Divine Che Neba, "Entry on: Myth of the Nsaani Mubaburu by George Nebachi", peer-reviewed by Eleanor A. Dasi and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/146. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

George Nebachi

Myth of the Nsaani Mubaburu

Cameroon

TAGS: African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions





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

General information	
Title of the work	Myth of the Nsaani Mubaburu
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon
Original Language	Bafut
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Cameroon
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	August 19, 2017
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Mbebili- Bafut
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



George Nebachi (Storyteller)

Age of Narrator: 72 (in 2017)

Social status: Second Class Chief

Profession: Retired Teacher

Language of narration: Bafut

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating	Nsaani Mubaburu in Bafut means an area or portion of land that belongs to the child from the sky. This is one of the sacred places of worship in Mbebili, Bafut in the North-West Region of Cameroon. It is believed that a being from the sky fell into this place (which was formerly a market), and the people transformed it to a holy ground where village rituals are now being performed. Cultural Background: Bafut (see here) Occasion: Life performance

Summary	The Mbebili people had their market day that they used to hold on their holy day, *njwigong**. Whenever they got to the marketplace every market day, they noticed that there were people already there. They neither knew who those people were, nor where they came from. At the close of the day, they were also the last people to leave but no one equally knew where they went to. One day, at the close of the market, one Mbebili man decided to spy on these strangers in order to find out where they would go. He hid himself while every other person, but for the strangers, returned home. As he was spying on them, he saw them remove string from their bag which looked like a cob-web. This is the string they have been using each time they want to move between the sky and the earth. They threw the string up and hung on it. It carried them up to the sky and brought them down. They were surprised because it had never happened that way before. The string has either been carrying them up to the sky or bringing them down to the earth. They tried it again and again. It still did not work. They tried it a few more times and did not succeed. They immediately suspected that someone must be watching them and that is why they could not return to their home (i.e. to the sky). Immediately, they started a search around. The spy, being afraid of the outcome, sneaked home. When the strangers searched and could not find anyone, they tried their charm again and this time the cob-web got hooked in the sky and they climbed and vanished into the air. After this incident, they still continued their visits to earth but always made sure that no spy was watching them before they returned to the sky. One day, the strangers from the sky sent a little girl to dump refuse in

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a pit on earth where they always emptied their trash. They had a rule which stipulated that when throwing dirt in that pit (in the earth), one should not look into the pit. But this little girl went and disposed of the garbage and looked into the pit. Consequently, she fell in it. Up in the sky where she came from, it was daytime, while on earth, it was night. She was only discovered at dawn in the marketplace lying dead, with many varied-shaped cowries and beads on her body and a basket of refuse beside her. The people took the beads and cowries she was wearing to the palace and decorated palace tools with them. Since this child fell from the sky, they buried her on the same spot and named the place "Nsaani mubaburu," which means the "field or portion of land that belongs to the child from the sky". A long stone was placed on the tomb of the girl. To this day, her tombstone is still planted on the spot where she fell in Bafut.

* "*Njwigong* is an ordinary day or days when people are free to work without restrictions on farms or in homes." Mathias Alubafi Fubah, *Bambui Arts and Culture*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018, 42.

Analysis

World mythology is replete with instances of ancestors, religious leaders, prophets, outcasts and a lot more, falling from heaven and/or the sky, to either indicate places of worship, or dispatch special messages to humanity. The Bafut people, like most Africans, revere most of these messengers and sacred grounds because they play an important role in shaping their wellbeing in this world and hereafter. Daily, monthly, or yearly rituals are performed honouring these supernatural forces as a sign of recognition. This world practice indicates the oneness of humanity in relation to celestial forces.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions

Death Girls Religious beliefs Society

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

Further Reading

Mbiti, John, *African Religions and Philosophy*, London: Heinemann, 1969.

Pade, William E., *Interpreting the Sacred: Ways of Viewing Religion*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2003.

Addenda

Method of data collection: Tape recording and note- taking.

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