

The Outline of the Signing of the Treaty between Makoko-Brazza In 1880

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ABSTRACT: *This article was aimed at assessing and outlining the signing of the treaty between Makoko-Brazza in 1880. Furthermore, the article sought to explore the nature of the treaty signing and as well as its impacts. Numerous Scholars and Researchers' results show that the Makoko Treaty has very considerable impacts on earth's history on the settlement of French in Central Africa. One and most obvious impact of the treaty signing is the separation of the nation or rather land division which led to the formation of the Middle Congo in 1880. However, historic studies show that there are several interpretations made in an attempt to convey certain confusions which risk tarnishing their historical significance. The main purpose of this article is to shed new light by revealing the true motivations behind the 1880 treaty signing. First and foremost is the definition of the treaty, this is the major concern because it outline the nature of the treaty, which is crucial to be well understood, and the true explanation fits well with its origin, which is the general context of colonial expansion and the running of the bell tower for the occupation of the vast colonial spaces at the end Of the nineteenth century.*

Keywords: *treaty- Makoko-De Brazza-Occupation- Colonization*

I. INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the 1880 treaty was based in central Africa during the French colony. The obligation to explain allows us to evoke the circumstances and the nature in which the act commonly called the Treaty of Makoko of 1880 was signed. This treaty is considered by many, especially the Africans and the Europeans to be the major event in earth's history but which French penetrated Central Africa. Having said that, it is then correct and necessary to define and classify the treaty as a matter of major priority as well as the nature of the act; thus taking possession of the average price of the Congo River before assessing its validity. It is necessary or rather needed to confront and investigate the accounts of the ancient Teke of Mbe capital of the kingdom of Makoko and its surroundings, as well as those of Brazza and his companions. Current historiography does not condemn us to unilaterally compile the writings of European authors while leaving aside what the Teke scholars think. This approach justifies the approach taken in drafting this article: definition of the nature of the Makoko treaty, the facts put in context, the true motives of the Makoko treaty, and what is the scope and legal value of such a treaty.

1. Definition of the nature of the Brazza-Makoko treaty

First and foremost, it is more important to note that the establishment of the treaty was an agreement between two parties, but then what is it that is called Brazza-Makoko. One plain and obviously explanation is that it is the treaty signed with the Makoko Ilooler in his village of Ndouo on the 10 September 1880 and the act of taking possession of the territory where Brazzaville which was signed by Ngalieme the Vassal chief of the Makoko in Ncouna October 3, 1880. It is this act whose copies circulated which is commonly called the Makoko treaty. According to the explanations provided by H. Brunschwig: The minutes of any of these texts have yet not been found. And as all documents only mention that copies and as Makoko had no chancellery, we can only assume that De Brazza had written on the field several copies without identifying the original text that would have authorized minute¹ on what exactly is it? but this is the shortest and by so far the known definition of the treaty.

2. The facts put in context

It is very important to compare the following two accounts of the same event narrated by the Teke scholars and on the other hand by Brazza and his companions. The narrative collected from the old Teke residing in the villages of Mbwambe-Léfini, Ngabe, and Mbe relates that Brazza, whom they nicknamed as

Barontsari, was one of the first Whites whom the Teke had known towards the end of the 19th century. It came from Mpuru (Europe) via Gabon and would have followed this route: Ansuku (Franceville) - ntsiekuyantsiendziu and ntsie mbum, respectively plateau kukuya, the plateau of Djambala, and plate of Ngo.

After Intsini crossed the Lefini, He passed through Mpum and was led by an Ombamba interpreter to Mbe at King Iloo. Brazza was accompanied by a large suite of which the famous Senegalese was a part. At Mbe He spent a few days after King Iloo offered him his hospitality. And Brazza asked the king if he could settle somewhere on his land, but before responding to this request, King Iloo solicited the advice from his advisors. Messengers were dispatched across the Teke country. All vassals leaders opposed their refusal by saying that stranger (Ondzia) is an evil spirit (nkirawumbi) with which it will be impossible to live ².

Those advisors recommended Iloo to observe prudence and patience, for this stranger would soon set off again for Europe. Then the king took the initiative to propose to Brazza the following:

This: I have vainly multiplied my efforts with my vassal's leaders to give you a place or you desire to establish your village. I was not successful. If you like, go there (ku-na) to the south at Mbankwa. He is my wife and head of the village Impila. He will show you a place where you will be settled. If he refuses, I will walk straight on him. I will let the lions and the leopards against him oblige him to submit to my order. ³

In the meantime, Brazza went back to Europe. Unfortunately, to his return, he found another king, to whom he will reiterate his vow to settle in Nkuna and the king nodded. Brazza handed him two papers (inkanimele), One was red and the other blue. The red paper would mean alliance and friendship. In the case of threats from whites other than the Fallas (French), the king would ask for help from the command (Brazza) by brandishing this red paper. As for the blue paper, it would give the king the right to claim presents and money according to his good will. The brief commentary on this narrative prompts us to make it clear that this is not a free gift of Makoko lands to this stranger (Brazza). Rather, it would be a request insisted by the Franco-Italian explorer to get a place to settle in Teke territory. The King had never wished to see the whites settle far from his residence at Mbe; this is confirmed by Brazza's report to the French government by writing the following: *Makoko was very anxious that settled near his residence in Mbe the new village of whites. It is not without regret that accesses my request to secure further, Ncouna* ⁴.

Conversely, what is the version of the facts recounted by Brazza and his companions?

There chronologically three memorable days for Brazza and his companions ⁵:

- the 20th of August 1880 at 3 pm: their meeting with the Makoko;
- September 9, 1880: the promise made by Makoko to his interlocutors;
- And on September 10, 1880: the act of cession to France.

The last two dates are of particular interest to us because they are the very expression of the obstinacy and eagerness which animated the explorer Brazza. He said bluntly: *Makoko comes to talk to me, and as I'm doing my toilet, it goes back home or I'll see it. Then he called for the fetish, and in his presence and that of his two brothers, he said to me as I came here, carrying the word of the chief of the Whites for the Abanhos and the Abomas, Speech to the leader of the whites of my country study tell him that Chief Makoko, who has always been away from whites, learning that whites will come to this country and that they want to make villages there, Takes all his land and Gives the chief of the Whites so that the leader of the Whites opens a road between his country and the country that Makoko has just given him. All they need to make their villages.* ⁶

It is rather the episode of September 10 that seems more crucial, Brazza himself says:

I spent twenty days in Makoko, and longer in his states, Knowing whites than by the slave trade and the echo of gunshots fired at the Congo by Stanley, he long remained incredulous to stories Topics Of our conduct. Without fear of war more than the whites, he said, we prefer peace. I questioned the soul of a great sage of my fourth ancestor and convinced that we will not have to fight two parties. I resolved to fully ensure peace by becoming the friend of one who inspired me confidence ⁷

Finally, it's time to mention that famous treaty as written by Brazza: *King Makoko, who sovereignty between the source and the mouth of Lefini Ncouna to have ratified the cession of territories for the establishment of a French station, and, moreover, session of its territory to France, to which he is transferring his hereditary rights of supremacy, desiring in sign of surrender to display the colors of France, And by this document in duplicate and signed, acknowledges the measures it has taken in regard to me, considering me as the representative of the French Government.* ⁸ *The chief lieutenant of the mission of the Ogooué and Congo signed lower PS DeBrazza*

We note that in this text there are three important aspects:

- cession by Makoko of its territories for the establishment of a station
- cession of its territory to France
- cession of her hereditary rights of supremacy

It is no exaggeration to point out that these narratives are inconsistent and give rise to confusion which is an expression of the aims pursued by both. Moreover, these narratives also diverge because they do not fit the precise definition of any legal treaty. The Petit Larousse dictionary defines the treaty as a convention concluded

between two governments. Is this the case for the Makoko treaty of 1880?. Besides this, some serious historians have called it Brazza-Makoko because it was signed by these two characters. So it's fair and reasonable enough to say behind these contradictory narratives lie the true motivations of this treaty.

2.1 The true motives of the Makoko treaty

The context in which the Makoko Treaty was signed is well known to historians. It is, however, worth recalling that this was the era of colonial expansion of the nineteenth century, whose causes were essentially economic based. There is an urgent need to provide the booming European industries with every new and abundant resource. This explains the race for raw materials such as cotton, rubber, and minerals. As for European consumers, they are in great need of tropical products such as sugar and coffee. Moreover to that, it should be remembered that, from 1875 onwards, a serious economic crisis struck Europe and brought protectionism back, hence the need for European states to find new markets which were not protected by Customs barriers. Imperialism then succeeded liberal capitalism.

For France in particular, it is the results of the war which opposed it to Germany that explain the need for nationalist renewal because the defeat that it has undergone in front of the Germans has catastrophic consequences on this France mutilated whereas Germany is unified. Worse still, the fate of France after the signing of the Treaty of Frankfurt on 10 May 1871 is not the most enviable. At the end of this war, as we know, France lost the North of Lorraine with Metz and all of Alsace except Belfort. The race between HM Stanley acting on behalf of King Leopold II of Belgium and PS de Brazza working on behalf of France found its foundation there. It is a real competition for these two explorers who multiply subterfuges and strategies in order to reach the banks of the Congo first. In conferences and published letters by Napoleon Ney Brazza reveals his intentions: *If there is an advantage to seize the Congo, I liked best was the French flag as the International Belgian flag flying in this beautiful African country*⁹

him, the Congolese basin is presented as an Eldorado with its soil of exuberant fertility where one grows the oil palm, the groundnut and where grows the most precious essences like the redwood and the ebony and or The trade in ivory and rubber accounts for nearly a thousand percent.

On the side of Belgium, this veritable steeplechase takes its relief when referring to this excerpt from the letter from Colonel Strauch, president of the Upper Congo Studies Committee at Stanley: *We call your attention to a very serious projects Probable of Mr. De Brazza and we commit you to make all your efforts not to let you get ahead by him. We hope it works out down Alima, he will find you already installed at the confluence of the river*¹⁰

For Brazza, one understands this concern to counter the most urgent, three years after the signing of the Makoko treaty. While he was organizing the West African mission in France, including Ch. De Chavannes, A. Dolisie and railway engineer L. Jacob, he learned that Stanley's agents were ahead of him in Congo and that they open posts in the kingdom of Loango, especially in the Kouilou-Niari valley. Thus he immediately ordered Lieutenant-Commander Cordier, commander at Libreville the Sagittarius, to settle in Loango and Pointe-Noire as soon as possible. Thus, on March 14, 1883, a treaty of friendship was signed with the Maloango authorizing Cordier to occupy the extremity of the Indian Point.

2.2 What is the scope and legal value of this treat

In fact, it was after refusing to go to the service of the study committee of the Upper Congo that Brazza was entrusted with a second mission whose secret purpose was to hinder Stanley. The informality of these arrangements, to use the expression of H. Brunschwig, is astonishing because Brazza, by his audacity, has introduced politics into the heart of Black Africa. Understandably, if he had revealed his initiative to Stanley, it would have alerted Europe and aroused rivalries at the moment when the French government itself was not informed.

How then can we explain the wait-and-see attitude of the French governmental authorities who have reservations about this adventure, which only engaged Brazza alone? In other words, why did the same authorities wait two years to ratify DE Brazza's work by voting on the ratification of the Brazza-Makoko Treaty on 30 November 1882? Brazza willingly acknowledges: *Having not qualified to deal with, it's on my own responsibility in dealing Brazzaville; I took advantage of good provisions of Makoko in respect of France which I was the representative*¹¹

The very character of Brazza explains the success of such an adventure. But to make the adventure one must be ambitious, intrepid and audacious. Here Brazza's audacity brought him to face the legendary difficulties of Africa to see his dream come true; that of placing under the colonial yoke of France an immense rich territory, which he estimated to be populated by five millions of individuals.

However, it is to be feared that by magnifying to an extreme the methods used by Brazza to achieve its objective, the validity of the Makoko treaty is further obscured. Some historians have described his methods as pacifists even though they are wrapped in a trick. He speaks when he talks about his chance meeting that day

with the Stanley novembre 1880 7: *This day brings the chance for a moment two men; Two antitheses: Speed and slowness, boldness and prudence, power and weakness. Yet the extremes touch each other; their furrows so different, traced with the same perseverance, converge to the same end: progress.*¹²

Such self-appreciation of his work is not the happiest. The historian is not a censor of the actions of the men who have preceded us in this world. But how to judge the attitude of Brazza Oubanguians face when he said: *Choose, they did I say between the cartridge and the pavilion that I send you. One will be the sign of a war without thank you, the other a symbol of peace as beneficial to your interests as ours*¹³

What a summons! It sounds like deception otherwise use Brazza was intimidation to get his way is not honorable¹⁴. Similarly, the use of unsafe interpreters is a sign that does not deceive. Thus Brazza describes Ossiah as the most precious man who accompanied him on his travels, and who spoke almost all the idioms of the Ogooue and the inferior Congo. Of course, inter-comprehension is easy between alto gove ens (Teke of East Gabon) and Teke of Mbe. But for us it seems curious that there was in those ancient times, a polyglot of the genus Ossiah. What is certain is that Brazza uses an irrevocable right, a spontaneous gesture of African generosity, a banal gesture of hospitality peculiar to Bantu manners (Teke) and to confirm to himself that right he draws An official act in his eyes, of his taking possession of the land of Mfoa. Makoko said to him:

Nunya belongs to me, I give you in advance the part that you will designate and not all the country belongs to me, I give it to you. And Brazza on his side writes: Makoko cedes a portion of its territory, the land conceded is delimited by the rivers Djoué and Impila. This is neither more nor less than the installation of a French Station. It is also important to note that the word treated was used by Brazza since he knows its meaning while Makoko can ignore its subtlety.

Moreover, it should be noted that the treaty between Makoko and Brazza is not the first act signed by the French in the history of Central Africa. Apart from the treaty which Cordier had signed in 1883, with the Maloango one can cite another case. Remember those 41 years before the signing of the Makoko treaty on 9 February 1839? Bouet-Willamez signed with King Denis Rapotchombo Autchoue Nkoue a treaty which allowed the French to settle on two leagues from coast¹⁵ under the pretext of protecting the king (who knows against what enemy), France obtained permission to install here Of counters in Gabon.

Similarly, by the convention of September 10, 1880, the Makoko did not yield his whole kingdom to France to place himself under his protection. Rather the Makoko, by this act, granted Brazza and the Fallas (French) permission to settle on the Stanley-Pool. It granted him only the small territory between the banks of the Djoué and Impila rivers (Tsiémé), an area of barely 20 km long by 5 km wide.

The Makoko Iloo seems to have had a certain interest in making friendship with this stranger. But did he know, who had no dignity to preserve, that the two papers which Brazza had given him, would withdraw his sovereignty? This is almost universal; for nothing in the world, no leader of any kind can accept to alienate his suzerainty.

II. CONCLUSION

We have focused on the elucidation of the conditions under which the Makoko Treaty was signed because its implications are numerous. The most important are:

- Creation of the Middle Congo colony
- Creation of about forty concessionary companies,
- Liberalization of international trade on the Congo River after the Berlin Conference (February 1885)

Not being a jurist to appreciate the Makoko treaty of 1880, we hope to have made available to the community of researchers (historians, sociologists, economists, geographers, linguists, and jurists ...) new information, thus giving new light to this treaty. Certainly, there are events that do not make sense on their own. It is rather by integrating them into our history that they make sense: such is the case of the Makoko treaty of 1880 because it undoubtedly appears as the starting point of French colonization in Central Africa.

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