

*A collection of 100 Kwele Proverbs and Wise Sayings*



*By*

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My greatest appreciation goes to almighty God for enabling me to do this research on an ethnic group of which I don't belong, it makes me pleasure and courageous and aim to do more on other African ethnic groups.

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May God bless you!!!

## **DEDICATION**

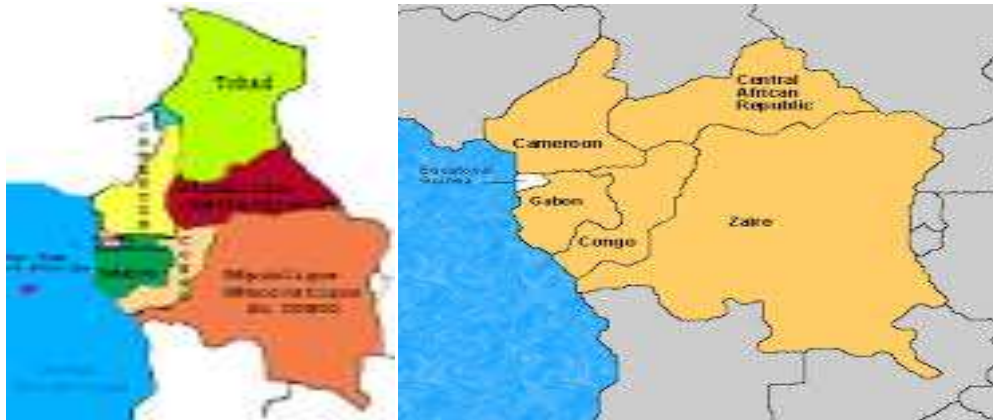
I dedicate this work to: My lovely family, that including my wife *Rehema fbunga Noella*, my sons *Jovial fkyoci flias* and *Jordan Bushiri flias*. I appreciate the support of the African Proverbs Working Group in Nairobi, and all over the world.

## **OVERVIEW / INTRODUCTION**

The Kwele (Bakwel, Bekwil) people are an ethnic group of eastern Gabon, Cameroon in Western Africa, Republic of Congo and Democratic Republic of the Congo. They fled the coastal area of western Africa during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after their traditional enemies acquired

firearms from the slave traders. This altercation is often called the “Poupou” war. The Kwele then settled into lands between the Dja and Ivindo rivers. The kwele are noted for their ceremonial masks which are collected as art objects. The Kwele occupy a great forest region on the borders of Gabon. Their village communities comprised a number of lineages and were governed in the usual way for “headless” equatorial societies, that is in a diffuse and more or less informal manner.

### **Ethnographical Location Of Bakwele People In The D.R.Congo, Gabon, Cameroon and Western Africa.**



### **CULTURE**

The Kwele believe that unexplained deaths, epidemic smallpox and other mysterious threats to the well-being of individuals or the community are caused by witchcraft. Witches are believed to live in male or female hosts, from which they emerge at night to feed upon the internal organs of their victims.

The antidote to witchcraft is the *beete ritual*, which includes masked performances. The *beete* cult reinforces unity and maintains social order. The *beete* ritual which lasted for week, would open with the departure of men into the forest to hunt antelope, whose flesh seasoned with medicines, had to be eaten at a meal at the closing ceremony during the hunt, women and children stayed in the village, after one or two days, *ekuk masks* would “leave” the forest, enter the village and invite the people to come and dance and sing. *Ekuk* means both “*protective forest spirit*” and “*children of beete*”

### **Here are some of the wise sayings:**

#### ***1. A ho te mbouoo***

***Swahili:*** Miti yote msituni haifanani

***French:*** Tous les arbres dans la foret ne sont pas semblable.

***English:*** all trees are not straight in the forest.

***Teaching:*** All people are not the same in the world. There are those who are bad and good people, tall and short, black and white.

## **2. Ngneung-he ho me houou ho me hi**

**Swahili:** *Kama mtu yuko na wewe, inafaa kuwa naye.*

**French:** *Si quelqu'un est avec toi, il faut être avec lui.*

**English:** *If someone is with you, it's good to be with him.*

**Teaching:** *The one who loves you it's good for you to love him back. When a person invite you, you have to invite him back too.*

## **MARRIAGE**

The Bakwele lineage could grow to be a large as the household male could provide for although there is mentioning larger groups having to move away from the group. Proportion of marriage ending in divorce and ideal marriage was polygamous, however women are scarce creating competition in the marriage system. The compulsion toward having a large family and hence personal power in the village drive many Bakwele family heads to spend the family wealth exclusively to acquire wives of their own. In acquiring wives for themselves, and their sons and younger brothers, family heads are expected to allocate family wealth equitably... Inheritance is to be split equally but in reality the head of the household who is the father determines the allocation. The sons will often leave and join another lineage with more wealth and women to offer in exchange for allegiance.

## **RELIGION**

In the context of civilization of Ogoou basin (which include the Fang, Kota, Tsogo, etc) and assuming reasonable contact with these peoples, it is difficult to believe that the Kwele would similarly have venerated ancestors and kept the relics of the dead of the lineage. Indeed, each lineage kept the skulls (edim) of important deceased members of the group in baskets, a practice similar to that of the Kota and Mahongwe from mokambo. These reliquary baskets were apparently decorated with "carved wooden heads" and were placed in the living hut behind the bed of the head of the family. Kwele people believe in witch

## **ECONOMY**

The Kwele are hunters their diet consist of both meat and plants. The Kwele make use of fifty non-domesticated forest plants for nutritional and other value. A plantain economy main protein-lipid sources: hunters that eat meats, weapons: bow, arrow, blowguns.

## **THE KWELE ART**

There are many types of Kwele masks, bush spirit masks, *Ekuk*, which are divided into white-faced masks that function as a guardian spirits and animal masks, *Kuk-guu* (a flying diityak squirrel or spiny-tailed squirrel) and *kuk-diityak* (an owl, also known as a witch's chicken) etc

## **POLITICAL SYSTEM**

Like the Kota and Fang, Kwele people are organized in a patrilineal Kinship system and are divided into about thirty exogamous clans. Their political system emphasizes the power of

the war chiefs (who are often also village chiefs) probably because of continual warring with their neighbors. It depends less than most other traditions upon elders of the lineage or clan. These warriors, who are called *ngeng*, play a vital role in protecting the community against incessant attacks. Like other African ethnic groups, Kwele people use proverbs on their daily activities, especially during marriage ceremonies, burial funerals, and family gathering.

## **Table of Contents**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Acknowledgement .....   | i         |
| Dedication .....  | i         |
| Introduction .....  | ii – iv   |
| <i>Images: Ethnographical Location Of Bakwele People In The D.R.Congo, Gabon, Cameroon and Western Africa .....</i> | <i>ii</i> |

### **A collection of 100 Kwele Proverbs and Wise Sayings**

- 1. A heu'ho mbing ndzeum'e ngo'o ndog-o tou'hou.....1*  
*English: He who went and came back, want to kill.*

2. **Ahho'o ssou nchue te n'tsi'hi**.....1  
*English: You catch a fish and you wash it in the same water still.*
3. **A ho ndii sene**.....1  
*English: It is possible that things change every time.*
4. **A ho te mbouoo**.....1  
*English: All trees are not straight in the forest.*
5. **A hoyi ko lee hheu**.....1  
*English: The one that comes my way, I will accept it.*
6. **A jouo ho kouh-ou**.....2  
*English: When it overflows it cannot be prevented.*
7. **A jouo pong-ho ngneung-e ngneung**.....2  
*English: Sweet to me but biterto them.*
8. **A jouo'o mpong-ho ngneung le hia n'dju'he hi**.....2  
*English: A heavy luggage can kill you.*
9. **A jouoo ho lah a zi ngneung-he ho hou**.....2  
*English: It is good to have people you depend on in life.*
10. **A ko ko?**.....2  
*English: You should not boast by yourself.*
11. **A lah me kepah**.....3  
*English: No person knows about tomorrow.*
12. **Alah (a mbou lah)**.....3  
*English: Understanding each other surpasses everything.*
13. **A le ndjio ha te mbing ndzeum ntong choung**.....3  
*English: When he sees me, he talks about me.*
14. **A moh-o kou'ho tepong-ho ho'o zi mbong**.....3  
*English: Sometimes bad things bring good things.*
15. **A nou le veum-e le ju'he me vet toutoub**.....3  
*English: The secret that you cannot tell anybody, is for killing somebody.*
16. **Anou jioo pou ndzing pah ngaa mpfou**.....4  
*English: A bad event or incident spreads like death.*
17. **A piakne mbong**.....4  
*English: The one who involves others in his affairs is wise.*
18. **A pik te nong-ho le zeung hou ntchih-e lak**.....4  
*English: You cannot be satisfied with what you have.*
19. **A teume ngneung mbhouh-ne hi**.....4  
*English: When you have a problem, you lose respect.*
20. **A tou'ho hue hue tsi'he mii hi** .....4  
*English: Everybody has a head fixed on his neck.*
21. **A tseu tseu te ndo'ou n'touh**.....5  
*English: A drop by drop of wine fills the pot*
22. **A tsouh te ndzouh le-pfouh**.....5  
*English: It crushed until it penetrated the mortar.*
23. **A wouheu'e le keu'heu hi**.....5  
*English: When you set a trap for others, you will fall in it one day.*
24. **A woua ndeum'e wouo**.....5  
*English: The destiny of everybody is in God's hands.*

25. *Awo sso'o found-ho?*.....5  
*English: He who does wrong is the first one to ask.*
26. *A ze te kouo nguia n'koh-o nteu'heu*.....6  
*English: He who enters in the house knows how to climb to the ceiling.*
27. *E hii a me tchoub'e*.....6  
*English: It is good to sit together as brothers and solve problems.*
28. *E mbong sou'ou a tsie meung miaa*.....6  
*English: A good friend is worth more than a relative.*
29. *E mboung me ho ndzi'he me fack*.....6  
*English: It is a poor person who gives birth to twins.*
30. *E tchou le hii ngo'o ho?*.....6  
*English: Wisdom is seen in action not by words.*
31. *Hie wouhte ngneung-he mbou hi*.....7  
*English: Give respect where it is deserved.*
32. *Joung-ho ntio'o ndzet mi* .....7  
*English: When you disrespect someone, then do not listen to him but take what he gives you.*
33. *Kikia ho te ntou'o n'tsi-hi te ngeu'ho nzang-ha*.....7  
*English: Ants cannot cross the river without a rope of reeds.*
34. *Kwa n'do'o te feh*.....7  
*English: It is a curse if your sacrifice is not accepted.*
35. *Le pi'he fouh-o te tchii sii*.....7  
*English: It is not by looking down at the soil that you get wealth.*
36. *M'ba hou le tsak-a pii n'dag ngneung*.....8  
*English: You cannot depend on what is not yours, even if you have good heart.*
37. *M'ba hou le zing'he ngneung n'gouag'a hi*.....8  
*English: Do not disrespect someone who carried you for the first time.*
38. *M'vvo'o ntsia nkeu-nkeu n'dzeum lah ntsiaa nkeu-nkeu*.....8  
*English: When your face passes faster, your back will do the same.*
39. *Me hia wou tsou ou pfe mbouh'ou n'dze ngue me tchuh-ne*.....8  
*English: When you are given food, click your tongue so that they give you again.*
40. *Me ho mveung-he nou toutouh ngneung-he ntchou ndzeung*.....8  
*English: The words of a short person are listened in the evening only.*
41. *Me ho ngou nguim neung-he pa'a*.....9  
*English: Life is self-reliant.*
42. *Me ho ntou'o lefang-ha mhou ngneung n'tsi'he pe nko'zo'o*.....9  
*English: If you send thunder to someone, do your exercise outside the house.*
43. *Me ho te chuing-he leuo'o nkouhte nsang-ha*.....9  
*English: When you are selling a donkey, do not hold its tail.*
44. *Me ho te mboung-ho*.....9  
*English: We never lack history.*
45. *Me ho te ntoh-o nteung m'tchu me pou*.....9  
*English: An old man is not pointed a finger.*
46. *Me ho te souk-ou nnet ngneung te hi ndjuh-te*.....10  
*English: You cannot wash somebody if he/ she has not yet scrubbed his/her body.*
47. *Me ho te teme ntang-ha nteu nguia'a*.....10  
*English: You cannot build the roof of your house while inside.*

48. *Me koueu'he seu*.....10  
*English: Shame kill people.*
49. *Me le chih-ii me fou heu'o*.....10  
*English: Whoever comes, will one day go back.*
50. *Me le ju'u nking nguie hi moo*.....10  
*English: When you laugh at a barren woman, it gives her strength to look for a baby.*
51. *Me mah-a hi si n'gaap le tsouk*.....11  
*English: When it is thrown down, even a chicken cannot eat it.*
52. *Me wak-a wou m'baa wou le wat net*.....11  
*English: When you are undermined people, do not do it to yourself.*
53. *Me zeug-e moo le hia a touh*.....11  
*English: A child with a big tummy does not become tall.*
54. *Mela'a ho mbig-he ntseung-he n'guia*.....11  
*English: Gossip can destroy the whole family.*
55. *Meung-he hou tchoug-e mii*.....11  
*English: He who coughs swallows.*
56. *Meung-he lah nkoue nguia e ho noh ntong-ho fo;o choung-ho hi*.....12  
*English: When you finish to build a house inform the King.*
57. *Meung-he pe n'tah*.....12  
*English: When you pick a wallet, is not getting wealth.*
58. *Mmoh ndeu'he te moo*.....12  
*English: When you grow up, you cannot go back.*
59. *Mpfe ndzap mpfe keba*.....12  
*English: The one who eats vegetables is the one who plucked them.*
60. *Ndeum'e n'deu*.....12  
*English: God's path is not easily followed.*
61. *Ndeum'e te lii*.....13  
*English: God does not sleep at all.*
62. *N'deum me ho mvoo ntchoop moo*.....13  
*English: It's God who makes a child to be great or a winner.*
63. *N'dju'u me ho ndzi'he tsop*.....13  
*English: A leopard gives birth to a leopard.*
64. *N'do'o ho te ndah-a ndzii*.....14  
*English: The malediction does not sleep hungry.*
65. *N'guiih-e nouneu e ho te ndzougou*.....14  
*English: When the truth is revealed the incident revives.*
66. *N'keu n'tsang'ha te tchoh-o*.....14  
*English: He who fights is stupid. He who flees the battle is not a coward.*
67. *N'kong-ni ntsie jouo tseu*.....14  
*English: Expectation is above all.*
68. *N'sou hou mo'o ngab'a ho*.....15  
*English: A chick, you have a good friend.*
69. *N'sou'ou ntsong-ho si ngo tsong*.....15  
*English: A friend to a thief, is also a thief.*



70. *N'tchih-e zang-ha nkougni*.....15  
*English: He who scratches the leg of an eagle is wasting his time.*
71. *N'tsi leveum me pih tsi tou'ou*.....15  
*English: It is what is in the stomach which carries what is on the head.*
72. *N'tsi'hi teu'e pah'a melah meteung*.....15  
*English: Every river is dangerous.*
73. *Ndze saa n'tang moh*.....15  
*English: It's not good to hunt two rabbits at a time.*
74. *Ngeung-he ho ten oh-o mbaa jih-e nere zii*.....15  
*English: A person cannot press a swollen part on his body by himself.*
75. *Ngneung-he fah-jioo*.....16  
*English: He who seeks for something, finds it.*
76. *Ngneung-he ho me hou ou ho me hi*.....16  
*English: When someone has a relationship with you, be with him together.*
77. *Ngneung-he mpte mia'a zou a neu'he mia'a mbeu'oh lezet*.....16  
*English: The person who overeats excrement a lot.*
78. *Ngneung-he n'te mbingte jou'o mook te ho nto'o* .....16  
*English: He who safeguards food on fire is not the cooker.*
79. *Ngneung-he nte ngwe lekong lemoh-o n'tso'o ntchou'ou*.....16  
*English: You can go to war just because you have one spear only.*
80. *Ngouag-a lak-a si ngo n'tsong*.....16  
*English: He who undervalues a small thing is a thief.*
81. *Ngwessou moo medju sin go le nteung-he hhoh-o nteuo'o*.....16  
*English: A lady who is not married, is like deep river which crushes calabash.*
82. *Nkong-ni tsie jouo'o tseum*.....17  
*English: The one who gives you love is better than anyone else in the world.*
83. *Nn'a me moo ho nkeu'eu nkenne nkenne*.....17  
*English: An animal with its young does not run at night without looking behind.*
84. *Nteu'oh mbou la sa'a*.....17  
*English: He who brings his respect does not return empty hands.*
85. *Nteung-ne ke'ndong ho te ngouheu'e*.....17  
*English: A banana tree even if it's bent, it cannot fall at all.*
86. *Ou keu'e ntseung mbo hou keu'e ndzet*.....17  
*English: The lower parts of animals also have fakes.*
87. *Ou le teme lekong-ho ntchou'ou feung*.....18  
*English: You cannot put a spear into a fresh wound.*
88. *Ou pa ha ng'o ndeum ha le*.....18  
*English: Do not hate anybody, it's God who created him.*
89. *Ou tsia ha mbah lepah*.....18  
*English: You came first ahead of me because am still stitching my pillow.*
90. *Ou tsoh ntong te tsiaa*.....18  
*English: He who does not share with others is greedy.*
91. *Ou yiek'e le ya ou ho le pfouh mbaap mbe kwe*.....19  
*English: Too much wisdom leads to destruction.*
92. *Te kouangte mo'o lih-I si ngo ndeu*.....19  
*English: He who doesn't remember is a witch.*

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>93. <i>Te mah-a ha me ze</i></b> .....   | <b>19</b>      |
| <i>English: Do not throw a child in the forest but on the road.</i>                                     |                |
| <b>94. <i>Te tchu nkeu wou'o mbou ngnigniaa</i></b> .....   | <b>19</b>      |
| <i>English: Do not give an owl the message of a crow.</i>   |                |
| <b>95. <i>Tou-nkiah ndah ngouh ntchih-e nchih-te</i></b> .....  | <b>20</b>      |
| <i>English: A small fish today, will be big tomorrow.</i>   |                |
| <b>96. <i>Tsseeh'te nere fah-a le nong-ho</i></b> .....   | <b>20</b>      |
| <i>English: He who slowly approaches somewhere, is given a place to sleep.</i>                          |                |
| <b>97. <i>Veung veung moo medju a le souk'ou ki'hi</i></b> .....  | <b>21</b>      |
| <i>English: A girl who does not refuse anything will sleep with a widower.</i>                          |                |
| <b>98. <i>Wena mwitu guluzita meso</i></b> .....  | <b>22</b>      |
| <i>English: He who runs in the bush, closes eyes..</i>  |                |
| <b>99. <i>Wouo fah-a le he fah mbeung nong ndou'ou, wouo mpfee le mpfet nou'ou nong nkiaa</i></b> ..... | <b>22</b>      |
| <i>English: He who seeks food under rain, eats it under sun.</i>  |                |
| <b>100. <i>Zo'o ndeung ndeung-he tsie lekang</i></b> .....  | <b>22</b>      |
| <i>English: Innocence and conscience worth than witchcraft.</i>   |                |
| <b>Summary</b> .....  | <b>23</b>      |
| <b>Conclusion</b> .....   | <b>23</b>      |
| <b>References</b> .....   | <b>24</b>      |
| <b>Appendix</b> .....   | <b>25 - 28</b> |

|                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Summary</b> .....    | <b>23</b>    |
| <b>Conclusion</b> ..... | <b>23</b>    |
| <b>References</b> ..... | <b>24</b>    |
| <b>Appendix</b> .....   | <b>25-28</b> |

## *A collection of 100 Kwele Proverbs and Wise Sayings*

1. **A heu'ho mbing ndzeum'e ngo'o ndog-o tou'hou.**

**Swahili:** Aendaye na kurudi hutaka kuuwa.

**French:** Celui qui va et revient, veut tuer.

**English:** He who went and came back, wants to kill.

**Meaning:** It warns married people that once you divorce with your partner, you should be careful with the person you divorce with when he/she comes back.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Deuteronomy 23:23 "That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto Jehovah thy God, a freewill-offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth."*

2. **Ahho'o ssou nchuele n'tsi'hi.**

**Swahili:** Unashika samaki, tena unaisafisha kwenye yale maji?

**French:** Tu attrapes le poisson et tu le rince dans la même eau ?

**English:** You catch a fish and you wash it in the same water still.

**Meaning:** Opportunity comes once in life, when you get a chance do not let it go.

**Biblical Parallel:** *1 Corinthians 7:21 "Was thou called being a bondservant? Care not for it: nay, even if thou canst become free, use it rather."*

3. **A ho ndii sene.**

**Swahili:** Inawezekana mambo kubadilika kila wakati.

**French:** Il est possible les choses changent à tout moment.

**English:** It is possible that things change every time.

**Meaning:** Everything and everybody can change, except God and his words.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Ezekiel 21:26 "Thus said the Lord Jehovah: Remove the miter, and take off the crown; this shall be no more the same; exalt that which is low, and a base that which is high."*

4. **A ho te mbouoo.**

**Swahili:** Miti yote hainyoroki msituni.

**French :** Tous les arbres ne sont pas droits dans la forêt.

**English:** All trees are not straight in the forest.

**Meaning:** All people are not the same in the world. There are bad and good, tall and short, black and white. Even their hearts and characters are very different.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Luke 8:12 "And those by the way side are they that have heard; then cometh the devil, and taken away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved."*

5. **A hoyi ko lee hheu.**

**Swahili:** Kile kitakacho nijia ni changu nakikubali.

**French:** Ce que me parviendra est à moi, je l'accepte.

**English:** The one that comes my way, I will accept it.

**Meaning:** When you are struggling in life, sometimes you accept anything that comes your way.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Mathew 12:34 "Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth spoken."*

**6. A jouo ho kouh-ou.**

**Swahili:** Ikizidi haizuiliki.

**French:** Trop, c'est trop.

**English:** When it overflows it cannot be prevented.

**Meaning:** When someone you do respect has been doing bad things to you, you may disrespect him when it exceeds.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Hebrews 4:1 "Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into his rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it."*

**7. A jouo pong-ho ngneung-e ngneung.**

**Swahili:** Kinacho kufurahisha, hakifurahishi watu wote.

**French:** Ce qui te plait, ne plait pas les autres.

**English:** Sweet to me but bitter to them.

**Meaning:** Anything that may please people, may not please others. What you see as bitter, it is nice to someone else out there. so stop criticizing things.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Galatians 5:15 "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."*

**8. A jouo'o mpong-ho ngneung le hia n'dju'he hi.**

**Swahili:** Mzigo mzito sana waweza kukuuwa

**French:** Une chose plaisante peut te tuer.

**English:** A heavy luggage can kill you.

**Meaning:** When you are attracted to something a lot, it can destroy your life.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 6:17 "And I, behold, I do bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is in the earth shall die."*

**9. A jouoo ho lah a zi ngneung-he ho hou.**

**Swahili:** Ni vyema kuwa na watu wa kutegemea.

**French:** C'est mieux d'avoir les gens sur qui tu comptes.

**English:** It is good to have people you depend on in life.

**Meaning:** Human being needs one another in many issues. They depend to each other for them to accomplish their promises.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Joshua 10:37 "And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but he utterly destroyed it, and all the souls that were therein."*

**10. A ko ko ?**

**Swahili:** Nani ni nani, na kwa nini ?

**French:** Qui est qui, et pourquoi?

**English:** Who is who, and why?

**Meaning:** If you praise yourself sometime is not good. You should show your deeds with actions and let others praise you.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Psalms 5:5 "The arrogant shall not stand in thy sight: Thou hates all workers of iniquity."*

**11. A lah me kepah.**

**Swahili:** Maisha ya kesho hayajulikani.

**French:** La vie de demain est inconnue.

**English:** The life of tomorrow is not known.

**Meaning:** It's good to live and do well today instead of waiting tomorrow.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Luke 6:23 "Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets."*

**12. Alah (a mbou lah)**

**Swahili:** Kusikilizana kunashinda kila jambo.

**French:** L'entente dépasse toute chose.

**English:** Understanding each other surpasses everything.

**Meaning:** Whenever people live together and understand each other (solidarity), they achieve a lot.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Deuteronomy 1:13 "Take you wise men, and understanding, and known, according to your tribes, and I will make them heads over you."*

**13. A le ndjio ha te mbing ndzeum ntong choung**

**Swahili:** Akiniona anaongea kunihusu.

**French:** De qu'il me voit, il parle de moi.

**English:** When he sees me, he talks about me.

**Meaning:** When you do good, people will always talk about you as well as when you do bad things

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 22:15 "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might ensnare him in his talk."*

**14. A moh-o kou'ho tepong-ho ho'o zi mbong.**

**Swahili:** Wakati mwingine ubaya uleta wema.

**French:** Quelques fois le Malheur est bon.

**English:** Sometimes bad things bring good things.

**Meaning:** The proverb is used in some situation whereby something bad may happen to you but at the end of it, it is for your own good.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Philippians 1:12 "Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel;"*

**15. A nou le veum-e le ju'he me vet toutoub.**

**Swahili:** Siri ambayo hauwezi kumuambia mtu ni ya kuuwawa.

**French:** Le secret que tu ne peux pas dire à quelqu'un est celui de le tuer.

**English:** The secret that you cannot tell anybody, is for killing somebody.

**Meaning:** It is very hard to a person who hates you to tell what they plan about you.  
**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 22:15* “Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might ensnare him in his talk.”

**16. Anou jioo pou ndzing pah ngaa mpfou.**

**Swahili:** Jambo mbaya usambaa kwa haraka kama habari ya kifo.

**French:** Il y a les affaires qui se rependent comme la nouvelle de la mort.

**English:** A bad event or incident spreads like death.

**Meaning:** The proverbs advices the community that they should not behave badly because everyone will know and it will be a bad reputation.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 2:3* “And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”

**17. A piakne mbong.**

**Swahili:** Ahusishaye wengine kwenye mambo yake ana hekima.

**French:** Celui qui associe les autres dans son affaire est sage.

**English:** The one who involves others in his affairs is wise.

**Meaning:** If you share an idea with another person you may get a good solution or idea compared to the one you had.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 7:24* “Everyone therefore that heard these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock”

**18. A pik te nong-ho le zeung hou ntchih-e lak.**

**Swahili:** Hauwezi kutoshelezwa na kile ulichonacho.

**French:** On n’est jamais satisfait de ce qu’on a.

**English:** You cannot be satisfied with what you have.

**Meaning:** It is human nature to always want to get more things. Anything you have is always insufficient.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Psalms 78:30* “They were not estranged from that which they desired, their food was yet in their mouths,”

**19. A teume ngneung mbhouh-ne hi.**

**Swahili:** Mtu akiwa na shida upoteza heshima.

**French:** Lorsqu’on est dans les pétrins on perd sa lucidité.

**English:** When a person has a problem, he/she loses respect.

**Meaning:** A person in trouble is sometimes denied respect.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Lamentations 5:12* “Princes were hanged up by their hand: The faces of elders were not honored.”

**20. A tou’ho hue hue tsi’he mii hi.**

**Swahili:** Kila mtu ana kichwa juu ya shingo.

**French:** Chaque personne a la tête posée sur son cou.

**English:** Everybody has a head fixed on his neck.

**Meaning:** everybody is responsible of his own deeds.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 16:24* “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”

**21. A tseu tseu te ndo'ou n'touh.**

**Swahili:** Tone moja moja la pombe ujaza kibuyu.

**French:** Goutte à goutte du vin, remplit laalebasse.

**English:** A drop of wine fills the pot.

**Meaning:** Do not undermine something small because that can be used to bring blessing to you.

**Biblical Parallel:** *1 Samuel 17:33* "And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

**22. A tsouh te ndzouh le-pfouh.**

**Swahili:** Alitwanga hadi ikaingia kwenye kino.

**French:** Il a pile jusqu'à percer le mortier.

**English:** He crushed it until it penetrated the mortar.

**Meaning:** It's good to avoid exaggeration, anything that is in excess brings problems to the body or to the society. You better be careful when you are crushing, you may end up crushing even the mortar.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Leviticus 2:16* "And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, part of the bruised grain thereof, and part of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: it is an offering made by fire unto Jehovah."

**23. A wouheu'e le keu'heu hi.**

**Swahili:** Ukitega wengine, siku moja utaanguka ndani ya mtego wako.

**French:** Lorsque tu pièges les autres, tu en tomberas un jour.

**English:** When you set a trap for others, you will fall in your trap one day.

**Meaning:** Anything you do with bad intention to hurt others, will always fall back on you or your children.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Esther 7:1, 10* "So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified."

**24. A woua ndeum'e wouo.**

**Swahili:** Maisha ya wote yamo mikononi mwa Mungu.

**French :** Le destin de tout homme est dans les mains de Dieu.

**English:** The destiny of everybody is in God's hands.

**Meaning:** Nobody can stop you for being as you are, because we all depend on God's grace.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Acts 13:34* "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David."

**25. Awo sso'o found-ho?**

**Swahili:** Afanyaye ubaya ndiye uwa wa kwanza kuuliza.

**French:** Celui qui commet le mal, interroge le premier.

**English:** He who does wrong is the first one to ask.

**Meaning:** It talks about who usually struggle to implicate others while they themselves are guilty. They are known through the fruits of their deeds.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 26:48* “Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he: take him. And straightway he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Rabbi; and kissed him.”

**26. A ze te kouo nguia n’koh-o nteu’heu.**

**Swahili:** Anayeinganyumbani, anajua jinsi ya kupanda kwa dari.

**French:** A peine d’entrer dans la maison, il veut monter sur le plafond.

**English:** He who enters in the house knows how to climb to the ceiling.

**Meaning:** It is used to guests that they should be carefully to avoid showing their bad behavior before they leave.

**Biblical Parallel:** *1 Peter 3:16* “having a good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against, they may be put to shame who revile your good manner of life in Christ.”

**27. E hii a me tchoub’e.**

**Swahili:** Ni vyema kuketi pamoja kama ndugu kutatua matatizo

**French:** La réflexion sur un probleme est mieux lorsqu’on est nombreux.

**English:** It is good to sit together as brothers and solve problems.

**Meaning:** Many hands make the work Light.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 29:22* “And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.”

**28. E mbong sou’ou a tsie meung miaa.**

**Swahili:** Rafiki mwema azidi ndugu.

**French:** Un bon ami est plus qu’un membre de la famille.

**English:** A good friend is more worthy than a relative.

**Meaning:** Friendship is about caring each other, sharing idea. For this reason, he can be more important than a relative.

**Biblical Parallel:** *John 11:11* “These things spoke he: and after this he said unto them, Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.”

**29. E mboung me ho ndzi’he me fack.**

**Swahili:** Ni mtu maskini ndiye ambaye uzaa watoto mapacha.

**French:** C’est le pauvre qui met au monde les jumeaux.

**English:** It is a poor person who gives birth to twins.

**Meaning:** God gives grace to those who are in poor conditions of living and believes in him.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 48:9* “And Joseph said unto his father, they are my sons, whom God hath given me here. And he said, bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.”

**30. E tchou le hii ngo’o ho?**

**Swahili:** Akili uonekana kwa vitendo.

**French:** L’intelligence se fait voir par les actions.

**English:** Wisdom is seen in action



**Meaning:** Concrete action determines the person you are dealing with.

**Biblical Parallel:** *1 Samuel 25:18* “Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched grain, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses.”

**31. Hie wouhte ngneung-he mbou hi.**

**Swahili:** Patia heshima kwa mtu anayeistahili.

**French:** Donne du respect à celui qui le mérite.

**English:** Give respect where it is deserved.

**Meaning:** Everyone should be given his due respect, every place should be given its deserved respect.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Philippians 2:29* “Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy; and hold such in honor”

**32. Joung-ho ntio’o ndzet mi.**

**Swahili:** Ukidharau mtu kataa mambo yake pia.

**French:** Si tu détestes quelqu’un refuse ses affaires également.

**English:** When you disrespect someone, refuse his association too.

**Meaning:** It is used mostly to people who are divorcing. If you accept to divorce then you should be far from each other.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Jeremiah 18:10* “If they do that which is evil in my sight, that they obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.”

**33. Kikia ho te ntou’o n’tsi-hi te ngeu’ho nzang-ha.**

**Swahili:** Chungu hawezi kuvuka mto kama hana kamba ya mianzi

**French :** La fourmi ne peut jamais traverser une rivière sans la corde de raphia.

**English:** Ants cannot cross the river without a rope of reeds.

**Meaning:** Togetherness in life should not be for negative habits, however is good when you are holding on something as a group.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Ecclesiast 2:26* “For to the man that pleased him God gives wisdom, and knowledge, and joy; but to the sinner he gives travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that pleased God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.”

**34. Kwa n’do’o te feh.**

**Swahili:** Ni laana wakati sadaka yako haikubaliwi  
**French :** C’est une malédiction lorsque ton sacrifice n’est pas accepté.

**English:** It is a curse if your sacrifice is not accepted.

**Meaning:** It is good to be in a good relationship with your God so that everything you ask is being accepted before him.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 4:5* “But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”

**35. Le pi’he fouh-o te tchii sii.**

**Swahili:** Kuangalia sana chini sikuokota mali.

**French:** Ce n’est pas à force de regarder le sol qu’on ramasse la fortune.

**English:** It is not by looking down the soil that you get wealth.

**Meaning:** It is used to advice lazy people that for you to get something useful you must work hard but not wait until someone does for you. Hard work pays.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Titus 1:12 “One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons.”*

**36. M’ba hou le tsak-a pii n’dag ngneung.**

**Swahili:** Hauwezi kutegemea kisicho kuwa chako, hata kama una roho nzuri.

**French :** Tu ne peux pas dépenser de bon cœur ce qui ne t’appartient pas.

**English:** You cannot depend on what is not yours, even if you have good heart.

**Meaning:** Slump your chest if things belong to you, but if it is not yours leave it alone.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 32:18 “Then thou shalt say, they are thy servant Jacob’s; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, he also is behind us.”*

**37. M’ba hou le zing’he ngneung n’gouag’a hi.**

**Swahili:** Usimdharau mtu aliye kubeba mara ya kwanza

**French :** On ne sous-estime pas celui qui ta aider à arriver quelque part.

**English:** Do not disrespect someone who carried you for the first time.

**Meaning:** You should learn to be thankful to people who help you for the first time.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God.”*

**38. 38. M’vvo’o ntsia nkeu-nkeu n’dzeum lah ntsiaa nkeu-nkeu.**

**Swahili:** Wakati uso unapitambio, mgongo pia utapita vilevile

**French:** Lorsque le visage passe en vitesse, le derrière mêmement.

**English:** When your face passes faster, your back will do the same.

**Meaning:** The body is one and there is no part of it more important than the other that is why when a problem affects one part of it, the whole body suffers.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Job 17:7 “Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow.”*

**39. Me hia wou tsou ou pfe mbouh’ou n’dze ngue me tchuh-ne.**

**Swahili:** Ukipewa chakula, mbofya ulimiupewe tena.

**French:** Lorsque tu reçois la nourriture claque la langue pour recevoir en plus.

**English:** When you are given food, click your tongue so that they give you again.

**Meaning:** Silence is a cure, even if you are not pleased with what you are given, do not show your displeasure so that you will be given once more.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Colossians 3:15 “And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful.”*

**40. Me ho mveung-he nou toutouh ngneung-he ntchou ndzeung.**

**Swahili:** Ni jioni pekee, maneno ya mtu mfupi ukubaliwa.

**French:** C’est seulement tard le soir qu’on accepte le dire d’un chétif.

**English:** The words of a short person are listened to in the evening only.

**Meaning:** In some region people are being denied their rights just because of physical

attitude, color and religions, something which is archaic. We have the same value before God.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 1:27 “And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”*

**41. Me ho ngou nguim neung-he pa’a.**

**Swahili:** Maisha ni kujitegemea

**French:** Chacun pour soi.

**English:** Life is self-reliant.

**Meaning:** Many people prefer first of all to satisfy themselves and serve others later.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Proverbs 28:25 “He that is of a greedy spirit stirred up strife; But he that putteth his trust in Jehovah shall be made fat.”*

**42. Me ho ntou’o lefang-ha mhou ngneung n’tsi’he pe nko’zo’o.**

**Swahili:** Ukimtumia mtu radi fanya mazoezi yako inje.

**French :** Lorsque tu envoies la foudre a quelqu’un, restes dehors pour tes imprécations.

**English:** If you send thunder to someone, do your exercise outside.

**Meaning:** Everything has its terms and conditions to follow for it to be used effectively. You better either agree or refuse.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Mark 8:34 “And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”*

**43. Me ho te chuing-he leuo’o nkouhte nsang-ha.**

**Swahili:** Unapouza punda, usimshikilie mkia.

**French:** Quand on va un cheval, on ne lui retient pas la queue.

**English:** When you are selling a donkey, do not hold its tail.

**Meaning:** You cannot marry off your daughter and still want to control her at her in-law home.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 29:23 “And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her.”*

**44. Me ho te mboung-ho.**

**Swahili:** Hatujawai kosa historia.

**French:** On n’a jamais manqué d’histoire

**English:** We never lack history.

**Meaning:** It simply means that people especially those who will be alive will be always having something to narrate in future because of what is happening today.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Luke 14:27 “Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”*

**45. Me ho te ntoh-o nteung m’tchu me pou.**

**Swahili:** Mzee hanyoshewi kidole.

**French:** On ne point pas le doigt à un vieux.

**English:** An old man is not pointed with a finger.

**Meaning:** Talk to old people with respect, do not argue with them even if they are

wrong, because they are elders.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Lamentations 5:12 “Princes were hanged up by their hand: The faces of elders were not honored.”*

**46. Me ho te souk-ou nnet ngeung te hi ndjuh-te.**

**Swahili:** Hauwezi kumuosha mtu kama haja sugua mwili wake mwenyewe.

**French :** Tu ne peux pas laver quelqu'un, s'il ne peut lui-même se laver.

**English:** You cannot wash somebody if he/ she has not yet scrubbed his/her body.

**Meaning:** The bible teaches people to help others, but it becomes useless when help someone with no idea, vision or who does not want to be helped.

**Biblical Parallel:** *1 Samuel 25:3 “Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail; and the woman was of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb.”*

**47. Me ho te teme ntang-ha nteu nguia'a.**

**Swahili:** Hauwezi jenga kulijenga paa la nyumba yako ukiwa ndani.

**French:** Tu ne peux pas construire la toiture d'une maison à l'intérieure de la maison.

**English:** You cannot build the roof of your house while inside.

**Meaning:** It is dangerous when you tend to do things without a plan. Think twice before doing something.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Mark 14:64 “Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be worthy of death.”*

**48. Me koueu'he seu.**

**Swahili:** Aibu huua watu.

**French:** La honte tue les gens.

**English:** Shame kill people.

**Meaning:** It is good to accept the result of what you did whether it is wrong or good.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 27:5 “And he cast down the pieces of silver into the sanctuary, and departed; and he went away and hanged himself.”*

**49. Me le chih-ii me fou heu'o.**

**Swahili:** Yeyote atakaye kuja, atarudi siku moja.

**French:** Quiconque est venu, partira un jour.

**English:** Whoever comes, will one day go back.

**Meaning:** It is used to comfort the family of the disease during burial ceremony.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 16:8 “And he said, Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, whence comes thou? And whither goes thou? And she said, I am fleeing from the face of my mistress Sarai.”*

**50. Me le ju'u nking nguie hi moo.**

**Swahili:** Amchekaye tasa humpa nguvu ya kumtafuta mtoto.

**French:** Lorsqu'on se moque de l'impuissant cela lui pousse à avoir l'enfant.

**English:** When you laugh at a barren woman, it gives her strength to look for a baby.

**Meaning:** When you despise someone, it makes him stronger than before to prove you wrong.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 25:21 “And Isaac entreated Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren: and Jehovah was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.”*

**51. Me mah-a hi si n’gaap le tsouk.**

**Swahili:** Kikitupwa chini, hata kuku hakili.

**French:** Même s’il est jeté par terre, même la poule ne peut pas le picorer.

**English:** When it is thrown down, even a chicken cannot eat it.

**Meaning:** There are things that a human being cannot do and when they dare to do them, they lose their respect in the community.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Exodus 22:31 “And ye shall be holy men unto me: therefore ye shall not eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs.”*

**52. Me wak-a wou m’baa wou le wat net.**

**Swahili:** Wakikususha mamlaka usijisushe pia.

**French:** Si on te rabaisse, il ne faut pas te rabaisser toi-même.

**English:** When you are brought down by people, do not do it to yourself.

**Meaning:** It is obvious that you cannot be admired by everybody in this world, and you are advised that you should not follow those who minimize and deny yourself.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 27:42 “He saved others; himself he cannot save. He is the King of Israel; let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe on him.”*

**53. Me zeug-e moo le hia a touh.**

**Swahili:** Mtoto mwenye tumbo kubwa, harefuki.

**French:** L’enfant qui a un ventre ballonne, ne grandit pas.

**English:** A child with a big tummy does not become tall.

**Meaning:** People eat to maintain their health but it is advisable to be careful with what goes into your stomach than what is coming out.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Romans 3:13 “Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit: The poison of asps is under their lips:”*

**54. Mela’a ho mbig-he ntseung-he n’guia**

**Swahili:** Uvumi unaweza kuimaliza jamii nzima.

**French:** Le mensonge peut décimer toute une famille.

**English:** Gossip can destroy the whole family.

**Meaning:** When you lie about an individual in the family, you reduce his value in the family and community at large.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Proverbs 20:19 “He that gets about as a tale-bearer revealed secrets; Therefore company not with him that opened wide his lips.”*

**55. Meung-he hou tchoug-e mii.**

**Swahili:** Akohoaye humeza.

**French:** Celui qui tousse avale.

**English:** He who coughs swallow.

**Meaning:** When you have any problem, it is better to accept it first and look for a solution. Do not be discouraged.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Daniel 5:16 “But I have heard of thee, that thou canst give interpretations, and dissolve doubts; now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.”*

**56. Meung-he lah nkoue nguia e ho noh ntong-ho fo’o choung-ho hi.**

**Swahili:** Ukimaliza kuijenga nyumba, julisha mfalme.

**French:** Quand tu finis à construire, informe le roi.

**English:** When you finish building a house inform the King.

**Meaning:** It warns you that, for you to realize your plan without any problem with the government inform the man in charge of each and every tax.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Romans 13:1 “Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God.”*

**57. Meung-he pe n’tah.**

**Swahili:** Uokotapo mkoba, sio utajiri.

**French :** Si tu ramasses un porte-monnaie, ce n’est ça la richesse.

**English:** When you pick a wallet, is not getting wealth.

**Meaning:** For you to get rich, you must work hard, do not expect that you can wealth easily as you are dreaming a real dream.

**Biblical Parallel:** *2Timothy 2:6 “The husbandmen that labored must be the first to partake of the fruits.”*

**58. Mmoh ndeu’he te moo.**

**Swahili:** Ukikomaa huwezi kurudinyuma.

**French:** Lorsqu’on grandit, on ne revient plus d’enfance.

**English:** When you grow up, you cannot go back.

**Meaning:** When you grow up you leave all childhood characters then you start behaving has a grown up or adult.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Hebrews 6:17 “Wherein God, being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath;”*

**59. Mpfe ndzap mpfe keba.**

**Swahili:** Anaye zikula akulaye mboga ndiye aliye zichuma.

**French :** C’est celui qui consomme les légumes qui les a cueillis.

**English:** The one who eats vegetables is the one who plucked them.

**Meaning:** The proverb is used when the proof of any activity is with the person who has the items.

**Biblical Parallel:** *John 13:26 “Jesus therefore answered, He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it him. So when he had dipped the sop, he takes and gives it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.”*

**60. Ndeum’e n’deu.**

**Swahili:** Njia ya Mungu haifuatwi kwa urahisi.

**French:** Le chemin de Dieu n'est pas facile à suivre.

**English:** God's path is not easily followed.

**Meaning:** Anyone who says God's words, it must come from his/her heart.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Job 37:5 "God thundered marvelously with his voice; Great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend."*

**61. Ndeum'e te lili.**

**Swahili:** Mungu halali kamwe.

**French:** Dieu ne dort jamais.

**English:** God does not sleep at all.

**Meaning:** The proverb is used when your enemy get revenge of something bad happening to him as he did to you.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 26:45 "Then cometh he to the disciples, and said unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."*

**62. N'deum me ho mvoo ntchoop moo.**

**Swahili:** Ni Mungu afanyaye mtoto kuwa mshindi.

**French:** C'est Dieu qui fait l'enfant soit victorieux.

**English:** It's God who makes a child to be a winner.

**Meaning:** God is the one who gives people the ability to do things in the world.

**Biblical Parallel:** *1 Samuel 3:11 "And Jehovah said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle."*

**63. N'dju'u me ho ndzi'he tsop.**

**Swahili:** Chui humzaa chui.

**French:** Le léopard ne met bas qu'un Léopard.

**English:** A leopard gives birth to a leopard.

**Meaning:** The proverb compares the behavior of people with that of their children.

**Biblical Parallel:** *John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life."*

**64. N'do'o ho te ndah-a ndzii.**

**Swahili:** Laana hailali njaa.

**French:** La malédiction ne dort jamais affamer.

**English:** The malediction does not sleep hungry.

**Meaning:** Once you are cursed, all your life becomes disorganize. You become useless in the community and people laugh at wherever you go.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Galatians 3:10 "For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone who continued not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them."*

**65. N'guiih-e nouneu e ho te ndzougou.**

**Swahili:** Wakati ukweli unapojulikana, lile jambo huwa nikama linatendeka tena.

**French:** Lorsque la vérité est connue, la scène revient en esprit.

**English:** When the truth is revealed the incident revives.

**Meaning:** Forgetting is the healer but remembering hurt, his to avoid all this people should learn how to forgive and forget.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Luke 22:61 “And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him, before the cock crow this day thou shalt deny me thrice.”*

**66. N’keu n’tsang’ha te tchoh-o.**

**Swahili:** Akimbiaye vita si mjinga.

**French:** Celui qui fuit la bagarre, n’est pas un poltron.

**English:** He who flees the battle is not a coward.

**Meaning:** A stupid person reacts negatively but a wise person avoids any kind of quarrel.

**Biblical Parallel:** *John 18:10, 11 “Simon Peter therefore having a sword drew it, and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. Now the servant’s name was Malchus, Jesus therefore said unto Peter, Put up the sword into the sheath: the cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”*

**67. N’kong-ni ntsie jouo tseu.**

**Swahili:** Matarajio uzidi kila kitu.

**French:** L’espérance dépasse tout.

**English:** Expectation is above all.

**Meaning:** It definitely means that when you expect to get something and keep praying about it, you will get it at last.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Hosea 4:8 “They feed on the sin of my people, and set their heart on their iniquity.”*

**68. N’sou hou mo’o ngab’a ho.**

**Swahili:** Kifaranga una rafiki wa ukweli.

**French:** Le petit poussin, tu as un vrai ami.

**English:** A chick, you have a good friend.

**Meaning:** Friendship is a long process which needs for people to know each other, that why is hard to have a really friend when you still a toddler, except Jesus Christ.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 19:14 “But Jesus said, suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.”*

**69. N’sou’ou ntsong-ho si ngo tsong.**

**Swahili:** Ukiwa rafiki wa mwizi, nawe pia ni mwizi.

**French:** L’ami au voleur, c’est aussi un voleur.

**English:** A friend to a thief is also a thief.

**Meaning:** Friendship brings characters together and people alike, the proverb wants to show you consequences and how much it can cost you for being friend to a person with bad behavior.

**Biblical Parallel:** *1 Corinthians 15:33 “Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals.”*



**70. N'tchih-e zang-ha nkougni.**

**Swahili:** Anayekwaruza mguu wa mwewe hupoteza mda wake.

**French:** Celui qui gratte la patte du hibou, passe son temps.

**English:** He who scratches the leg of an eagle wastes his time.

**Meaning:** It teaches people to deal with issues which are important instead of wasting time on useless affairs.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Proverbs 26:7 "The legs of the lame hang loose: So is a parable in the mouth of fools."*

**71. N'tsi leveum me pih tsi tou'ou**

**Swahili:** Ni kile kilicho tumbonikinacho kibeba kilicho kichwani.

**French:** C'est ce qui est dans le ventre qui porte ce qui est sur la tête.

**English:** It is what is in the stomach which carries what is on the head.

**Meaning:** When a person is hungry all his body is upset and cannot react well.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 12:4 "How he entered into the house of God, and ate the showbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests?"*

**72. N'tsi'hi teu'e pah'a melah meteung.**

**Swahili:** Kila mto ni hatari.

**French:** Chaque rivière est dangereuse.

**English:** Every river is dangerous.

**Meaning:** People should be very prudent when they meet people they do not know better because every person has his default.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Proverbs 10:19 "In the multitude of words there wanted not transgression; But he that refrained his lips doeth wisely."*

**73. Ndze saa n'tang moh.**

**Swahili:** Si vyema kuwawinda sungura wawili kwa wakati mmoja.

**French:** Ce n'est bon de chasser deux lièvres à la fois.

**English:** It's not good to hunt two rabbits at the same time.

**Meaning:** It's good to focus on one thing, two may make you lose one them.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 6:24 "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."*

**74. Ngeung-he ho ten oh-o mbaa jih-e nere zii.**

**Swahili:** Mtu hawezi kuufinya uvimbe wake mwenyewe.

**French:** Tu ne peux pas presser ton propre abcès.

**English:** A person cannot press a swelling on his body by himself.

**Meaning:** Love others as yourself because nobody would like to harm himself.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 5:43 "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy"*

**75. Ngeung-he fah-a jioo.**

**Swahili:** Atafutaye kitu hukipata.

**French:** Qui cherche trouve.

**English:** He who seeks for something finds it.

**Meaning:** It is definitively that when you put effort to seek something you want, you will get it.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 7:8 "For every one that asked received; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocked it shall be opened."*

**76. Ngneung-he ho me hou ou ho me hi.**

**Swahili:** Wakati mtu anauhusiano na wewe, kuwa naye pamoja.

**French:** Si quelqu'un est avec toi, il faut aussi être avec lui.

**English:** When someone has a relationship with you, be with him together.

**Meaning:** Love he who loves you too.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Song of Solomon 5:8 "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, If ye find my beloved, That ye tell him, that I am sick from love."*

**77. Ngneung-he mpte mia'a zou a neu'he mia'a mbeu'oh lezet.**

**Swahili:** Akulaye zaidi hunya zaidi.

**French:** Celui qui mange beaucoup, defeque beaucoup.

**English:** The person who overeats excretes a lot.

**Meaning:** People should be ready to accept the results of each and every action they take in life.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 50:15 "And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, It may be that Joseph will hate us, and will fully requite us all the evil which we did unto him."*

**78. Ngneung-he n'te mbingte jou'o mook te ho nto'o**

**Swahili:** Achungaye chakula kikiwa motoni siyempishi.

**French:** Celui qui garde à manger à la cuisine, n'est pas le cuisinier.

**English:** He who safeguards food on fire is not the cook.

**Meaning:** You can be safeguarding food on fire but you are not the one who prepared it. It is like when you have interest in something you get involved directly, but if you don't, you may not be involved fully.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Philippians 2:21 "For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ."*

**79. Ngneung-he nte ngwe lekong lemoh-o n'tso'o ntchou'ou.**

**Swahili:** Unaweza kwenda vitani kwa sababu unao mkuki mmoja pekee.

**French :** Tu ne peux pas refuser d'aller à la guerre puisque tu n'as qu'une flèche.

**English:** You can go to war because you have one spear only.

**Meaning:** Courage is the most important when going to war.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Numbers 13:21 "and what the land is, whether it is fat or lean, whether there is wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first-ripe grapes."*

**80. Ngouag-a lak-a si ngo n'tsong.**

**Swahili:** Anaye dharau kitu kidogo ni mwizi.

**French:** Celui qui minimise quelque chose est un voleur.

**English:** He who devalues a small thing is a thief.

**Meaning:** It is not good to like big and good things that you cannot afford, this may lead you to steal. We should appreciate even small things.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 4:8 "Again, the devil taken him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."*

**81. Ngwessou moo medju sin go le nteung-he hhoh-o nteuo'o.**

**Swahili:** Msichana ambaye hajaolewa ni kama mto wenye kina kirefu ambacho huvunja mtungi.

**French:** Une fille célibataire est comme une profonde rivière qui casse laalebasse.

**English:** A lady who is not married, is like deep river which crushes a calabash.

**Meaning:** When a lady is not married, she always brings war between people, especially young men.

**Biblical Parallel:** *2John 1:7 "For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist."*

**82. Nkong-ni tsie jouo'o tseum.**

**Swahili:** Akupatiaye mapenzi ni ndiye mwema zaidi ya watu wote duniani.

**French :** Celui qui te donne l'amour est plus que quelqu'un au monde.

**English:** The one who gives you love is better than anyone else in the world.

**Meaning:** When you are loved by someone, it's important to appreciate because they cannot harm you.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Mathew 3:17 "And lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

**83. Nn'a me moo ho nkeu'eu nkenne nkenne.**

**Swahili:** Mnyama aliye na watoto hakimbii usikubila kutizama nyuma.

**French:** Une animale qui a les petits fuient sans regarder derrière.

**English:** An animal with its young does not run at night without looking behind.

**Meaning:** A good parent always checks on the wellbeing of their children.

**Biblical Parallel:** *John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep."*

**84. Nteu'oh mbou la sa'a.**

**Swahili:** Aletaye mkono kwa heshima hakosi kitu.

**French:** Celui qui tend la main respectueusement ne manquera jamais quelque chose.

**English:** He who brings his hand with respect does not lack something.

**Meaning:** It is good to appreciate in a respectful manner when you are given something, you will never go empty handed once more as you come.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 26:27 "And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;"*

**85. Nteung-ne ke'ndong ho te ngouheu'e.**

**Swahili:** Mgomba ata ujipinde hauwezi kuanguka.

**French:** Même si le bananier est penché, ne peut pas tomber.

**English:** A banana tree even if it is bent, cannot fall at all.

**Meaning:** When we work together as a family or community you we become stronger than when alone.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 50:7 "And Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt"*

**86. Ou keu'e ntseung mbo hou keu'e ndzet.**

**Swahili:** Sehemu ya chini ya mnyama, huwa na kinyesi.

**French:** La partie inferieur de l'animal, a des excréments.

**English:** The lower parts of animals also have faeces.

**Meaning:** It is not good to say that everything good will bring you good thing, because anything that is good sometimes brings you problems.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Luke 1:53 "The hungry he hath filled with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."*

**87. Ou le teme lekong-ho ntchou'ou feung.**

**Swahili:** Hauwezi kudunga mkuki kwenye kidonda kibichi.

**French:** Tu ne peux pas maitre une flèche sur une plaie fraiche.

**English:** You cannot put a spear into a fresh wound.

**Meaning:** When bad things occur, you cannot reverse them.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Genesis 50:17 "So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the transgression of thy brethren, and their sin, for that they did unto thee."*

**88. Ou pa ha ng'o ndeum ha le.**

**Swahili:** Usimchukiye yeyote, ni mwenyezi Mungu aliye muumba.

**French:** Ne hais pas personne, c'est Dieu qui l'a créée.

**English:** Do not hate anybody, it's God who created him.

**Meaning:** Enmity is wrong, you should avoid to have one because is like cursing yourself and your family.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 5:44 "But I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you;"*

**89. Ou tsia ha mbah lepah.**

**Swahili:** Ulinitangulia kwa sababu bado nashona mto wangu, **French:** Tu me devances seulement parce que je confectionne le coussin.

**English:** You came ahead of me because am still stitching my pillow.

**Meaning:** When you are ahead of others, remember that the people behind you are preparing to be like you even to surpass you. You better be careful.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Luke 22:24 "And there arose also a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be greatest."*

**90. Ou tsoh ntong te tsiaa.**

**Swahili:** Asiye wagawia wengine ni mlafi.

**French:** Celui qui ne partage pas est un gourmand.

**English:** He who does not share with others is a greedy.

**Meaning:** The proverb is used to advice selfish people that they should learn how to share with others. Because a hand which gives out will receive more than that which receive.

**Biblical Parallel:***Luke 6:35 "But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil."*

**91. Ou yiek'e le ya ou ho le pfouh mbaap mbe kwe.**

**Swahili:** Akili nyingi huleta madhara.

**French:** Beaucoup d'intelligences apporte la folie.

**English:** Too much wisdom leads to destruction.

**Meaning:** When you present yourself as wiser than others, people avoid to be closer to you.

**Biblical Parallel:***Ephesians 4:26 "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:"*

**92. Te kouangte mo'o lih-I si ngo ndeu.**

**Swahili:** Asiyekumbukani mchawi.

**French:** Celui qui ne se souvient pas du passe est un sorcier.

**English:** He who doesn't remember is a witch.

**Meaning:** According to psychology, forgetting is good and the bible says for you to forgive, think something good someone did to you when you were in bad situation. So it is good to remember things and forget bad things.

**Biblical Parallel:***Luke 22:61 "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him, before the cock crow this day thou shalt deny me thrice."*

**93. Te mah-a ha me ze.**

**Swahili:** Usimtupe mtoto porini bali njiani.

**French :** Ne jette pas l'enfant dans la foret mais sur la route.

**English:** Do not throw a child in the forest but on road.

**Meaning:** If you do not like something, throw it where people are gathered so that they can help you. Do not throw it far away from people.

**Biblical Parallel:***Proverbs 22:9 "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he gives of his bread to the poor."*

**94. Te tchu nkeu wou'o mbou ngnigniaa.**

**Swahili:** Usimpe kunguru ujumbe ya tai.

**French:** Ne transmis pas le message de l'épervier au corbeau.

**English:** Do not give an owl the message of a crow.

**Meaning:** It is used to warn people who always talk about others that they should be prudent before you deliver any message and you must know the person and which kind of message do you want to tell him.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 2:12 “And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.”*

**95. Tou-nkiah ndah ngouh ntchih-e nchih-te.**

**Swahili:** Samaki mdogo leo, atakuwa mkubwa kesho.

**French:** Le petit poisson aujourd’hui, sera grand demain.

**English:** A small fish today, will be big tomorrow.

**Meaning:** The proverb encourages people to be patient, for everything has its own time for transformation.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2 “For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;”*

**96. Tsseeh’te nere fah-a le nong-ho.**

**Swahili:** Akaribiaye mahali polepole hupewa mahali pa kulala.

**French:** Celui qui s’approche petit à petit à un endroit recevra une place pour se coucher.

**English:** He who slowly approaches somewhere, is given a place to sleep.

**Meaning:** If you have any problem and you slowly seek for help, you will get it.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Matthew 7:8 “For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”*

**97. Veung veung moo medju a le souk’ou ki’hi.**

**Swahili:** Msichana asiye kataa jambo lolote, hulala na mjane

**French:** Une fille qui ne refuse jamais ce qu’on lui dit, couchera avec un veuf.

**English:** A girl who does not refuse anything will sleep with a widower.

**Meaning:** If you do not have good judgments in life, you will be always involved in bad things.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Ruth 3:7 “And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.”*

**98. Wena mwitu guluzita meso.**

**Swahili:** Akimbiaye msituni, ufunga macho.

**French:** Celui qui court en brousse ferme les yeux.

**English:** He who runs in the bush, closes eyes.

**Meaning:** It is foolishness to expose oneself on avoidable dangers.

**Biblical Parallel:** *Proverbs 8:12 “Wisdom dwells with prudence, he finds out knowledge and discretion”.*

**99. Wouo fah-a le he fah mbeung nong ndou’ou, wouo mpfee le mpfet nou’ou nong nkiaa.**

**Swahili:** Watafutao chakula na mvua, ula kwenye jua.

**French:** Ceux qui cherchent la nourriture sous la pluie, la mange sous le soleil.

**English:** He who seeks food under the rain, eats it under the sun.

**Meaning:**For you to get what is good to you, you have to suffer and then enjoy the deed of your work.

**Biblical Parallel:***Ruth 4:13, 14 “So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife; and he went in unto her, and Jehovah gave her conception, and she bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be Jehovah, who hath not left thee this day without a near kinsman; and let his name be famous in Israel.”*

**100. Zo’o ndeung ndeung-he tsie lehang.**

**Swahili:** Asiyekuwa na kosa, akiukumiwa ni zaidi ya mchawi.

**French:** L’innocence et la conscience dépassent la sorcellerie.

**English:** Innocence and conscience worth than witchcraft.

**Meaning:** When you do wrong just accept that you are guilty, but an innocent person can still keep on proving his innocence.

**Biblical Parallel:***Exodus 23:7 “Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.”*

## **SUMMARY**

Proverbs play a significant role in both the traditional as the modern African societies. They hold a considerable place in the society since they are used to synthesize and conserve a cultural and philosophical heritage which constitutes the wisdom of a people. Proverbs are used to develop the community socially, morally and intellectually, as well as consecrate the knowledge of culture as the mastery of a people’s language.

However it was not easy to collect proverbs which were not from my ethnic group, and it required a lot of effort and patience. I was meeting people who were unable to speak other languages rather than their Kwele dialect, and had to look for translators. Sometimes it was only possible to get a few each day, which slowed the process for many months.

In short, despite all challenges, my collaborator and I faced, I am feeling proud to work on such incredible ethnic group from more than three African countries and publish it.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Kwele proverbs and wise sayings contain useful education for every generation and everyone in the community. They are used to teach the most basic human values which they express in ways related to their environment and way of life.

**Respect** for other people is very important and is emphasized by the Kwele. It must be earned and not given without reason. Proverb No. 31 states that “Give respect where it is deserved.” (*Hie wouhte ngneung-he mbou hi*). Everyone in the community should earn their respect, and be entitled to it when they deserve it.

**Unity** is strongly encouraged in this community in order to help people to develop as a community, person or family. Cohesion leads to other human values such as friendship and love, helpfulness and a sense of responsibility for one another. Proverb No.33 is descriptive and gives a clear imagery of unity; “Ants cannot cross the river without a rope of reeds.” (*Kikia ho te ntou’o n’tsi-hi te ngeu’ho nzang-ha.*)

Proverb No.40. teaches about **Equality** “The words of a short person are listened to in the evening only.” (*Me ho mveung-he nou toutouh ngneung-he ntchou ndzeung.*) Many times, people are discriminated, and are denied their rights because of their physical attitude, color and religions. Human beings are of the same value before God and should be treated equally



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## Appendix

### RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR THE COLLECTION OF 100 BAKWELE PROVERBS

By:

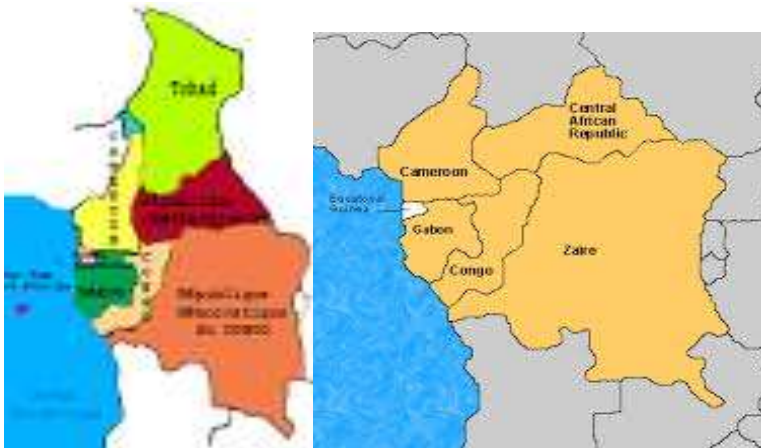
ELIAS BUSHIRI ELIE

### INTRODUCTION

#### LOCATION

The Kwele (bakwel, bekwil) people are an ethnic group of eastern Gabon, Cameroon in Western Africa, Republic of Congo and Democratic Republic of the Congo. They fled the coastal area of western Africa during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after their traditional enemies acquired firearms from the slave traders. This altercation is often called the “Poupou” war. The Kwele then settled into lands between the Dja and Ivindo rivers. The kwele are noted for their ceremonial masks which are collected as art objects. The Kwele occupy a great forest region on the borders of Gabon. Their village communities comprised a number of lineages and were governed in the usual way for “headless” equatorial societies, that is in a diffuse and more or less informal manner.

#### Ethnographical Location Of Bakwele People In The D.R.Congo, Gabon, Cameroon and Western Africa.



#### CULTURE

The Kwele believe that unexplained deaths, epidemic smallpox and other mysterious threats to the well-being of individuals or the community are caused by witchcraft. Witches are believed to live in male or female hosts, from which they emerge at night to feed upon the internal organs of their victims. The antidote to witchcraft is the *beete ritual*, which includes masked performances. The *beete* cult reinforces unity and maintains social order. The *beete* ritual which lasted for week, would open with the departure of men into the forest to hunt antelope, whose flesh seasoned with medicines, had to be eaten at a meal at the closing ceremony during the hunt, women and children stayed in the village, after one or two days,

*ekuk masks* would “leave” the forest, enter the village and invite the people to come and dance and sing. Ekuk means both “*protective forest spirit*” and “*children of beete*”

### **Here are some of the wise sayings:**

#### **1. A ho tembouoo**

**Swahili:** Miti yotemsitunihaifanani

**French:** Tous les arbres dans la foret ne sont pas semblable.

**English:** all trees are not straight in the forest.

**Teaching:** All people are not the same in the world. There are those who are bad and good people, tall and short, black and white.

#### **2. Ngneung-he ho me houou ho me hi**

**Swahili:** Kamamtuyukonawewe, inafaakuwanaye.

**French:** Si quelqu'un est avec toi, il faut etre avec lui.

**English:** If someone is with you, it's good to be with him.

**Teaching:** The one who loves you it's good for you to love him back. When a person invite you, you have to invite him back too.

### **MARRIAGE**

The Bakwele lineage could grow to be a large as the household male could provide for although there is mentioning larger groups having to move away from the group. Proportion of marriage ending in divorce and ideal marriage was polygamous, however women are scarce creating competition in the marriage system. The compulsion toward having a large family and hence personal power in the village drive many Bakwele family heads to spend the family wealth exclusively to acquire wives of their own. In acquiring wives for themselves, and their sons and younger brothers, family heads are expected to allocate family wealth equitably...

Inheritance is to be split equally but in reality the head of the household who is the father determines the allocation. The sons will often leave and join another lineage with more wealth and women to offer in exchange for allegiance.

### **RELIGION**

In the context of civilization of Ogoou basin (which include the Fang, Kota, Tsogo, etc) and assuming reasonable contact with these peoples, it is difficult to believe that the Kwele would similarly have venerated ancestors and kept the relics of the dead of the lineage. Indeed, each lineage kept the skulls (edim) of important deceased members of the group in baskets, a practice similar to that of the Kota and Mahongwe from mokambo. These reliquary baskets were apparently decorated with “carved wooden heads” and were placed in the living hut behind the bed of the head of the family. Kwele people believe in witch.

### **ECONOMY**

The Kwele are hunters their diet consist of both meat and plants. The kwele make use of fifty non-domesticated forest plants for nutritional and other value. A plantain economy main protein-lipid sources: hunters that eat meats, weapons: bow, arrow, blowguns.

## **THE KWELE ART**

There are many types of Kwele masks, bush spirit masks, *Ekuk*, which are divided into white-faced masks that function as guardian spirits and animal masks, *Kuk-guu* (a flying diityak squirrel or spiny-tailed squirrel) and *kuk-diityak* (an owl, also known as a witch's chicken) etc

## **POLITICAL SYSTEM**

Like the Kota and Fang, Kwele people are organized in a patrilineal Kinship system and are divided into about thirty exogamous clans. Their political system emphasizes the power of the war chiefs (who are often also village chiefs) probably because of continual warring with their neighbors. It depends less than most other traditions upon elders of the lineage or clan. These warriors, who are called *ngeng*, play a vital role in protecting the community against incessant attacks. Like other African ethnic groups, Kwele people use proverbs on their daily activities, especially during marriage ceremonies, burial funerals, and family gathering.

## **WRITING OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this research are:

To collect 100 proverbs and wise sayings from the Kwele ethnic group.

To translate these proverbs and wise sayings into English, Kiswahili and French.

To find biblical parallels which explain and support the proverbs.

To find visual materials that further explain and illustrate the proverbs.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

To help people to enrich their communication skill, by using Kwele proverbs and wise sayings, more frequently and to help them value their origin.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The writer will interview Kwele elders from Gabon, Cameroon Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other people with good understanding of the proverbs and wise sayings. He will record them for translation into Kiswahili, English and French and produce ten booklets.

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## **BUDGET**

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| EXPENSES            |              |
| Data gathering      | \$130        |
| Typing and Printing | \$ 90        |
| Binding             | \$ 65        |
| Transport           | \$150        |
| Miscellaneous       | \$ <u>65</u> |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>\$500</b> |

