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Alfred Ngoisa Lyonga

The Myth of Efasa-Moto

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 Myth of Efasa-Moto
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon
Original Language	Bakweri
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Cameroon
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	July 31, 2017
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Buea
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
Author of the Entry	Divine Che Neba, University of Yaoundé 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Eleanor A. Dasi, University of Yaoundé 1, wandasi5@yahoo.com Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

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Creators



Alfred Ngoisa Lyonga (Storyteller)

Age of Narrator: 56 (in 2017)

Social status: Headman- Member of council of elders who assist the chief directly in administration

Profession: Teaching

Language of narration: Bakweri

Bio prepared by Divine Che Neba, University of Yaoundé 1, nebankiwang@yahoo.com

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating	Background: The Bakweri people are principally settled at the foot of Mount Fako in Buea, headquarters of Fako division, South West Region, Cameroon. Like every other society, the Bakweri people believe in supreme God, Gods, ancestors and spirits. According to the people, God is a male being, with some special powers which people believe in. The supreme god of the Bakwerians is called Efasa Moto. His abode is a cave at the summit of Mount Fako. He is half man, half stone and commands all the other gods, who assist him in the land. He is the owner of all the land on the mountain range and the wealth it produces, that is, a large sugar cane plantation, fruits of many kinds and beautiful flowers. Visitors are allowed to go up the mountain, eat of all the types of fruits found there but are not permitted to take anything, not even peelings, out. God, Gods and spirits are important to the Bakweri community since they serve as sources of life and peace to the populace. These gods are there to help and assist the people in all their activities. Thus they are pacified in all traditional and social events. Occasion: Staged performance
Summary	Efasa-Moto is the folkloric god of the Bakweri people at the foot of the Fako Mountain. He controls the entire “hill” from the North East Coast to the West Coast on the border with Balondo land in the Meme Division. Efasa-Moto is the male counterpart of the Liengu la Mwanja or the legendary “mammy water” or jengu (water goddess). After an agreement between the two, Efasa-Moto chose to live in the mountain while Liengu la Mwanja remained in the sea. Efasa- Moto and Liengu la Mwanja are the greatest spiritual figures that the Bakweri people have ever known. Efasa- Moto is divided vertically from top to bottom in a strange mixture of half human and half rock yet shaped in the form of a goat standing on its hind legs. His wife, Liengu la Mwanja, is a beautiful woman with an oval-shaped face, an enchanting smile with a love gap-tooth, high and well curved hips and head overflowing with hair of dark wool. Efasa-Moto lives in a cave at the summit of Mount Fako and from this position, commands all the other gods of the land. He is the owner of all the land on the mountain range and everything it produces; sugar

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cane, fruits of many kinds and beautiful flowers. Visitors are allowed to go up the mountain, eat of everything found there but are not permitted to take anything, not even peelings, away. If that is attempted, Efasa-Moto will cover the whole area with clouds thus making it difficult for the visitor to find his way out of the mountain.

As the spiritual protector of the Bakweri, Efasa-Moto can be summoned by the traditional authorities for clemency over an evil or unfortunate situation. This entails sacrifices in which a red skin fellow is offered. Albinos were commonly used for this purpose. They are usually abandoned on the mountain as offerings of appeasement to the mountain god so that he continues to bless the inhabitants at the foot of the mountain by way of rich fertile soils and abundant flow of water.

Efasa-Moto is harmless but does not tolerate evil practices. If for example, anyone carries charms or amulets to the mountain, that person will not return alive. The recent case of a Nigerian athlete is cited. It is alleged that he carried charms to win the 1986 Mountain Race but Efasa-Moto struck him at Hut II and he died shortly after returning home. The wrath of the god is also incurred when the people go against what he has established. For example, it is believed that the eruption which occurred on October 17, 1982 was due to the wrath of Efasa-Moto. Certain rituals had to be performed in order to appease him.

Efasa-Moto communicates with the people through Amasijum*, his loyal messanger. It is a deity which comes out only on special instruction from the supreme God, Efasa-Moto, especially when there is evil in the land. It should be noted here that anybody can choose to become an Amasijum if only the person accepts to undergo the initiation process and be chosen by Efasa-Moto.

Despite the fact that Efasa-Moto plays a significant role in the moral uprightness of the Bakweri people, their greed, pride and self-righteousness are said to have alienated them from him. Nonetheless, the bond of the Bakweri and their benefactor god can still be renewed if the people undergo intense ritualistic cleansing.

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* A masquerade that comes out only to deliver Efasa-Moto’s Messages.

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Analysis	Mountains are frequently considered as appropriate places of worship in mythologies across the world. Efasa- Moto is not the only god associated with a specific place of worship, for instance Vulcanus, the Roman god of fire and volcanoes, corresponding to the Greek Hephaestus, has his home on Mount Etna, the Hindu deity, Shiva, lives on mount Kailash. The ancient Greeks also believed that Mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece, was the home to many gods and goddesses. Similarly, Mount Fako, the highest mountain in Cameroon and West Africa and the abode of Efasa-Moto, serves as a sacred ground for worship and other religious practices among the Bakweri people of the South West Region of Cameroon. The faith in Efasa-Moto is still alive, the storyteller apparently believes in the power of the god and thus does not differentiate between factual events, like an athlete's death or the 1982 volcanic eruption, and the myth because for him it reflects reality.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Gods
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Character traits Hierarchy Nature Religious beliefs
Further Reading	Naess, Arne, "Mountains and Mythology", *Trumpeter* 12.4 (1995).
Addenda	Method of data collection: Note-taking. Researcher: Divine Che Neba.

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Research Assistant and Translator: Maria Gorretti Sawai Malange Limunga.

Editor: Eleanor A. Dasi.

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