

Beyana Ngarbaï

Ping the Precious Monkey

Chad

TAGS: [African Mythologies](#) [African Storytelling](#) [African Traditions](#) [Gods](#)



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
<i>Title of the work</i>	Ping the Precious Monkey
<i>Country of the First Edition</i>	Chad
<i>Country/countries of popularity</i>	Chad
<i>Original Language</i>	Mundang: The original language of the myth is Ngambay, but because the researchers could not understand the language, and there was no translator available, the narrator decided to tell the story in Mundang which they could understand.
<i>Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database</i>	Chad
<i>Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Database</i>	December 24, 2019
<i>More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database</i>	Pala
<i>Genre</i>	Myths
<i>Target Audience</i>	Crossover
<i>Author of the Entry</i>	Eleanor A. Dasi, University of Yaoundé 1, wandasi5@yahoo.com Larissa Aïcha Saïd, University of Yaoundé 1, larissaichasaid@gmail.com

<i>Peer-reviewer of the Entry</i>	Daniel A. Nkemleke, University of Yaoundé 1, nkemlekedan@yahoo.com Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au
-----------------------------------	---

Creators



Beyana Ngarbaï (Storyteller)

Age of Narrator: 62 (in 2019)

Social status: Notable

Profession: Teaching

Language of narration: Mundang

Bio prepared by Didymus Tsangue Douanla, University of Koblenz-Landau, douanlatsangue@gmail.com, Aïcha Saïd Larissa, University of Yaoundé 1, larissaichasaid@gmail.com and Eleanor A. Dasi, University of Yaoundé 1, wandasi5@yahoo.com

Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating

Origin/cultural background: See myth of [Burma Te-Dge](#).

Summary

From the beginning of time, when the women of the Pala clan in the western part of Chad were pregnant, there was only one way for them to give birth - their wombs had to be opened with a knife to remove the baby, and they would inevitably die in the process. One day a pregnant woman, realizing that she would soon go through the same fatal process, escaped to the forest and sat under a big tree, lamenting her situation to the forest. Then, the forest god appeared to her in the form of a monkey coming down from a tree. The Monkey harvested leaves, which he chewed, then ground with red (palm) oil and gave to the pregnant woman to swallow. After that, the woman gave birth naturally.

After her delivery, she took the Monkey with her back to the village. When men were threatening to kill the Monkey, she protected him. Later, the Monkey taught the men of the village how to make the concoction he had given to the pregnant woman in the forest. From that day on, the Monkey became a sacred animal for the Bebalem clan.

Analysis

Some animals occupy a prestigious position in many world myths, either by their involvement in incidents or activities that are beneficial to humans or by their favour from the gods. In the myth above, the Bebalem people of Chad consider the Monkey as sacred because of its role in showing the people the natural birthing method, significantly reducing the mortality rate of women during childbirth. The Monkey then becomes a sacred animal to the people by virtue of this life-saving contribution. The Monkey is also popular in other mythologies and folklore. Such as in China, where it is considered as the "Great Sage Equal to Heaven*", in Hindu mythology, as a representative of Shiva, and in Japanese mythology, representing the god of fertility and safe childbirth (interestingly, the same role it plays in the myth of Ping the Precious Monkey!).

* Qítīān Dàshèng (奇天大圣). See: *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio* (tr. John Minford), London: Penguin, 2006.

Classical, Mythological,
Traditional Motifs,
Characters, and
Concepts

Other Motifs, Figures,
and Concepts Relevant
for Children and Youth
Culture

Further Reading

[African Mythologies](#) [African Storytelling](#) [African Traditions](#) [Gods](#)

[Animals](#) [Child, children](#) [Gender, female](#) [Nature](#) [Religious beliefs](#)

[Animals in Mythology](#), mythencyclopedia.com (accessed: August 16, 2021).

Jokinen, Anniina, "[Monkeys and Monkey Gods in Mythology, Folklore, and Religion](#)", luminarium.org, published March 8, 2007 (accessed: August 16, 2021).

Addenda

Researchers: Eleanor A. Dasi and Larissa Aïcha Saïd

Research assistant: Seïd Houzibe (trans.)

Editor: Daniel A. Nkemleke
