

AN EXPOSITION OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR AND HUMAN SOCIAL PATTERN IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN WORLDVIEW

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Abstract

Animals are believed to be endowed with life force in traditional African Worldview. This life force can be used to enhance or strengthen that of humans. There are deep underlying significant features in animals that give them a unique behavioral pattern. In the social sphere of human existence in traditional African worldview, snake is associated with (subtlety), lion (strength), tortoise (wisdom), dog (friendship), locust (destruction), bee (paradox), cat (longevity), owl (evil), and sheep (innocence). The expository method of this study is aimed at advancing the argument that the essential behavior of animals can be replicated in traditional African world view. This is done through charms, amulets and totem in human social relationships either for a positive or negative purpose. The study further reinforces and relates the concept of life force with similar concepts as telekinesis, telepathy, clairvoyance and clairaudience. The major finding of the study for further research is how the ontological and scientific relationship shared between humans and animals that produce such causal relationship can be reconciled.

Keywords: Lifeforce, Behaviour, Ontology, Charms, Amulets, Totem, Social, Pattern

Introduction

The concept of force finds expressions in almost all of the cultures and philosophies of the world. It, in fact, serves as the bedrock of today's natural sciences which can be traced to the observations of Sir. Isaac

Newton several centuries ago. According to Goren and Galili, “Newton's laws are introduced expressing regularity in terms of forces”.¹ However, the concept of force cannot absolutely be traced solely to Newton. The ancient philosophers who expounded on the basic substance of the universe are said to be the originators of the idea in Western philosophy. These philosophers range from Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes to Heraclitus, Pythagoras and the Atomists, Leucippus and Democritus. In the motion and interaction of chemical and physical elements, we cannot doubt the intervention of certain forces of one sort or the other. However, the concept of force cannot be excluded from the human world. Humans make use of the forces of nature and exude forces in themselves. In the traditional African worldview, humans can strengthen their life force by tapping from the life force of other beings, whether humans or animals. Hence, “the unique thing about this force as subscribed by Africans is that they are metaphysical but with evidence in the physical or material realm”.²

In Africa, the belief is that force and being cannot be distinguished as all beings are endowed with a vital force.³ This means that humans do not only make use of the forces of nature, but exude a life force, which is also present in all beings. In traditional African worldview, this force permeates all things including the way Africans relate with one another. Africans view one another as beings composed of a force. This strengthens the African mode of communalism and enables Africans to see a wife as 'our wife', children as 'our children', and fathers as 'our fathers', ancestors as 'our ancestors'. It breeds the idea that since individuals in community are composed of a vital force, there is the need to see every member of the community as one body.

¹. Ehud Goren and Igal Galili. “Newton's Law-A Theory of Motion or Force.” *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*. Vol. 1287(2019): 1-10.

². Emmanuel Iniobong Archibong. “A Critique of Force in African Worldview” *Igwebuike: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities*. 4, no.4 (2018):2.

³. Placide Tempels. *Bantu Philosophy*. (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1959), 22

The concept of life force is not limited to the African communal world alone. It is also a very important aspect of animal behavioral patterns. Africans use materials from animals and their kings usually carry around, the tail of a cow or a horse and wear the skin of a leopard. They also decorate their palaces with elephant tusks and cow horns; they in fact use the shells of tortoises as musical instruments. The significance of this is that the items having been derived from animals are composed of forces which benefits Africans through their usage. Africans do not have a mechanical conception of time and this is rooted in seasonal changes. Africans have seasons to plant and seasons to reap; they usually know mornings by the crow of cocks and the bleating of goats. These animals engender these behavioural patterns by leaving their pen in the morning and returning by the setting of the sun. This connectivity of behavioural patterns in animals and humans is rooted in the concept of life force.

Placide Tempels observes that “for the Bantu, being is force and force being”⁴. Writing about the Bantu, Tempels broadened his thoughts to include all native Africans. Basically, since Africans view force as undivided from being, it is therefore believed by Africans that everything in the universe is composed of force, including animals, trees, and stones. In African ontology, even the dead have force and could be invoked to act in the world of the living. This is mostly demonstrated in the African pouring of libation where the spirit of the dead is called upon to carry out a particular act. Among the Ibibios of Southern Nigeria for instance, this force can best be expressed as “Obot” a creative principle which is the sole cause of all things in the universe and which determines the life and nature of man. The Ibibio's in particular are known to attribute causes of events to this creative principle which seems to be no different from “Abasi” from the term “aba nsinsi” one which lives forever, God.

Social patterns in traditional African worldview are determined by the understanding of vital force and force is the totality of everything in reality whether corporeal or incorporeal⁵ Simply put, force is that in

⁴. Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 27

⁵. John Mbiti. *African Religions and Philosophy*. (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1969), 14

which everything is contained whether animate or inanimate. The African conceptualization of force and being as one is the major driving force of the Ubuntu Philosophy. John Mbiti's Ubuntu theology contends that "the central focus on the work of God in the lives of Africans is to establish the basis for an ethical approach to life. This enables people to establish social bonds and also to resolve conflicts and build peaceful social relations".⁶ The concept has not only permitted Africans to see each other as part of themselves and everyone else, it has also gone further to foster a closer relationship between Africans and animals and has even so, made Africans to be able to extract the life force of animals in order to strengthen their own life force and replicate these in making changes in their environment through totems and charms.

Traditional African Worldview and Force

Traditional African Worldview is the totality of all that defines the African cutting across his belief, logic, religion, science, morality and culture. This definition follows Vidal's averment that worldview is constructing "a global image of the world and in this way to understand as many elements of our experience as possible".⁷ Atta-Asiedu points out that this traditional African worldview is so far "distinguished from the worldviews of other peoples in so far as it is grounded in and grows out of African history and culture".⁸ This does not however mean that it is so different from the worldviews of other peoples in ways that there can be no necessary linkages. Tempels aver that "behaviour" "can be neither universal nor permanent unless it is based upon a concatenation of ideas, a logical system of thought, a complete positive philosophy of the universe, of man and of the things which surround him, of existence, life, death and of the life beyond".⁹ This gives us the idea that before

⁶. Julius Gathogo. "John Mbiti's Ubuntu Theology: Was it Rooted in his African heritage?" *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 48,(2022):13.

⁷. C. Vidal. "Metaphilosophical Criteria for Worldview Comparison" *Metaphilosophy*, 43, no.3(2012): 311.

⁸. KwakuAyim Atta-Asiedu. "African Worldviews and Research in African Studies: The Missing Ingredient." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, (2020):2.

⁹. Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 9.

traditional African worldview can be universalized, studied, and understood, it must first of all be looked at from the point of the African system of thought, culture, logic, and entire philosophy.

The traditional African man is a completely religious man. He carries his religion in his heart at all times and preserves perfectly, the natural synchronization of his religion with his culture, ethics, and his philosophy. Henri Mbaya, and Ntozakhe Cezula, while writing on the contribution of Mbiti to the study of Africa states that:

In his *An Introduction to African Religion*, Mbiti outlines African beliefs, traditions and cultures. According to Mbiti, the ontology of an African is embodied in the saying "Africans are notoriously religious." African life, cultures and beliefs exist as an integrated system. In contrast to the Western worldview, where life is dissected and compartmentalized, Mbiti shows the holistic character of African cultures: the unity between religion and life rather than partitioning of the two. He goes right into the deep 'bone-marrow' of African life, and spirituality, the pulse and rhythm of African life.¹⁰

It has proved futile for the African to completely disentangle himself from his religion in totality, even after several years of conversion. African traditional beliefs still hold sway even in the lives of steady church goers. In most African churches today, especially those pioneered by Africans with moderate or little Western influences, rituals and observances, even demonstrations that are outrightly traditional are common place. In these churches, individuals perceived to be spirited rise and fall carelessly; such a person has the ability to tell about future occurrences and warn individuals of foreseeable dangers. These are manifestations of the African worldview of force and it shows that, through the usage of certain objects, gotten from animals, one can

¹⁰. Henri Mbaya, and Ntozakhe Cezula. "Contribution of John S Mbiti to the Study of African Religions and African Theology and Philosophy." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal*, 5, no.3(2019): 425.

permeate the natural world of forces since force cannot be detached from being. Africans believe in a universal force and this force is present in all things including animals. This means that when man kills and consumes an animal, he consumes the life force available in the animal and strengthens himself in so doing.

Babalola and Alokun aver that "...the concept of time may help to explain beliefs, attitudes, practices, and general way of life of African people, not only in the traditional set up, but also in the modern situation (whether political, economical, educational or church life)".¹¹ The African conceptualization of time is barren of a distant future; hence, it tilts backward rather than forward and influences the way the African behaves toward concepts such as death and the future. The African is mostly concerned about the present and the past. Moyounotsva J. Marava (2015) puts it this way:

Time in African traditional life is simply a composition of events which have occurred, those which are taking place now and those which are inevitably or immediately to occur. What is certain to occur, or what falls within the rhythm of natural phenomena, is in the category of inevitable or potential time. Actual time is therefore what is present and what is past. Time in the African sense evolves. Time moves backward rather than forward and it is against this background that the concept of life and death becomes problematic in trying to understand the time frames in which they fit in the African philosophical perspective of potential time and actual time. However, there are some contradictions by people of various religions in Zimbabwe on the concept of death as reflected by the use of the terms such as "kuviga" (to bury) and "Kurasha" "(to throw away) "kuradzika" (to help someone to sleep); when it comes to burial, (Kuchengeta) opined that the world of scholarship should bear with the fact

¹¹. Sunday Fumilola Babalola, and Olusegun Ayodeji Alokun. "African Concept of Time, a Socio-Cultural Reality in the Process of Change." *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4, no.7(2013):144.

that in this area of research, there is no enough literature to depend upon.¹²

Since the African does not believe in an elongated future, he does not, like the Westerners, build castles in the air. He believes that the dead are still alive and not residing in any place that may be synonymous with heaven. He is concerned with the present as much as he is concerned with the fact that his dead still lives with him, in present time. This goes to justify the concept of force in the African traditional worldview, which sees force as a universal entity, non-detachable from being. Hence, as long as it is a being, i.e anything that exist, it has a life force inherent in it. This lays credence to the scientific fact that “physical objects have the characteristics of both particles and waves”.¹³

In the traditional African worldview, force is a unity. This connotes that it is one-dimensional. The concept has one sole metaphysical value. As Tempels puts it “This supreme value is life, force, to live strongly, or vital force. The Bantu say, in respect of a number of strange practices in which we see neither rime nor reason that their purpose is to acquire life, strength or vital force, to live strongly, that they are to make life stronger, or to assure that force shall remain perpetually in one's posterity”.¹⁴ Vital force finds expression in man, animals and inanimate things. It is simply present in all things. In African traditional worldview, it is believed that when a person dies, this vital force does not die. It becomes awake and is always open to communication. This causes the African man to believe that when he pours libation and call on the dead, they hear him and does what they are called upon to do. In most parts of Africa, when a person dies untimely in a way that is believed that someone unknown must have been the cause of his death, he would be buried with a machete in hand so he could use it against whoever killed him.

^{12.} Moyounotsva J. Marava. “African Philosophy on the Concept of Time and Its Influence on the View of Death and Afterlife – A Zimbabwean Perspective.” *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology*, 3, no. 2(2015): 87.

^{13.} Emmanuel Iniobong Archibong. “A Critique of the Concept of Force in Modern Science” *Nnamdi Azikiwe Journal of Philosophy*. 11, no.1 (2019): 163

^{14.} Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 22.

It is vital force that enables one to live strong. In this case, that man needs to remain strong is the more reason he consumes the energy from other beings, especially animals. Tempel savers that “these various aspects of Bantu behaviour already enable us to see that the key to Bantu thought is the idea of vital force, of which the source is God. Vital force is the reality which, though invisible, is supreme in man. Man can renew his vital force by tapping the strength of other creatures”¹⁵. Hence, by diminishing other creatures, man strengthens his own life force. The same can deduced from the greetings of the Ibibio'sof Southern Nigeria who use such terms as *sòng idem o* (be strong) and *yak itonguwemasong fi* (let your life be strong).

This concept of being in African worldview is consistent with the notion of the Brahman-atman in Hindu religio-philosophy where everything is in the one and the one is everything and the one is manifested in all things. By this, there is only one unity of force that is present in all things as well as being present in the one. The idea is also consistent with Baruch Spinoza's concept of “Deus SiveNatura” (God and Nature) where he recognizes God as Nature and Nature as God. Joshua Dejoy holds that “Spinoza draws radical conclusions from his monist thesis that there exists a single substance, Nature, including the orderly determination of the universe and even human behavior”.¹⁶ The conceptualization of force in traditional African worldview is without a doubt similar to those of the monistic philosophers of the ancient era of Western philosophy.

Human Social Relations in Traditional African Worldview

Africa is highly communalistic in its social relationships. This is evident in the philosophy of *Ubuntu* which asserts the 'I am, because you are'. It pictures a community where everyone is dependent upon one another and recognizes one another as part of the overall family. The concept of *Ubuntu* is different from Descartes individualistic philosophy of 'cogito

¹⁵. Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 32.

¹⁶. Dejoy Joshua. “Deus SiveNatura: Substance and Determinism in Spinoza's Ethics.” *Aisthesis*, 8, (2017): 23.

ergo sum' which connotes 'I am, because I think'. *Ubuntu* is communalistic as Africans see society as one fulcrum and therefore shares the pain of others. It is in this respect that Julius Gathogo asserts that “this aphorism, which expresses a traditional African ethic (called *Ubuntu*), implies that none of us (as theologians or as members of society) comes into the world fully formed; we will always need “others”.”¹⁷

This view of society as one body is not different from the view posited by Auguste Comte where he discusses, in his Positive Philosophy which is the idea of society as a single organism, a united whole with a diversity of means but with one aim to the benefit of the whole. He avers that, “the main cause of the superiority of the social to the individual organism is, according to an established law, the more marked specialty of the various functions fulfilled by organs more and more distinct, but interconnected; so that unity of aim is more and more combined with diversity of means.”¹⁸ Relating this with African thinking would mean that even though the African society is seen as a whole, it does not disregard the parts which through interdependency can function with a diversity of means with the ultimate aim to contribute towards the benefit of the complete whole. The more reason the traditional African sees a man of another ethnic group as a brother and regards him as such. Even in the Diaspora, whenever two Africans meet, they introduce each other to any third party available as a brother or as a sister.

Evaluating Human Social Patterns from Animal Behaviour in Traditional Africa

Ringim A. Set al, notes that “in Africa, migratory bird species can generally be divided into two categories, the Palearctic migrants and the intra-African migrants. The Palearctic migrant species breed in Europe, North Africa, and part of Asia, and spend their wintering season in tropical Africa, whereas Intra-African migrants breed in one part of

¹⁷. Gathogo, “John Mbiti's Ubuntu Theology”, 4.

¹⁸. Auguste Comte. “The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte” Volume 2, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 140.

Africa and spend the post-breeding season in a different location or appear partially in another part within Africa.¹⁹ Like humans, birds are capable of recognizing seasons as well as living by them. Africans also possess this seasonal attitude which is employed in knowing when and what to do in certain seasonal changes. There are several indigenous African belief systems: taboos and totems that also prohibit the diminution of the life force of certain animals.²⁰ For example, among the Efiks and the Ibibios, the Ekpe (Tiger or Lion) is a great symbol of strength and power and are displayed as masquerades. When an Ibibio or Efik calls a fellow by the name 'Ekpe', he tries to say that the fellow is a strong person. When the fellow is called 'Ikid' (tortoise), it would mean that the fellow is sluggish or wise. When he is called 'Iyak' (fish), it connotes that he is swift in water as a fish. The traditional African goes as far as using allegories of certain animals' behaviour in folktales to be able to capture the social dynamics of animal behaviour. The social representations of the elephant, primates, wolves and other animals attest to the fact that Africans and humans at large share certain characteristics or close affinities with animals.

That animals have life force is enough to appropriate this to man's advantage. African kings for example, use the skin of lions for clothing symbolizing strength and royalty. The actions and behavioural patterns of animals are replicated by humans in their social behaviour. For instance, the tusk of the elephant is used to symbolize wealth. The horse tail is also used as a fashion accompaniment by Kings.²¹ The monkey is seen as very crafty and is used to depict same in human relationship. Even the nature and emotions of humans can be captured through animals like the gentleness of the dove, the stubbornness of the goat and

¹⁹ AS.Ringim, *et al.* "A Comparative Study of Species Diversity of Migrant Birds between Protected and Unprotected Areas of the Hadejia-Nguru Wetlands, Nigeria." *Tanzania Journal of Science*, 43, no. 1(2017): 111.

²⁰ Francis and Issifu Diawud, and Karim Abdul. "Exploring the African Traditional belief Systems in Natural Resource Conservation and Management in Ghana." *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 8, no. 9(2015): 120.

²¹ Adesola Olateju. "The Yoruba Animal Metaphors: Analysis and Interpretation." *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 14, no. 3(2005): 379.

the beauty of the peacock. The behaviour of these animals can be replicated in human beings. Babalola and Alokun explain these behavioural similarities using Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* thus:

In *Things Fall Apart*, one observes a lot of references to time concept on African thought. In page 11, he wrote that during the planting season, Okonkwo worked daily on his farm from Cock crow until chicken went to roost. In page 19, he wrote that “the drought continues for eight market weeks...” In page 22, he wrote that Ikemefuna was ill for three market weeks. Again, in page 23, he wrote that Ikemefuna came to Umuofia at the end of the care free season, between harvest and planting. He also wrote in page 27 that, “yam, the king of crops, was a very exacting king. For three or four moons, it demanded hard work and constant attention from cockcrow till the chicken went back to roost”.²²

Cocks, hens, and goats from morning go out in search of food and by dusk return to their pen. These behavioural patterns are replicated in human beings due to the fact that these animals are being consumed by humans on many occasions. Lions know they have to go out hunting, they know where to find their food and sometimes, they hunt in groups. This supports the fact that from the primitive era to the present day, humans' still hunt socially. These hunting societies of humans know when to leave for hunting at dawn and when to return. In the same vein, birds build nests for their young ones and themselves as well as humans who build shelter for themselves and their young ones.

Animal behavioural pattern evident in the African traditional worldview goes beyond the synonymous behaviours that exist between animals and humans. By extension, in the African traditional worldview, humans extract the life force of animals when they consume these creatures or make use of them as totems. Writing about totems, Mokgale Makgopa

²². Sunday Fumilola Babalola, and Olusegun Ayodeji Alokun. “African Concept of Time, a Socio-Cultural Reality in the Process of Change.” *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4, no. 7 (2013): 143-147.

notes that “when one speaks of a totem, one thinks of a symbol that brings unity within a group or clan. This symbol is represented by an animal. The symbol has supernatural power which can be transferred to human beings. This is evidenced by the treatment that the animal, plant or natural object gets”.²³ These supernatural powers can either be transferred to humans through the consumption of animals or the usage of items from the animals. For example, when a king puts on the skin of a leopard, it is thought that the powers and strength of a leopard has been transferred to him. Such a king is expected to be powerful in warfare. In the same vein, it is possible to observe that many African kings carry horsetails around and this symbolizes the fact that, the strength and agility of the horse has been transferred to the African kings. This is exactly why Ejikemeuwa J.O Ndubuisi avers that “Generally, the notion of totem is associated with the idea of kinship between certain animals, animate or inanimate beings and a particular individual or group of individuals in a given society. It shows that there is a spiritual link between a totemic object and the person or persons concerned”.²⁴ This spiritual link is borne out of the fact that in African traditional worldview, the concept of life force in all beings plays a central role. Hence, whatever behavioural pattern resides in an animal can be transferred to a human being.

Again, certain animals exhibit particular characteristics that enable Africans to see them in that light. For example, the owl, being nocturnal, is seen as synonymous with evil. The lion because of its bravery is associated with strength; the sheep with innocence. The dog due to its closeness with man is noted for friendliness and the tortoise is always viewed in the light of wisdom or craftiness. Thus, by the diminution of their life force and making use of their remains, humans get connected to their life force and in the process, replicate the behavioural patterns of

²³. Mokgale Makgopa. “Totemism: A symbolic representation of a clan with specific reference to the Basotho ba Leboa – An ethnographical approach.” *South African Journal of African Language*, 39, no. 2(2019):160.

²⁴. Ejikemeuwa J.O. Ndubuisi. “Totemism in Africa: A Philosophical Evaluation of Its Significance in a World of Change.” *Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development*, 1,no.1(2018):26.

these animals. There are plethoras of animal behaviour that humans can replicate through consumption and usage. Leslie Zubieta, while explaining animal role as similar to that of humans writes that “animals are regarded as wise, lazy, greedy, fast, and so on”.²⁵

The life force from animals can be employed as charms and amulets which can enable humans to see things without using the natural senses of sight, to hear sounds and obtain information from extra-mundane beings without the sense of hearing, to move objects without having to touch them, and to communicate with extra-mundane beings without the application of words or natural language. These abilities are termed as clairvoyance, clairauidence, telekinesis, and telepathy respectively. They can be enhanced by making use of certain body parts of animals as amulets and charms while the life force of these animals are put into action through incantations. Regarding this, Olusegun Soetan writes that “usually, animal products such as hide, bones, eyes, nails, claws, and feathers are the most commonly used ingredients for the super charms. Other ingredients are, but not limited to, fecal droppings, snail slime, old clothes, footwear, earth, rainwater, spring water, semen, human genitals, menstrual blood, yokeless eggs, animal horns, fallen meteor, seaweed, chameleons, snakes, tortoises, placenta, and fetus. Almost anything could be used as ingredients for charms”.²⁶ These charms are important because they enable one to engage in clairvoyance, telepathy, telekinesis, and clairauidence, all of which is possible due to the fact that animals in traditional African worldview aggregate a life force which is purposeful for humans.

Extrasensory abilities can be found in other cultures of the world too. In the East, it can be noticed in the religio-philosophies of Buddhism and

^{25.} Leslie F. Zubieta. “Animals’ Role in Proper Behaviour: Chewa Women’s Instructions in South Central Africa.” *Conservation and Society*, 14, no. 4(2016):408.

^{26.} Olusegun Soetan. “Charms and Amulets”. *Culture and Customs of the Yoruba*. Toyin Falola, Akintúndé Akínýmí (eds.). Austin: Pan-African University Press, (2017). 210.

Hinduism and other related sects. One of the most popular writers of extrasensory perception in the East writes that “here animals and humans, and other species too, converse by speech as well as by telepathy. We use speech when close and telepathy when distant”.²⁷ This proves the point that animals too, have behavioural patterns borne out of the life force that resides in them which enables them to participate in such extrasensory exercise. It is also the reason why when Africans make use of items from these animals, they are capable of connecting to a transcendental realm where sense organs are not required in communication. Rampa goes on to write that “When I was eight years of age I had an operation which opened my “Third Eye”, that special organ of clairvoyance which is moribund in most people because they deny its existence”.²⁸ In traditional African worldview, this ability can be replicated from animals such as the dog which is so close to man that he seems to be able to dive into the mind of man and share either the sadness or joy that its owner envelopes. Rampa also notes this life force through a conversation:

The only purpose of breathing no matter what system one adopts, is to take in as much air as possible, and to distribute it throughout the body in a different form, in a form which we call prana. That is the life force itself. That prana is the force which activates man, which activates everything that lives, plants, animals, man, even the fishes have to extract oxygen from water and convert it to prana.²⁹

In Africa, this life force is not limited to living things alone. But the point deducible from Rampa is that there is a life force in animals. Hence, when Africans consume or make use of remains from these animals, they activate the life force of these animals and are able to, for example, move objects without touching (telekinesis), an act which can be seen as magic and which is used in causing rainfall and other negative or positive acts.

^{27.} Tuesday Lobsang Rampa, *The Rampa Story* (London: Souvenir Press, 1960), 63.

^{28.} Rampa, *The Rampa Story*, 23.

^{29.} Tuesday Lobsang Rampa, *Doctor From Lhasa* (New Jersey: Inner Light Publications, 1991), 181-182.

In the West, the concept of vital force is understood basically as energy which Tempels calls “vital energy”³⁰ and is present in both animate and inanimate object. In the sense of energy, we can say that energy or what can be called potential energy is present in all things. This proves the idea that humans can replicate certain powers from the life force or vital energy of animals, and activate this energy through charms and totems to move and alter things in nature.

Conclusion

Understanding animal behavior and the replication of such in human social relationship is useful for maximizing their life force. The proper knowledge of the behaviour of animals can lead to the preparation of charms that can preserve human life force putting one at an advantage over others. For instance, if a man is trying to woo a lady, the behavior of an animal that is closer to love can be used in preparing charms that will turn the lady's heart towards the man. One animal fitting for this charm is the deer.³¹ This paper opens up further engagements into the ontological and scientific relationship shared between humans and animals that produce such causal relationship as adumbrated. Sufficient for now is the exposition that animals, by their behavioural characteristics, possesses life force which can be tapped, and is still being tapped in human social relationships.

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^{30.} Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 22.

^{31.} Adesola Olateju. “The Yoruba Animal Metaphors: Analysis and Interpretation.” *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 14, no. 3(2005:). 380.

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