

## THE OPENING OF THE CONGO BASIN TO WESTERN INFLUENCES XVI- XIX CENTURIES

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### ABSTRACT

This study portrays the various vicissitudes of European penetration in the Congo Basin. European started relations with the Kongo kingdom through evangelization. The discovery of America had pushed Europeans to use the slave trade and the slave was now exchanged against European products. It is only with the abolition of slavery, that Europeans settled all along the coast, and shortly after the pioneers of colonization penetrated to the interior of the country. Slavery impact negatively and accelerated the depopulation of Africa in general and the Kongo kingdom in particular and also led to the disappearance of some villages and civilizations which have existed hundreds or thousands of years.

**Keywords:** Opening, Congo Basin, western influences, colonization.