

## The life of André Massaki

1. Childhood in Maquela
2. The early adolescence years
3. Adulthood

Andre Massaki had a busy life as people say. Indeed, he was a journalist, head of a publishing house and at the same time pastor and marriage counselor in addition to his active participation in the political life of his country Angola. Although based in Congo, he never stopped working on the awakening of the conscience of his fellow countrymen not only in Congo but also in Angola, and this through a variety of writings. The love for peace and justice have always accompanied both his political and religious life. Let's go to the childhood of this man called papa Massaki, due to the respect for his experience in the Christian life because that is the aspect which interests us.

Andre Massaki is an orphan who lost his parents and only sister at the age of 6 years. His parents were from the region of Uige in Angola. Born on February 25<sup>th</sup> 1923, in the village of kikaka in the region of Maquela do Zombo, Andre Massaki had a difficult childhood because his parents were not rich and at that time as in all the villages around, you had to work very hard. Andre Massaki was the only child left after the successive deaths of his brothers and sisters and this life he explains in his book entitled "Mwana Nsiona" in Kikongo, translated in English, "the orphan with a broken heart," published in 1972 at the CEDI publishing house in Kinshasa. His father, after spending several years in the village, and to escape the forced labor required by the colonial Portuguese, decided to emigrate to Congo Kinshasa, after hearing good news from other villagers who made the journey before him. Unfortunately he will not stay there long and dies after a long illness and lack of effective care. Andre Massaki's mother who lost her little girl at the same time during a whipping punishment at a public square, fell ill and died. Andre Massaki assisted at this horrible scene, where his mother was being whipped by policemen who did not even care about the little girl who was attached on the back of the woman. This is how he lost his only sister before his very eyes. And this scene affected him all his life. Himself was also a victim of forced labor. Indeed, his maternal aunt having no one else to send to the chores required by the colonials had to send the young André reluctantly. The latter gladly accepted, despite his young age to do the chores for his aunt's peace. Later, he will do it for his own account. Andre Massaki became an orphan and went with his uncle to the city of Matadi in the Belgian Congo to flee this difficult life. He will remain in the Belgian Congo for 43 years. It is in the Bas Congo that he did his primary and secondary school, having always been attracted by studies. Before entering school for the first time, he had learned writing and reading on his own by writing on the ground and learning from those who had entered the school before him. So he made his preparatory and primary studies from 1932 to 1937 at the Swedish Mission (SMF) in Matadi. From 1937 to 1940, he received his secondary education in the educational section at the BMS mission in Ngombe Lutete at about 60 KM from Mbanza Ngungu in Bas-Congo. He was baptized on December 4th, 1932 in Matadi by the missionaries of the Swedish mission. This happened during a sermon by a missionary from the Mission BMS and the verse which touched the young Massaki is this: "Blessed are those who are in sorrow, for God will comfort them" (Matthew 5:4). His mother had always been a pious and wise woman, and she strongly influenced Andre Massaki and so he was always attracted by justice. His mom whose name is Mavivana, therefore said this phrase on her deathbed: "nothing will happen to you, because God the Almighty will take care of you and give you a long life."

2. Andre Massaki lived his adolescence years in Matadi, where he continued his secondary education at the Baptist Mission (BMS) Ngombe Lutete from 1937 to 1939. Still at BMS, he continued his studies to be a primary school teacher. After three years of experience as a teacher from 1940 to 1943 at the Baptist Missionary Society in Ngombe Lutete and at the Swedish Mission (Svenska Forbundet Mission) in Matadi, he entered professional life by chance. At that time, executives of a railroad company were seeking a person of integrity to manage a buffet car on the line-Kinsasa-Matadi. And some people who knew him as a Christian, recommended Andrew Massaki for this position and he was hired after passing a test. So from 1943 to 1945 was Andrew Massaki an executive agent at the Office of Colonial Transport (Otraco).

3. Andre Massaki married on July 2nd, 1944 Ntatani Madeleine, a daughter of a prominent merchant of the time named Mingiedi Mbala, based in Matadi. Although he was very shy, saying that maintaining a wife was not easy and one needed to have a lot of money, he was persuaded by his aunt. Thus, the wife of his uncle encouraged him to take a woman, explaining that a woman would bring with him more than she could as an aunt. Being also an orphan, his aunt wanted him to find a wife before her death. Six years after his marriage, his aunt died. Meanwhile he had many professional experiences as chief dining car on the railway

line Matadi-Kinshasa from 1943 to 1945, head of oil stock in the anglo anglo company based in Matadi from 1945-1950. Afterwards he became a clerk or office expert at the Beltexco company, a Belgian textile company, from 1950 to 1952. His stepfather Mingiedi Mbala took him as administrator of his business from 1952 to 1956 in light of his integrity and knowledge. Andre Massaki was always attracted by knowledge and therefore continued his training despite the many posts he occupied. Jointly with these positions, he was simultaneously speaker at the national voice of Zaire for Baptist churches news from 1958 to 1968 . From 1956 to 1959, after voluntarily leaving the establishment of his stepfather, he opened a public office of secretaryship, with the intention to deal with public affairs. The Belgian colonial authorities gave him permission to do so after a successful contest. Thus he became the intermediary between the African population and the Belgian colonial authorities. This job mainly consisted of writing letters to the Belgian authorities in the commercial and judicial fields on behalf of the african population. Traders also came to see him often to make their inventory and their accounts. Meanwhile he worked as a journalist at Envol newspaper, led by the African literary society, in three languages: French (Envol), the Lingala version (Oyebi) and Kikongo version (Sikama). Then followed the writing in the Moyo (life) as editor in chief, a newspaper that was published at the time in Kikongo too from 1963 to 1973. From 1973 to 1975 Andre Massaki was head of department of CEDI publishing house (center of publishing and distribution of Christian literature) in Kinshasa. At the end of 1975, Andre Massaki and his family moved to Kenya where he was coordinator of the Living Bible in French-speaking African countries and Madagascar (American Christian organization that teaches students and deals with the translation of the Bible) after following courses at the International Institute of techniques in Christian Communications and translation of the Bible. He was in the charge of the translation of the Scriptures until 1981.

During all this time, Andre Massaki was invited to several seminars and conferences. To name a few, he participated in the Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly (PACL), held in Nairobi, Kenya from December 9th to 20th 1976, with the subject of intervention "the Christian and armed conflict. " From May 8th to 13th 1978 in Blantyre, Malawi, he participated in the congress "Love Africa" with a subject of "carrying the burdens of my brother. " This congress was organized by the organization "Open Doors" led by brother Andrew of Holland. Andre Massaki also intervened in Abidjan on the commentary of live translations of the Scriptures, at a pan-African conference of all the Bible Societies, organized by the director of Wycliffe "from May 19th to 25th M 1978. By mid 1981, he left Kenya for Angola with a stopover in Zaire. In Luanda, he became director of the center of evangelical documentation and dissemination of Christian literature "CEDDIL" of CAIE (Conselho Angolano de Igrejas Evangelica from 1981 to 1986. Since 1987, he and his wife worked as marriage counselors in the organization Family Life Ministry( Conselho da vida familiar), he as director and their couple as FLM representatives in Angola. Since the 1960's Andre Massaki and his wife Ntatani Madaleine were responsible for the upbringing of young men and women, young married couples across Africa.

#### The political life of Andre Massaki

Andre Massaki who has always been attracted by justice, was the founder of Assomizo, an association that will become Alliazo, founded on December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1956 and this association will become a political party named PDA (Angolan Democratic Party) which he founded.

The PDA will merge with the UPA of Hoden Roberto to become the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) on March 27th, 1962. His conviction was the freedom of his people. For him, no population could live without freedom and his struggle was thus to free his people from the yoke of colonial Portuguese that he experienced as a child and which was still live in his memory. Meanwhile, he was also Minister of Education at GRAE (armed wing of FNLA) for the mass and executives of the country. Following the sudden death of David Livromentos in October 1962 who was the first President of the FNLA, Andre Massaki became Chairman of the FNLA until December 12th, 1972. the year 1975 was his last one in politics and devoted himself to spreading the message of Jesus in churches and Christian organizations. Andrew Massaki described himself as a "peace maker" and will remain so forever not only in conflict between the leaders of various political movements of Angola but also among all populations.

#### Within churches

Andre Massaki having studied literature and language was particularly interested in the message of Jesus and the freedom of peoples. Language being an extraordinary Communication tool, he had to go learn English in London in 1968 at David's School, England and perfected in French and journalism at the Euro-center in Lausanne and Geneva in Switzerland as well as for journalism.

He also did his theological studies in Switzerland at the Emmaus biblical institute. Since 1975 André Massaki never stopped using the scripts for his work not only in churches but also as advisors with his wife in the FLM Christian organization in which they were representatives in Angola since late 1987. Many young couples and students remember their good advice in Kinshasa in Congo(actual DRC), in Nairobi Kenya, as well as in Luanda , Angola. Wherever he lived, his house was always a welcoming place for

strangers or friends as he had wanted as a child during a discussion with his uncle on their journey to Matadi, Belgian Congo. Since his marriage in July 2nd 1944, the couple Massaki has steadily spread the good word and provided good advice to young and old for their evangelization training, while giving also advice to couples for married life. They have always wanted through their experience of 66 years of married life, to testify to other brothers and sisters of the benefits of having a Christian education as the basis of life and Jesus Christ as savior. Thus, in this context, Ntatani Madalena, his wife, wrote the book "I am a married woman" which was translated into Lingala, Kikongo, Kiswahili and English to reach a large number of women in Central Africa. For André Massaki, other writings followed the orphan with a broken heart:

- Life in a christian home
- To which race does God belong?
- The life of Booker T. Washington
- The life of Disengomoka
- Living letters of mother Ndona Madungu
- The history of the establishment of Baptist Churches in the Northern Angola
- Earth, listen to His voice (a report done after the international congress for world evangelization held in Lausanne, Switzerland, from July 16<sup>th</sup> to 25 1974).
- Advice to the reader

All these books were published in French and Kikongo. Some of them were also translated into Lingala at the time to reach the greatest number. Sharing the moments of his life was truly a learning experience for Andrew Massaki. So he was involved in several conferences on good news, but also peace between peoples. One of the largest Christian conference in which he participated was the "Pacla" (*insert link to the site*) in Nairobi in 1976. For him, Christ's message could also help people of different sides in conflict, not only to talk together and try to find a solution but also to forgive each other. For him, one could not build a country with new bases without going through forgiveness. Belief in God, whatever name you call him, was not necessarily inconsistent with politics but rather a resource to use to gather people together in the name of God through Jesus Christ our saviour.

Since the 2000s, André Massaki retired from work and spends his time organizing his library, but he always remains available to help young people prepare for conferences or interventions in the field of religion and marriage counseling. His pamphlets and books are still available in read-only on site. Being very old and physically weak now (86 years), Andre Massaki is no longer able to meet the various official demands and lives his retirement in the middle of books of his library and radio news bulletins in his house in Viana.

Makuzayi Massaki