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Notes on

West African Categories

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BY

R. E. DENNETT

AUTHOR OF

"Nigerian Studies," "At the Back of the Blackman's Mind," &c.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

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TO THE
MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER
ELEANOR DENNETT (*née* GARFORTH)

686716

PREFACE

I CANNOT help referring to the sympathetic and learned review of *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind* by Dr. A. Van Gennep in the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*. On page 224, however, he states that Miss Werner, in a review of the same book, had been clever enough to point out that there were a number of discordances between my Xivili and Bentley's Congo. On this occasion I have not found it necessary to use Xivili and have gone to Bentley for my words, hoping in this way, by using a language the dictionary of which is easily obtained, my work may be of more general interest and more easily criticised. Mistakes are sure to be found, but they will some day be corrected, and I can only hope that such as they are they will not interfere very much with the end. Van Gennep, Miss Werner, and others have in common with myself, *i.e.* the philological foundation of the categories I have noted as existing at the back of the Black man's mind.

Miss Werner, who was at one time inclined to look upon my work as fantastic, is now greatly helping to push on Van Gennep's endeavour, and in her paper

entitled *The Names of Animals in the Bantu Languages* writes :

“Van Gennep lays stress on the importance of studying the noun classes of the Bantu languages from a new point of view. The ideas underlying this arrangement have long been a puzzle to philologists Most attempts in this direction have been more or less fantastic in character and were, M. Van Gennep thinks, foredoomed to failure because they approached the question from a purely European point of view. The solution, he suggests, may lie along the lines indicated by Mr. Dennett in *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind* (now supplemented by *Nigerian Studies*)—viz. : in discovering the logical system of the Bantu—the principle on which they classify the facts of the visible world so far as these are known to them. ‘Ce système de classification des choses de l'univers, phénomène de l'ordre social, entraîne une classification correspondante des mots designant ces choses.’

“We may remark, in passing, that considerable light is likely to be thrown on this subject by M. Torday's researches among the Bushongo, whose system of sacred animals, intimately connected with their social organisation, seems to complete and explain the information obtained by Mr. Dennett from the Bavili, and the hints as to the Warrendi contained in P. Van der Burght's work, to which M. Van Gennep refers at the end of his Essay.” (*Revue des Idées*, January 15th, 1907.)

I have for the last thirty years been deeply interested in the working of the mind of the Black

man in the Congo and Nigeria, and little by little I have discovered a formula which I maintain is at the back of his mind and has been the foundation of his religious and social systems. And the more I read of the efforts of great minds at home scientifically to put the subconscious in its proper place, the more I feel the need of their help in my studies. It is therefore more in a tentative way that I bring forward what seems to me a very remarkable lesson that I have learnt from the native of Africa, namely, that his natural religion and form of government is, in my opinion, rather the result of instinct and the subconscious than of any direct effort of his brain, although it would appear that at some period or other a classification of his ideas may have been drawn up by his priests or some prophet or philosopher.

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NOTES ON WEST AFRICAN CATEGORIES

THE FORMULA

THE formula which I give in "At the Back of the Black Man's Mind" is formed perpendicularly of $1 + 6 + 1$ or eight parts. Each of these parts have a complementary extension of three parts, making it $4 + (6 \times 4) + 4$, or of thirty-two parts in all. It is as under :

The meaning of the formula appears to me to be that all things created, procreated or produced must

proceed in their creation, procreation, or production in accordance with the order therein expressed, *i.e.*

- 0 God, in the far past, caused
- 1 that which was at rest and which is to become the mover towards a certain intermediate effect,
- 2 & 3 that the intermediate causes of this intermediate effect are two coordinates, *i.e.* the actor and the instrument,
- 4 which by coming together in a certain place cause an intermediate effect.
- 5 This puts a new cause in motion in a certain manner
- 6 & 7 which by means of two intermediate causes which are coordinate and progressive as action and quality
- 8 cause the final desired effect.

As the filling in of the complementary parts in the lateral developments is not absolutely necessary to prove that the thoughts expressed in the perpendicular developments of the categories agree with the classes in their language, I will not attempt to fill them in. I will in this study simply show how the classes in the language of the Bavili prove that there is a natural basis for the philosophy as expressed in the categories not only of the Congo but also of that which I have discovered to exist in Southern Nigeria. I may mention that whereas the Congo is 6° south of the Equator, Southern Nigeria is about the same degree north of it, and that intercommunication between such places so far apart in primitive times was very difficult.

Both countries may have been affected by some movement from the interior.

As I shall be constantly using the terms

- (a) Leading names,
- (b) Perpendicular development,
- (c) Complementary parts,
- (d) Lateral development,

it will be well for my reader clearly to understand what I mean by these terms, and I hope that a glance at the figures below may show my meaning and their position in the formula.

THE CATEGORIES.

CATEGORIES seem to have been the cause of very much discussion from very early times. The Hindus lay down six categories. These are called "The Six Categories of Kanada" and are those of substance, quality, action, genus, individuality and concretion. Aristotle gave us ten categories, and the world wants to know why ten and whence did they come. From Aristotle we come to Kant, who made the categories the kernel of German philosophy which Hegel assimilated and carried to a higher stage. Then we have Hermann Ulrici working out a system of categories which those of Charles Bernard Renouvier, the able French logician, somewhat resemble.

Professor G. F. Stout defines categories (*Manual of Psychology*, vol. 11, pp. 12 foll.) as forms of cognitive consciousness, universal principle, or relations presupposed either in all cognition, or in all cognition of a certain kind.

Now in "At the Back of the Black Man's Mind" and "Nigerian Studies" I have tried to show that certain great categories of thought exist. These conclusions I drew from their folklore and primitive form of

philosophy and government. My observations have been ridiculed by some, while others say that such ideas never existed in the Black Man's mind until I put them there. Well, I shall endeavour to demonstrate that they exist in the classes into which the Bavili and Bakongo divide their language, and I take it for granted that no one will honour me by saying that I drew up the language of the Bavili (people of Loango now part of Congo Français). In "Nigerian Studies" I have pointed out how the form of government in existence there depends on or agrees with this philosophy of the Bantu. The Prophet Ifa, now deified, but once probably a Mohammedan priest, evidently adopted the form in his endeavour to lift the pagan from a belief in many nature powers to a belief in One God. He may be said to have been a kind of Yoruba Moses.

Briefly, the form of government in Yorubaland, Southern Nigeria, is composed of the following officers :

1. The Queen Mother and three courtiers.
The King and three officers.
The War Chief and three officers.
The Prime Minister and three officers, or sixteen personages in all.
2. The Prime Minister (who both in the Congo and Nigeria need not be a prince) becomes the head of a Council, and he is helped by three officers
The Prime Minister and each of these again have three assistants or courtiers, thus forming another set of sixteen.

6 NOTES ON WEST AFRICAN CATEGORIES

3. The Council is formed of six pairs of elders and their twelve Orishas or deified ancestors, or twenty-four parts in all.

The formula may thus be mathematically expressed as $4 + 4 + (6 \times 2)$, that is not counting the followers, or complementary parts.

The nature powers, still worshipped by the followers of Ifa the Nigerian Revealer, are

4. Creative deities coinciding with the King's court.
5. Procreative deities coinciding with the Prime Minister and his three great officers.
6. Pairs of created elementary powers representing water, earth, etc., coinciding with the Council of the Prime Minister.

These gods and powers are connected with the seasons and dominate birth, marriage, and tabu ceremonies in such a way that it is impossible to separate them from the religious rites and all that the natives hold most sacred.

Further, they are not only nature deities but they are also looked upon in many cases as the deified ancestors of the people in their different categories as kings, chiefs, priests, fishermen, hunters, farmers, etc.¹

Through the seasons, and the names of the divining palm nuts and their meaning, and in other ways, I have shown that the religious and social ideas of the Yoruba can be reconciled with those of the Bavili as

¹ I have written in general terms purposely, but those who are interested in this matter and wish to know the names of the Gods and Rulers will find them in "At the Back of the Black Man's Mind" and "Nigerian Studies."

given in my book "At the Back of the Black Man's Mind."

In the following pages I propose proving that these categories can be shown to exist in the classes into which the language of the Bavili is divided by certain prefixes. After having set forth the prefixes, I shall precede my studies in the classes themselves by a short account of what I believe to have been the West African's primitive life.

Remember that I am dealing with a poetic and imaginative people, and without the exercise on the part of the reader of a certain amount of primitive imagination what follows will hardly appeal to him.

BANTU AND BAVILI PREFIXES

THE language of the Bavili is a dialect of the one spoken by the people of the Congo, as a section of the great Bantu tongue, and is agglutinative.

The nouns in this language are always immediately preceded by prefixes, much as nouns in English are followed by the suffixes: *ness, dom, tion, ance, ly* and *ity*. All the pronouns, adjectives, and verbs receive the same prefixes as the noun which is the subject of the sentence, so that we need not dilate upon the important part they play in the speech of the Bavili and the Bantu generally.

Anyone who has looked into the grammars of the different dialects of the Bantu will be struck on the one hand by their similarity, and on the other by the want of order displayed by the different grammarians in their arrangement of the prefixes.

In 1659 a grammar by Fr. Hyacinth Brusciotto de Vetralla, Prefect of the Catholic Church in the Congo, was published in Rome "for the more easy understanding of the most difficult idiom of the people of the Congo."

Mr. Bentley gave us his remarkable dictionary and grammar of the Congo dialect in 1887, and

Monseigneur Carrie presented us with his excellent "Grammaire de la langue Fiote, dialecte du Ka Kongo" in 1888.

In his comparative grammar of South African languages, Bleek (1862) compared the concord prefixes of twenty-five Bantu languages and gave his "standard" as under:—

	Singular.	Plural.
1.	Mu	A or Ba
2.	N	Thin or tin.
3.	Mu	Mi
4.	Ki	Pi
5.	Di	Ma
6.	Ku	Ma
7.	Lu	Tu
8.	U or Bu	U or Bu
	,	Ma
9.	Pa	Mo
10.	Ka	—

The following are the differences between this standard list and that of the Bavili, so far as my knowledge will take me:—

No. 1. No change.

No. 2. N and M as light nasals preceded by the letter *e* take the prefix Zi instead of *Thin* or *tin*.

No. 3. No change.

No. 4. Ki the Bavili pronounce Xi or Tchi and it makes Bi in the plural instead of Pi. This difference is insignificant, especially when

we remember that the ancient missionaries spelt *Kabinda Capinda*.

No. 5. The Bavili place Li for Di, the plural being the same.

No. 6. No change.

No. 7. No change.

No. 8. No change.

No. 9. The Bavili have Va singular and Mu plural. The Va form, however, appears to me to be anterior to Pa, the development. The Fjort do not like saying *Mva Mva* and say *Mpa Mpa* in its place.¹ Mr. Bentley tells us "Mp is nearly always the result of a combination of M and V, the V having become P according to euphonic law. If M were under

¹ The Kongo people also object to the combination of F with A or E in initial syllables, and in such cases U or W intervenes.

A is often a contraction for Ia, as in the word *Za* for *Zia*.

Fa, then, may be said to stand for Fia, and so Fia or Fa may be written Fwa.

The word *Fwati* (little), has just the opposite meaning to the word *Mpampa* (much), so that in an indirect way we arrive at F as the diminutive of V; hence, perhaps, Mr. Bentley's Class 15—Fi he calls a sign of the diminutive.

The word *Vama*, plural *Muma* (Bavili, a place), is given by Mr. Bentley as *Vuma* (Kongo) and means space, while *Fulu* has the sense of an enclosed space and remains *Fulu* in the plural. *Mpulu* again means the scrotum, while *Mpuma* has the meaning of a man who is as free (as space) from all *Xina* (pl. *Bina*) or things forbidden.

Thus we have the opposites :—

<i>Vuma</i> , space	<i>Mpuma</i> , a man free, etc.
<i>Fulu</i> , room	<i>Mpulu</i> , the scrotum.

The change caused by P taking the place of V or F in these words then appears to be the giving of a finite and limited sense to a word otherwise referring to the infinite or something greater.

any circumstances removed, the P reverts to V."

Thus :— *Mpaku* *lu Vaku*
 Mpunda *Vunda*
 Mpila *Mvila.*

No. 10. Ka. This prefix no longer appears in colloquial Xivili, and it is possible that the euphonic N's or M's which precede the Ka sound, may have caused it to disappear and have then carried it off into that class of light nasals which makes its plural in Zi.

I am, however, rather inclined to think that at one time it may perhaps have been a part of the Ki-Bi class, the Ki or Ka, for euphonic reasons making Mi in the plural (see Bu, plural Ma or Mi).

Thus we have the word *Koko*, hand, for *Kioko*, *Mioko* in the plural. This Mi being possibly an older form of Bi. This connection between Bi and Mi and I becomes more apparent when we learn that all are abbreviated forms of Imbi. Thus a stranger *Muegne*, plural *Begne*.

So much then for the differences between Bleek's standard list and the prefixes now in use among the Bavili.

In the following notes I will endeavour to take what I think is the psychological order of the prefixes; we may then see whether this order agrees

with the order of the categories as given in "At the Back of the Black Man's Mind" and "Nigerian Studies" or not, *i.e.* the order of procreation and the seasons. If it does, then I think we may conclude that the so-called Christian influence, which some of my critics suggest, must date back many thousands of years, and that its connection, even with Genesis, must be a very remote one. For, as I have said before, I lay no claim to the creation of the order of the seasons, upon which order the categories of thought, both among the Bavili and the Yoruba, seem to me to depend.

INFANCY AND THE PREFIXES

I THINK we can liken the primary stage in the development of the race to the infantile stage in the growth of the individual. It will be interesting to discover if words can be found in Xivili or Bakongo to express the “perpendicular” progression in the growth of the baby from its birth to the time that it begins to speak, and so prove itself in the native fashion of thinking as something more than a mere animal.

In considering this stage we must remember that the child originated from its father, or, as some primitive people thought, in some life-giving stone or tree. There should then be a class for this originating power; we shall mark this down as the “O” class.

There never has been any doubt as to the mother being the means through which the child is born. She received the seed, or inspiration, from without herself, and it became confined within an enclosed place.

1. Va—Mu.—*Vama*, space,—plural *Muma* may be taken as standing for this operation. We shall call this class number 1. The child is born.

2. Mu—Mi.—It has life (*Moyo*), breath (*Mula*), as it takes in the air (*Mwela*) of heaven. The accoucheur

(*Mbussi*) helped to bring it into the world. This is the Mu—Mi class, which we shall number 2.

3. Xi or Ki, plural I or Yi or Bi.—In its early infancy (*Kindeka*) it utters a faint sound (*Xinzuzukulu*), and shows its affinity (*Kiyitu*) to humanity (*Kiwuntu*) by certain signs of intelligence (*Kibalanga*). This is the Xi or Ki, plural Yi or Bi, class, which we shall call number 3.

4. Li or Di or E, plural Ma.—Then it imbibes milk (*Lidenwuene*) from its mother's breast (*Ebeni*), and so grows. This is the E, Di, or Li, plural Ma, class, which we shall number 4.

5. Lu—Tu.—It now begins to feel and touch things, and so obtain pleasant or unpleasant sensations (*Luiuu*, plural *Tuiuu*). This we shall call the 5th class.

6. Ku—Ma.—It begins to find the use of its legs (*Kulu-Matu*), and by using its powers of sight, etc., it begins its first lessons in mimicry (*Kusokolola*). This is our Ku—Ma or 6th class.

7. Bu—Ma.—Then it uses its capacity (*Buzabu*, plural *Mazabu*) and activity in climbing and playing and making things. This is the Bu—Ma and our 7th class.

8. Mu—Ba.—And finally as it speaks it becomes entitled to be included in the class of persons as a child (*Muana*, plural *Bana*); this is the Mu—Ba or 8th class.

But outside these classes the Bavili have two classes: one into which foreign words are placed, which make their plural by adding *Zi* to the singular,

our 9th class, and another, or that of plural nouns such as *Zambi*,¹ used in a singular sense.

As *Zambi*, a developed idea of God, comes to mean the Creator of heaven, the waters and the earth, as the one in whom are all things, we will call this 10th class the "O" class, and in trying to explain the philosophy of the classes and categories it shall be understood that these 9th and 10th classes stand outside the intermediate 8 classes.

The classes in this order now stand as under :—

"O" plural nouns with singular meanings.

1—Va—Mu

2—Mu—Mi

3—Ki—Bi or Yi or I

4 —Li or E or Di plural Ma

5—Lu—Tu

6—Ku—Ma

7—Bu—Ma

8—Mu—Ba

9—N or M plural Zi

¹ The word *Zambi* is derived from Zi plural sign :—

Ia = four

Zia or Za = fours

Imbi = personal essence

Zambi = God.

Zambi is the personal essence of the "fours" which appear so often in the Bavili philosophy. He is here in the 10th class as the one in whom are all things. In the same way among the Yoruba, Olorun is the owner of the heavens, the origin of all the personalities or dead ancestors figured by stars in the heavens.

THE PRIMITIVE WEST AFRICAN

IN preanimistic times two great needs urged man on to a development of which he little dreamed. Hunger forced him to the search for food, and desire impelled him to copulation. The elements existed; they constituted his environment; and they consequentially affected him: and he trapped fish in the rushing waters of subsiding floods and streams. He also trapped the young of animals; and later he hunted them, having no other weapon beyond a pointed stick. His sense of hearing developed, and he was quick to catch the slightest noise made by the fish in traps in the water or the young animals on earth. He mimicked the cry of animals and called them near enough to him to pierce them with his pointed stick. Now, even to this day, on the West coast of Africa, the great time for fishing and hunting is just after the rains until the rains commence again; that is, during the four to five months comprising the dry season.

Man's sense of taste or his need for food cannot then be dissociated from the occupation of trapping and hunting from the dry season, the senses of hearing and calling from the elements of water and earth.

I have shown that in Yoruba the words used for the senses of smell, sight, and touch are all included in words meaning to copulate. Like the animal he was, primitive man was led by his sense of smell towards women at a certain period; he saw them, pursued them, and came into contact with them. This was at the season of the year just following the season of fish and flesh; and, so, just as the rains commenced.

Man in this animal stage of existence was probably a wanderer on the face of the earth. Attracted by his sense of smell, he, with other males, was drawn towards a female, fought his competitors, and instinctively satisfied his desire, and then left the female to her own devices. She in time conceived and brought forth a child. At this time she possibly in no way connected her conqueror with the event that made her a mother. Like other animals, she tended her offspring until such time as it could look after itself, when she left it or it left her. This process would be repeated until she was past bearing, when men would no longer approach her, and she finally was killed or then, lost or helpless, she died unmourned and forgotten. There are enough traces left in Africa of this wandering life and indifference to the death of the old to enable us to picture the sad existence of such a mother. Even where people in Africa are settled and living in villages this neglect of the old, who have outlived their usefulness and their relations, is often brought to our notice as we travel through the country and meet starved old women by the wayside, either dead or trying to walk to some far-

off town, where they think or know that some compassionate relation may, perchance, still live. In such cases love has been outlived and there is no horror of death. I said "sad existence"; but, while it looks and is sad from our point of view, it would, in those far-off animal days, be a natural state of affairs and no one would be sad about it. The mother, however, owned the children so long as she could keep them, and they in their wanderings, if they ever thought about it, would never connect a father as the cause of their being, but would look on and consider the mother as their sole progenitor. As Hartland in his *Primitive Paternity* says: "Birth is a phenomenon independent of the union of sexes. By this it is not meant that, at the present time, everywhere among such peoples physiological knowledge is still in so backward a condition that the co-operation of the sexes is regarded as a matter of indifference in the production of children. That would be to contradict the facts. To-day the vast majority of savage and barbarous natives are aware that sexual union is ordinarily a condition precedent to birth. Even among such peoples, however, exceptions are admitted without difficulty: and there are peoples like certain Australian tribes who do not yet understand it. Their state of ignorance was probably once the state of other races, and indeed of all humanity. The history of mankind so far as we can trace it, whether in written records or by the less direct, but not the less certain methods of scientific investigation, exhibits the slow and gradual encroachments of knowledge on the

confines of boundless ignorance. That such ignorance should once have touched the hidden springs of life itself is no more discreditable than that it should have extended to the cause of death."

I think we may trace to this period of "Mother-right" the fact that many primitive people in Africa still trace their descent through the mother branch of the family, where the nephew succeeds to his uncle's rights and possessions. And so far as my experience goes "Father-right" is in Africa, comparatively speaking, a modern invention due to Mohammedan or Christian influence. So strong was "Mother-right" in the Congo that I can remember a trader's factory being attacked because he had sent his daughter by a native woman to Europe to be educated; and until quite lately a father among the Bavili could only say he owned those of his children he had redeemed. (See *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind*, page 41.) It may be well said then of Africa, as Hartland says in *Primitive Paternity*: "The conclusion seems irresistible that Father-right is traceable not to any change in savage or barbarous theories of blood relationship, but to social and economical causes."

But there succeeded to this state of hunger, wandering, and haphazard propagation, when life, danger, death, and mystery, though experienced, were not thought about, a time when man and woman became companions, and finally found it necessary or convenient to live together in a more or less settled state.

THE BEGINNING OF ANIMISM

HIS VENERATION FOR STONES AND TREES

IN Benin, wooden images are sacred to some river spirits, such as Ovia, Ovatu, Ibwili, and Erede ; while stones are found in the groves of the spirits of the Rivers Okwhai, Olokun, Ake, Okbi, Okunwan, Akwiaon, Okwa, and Ogha. All wooden figures representing their ancestors are called by the people Elimi or Enimi.

Men of science take us back to electrons in the kingdom of matter, to protophyta in the vegetable kingdom, and to protozoa in the animal. Life is evident in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and men of science now tell us that the mineral kingdom may also be living matter. It is no use our talking to the uneducated native of Africa about electrons, protophyta, or protozoa ; but, when we tell him that stones and trees, as well as animals, have life in them, he looks upon us with a certain amount of compassion, as if to say : " Have you just found that out ? I have been trying for centuries to tell you this, but you have told me that my belief is simply superstitious." Yes, subconsciously, the so-called savage or primitive man has for a long time believed implicitly in the truth of

this speculation of the laboratories. In this stage of man's development, it may truthfully be said that instinct is fast passing into individual and racial intelligence. Darwin told us long ago that the difference in mind between man and the higher grade of animals, great as it was, was certainly one of degree and not of kind. I wonder who was the better interpreter of nature : the native of Africa who humbly felt himself part of these kingdoms, or the arrogant westerner who called the unstudied instinctive conclusions of the native superstition. Not only does the native suffer, but those observers who see in his instinctively built up institutions something worth studying are regarded by the westerner as creatures suffering from some mental delusion, a kind of "disease not unknown among Europeans who have lived a long time in savage countries." And when such a person has learnt something of the progress of science, and has suddenly been confronted with the inner meaning of what he calls symbolism—which may be said to coincide with the scientific progress he has read about—he accuses the diseased ones of putting ideas into the Blackman's mind, or satisfies his arrogance by calling the description fantastic.

This kind of person has not learned that the sprouting of intelligence in primitive and civilised man respectively is the same : and he is not ready to accept a truth, wrapped up in symbolic or poetic language ; because he himself would not have so expressed it. He has no pity for the ignorance of

primitive man whose want of twentieth century vocabulary has not permitted him (primitive man) to express a truth in twentieth century language.

The Bini woman desirous to become a mother goes to a sacred stone and invokes it accordingly. "Call me not 'stone,'" answers the stone, "I am a being : " and he grants her prayer.

The Oni of Ife asserts that when the Creator had finished making the world He turned to stone again.

Herbert Spencer quoting Piedrahita (Sociology 1-1 page 180) says "the Laches worshipped every stone as a god, as they said they had all been men, and that all men were converted into stones after death, and that a day was coming when all stones would be raised as men."

A Chukchi female Shaman showed a recent scientific traveller a stone of peculiar shape which she called her husband. (*Primitive Paternity*, page 119, Hartland.)

An egg-shaped pebble of quartz two inches long by an inch and a half in greatest diameter was formerly used in the western division of Sandsting parish as a cure for sterility. (*Ibid*, page 79.)

Beneath a chair (which is of stone and much worn) in Finchale Priory Church in the county of Durham is shown a seat, said to have the virtue of removing sterility and procuring issue for any woman who, having performed certain ceremonies, sat down therein and devoutly wished for a child. (*Ibid*, page 129.)

The truth buried in all this is that stones were and still are believed to have a living principle in them.

Our men of science now tell us that stones may have life in them, and although we may not believe in their magic influence it is certain that Africans as well as ourselves use iron "to make us strong" as they say, and many other minerals as medicines.

Trees are planted over the graves of chiefs in Benin City, and in many other places in Africa, and we may presume that in many towns which once existed but of which there are few traces the same custom held good. These spots are in many cases covered with dense bush, among which are the sacred trees, some of which are still looked upon as the home of the soul of some departed ancestor by his descendants now living in other places. Trees are said to grant children to women.

"As in the case of trees," writes Hartland in *Primitive Paternity*, "so also plants of smaller growth have been referred to transformations of sacred or mysterious personages.

"The various legends of the origin of maize are too well known to need repetition. The Brazilian legend of the manioc is similar. It was a maiden born to a chief's daughter who had never known man. She grew to maturity in a year, died without disease, and was buried in her mother's house. The grave was watered every day according to the ancient custom of the tribe, and in due course a plant grew up from it, flourished and bore fruit. . . .

"A scene portrayed on the walls of a chamber in the Great Temple of Isis at Philæ represents the dead body of Osiris with stalks of corn springing from it,

while a priest waters the stalks from a pitcher in his hand."

Frank in "Modern Light on Immortality" says :
"The element of the tree worship undoubtedly evinces the aboriginal origin of the Druidical worship ; for it is easily traced through the entire Scandinavian mythology."

It is Odhinn who with his two brothers goes forth throughout the world to find *Ask* and *Embla*, the ash and the elm. Finding these stocks void of life, they breathed into them the living spirit, and from their bosom sprang the human race.

HIS RELATION TO ANIMALS

AGAIN, among the Yoruba we find Iro, the chimpanzee, confused with Oro, the departed spirit of the first father. They say that Iro had the power of sacrificing to the Orishas in such a way that he could obtain children for the sterile and barren. He killed one of his master's children, ran away, and became a chimpanzee ; and now if anyone wants a child from Oro he will get a ram and peto (corn beer) and take them to the Oro grove and ask the master of Iro to take the offering to him.

“ The Moors consider it wrong to kill a monkey, because the monkey was once a man whom God changed into his present shape as a punishment for the sin he committed by performing his ablutions with milk. The Chukchi of North-Eastern Siberia believe that if a person is cruel to brutes his soul will after his death migrate into some domestic animal.” (*The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, Westermarck.)

Here then we find that the souls of human beings are as it were degraded back to animals on account of their brutality ; and I think it is worth while to note that while the primitive man feels himself much more

closely related to the animal world than does his civilised fellow creature, he still looks upon it as an inferior world to his—a place for brutes that good men dislike and fear. Egyptian gods taking advantage of this fear are said to have turned themselves into beasts to keep men in order.

“The adoration and worship of beasts among the Egyptians,” says Diodorus, “seems justly to many a most strange and unaccountable thing and worthy enquiry: for they worship some creatures even above measure, when they are dead as well as when they are living; as cats, ichneumons, dogs, kites, the bird Ibis, wolves, and crocodiles, and many other such like.”

He informs us of the extraordinary expense and care to which the priests put themselves when providing for the living animals, and even still more extravagant labour to which they went in observing the obsequies of the sacred animals. He says: “No similar worship was to be found among any of the ancient people. . . .” Evidently in some way all these ceremonies point to some occult relation or conception of some common derivation between man and beast, which is not apparent but must be deduced from concomitant circumstances.

Diodorus hints—“that the first gods were so few, and men so many above their number, and so wicked and impious, that they were too weak for them, and therefore transformed themselves into beasts and by that means avoided their assaults and cruelty. But afterwards they say that the kings and princes of the earth (in gratitude to them for the first authors of

their well being) directed how carefully those creatures whose shapes they had assumed should be fed while they were alive and how they were to be buried when they were dead." (Frank's *Modern Light on Immortality*, p. 88.)

In the Congo, among the Bavili, the Leopard has a Court; certain other animals holding the same offices, which are called by the same names as persons of the King's Court; the Mfumu or king calling himself the Leopard. Among the Yoruba, the only person allowed to call himself the Leopard is the Alafin of Oyo. (For more about the Leopard see *Nigerian Studies, At the Back of the Black Man's Mind*, and *The Folklore of the Fjort*.)

On the other hand, a grandfather in Abeokuta who loved his grandson's wife told her that after his death he would come back to the world as her son. And a slave in Benin City who was very basely treated by his mistress, whom he hated, threatened to come back to life again as her son as a punishment for her cruelty—and, as all the Benin world knows, he fulfilled his threat and is now in that city giving his mother a fearful time of it. He insists on going to market with her, and cries for all he wants until she gives it to him.

The souls of the dead are thus seen to have departed into stones, trees, and animals, and sterile men and barren women can by prayer obtain life-giving powers from either of these representatives of the three kingdoms. The native thus recognises three sources of life: that which is in the stones, that

which is in the trees, and that which is in man the representative of the animal kingdom; but these sources of life are rather the ancestors of the native than the intrinsic life of the stones or trees themselves. The stone or tree is, in many cases, to the soul of the ancestor what the body is to the life and soul of living man.

I have sketched the primitive African animated by the desire to eat, to drink, and to copulate; and I have briefly shown how his thoughts became associated with the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, which he had come to connect with his desires. The desire for existing things and the desire for copulation and the means for satisfying these desires were present to primitive man long before he had come to see any connection between procreation and production; and it was only after he had stored observations of the growth of plants and the order of the seasons, and had drawn conclusions from his observations, that he came to grasp any idea of this connection.

ANIMISTIC PLANTING MAN IN CONNECTION WITH THE CATEGORIES

AFTER many years of gradual development man started to plant, and he did so at the season of the year which his ancestors had handed down to him as the marriage season. Man had now entered well into the animistic stage of his existence; and the hunter had developed not only into a farmer, but also into a medicine-man. Man also, though perhaps still more or less of a wanderer, had settled down during the rainy season and lived with his wives and family. He watched the seasons, and noted that after having copulated and planted his wife conceived and plants germinated; his wife became pregnant, and the earth yielded its fulness or harvest; and, finally, as the fruits of trees rotted, so his wife either died with the dying rainy season or then lived through the dangerous 7th and 8th months, and finally gave birth to her offspring just at the time of rest and before he had to go trapping fish and hunting animals again. This all seems to me a perfectly natural development of that sympathetic magic of which we hear so much as existing between procreation and production and the seasons.

The dry season we have already connected with trapping and hunting, and the sense of hearing and calling; and the senses of smell, sight, and touch have been associated with copulation. The rainy season cannot be dissociated from the progression of procreation and production.

Marriage and farming may be said to have produced the priest, the doctor, and the farmer. The necessity of exchange of products brought forth the markets and the buyer and seller. And the necessity of better implements of hunting, war, and farming produced the blacksmith and other mechanics.

And in this way the progress of civilisation may be said to be perpendicular,¹ and should fall into the order as already given in the infantile stage of man.

I will now give you a list of words in each of the different classes, which clearly shows that each class is intimately connected with the categories as given in *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind, i.e.,*

1 { Water Fishing, etc. }	2 { Earth Hunting, etc. }	3 { Rainy season Marriage Planting }
4 { Motion Conception }	5 { Action Pregnancy Harvest }	6 { Travail Life Death }

I am dealing here, it must be remembered, solely with what I have called the perpendicular development; and if I am allowed I will go further and say

¹ For my meaning of the word "perpendicular" see page 3, formula (*b*).

that the meaning of the words, which form the prefixes Nos. 2, 3, and 4, in themselves refer to the main headings of the three categories—Water, Earth, and Planting.

- (2) Mu—Mi . . . Mu = Sea.
- (3) Xi or Ki—Bi . . . Xi or Ki is sometimes translated as “at the house of.”
- Anci* is earth, and in the word *Anciama* or *Xama*, the rainbow, we have Xi taking the place of ANCI, earth.
- (4) Di or Li—Ma . . . Di or Li are roots of the words *Dia* or *Lia*, which mean food.

THE LIST OF WORDS.

Category—Water

Class (2) Mu or M and N, plural Mi.

Next to the "Revelation" or space class VA—MU, we have that which is revealed *Muinda*, pl. *Minda*, or that which shines.

The verbs in this class are formed in many cases by Onomatopoea, i.e., the sea or that which U.U.U's or roars, *Mu*, pl. *Miu*; the stream that Bu Bu Bu's or babbles and flows; the rain that falls *Nnoka*, pl. *Minoka*; the steam that rises from hot food that smells *Muku*, pl. *Miuku*; salt that has been evaporated from the sea *Mungwa*, pl. *Miungwa*; *Muali* fibre from which traps are made; *Ntambu*, pl. *Mitambu*, a trap or that which is tied; *Mushinga* a belt; *Nleki* the fisherman.

The child now adolescent (*Ntenda*, pl. *Mitenda*) is blessed with a heart (*Ntima*) and a soul (*Mwanda*). He has learnt to associate the sound of the bell with announcement (*Nsamu*); the sound (*Ta*) of the arrow as it flies through the air with the one who shoots (*Munta*); the sound of speech and the mouth (*Nua*).

The name of this season is *Mwici*, and it is composed of two months called the depth of salt water and of fresh water.

Philologically then this Mu—Mi class has been clearly shown to be connected with the fishing season and my category headed Water. The following are the names of fish, animals, etc., in this trapper class :

Nsangi whitebait ; *Ngola* catfish ; *Nzonji* small scaly fish ; *Mbete* slug ; *Nkala* crab ; *Nygungu* spider ; *Nsusu Ankiengele* water spider ; *Mfulu* tortoise ; *Mbambi* lizard ; *Mboma* black python ; *Mpidi* an adder ; *Nzau* elephant ; *Nguvu* hippopotamous ; *Ngulu* pig ; *Ngombo* the wild ox ; *Mpakasa* a buffalo ; *Nkombo* a goat ; *Nkoko* a goat ; *Mpiti* a small gazelle-like antelope ; *Mbumba* a cat ; *Mbwa* a dog ; *Mpuku* rat ; *Ngulumaci* manatee ; *Nsekele* rabbit ; *Nkewa*, *Nkima* monkeys ; *Mkusu* parrot ; *Nduwa* plantain-eater ; *Ngono* crow ; *Nuni-Eyanga* a stork ; *Nkitikiti* a moorhen ; *Nsunguluwa* kingfisher ; *Nsusu* a fowl ; *Nkelele* a guinea fowl ; *Mbobobo* a wood pecker ; *Ndiedie* a small blue bird.

We naturally expected a large number of fish and animals in this "trapping" class, as well as in the hunting class which follows it.

Category—Earth.

Class (3) Ki or Xi (Tchi), plural Bi.

In this class we find words expressing office, agency, or condition, or words which in their English equivalents end in the suffixes *ship*, *ness*, *dom*—*Xitinu* kingship, from *Ntinu* a king.

When nobles in Loango speak of the earth they use the word *Xivili*, which is also the name of their language.

The centre of digestive thought *Xifundi* is often said to be the stomach *Xivumu*. *Xizuissu* means right,—reason he calls *Xizonza*, and intelligence *Xibalanga* (the verb *Zonza* meaning to disagree and *Balanga* to keep on hardening). *Xinsu* is a sign; *Xizala* a nail of the finger; *Xisa* a picture; *Xina* a thing forbidden; *Xibunzu* esteem; *Xidunzindunzi* tête-à-tête. Grass is called *Xititi*, and firewood *Xixi*.

This category falls into the place of the season of two months (*Xicivu*) called *Bunji*, the end of the cold dry season nearing the end of the hunter's season and the beginning of the rains. The ancient hunter used either a cudgel *Kodi* or *Bota*, and later on a kind of hatchet *Xitali*; he gained access to young animals by mimicking their mother's call or cry *Dilu*. He was thus a great deceiver *Mvuni*. Small showers *Wangawanga* warn the hunters and fishermen that it is time for them to leave their hunting-camps and return to their villages to repair their houses.

In this Ki—Bi class we have the deceitful little

gazelle-like antelopes *Kinkuba* and *Kimpiti*, the cat *Budi* and the hyena *Kimbungu*, the water rat *Kondana-Mpati*, the rat *Kimbwa*, the buzzard hawk *Kimbi*, the kite *Kimbembe*, the owl *Kutukudia*, cock bird of the whydah *Kinsengwa*, the sand-martin *Lekamayenga*, the partridge *Kinkwavi*, the quail *Kimbimbi*, the green snake *Kinzengele*, the small snake *Kimbanda*, the adder *Minamaki*, the tadpole *Diokolo*, the frog *Xidi*, the toad *Kiwula*, a small fish *Vadi*, the shrimp *Kimbidingi*, the firefly *Minikamallenge*, the dragon-fly *Venga Mpunza*, the mantis *Xikansambi*, the grasshoppers *Vengela*, *Kintele*, *Kinxiamaji*, and *Kisasi*; the caterpillar *Kimpiatu*, the unicorn beetle *Kinkakala*, the small beetle destructive to skins *Kulukuku*, and the cicada insect *Kintendela*. The generic name for small insects *Kinzanzala*, the jigger *Dede*, the bug *Kinsekwa*, the winged ant *Yinswa*, the black stinging ant *Kiansudi*.

Category—Marriage and Planting.

Class (4) E or Di or Li, plural Ma.

The beginning of the rainy season *Nvula* is the period of evolution and production. Drizzle *Liwunge* covers the head of the fisherman, and the dew *Lidime* in the early morning still glistens like pearls on the grass. The first rains come as a surprise *Lixivi*, and husbands hurry to fix the king post *Likunji* of the shelter *Lilondo* to protect their wives from the heat *Libabala* of the sun so like that of a furnace *Esoka*, and young males *Eyakala* who have passed through

the house of circumcision *Lilongo* search for mates. This is the season of marriage *Likwela*, vagina *Likota* and scrotum *Likata*, and the smell that the first rains cause the earth to give forth, a smell of a slightly musky odour, is said to suggest (*Liambu* = suggestion) thoughts of marriage to virgins and animals that have not yet given birth to young *Esundi*; gentleness *Malembe* gives way to anger and passion *Likaxi* and *Likudi*, and the virgin's breasts *Libeni* are developing and she is ready to become a breeding animal *Lixina*. Men having married make a fence of papyrus *Liwu* around their wives' huts. This is a time of imagination when men's thoughts are lightly turned to love and marriage. They marry and think of offspring. But it is not only a season of marriage, but also one of sowing and planting; the woman takes care of her hen's eggs, and her thoughts are carried to the time when these eggs *Liaxi* will become chickens. She plants her seed *Linsansa* and thinks of the harvest she will reap from her fields *Livia* and farm *Liyangala*, such as corn *Lisa*, pumpkin *Lilenge*, sweet potato *Livuta*, ground nuts *Liakila*, beans *Limbandi*, cassava *Edoko*, the plantain *Dinkongo*. All these thoughts of the good time coming are a source of gladness and joy *LiyANJI*. Man still hunts, but round about his farm and with dogs "*Eveta*." The earth produces the edible fungi *Libalantoto* and *Etumbudia*, and dead fish *Etidi* float down the rivers. This they cook in pots placed on three stones *Makukwa*. Sheep *Limeme* are now kept, and in this (E, Li, Di, plural Ma) class we have the following animals, etc., in addition to the

sheep : *Ekombe* the civet, *Dievwa* the jackal, *Ebulan-sunga* the flying squirrel ; the rats *Etonga*, *Etumpu*, and *Esunjia* ; the mouse *Etutu*. The hornbill *Epanji*, the pelican *Elembe*, the whydah bird when not in plumage *Eseke*, the dove *Eyembe*. The small juju omen bird *Ekuluntietie*, the lizard *Ekolombo*, the cerastes viper *Euta*, the tadpole *Etakangola*, the bull-frog *Esundu*. The snipe fish *Eleka*, the spider *Esangangungu*. The carpenter-bee *Efungununu*, the hornet *Dingungu*, the blowfly *Ekulumbwanji*, and the flies *Evukunia* and *Evekwa*. *Ekonko* is the generic name for grasshoppers, and the large one with purple wings is called *Ebangia*. The caterpillars *Ebanda-Nzaji* *Elamalama* belong to this class. The white working ant *Ekeketele*, and the one that eats it the *Elendeji* also.

Category—Season of Conception and Germination

Class 5 (Lu, pl. Tu).

This class of prefix gives a collective noun a special and divided sense. *Mbu*, the sea, an open space, becomes *Lumbu*, the enclosed space where man keeps his wife. It is the end of one period and the beginning of another, as in fermentation, and so a kind of new birth (*Luwutilu*).

The seed sown moves on to a stage of germination (*Luwalumuka*), and man, having come in contact or touch (*Luviakana*) with woman, conception (*Luyinita*) takes place.

Most words ending in English in "tion" expressing

the manner of the action or movement of the verb belong to this Lu—Tu class.

Sickness (*Luluka*) overcomes the wife, and man's love (*Luzolu*) and desire (*Luvuilu*) cause him to build the fence (*Lumbu*) round her hut to guard her from the fury of beasts (*Lonzo*) and wind (*Lunga*). Man cannot remember his birth (*Luwutilu*), nor the beginning of things (*Lubantumumu*). He may retain a vague impression of the time when he was carried in a sling (*Lusembe*) on his mother's back. He can perhaps recall the time when he ceased to crawl, and the action of walking (*Luliatu*) commenced. He remembers quite well the passing away of childhood, and when he reached the adult state (*Lumbutu*), and when he first wore an apron of leaves (*Lukumfu*). Then came that craving (*Lumpeme*) for mutual affection (*Luzolanu*) and its fulfilment in marriage (*Longo*) and conception (*Lukumu*); and now that his wife has conceived he must appease the father thunder-god in heaven, who taught him to make the hatchet and axe (*Luaji*), and make him an offering (*Lutambiku*), and see to the purification (*Luveleleso*) of his wife.

There are few or no animals, etc., in this class.

Category of Harvest and Pregnancy

Class 6 (Ku—Ma)

This is the season of harvest and pregnancy during which the Diviner is very busy. Speaking psychologically, all the parts of the body are full of action in some way; and omens are figured to the Bavili by birds, frogs, snakes, and colour, and every sense is in

this way touched. Some omens predict evil, and others safety. These omens guide the fisherman and the hunter when in their search for food. They help man to discover evil-doers. They portend death—but perhaps their principal use is that they cause man to stop and think before he undertakes anything or acts.

This season of harvest is well represented by this class of nouns which reproduces in a substantive form most of the verbs in the language.

Ku—Ua to hear.

Ku Uu a place where a thing is heard.

Ku Tu an ear.

Ta is to say or tell.

Ku Ta to collect an assembly of people in a place where the thing is heard, this is generally in the market-place.

This season of harvest or reaping (*Kusala*) is represented by the deity or power *Kungu* (an amassing). Having plenty of food, this is a time when man enjoys good health, sturdiness, and strength (*Kumama*). The coming of harvest or pregnancy is awaited with great anxiety, more especially in time of dryness (*Kwijima*), when shortness (*Kufama*) brings groaning (*Kunga*) in the place (*Kuma*) where food should be sold. This is a time of selfishness (*Kuyindula*) and pretence (*Kuvunina*), sometimes of suicide (*Kuvonda*). Inquiry (*Kunka*) is made, and homage (*Kunda*) is paid to the power (*Kungu*) presiding over this season, and repentance and remorse (*Kubanza*) is evident everywhere, and then comes the dawn (*Kuma*) of a brighter day, and order (*Kumpama* or *Kubama*) reigns once again.

There are apparently no animals in this class, and

but one bird, so far as I know, the *Nketeidenge*. This is strange, as we might have expected the birds, etc., acting as omens to have been present.

Category of Travail and Construction.

Class 7 $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{W or U} \\ \text{Bu} \end{array} \right\}$ no plural
 $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \\ \text{Bu, pl. Ma or Mi.} \end{array} \right.$

This is the season of storing, and so of comparative happiness *Wete*, also of idleness *Wolo*, and there is wealth *Umwama*. On the other hand, the pregnant woman in giving birth prematurely very often dies; it is therefore a time of fear *Wonga*. Should she die, man has to live without his wife *Umpumpa*, and this state of bereavement *Unsona* is hell to him (*Ubilungi*), he is in a shattered and broken state *Udika*, and in his recklessness *Umpumbulu*, and blindness *Umpofo*, he does foolish things.

In this class many words commencing with Bu, such as *Buzabu*, capacity, and many others which in English end in "ity," remain unchanged in the plural. It is also interesting as a class, as many words included in it imply construction and organisation; such as a town *Buala*, plural *Mala*, which suggests to the mind the organisation of a human society; or *Buta*, plural *Mata* a gun; *Buatu* or *Lungu* a canoe, plural *Miatu* or *Malungu*.

There are apparently no animals in this class, but we have *Unkundia*, the edible weevil, who now becomes visible in the stored corn.

LATERAL DEVELOPMENT, PHYSICAL MAN

By this short study of primitive life we are led to suppose that the categories in the language of the Bavili and Bakongo will be found to arrange themselves in a two-fold fashion: one perpendicular, in accordance with the order of the seasons and the professions of man incited by them and their needs; and one lateral, expressive of man's thoughts and experiences in connection with those parts of the universe with which he believes himself to be so nearly related, such as the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, and the seasons.

We will now consider this lateral development.

We have noted that the Bavili and the Bini divide their sacred groves into two great classes. The ones which have stones or stone figures in them, and those that have trees, sticks, or wooden figures. Water, possibly representing the rains, and so the seasons, appears to be common to both.

As these groves are connected very nearly with ancestor worship, we may feel sure that the conclusion that we have drawn that the West African recognises his relationship to the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms is a correct one. Women in both

countries, Congo and Nigeria, as we have seen, credit stones and trees as the cause of their conception. At a later stage of the African's development he noted the order of the seasons which he recognised worked in sympathy with the order of procreation. Gradually perhaps, but finally, in the animistic stage of his existence certain physical features became associated with, and symbolical of, certain powers which he recognised as existing and affecting him.

Then man became cognisant of a struggle between his physical and moral nature, and so became conscious of what we call good and evil. This lesson, I think, he learnt from the struggle between the wind that brought rain, which helped the earth to produce, and that which drove this beneficent wind away: the struggle also between the cruel wind that brought the lightning that killed him, and the beneficent wind that drove that cruel one away. He realised that his nervous system was subject to shock, and connected these shocks with certain warnings given by birds, snakes, and vermin, which we call omens.

He procreated like the animals, and noted that the only apparent difference between him and them was that he could speak and was conscious of powers above him, whom he bent down to and respected. These powers, or the God over these powers, objected to his acting as some animals do, and punished him when he did so. These prohibitions became the commandments which we find the Bavili has divided into five distinct sections; we shall have more to say about them later on.

All this brings us to what I have called the second or lateral development of the Bavili's thoughts, a study which is naturally a very difficult one, as one has to think in an acrostic kind of way. To give any of the complementary parts in these lateral developments which the Bavili attach to each main thought or idea would, in the present stage of my knowledge, be premature; these must be filled in later when discussion has made this attempt of mine more perfect and we know the names of all the 201 sacred groves; ninety-six only out of which I have been able to discover.

From a study of the derivative nouns carrying the prefixes in the order we have now adopted, we learn the following:—

Va—Mu	signifies	Space, motion on to, or off from on.
Mu—Mi	„	He, who, or that which does, and echoism.
Xi or Ki—Bi	„	The instrument by which an action is performed.
E, Li, Di—Ma	„	The place where the act is done.
Lu—Tu	„	The definite manner in which an action is performed.
Ku—Ma	„	The action.
U—Ba	„	The quality which brings about and fits for condition.
Mu—Ba	„	The created creature, or thing.

Let us take birth as the result required, the above would then read as follows:—

The Yoni	is the conceiver or doer.
The Phallus	is the instrument.
Marriage	is the place where these two meet.
Conception	is the definite manner in which the act is performed.
Pregnancy	represents the action.
Travail	the quality which brings the birth about.

Let us now consider in this light the winds and seasons and their effect upon wondering man.

Lungu lu lubu, which I have translated as the very depth of maternity among the winds, coincides with the season *Mwici*¹ the "smokes," which the Bavili look upon as the season during which the rains are being prepared. *Lungu lu lubu* is beneficent and guards the interests of the fishermen of Loango; and goes forth to fight *Xikamaci*, the north wind, when she comes along and tries to drive back the rain-bringing south wind *Bunzi*.

Lungu lu lubu we must look upon as the motive creative power in space, the cause, and is in the place of the Va—Mu class.

Then as coordinate intermediate causes connected with the water and earth categories we have the words

Moyo life, the actor (Mu—Mi class), and
Ta body, the instrument (Xi or Ki—Bi or I class).

The meeting place where the living man is made is *Menga* or blood (E, Li, Di plural Ma class). The singular of this noun is *Enga*, which freely translated means "E" the place where the action is performed connected with (*Nga*) or a matter previously understood.

Then we come to the definite manner in which the creative act proceeded, which is a motion expressed by the Bavili word *Lutumu* which means "direction," and is of the Lu—Tu class.

¹ Or more properly the season just before it, called *Mawalala* or Revelation.

The action is expressed by the word *Zanzala* circulation, belonging to the Ku—Ma class.

Finally, we have the quality which brings about and fits for the condition, or the word *Unkete* meaning construction, a word of the U or Bu plural Ma class. This appears to be a category giving the headings of the composition of the physical parts of *Mu Ntu* man.

This category then reads:—

o				
1	Creative Wind	—	—	—
2	Life	—	—	—
3	Body	—	—	—
4	Blood	—	—	—
5	Direction	—	—	—
6	Circulation	—	—	—
7	Construction	—	—	—
8	Man	—	—	—

THINKING MAN

Xikamaci, whom I have described elsewhere as the author of *Ndongoisism* or witchcraft, is the north wind, and, as a word, falls into the Xi or Ki, plural Bi, class. *Bunzi* (also of this class), the south wind, is endeavouring to bring the rain to fall upon the earth and make it fertile; *Xikamaci* wants to drive it away. The very meaning of the word points to this, as it is (Xi) earth (ka) divided from (maci) water. The coming of the rain causes the earth to produce, and anything that produces is good (*Mbote*). That which prevents production is bad (*Ambi*). The story tells us that *Xikamaci* usurped the authority of her chief or father, and punished the children who damaged her plantations, instead of allowing him to do so. She was impatient of control, and did not give her parent the honour due to him. She was punished by having her fields flooded and by being driven into the sea. In this struggle between *Bunzi* and *Xikamaci*, the good south and bad north wind, we expect to find the origin of man's ideational method of arriving at a right conclusion. This category, we must remember, has to do with earth and trees and moral ideas.

The name of the season of preparation for rain is called *Bunji* (the deep of seed), and the months are

called the (*Muanda*) valley, breath, or soul, of the rains. Ideationally then we have the soul or spirit (*Muanda*) in the place of that which does, and this word belongs to the Mu—Mi class.

Xizonza, or reason, is then looked upon as the instrument, and represents the Xi or Ki—Bi class.

The meeting-place of these two is apparently *Liambu*; the word (*Mamu—Zambi* or) *Ma Ambu* (the plural form) is the name of a place where a great discussion has taken place after the death of some chief. This word is of the class Li, plural Ma. Determination (*Lukanu*) is the manner in which the idea is carried out (Lu—Tu class).

Inquiry (*Kunka*) is the action (Ku—Ma class); and knowledge (*Zayi*) (Bu—Ma class) is the quality which brings about the desired end—the spiritual-thinking man (*Muntu*).

This lateral category in development then reads as under :

o

1	Opposing winds	—	—	—
2	Soul	—	—	—
3	Reason	—	—	—
4	Discussion	—	—	—
5	Determination	—	—	—
6	Inquiry	—	—	—
7	Knowledge	—	—	—
8	Thinking man	—	—	—

PROPAGATING MAN

THE next category is that connected with the place where the action is done. As a season it is the beginning of the tornado season, when the first rains fall upon or meet the earth. Earth and water are thus, if we may say so, married. Seed is put into the ground, and so seed and earth meet.

The winds meet and form whirlwinds *Kimbongela*. The place of junction of roads is called *Evambo*. Where the winds cross and the roads join is a place in the centre of a kingdom or a town that the Bavili call *Mavamba*. In some towns this is marked by a four-sided or faced *juju* or fetish.

As we are here dealing with man, marriage is the meeting-place of the male and female.

The word in the Mu—Mi class that I think represents the idea of doer in this category is *ndia* the womb. The instrument here is the phallus *kata*.

The place where the action is done is marriage *Likwela*, when the fruitful woman *Exina* receives the seed of man. The Li or E—Ma class.

Luniatu sickness is the sign of coming pregnancy, the sign of the manner in which the act of propagation proceeds. This is the Lu—Tu class.

Kuyimita pregnancy is the action.

Then comes the pain and travail, anxiety and apprehension, *Wonga*, that precedes the doing of something, in this case the bringing about of the birth of the child *Mwana*.

o

1 Whirlwind — — —

2 Yoni — — —

3 Phallus — — —

4 Marriage — — —

5 Conception — — —

6 Pregnancy — — —

7 Travail — — —

8 Infant — — —

EMOTIONAL MAN

AND now we come to the emotions and the Lu—Tu class, or the manner in which the winds, &c., have impressed the Bavili or BaKongo. This is done in the season when thunder and lightning are very awful, and the struggle between (*Mabili*) the east and (*Senza*) the west winds is taking place. I need not dilate on the effect thunder and lightning have on mankind even in civilised Europe, but I may simply say that it is very impressive in Africa.

Thunder and lightning and a clap of thunder all go under the name of *Mwandaji* (or *Nzaci*) which in this case is the doer or agent. This is of the Mu—Mi class. Then the instrument through which it touches the emotional part of man is that respectful fear the Bavili call by the word *Vumi* of the Xi, Bi, plural Bi or Yi class. Fear gives way to anger. The native looks upon thunder as the angry voice or word of the Father in heaven, and just as woman who refuses to comply with man's will in the case of the fulfilment of his desire, makes him angry, so the Father in heaven in this season of marriage is angry with his wives.

And as the woman after she has got over the fear caused by the passionate man's shouting and struggling is angry, so man is apt to resent the feeling of fear and dismay caused by the thunder. And in this way anger (*Ekaxi* or *Ekudi*) is the meeting-place. When woman conceives, and she and her husband hear the thunder, they think that they have done something wrong, and that God is speaking to them, so they run away (as the season *Wangala* or *Bangala* suggests) and make aprons of leaves *Lunkumfu* before answering the call, just as the men and women one meets in the fields working in a naked condition will run to their clothes when the White man calls them. Or as our guide when we are travelling before entering a stranger's town will pluck a small branch of a tree or shrub and tuck it under his belt in front of him. Shame, as represented by the apron, is the manner in which thunder helps to make man conscious of wrongdoing.

Now if man feels he has done wrong, *Kubanza* or repentance is the action that should follow. His wife is now pregnant, remember, and all their thoughts are concentrated on whether it is the will of God that she shall produce a child or not.

Then as he repents or not, or as his wife endures the next season (the seventh and eighth months of the rainy season) of bending and strong winds or not, so comes great misery and grief *Bititi* or joy *Wete*.

Thus do the winds, and lightning, the God of Marriage, make propagating man emotional.

o

1 Winds bringing the noisy thunder — — —

2 Sound — — —

3 Dismay — — —

4 Anger — — —

5 Shame — — —

6 Repentance — — —

7 Joy — — —

8 Emotional man — — —

SENTIENT MAN

THE season of action, when so great a number of the fruits of the earth are ripe, was originally the great time of plenty, but when man became a planter his harvest time came earlier and continued through the greater part of this time. But the latter part of this season is also the time when the waters of the rivers reach their highest level and floods are frequent. *Kunzi* and *Ngonzolo* are both winds, the latter being also the malevolent rainbow. It is thus a time of great activity, when all man's nerves and senses are at their fullest tension. In many ways it was a time of great danger, which experience and custom taught man to guard against. He believed that certain heaven-sent warnings were sent to help him to avoid dangers and seek prosperity. His heart (*Ntima*) palpitates and stops to hear, as he says, what his mother's voice is telling or advising him. Or perhaps, as we should say, his conscience (*Ntima*) pricks him. He hears birds sing, frogs croak, and he knows all is well or not. Thus sound and hearing, heart and conscience, are associated under this N or M or Mu plural Mi class. Conscience here is the "doer."

Digestion of food or assimilation of thought he associates with his stomach *Vuma* (or the Xi or Ki plural Bi or I class), and so certain foods are *Xina*, or forbidden. The digestive stomach is also where the power of witchcraft (*lindoki*) resides.

Upon meeting the snake Nduma he asks himself the question "Did I know my wife on the day of rest?" "Have I looked upon women during their periods?" *Ebene* breasts, *Ekoto* the vagina, and other words of the Li or E plural Ma class, refer to copulation.

The manner or way he should go is pointed out to him by the field rat *Mbenda*, which runs along in front of him if all is well. If also he strikes his right foot on setting out on a journey it is bad. This contact causes an impression on his brain *Tomfo*.

Action and feeling are all connected with the sense of sight (the word *Kumona* means both sight and feeling). When the native sees a fish eagle which is all brown it is a bad sign, but when its wings are tipped with white it is a good sign. Then there comes a time when the bending winds shake the rest of the dead and tasteless (*Tozo* tastelessness) fruit from the trees; when the winds cause the trees to fall with a crash; when the wife and forthcoming child may or may not live; when deadness (*Ufwa*) is all around one; when witches do their worst, and the brown bird *Mvia* reminds him of their being burnt to death; when the frog *Xuula*, croaks its impending death warning, or the owl *Mpawlo-Pawlo*, hoots "be at rest, all is well." All which points to death or coming life in the new year.

o

1	Winds	—	—	—
---	-------	---	---	---

2	Association	—	—	—
3	Assimilation	—	—	—
4	Examination	—	—	—
5	Impression	—	—	—
6	Feeling	—	—	—
7	Deadness or life	—	—	—
8	Sentient man	—	—	—

WORSHIPPING, LAW-ABIDING MAN

WE have now reached the season of "bending" in the lateral development of the Bavili's philosophy. This is composed of the last two tornado months of the rains when life and death are hanging in the balance. The wind *Dumi* roots up the great trees which have no longer the power of swaying to and fro. But, as we say, there is a silver lining to every cloud, so towards the end of this cruel time of travail and trial there comes the benevolent rainbow *Luaiyi* (the umbilical cord) the meaning of which connects it with the promise of the successful birth of the long-looked-for child, the rest and calm of the new year. What is the effect on man of this bending season? It makes him comply with the observed customs and habits or laws of God and Nature, and so become a law-abiding creature.

Nlungu or equity is in this case, I think in the place of the doer. The natives nearly always call in friendly arbitrators before they go to law.

Kieleka truth is the instrument.

Ekinu is the place or grove where people give vent to their feelings of gratitude on the birth of a child

called *Lombo* supposed to be the incarnation of a water spirit (the verb *Lomba* means to supplicate).

Ludiku—the manner in which equity is appeased is by the offering of a present. Both sides when they appear before their arbitrator make him a present. When the fear of thunder and lightning has, as it were, brought the African to his knees, he thinks he has done something wrong and makes a present to the lightning power *Nzaci*. When one of them needs a child he goes to the sacred grove of the power and asks for it, never forgetting an offering.

Kunda, homage or worship, is the action in this case. This is done by prostrating himself before the symbol representing the power.

Lemvo, obedience, is the quality that fits him to become a law-abiding being.

o

1 Wind and Rainbow — — —

2	Equity	—	—	—
3	Truth	—	—	—
4	Supplication	—	—	—
5	Propitiation	—	—	—
6	Homage	—	—	—
7	Obedience	—	—	—

8 Law-abiding man — — —

GOD AND MAN

Nzambi

WE must now revert to the Bavili idea of God, which is that he is a personality who has in himself all the "fours," the leading names of which we have been discussing. He is, in fact, the essence of the fours.

The fours are, as I have pointed out, composed of the main idea or leading name which I have tried to give under the different categories of physical, thinking propagating, emotional, feeling, law-abiding man and three other complementary parts which I have not given. This main idea and its three complementary parts are expressed in the native philosophy as the ancestor, father, mother, and offspring parts. The resultant offspring is through the mother, of the father, and from the ancestor. We may then very rightly describe the Bavili's idea of God as the personality from whom are all things, of whom are all things, through whom are all things, and in whom are all things.

MAN AND THE MORAL LAW

IN summing up these categories, and endeavouring to understand them I think it is well to have them in tabular form (see following page).

We cannot ignore in this recapitulation the general summing up the native himself has given us of his *Xina* or laws which he divides into five classes :—

1. <i>Xina Xivanga Nzambi</i>	Against Gods and Rulers
2. <i>Xina Va Xifumba</i>	Against Parents
3. <i>Xina Nkaka</i>	Against Neighbours
4. <i>Xina Nsoki</i> or <i>Nsexi</i>	Against Covetousness
5. <i>Xina Mvila</i>	Against Illegal Marriages.

Their idea of morality is thus seen to be not duty towards quite so much as the avoidance of harmful acts against. They must not act like certain animals do.

Let me here remind you again of their ideas of good and evil. Good is that which produces, evil that which is opposed to production, and destroys.

1. Man must remember that there is a power above, who punishes those who thwart production, and the sign of this authority is the snout of the saw-fish *Bafu*, which is a fish which loves to destroy.

0.	<i>Nzambi</i>	God			
1.	Space	and Winds			
2.	Breath	Soul	Yoni	Sound	Association
3.	Body	Reason	Phallus	Dismay	Assimilation
4.	Blood	Discussion	Marriage	Anger	Imagination
5.	Direction	Determination	Conception	Shame	Impression
6.	Circulation	Inquiry	Pregnancy	Repentance	Feeling
7.	Construction	Knowledge	Apprehension, Travail	Joy or Grief	Tastelessness or Deadness
8.	Physical,	Mental,	Propagating,	Emotional,	Sentient,
9.	Other outside things				Law-abiding, Truthful Man

2. Anyone who leads one astray by making false pictures, prevents production, and is as evil as the *Mbambingombi* monitor lizard.

3. *Xibika-Bakolu* silence as to the name of the King and God is figured by the spitting viper *Mpili*, who kills those who by their noise and foolish talk disturb his rest.

4. The restless fowl or cock *Susu*¹ is said to remind the chief to rest on the fourth day.

5. And *Beci*, the silver fish, possibly owing to the damage it does to the net of its master fisherman, has become the sign of resistance to parental authority.

6. The shark *Nkwimbi* reminds them that it is wrong to murder.

7. *Nvuli* the water buck is like the woman who listens to the adulterer who would ruin her.

8. *Ngulubu* is the pig that steals food in the market place.

9. *Nkufu* is the tortoise, who is always throwing the blame of his own evil actions on to his neighbours.

10. *Nvubu* is the greedy hippo, who appears to the Bavili to covet all he sees.

Things like the actions of these creatures they must not do.

The order above is that of the Ten Commandments as given by Moses, and I have adopted it so that we may readily compare the moral ideas of the Bavili with those of the Israelites.

¹ See pages 214 and 245 "At the Back of the Black Man's Mind."

The West African believes in a Supreme God.

He believes also in intermediate powers, as the man of science believes in the motion that was caused by the first cause in the beginning, and here he differs from the positivist. He certainly does make images, and they are to be seen in his sacred groves. The groves themselves are dedicated to "powers," much as Churches are dedicated to saints, who are said by certain Christian sects to intervene on behalf of worshippers of God.

The taking of the name of God or King in vain is prohibited by the West African generally. They rest on the fourth and not on the seventh day, and here their law differs in detail from that of Moses. It seems to me that the Bavili, at any rate, rests on the fourth day because this is the period when according to his philosophy God's work of creation ceased. Natural development under His guidance carried on His work to completion also in the fourth period.

The West African knows that it is right to honour his parents. He knows that it is wrong to kill, commit adultery, to steal, and bear false witness.

And finally, he knows that it is wrong to covet.

Broadly speaking

Xina Xivanga Nzambi covers the first 3 Commandments

Xina Va Xifumba „ the 4th and 5th „

Xina Nkaka „ the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th Commandments

Xina Nsoxi covers the 10th Commandment

Their law *Xina Mvila* against wrong marriage is not included in the Ten Commandments of Moses.

Now let me try to reconcile the natural order of the categories as they have fallen into their places in the acrostic fashion they have, in accordance with the prefixes in their language, with this order of the Moral Law.

The first three categories are governed by the prefixes :—

1. Plural noun *Zambi*.
2. Va-Mu class connected with space and the winds.
3. Mu-Mi class connected with equity and moral ideas.

These are all Godlike ideas, and I have shown that sins against these ideas have been summed up by the Bavili under their *Xina*, *Xivanga-Zambi* or God the creator class.

The fourth and fifth lateral categories are those of instrument and of place.

4. Xi or Ki or I plural Bi or Yi class connected with reason and truth.
5. Di, Li, E plural Ma class relating to marriage and supplication.

These two classes have to do with the law of rest on the fourth day, when the father sees that his fetishes are in order, and prays for his people and the honouring of their parents by the offspring. This is covered by the class *Xina Va Xifmba*.

6, 7, 8 and 9, refer to the manner, action, quality in law-abiding man. He commits murder or adultery, or

theft, or bears false witness—the process is the same, he must

1. Class Lu—Tu (1) *Propitiate* those he has sinned against.
2. „ Ku—Ma He must do (2) *homage* and repent, and he
3. „ Bu—Ma must be (3) *obedient* and abide by the
4. „ Mu—Ba judgment and become a (4) *law-abiding, truthful* man. These 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Commandments are covered, as we have noted, by the class *Xina Nkaka*.

The last class is the general one into which all foreign words are placed, N or M making *Zin* or *Zim* in the plural.

Man must not covet all these things which are not his—*Xina Nsoxi*.

CONCLUSION

IN conclusion let me repeat that the natives of Africa like other human beings have divided ideas first of all into two great divisions. For example, mankind is of two kinds, the Sons of God (their first ancestor), and Slaves ; good people and bad ; light and darkness ; day and night ; spirit and matter, and so on.

The next division of their thoughts is where they are divided into families of fours. The four in each family are represented by the ancestor, the mother, the father, and the offspring parts, or the from, through, of, and in, in all things.

Four sets of these families form a group of sixteen, and two of these groups fill in a "formula."

One of these groups is the outward and visible manifestation of the other, which may be invisible, but they cannot be separated one from the other.

A man may be struck by a stone thrown from the arm or sling by some one from some place which is to him invisible. The injured one, however, feels the blow and has an idea of the manner in which the stone was thrown. He is sure the action was that of throwing, experience has taught him so much. Pain assures him that he is hurt. He is conscious of the

presence somewhere of an invisible enemy, and he does his best to discover him so that he may know why this person has acted in this way. In other words, action cannot be separated from the doer or actor.

Now the result of many years' study of the West African's mode of thought leads to the conclusion that he is (in however backward a state) a scientific, religious, and law-abiding man, and in this way he is fundamentally at one with other human beings all over the world.

Let me substitute for the words Religion, Science, and Law, those of Instinct, Reason, and Habit. It is easy to understand that Habit is where Reason and Instinct meet; and as the native would say, it is their offspring. That is to say, Habit is of the instrument Reason, through the doer Instinct, and this Instinct (to fall in with the African's philosophy) must have an ancestor from which it has come. Let us call this ancestor Personality. Then under the heading Personality we have the parts Instinct, Reason, and Habit. These four are invisible: how can man know that they exist? The manner in which he is made to know that a something we call Instinct exists is by Sensation or Impression. Reason comes to him by Experience and Movement, and Habit by Capacity and Thought, and in this way he shows himself to be a knowing or conscious being.

He is quite at liberty to ignore his Instinct and Reason, and he may refuse to submit to Habit, but he must take the consequences. His family will call him irreligious, ignorant, and criminal.

Let me now write down the four invisible and four visible parts of this category :—

Personality

Instinct or Religion

Reason or Science

Habit or Law

Impression or Sensation

Experience or Movement

Capacity or Thought

Consciousness

Now this category of Personality is in itself a result, and it has in it parts of three previous categories which we shall call the (a) from, (b) through, (c) of, categories.

Let us first consider the “of” category.

Religion or Instinct is of Receptivity ; Reason or Science is of essentiality ; Habit or Law is of order or place.

Impression is of manner ; Experience is of action ; and Capacity is of quality.

Through.

Instinct or Religion comes to man through the heart or soul ; Reason or Science through the body ; Law or Habit through the medulla oblongata ; Impression through the Pons Varolii ; Experience through the cerebellum ; and Capacity through the cerebrum.

From.

Instinct or Religion man feels must have been inspired by some perfect spirit ; Reason or Science must have originated in man from some Omniscient source ; Habit or Law from the order in creation (the seasons), the Word that ordered all things ; and this is made evident to conscious man, because he is impressed by the manner in which the world has been designed ; he feels that this design manifests the great conceiver the cause of his instinctive religion. In all actions which he experiences he recognises the movements of the Omniscient ; and in his capacity to build up Habit and Law he is conscious that he is really submitting to the Will of the God from whom, through whom, of whom, and in whom are all things.

Let me express these ideas in the formula of the Bavili. It must stand for an example of how the lateral developments may perhaps be filled in.

o God		From	Through	Of	In
		1 Creator (space)	Substance	Spirit	Person
32 parts	16	2 Conceiver	Heart ¹	Receptivity	Instinct or Religion
		3 Omniscient	Body ²	Originality	Reason or Science
		4 Word (place)	Medulla oblongata	Order	Habit or Law
	16	5 Design	Pons Varolii	Manner	Impression or Sensation
		6 Motion	Cerebellum	Action	Experience or Movement
		7 Will	Cerebrum	Quality	Capacity or Thought
			8 Image of God	Substance Spirit	Person
		9 Other things			

¹ Heart represents Circulation, Respiration, and Inspiration.

² Body stands for Bones, Muscles, Nerves.

I now feel that I have written enough to point out the importance of the study of these categories at the back of the Black man's mind, and many as my errors and discordances may be, I cannot help feeling that I have at least been able to supply the future African philosopher with enough matter to guide his thoughts in the right direction towards the restoration of a most beautiful natural philosophy, which has led the West African step by step to acknowledge one God as the Ruler and Creator of the Universe, and one moral law, which is common to all mankind, as his guide to good conduct.

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