La Repubblica Democratica del Congo: conflitti e problematiche socio-territoriali
Francesco De Pascale, Luca Jourdan, Kalenge Nguvulu Chris (Eds.)

Land, citizenship and ethnicity: the prelude to the “Congo wars”
Anna Caltabiano

Abstract

The DRC is crossed by conflicts, often interpreted as the result of national and international interests for the natural resources of the state or as deriving from atavistic ethnic hatred? An analysis of the historical roots of this violence shows, however, that the troubled path of construction of the nation-state has its roots in a colonial past that raised political and social problems linked to the recognition of inclusive and inviolable citizenship rights. In particular, the indirect rule policies of the colonial regime bound the recognition of citizenship to the possibility of access to land, based on an alleged ethnicity. In the post-colonial period, a long process of land reform and the adoption of contradictory citizenship laws, contributed to inflame relations between populations that claimed land ownership on the basis of ethnicity, which became increasingly selective and marginalized. With the transition to multi-party politics in the 1990s, the need to be recognized as citizens of the Congolese State and participate in political competitions clashed with the problems linked to the recognition of citizenship. In a territory crossed by migrations said issues are also connected to the conflicts that emerged in neighboring countries. The ethnicization of politics had a strong influence on the democratization process of the country, with obvious repercussions on the Congolese conflicts.

Keywords: Earth, citizenship, conflicts, Democratic Republic of Congo

Works cited


FAO, 2002, Land Tenure and Rural Development, Economic and Social Development Department.


1 Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche e Sociali, Strada Maggiore 45, Università di Bologna, 40125, Bologna. E-mail: anna.caltabiano2@unibo.it.


