

KIVU AND ITURI IN THE CONGO WAR: THE ROOTS AND NATURE OF A LINKAGE*

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[(*) The Political Economy of the Great Lakes Region in Africa. The Pitfalls of Enforced Democracy and Globalization (edited by Stefaan Marysse and Filip Ryntjens). New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 10-11, 190-222]

ABSTRACT

The war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is astonishing for many reasons: the high number of state and no-state actors involved, the complexity of underlying stakes and conflicting interests, the magnitude of human and material losses, the inadequacy of response from the international community («*abundance of rhetoric and deficit of concrete actions*»), its impact on reshaping a new regional order and a vast-scale movement of disinformation. Eastern Congo seems to be the heart of this conundrum and what is happening there is the mirror of the post-cold war predicament in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The paper compares and contrasts the situation in Kivu and Ituri, the two seats of the Congo war. It shows the long-term continuity of interactions and the extent to which the local and external dynamics played a central role in the local history and how they are transforming the whole area into a wide arena of national, regional and international political and economic competition whose outcome is still unforeseeable. It suggests that, being part of both national and regional geopolitics, the two cases of war must be handled in the same way and become the central piece of the policy aimed at settling for good the multidimensional conflict and the policy of rebuilding the country.

1. Introduction

The war in the DRC began in 1993 in Walikale, Masisi and Bwito/Rutshuru in Northern Kivu. The conflict, also known as the «*Masisi war*», took a new turn in 1996, with the start of the Tutsi-led uprising in Kivu, the so-called «*First Banyamulenge Rebellion*». Contrary to this first wave of the Tutsi rebellion, the second, which began simultaneously at the Congo-Uganda borders in Rutshuru (Northern Kivu) and the Congo-Burundi borders in Uvira (Southern Kivu), attracted the attention of the international community early on. Furthermore, it was referred to in the media and in official discourses, not as the war in Kivu, but as «*the Eastern Congo crisis*». Then, in 1999, when the war expanded to Ituri, in the Northeast, the international community's interest in the *Banyamulenge Rebellion* dwindled, as the focus shifted to the conflict in Ituri, which for many people was synonymous with the Congo war. Despite the particularities of the two seats of the Congo war, i.e. Kivu and Ituri, they do have certain common characteristics, which can be traced back to the end of the 19th century: (1) the eccentricity of Kivu and Ituri vis-à-vis the capital of the country and, consequently, their peripheral positions in relation to the centre of power; (2) the wide implementation of the 1920 circular of the Minister of Colonies, Louis Franck, on the reshaping of the traditional political power structure by the colonial authorities of the Eastern Province in Stanleyville and the introduction of sectors as the local unit of government, more specifically between 1922 and 1933; (3) the economic and social history of Congo's easternmost province since the 1920s; (4) the demographic composition of the population and the existence of cross-border communities with stakes in events in two or more countries; (5) the presence of regional and international key players who are, in one way or another, involved in events in Kivu as well as Ituri; (6) the vast scale of deliberate killing; (7) the proximity of Uganda and Rwanda, two countries where armed conflict became the chosen way for bringing about political change (cf. Uganda's National Resistance Army or NRA from 1981 and the Rwandan Patriotic Army or RPA from 1990). In sum, factors of a geographical (or geopolitical), demographical (the presence of «*Hamit*» and «*Bantu*» populations) and geological nature (the presence of mineral resources) put Kivu and Ituri at the heart of a conflict with new regional and international stakes, whereby French and

Anglo-American rivalry acted as a catalyst. Germany, which had pulled out of its colonies in 1919, surrendering Tanganyika to Great Britain and Rwanda and Burundi to Belgium, was also drawn in¹.

In the present contribution, we highlight the above issues in pre-war and wartime Congo, we look at the role of Kivu and Ituri in Congo's new peace deal, and we consider post-conflict prospects. Our initial focus is on the background to the war, as we consider Kivu and Ituri in their historical and geographical contexts. Subsequently, we discuss the impact of national and regional stakes in the emerging post-cold war order in central Africa at the provincial and grassroots levels in Kivu² and the Eastern Province. We intend to demonstrate that, while Ituri was experiencing relative calm, especially between 1993 and late 1996, Kivu underwent the effects of a regionally-determined war that unfolded in three phases: the Masisi War (March 1993-July 1994), which was confined to a small part of Northern Kivu Province; the internationalisation of the conflict following the influx of over a million Rwandan Hutu Refugees (July 1994-September 1996), which affected all of Kivu; and the First Banyamulenge Rebellion or first Tutsi-led war (September/October 1996-May 1997), which plunged the country in general and Ituri in Eastern Province in particular into a similar situation as Kivu. Finally, we assess the reshuffling of political cards in the seats of Eastern Congo following the Second Banyamulenge Rebellion (from August 1998 onwards), and the extent to which the war has been managed from the start by the Congolese government in Kinshasa and the international community. We focus on the role of the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU), and consider the significance of the peace accords signed respectively at Lusaka/Zambia (July/August 1999), Sun City, Pretoria/South Africa and Luanda/Angola between April 2002 and April 2003.

2. Kivu and Ituri in Their Historical and Regional Contexts

Circumstances in Kivu and Ituri were already similar long before the eruption of the 1996-1997 war. These similarities stem from geographical and historical factors, and from the long-term inefficiency of the state authorities, which had transformed this part of the country into a kind of lawless Wild West.

2.1. A Century at the Periphery

In the course of its history, the DRC has been governed from three places: Vivi (1885-1886), Boma (1886-1926) and Leopoldville/Kinshasa (from 1926 to the present day). In other words, the country's three successive capitals are all situated in the West, near the Atlantic Ocean, more than 2,000 kilometres from Congo's eastern borders. This is the result of a process of colonial occupation, which began on the West coast and unfolded towards the East, in implementation of the principles of the General Act of the Berlin International Conference (26 February 1885) and the Colonial Charter for Africa. Located in the easternmost part of the country on the borders of what, in the case of Kivu, would later become German Eastern Africa and, in the case of Ituri, the British colonies of Sudan and Uganda, the region was placed under Leopoldian or even Belgian rule quite late on. Far beyond the immediate sphere of influence of the capital, they officially became part of the Leopoldian administration after the eviction of «*Arabo-Swahilis*» in what was referred to as the "anti-slavery campaigns" (1890-1895). Only then did Kivu and Ituri become known as the *Districts* of Kivu³ and Ituri, and was their administration organised as such. In 1924, they were integrated into the Eastern Province (one of four provinces in Belgian Congo at that time) and governed from Stanleyville, present-day Kisangani. When, in 1933, the number of provinces was increased from four to six, the Eastern Province was split into two, i.e. Stanleyville and Costermansville. This

¹Les stratégies de la politique étrangère allemande pour la Corne de l'Afrique, l'Afrique Orientale et l'Afrique centrale, 1995-2004 Auswärtiges Amt.

²Kivu refers here not the Great Kivu, which is sometimes called the Kivu-Maniema province, but to the two provinces of Southern Kivu and Northern Kivu as they were delineated in 1988.

³The district of Kivu was referred to as the Ruzizi Kivu territory between 1900 and 1922; see *Divisions et Subdivisions Territoriales de la Colonie*, Boma, le 1er mai 1909, pp. 24-25; VANDEWOUDE, E.J., *Les documents relatifs à l'ancien district de la Ruzizi-Kivu (1900-1922)*. Léopoldville, 1959.

meant that Ituri and Kivu were now administratively separated and run from their respective capitals, namely Stanleyville and Costermansville, which is known today as Bukavu. This 1933 administrative reorganization, however, had no impact whatsoever on the activities of the National Committee of Kivu (NCK), the last of the Charter Companies to be established for the purpose of managing large areas of land (*«pouvoir concédant»*). It was set up in 1928 to manage the lands and resources in most of Eastern Congo⁴. The NCK would continue to oversee land matters in the two new provinces from its headquarters in Costermansville until its dismantlement in 1966. In the next sections (2.2 to 2.4) we examine Kivu and Ituri in the 1920s, when they were still governed from Stanleyville, and we consider how the regions interacted following their administrative separation (from 2.2 to 2.4).

2.2. The Colonial and Post-Colonial Impact on the Traditional Local Powers

The so-called “indigenous policy” was originally launched in 1891, when the Leopoldian authorities introduced recognized chieftaincies whose chiefs received the medal of the Congo Free State. Later, after the transfer of rule from Leopold II to Belgium in 1908, it was reformulated on several occasions, including in pursuance of the decree of 2 May 1910 and subsequent amendments⁵. For the purpose of the present study, we focus particularly on a circular of 8 November 1920 from the then Minister of Colonies Louis Franck, concerning the introduction of ethnically-based sectors⁶, and on the decree of 5 December 1933 on the chieftaincies⁷. Both were implemented quite extensively in Kivu and Ituri within the framework of a policy of indirect rule by the provincial authorities of the Eastern province in Stanleyville, particularly Governor A.J. Moeller, his successors and their collaborators at the District and Territory level. This resulted in a thorough reshaping of traditional power structures. After all, the reorganisation not only implied the appointment of new chiefs; it also strengthened the position of some ethnic groups and individuals to the detriment of others. The Vice-Governor-General A. de Meulemeester motivated this colonial intervention in the traditional local power structure as follows: *«réduire le nombre des chefferies et renforcer le pouvoir des autorités coutumières par la mise en place des tribunaux (les premiers ont commencé à opérer dans la Province Orientale en 1921) et en faire, plus qu’auparavant, des subordonnés de l’administration coloniale ou de l’administrateur territorial, pilier de l’administration coloniale»*. In other words, the goal was, as he put it, to *«reconstituer des groupements assez peuplés et homogènes pour qu’avec notre tutelle discrète, ils évoluent dans la voie du progrès et de la civilisation en conservant celles de leurs institutions ne contrevenant pas aux règles de l’ordre public univesel»*⁸. The tribe became the cornerstone of this policy: *«les communautés au sein des chefferies et nouveaux secteurs sont regroupées sur base non pas des liens politiques définis, mais de leurs origines communes»*⁹. It took over ten years to implement this policy, which, in principle, affected all Territories¹⁰. Furthermore, the Territories were named after the dominant tribe or ethnic group¹¹, including in Kivu and Ituri.

In Kivu, three issues became a bone of contention within the colonial administrative

⁴JASPAR, H., «Le Comité National du Kivu», *Revue Economique Internationale*, vol. 1, n°1, 1928, pp. 211-228; MENDIAUX, E., «Le Comité National du Kivu», *Zaire*, vol. X, n°8, Octobre 1956, pp. 803-813; vol. X, n°9, novembre 1956, pp. 927-954 et 960-964.

⁵MOELLER, A. J., «De certaines formes de participation des indigènes à l’administration de notre colonie», *Société Belge d’Etudes et d’Expansion*, vol. 5, n°6, juin-juillet 1927, pp. 262-266.

⁶The sectors were formed on an ethnic basis; cf. *Congo*, Juillet 1929, II, n°5, p.781.

⁷MAGOTTE, J., Les circonscriptions indigènes. Commentaires du décret du 5 décembre 1933. Dison, Winandy 1934.

⁸DE MEULEMEESTER, A., «Province Orientale n°2809. Reconstitution des groupements», *Politique indigène*, Stanleyville: Imprimerie Ecole Stanleyville, 1932, p. 12.

⁹MOELLER, A. J., *op. cit.*, p.265.

¹⁰DE MEULEMEESTER, A., *op. cit.*, p.13.

¹¹«Ordonnance du Gouverneur Général Tilkens n°91/AIMO (Affaires Indigènes et Main-d’Oeuvre) du 29 septembre 1933», *Bulletin Administratif du Congo Belge (BA)* du 6 octobre 1933.

hierarchy: the imposition of Daniel Ndeze (1920) and André Kalinda (1921)¹² as Great Chiefs of the entire Rutshuru and Masisi territories respectively, and the favouritism towards Kabare to the detriment of Ngweshe¹³. The pro-eminence of Daniel Ndeze and André Kalinda was strongly challenged after independence. Daniel Ndeze and his heirs faced opposition from both the Hunde of Bwito and their rivals within the Bwisha chieftaincy itself. Bwito became an independent chieftaincy in 1971, while the Ndeze have increasingly lost power in Bwisha since the 1980s, especially in the context of the dynamics of the AFDL/RCD war and within the administration. The Bashalis fought for autonomy from André Kalinda and briefly achieved it between 1961¹⁴ and 1967¹⁵. They only gained full independence after the death of André Kalinda in 1974, when the Great Chieftaincy of Bahunde was split into four small autonomous chieftaincies: Bahunde, Bashali, Osso (1976) and Katoyi (1977). In the far South, in Bushi, events have evolved differently since the 1920s. Little by little, Mwami Kabare proved himself to be less submissive to the colonial authorities than had often been assumed. Eventually, he was banished from his chieftaincy in the 1930s and relegated to the sideline in Léopoldville until independence. Meanwhile, the colonial administration had appointed Mpozi as Regent¹⁶. This marked the start of a conflict between the Kabare and Mpozi lineages within the local power structure, which would flare up at each inter-reign.

In Ituri, the implementation of Louis Franck's 1920 policy on the introduction of Sectors meant the Hema and Lendu, and some other communities, obtained their own chieftaincies¹⁷. However, as a result of decisions by the Ituri District Commissioners in 1940 and 1959, Hema and Lendu villages or political entities were merged into the chieftaincy of the Bahema-South¹⁸. This policy was continued under the governorship of Jean-Fauster Manzikala (head of the Kibali-Ituri province) in the mid-1960. The latter is accused by the Lendu of having incorporated more Lendu villages to the detriment of the Walendu-Bindi chieftaincy. He also appointed someone who did not belong to the ruling Hema families, Kawa Mugisa, as the head of the Bahema-South chieftaincy, forcing the legitimate rulers to flee and seek refuge in Uganda¹⁹. These facts illustrate how the colonial and post-colonial administrations implemented a general policy that favoured the Hema to the detriment of the Lendu. It enabled the Hema to increasingly occupy key positions in the administration, education, health and private sectors²⁰. This trend of Hema-Lendu power imbalance seems to continue until today, as the great players in the area, Uganda and Rwanda, side mainly with the Hema in conflicts with the Lendu and/or other communities of Ituri²¹.

After having served as «*fonctionnaires coloniaux*» or colonial auxiliaries, the traditional authorities were co-opted and incorporated into the provincial and national assemblies during the 1960s²². Over the next two decades, they came to occupy key positions within the hierarchy of the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution or MPR. They headed the MPR's local branches, commonly referred to as «*cellules*», and were granted the title of «*Présidents cellulaires du MPR*». In addition, some became territorial administrators and parliamentarians. They also participated in the recurrent ethnic wars, siding with their own communities, clans or families and thus failing to

¹²MOELLER, A. J., *op. cit.*, p.264.

¹³Congo, Juillet 1929, II, n°2, pp. 187-194; n°5, pp. 770-775.

¹⁴Rapport Teuwen, Léopoldville, 1966, p.16.

¹⁵Moniteur Congolais, 1967.

¹⁶Farther R. Colle is one of those who give a fully account on this conflict and the way the colonial administration handled it, «Organisation politique des Bashi», Congo, II, 1, 1921, pp. 657-684; *Essai de monographie des Bashi*, Bukavu, 1971.

¹⁷Congo, Juillet 1929, II, n°5, p.782.

¹⁸MEDIAS POUR LA PAIX, Rapport de la Table Ronde pour la Résolution du Conflit Communautaire Hema-Lendu. Kinshasa, 10-11 juillet 2003, p. 11.

¹⁹MEDIAS POUR LA PAIX, *op. cit.*, p.12.

²⁰RASSEMBLEMENT CONGOLAIS POUR LA DEMOCRATIE (RCD)/KISANGANI, «Pourquoi tant de confrontations au Nord-Kivu et Ituri?», <http://www.congorcd.org/declarations/bulletin1.htm>.

²¹MEDIAS POUR LA PAIX, *op. cit.*, p.10.

²²Moniteur Congolais, n°23 du 6 juin 1960, p.1622.

fulfil the role of arbiter. The fact that they have sided with Rwanda²³ since late 1996 has further undermined their moral authority and eroded the foundation of their political and socio-economic powers²⁴. It is a trend that is common to the whole of Eastern Congo, from Uvira (North of Tanganyika Lake) in the South to Mahagi (on the shores of the Lake Albert) in the North.

2.3. Similarities in the Socio-Economic Histories

Kivu and Ituri were incorporated into Economic Zones VI and VII of the Belgian Congo in 1928 (see **Annex at the end of the book**). The whole region, stretching along Congo's Eastern borders from Manono in Northern Katanga (on the shores of Lake Tanganyika) to Lake Albert in the North, was converted into a zone of land and agricultural colonization²⁵ (see the CNKI's Land Domain in the **Annex at the end of the book**). With the exception of mining activities in some areas (i.e. Kamituga/Mwenga in Southern Kivu, Kabunga/Walikale and Butembo/Lubero in Northern Kivu, and Kilo-Moto in Kibali-Ituri), the zone was very much dominated by cash or export-oriented crops (tea, coffee, cinchona, cotton, pyrethrum, rice, etc) and settler plantations (sometimes with mixed farming). The respective interests of the local Congolese population, the large enterprises and white settlers clashed. The emergence and development of this type of agricultural economy, sometimes in heavily populated areas such as Bushi and Bwisha, entailed massive land expropriations that went beyond the implementation of the decree that declared all «vacant lands» to be State property. This is why the issue of indigenous lands caused growing dissatisfaction among the Congolese populations in the 1950s²⁶. Moreover, local people were also banned from participating in commercial agriculture until 1953. In many parts of Eastern Congo, the land issue in general also set the NCK against the white settlers, and sometimes against the Belgian colonial administration too. The land expropriations and conflicts continued, peaking in the 1970s and 80s following the Zairianization measures of 1973 and the passing of a new land law that reinforced the 1966 Bakajika Law. In this respect, the situation in Kivu was always worse than that in Ituri. Specific aspects of the land conflicts in Kivu are discussed in studies by Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo (Masisi), Séverin Mugangu (Bushi) and Mafikiri Tsongo (general considerations on Kivu). The situation in Ituri, however, is not. It is perhaps best summarised as follows: *«A ce problème de manque de terres disponibles s'ajoutent les abus commis par des chefs coutumiers et l'Administration dans l'attribution des terres aux particuliers ainsi que la situation controversée de nombreuses concessions abandonnées, non mises en valeur et acquises à la suite des mesures de la zaïrianisation de 1973. Au même moment, des éleveurs Hema multipliaient des efforts pour agrandir leurs concessions en grignotant sur les terres des paysans Lendu. Le détonateur de la guerre intercommunautaire a été justement la tentative du Fermier Ogwaro (Hema) d'étendre sa concession jusqu'à menacer d'expulsion de force des habitants d'un village Lendu»*²⁷. This is also the view held by the leadership of the RCD-Kisangani: *«Sous Mobutu, les*

²³ OBSERVATOIRE DES CONFLITS ET POUR LA PAIX EN AFRIQUE DES GRANDS LACS/OCAPGL, Rapport final de la Conférence des Bani du Sud-Kivu en octobre 1999. Nairobi, le 6 novembre 1999; GROUPE LOTUS, Ituri et Kisangani: Situation sécuritaire extrêmement inquiétante. Kisangani, le 30 mars 2003, pp. 7-8.

²⁴ This aspect is discussed in further detail by Denis M. Tull with specific reference to Northern Kivu province. See TULL, A., M., «A reconfiguration of political Order? The State in the State in North Kivu (DR Congo)», *African Affairs*, vol. 102, 2003, p.439ff.

²⁵ DE GREEF, G., «Colonisation du Haut-Ituri», *Bulletion Agricole du Congo Belge (BACB)*, vol. V, n°3, septembre 1914, pp.529-536; LOUILLET, M., «La situation économique de la Province Orientale pendant l'année 1920», *Congo*, II, 1921, pp.797-811; 1922, pp.111-131 et pp.451-466; CLAESSENS, J., *Le Haut-Ituri et l'Uélé Oriental, pays de colonisation*. Bruxelles, 1925 and «Du Lac Albert au Lac Kivu», *BACB*, vol. XX, n°1, mars 1929, pp.3-35; DUTRON, Ph., *Kivu, terre promise*. Buxelles, 1934; COMITE NATIONAL DU KIVU/CNKI, *L'Appel du Kivu*, Bruxelles, 1957.

²⁶ PALANTE, H., Note analytique des dossiers. Saturation de différentes chefferies du Kivu. Bukavu, 1953; BREBANT, V., Le problème foncier indigène au Kivu. Léopoldville, 1953; COMMISSION DU CONGRES COLONIAL (CCC), L'étude du problème foncier indigène au Congo Belge. Bruxelles, 1957.

²⁷ MEDIAS POUR LA PAIX, *op. cit.*, p.16.

*Hema ont abusé de la fameuse Loi Bakajika pour s'approprier des concessions abandonnées, de leur position de fait et de la corruption...et en ont profité pour prendre les terres des Lendu»*²⁸. The Association Coopérative des Eleveurs de l'Ituri (ACOOPELI)²⁹ seems to have played an important role³⁰ in fuelling the land conflicts, as does the Association Coopérative des Groupements d'Eleveurs au Nord-Kivu (ACOGENOKI) in Kivu, which was funded by Canada. Both operated within the framework of a vast programme of cattle development conceived by Mobutu's Chief of Staff, Barthélémy Bisengimana, in 1972-1973³¹ and aimed at expanding the pasturelands or ranches, which was achieved to the detriment of food-growing. One of the consequences was the escalation of land and political conflicts between the cattle raisers and the agriculturalists. In both cases, the authorities in charge of the Ministry of Agriculture in Kinshasa (Kanyinda Onsi Ndal, Dz'bo Kalogi, Senzeyi Ryamukuru and Tepatondele in particular)³² played a pivotal role. It was another story after 1989: precious and strategically important minerals and oil became the targets³³ of local and regional actors, as well as multinationals, and fuelled the international war that has continued until today. If, for example, one compares the 1947 map of the land and agriculture colonization (**map 1a**) with that of today's mining war (**map 1b**), one sees that they correspond very closely indeed.

²⁸RCD-KISANGANI, «Pourquoi tant de confrontations au Nord-Kivu et en Ituri?», <http://www.congorcd.org/declarations/bulletin.htm>.

²⁹The ACOOPELI was founded after the Bureau du Projet Ituri/BPI (an agriculture-cattle raising project). So, the two organizations closely worked with the radio CANDIP (Centre d'Animation et de Diffusion Pédagogique) at the ISP(Institut Supérieur Pédagogique)-Bunia, the latter playing the role of a vulgarisation instrument.

³⁰MEDIAS POUR TOUS, op. cit., p. 17.

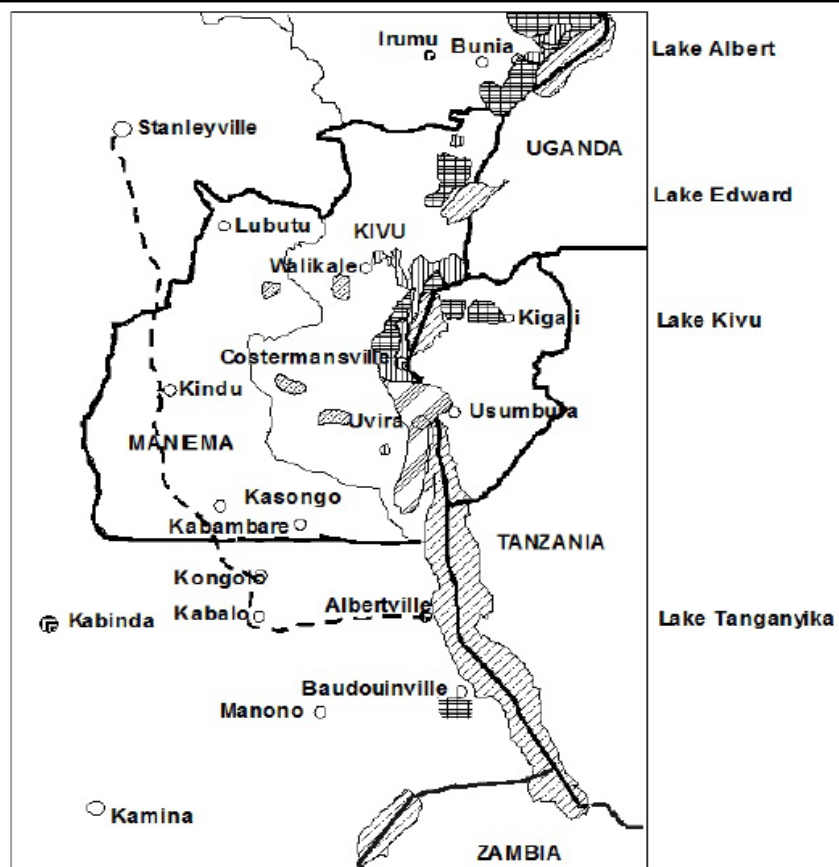
³¹Both emerged in the same period (end of the 1970s and early 1980s) and seem to have the same denomination, as *cooperatives* and *groupements* are not totally different.

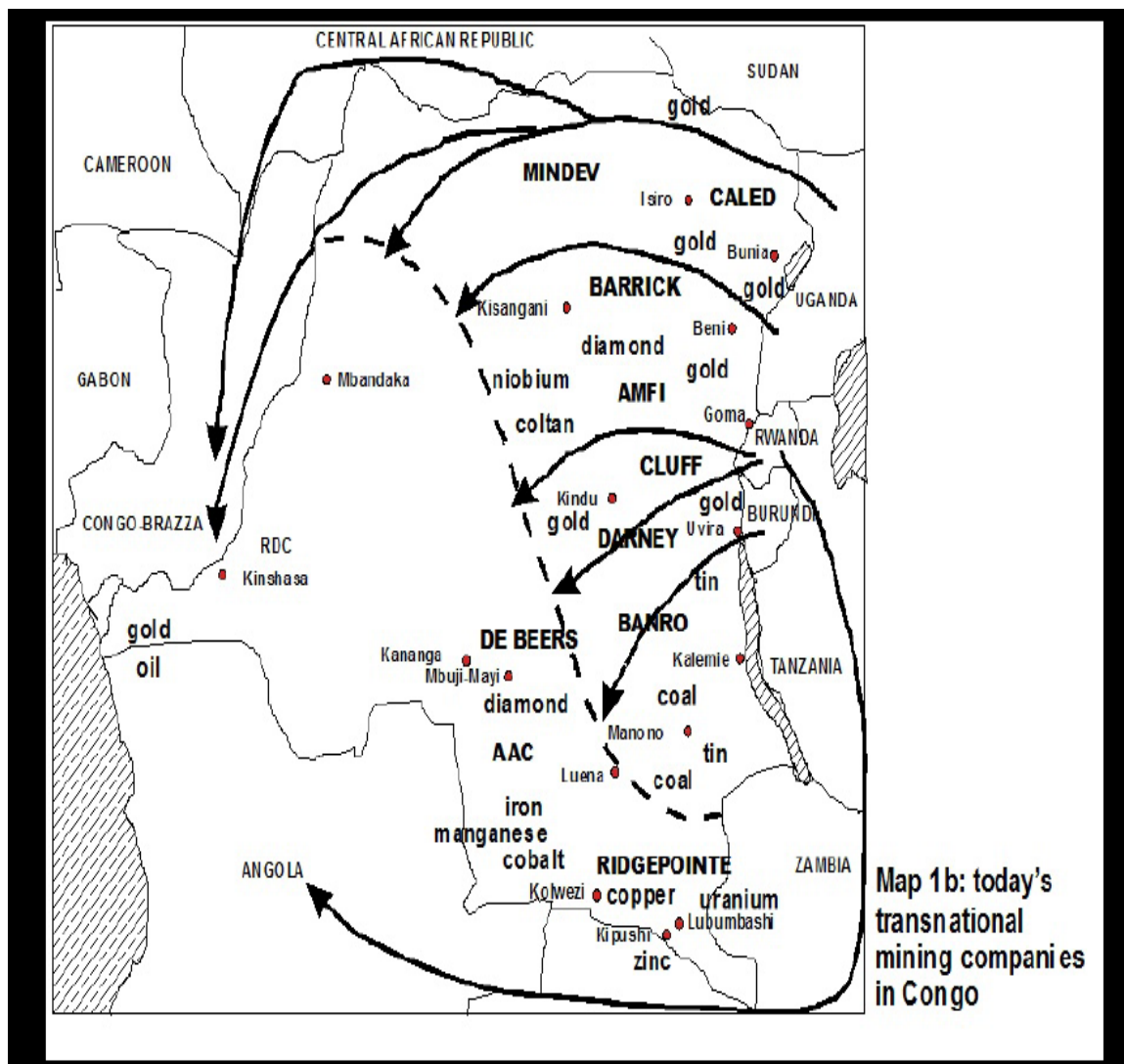
³²In addition to being an influential politician in Ituri under Mobutu's regime, Dz'bo Kalogi is one of the owners of Ituri's great ranches,

³³It should be noted that international interest in gaining control of the DRC resources is not new. See *Le Congo dans la guerre: les accords tripartites Belgique-Grande-Bretagne-Etats-Unis*, Bruxelles, Centre de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Politiques/CRISP, 1977; DE GRAND RY, G., *Les Grabens Africains et la Recherche du Pétrole en Afrique Orientale*, Bruxelles, Institut Royal Colonial Belge/IRCB, 1941; BA, 1947, II, p. 2323; BA, 1953, I, pp. 912-916 (concerns the control of exports of tantalum and niobium); THE AMERICAN ASSEMBLY, *The United States and Africa*, New York, Columbia University, 1958; DAVISTER, P., *Katanga, enjeu du monde: récits et documents*, Bruxelles, Editions Europe-Afrique, 1960; RUY, P., *Het uranium van Kongo en de wereldpolitiek*, sl, 1963; BUCH, P. et VANDERLINDEN, A., *L'uranium (congolais), la Belgique et les puissances*, Bruxelles, Boeck Université, 1995; LECLERCQ, H., *Aperçu historique des relations entre la RDC et les institutions financières internationales*. Conférence, CERGLA (Centre d'Etude de la Région des Grands Lacs d'Afrique, Université d'Anvers)-REC (Réseau Europe-Congo), Bruxelles, le 12 décembre 2002. A new dimension to the issue of control over the DRC's resources is the increasing number of actors involved (including local leaders) and the subsequent killings of the Congolese people.

**Map 1a:
European
colonisation
in Kivu
in 1947**

- — railway
-  coffee
-  rice
-  cotton
-  European colonisation
-  district capital
- district boundary
- provincial frontier





Many sections of the aforementioned Economic Zones VI and VII were considered to be underpopulated in the 1920s; their development required the importation of workers from elsewhere³⁴. It was in this context that people from Rwanda were transferred to the highlands of Kivu from the late 1930s to the 1950s. In other words, they were imported to suit colonial needs: to work in public services or on plantations run by white settlers and, more particularly, to assure the viability of local chieftaincies³⁵. This policy also affected the Nande populations from Beni and Lubero territories, who were recruited to work in the plantations of Rutshuru and Masisi between the end of World War II and independence. No such migration wave occurred in Ituri, where the only industry to attract workers from the country's other provinces were the Kilo Moto mines. However, there are three other migratory phenomena that began in Kivu and extended to Ituri. The first was the northward expansion by the Nande, from their territories of Lubero and Beni and the Semliki plain in the far North of Kivu to Lake Albert³⁶. Attracted by trade, they settled in most cities (Kisangani, Bunia, Isiro, Mahagi, Buta ...) and on the main roads of the Eastern province, and eventually became involved in local land and political matters. Janet MacGaffey, in her book

³⁴ «La question de la main-d'oeuvre», *Congo*, 1929, I, n°2, pp.259-260; «Rapport du Sous-Comité de la Province Orientale du Comité Consultatif de la main-d'oeuvre, Stanleyville 1928», *African Archives, Brussels, Rapport Annuel du Congo Belge, RA/CB(138)n°3*.

³⁵ The population growth resulting from this immigration affected the tax revenues that the chieftaincies required in order to sustain their activities or to remain self-funding.

³⁶ A great part of these territories belonged to the Eastern Province until the 1950s.

«*Entrepreneurs and Parasites*» (1987), describes the importance of the Nande long-trade (traded commodities and the trade networks linking Butembo-Beni to Goma in the South, Kinshasa in the West, Bunia, Kisangani and Sudan in the North and Eastern Africa)³⁷. Indeed it is still important today, despite the ongoing war: «*les villes de Butembo et Beni, fiefs du RCD-ML... forment un point commercial majeur qui relie les Grands Lacs avec l'Afrique australe, le Moyen Orient et l'Extrême-Orient...Le trafic du diamant de Kisangani vers d'autres zones de la Province Orientale et la Province du Nord-Kivu a fait de Beni un des centres majeurs du commerce du diamant avec des liens à Kinshasa et Kampala*»³⁸. It is no coincidence that Mbusa Nyamwisi, a Nande from Beni and leader of the RCD/ML (Mouvement de Libération), was appointed Minister for Regional Cooperation in the transitional government which was installed in Kinshasa on 30 June 2003. His position reinforces Nande interests not only in the East of Congo, but in the entire Great Lakes region, including those of the Tutsi in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the RCD-Goma. This is less the case for their Hema rivals in Ituri. Because of their migration from Kivu to the Eastern province, some observers compare the Nande with the Bamileke of Western Cameroon, and regard this movement as an example of «*colonization by autochthonous populations*»³⁹; they consider such immigrations to have a negative impact on local societies, in a variety of ways: «*elle (l'intrusion de populations allogène) perturbe les populations indigènes pré-établies par compétition entre populations de poids démographique différent, par compétition sur les terres, en particulier les indigènes peuvent être amenés à vendre leurs terres sans bien maîtriser le processus et sans bien en mesurer les conséquences définitives, par perturbation des fragiles systèmes de commerce et d'échange régionaux*». But the Nande also made a similar migratory move to the South, an expansion that set them against the Hutu of Rutshuru and Goma, with whom they dispute autochthony, the rights of first occupancy and power. For example, the politics of the Nande under the governorships of Denis Paluku (1962-1966)⁴⁰ and Jean-Pierre Kalumbo Mbogho (1991-July 1993)⁴¹ led to two waves of interethnic war, their role in which is described by Félicien Nzitatira Mbeba as follows: «*De 1963 à 1965, ils (les Nande) s'allient aux autres communautés antagonistes des Hutu et des Tutsi dans les événements sanglants qui les opposent (guerre de kanyarwanda) et apportent, de ce fait, du tonus au conflit interethnique qu'ils auraient pu atténuer s'ils avaient été des arbitres neutres. En 1993, sans être acteurs actifs, ils attiseront, à distance, le feu qui s'allume au Masisi pour s'étendre à une grande partie de la province du Nord-Kivu*»⁴². Apparently, then, Nande expansionism, which some consider to be a striving for hegemony, is one of the strongest catalysts for the conflicts in Kivu and Ituri⁴³.

³⁷MACGAFFEY, J., *Entrepreneurs and Parasites. The Struggle for Indigenous Capitalism in Zaïre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, figure 6.1, p.153.

³⁸«Pillage des ressources nationales: Kawa et le Parti pour l'Unité et la Sauvegarde de l'Intégrité du Congo (PUSIC) ont alimenté le réseau ougandais», <http://www.digitalcongo.net/fullstory.php?id=36087>.

³⁹«Rapport DGXI-III- Les Facteurs du changement», <http://www.ulb.ac.be/soco/apft/GENERAL/TEXTE/RPDGXI/prfr13.htm>, pp. 3-4. A more general vision is given by HECHTER, M., «Le colonialisme interne», *Pluriel*, n° 32, 1982, pp. 119-128.

⁴⁰While he was still minister of agriculture in the first government of Kivu Province in Bukavu (Muruho government), Paluku was already being criticized by the Bashi leaders of working for the hegemony of his Nande community, *Dignité Nouvelle*, n°9, 25 avril 1962, pp. 1 et 6; n°12, 23 mai 1962, p.3. For Nande overall politics, read KATSUVA, T., «Awabelo vous écrit», *Trait d'Union*, n°4 du 1-12-1958, p. 3; WILLAME, J.C., «La province du Nord-Kivu», *Les Provinces du Congo. Structure et Fonctionnement*. Léopoldville, Institut des Recherches Economiques et Sociales-Centre d'Etudes Politiques (IRES-CEP), n°3, octobre 1964, pp.25-85.

⁴¹NGABU, F., «Les massacres de 1993 dans les zones de Walikale et de Masisi», *Dialogue*, n°192, août-septembre 1996, pp.37-50; «MONGA, M.L., «Qui a mis le Nord-Kivu à feu et à sang? Kalumbo, Nyamwisi Muvingi et Mbuza Mabe?», *La Conscience*, n°146, juillet 1993, p.6.

⁴²NZITATIRA, M.F., Les migrations, la question ethnique et la réconciliation, Goma, le 11 février 1998, p.3.

⁴³See footnote 62; MEDIAS POUR TOUS, op. cit., p.8. In an alarming declaration, the Hema are «denounce what they see as the project of Hema's extermination by Mbusa Nyamwisi's RCD/ML», DHETCHUVI MATCHU, M. J. B., Déclaration de la communauté Hemi du 03 août2002. Bunia, le 3 août 2002 (point n°1). The recent discourses of the Hema leaders (John Atenyi Tibasima, Adèle Lotsove Mugisa and Thomas

The second phenomenon was the settlement of Rwanda's Tutsi refugees in Kivu between 1959 and 1973 and, more importantly, the appointment of one of these refugees, Barthélémy Bisengimana, to some high-ranking positions of power in Kinshasa (i.e. Vice Secretary General and Chief of Staff to President Mobutu in 1966⁴⁴ and 1969⁴⁵ respectively) in a context of military dictatorship⁴⁶. On the one hand, the newcomers slowly succeeded in infiltrating in urban as well as rural areas of Kivu⁴⁷ and the eastern Province. On the other, as Mobutu's Chief of Staff, Bisengimana was able to grant many privileges to key Tutsi, Hema and others within the Congolese nationwide leadership. Bisengimana's politics reinforced the alliance between the Tutsi and Hema and enhanced their perception of sameness⁴⁸, while undermining the positions of Hutu⁴⁹ and Lendu. Today, many western media and actors equate Hema with Tutsi and, conversely, Lendu with Hutu. Consequently, in events as they have unfolded in both Kivu and Ituri, the Tutsi and Hema are invariably presented as the victims of Hutu and Lendu hatred and barbaric violence. No-one has emphasized this cliché more than the Belgian journalist Colette Braeckman, who wrote: «*Par ailleurs, Kinshasa ne reste pas inactif: les forces de Mbusa Nyamwisi se sont ouvertement rangées dans le camp gouvernemental et elles recrutent parmi l'ethnie des Lendu (proches des Hutus par l'idéologie) pratiquant une politique des massacres et de terre brûlée dont sont victimes des Hemas, des éleveurs apparentés aux Tutsis*»⁵⁰.

The third and final phenomenon is the new wave of Rwandan refugees, comprising over one million Hutu. Upon their influx in July 1994, following the RPF's seizure of power in Rwanda, they settled along the Congo-Burundi-Rwanda borders from Uvira in the South to Rutshuru in the North. This invasion became the detonating factor of the cataclysm, as the refugees were settled on a tiny territory where land had already been in short supply for quite some time, due to overpopulation, the creation of large protected areas or national parks like Virunga and Kahuzi-Biega, and the presence of large ranches and export-oriented agricultural plantations. All of this occurred at a time of uncertainty caused by the country's political deadlock. The immigrants constituted a threat to both Tutsi positions in Zaire and the Tutsi-dominated regime in the new Rwanda. It was a threat that could not be allowed to persist, certainly not in the eyes of the US administration in Washington, which was intent on overthrowing Mobutu and making Rwanda its new key «*state player*» in the region. The war that Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi waged in the DRC was partially directed against them. Many of those who were able to escape the subsequent massacres were dispersed throughout the country, roaming from forest to forest. This, in turn, became a pretext for the unending war waged by Kagame, who «*sees the interahamwe everywhere in Congo*»⁵¹. It also constitutes the basis of a wide perception of Hutu peril, as exemplified by the

Lubanga) epitomized in the expression of «Ituri for the Iturians» is directed against the Nande, see VLASSENROOT, K., «Le conflit en Ituri», L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Annuaire 20002-2003 (sous la direction de Stefaan Marysse et Filip Reyntjens). Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003, pp. 228-229.

⁴⁴ GERARD-LIBOIS, J. et VERHAEGEN, B., *Congo 1966*. Bruxelles, CRISP, 1967, p. 24.

⁴⁵ *Moniteur Congolais*, n°10, May 05, 1969, p.400.

⁴⁶ The Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution emerged in 1967 as a single Party and was elevated to the position of the country's first institution in 1972 and the State Party in 1982.

⁴⁷ GAFANDI, R., «L'installation des réfugiés rwandais au Kivu», *Dignité Nouvelle*, n°3, 17 mars 1962, p.5.

⁴⁸ There are reasons to support this hypothesis: collision of Ngabu and Mwerekande in the Tutsization of the catholic church clergy and hierarchy of the diocese of Goma, Ngabu's espousal of Tutsi discourses on ethnic relations and the nature of the crisis in Northern Kivu, the similar views that Bishop Faustin Ngabu and Bishop Joseph Banga Bane (Buta) held on the AFDL and the denial of the massacres of Hutu in Kivu in the late 1996 and early 1997, see «L'évêque de Goma conteste la réalité des massacres des Hutu», *Le Monde* du Mercredi 12 mars 1997; BANGA BANE, J., *Massacres et génocide dans l'Est du Zaïre. Eléments fiables d'analyse et de réflexion*, Kinshasa, le 30 janvier 1997.

⁴⁹ BAKERURA, D. et al., *Mémoire des Hutu Zaïrois au Président de la République*, Kinshasa, le 23 mars 1980; BUCYALIMWE, M., «La guerre des chiffres: une constante dans la politique au Nord-Kivu», *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Annuaire 2000-2001* (sous la direction de Filip Reyntjens et Stefaan Marysse), Paris, L'Harmattan, 2001, pp. 226-262.

⁵⁰ BRAECKMAN, C., «De nouvelles tueries dans l'est du Congo», *Le Soir*, le 4 mars 2003.

⁵¹ Even the Hema see the Interahamwe everywhere among the ranks of the Lendu and/or behind the Musa

following description in the weekly Magazine Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent: «*La Hutu connection. Du Rwanda à l'Ouganda, du Burundi au Congo-Brazzaville et de la RDC (République Démocratique du Congo) à la Centrafrique, les extrémistes interahamwe ont essaimé dans toute la région. Ils sont totalement incontrôlables*»⁵².

2.4. The All-Front Players in Events in Kivu-Ituri

From the 1920s to the present-day, a great many colonial, Congolese, regional and international actors have been involved in key events and/or predicaments in both Kivu and Ituri. Simplifying matters somewhat, you could say that, over that period, three different contexts have occurred, defined by different stakes, even though the actors were often the same. These three contexts coincide with three different periods: pre-1990, 1990 to 1999, and post-1999.

The pre-1990 context comprises two subperiods. The first is the colonial era, when the districts of Kivu and Ituri were still part of the Eastern Province and administrated from its capital, Stanleyville. As far as political and administrative issues were concerned, the key players were, first and foremost, the authorities in Stanleyville until 1933: District commissioner Hackars, Governors Adolphe de Meulemeester and A. J. Moeller, and their assistants, Landeghem, Gilson and others)⁵³. Also important were the leaders of the NCK (i.e. Helzig Balzac), who from the committee's headquarter in Costermansville (present-day Bukavu) played a determining role in land management and sales. They interacted with the white settlers and the Congolese farmers of the region between 1928 and 1966, the year that the NCK was dismantled. Other influential players were the White Fathers of the Vicariat du Haut-Congo (Mgr Cleire and other clergy or dignitaries within the Catholic Church), the members of the Société du Haut-Uélé et du Nil (SHUN) and the Société des Chemins de Fer Vicinaux au Congo (VICICONGO), two trading and transportation organizations that operated in Kivu and in the Eastern Province.

The second period coincided with dictatorship. During this era, first the Mobutu-Bisengimana tandem (1966-1977) and then the Mobutu-Kengo-Kithima trio (1977-1990) played a central role in decision-making in both Kivu and Ituri, introducing profound changes to the political, economic and social landscape from the early 1970s onwards. In addition, many actors from Ituri played a significant local role in Kivu, either from within or from Kinshasa, while also remaining involved in the internal affairs of their own province. These included the 1972-1974 Secretary of MPR's Political Bureau Mandradele Tanzi, Bishops Faustin Ngabu and Léonard Dhejju, the long-time Minister of Agriculture and Mining Dz'bo Kalogi, high-ranking MPR member Zamundu, head of security Nendaka, and Governor Manzikala of Kibali-Ituri, and Southern Kivu Governor Dilingi la Milombe. Similarly involved were the authorities of Kivu, who worked in or dealt with Ituri: Northern Kivu Governor Denis Paluku, Eastern Province Governor Assumani Busanya Lukili, Bishops Emmanuel Kataliko and Alphonse-Marie Runiga, businessmen and/or politicians such as Kitambala, who was involved in the gold trade among other things, Ngezayo Kambale and Cyprien Rwakabuba, both of whom traded coffee, and Pay Pay wa Syakasighe, long-time Minister of Economics and Trade and Governor of the Central Bank, the Banque du Zaïre⁵⁴. The ties between the Hema and Tutsi were initially forged at leadership level in the 1970s among politicians in Kinshasa. They would grow at grassroots level in subsequent years, particularly within the dioceses of Uvira, Goma and Bunia. The growing number of young Tutsi (especially Banyamulenge) at the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique in Bunia in the 1980s and early 1990s should be seen in this context⁵⁵. Most of them, and indeed others who studied at

Nyamwisi in the Ituri war.

⁵²Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent, n°2017, 1999.

⁵³MOBE, A.M., «L'inauguration du monument Gouverneur de Meulemeester», *La Voix du Congolais*, n°40, juillet 1949, pp. 273-274.

⁵⁴He boosted Nande business through credit loans. A street in Goma was even renamed Wa Syakasighe.

⁵⁵In fact, Tutsi and Hema studied together in a period of growing tensions at the ISP Bunia among the Hema-dominated personnel and the Hema/Lugbara-dominated student body. Some key Lendu (Bura Pulunyo), Bira (Mareki Ma Mudzi-Tina) and Hema (Pilo Kamaragi and Kamara Rwakaikara) leaders worked there during this tragic episode. Kamara Rwakaikara became the AFDL Minister of Education and was said in some

Lubumbashi, became part of the leadership that spearheaded the first and the second Banyamulenge Rebellions under the umbrella of the RPF/RPA (Rwandan Patriotic of Army).

The 1990-1999 period was characterized by a challenge to Mobutu's dictatorship and the MPR regime, at a time when the RPF, operating from Uganda and Congo, was waging war in Rwanda. The NRA and RPF were drawn in by a determination to prevent democratic reform. Thus, Mobutu, who supported the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda/NALU, an armed group opposed to Museveni, and Museveni, who supported the RPF and Mobutu's opponents whose «*maquis*» operated from the Uganda-Congolese border (Kisase Ngandu and Laurent-Désiré Kabila)⁵⁶, became key players behind the violence that has shook Kivu and Ituri from 1987 (one year after Museveni's advent to power) and that became known as the Beni rebellion and the Masisi war. Museveni's involvement in arms trafficking in Bunia (collision with Nyamwisi Muvungi and Kakolele) is well documented⁵⁷. Nyamwisi Muvungi was a special actor, as he worked for both Museveni and Mobutu. On the one hand, he took advantage of his ties with the Kondjo (Nande of Uganda)⁵⁸, while on the other he allowed himself to be manipulated by Mobutu in his capacity as Minister of Youth and Sport within the Nguz Government. He paid the price when he was killed in Butembo on 5 January 1993.

The post-1999 period has been dominated by growing rivalries between Rwanda and Uganda and their Congolese «allies» over the plundering of local resources. As a consequence, the DRC has disintegrated and more regional, international groups and networks have been drawn in than ever before. These include state and non-state actors, mainly multinationals, such as the Banro Resources Corporation, SAKIMA (Société Aurifère du Kivu-Maniema), Heritage Oil, American Fields Inc. of Hope/AMFI, Barrick, and Caleb International. Once again, the NRA and the Uganda's People Defence Forces/UPDF⁵⁹ (James Kazini, Salim Saleh), the RPA and the Congo Desk (James Kabarebe, Charles Murigande, Jacques Nziza, Patrick Karegeya, Patrick Mazimpaka)⁶⁰ are using their allies or proxies within the RCD-Goma (Azarias Ruberwa⁶¹, Makabuza Modeste⁶², Thibert Rujugiro)⁶³, RCD/ML (Mbusa Nyamwisi)⁶⁴, Union des Patriotes Congolais/UPC (John Tibasima, Thomas Lubanga)⁶⁵, the Mouvement pour la Libération du

circles to be close to Paul Kagame. What the Ituri district experiences at large today lies in the continuation of these ISP-Bunia tensions.

⁵⁶Rapport de la Commission Vangu, Kinshasa, 1995, p.17.

⁵⁷«Est pris qui croyait prendre. Le tornutruant Nyamwisi Muvungi abattu dans son fief», *La Conscience*, n°43, 31 janvier 1993, p.4.

⁵⁸The historian Mashaury Kule Tambite calls Yira both Nande and Kondjo, arguing that the two last names were colonial creations in contrast with the first one that has its roots in the cosmological mythology, «Qui sont les Yira:Nande ou Kondjo?», *Zaire-Afrique*, n°168, octobre 1982, p. 506.

⁵⁹PERROT, S., «Entrepreneurs de l'insécurité. La face de l'armée ougandaise», *Politique africaine*, n°75, octobre 1975, pp. 60-90.

⁶⁰OBSERVATOIRE GOUVERNANCE-TRANSPARENCE/OGT, Le Rwanda plante le décor d'une nouvelle guerre d'agression à l'Est de la RDC, Kinshasa, septembre 2003.

⁶¹He is the President of the RCD-Goma and Vice-President of the DRC in charge of the political commission, security and demobilisation.

⁶²President of the Jambo Safari society, funded by a powerful Rwandan bank (Banque de Commerce, de Développement et de l'Industrie, BCDI), and brother of Alexis Makabuza, President of the TPD (Tous pour la Paix et le Développement) in Goma, he is the representative of the RPF's Congo Desk within the RCD-Goma (OGT, *op. cit.*, p.25).

⁶³A Burundian refugee close to former President Bagaza and one of the big funders of the RPF's war, he came to settle in Goma where he is running the Super-Match, a society that produces and sells cigarettes. In the wave of the AFDL/RCD, he owned from the British-American Tobacco company (BAT) the tobacco plantation of Ahuzi (OGT, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24).

⁶⁴Like his elder brother (the late Enoch Nyamwisi Muvungi), he is involved in the war in Ituri and Northern Kivu and may have ties with Kigali, Kampala, and Kinshasa at the same time. KASEREKA, M.V.R., *Dynamiques locales et géopolitique régionale des pays de Grands Lacs. Cas du territoire contrôlé par le RCD-ML*. Thèse de Maîtrise, Instituut voor Ontwikkelingsbeleid en -BEHEER-Universiteit Antwerpen (IOB-UA), Octobre 2004, pp. 7, 11, 16-17, 30-33, 36-38

⁶⁵In 2002, Thomas Lubanga signed an agreement with the RCD-Goma and openly worked with Kigali.

Congo/MLC (Jean-Pierre Bemba)⁶⁶ to make sure that the government in Kinshasa does not regain control over the East of the country. Many leaders from such transborder-communities as the Nande/Kondjo, Hutu/Kiga, Tutsi/Hima/Hema, Shi/Havu, Kakwa⁶⁷, Logo, Lughara and Alur are, to a considerable degree, the auxiliaries of the three competing governments in Kampala, Kigali and Kinshasa.

As regards the local balance of power, it is noticeable that the all-front players belong to three main groups: the Nande, Tutsi, and Hema. In general, the Nande form closed communities and show great solidarity⁶⁸, as do the Tutsi. They are involved in long-trade business, like the Tutsi and Hema, but they are superseded by the latter two in terms of cattle farming. Nevertheless, the Nande did gradually get involved in the cattle industry in the course of the 1980s and 1990s, benefiting greatly from the chaos in Masisi caused by a seemingly unending war that has dragged on since March 1993. All these factors made them competitors and rivals in the economic and political arenas, and also set them against other neighbouring communities.

Inter-ethnic competition in the economic and political realms could also be felt within the churches, particularly the Catholic Church, which is powerful at all levels of Zairian society and in the international arena. The appointment of bishops by Rome seems to have followed ethnic lines. This is the reason why, particularly between 1990 and 2000, the Nande and Tutsi/Hema had up to four bishops running the dioceses in Kivu and the Eastern Provinces at the same time⁶⁹:

- Nande: Butembo-Beni in Northern Kivu (from 1966 to the present)⁷⁰, Kisangani in Eastern Province (1967-1988)⁷¹, Bukavu in Southern Kivu (1997 to the present)⁷², Isiro-Niagara (1995-2001)⁷³ and Wamba (1990 to the present)⁷⁴ in the Eastern province;
- Hema: Uvira in Southern Kivu (1982-1985)⁷⁵, Goma in Northern Kivu (1974 to the present)⁷⁶, Bunia (1985-2002)⁷⁷ and Buta (1995 to the present)⁷⁸ in the Eastern province
- Tutsi munyamulenge: Uvira in Southern Kivu (1985-2002)⁷⁹.

No other community -with the exception of the Bashi, who once had three bishops (Bukavu⁸⁰, Kasongo⁸¹ and Kisangani/Mahagi-Nioka⁸²) - has ever had such a powerful influence within the catholic hierarchy. Four ethnic groups (Nande, Tutsi, Hema and Shi) have remained key

⁶⁶NATIONS-UNIES, Rapports des groupes d'experts sur l'exploitation illégale des ressources naturelles et autres richesses de la République Démocratique du Congo, New York, 2000-2003.

⁶⁷The former President of Uganda, Idi Amin Dada (1972-1976) belongs to this group. So too do Museveni's tough opponents in both Uganda and the DRC.

⁶⁸STREIFELLER, S., «State substitution and Market Liberalization in Northern Kivu, Zaïre», *Sociologia Ruralis*, Vol. 34, n°1994; «Long-trade smuggling and the new commercial class: the Nande of North Kivu», in MACGAFFEY, J., *op. cit.*, pp. 149-151.

⁶⁹For more information, see <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org>.

⁷⁰Emmanuel Kataliko (1966-1998) and Melchisédech Sikuli (1998-.....).

⁷¹Augustin Fataki Alueke was ordained on 28 January 1968 and retired on 1 September 1988

⁷²Emmanuel Kataliko (1998- October 4, 2000, date of his death) and Charles Kambale Mbogha (2001-...).

⁷³Charles Kambale (Isiro-Niagara (6 December 1995-13 March 2001)..

⁷⁴Charles Kambale Mbogha (1990-1995) and Janvier Kataka Luvete (1996-...).

⁷⁵Léonard Dhejju (1982-1985). He was moved to Bunia.

⁷⁶Faustin Ngabu (1973-.....)

⁷⁷Léonard Dhejju (1985-2002). He was forced by Rome to resign from this position in 2002 because of his involvement in the Hema-Lendu conflict.

⁷⁸Joseph Banga Bane (15 December 1995-...).

⁷⁹Jérôme Gapangwa Nteziryayo (20 October 1985-10 June 2000). He was forced by Rome to resign because of his active role in the Banyamulenge Rebellion and replaced by Father Jean-Pierre Tafunga from Shaba (2001-....).

⁸⁰Mulindwa Mutabesha (18 December 1965-15 September 1993: he was forced to resign for a variety of reasons we shall not discuss here) and (Christophe Munzihirwa (1993- 29 October 1996: he was killed during the Rwanda-led war).

⁸¹Thimotée Pirigisha Mukombe (1967-1991) and Christophe Munzihirwa (1991-1993).

⁸²Alphonse-Marie Runiga Musanganya was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Kisangani on 3 May 1979 and Bishop of Mahagi-Nioka on 4 September 1980. He retired on 16 October 2001 because of age.

players, both at the Episcopal conferences of Kivu and in the Eastern Provinces, and within the Episcopal conference of Zaïre. The opposition of the Hema to the appointment of Bishop Janvier Kataka as Administrator of Bunia Diocese and possible successor to Léonard Dhejju, at the climax of Mbusa Nyamwisi-John Tibasima/Thomas Lubanga conflict on 12 April 2002⁸³, was another case in point. Ethnicity also became the determining factor in the selection of candidates for priesthood and appointments to key positions within individual dioceses⁸⁴. The situation was practically identical in other churches, including the Eglise du Christ of Zaïre and the ECZ (Communauté des Eglises Pentécôtistes au Zaïre or CEPZA, Communauté des Eglises Baptistes au Zaïre or CEBK, Communauté des Eglises Baptistes au Zaïre Est or CEBZE, Communauté des Eglises du Christ ou Chrétienne en Afrique ou Communauté Evangélique au Centre de l'Afrique or CECA), and the Adventist Church under the leadership of Pastor Ruterahagusha. Even such religious congregations as The Jesuits Company, the White Fathers and the Marist Brothers, who, for a long time, belonged to a single large province that encompassed Rwanda, Burundi and Congo and the Murhesa (Kabare, Southern Kivu) and Mokotos (Masisi, Northern Kivu) monasteries, were not entirely void of ethnic considerations in matters of recruitment and promotion.

3. The Pre-1999 War in Kivu and Ituri: An Overview

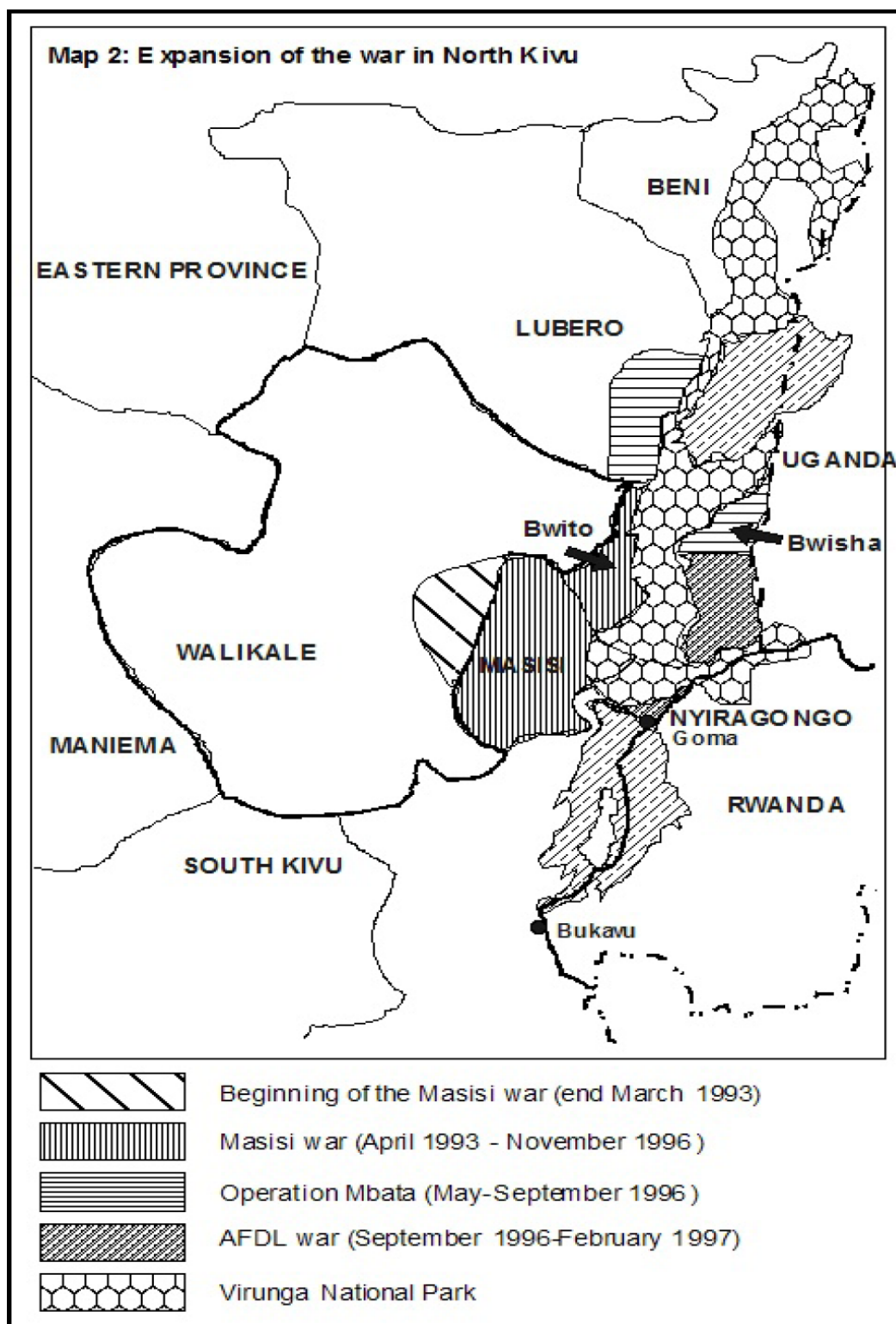
In this section, we try to determine the extent to which local dynamics shaped the war in Kivu and Ituri before 1999, marking the beginning of profound changes in the political landscape of Eastern Congo. We also consider the cause and effect relationships of events as they unfolded.

3.1. The Case of Kivu

The war in Kivu erupted immediately after the termination of the National Conference's activities, a period marked by a political power vacuum in Kinshasa, as Mobutu disclaimed any responsibility in national affairs. His attitude was prompted by the NC's decision to grant substantial powers to the Prime Minister and by the emergence of two competing governments, one led by Tshisekedi (the NC-elected Prime Minister), the other by Birindwa (Mobutu-appointed Prime Minister). With the two governments disputing one another's legitimacy, the country lacked any form of efficient administration. Between December 1992, when the NC concluded its work, and January 1999, the war evolved as follows: conflict in Masisi and Bwito/Rutshuru from March 1993 to May 1996; spread to Bwisha/Rutshuru and the South of Lubero territory (Kayna and Kanyabayonga); further spread to the entire Kivu and all of Eastern DRC with the AFDL and RCD war (**map 2**).

⁸³UNITED NATIONS, *Situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. New York, 26 September 2002, section 57, p.17

⁸⁴For the specific case of Goma, read BUCYALIMWE, M., «La société civile du Kivu: une dynamique en panne?», *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Annuaire 1998-1999* (sous la direction de Stefaan Marysse et Filip Reyntjens). Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999, tableau 3, p.271.



3.1.1. The Masisi War and Failed Mediation (March 1993-July 1994)

The war flared up in the Walikale territory in March 1993. After two weeks, fighting in Walikale ended, but it shifted to the Masisi and Bwito/Rutshuru territories. Referred to as the «*Masisi war*», the conflict was much more complex than is often assumed. Initially, it was the result of conflicting political and ethnic interests. We associate these interests with four kinds of logic: the logic of power and the question of political survival, the logic of exclusion and the issue of citizenship, the logic of number and the electoral issue, the transnational logic and the issue of

local and national power. In the end, the transnational logic prevailed, given that the actors who were involved in both the Masisi war and the RPF regional war are today's strongmen in the political landscape of both Kigali (Rwanda) and Goma in Northern Kivu province⁸⁵.

Peace campaigns were organised by the central government in Kinshasa and the provincial authorities in Goma between July 1993 and July 1994. But these failed, for a variety of reasons, including a political and ethnic polarization, the politicisation of these campaigns, and the lack of political will to find a lasting solution to the conflicts. However, external factors also compromised reconciliation efforts. First, the RPF cast its shadow over the conflict from the beginning. Then there was the influx in Kivu of Hutu refugees from Burundi and Rwanda following the assassination of the Hutu President-Elect of Burundi, Melchior Ndadaye, on 21 October 1993 and after the RPF's victory in Rwanda in July 2004 and the subsequent transfer of the Burundian and Rwandan domestic wars between Hutu and Tutsi. Further contributing factors included the new Rwanda being granted seemingly endless credit by the international community in the wake of genocide, which allowed the RPF/RPA to act freely in the region, and the growing interest of multinational corporations in controlling the natural resources of the DRC.

3.1.2. The Hutu Refugee Issue and the Internationalization of the War (July 1994 onwards)

With the influx of Hutu refugees, what had been a local conflict quickly became a nationwide war: the fate of the Mobutu regime was tied to that of the Hutu refugees, who constituted an obstacle to the strengthening of the Tutsi-dominated regime in Rwanda and its role as a pro-US key player. These two goals were to be achieved through the annihilation of the Hutu refugees and the removal of Mobutu from power. The reasoning was simple: it was thought that, with the presence of two armies on Congolese soil (i.e. the former Rwandan Armed Forces that had moved into the DRC and Congolese Armed Forces themselves), Mobutu stood to benefit from the Rwandan crisis, as he would be able to use these troops in case of war with Museveni's Uganda and Kagame's Rwanda. The elimination of the two armies became a priority for the international community, which had adopted Rwanda's policy of preventing genocide in the DRC. The internationalisation of the war in Kivu became a reality when Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and their allies, with the backing of the international community, intervened directly in Congo's politics and internal affairs. Officially, their actions were undertaken within the framework of a three-party commission, comprising of Zaire, Rwanda and the UNCHR. In reality, a plethora of humanitarian organizations were involved. All these actors failed in their tasks, primarily because the Tutsi leaders and their supporters rejected the idea of the Hutu refugees returning to Rwanda. Rwanda's new strong man, Paul Kagame, opted for a strategy of internal and external repression that would last for more than five years. Many Hutu refugees who returned to Rwanda, be it freely or forcibly, were killed. The late Archbishop of Bukavu, Christophe Munzihirwa Mwene Ngabo, tried to intervene, requesting that conditions for the return of refugees be improved. In a letter sent to the US Ambassador in Kinshasa on the eve of the AFDL war, he argued as follows: «*Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, les conditions de vie dans les camps deviennent de plus en plus dures: un certain nombre de réfugiés a été supprimé de la liste des ayants droit, la quantité de nourriture a diminué, les activités commerciales sont interdites, et dans les camps du Sud-Kivu, les écoles sont fermées...A notre point de vue, les grandes puissances entérinent une situation de fait: elles appuient la minorité au pouvoir au Rwanda, elles désirent voir les réfugiés s'intégrer au Zaïre. De plus, l'aide accordée par certains Etats occidentaux, dont les Etats-Unis, incite Kigali à durcir sa position vis-à-vis des réfugiés. Décisions occidentales qui hypothèquent toute solution de paix et qui auront des conséquences désastreuses pour les populations*»⁸⁶. However, the policy that Paul Kagame pursued towards the DRC after assuming power in July 1994 went far beyond revenge for

⁸⁵ BUCYALIMWE, M., «Le Nord-Kivu au coeur de la crise congolaise», *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Annuaire 2001-2002* (sous la direction de Filip Reyntjens et stfaan Marysse), Paris, L'Harmattan, 2002, pp. 165-169, 178-182.

⁸⁶ MUNZIHIRWA, M.N.C., Lettre à Monsieur l'Ambassadeur des Etats-Unis d'Amérique à Kinshasa. Concerne: évolution inquiétante de la situation au Sud-Kivu. Bukavu, le 3 juin 1996.

the 1994 genocide and the obstruction of the Hutu refugees' return to Rwanda. He was also intent on keeping most of the RPF's combatants⁸⁷ out of Rwanda in order to secure his own power and to cover up the plundering of the DRC's natural resources. Two years later, in September-October 1996, all these intertwined stakes culminated in a joint-assault on the DRC by the armies of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, in a bid to destroy the Hutu refugee camps and eliminate the refugees, and also to remove Mobutu from power.

The objectives of the war, conducted under the AFDL's umbrella and known as the Tutsi or First Banyamulenge Rebellion, were achieved. Furthermore, Southern Kivu and Northern Kivu provinces were occupied by Rwanda. This marked the end of the transitional institutions established by the NC, as Rwanda began to dictate the course of events in the DRC. The new target of Rwanda's recriminations and its policy in the DRC was Laurent-Désiré Kabila. An ally of both Paul Kagame and Yoweri Museveni Kaguta and spearhead of the AFDL war, he had succeeded in imposing himself as the successor to Mobutu, much to the disappointment of Kagame and Museveni, who would have preferred a Tutsi or a more dependable man to assume power in Kinshasa. A new wave of war, known as the «*guerre de rectification*», was launched in August 1998 by the so-called *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* or RCD. The purpose was to remove Laurent-Désiré Kabila from power. In other words, the RCD or the Tutsi or *Second* Banyamulenge Rebellion was intended to weaken the government in Kinshasa and to strengthen the positions of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi in the DRC, a process that has continued until today.

In addition, the conflict between Rwanda and Uganda resurfaced as competition over the control of Congo's natural resources intensified. The interests of Kagame and his followers conflicted with those of Museveni, as the RPF leadership tried to acquire autonomy from its godfather, Uganda's President Museveni. The split in January 1999 of the RCD into two factions, i.e. pro-Kigali RC-Goma and pro-kampala RCD-Kisangani, and the division of the Eastern Congo into two sovereignties, a Rwanda-controlled zone and a Uganda-controlled zone⁸⁸, are just two examples of Ugandan-Rwandan hegemonic rivalry. In short, the Hutu-Rwandan issue led Kivu and the entire country into a trap, so that it became hostage to Rwandan domestic problems.

3.2. The Case of Ituri

The violence that erupted in Ituri in 1992, after fighting in Shaba (Katanga) and before the Masisi war, is generally interpreted within the context of the Hema-Lendu conflict. This simultaneity of events in Eastern Province, Shaba and Northern Kivu, at a crossroad in Congolese political history (1992-1993), was not entirely coincidental. That is to say, it would appear to bear the hallmarks of Mobutu and/or his opponents. In a sense, the attempt to mediate by the provincial authorities in Ituri (and around Eastern Province by Governor Lombeya Bosongo Likund'Elio) was successful, as the tension was eased somewhat⁸⁹. However, the situation changed in June 1999, with the creation of Kibali-Ituri province and the appointment of a Hema as Governor by a Ugandan General, James Kazini, in an effort to transform Hema economic strength into political power⁹⁰. This fact is, for that matter, recognised by the Hema cultural association, ENTE, which praised the goodwill of the central government in trying to curb any violence that occurred between 1990 and 1999⁹¹.

⁸⁷Some of them were Ugandan demobilized soldiers that Museveni had sent into the war in Rwanda in 1990. Kagame followed his example by redeploying them alongside the Rwandan soldiers into the war in the DRC in 1996.

⁸⁸RUSAMIRA, E., «La dynamique des conflits ethniques au Nord-Kivu: une réflexion prospective», *Afrique contemporaine*, Automne 2003, p. 159.

⁸⁹GROUPE LOTUS, *Conflit ethnique dans le district de l'Ituri: Historique, repères, enjeux et pistes de solutions*. Kisangani, le 30 mars 2003, pp. 11-12.

⁹⁰RCD-KISANGANI, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁹¹ENTE, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

3.2.1. The 1992 Hema-Lendu Clashes and a Move to Rearm (December 1992-May 1997)

The clashes between the Lendu and Hema erupted just a few days after the NC concluded its works in December 2002, three months before the outbreak of the Masisi war. The deeper causes were numerous: the usual rivalries and conflicts between herders and (cattle) farmers in the context of rural development policy (as in many other parts of Africa), the ambiguities of the written land law (1966 and 1973), and wrongdoing in their implementation. As for the «*casus belli*» or the immediate cause, the Lendu pointed the finger of blame at their Hema rivals, the territorial administrator of Irumu, and the local military authorities: «*L'assassinat de six sujets Lendu arrêtés et détenus en la prison de Bogoro dans la collectivité secteur des Bahema-Sud le 13 décembre 1992 était le détonateur du conflit sanglant interethnique entre les Hema et Lendu du territoire d'Irumu. Le chef Kahwa et quelques notables Hema avaient réquisitionné, moyennant la corruption, le 412ème Bataillon Commando du Mont-Hawa et la Gendarmerie de Bunia pour massacrer les sujets civils Lendu en colère*»⁹². So as far as the Lendu were concerned, they were driven to war with the Hema out of self-defence. The Hema denied this allegation and in turn accused the Lendu of having provoked the violence. Irrespective of who was to blame for the conflict or who had fuelled it, the clashes that occurred in late 1992 were the prelude to a long inter-ethnic war. Initially, this conflict set the Lendu against the Hema, as the two parties accused each other of organising military training and self-armament for further confrontations. The Lendu also claimed that Hema politicians and intellectuals were siding with Museveni, which the Hema also denied. Eventually, though, the Ituri conflict also set the Hema and Lendu against other communities. Unlike in Southern Kivu and Maniema, which remained peaceful, tension in Ituri did not die away, for various reasons: the deep polarization between the two groups, the existence of deep-rooted historical antecedents, the increasing involvement of the two groups in a military build up and, of course, the effects of the deteriorating situation in Northern Kivu in early 1993.

In addition, the shadow of the Hutu refugee crisis loomed darkly over the already tense situation in Ituri, until the eruption of the AFDL war. Its subsequent internationalisation enhanced and accelerated the militarization of Ituri, while the stakes evolved from intermittent ethnic rivalries to regional competition for control over local economic resources.

3.2.2. Ituri Under AFDL Rule (May 1997-August 1998)

At this stage of the post-Mobutu order, the Hema-Lendu conflict was minor compared to the war targeted against the Hutu (Congolese, Burundian and Rwandan refugees) and Mobutu's supporters, as well as the growing rivalry between the Katangans and the Tutsi on the one hand, and between President Laurent-Désiré Kabila and non-Tutsi leaders from Kivu who spearheaded the fall of Mobutu on the other. However, the Hema seemed to be better represented than the Lendu in the central government of Laurent-Désiré Kabila and in the AFDL's local administration in Kisangani and Ituri. The Hema position was reinforced by such key leaders as Pilo Kamaragi, John Tibasima, Kawa Mandro and Adèle Lotsovo with support from the Savo family and catholic bishop Léonard Dhejju. With regard to the growing Kabila-Kagame/Museveni antagonism, some Hema supported the Kagame-Museveni tandem, while a small number sided with Laurent-Désiré Kabila. This became increasingly obvious during the RCD-war: the first group moved to Goma, while the second remained in the capital Kinshasa. Those who moved to Goma became directly involved in Kivu's internal problems for at least four to five months (August 1998-January 1999).

3.2.3. Ituri Under RCD Rule (August 1998-June 1999)

Towards the end of 1998, the composition of the RCD team (Political Council, Executive Committee, administration and army) appeared to have a broader ethnic and national base. However, this multi-ethnic composition did hide one reality: the Tutsi controlled every section, because they either held the Presidency or the Deputy Presidency, and lower-ranking strategic

⁹²MEDIAS POUR LA PAIX, *op. cit.*, p.13.

positions. The Tutsi hegemony increasingly caused frustration among the Congolese. This and Uganda's desire to step out of Rwanda's shadow in its operations in the DRC partly explains why the RCD split. In fact, when Kigali and Kampala decided to break ties and operate separately, the Congolese in the RCD followed their "masters", joining the pro-Kigali RCD-Goma or the pro-Kampala RCD/Kisangani (RCD/K). The other side of the coin is that, after the failure of the assault by the NRA/RPA/RCD on Kinshasa in August 1998, conflicting perceptions of the Congolese war and how to handle it began to take shape between the two allies, Rwanda and Uganda⁹³. Kagame favoured a military solution and minimised the support of the Congolese people. On one occasion, he stated the following in public: «*We are not in Congo because we are loved by the Congolese*». Museveni, on the other hand, preferred an approach that would rather help him earn the popular support of the Congolese peoples. In other words, he wanted a rebel movement without Rwandan connotations. Thus, he sponsored the creation of the Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC), which would become a rival of the different factions of the RCD/K in the regions of Ituri, Beni, and Lubero. Kagame and the leadership of the RPF began to achieve autonomy vis-à-vis their master and mentor, Museveni. It was a form of ingratitude that the latter did not take lightly. The result of the RPF's move was the development of conflicting hegemonic policies by Uganda and Rwanda, and the weakening of the cohesion that existed within the anti-Laurent-Désiré Kabila camp.

Following the divorce of Kigali and Kampala in January 1999⁹⁴, the pro-Ugandan faction of the RCD established its headquarters in Kisangani, the capital of the Eastern province; hence it was called the RCD/K, to distinguish it from the pro-Rwanda faction, the RCD-Goma. Kisangani became the rival of Goma, as it was of Bukavu. The RCD/K was organised along the lines of its model, the RCD-Goma. The differences between the two rival fractions of the rebellion lay elsewhere. In the RCD-Goma in Kivu, the Tutsi controlled everything, from the leadership to the grassroots level. By contrast, in the Eastern Province, such outsiders to the region as Wamba-Dia-Wamba and Jacques Depelchin not only headed the movement, but also inherited local ethnic and political conflicts, like the Hema-Lendu opposition in Ituri, about which they lacked knowledge or background. Given that they unexpectedly had to play the role of arbiter in these feuds, and at the same time face their rivals in the RCD-Goma leadership, while also working for their own repositioning in the Eastern province and in the country, both leaders of the RCD/K had a smaller chance of succeeding than their lieutenants, who were natives and strategic collaborators of Museveni, for different reasons. Wamba-Dia-Wamba, the former President of the Political Council of the RCD in Goma, is a native from the Lower Congo in the west, near the Atlantic coast, while Jacques Depelchin originates from Uvira in Southern Kivu, a stronghold of the Tutsi Banyamulenge. Given their common background at a Marxist-inspired school in Dar-Es-Salaam, they were more ideologically linked to Museveni than any other leader of the RCD/K. Both men were ill-seated in a province where ethnicity was a key element for gaining support at grassroots level. Moreover, ethnically they were also foreign to Museveni (although Jacques Depelchin is a Tutsi from his mother's side), who is close to the Hema and was increasingly relying on local leaders, mainly Hema and Nande on the Congolese side, Hima and Kondjo (Nande) on the Ugandan side⁹⁵. Events turned against Wamba-Dia-Wamba and Jacques Depelchin and in favour of the local warlords, i.e. their former aides Mbusa Nyamwisi (leading member of the Ligue Intercommunautaire pour la Reconstruction du Nord-Kivu or LICOR and former President of the General Assembly of the RCD in Goma) and John Tibasima Mbogemu. The former pursued the same ethnic politics as his elder brother Enoch Nyamwisi Mbusa, consisting mainly in enhancing Nande political and economic power in Kivu and Ituri by simultaneously working with Kampala,

⁹³These conflicting perceptions persisted until the end of November 2004, «Troupes rwandaïses en RDC: l'Ouganda met en avant les accords existants», *Agence France Presse*, Kampala, le 30 novembre 2004.

⁹⁴June 1999 coincided with the first fights between the Rwandan and Ugandan troops in Kisangani (*APA*, n°883, May 15, 2003, p. 8) and the transfer of the RCD-Kisangani headquarter to Bunia. From then on, Bunia in Eastern Province was for Uganda what Goma in Kivu had been for Rwanda since November 1996.

⁹⁵It would be interesting to establish what kind of relationship he has with the Kiga in an anti-Hutu fight in the region.

Kinshasa and Kigali⁹⁶. The latter was linked to both the ethnic setting and the mining business in Ituri, as he used to hold an important position with the Kilo-Moto mining society. In fact, he is to Ituri what Alexis Tambwe of the SOMINKI cartel is to Maniema and Southern Kivu. Like the latter, he has connections with white and multinational networks. His interests go far beyond the circle of his own Hema community.

As long as the movement's headquarters was in Kisangani, the in-fighting within its leadership would not be visible and the growing competition between Uganda and Rwanda to control the city would inhibit them. The fight between the two camps in Kisangani led to the defeat of Uganda. In the aftermath of this defeat, the RCD/Kisangani moved its headquarters to Bunia, where Wamba-Dia-Wamba and Jacques Depelchin were thrown directly into the ethnic turmoil of Ituri, at a time when the Lendu-Hema conflict was just resumed: *«En effet, un conflit qui était considéré comme un petit problème local (avril-mai 1999) entre deux concessionnaires, l'un Hema et l'autre Alur, et leurs voisins Lendu, a connu en quelques jours une évolution fulgurante vers une guerre plus structurée et mieux organisée sur le terrain. C'est ainsi qu'il a été étonnant de voir la partie Lendu au conflit apparaître, dès avril 1999, presque partout dans la collectivité des Walendu-Pitsi, bien armés (en armes blanches en bonne quantité). Ce qui indiquait que ces armes avaient été fabriquées bien avant le déclenchement du conflit. Autrement dit, il y a eu un temps de préparation»*⁹⁷. Moreover, they became more vulnerable when facing such UPDF officers as General James Kazini, a long-time commander of the Ugandan operations in the DRC. The latter were the real holders of power and distributors of privileges in the city and the district of Ituri, where the Hema hegemony was being tightened by Kazini, Adèle Lotsovo Mugisa, John Tibasima and Thomas Lubanga, much to the dissatisfaction of their long-standing rivals, mainly Lendu, Lughara, Alur, and Nande.

4. The Kivu-Ituri War Linkage and Current Trends

The end of a period of single-party rule since 1967 by the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution or MPR and the ensuing return to a multi-party system in Congo on 20 April 1990 was the opening of Pandora's box. This transition, which came as a result of new internal, regional and international stakes in the emerging post-cold order, brought to the fore old cleavages and conflicts that had remained virtually unnoticed under Mobutu's rule: ethnic, political, religious and regional rivalries, especially in the provinces of Katanga (South-East), Kivu (East) and Ituri (North-East)⁹⁸. The complacency of the central and provincial governments in dealing with these serious matters was seen as a sign of complicity. Despite the one-year forum, known as the National Conference or NC (July 1991-December 1992), and the subsequent establishment of transitional institutions (i.e. NC institutions as opposed to those set up on 30 June 2003), matters deteriorated, not only in the aforementioned provinces, but also in the capital Kinshasa. The power struggle that unfolded at the summit of the Congolese state between, on the one hand, Mobutu, the members of the *«Mouvance Présidentielle»* and his allies within the *«partis alimentaires»*, and, on the other, the members of the Opposition⁹⁹, and the conflict between the old politicians of the 1960s and 70s and the new generation of leaders, gave rise to a complex crisis. The NC institutions reached a deadlock. The so-called 'third way', imposed by the international community and identified with one man, Kengo wa Dondo, did not pay off either, at least not from the Congolese point of view. It was his government that managed the Rwandan and Burundian Hutu crises and controversially launched a counteroffensive against the invasion of 1996-1997 by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi¹⁰⁰. Drawing

⁹⁶KASEREKA, M.V.R., *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

⁹⁷ENTE, *op. cit.*

⁹⁸«Conflit Hema-Lendu: Affrontements sanglants de décembre 1992», MEDIAS POUR LA PAIX, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁹⁹The political blindness of Mobutu's so-called opponents put themselves into Rwanda and Uganda's game and gave a boost to the invasion and occupation of Congo, contributing willingly or unwillingly to the process of the de facto partition of the country.

¹⁰⁰The most vocal critic was Mobutu's former Special Security Advisor, Honoré Ngbanda, «Interview conducted with him and recorded by Erik Nyindu of Les Amis de Wetchi asbl in Brussels», *Casette Le*

strong support from Museveni's Uganda, some officials in the Kinshasa government as well as opponents of Habyarimana in Kigali and Mobutu in Zaire, i.e. the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), found fertile ground in Goma, the big cattle ranches of Northern Kivu, and the Masisi war (March 1993) for waging their own regional war from 1 October 1990. In sum, the RPF's regional war and the local dynamics of the region have steered evolutions in a different direction in late 1990, both in Kivu and in Ituri.

It should also be remembered that, in the two years following Museveni's seizure of power in Uganda, between 1987 and 1989, an anti-Mobutu rebellion took place in the mountains of Ruwenzori, in Beni territory in Northern Kivu province, at the same time as the RPF came into play. In other words, two connected armed movements, against Mobutu in Congo/Zaire and Habyarimana in Rwanda, emerged simultaneously and involved many actors whose interests were not necessarily convergent: Museveni, the RPF leadership, Kisase Ngandu and Laurent-Désiré Kabila. The real common interest was the fight against Mobutu and Habyarimana, who were presented as the last dictators in the region. Even the leaders of the region's civil society joined the anti-Mobutu and Habyarimana rally in the name of democracy and human rights. Later, some members of civil society would be obliged to back Rwanda and Uganda as they invaded and occupied parts of the DRC. However, the Ruwenzori mountain range and Ituri were economically very interesting to Museveni. He therefore deployed troops there in the late 1980s, officially siding with Mobutu's opponents, known as the «*kasindiens*», and/or to fight the NALU, which was supported by President Mobutu through Nyamwisi Muvungi¹⁰¹. These troops are still present on the ground today, with the approval of the international community (see *infra*). In order to prevent this rebellion from taking shape, Mobutu sent in his own troops and he rallied some local politicians, in particular Nyamwisi Muvungi, a Nande from Beni who had ties with the Bakondjo in Uganda. He was also the President of the DCF/N (Démocratie Chrétienne/aile Nyamwisi). Thus, Museveni, certain officers of Mobutu's army and the members of the DCF/N became the link between events in Kivu and Ituri in the early 1990s. The chaos in the two regions deepened after the NC concluded its activities: first there were the clashes between Lendu and Hema in December 1992, followed by the Masisi war in March 1993. Both conflicts occurred after the pogroms of the «*Kasaiens*» in Shaba (Katanga). However, the situation deteriorated further still in Northern Kivu, while in Ituri the situation was slowly evolving from a violent confrontation to relative calm. This contrast persisted until the split in January 1999 of the RCD into two factions: the RCD-Goma and the RCD/K. Until that time, there had been three common denominators: the historical precedents, the regional economic and political dimension that had always characterized events in both cases, and their manipulation by local and external actors (see also under subheadings 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4).

The real connection between events in Kivu and Ituri began to emerge, as the context widened to the Hutu refugee crisis in Northern and Southern Kivu provinces. In December 1994, Museveni, with the complicity of the provincial government (Christophe Moto Mupenda) and the commander of the former Zairian Armed Forces (Tembele) in Goma, and probably with the full knowledge of the central government in Kinshasa (Kengo), transferred some rebels from Beni (the «*kasindiens*») to the borders of Lake Kivu, on the Bweremana-Sake axis in Masisi, beyond the Hutu refugee camps¹⁰². The final factor to establish a firm link between events in Kivu and Ituri was the spread of the Masisi war to all of Kivu and the Eastern DRC following the «*Mbata Operation*» and the AFDL war between May 1996 and May 1997. However, it was not until after the signing of the Lusaka Peace Accord on 10 July 1999 that Ituri descended into the same hell as Kivu. It increasingly became the centre of a new wave of ruthless violence and war, in which the battlefield extended far south into the territories of Beni and Lubero (Northern Kivu), which were already the targets of Rwandan expansionism from its positions in Rutshuru and Kanyabayonga. Kivu and Ituri would be the seats of the DRC war between June 1999 and June 2003, a period during which all the belligerents combined talking and fighting.

The Hema-Lendu conflict that was resumed in Ituri in April and May 1999 escalated after the establishment of the RCD/K headquarters in Bunia, the creation of Kibali-Ituri province with

Dialogue n°9, avril 1999.

¹⁰¹KASEREKA; M.V.R., *op. cit.*, pp.22-23.

¹⁰²NZABARA, M. F.X., «La guerre dans la zone de Masisi», *Dialogue*, n°195, août-septembre 1996, p. 43

Bunia as its capital, and the appointment of Adèle Atsovo Mugisa, a Hema woman, as Governor by James Kazini. Whereas the conflict of April-May 1999 was limited to the chieftaincy of Walendu-Pitsi, the post-June 1999 war extended to other chieftaincies of the Ituri district, including Bahema North, Bahema South, Bahema Maguru, Walendu Tatsi, Mambisa and Ndo-Okebo. Furthermore, it set the Lendu against the Alur and/or Mambisa, and the Hema against the Nande. As Ugandan support to Mbusa Nyamwisi, John Tibasima and other emerging local warlords strengthened, the fragile power base of Wamba-Dia-Wamba and Jacques Depelchin gave way and their authority crumbled drastically. Their role became less important, as the momentum shifted back towards the local ethnic leaders. The goal of the belligerents shifted too: instead of directing their fight against Kinshasa, they battled it out for control of the city of Ituri and/or its hinterland, which was primarily a gold-mining area. In brief, they strove to gain space through ethnic cleansing. As we have mentioned before, a new element on the Ituri-Beni-Lubero scene was the rise of Jean-Pierre Bemba's MLC, sponsored by Kampala. With the MLC, Museveni intended to liaise the Eastern and the Equator provinces, and to take advantage of Mobutu's former soldiers, in an attempt to seize power in Kinshasa from the Equator. Kigali, meanwhile, was trying to do the same via the provinces of Kasai and Shaba. After Joseph Kabila's rise to power in Kinshasa, Rwanda extended its zone of control from Goma and Bukavu in Kivu to the area around Lubumbashi (Shaba) and Mbuji-Mayi (Eastern Kasai), where it still has troops. From these developments, the movements of Jean-Pierre Bemba and Mbusa Nyamwisi emerged as the most powerful actors in the area: the first was used at the national level, the second at the regional level and as a counterweight to other local warlords. At least, this was the case until the day Museveni began to set the two movements up against each other, in line with his usual policy of divide and rule. In other words, they sometimes worked as allies, sometimes as rivals. This rivalry allowed Nyamwisi and his Nande brothers to finally force Jean-Pierre Bemba to withdraw from Beni, Lubero and Ituri between December 2002 and February 2003¹⁰³.

Another important factor in the distribution of the political cards in Eastern Congo was the division of Northern Kivu into two parts: Lubero and Beni were excluded from the authority in Goma and integrated into the Ugandan sphere of influence. Rwanda maintained its control over the other four territories of Northern Kivu (Nyiragongo, Rutshuru, Masisi and Walikale) alongside Southern Kivu, Maniema, Northern Katanga provinces and a substantial part of Kasai. This shows the extent to which the RCD war consolidated the de facto partition of the country, and the positions of Uganda and Rwanda in the east. Nyamwisi, with the blessing of Museveni, joined his two home territories of Beni and Lubero into an autonomous province and appointed a Nande brother as Governor¹⁰⁴. So, as a result of the RCD-war, not only was the unity of the country broken down, but both the Eastern and Kivu provinces were also split into two governorships according to ethnic dominance (Tutsi around Goma, Nande around Beni and Hema around Bunia). With the Sun City accord of April 2002, Nyamwisi turned to Kinshasa in what was seen as a first step towards the reunification of the country, though without fully severing ties with Kampala. Through Nyamwisi, the central government of Kinshasa intervened in Ituri. Kagame undertook a northward military push, with assistance from the RCD-Goma and its twin organization, the TPD (Tous pour la Paix et le Développement)¹⁰⁵, in an attempt to link Goma and Bunia: up until today, Rwanda has been threatening Lubero and Beni, acting in Ituri through his new allies, including Thomas Lubanga, who signed an agreement with the RCD-Goma, and the RPA troops that Paul Kagame sent there. After heavy fighting on several occasions in 1999 and 2000, the RPA ousted the UPDF from the city of Kisangani, which remained a Rwanda-stronghold. However, Museveni helped some Tutsi Banyamulenge to join the MLC leadership. For example, Moustapha Mukiza (a former member of the RPA) was appointed Commander of the First Military Region of Bandundu

¹⁰³ KASEREKA, M.V.R., *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰⁴ The first was Colonel Kayisavera Mbake, who was replaced respectively by Nyonyi Bwanakahwa, Sikuli Uvasaka Makala and Eric Kamavu (kept his position until the beginning of the transitional government on June 30, 2004, KASEREKA, M.V.W.,R., *op. cit.*, pp. 48-50.

¹⁰⁵ Read, BUCYALIMWE, M., «La TPD à Goma (Nord-Kivu): Mythes et Réalités», *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Annuaire 2003-2004* (sous la direction de Filip Reyntjens et Stefaan Marysse). Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004, pp. 139-170

in Kikwit¹⁰⁶. It is also believed that Museveni backs Jérôme Kakwavu (Gakwavu), whose group is terrorising the border region of the DRC, Sudan and Uganda, and the Aru territory in the North-east of the DRC¹⁰⁷. So the presence of the allies of Kampala, Kigali and Kinshasa in an already volatile situation further complicated any attempt to pacify Ituri. The initiatives that were undertaken respectively by the leadership of the RCD/K (Wamba-Dia-Wamba and Jacques Depelchin), Governor Adèle Atsovo Mugisa, Jean-Pierre Bemba, the UN humanitarian organization OCHA and Uganda did not succeed. It was only within the framework of the Uganda-DRC accord of Luanda (September 2002) that, after months and months of hesitation, a commission for the pacification of Ituri finally took shape, at a time when the international community was beginning to act on the ground through the EU-led mission, known as «*Operation Artémis*», and the Ituri brigade/UNAMIC. Until the installation on 30 June 2003 of the transitional government, in implementation of the global and inclusive accord of Pretoria (17 December 2002), the actions of the two bodies were still limited. Their achievements were even compromised by the renewed fighting during that same period. Referring to this war, Colette Braeckman wrote: «*Cette région (de Beni-Butembo), qui fait tampon entre les territoires contrôlés par deux alliés du Rwanda (le RCD-Goma et à Bunia l'UPC), fait l'objet d'une offensive militaire majeure. Une attaque généralisée est menée contre les territoires de Beni et de Lubero par des soldats du RCD-Goma, parmi lesquels les populations locales déclarent avoir reconnu de nombreux soldats rwandais*»¹⁰⁸. Thus, Ituri and Northern Kivu became the epicentres of a regional war. The goal of the June 2003 military offensive of the RPA and RCD-Goma was to link up with the UPC before the installation of the post-Pretoria institutions of transition. This new Rwandan venture came to a halt at Butembo city, the seat of Lubero territory, after pressure from Washington. The US had applied similar pressure to stop joint operations from Bunia by the MLC-UPC. However, the deployment of heavy and sophisticated military equipment seems not to have stopped. Troops of the RPA are still present in these two territories and in the far north in Ituri, and Kigali, Kampala and Kinshasa are also continuing their involvement. This has not facilitated the reunification of the country, which in theory at least began on 30 June 2003.

In implementation of the Pretoria accord (17 December 2002), all the belligerent parties were represented in the institutions set up between June 30 and the end of August 2003. According to the most optimistic, the process of reunification is irreversible. Others, however, see many signs of unease. The allies of the two invading countries now have a foothold in Kinshasa, while the central government has never succeeded in re-establishing its authority in the former rebel-occupied territories. The East still remains a key obstacle to reunification, for different reasons. Rwanda and Uganda have continued to control their respective zones without the slightest condemnation on the part of the international community. The fight for the national leadership also flares up regularly. The role of both the UNAMIC and CIAT in Kinshasa and the East is observed with suspicion. In many instances, their actions are perceived by public opinion as strongly pro-RCD/Goma and pro-Rwanda, as is evident from the wide condemnation of how the presence of Rwandan and Ugandan troops has been handled, as well as the criticism of their unending involvement in destabilising the East. The mutiny and rebellion in Bukavu (February and May/June 2004) and the revolt of the local populations also come to mind¹⁰⁹. In Ituri, there is a growing confrontation between the militias and the UNAMIC brigade, a sure sign of misunderstanding regarding the nature and goal of the DDRRR programme¹¹⁰. The big issues in the reunification process, such as the army, the administrations and finances, remain unresolved.

Recent evolutions have not significantly changed the situations in respectively Kivu and

¹⁰⁶http://www.actucongo.com/congo_institutions.htm.

¹⁰⁷«Jérôme Kakwavu crée l'Etat Indépendant de l'Ituri et du Haut-Uélé», <http://www.societecivile.cd/node.php?id=1512>.

¹⁰⁸BRAECKMAN, C., «La guerre menace au Kivu», *Le Soir* du 12 juin 2003.

¹⁰⁹By remembering the role played by the Organisation of the United Nations in Congo in the destruction of the Lumumba-elected government in the early sixties, many Congolese are wondering, following the example of Virgil Hawkins, if history is not repeating itself, «History Repeating Itself. The DRC and the UN Security Council», *African security Review*, XII, n°4, 2°003, pp. 47-55.

¹¹⁰DDRRR stands for Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement.

Ituri, except that the whole Eastern DRC was divided into four different military regions (with headquarters in Kindu, Bukavu, Goma and Kisangani) whereas they are the targets of Uganda and Rwanda's hegemonic expansion¹¹¹ and that the role of UNAMIC and CIAT in the transition process has grown. Ultimately, the central government and the Congolese people are being held hostage to a process of reunification that grants much strength to the invading countries and actually enhances the partition of the country. Indeed, the country is still divided six months before the end of the transition, as are Kivu and Ituri, where former rebel groups continue to hang on, despite the appointment of transitional Governors and Deputy Governors in May 2004. The recent resumption of fighting in both Kivu and Ituri¹¹² is a serious threat to the institutions of transition and yet another move towards obstructing the elections scheduled for 2005.

5. Conclusion

In this study, we have dealt with the roots and nature of the Kivu-Ituri linkage prior to and during the ongoing war in Congo. The purpose was twofold: first, to show that, contrary to general perceptions and simplistic views, the wars in Kivu and Ituri are intertwined; they are the result of motives and stakes that go far beyond ethnic rivalry. Second, to explain why the troublesome situation in Eastern Congo has dragged on for so long, what are the true reasons for the international community's inadequate response to the Congo war, and where the ambiguities of the peace accords and their implementation lie, both in Kinshasa and in the East. In this process, we have tried to articulate local realities and a global Realpolitik by drawing insights from history and from current US policy in Africa's Great Lakes region. On the one hand, the remoteness of the centre of power in this patrimonial state, and colonial administrative and economic policy, put Kivu and Ituri at a disadvantage from the start. On the other, the Congolese warlords who signed the Lusaka (1999) and Pretoria (2002-2003) peace accords are the main protagonists in what is seen by many essentially as *«la guerre des parrains»*.

We have underscored the particularities and common trends of the war as it unfolded in Kivu and Ituri. Firstly, this conflict weakened the position of the authorities in Kinshasa and it allowed Congolese sovereignty to be violated by foreign powers¹¹³. The formula of 1+4 (a President and four Vice-Presidents) is not a good solution either. Secondly, it is misleading to reduce the war to a dichotomy of Tutsi versus Hutu, Hema versus Lendu or Bantu versus Nilotics/Hamits, Banyarwanda versus No Banyarwanda or Congolese versus Rwandans, given the underlying geopolitical and economic stakes. Thirdly, the short war in Ituri was covered more widely than the lengthy conflicts in Walikale, Masisi and Rutshuru, at the centre of Rwanda's war in the DRC¹¹⁴. Fourthly, despite their apparent conflicts, Museveni and Kagame share the same goal in Eastern Congo: they see it as a *Lebensraum* (*«espace vital»*). Thus, they sometimes act in complicity, sometimes in rivalry. In a documentary broadcast on RTBF (Radio Télévision Belge Francophone) in the wake of the 10th anniversary of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (*«L'Afrique en morceaux. La tragédie des Grands Lacs»*), Yoweri Museveni stated that he and Kagame are shareholders in the AFDL war. This explains the endless pretexts that the two countries put forward at each stage of the Lusaka/Pretoria peace process, in order that the chaos in Kivu and Ituri should not be resolved, even after the assassination of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila on 16 January 2001, and despite several bilateral agreements signed between the DRC and Rwanda on the one hand, and the DRC and Uganda on the other.

In short, Kivu and Ituri are caught between three sets of dynamics: that of the East or the

¹¹¹Dr Jacques Ebenga Lombilo, a Congolese specialist in strategic and military analyses, is one of the Congolese who question this division and advocate the need of putting the military structure and security of this part of the country under one command, *«Controverse autour (du découpage des régions militaires et) de la désignation des chefs militaires»*, *Le Potentiel* du 9 octobre 2003.

¹¹²CHATAIN, J., *«Le Kivu et l'Ituri à nouveau en proie aux affrontements»*, *L'Humanité* du 7 décembre 2004.

¹¹³REKACEWICZ, P., *«Rivalités dans les Grands Lacs»*, *Le Monde diplomatique*, mai 2000.

¹¹⁴The war that started in these three territories of Northern Kivu province in March 1993 was still devastating at the beginning of December 2004, MBALA, L.R., *«Masisi, Walikale, Rutshuru: la guerre fait rage. Le Conseil de sécurité se réunit ce Lundi à New York»*, *L'Observateur* du 6 décembre 2004.

Horn of Africa, where the issue of oil comes into play¹¹⁵, that of the South or the Cape, with South-Africa's aggressive offensive in central Africa¹¹⁶, and that of the North (Cairo), where the issue of water from the Nile/Congo is important (cf. the Nile Basin Initiative or NBI)¹¹⁷. Consequently, the regions are driven further away from Kinshasa's influence. This why Jean-François Bayart, in a revealing title, is quite right to call Africa «*Le manteau de la guerre*», and to assert that «*la guerre au Congo-Kinshasa est peut-être pour l'Afrique ce que la guerre de Trente Ans était pour l'Europe: une guerre de la formation des Etats et d'un système régional des Etats*»¹¹⁸.

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¹¹⁵DE GRAND RY, G., *op. cit.*; JOANNIDIS, M. «Le pétrole, enjeu international et désormais régional», *Mission des Fonctionnaires Internationaux (MFI)*, du 29 janvier 2003; POLE Institute, *Les sables mouvants: l'exploitation du pétrole dans le Graben et le conflit congolais*, Goma, 2003.

¹¹⁶KLEN, M., «Les nouvelles données de la sécurité en Afrique australe», *Afrique contemporaine*, n°184, octobre-décembre 1997, pp. 90-107; MARAIS, H., *Afrique du Sud: Conversion musclée à la realpolitik*, *Le Monde diplomatique*, mars 1999.

¹¹⁷ROCHE, P.A., «L'eau, enjeu vital pour l'Afrique», *Afrique contemporaine*, n°205, 2003, p. 45; NAGEL-BOUKADIA, N., «Nil, Congo: source de guerre. L'eau, enjeu géopolitique du XXIème siècle en Afrique», *Africa B*, n°1, juillet-août 2002; DELSOL, C., «Pays riverains du Nil. Vers la paix de l'eau», *NLA (Les Nouvelles d'Addis)*, 2001

¹¹⁸*Croissance*, n°423, février 1999, p.50.