Divine Che Neba, Aïcha Saïd Larissa University of Yaoundé 1, "Entry on: Matching, the Rainmaker by Guidang Danzabe", peer-reviewed by Daniel A. Nkemleke and Katarzyna Marciniak. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2021). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1312. Entry version as of November 08, 2026.

Guidang Danzabe

Matching, the Rainmaker

Chad

TAGS: African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Seasons





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

General information	
Title of the work	Matching, the Rainmaker
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 31, 2019
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	N'djamena, Chad
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
Author of the Entry	Divine Che Neba, University of Yaoundé 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com Aïcha Saïd Larissa University of Yaoundé 1, larissaichasaid@gmail.com
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Daniel A. Nkemleke, University of Yaoundé 1, nkemlekedan@yahoo.com Katarzyna Marciniak, University of Warsaw, email: kamar@al.uw.edu.pl

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



Guidang Danzabe (Storyteller)

Age of Narrator: 70 (in 2019)

Social status: Notable

Profession: Farmer

Language of narration: Mundang

Bio prepared by Divine Che Neba, University of Yaoundé 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com and Aïcha Saïd Larissa University of Yaoundé 1, larissaichasaid@gmail.com

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.

Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating

The Mundang* are believed to have arrived in Southern Chad from Egypt in the 18th century. In the 19th century, some of them migrated and settled in Northern Cameroon and North-Eastern Nigeria. They speak Mundang, a Niger-Congo language. In Chad, they are chiefly located in Léré village. Their main activity is farming, although some of them are involved in cattle grazing, hunting and fishing. Their society is patrilineal and polygamous, and they practise animism, Islam and Christianity.

* See: De Garine, Igor, et al., "Population, Production, and Culture in the Plains Societies of Northern Cameroon and Chad: The Anthropologist in Development Projects [and Comments]", *Current Anthropology,* University of Chicago Press, USA. 19.1 (1978): 42–65; Gauquelin, Maud, *De la Royauté sacrée à la Pluralité Religieuse des Moundang, du Tchad au Nigéria*, Diss. Paris, EPHE, 2014.

Summary

The myth goes that one day among the Mundang people the chief's daughters decided to go and look for walnuts and millet stalks, to fabricate vegetable salt. On their way, they arrived in the village of the wicked (devils) and everything there was strange. The sap of a cactus was the only thing to take as liquid in that land. They collected some to drink on the way. These girls, who were constantly very thirsty, finished the sap from their cactus on the way before reaching their final destination. When they got to their destination which was a farm, they felt thirsty again and started complaining that they needed water to drink. After complaining to each other, the youngest of the girls, named Matching, isolated herself from the rest and started singing. While she sang, clouds started gathering in the sky. She sang for the second time, the clouds became heavier, and when she sang for the third time rain began to fall in abundance. The girls carried rainwater and drank to their satisfaction. On their way back from the farm, the devil stopped them and reproached them for disobeying his law, which prohibited the drinking of any other liquid apart from cactus sap. The devil proposed to punish them by having one of the girls stay back and serve as his wife. After some hesitation and out of jealousy, the two older girls decided that Matching (the rainmaker),

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.

the youngest of them, should stay behind. When both girls returned without Matching, they were long questioned by their father on the whereabouts of Matching. They said Matching had been killed by a lion. They had taken her shoes along to present as evidence. The Chief of the village found this account incredible, however, he accepted because he had no proof to the contrary.

Ten months passed in the village without rainfall, and the villagers decided to question the village priest about the root cause of the absence of rain which had resulted in serious drought and famine in the land. The village priest told them that: “You gave our rain to the devil”. The people could not figure out what he meant. To make his point clear, the village priest asked the chief where his last daughter was. The chief responded that she had been eaten by a lion when she accompanied her sisters to the farm. The village priest could sense that there was some uncertainty in the tone of the chief’s voice. When the chief presented the shoes of the deceased that her sisters had brought with them, the village priest told them she was still alive. An expedition was quickly organized to that farm, with instruction from the chief to have all girls that would be found on the way measure the shoes. If the shoes fit anyone, the person should be taken back to the village. When the expedition team arrived at the devil’s village, they noticed that there is abundant rainfall there and all is fresh and green. They explained the reason for their expedition to the devil and the devil gathered all the girls in his village, to measure the shoes, and they fitt none of the girls. Disappointed, the team decided to return home.

On their way, they heard a female voice singing and they were surprised because all the girls had been gathered in the village. It was now clear that this female voice was coming from someone who was not among the girls gathered in the village, and consequently was somebody very special. Indeed, it turned out that the voice was that of Matching, standing under a tree. The excursion team approached her to find out why she decided to be lonely when others were gathered in the village square. She replied that her sisters sold her to the devil, and she has since been waiting for them under the tree. To help her cross the frontier, the men decided to lend her the shoes in their possession, but little did they know that she was the girl they were looking for. When they got to the village, she removed the shoes and gave them back to the men, and went behind her father’s house to sing her magical song which caused rain to fall. As usual, she sang for the first-time clouds gathered, the second the cloud became heavier

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.

and the third time rain began to fall for the first time in ten months. The father, who had not yet seen her at this moment, could recognize her voice in the rain. He began to look for her in the whole village under the rain, while others were rejoicing for the coming of the rain. When her father finally saw her, he could not recognize that she was the one, until she called him aloud and said: “Father, your rain is back, but I, Matching, belong to the devil”. At the utterance of these words, the devil appeared to take his wife home. Despite the plea from her father to allow her for some time, the devil turned down his request. Matching promised to come back in the tenth month to stay with them for two months. From that day, the season for drought lasts for 10 months in the Mundang village, representing the absence of Matching, and rain comes for two months, representing her presence. This is the usual climatic condition in the northern part of Chad, where the Mundang people live.

Analysis

Rain making and prevention are phenomena that cut across many cultures. Within the African context, priests, priestesses, kings, prophets, herbalists are those who are at the center of rainmaking and rain preventing rituals. What orchestrates these spiritually inclined personalities into these acts is drought (for rainmaking) and/or preparation for special festivals or occasions (in cases of rain prevention). Beside the above, some performers of rainmaking and prevention use their magico-spiritual powers to send out thunderbolts to warn or destroy their enemies. Thus, through invocation and combination of magical herbs, they are able to manipulate nature to their favor. This gift of being able to access nature is inborn or acquired. In the process of acquisition, initiates undergo different ritual processes and stages through the assistance of a master initiate. The different ritual elements are put together before each performance takes place. The place of performance is usually sacred and taboos are respected. Amongst the Igbos of Nigeria, the priest of the rain god invokes rain by burning concocted herbs and igniting the rain with a broomstick. Amongst the Mundangs of Chad, the king is today the master initiate in rainmaking. Assisted by some other priests and priestesses, rituals related to rainmaking among the Mundang people are performed when the drought is too long. The myth does not bring the king into the limelight but introduces the mythic song by the princess (dedicated to the rain deity), which is able, together with other ritual items to affect nature, and later bring rain. The young girl

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.

	in the myth is obviously a spirit, as she is capable of transcending into the world of the wicked and back. Her absence, as the myth records, causes drought. The hymns or incantations chanted by the generation of kings or priests after Matching have a spiritual effect on nature. These rituals in Africa differ from one culture to another. Rain deities in other world mythologies have the ability to invoke rain. Their absence or anger provokes droughts.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Seasons
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adolescence Adventure Conflict Girls Nature Siblings
Further Reading	Oestigaard, Terje, *Religion at work in a Globalized Tradition: Rainmaking, Witchcraft and Christianity in Tanzania*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2014. Schapera, Isaac, *Rainmaking Rites of Tswana Tribes*, Cambridge: African Studies Centre, 1971.
Addenda	Researchers: Divine Che Neba Research assistant: Aïcha Saïd Larissa and Seïd Houzibe Editor: Daniel A. Nkemleke

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.