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Rose Nanje Mande

The Bakundu Creation Myth

Cameroon

TAGS: African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Gods





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

General information	
Title of the work	The Bakundu Creation Myth
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon
Original Language	Lukundu
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Cameroon
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	December 22, 2017
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Mbonge - Kumba
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover (young adults + adults)
Author of the Entry	Divine Che Neba, University of Yaounde 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com
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Creators



Rose Nanje Mande (Storyteller)

Age of narrator: 50 (in 2017)

Social status: Koro (Female elder)

Profession: Farmer

Language of narration: Lukundu

Bio prepared by Eleanor A. Dasi, University of Yaounde 1, wandasi5@yahoo.com and Divine Che Neba, University of Yaounde 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating

Background*: The Bakundu people came from the Congo basin and settled in Beboka in the Ndian Division, but soon left this settlement because of the hilly and barren nature of the land. They found present day settlements in Mbonge, Kake, Ngolo, Balue, Itoki, Mbakwa, Banga, etc, which were all named after the sons and grandsons of Ngoe, the founding father. The bulk of the population today practice Christianity, which was introduced by the Germans through the Basel Mission. However, this has not completely eliminated the secret traditional cults that tie the people to the ancestral and spiritual worlds. They believe in the phenomenon of double souls for those who belong to these secret cults; one soul lives in the human body and another in a land or water animal. Their main activity is farming, mostly of cocoa, which contributes to about three quarters of the Sub-Division's income.

Occasion: staged

*Source: Okia, Timothy Musima, "Social Developments in Bakundu during German Colonial Rule in Cameroon: 1884–1914", *Przegląd Zachodni* 1/2014, Poznań, 2014, available at iz.poznan.pl (accessed: January 15, 2019).

Summary

In the beginning, Obase (God) created Kongwe Mountain. Since he was alone, he created the great Botu tree, which he planted on the Kongwe Mountain to produce all the species of things on earth. The branches of the great Botu tree brought forth the various creatures that exist in the world today. One of the branches brought forth the human race, another cats, another dogs, the cows, the water bodies, the rocks and every other thing that exists.

The branch that brought forth humans further forked into two: one brought forth the good human race while the other brought forth the bad human race. The good human race pleaded with the great Botu tree to extend its root abroad and cause the soil of Kongwe to be extended to other parts of the world so that the good human race could spread to the rest of the world. The bad human race did not,

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however, like this development. It wanted both races to be in the same place so that it could subdue the good human race.

Before the Botu tree could expand its roots so that the good human race should fill other parts of the earth, the branch of the bad human race had introduced suffering and evil. That was how the whole world was created and also why evil dominates on the earth.

Analysis

This myth bears resemblance to creation myths that place God at the helm of creation. The myth does not only explain the creation of all things, but also serves as a medium through which the Bakundu people relate with the rest of the human community with respect to their worldview and cosmology. It suggests that Bakundu believe in a supreme creator deity who is supposed to be venerated for his wisdom and all-knowingness. Finally, the myth explains the origin of the concepts of good and evil and why evil seems to dominate the world.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Gods

Further Reading

Sprout, Barbara, *Primal Myths: Creation around the World*, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1979.

Von Franz, Marie-Louise, *Creation Myths*, Boston: Shambhala, 1995.

Addenda

Researcher: Divine Che Neba

Research Assistant: Lenya Colle Malike

Editor: Eleanor A. Dasi

Method of data collection: Tape Recording

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