

How to deal with the question of guilt?

Daughter of Decolonisation

NADIA NSAYI

Nadia Nsayi, born in Kinshasa, but raised by adoptive parents in a provincial town in Flanders after the death of her birth father, starts doing genealogical research into her roots while at university. With the help of the family tree sent to her by an uncle, she discovers that her family history is closely entwined with the history of Belgium and the Congo.

This is no one-sided account that lumps all Belgians together. A book that can potentially reach new generations. –

DE WERELD MORGEN

Her grandfather, Arthur Clerebaut, was a colonial in the Belgian Congo who fathered a son with a Congolese woman. As a 'métis' (the commonly used term for children from mixed marriages), Marcel was educated in Catholic boarding schools. Marcel (who later had a daughter, Nadia) worked himself up to 'évolué', the term used to refer to intellectuals who adopted the Western model and were therefore able to climb the social ladder. The terminology alone points to the racial oppression inherent in colonisation.

In addition to this (family) history, the author looks at her own development and growing awareness. She also writes about the Congolese diaspora in Brussels and calls for decolonisation via an official apology for the colonial injustices and for decolonisation as restoration. This compelling book interlinks a personal family story with the relationship between Belgium and Congo.



AUTHOR



Nadia Nsayi (b. 1984) is a political scientist who specialises in the Congo. After studying comparative and international politics at KU Leuven she worked as the Congo policy officer at Broederlijk Delen and Pax Christi Flanders. The focus of her work was peace and public participation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with special responsibility for the capital Kinshasa and the east of the country (the provinces of North and South Kivu). She also kept an eye on the situation in neighbouring countries Rwanda and Burundi. She now draws on what she learned in those roles as image curator at the Museum aan de Stroom (MAS) in Antwerp.

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