

The fate of one of the world's most devastated countries

# Congo

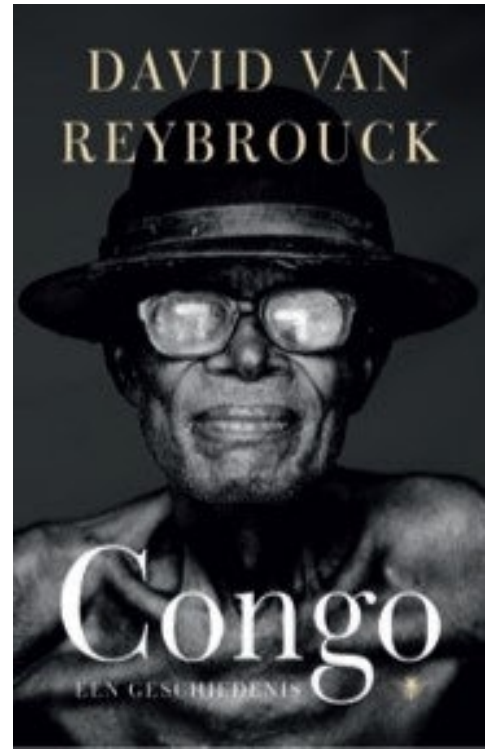
DAVID VAN REYBROUCK

Like many Belgians of his generation, David Van Reybrouck knew Congo from stories of the old days. His own father worked there in the 1960s. Yet he achieved a full understanding of the history of the former Belgian colony in the heart of Africa only while carrying out research for this monumental book. He focuses on the lives of the Congolese, having interviewed over 500 people in the slums of Kinshasa and in the villages of the interior, as well as members of the African diaspora in Europe and China.

**Sublime... Monumental... Virtuoso... This literary non-fiction is more thrilling than a novel**

NRC HANDELSBLAD

The author begins his gripping account in the 1870s and chronicles the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras, right up to 2010, the fiftieth anniversary of Congolese Independence. His vivid narrative zooms in on the impact of the slave trade and the late-nineteenth-century rubber boom and presents a lively account of Belgian colonization, the struggle for independence, Lumumba's tragic life and Mobutu's dictatorship, before detailing the causes of the war that has raged from 1996 to the present, the deadliest conflict since World War II.



## AUTHOR



**David Van Reybrouck** (b. 1971) writes literary nonfiction, theatre plays, poetry and prose. He made his debut in 2001 with the award-winning 'The Plague'. *Photo © Lenny Oosterwijk*

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**TRANSLATION RIGHTS** Marijke Nagtegaal - m.nagtegaal@debezigebij.nl, Uta Matten - u.matten@debezigebij.nl

**TRANSLATION GRANTS** Patrick Peeters - patrick@flandersliterature.be