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Mããlem Mããtu

The Myth of Amadou Moussa

Camaroon

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	The Myth of Amadou Moussa
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon
Original Language	Baba
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Cameroon
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	March 8, 2021
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Ndop, Northwest Region, Cameroon
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
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Creators



Mããlem Mããtu (Storyteller)

Age of Narrator: 81 (in 2021)

Social status: A traditional religious leader in the village

Profession: Farmer

Language of narration: Baba

Bio prepared by Amshetu Melo Forchu, University of Yaoundé, meloamshetu@gmail.com and Brindy Belinga Claude, University of Yaoundé 1, brindybc@yahoo.com

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating

Bafanji is one of the thirteen villages that make up the Ngo-Ketunjia Division, in the North West Region of Cameroon. Their forefathers are believed to have migrated about 450 years ago from the Ndobo Tikar group in the Adamaoua, and settled at their present site. The village was formed by Vhenji, one of the daughters of Mangeh, the first ancestor of the Ngo-Ketunjia. The king is the administrative ruler and the spiritual leader of the land but however shares his authority with the council of elders. Membership to these offices is hereditary. The people's main occupation is food crop cultivation. They worship their ancestors in shrines, though many of them have embraced Christianity.

Source: bafanji.org(accessed: January 3, 2019).

Summary

Story! Story! Story! (Kpartma, kpartma, kpartma)

Recount! Recount! Recount (Kpanga! Kpanga! Kpanga!)

A long time ago there were two friends who were both involved in polygamous relationships. One was called Amadou Moussa, and the other one is not named in the myth. The latter was a very bad person, who always conducted himself contrary to the rules and regulations of the land. This other friend pretended all the time to talk about a king of kings (reference to God according to the story). Amadou Moussa owned a large farm close to the one owned by this "bad" friend. Amadou Moussa worked regularly in his farm, but had never met his friend working in his, yet mysteriously the latter's farm would always be completely weeded and crops planted before Amadou's. Furthermore, during harvesting, this "bad" friend would never harvest during the day. One day, this "bad" friend became very ill and called for his good friend Amadou Moussa, to accompany him to the house of the king of kings to seek for healing. They walked for several days and finally got to the kingdom of *Ngni-Ngni Forngwo* (king of kings). Immediately they arrived there this "bad" friend passed on and was buried there and then. The servants of *Ngni-Ngni Forngwo* appeared inside the grave where this "bad" friend was buried, and began to sing a song which was an invitation to Amadou Moussa to come and go with them.

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These servants were only visible to Amadou Moussa. There were several other people in the grave singing together with the servants *Ngni-Ngni Forngwo*, and telling Amadou Moussa that the grave was not for his “bad” friend, rather for Amadou Moussa. Amadou Moussa is told in the song that his friend was a “bad” person and consequently is unable to go the king of kings. They preferred to have Amadou Moussa because he had been a very good person. To this revelation, Amadou Moussa jumped into the grave to the greatest surprise of the people who had come to bury his “bad” friend. Amadou asked the people to fill up the grave, they refused because they had never experienced such a scenario — a person buried alive! The grave filled up by itself and Amadou Moussa went to the kingdom of *Ngni-Ngni Forngwo*. From that time the news spread all over the village: the goodness of Amadou Moussa has taken him to *Ngni-Ngni Forngwo*. The “bad” friend was left behind in the grave.

Analysis

The Ndop society, just like many African societies, had rules governing their land. Some of these rules were given by the leaders of the land and some by the gods and ancestors of the land. Failure to respect these rules resulted in the anger, punishment and rejection from the gods and ancestors. This is seen with Amadou’s friend who fell sick, died, and who was rejected by the gods. The rejection of his soul by the gods means he will never be considered as a good ancestor to whom the people can pray. In many African traditions, the dead are not dead but they watch over the people from where they are, guiding them and answering their prayers; but Amadou’s friend would never enjoy that privilege since the gods rejected him.

Hard work is equally an important aspect raised in the myth. An African is generally highly esteemed by his ability to work hard in order to make a living. Women should be able to take care of their husbands, their children, and their husbands’ compound properly. Men, on the other hand, should be able to manage many wives and children. That is how we should view both Amadou and his friend polygamous status. However, while the gods rewarded Amadou, his friend, instead, was punished because his wealth was not a result of his personal hard work.

African tradition is a world of mysteries with many things that cannot be explained. This is seen in the myth with Amadou’s friend whose farm is weeded and harvested mysteriously

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Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Death Friendship Tradition Values
Further Reading	Austen, Ralph A., "Tradition, Invention and History: The Case of the Ngondo (Cameroon)", *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 32.126 (1992): 285–309.
Addenda	Researcher: Amshetu Melo Forchu

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