
**POLITICAL, SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION OF
THE TWA AND TEKE (BOMA) IN THE PLATEAUX DEPARTMENT IN THE
REPUBLIC OF CONGO: CASE OF THE NGO DISTRICT FROM 1960 TO
2013****Dominique Oba**Marien Ngouabi University, Teacher Training College, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo
Email: nzoussik@yahoo.fr**Abstract**

In Africa as everywhere else, African societies have known several forms of organization that can be found in Central Africa in the Kongo, Loango and Teke kingdoms. This form of organization is also found in the plateau department and more precisely in the region of Ngo where the Bantu and Tswa have lived since time immemorial. Benefiting from several privileges, gradually becoming lord of the land, although occupying space after the Tswa, the Bantu exert a far-reaching influence and domination over the tswa to the point of considering and transforming them as sub-men. The relations between these two peoples are generally to the advantage of the Bantu. In the region of Ngo, the twa and Teke knew a political, socio-cultural and economic organization which was at the base of their civilization. This study tries to show the influence of this multidimensional organization of these two groups which continue to coexist to this day, particularly from 1960 to 2013.

Keywords: political organization; sociocultural; Twa; Teke; Ngo district

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INTRODUCTION

In the Teke civilization, the question of cohabitation between different ethnicities and civilizations is a major concern and more over a thorny question accompanied by antagonisms and strife (Hall, 2017). This is the case of the plateau department and more precisely in the region of Ngo where the Bantu and Tswa have lived since time immemorial (Mumpande, 2020). Benefiting from several privileges, gradually becoming lord of the land, although occupying space after the Tswa, the Bantu exert a far-reaching influence and domination over the Tswa to the point of considering and transforming them as sub-men (Mumpande, 2020). The relations between these two peoples are generally to the advantage of the Bantu (George, 2010). This work, which is an important contribution to the history and

civilizations of the Teke subgroup and their neighbor Twa, tries to shed considerable and significant light both on the knowledge of civilizations still poorly known and on the relations between these two groups since time immemorial. In this work, it will first be a question of showing first the origins and migrations of the two peoples, then the forms of organization of their society in the period from 1960, date of the accession of the independence of the Congo, in 2013, date of the accelerated municipalization of the plateaux department. These are the different points that this article intends to study.

METHOD

One type of descriptive qualitative research is in the form of research with the method or case study approach. Case studies include in descriptive analysis research,

namely research conducted focused on a particular case to be observed and analyzed carefully to completion (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The case in question can be singular or plural, for example in the form of individuals or group. This research focuses on intensively on a particular object that studies it as a case.

Case study research or field study (field study) is intended to study intensively about the background of the problem situation and the position of an event that is currently taking place, as well as environmental interactions certain social units that are given. Research subjects can be: individual, group, institution or society (Moleong, 2021). Case study research is in-depth study of a particular social unit and the results of that research provide a broad and in-depth picture of a particular social unit.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Location of the study environment

Ngo is located in the center of the Republic of Congo (Paluck, 2009). Administratively, it is one of the eleven (11) districts of the plateaux department; it is located about 250km north of Brazzaville, 125km from Djambala, capital of the department, 72km from Gamboma and 59km from Mpouya (Mviri, 2020). The district of Ngo is limited: to the north by the district of Gamboma, to the north-west by the district of Mbon, to the south by the Léfini river, to the east by the district of Mpouya, and to the east by the district of Djambala. It has an area that covers an area of 9000km². The district of Ngo is shown in the map below (Fig. 1)

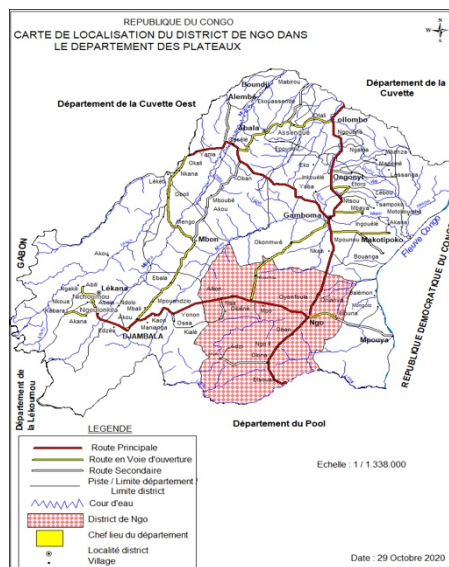


Figure 1. Map of the Ngo district in the plateaux department

B. The Tswa and their origins

In this chapter on the Tswa people we have covered three points of Tswa life. First of all their origin, the political and socio-cultural organization, and finally the economic organization.

1. Origin

It seems awkward to talk to the people Tswa, but without knowing its origin. According to the Congolese writer Futur Sacré-Cœur Waka (Sacré-Cœur, 2020). The pygmies, along with the Bantu, were the same people who lived in ancient Egypt. However, following foreign invasions due to the prosperity of Pharaonic Egypt, a first segment of this population left the territory to move south of the Sahara. D'hence the name of "early man". Several decades later, the Bantu who remained also left Egypt, in turn, heading south of the Sahara to join their brothers. These two peoples find together and populating the territory's. Faced with the difficulties of life, following the desertification of the Sahara, the Bantu and the first men clashed. The clash is ended in

the victory of Bantu. The Tswa said first men, to avoid the brutality of the Bantu neighbors, confined themselves to the depths of the equatorial forest of West, Central and East Africa. It is the supremacy of the Bantu over the so-called first human peoples. In Congo, the Tswa who are nevertheless the first "Masters", were driven back by the Bantu, more numerous in the depths of the forests. *It is therefore not surprising that the pygmy finds refuge in the forest, the safest place of conservation of the harvested products and the game, abandoning to the farmer Teke the savannah which does not represent for him any economic interest* (Dounias et al., n.d.).

Today they are men of the forest, a hunter with a spear with a wooden handle and an iron frame which is their topical weapon. But no legend, no tale, would prevent, quite the contrary, from thinking that they simply changed their stone spear into a metal frame in contact with the Bantu. According to Laurent Ngoulali, the Twa would have come from Zanaga (Frederick & van Nederveen Meerkerk, 2022).

In the region of Ngo, the situation would be almost the same. In other words, the *Tswa* would be the first to inhabit the territory. They lived in the Yama zone, located to the west of the Ngo district, to the east of Mbon and to the southwest of the Gamboma district precisely on the *Allion* plateau, at the source of the *Nkié* river from where they have the appellation of *Bana dzala nkie* which means the children of the river *nkie* that is to say, the residents or nationals of the river Nkeni. This river *nkie* gives drifts as town *Otsouankié*, hotel *Otsouankié*. It's just a water court and a tributary of the Congo River, the Nkeni flowing Gamboma. If the Ndouo River in the

plateaus becomes the Niari in the Niari department and the Kouilou in the Kouilou department, it is the same for the river called *Nkié* in Djambala, Ngo and Mbon, changes hydronymy to give sound Nkeni in Ngangoulou.

This is to say that the natives of these localities lived along this waterway after the Bantu migrations. However, it would be difficult for us to speak with exactness of the periodicity of their installation in these homes, as these are the oral sources and the information collected. With the Boma presence in the region, the Tswa dispersed, they found themselves all over the department. Over the past two decades, the *Tswa* have regained consciousness of their origin, thus renewing the Ayama and Ayo villages populated only by the natives assisted by the State, the Evangelical Church of Congo and its partners.

2. Physical or morphological characteristics

The scientific literature is abundant on the physical features of the natives. The *Tswa* people are a small population (1.50m on average). They have frizzy hair due to the problem of hygiene, food and habitat. They have naturally round eyes that express fear in the face of the stranger. Likewise, they are red in color due to frequent visits to the forest. It is a people who often travel in groups to better defend themselves against the Bantu. Their knowledge of pharmacopoeia is well established. It is said that the *Tswa* are animist peoples, very versed in fetishism says Bonganga.

C. Political, socio-cultural and economic organization

1. Political organization

The traditional society *Tswa* is a society without social class. The true union is organized around the village chief or fetish chief. The power to govern is transmitted from father to son, which means that it is the patriarchal system (Schapera & Comaroff, 2015). However, the child has more inclination towards the maternal side, hence the true implication of the maternal uncle for his development. In addition, the healer plays the role in the community. Indeed, by his magical powers, he is the intermediary between the living and the invisible world. He is the man most consulted by visitors and even the authorities. The reputation of the village is closely linked to it.

2. Socio-cultural organizations Tswa

The *Tswa*, people condemned to live with their Boma neighbors, practice almost the same socio-cultural activities, in particular: dancing and games, marriage, religion and traditional rites, commemoration of the dead, etc.

3. Dance and games

Dancing and games for the *Tswa* are the only means of entertainment. Like other peoples in the world, they sing and dance to the rhythm of drums in the evening. The 're *Tswa* of years their villages organize dance parties after a great hunt, a victory at the football game and also to the arrival of political leaders. Thus, girls and boys alike, consider dance as a privileged moment to express their emotion of joy. Dance competitions are organized between the villages. However, no winner is proclaimed, each locality proclaims itself victorious. This took place during the dry season, every time a village registers a death; the vigil is led by folk groups. The *Tswa* have dance groups like: *Ngotôh*,

Muziki, Ebodo ... Nowadays, the *Tswa* do not only devote themselves to folk dances, they have become excellent dancers of modern music.



Figure 1. Tswa children playing Ndzango in their village

Source: Mviri Gildas , photo of October 15, 2020 , Onianva village

The *Tswa* are also interested in games. They have a variety. There are games that are played during the day as well as at night. However, other games are played, either day or night. Thus, they have games like: *Olouori*, tales, stories, Riddle, Game *lipato*. Currently, they play modern games such as : Football, *Ndzango*.

These traditional games of tales and riddles are played in the evening around the fire. It is an initiation of adults to young people, a traditional education that is passed on from generation to generation. In the forest or at the river, they practice the game of hide and seek or *lipato*. Here, adults teach young people how to know the forest. Likewise, in the river they bathe with the young people in order to initiate them to swimming.

4. Marriage among the Tswa

Men have always been interested in marriage without distinction of ethnicity, race or religion. Also, the *Tswa* although deprived of everything, get married. They celebrate the marriage according to their financial and material means. It is not of marriage to the marital status as in modern societies but marriage traditionally said. Everyone agrees that the dowry among the *Tswa* is compulsory. Indeed, since

ancient times up to the present day, marriage *Tswa* al widely abused evolved and tends to, s e CONFON dre marriage Bantu. But, it is a long process which obeys certain stages as everywhere in the other evolved societies. Note that the way they got married is no longer remained a same as at present.

a) The old marriage

It included the following steps:

- 1) The distant preparation of the man: the man, who sees himself mature and ready to marry, should prepare himself accordingly before initiating any procedure. This why, he should have his cassava field he will feed his future wife, as he should have a house, money and beautiful clothes.
- 2) The search for the bride: After getting ready, the future groom goes shopping, looking for a girl in the neighboring villages. When this is found, the suitor or her parents come into contact with the girl's relatives, in particular her mother, her brothers or sisters. Without however announcing to the father, because with the latter, it is the final stage.
- 3) Asks for the daughter's hand: Here, the land being already worn out, "the parents of the suitor directly ask for the daughter's hand from her father. The latter tends list their component objects dowry including: the bo uteilles beer, whiskey, a few boxes of red wine, a piece of cloth together e a ball 5000 xaf they say the cap of the drink and a sum varying from 25,000 to 50,000 CFA francs depending on the girl's families.
- 4) Celebration of marriage: The suitor or his family pays the dowry in kind and in cash: It is the celebration of the marriage. Indeed, it is celebrated in the evening in the

presence of the two families of the girl, that is to say the paternal and maternal side which divides the goods. The marriage is consummated. But there is one detail, the newly married couple does not bring his wife to his village, he will spend a long stay of at least six months with the in-laws. This aspect often pushes the newlywed to stay forever in the village of his in-laws.

b) The current marriage

Man being an evolutionary animal, the *Tswa* has largely evolved in his habits as well as in his way of life. These changes affect the area of marriage. Indeed, if in the old days, to get married it was necessary to go through many stages, now things are simple. The procedure is as follows:

- 1) The meeting of the spouses: As it is the man who takes the first steps, the young *Tswa* in his adventures intelligently puts his traps in complicity with his relatives convinces, the girl and the two get along. Some go as far as the pregnant before the dowry.
- 2) Presentation of the pretender to the father of the girl: After convincing the girl behind the scenes, the groom sends a sage among the father of the bride for was the news. One evening, the young man comes to the in-laws to ask for the daughter's hand. Generally, the latter do not oppose because the girl has already given her position. The future family gives him the list of the dowry: money, stuff, drinks... Currently the *Tswa* marriage is as simple as possible. The sum of the dowry varies from 10,000F to

50,000 XAF depending on the parents of the girl".

D. Divorce

1. The causes

The woman being a rare bird, divorce is also rare in Tswa environment; there are a few isolated cases of divorce. According to the field survey, there are three main causes of divorce: The problem of witchcraft, misunderstandings and repeated fights due to the effects of man's alcohol and infidelity or adultery

2. Divorce proceedings

Strictly speaking, there is no well-defined divorce procedure even in the Congolese family code. The process varies from one family or from one village to another. The field survey gives the following elements: if it is the woman who refuses the man, she must repay the dowry doubly. In some families, if it is the wife who decides to leave her husband, her next husband will repay the dowry through his future in-laws. If it is the man who no longer wants his wife, he must prove it by giving his wife the ticket as proof of leaving the home, synonymous with separation. But her dowry will be repaid without interest. For some men in the event of divorce, he does not claim the dowry; he leaves it in the name or for the benefit of the children to keep the love with the ex-in-laws for the safety of the children.

3. Religion and traditional rites

The *Tswa* being animists, believe in God creator of the universe. However, superstition dominates the daily life of the *Tswa*, around procreation, disease, luck, as well as bad luck. This belief in a religion, or in a supernatural power. Among the *Tswa*, belief in natural spirits is spontaneous. They have always had recourse to the spirits

to undertake a fruitful activity such as hunting, fishing, the fetish ... In the forest, they invoke a natural power "the *Nkira*", it is the benevolent genius who resides in the caves capable of blessing or curse according to the observance of instructions or prohibitions. *Mpion* or and by chewing the cola and pronouncing words thus intervenes the god of nature who has power over the forest, the rivers, the earth. This belief allows them to face ferocious animals, large reptiles, and dangerous snakes while hunting or fishing, so that some Atswa do not know the God who created the world. For them "the *Nkira*" is the true god who represents all supernatural forces, because his proofs are palpable. By cons, currently many have converted to Christianity. In the c ontrée of Ngo, some prayer groups are led by the natives in particular those of the evangelical church of Congo. The belief in a single god is also the work of colonization in the Congo, which did not spare the *Tswa*.

4. The commemoration of the dead

Death strikes the *Tswa* like all other peoples of the world. Also, they fear it, to such an extent that if one or more aboriginals die successively they abandon the camp, it is said that the natives are nomads. Death is perceived by them as an ultimate stage in life, the end of everything, chaos. Death among the *Tswa* is a mysterious event, mourning among them concerns all layers of ages. Generally, the body of an indigenous person is not exposed for all to see as in the s bantu. The burial takes place at night without the Bantu knowing it. Whenever they register a case of death, a ritual is done to purge the *Tswa* community because of whoever has just left them. Thus, it is difficult to find a grave in a *Tswa* village. Until

today the funeral remains a ritual. Death among them is always a phenomenon due to witchcraft.

5. Tswa Economic Organization

It seems a good idea to give a brief overview of the activities or the way of life of the *Tswa*. *Tswa* daily life nowadays revolves around agriculture and animal husbandry as well as their usual activities like: hunting, fishing, gathering and gathering.

6. Agriculture and livestock

Although a predatory civilization, their cohabitation with the Bantu for thousands of years has made them accustomed to productive activities, especially agriculture and animal husbandry. Indeed, this cohabitation with their neighbors *Boma* made a very considerable breakthrough in agriculture. Since they settled down in the villages of *Ngo II*, *Onianva*, *Ngo* center... they have learned to cultivate the soil. At the beginning, they made small fields in forest and savannah where the production was always insufficient. Also to eat, they practiced barter with their *Boma* neighbors. The *Tswa* supplied the *boma* with the products of hunting, the gathering and collecting of meat, edible leaves, the products of gathering including caterpillars, the mushrooms which they exchanged for the *foufou*. Since the 1980s, several factors have upset the eating habits of the *Tswa*: the asphaltting of the section of the national road n°2 Etsouali-Obouya, passing through *Ngo* and the *Ngo-Djambala-Lékana* road, the execution of the project of social integration of people pygmy in the company of *Ngo* district by the Evangelical church of Congo which resulted in the construction of the integration *Ngo*, launching the slogan

of the president to first five - year plan 1981-1986 namely " return to the land for food self - sufficiency by the year 2000 which made the Congolese aware of the essential role of agriculture and the evolution of mentalities both *Boma* and *Tswa* to change the data. Thus, since then the *tswa* have also become producers of cassava, peanuts, yams, vegetables ... not to mention the presence of fruit trees around certain villages or camps with species planted by the *tswa* and *boma* intended for both consumptions than to as redialization. Thus, the *tswa* people of *Ngo* have fully integrated the monetary economy.

7. Fishing and hunting

The *Tswa* people do not have a vocation for fishing. This activity is not at the heart of his life, he practices subsistence fishing. Fishing is often practiced by a female population. But, men practice fishing with nets, dams or traps, especially in the dry season. There is fishing by stocking the waters. This form of fishing makes it possible to pour poison collected from the grains of very poisonous trees called " *Mbô*", previously crushed, into a river. These crushed grains are poured upstream of the stream, a few hours later, the fish are dying. This poison also kills reptiles, crocodiles. This practice is currently prohibited by the State because of its exterminating nature of species.

The *tswa* find it difficult to eat only the gathering and gathering; they hunt game they are excellent hunters. This activity allowed them to keep good contact with the Bantu. Hunting also has a socio-cultural aspect among the *tswa*. Through hunting, they demonstrate their courage in the face of danger. It is an initiation into know-how. Hunting

includes several techniques. We therefore retain the most used:

- a) Net hunting:** this hunting party brings together children, their parents, dogs and nets. Adults teach young people how to use nets. Children and dogs are the beaters of game which is killed with sticks or arrows after it is led to the net under pressure from the dogs.
- b) Hunting by trap:** we use the different cables, we tie the cable to a flexible stick, we make a noose placed around the vertical pieces of wood on the passage of the animals. We bend the stick and place a trigger in the middle of the knot. As soon as the animal passes by there and touches the trigger, the stick is raised; the animal thus immobilized is finished by blows of arrow, machetes or rifle. Another trap technique involves digging a deep hole, over which leaves and a layer of soil are placed so that the animal does not suspect a thing. On instead there above bait. As soon as the animal passes through it, it collapses into the hole.
- c) Rifle hunting:** modernism has come to bring such an easy and rapid technique to hunting. Rifles of the 12-caliber, fourteen-millimeter type and five-shot barrels often belong to the Bantu, which entrusts them to locals in order to provide them with game. Hunting products allow exchanges. There is a wide variety of game sold fresh or smoked: monkeys, gazelles, wild boars, hinds, large snakes and woodpeckers hunting is an activity reserved for men. We also note the hunting of rats called *Okoui*, *mpara*, *mbiené*. But nowadays, hunting is becoming more and more bequeathed to the second rank because of the rupture of the

ecological balance, in particular the exacerbated deforestation.

- d) Picking and collecting:** the *tswa* practice harvesting all year round. Harvest products vary from season to season. But, some products cover the whole year. In particular: picking cassava packaging leaves, *gnetum africanum* (coconut or *mfumou*), mushrooms, etc. At the same time as they collect, the *tswa* collect products such as: mushrooms, termites, caterpillars, crickets, locusts, grasshoppers etc.

The mushrooms are picked in the savannah and in the forest, several varieties grow, either on the ground or on the trunks of trees. The *Tswa* master all edible species. Picking takes place during the rainy periods from October to May.

- 1) Eggs :** the *Atswa* know the difference between the egg of a bird and a reptile. This laying period is from May to September. They collect the eggs of turtles, crocodiles, pythons, guinea fowl, partridges.
- 2) Termites:** they are collected during the months of September and October, period of the first rains. They are obtained after smoldering r t entire anthill without air enters the evening at sunset. Yesterday, we used the cassava wrapping sheets. This way of doing things has been abandoned. Nowadays, we use tablecloths, a new technique used by young people. They are collected in the morning generally before sunrise.
- 3) Crickets and locusts:** crickets are obtained by digging the place where the soil is loose, and thus indicating the hole where the cricket hides. They have a period. They are easily obtained after rain. Locusts are picked up by burning the

savannah and then digging holes. Locusts fall into these holes and are picked up after a while. This activity takes place at night in the moonlight.

E. Boma people

We cannot approach the question of the *Boma* people, in particular their origins, their behavioral characteristics and their way of life without first talking about the Bantu people in general and the Teké people in particular. The *Boma* is only one element of this great téké ensemble. This is as much to say that we are going to identify some general characteristics of the teke people

1. Origin

The Bantu form a human group estimated at nearly 200 million black Africans disseminated in several ethnicities from the territories of the upper Nile to the rocks of the cape, from north to south and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean to ballast (Obenga, 2004).

In the beginning there were only one people who inhabited ancient Egypt. Indeed, 5000 years before our era, this people dispersed following the degradation or climatic change which engendered the desertification of the Sahara and the Egyptian lands. Thus, the estrangement from one another has created differentiation, physical traits, languages and religions. So, we will Bantu, Nilotic, Sudanese (Wolof, Malinke, Hausa), the Khoisan. The Bantu in turn populated central and southern Africa and everywhere else.

Regarding the teke, historically speaking, it is difficult that we can give the date of the appearance of the teke kingdom, it would have been born in the first three century of the Christian era The second age of the Christian era (between +1 and 1000) is marked by the beginning of the "Teke proto

history" which is characterized by the founding of the kingdom. This period in Central Africa was marked by the emergence of several kingdoms and empires. This emergence was undoubtedly the consequence of a socio-technical revolution of the Bantu following their expansion. We cannot confirm on the foundation of the Teké kingdom; According to Professor Ndinga-Mbo :

The fact that the arrival of the Portuguese in the 15th century echoed their recession on the Atlantic coast, leads us to believe that certainly 2 to 3 centuries earlier, it would have reached its peak (De Coster & O'Dubhghaill, 2016). The Teké group is the largest in southern Congo. According to reliable sources, the word Teké is a deformation of Europeans. The word is closer to Tio. The Teké group in central Congo includes several sub-groups or tribes including the Boma. This is also a distortion of the French language. The word is really close to "Mbon-on or Abon-on" which means those whose environment is in the middle of the savannah.

Table 1
Téké tribes and their geographical location

No.	Tribes	Department	Districts/ Countries
1	Boma and Ngouoni	Trays , Pool	Ngo, Mpouya, Ngabé, Mbon
2	Ngangoulou	Trays	Gamboma, Abala, Ongogni
3	Nzikou	Trays	Djambala , Ngo
4	Teke-alima	Cuvette-Ouest, Cuvette, Trays	Okoyo, Boundji, Abala, Allembé
5	Teke-ewo	Cuvette-Ouest	Ewo , Mbama
6	Lali	Lekoumou, Pool, Bouenza	Sibiti, Zanaga, Vindza, Kingoué, Kindamba, Mayama, Komono,
7	Koukouya	Trays	Lékana, Zanaga
8	Nzabi-Mberé	Cuvette-Ouest, Lekoumou	Kélé, Mbomo, Bambama, Gabon
9	Wumu	Pool	Ngabé, Ignié
10	Smoke	Pool, Brazzaville	Kintelé, Brazzaville, Ignié, Loumou

No.	Tribes	Department	Districts/ Countries
11	Other Téké tribes	DRC, Gabon ...	Nanny, Tendé ...

Source: Oba Dominique, personal design, October 2020

2. Behavioral characteristics

In relation to the whole téké, we have chosen to speak of behavioral characteristics by the fact that the people of Central Africa present the same morphological traits. However, each people present behavioral peculiarities. We also know that the general behavior of a people is linked to its physical environment. Whereas the Boma is a people of the savannah.

Table 2
Boma sub-groups or clans

No.	Sub-groups/ Clans	Location
1	Scé or Assisséh	The Nkoumou-Gamboma axis, Ngo-Gamboma axis
2	Ngouoni or Angoungouoni	Mbon District
3	Adzidzouh	Djambala-Mbon axis (Olounou village)
4	Assi- Okéi	A xe Ngo-Mpouya
5	Assi- Mbéssala	A xe Ngo-Nsah
6	Assi- Abili-kono	A xe Ngo-Etsouali
7	Other sub-groups: Adzi-Impé, Abana.	Etsouali zone, River zone (Village Ndolo)

Source: Oba Dominique, personal survey, November-December 2019

What characterizes the Boma people is the savannah. This environment spares it from the natural danger presented by ferocious animals, snakes, large reptiles etc. Thus, if the man of the forest and the river feels in constant insecurity given the opacity of his environment, that of the savannah has rather a distant and clear view which reassures him. These environments influence the mentality of the latter. In other words, if the forest man would be bellicose, constantly armed, the savannah man would be more conciliatory. This is to

say that the téké in general would be a docile people, very allergic to the flow of human blood. Some would say that they are a fearful people when it comes to conflicts, battles, weapons.

According to certain information gathered, the districts of Mindouli, Kinkala, Ngoma-tsétsé, were formerly Téké territories. The latter to avoid bloody battles against their Kongo brothers migrated north to occupy the central plateaus, known as the Batéké plateaus. They thus traced in their retreat the imaginary line of demarcation that their Kongo neighbors should not cross. Hence it is the name of Akabandilou or Makabandilou which means the dividing line which has become a district of Brazzaville in the 9 Djiri district (De Schryver, Grollemund, Branford, & Bostoen, 2015). So, for the Teke, man is a neighbor and not a distant or a wolf. Thus, saying that the *boma* is a supporter of peace. It is perhaps in this sense that the Treaty of Brazza-Makoko was simplified.

3. Political organization

According to Ngoie-Ngalla, in the savannah of the south and the center of Bas-Congo probably arose from the 11th-12th century, political groups (Téké kingdom or Tio and Kongo). The role and place of the lineage structure are decisive in these kingdoms. Lineage is the natural framework of political power and the foundation of the kingdom, the product of culture (De Schryver et al., 2015).

Society is life in a group and together. The traditional Boma society is patriarchal; all the authority of the family rests on the father who is the chief. But this cannot exclude the role of the maternal uncle who was like the motor in the resolution of the problems. They live in villages left by their ancestors. The leaders of these villages follow one another from father to son. Nowadays, village chiefs are appointed by the

state. Some of these villages benefit from some basic infrastructure provided by the State.

4. Boma socio-cultural organization

The socio-cultural activities being very varied, it would be difficult for us to make a long list of them. This is why we have retained some s -unes in particular dance, games, and marriages.

a) Dance

The Boma is an excellent dancer and singer. The villages were animated to the rhythm of the drums. Between the villages, dance evenings were organized. Indeed, these were the moments of good atmosphere. Thus, there are groups of folk dances, initiatory healing dances, griots etc.

b) Folk dance groups

We note the following dances: Imbala- mbala, Otierako, Ngotô, Ebouka and Muziki, Owaya, Obitan, Ebodo or Losseba.

c) The Imbala- mbala dance

Imbala- mbala is the traditional rumba. According to Mr. Okia Léon, aged 57. *This in e is a Boma specificity. Imbala- mbala is danced as follows: the man holds the woman at the hips with both hands and the woman, in turn, grabs the man at the shoulders, both dance following the rhythm of the tom-toms. The two dancers face to face only hold their hands a little apart. However, as soon as the cadence stops, every dancer must pay a certain amount to the lady. This stop allows the dancers to change or continue with the same song if not to rest.*

d) The Otierako dance

In a funeral evening in Brazzaville in a district of Ouenzé, a national of the district of Ngo who explains to us what the Imbala- mbala dance is 64-year-old Mpiola Adolphe recounts the following:

It is a dance often intended for the elderly. Here the tom-toms

predominate the song, the instrument permeating the rhythm is called Onkou. Unlike Imbal- mbala, in Otierako everyone dances to the rhythm of the cadence without a woman. Indeed, it is a dance similar to Matsiemé a Koukouya folklore style. However, the pace is stopped by a person who requests it.

e) The Ngotô dance

It is the modernized Imbala- mbala dance. It is danced by young people with or without girls. Concerning the dancing evening with the girls, if in Imbala- mbala the two dancers do not rub their bodies at the Ngotô they do it. It's paid rumba. Here the man to dance with a woman must pay her in advance an amount varying between 100f to 500f depending on the agreement between the two dancers. Indeed, there are two ways of dancing Ngotô : Ngotô only danced by men. Here the dancers are placed in front of the agitated drummers of the maracas, the animation is held by a single singer who thus becomes, like a griot, it is like current shifted c oupé. And the special Ngotô. This is a well organized event with the participation of girls. It is an evening of rumba which is danced with the girls by rubbing their bodies; the women demand a high price. *Ngotô* is mostly danced by young adolescents. However, it has negative consequences, including adultery, fights, and unwanted pregnancies.

f) Ebouka and Muziki dance

Ebouka would be a dance of *Bangala* origin if not *Moye* . Indeed, along the Congo River, from Mossaka to Ngabé, young people adore the Ebouka dance. The Boma Ngo of the country's been imported during the street markets of Mpouya, Bouemba, Makotimpoko, and Lessanga- Ongogni ... and changed the rhythm. The young

people dance in a circle all around the drummers and move to the rhythm of the drums. Ebouka is danced in the evening and very often after sporting events. This dance lost its value in the 1990s and gave way to the Muziki dance, which gradually went to several villages. The Muziki would dance imported Teke of Pangala and Brazzaville including Fumu or Teke of stacked. Muziki is danced while also forming the circle like Ebouka. It is danced by young people. The peculiarity of this dance is that during the dance evening the dancers dress in uniforms from top to bottom. Today these dances have almost disappeared, giving way to Ibodo.

g) The Ibodo dance

Initially it was considered a delinquent dance in terms of its jerky rhythm and manner of being practiced, as it involves bodybuilding, bravery and the way girls flaunt the private parts of their bodies. We do not know its origin. Some say she is from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ibodo is practiced throughout central and northern Congo. However, the names change from one country to another. Thus, there are appellations such as Izobolo, Losseba, Bana ya zone, Odeyon, operdu etc. It is a dance that is of great interest to young people today.

h) Owaya and Obitan

These are two not very recent dances whose origin dates back to the 2000s. It is practiced by forming a circle around the drummers and singers. Women and men often show off their shoulders and hands with a more or less accelerated rhythm, punctuated by body games and screams of joy. They are often danced during funerals and political events: parliamentary descent, political campaign etc.

F. Healing initiation dances

These are dances related to cult's good spirits for healing and deliverance to specific diseases such as:

1. Itchoua

In some Boma villages there are initiated men and women called Nganga or Nga. However, this Nganga class is different from the others who do consultations and hold the fetishes or the gris-gris. The bonganga Itchoua consists of welcoming the patient until interning for a given period. The latter is subjected to a treatment which obliges him to dance every evening around a fire to the rhythm of the tom-toms. The patient is supported by the entire village community which supports him in his treatment by dancing and singing throughout his treatment. The dances often start around 19 hours to complete beyond 21h. Thus, the duration of treatment varies from 9 to 27 days depending on the severity of the patient's disease. The last day of treatment is devoted to a large ceremony in the open air, with the entire village community and the family of the cured patient. This is when the healer should be paid. He asks for a sum that varies between 50,000 and 100,000 francs. This amount is debatable; however, it can be paid by deposit, since they have already familiarized themselves. We celebrate the healing and the return to the fold of this denarius which will be accompanied by the healer. Let us note that beyond the initiatory character, Itchoua is a dance which marks the good moments of recreation of the villagers. In other words, it is the right time for love and children's games around Nganga's hut. It only concerns women.

The particularity of this dance is that it is practiced sitting on the floor

for all the participants in the box around the fire. It often concerns women.

2. Ankira

Similar to Itchoua, Ankira affects the person sometimes in the middle of the night, by surprise visited by the spirits who will make them sing day and night in a more or less unconscious way. The community always comes to her aid by singing and dancing so that the spirits are appeased and free her as quickly as possible. If in Itchoua the beginning and the end of the treatment are known, for the Ankira it is the opposite. Thus, the spirits which came suddenly leave in this way. Let us note that the non-respect or the bad execution of the ceremonies by the healer or the patient himself could generate serious consequences for the person possessed by the spirits in particular: madness, loss of memory or death by disappearance.

3. Ceremony of the birth of the twins

The birth of twins among the Boma gives rise to ceremonies as in other ethnic groups in the Congo. It is an initiation dance at the home of the parents of the twins for a period that can last 6 to 8 days or a month. Indeed, it is organized by a specialist initiate woman, the one who has already given birth to the twins on several occasions. During all the ceremonies in the house where the twins are. Elle put in the corner, a pile of trash that will be added each day so long it will last, that is to say all the dirt we sweep the house will be paid in the trash. The end of the ceremonies takes place with a ritual that will bury this pile of trash including the prohibitions for the protection of the life of the twins. This specialist is also paid at the end of the treatment after this ritual. Indeed, the Boma consider the arrival of the twins as the children sent

by the spirits called Ankira. Consequently, they have the right to a ritual if not they will risk leaving again, in other words die. The Boma also believe that twins bring good or bad luck to their parent depending on whether they are well or badly received by the family. This is why when they are born; a dance is organized every evening at the couple's home. This initiatory period is a moment of jubilation and joy. The peculiarity of this dance is that one should utter nonsense, profanity, in the songs to welcome the twins. Also, in the plot is it placed a basket or a plate where each visitor will put at will any gift he has planned for newcomers to meet their needs. It can be: money, fruits, piece of game or fish, Clothes, Chicken, Foufou etc.

4. The Griots

In Congo the Téké in general and the Boma in particular attach great importance to this musical genre. Indeed, the griot occupies a prominent place in the Téké tradition. He is present alongside the kings, dignitaries, notables, and even politico-administrative leaders: Sub-Prefect, Deputy, Prefect, Minister the griot animates the various ceremonies that take place in the villages: funerals, bereavement retreat marriage, Parliamentary decent of the éputé, authority politico-administrative etc. The griot, in his song, praises and adores the ceremony host, recites his family history, which gives him wings of the soul, immense joy. The griot is rewarded with money and valuable goods such as clothes, objects of téké power, as a sign of recognition for the recruitment of his children into the State services: Civil service, the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC), the ent times... the griot also animates

the festivals between the villages, snacks, banquets.

5. Games

Games are par excellence the moments most desired by children. In Boma society, as in other traditional Congolese societies, games are played during the day and at nightfall. Thus, in the Boma environment, there are several kinds of games, in which some participate effectively in the physical growth of children. Others, on the other hand, constitute an acquisition in traditional education. Thus, we find games such as: *Ebei, Ngola, riddle, story, tales, played by adults and the game of hide and seek or lipato, the bottle game, the game of the sea, are children's games.*

Games like *Ngola* and *Ibei* are the moments of entertainment for adults; they sometimes play them in the form of competitions between themselves and between villages by playing bets. Thus, they transform them in the form of a lottery to extract money from others. Nowadays, these games are replaced by modern games played all over the Congo. They are : Ludo, Card games, Queen's game.

G. Boma Economic Organization

The Boma way of life is not very different from that of all Congolese. However, there are some peculiarities related to the physical environment in which it inhabits. Here, we retain the production activities: agriculture, breeding, fishing.

1. Agriculture

The *Boma* is a large agricultural people favored by its physical environment of savannah and clear forest, grove. In this savannah country, most of the production is cassava, which *the Boma* transforms into fofou. It is its staple food. *The Boma* has the secret of fofou, women by preparing the mixture until

it *becomes* softer, forming a ball called *olion-intô*. Its diet consists mainly of edible insects specifically grasshoppers, caterpillars, small game, rodents, fruits and edible leaves. Agriculture remains the main economic activity for *the Boma*. D years the country Ngo, the bant u cultivates nt as food crops like yam, potato, banana, vegetable, etc.

2. Breeding and fishing

The breeding of sheep, goats and oxen is favored in the region of Ngo by the absence of tsetse flies and the existence of vast grassy areas, without forgetting the contribution and support of the Ministry of agriculture and livestock through its various projects. Regarding the activity of fishing, Boma are no fishing. However, they matter fish Mpouya, Gamboma and Oyo. Regarding hunting, according to Ki-Zerbo, hunting is the main activity of this community because, he declares to this effect: *These are remarkable hunters following a game in the trace fliring the ground and sometimes tasting the earth* (KI-ZERBO, n.d.). Jean Marie Ganfoum in his work clearly explains the tswa practice hunting. He says: *C ette hunting formerly practiced with sharp wood as a boom.*

3. Predation activities

These are mainly picking and collecting.

a) **Gathering** : inhabitant of the savannah and the clear forest, the Boma benefits from the products of nature at a seasonal rhythm, for example wild fruits : *malombo, mbila ya essobé, bamboo, Cia tondolo* ... At the rhythm of the rains, nature offers them mushrooms and the like. The other products are exploited on a permanent basis and the picking is done all year round, both for local and commercial

consumption. These are: cassava packaging leaves, asparagus, gnetum africanum (coconut or mfumou), lianas or roots ... these operations are done in an artisanal way and have little impact on the environment compared to the agropastoral activity.

b) Collection: As long as they collect certain products, they also collect other products. Thus, the products collected are: caterpillars, locusts, crickets, termites, fruits, etc.

CONCLUSION

Fixing since time immemorial and distant origins, Twa and Boma maintain relationships that date back many years. These relations gave the link to a political, socio-cultural and economic organization between the Twa and Teke (Boma) of the plateau department of the present Republic of Congo. However, they suffer from several shortcomings which need to be corrected, as recognition and significant consideration has been given to the Tswa by the government of the Republic of Congo.

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