Didymus Tsangue Douanla, Aïcha Saïd Larissa, "Entry on: Why the Garap People Do Not Eat He-Goat by Beyana Ngarbaï", peer-reviewed by Daniel A. Nkemleke, Susan Deacy and Karolina Anna Kulpa. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/986. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Beyana Ngarbaï

Why the Garap People Do Not Eat He-Goat

Chad

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	Why the Garap People Do Not Eat He-Goat
Country of the First Edition	Chad
Country/countries of popularity	Chad
Original Language	Mundang
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Chad
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	December 24, 2019
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	N'djamena
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
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Creators



Beyana Ngarbaï (Storyteller)

Age of Narrator: 62 (in 2019)

Social status: Notable

Profession: Teaching

Language of narration: Mundang

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Additional information

Summary

A a man stayed in the forest in the land of the Garap people of Mayo Kebie-East in the South of Chad until daylight ended. According to the myth, the daylight that ended transformed itself into a he-goat and was going back home to come back the next morning. When this man saw the he-goat, he caught it and took it home believing that it was a stray animal. According to the tradition of the Garap people, if a lost property or object was found, it was to be given to the chief priest of the land. This man disobeyed this law by not giving the he-goat to the chief priest. Rather, he slaughtered it for food. For him, it was a gift from the gods, because he had spotted it while sojourning a thick forest, not frequented by normal domestic animals. When he got home he chopped up the animal for cooking. The cooking process took a long time because the meat would not cook. Co-incidentally, daylight failed to appear. All the villagers began to wonder why the daylight was not coming.

After a long time of cooking, the meat was still not ready, and the man asked some of his fellow villagers to accompany him so that he could take the meat back to the place in the forest where he had caught the he goat in the first place. When they arrived at that specific location, to their great surprise, the slaughtered animal transformed itself back into a complete live animal and ran towards the East and behold the Sun rose in the sky. It was at this moment that they realized that the he-goat was indeed the Sun. From that day, the Garap people do not eat he-goats.

Analysis

The myth serves not only the purpose of explaining a natural phenomenon, or justifying cultural norms, it also serves as a means through which indigenous communities imparted social and moral values to the young. In the above myth, dishonesty and disregard for native laws and customs are castigated and the value of repentance and restitution is underscored. It is also important to note that factors such as age, purpose, and time often lead to slight variations in the content of the myth. When families gathered around the fireplace to listen to an elderly relative tell these stories, for example, the content was adjusted to meet a particular need, which could be to chastise or correct a particular domestic misbehavior or attitude. At a village square, or cultural event where a larger and mixed group of children

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and young adults constitute the audience more attention would be paid to the entertainment quality, thereby including riddles, proverbs, songs and lots of humour.

The above myth tries to explain the Sun according to a particular worldview – the Garap people's. As Deborah Scherrer points out in her compilation of Sun myths from all of the world, the Sun is sometimes depicted in these myths as a deity, a malevolent spirit, an omnipotent creator or a cruel taker of life (part 2*). In other myths the sun is sometimes considered as an inanimate object and other times as a living being, depending on the case. The Sun was also linked to the religious beliefs. As Scherrer explains further, all civilizations have constructed myths that recognize the important role of the sun in human life. Ancient people did therefore link their social and spiritual lives and activities to celestial deities, notable among which was the sun.

* Deborah Scherrer, *Solar Folklore and Storytelling*, solar-center.stanford.edu (accessed: March 18, 2020).

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions

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

Animals Nature Religious beliefs Transformation

Further Reading

Fomine, Forka Leypey Mathew, "Food Taboos in Precolonial and Contemporary Cameroon: A Historical Perspective", *Gastronomica* 9.4 (2009): 43–52 (accessed January 24, 2021).

Scherrer Deborah, *Solar Folklore and Storytelling*, solar-

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center.stanford.edu (accessed: March 18, 2020).

Why Moon and Sun Live in Sky (accessed: January 18, 2021).

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