Divine Che Neba, "Entry on: The Gods' Plum Tree by Aloys Nkong Kima", peer-reviewed by Daniel A. Nkemleke, Eleanor A. Dasi and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/625. Entry version as of November 06, 2026.

Aloys Nkong Kima

The Gods' Plum Tree

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 Gods' Plum Tree
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon
Original Language	Nweh
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Cameroon
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	January 4, 2018
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Menji-Fontem
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
Author of the Entry	Divine Che Neba, University of Yaounde 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com
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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



Aloys Nkong Kima (Storyteller)

Age of narrator: 58 (in 2018)

Profession: Teaching

Language of narration: Nweh

Bio prepared by Divine CheNeba, University of Yaounde 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating

Background*: Menji is a village in Fontem, in the Libialem division of the South-West region of Cameroon. It is located between Latitude 5° 30' 25.092" North and Longitude 9° 53' 48.192" East. They came from the Mbo and Bayangs forests as hunters and settled in their present location. As part of the Bangwa people of Libialem, the people of Menji speak the Nweh language. Accordingly, the people of Menji believe in ancestors and worship ancestral skulls. Also, it is believed that their first chief was a great hunter who amassed leopard skins, ivory tusks - things evident in their community as symbols of royalty.

Occasion: Life performance

* Sources:

Menji, cvuc.cm (accessed: January 17, 2019).

Wright, Juliet H., and Nancy E. C. Priston, "Hunting and trapping in Lebialem Division, Cameroon: Bushmeat Harvesting Practices and Human Reliance", *Endangered Species Research* 11.1 (2010): 1–12.

Summary

There was a woman in Bioleh whose name was Nkeng. She was commonly called Anyinkeng because she was a mother to twin children. She was married to a man called Kang, and the names of their twins were Ngenyi and Asonganyi. Anyinkeng had a younger sister who came to babysit the twins at birth. At that time, the Nweh people were living eternally on earth. There was no form of illness nor death in the village.

In the village, there was a special plum tree reserved only for the Gods of the tribe. It was decreed that no one had the right either to cut any of its fleshy fruits or even pick one that has fallen on the ground. It was decreed that whoever touches the fruits would become mad and eventually die, or would be killed and eaten up by the Gods. Nevertheless, the tree often bore very big and attractive fruits that always attracted every passerby in the village, both young and old. One day, Anyinkeng and her husband went to the farm and the twins used this opportunity to compel their aunt to go and fetch plums for

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them from the plum tree of the Gods or they would die and place a curse on her. With the belief that the people had about twins – that they are spirit children and had supernatural powers – she yielded to their request. Their aunt climbed up the tree and harvested a bag full of plums. When she plucked the last one, it fell on the ground and the Gods were alerted. The Gods came out of their threshold and gathered under the tree, ready to devour the woman. Entrapped with fear, she began to sing the following song requesting for assistance from her elder sister:

"NdegeNkengngwi Kang e

e-e-e-e-e-e

bclemekibi a lechen e

e-e-e-e-e-e

ngenyi ma tung a-ge

e-e-e-e-e-e

asonganyi ma tunga-ge

e-e-e-e-e-e

goetefiuhmbeunkuiuge

e-e-e-e-e-e"

–––––

My sister Nkeng the wife of Kang;

O come, o come;

The Gods of the plum are under

O come, o come.

Ngenyi compelled me to come;

O come, o come.

Asonganyi compelled me to come

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O come, o come

If you don't come I must die

O come, o come.

Anyinkeng heard the voice of her sister and went straight to the Gods' plum tree. There, she saw the Gods waiting for her sister to descend so that they could kill and eat her up. Fortunately, she knew a song which she could spur the Gods and make them spare her life at that moment. The song goes thus:

"Bin ke-ngohke-ngoh

Kwang -a-lang

Bin angranjem men ndia

Kwang-a-lang"

–––––

Dance in the whirling rhythm

Dance along, dance along

Dance and whirl homewards

Dance along, dance along.

The singing was accompanied by a ritual of sprinkling salt for the Gods. As she was singing, the Gods started dancing in a whirling rhythm, eating their salt and going homewards, but vowing that eternity on earth is no more a portion of humankind. When they danced and disappeared, the plum tree withered and dried up. The maid descended from the tree and went back home with her sister. The twins were warned seriously never to compel her to do a thing like that again.

Analysis

Inasmuch as women have been celebrated all over the world, from antiquity to the present, as mothers of humanity, they have, as many myths attest, been equally seen as bringers of evil, ill-omen and death

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	into the world. Their impatience and rebellious nature, from time immemorial, have plunged humanity into a mess, as most world myths record. Most myths of interdiction present them as pivots, always ready to trespass. It is this trespass that is at the origin of the untold evil and suffering in the world. The myth, *God's Plum Tree*, presents the heroine as the desecrator of tradition, but one who did not act of her own initiative but provoked by the threat of a curse by the twins.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Gods
Further Reading	Peek, Philip M., ed., *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed*, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2011.
Addenda	Researcher: Divine Che Neba Assistant researcher: Efuanyi Emmanuella Khumbah Method of data collection: Tape recording and note taking

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