Divine Che Neba, "Entry on: Myth of the Origin of the Mundang Chiefdom by Samuel Fah Lee", peer-reviewed by Daniel A. Nkemleke, Eleanor A. Dasi and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/439. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

Samuel Fah Lee

Myth of the Origin of the Mundang Chiefdom

Cameroon

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	Myth of the Origin of the Mundang Chiefdom
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon
Original Language	Mundang
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Cameroon
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	March 27, 2018
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Boboyo – Kaele
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover (Young adults and adults)
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



Samuel Fah Lee (Storyteller)

Age of narrator: 40 (in 2018)

Social status: Commoner

Profession: Secondary School Teacher

Language of narration: Mundang

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating	Background: The Mundang people are believed to have arrived in Chad in the mid-18th century from Egypt and occupied Léré, a village in South West Chad close to North Cameroon. Some of them were later displaced by the peuhls (Muslim fulanis), and then French colonization which pushed them into Cameroonian territory and a few others to northern Nigeria. In Cameroon, they are found in small chiefdoms in Boboyo, Kaele, Mayo-sokoye and Lara. The Mundang are an agricultural people, surviving mainly on the cultivation of cereals and vegetables though they sometimes also hunt and fish. The traditional Mundang society is divided into social classes and age groups and it is not possible to belong to two classes at the same time. They are polygamous by culture as they believe that polygamy helps in adequately choosing future leaders and also providing labour for agriculture. They believe in God the creator (*maseng*) which literally means "the most high" though they also have sub gods like the god of birth, ants, rain, sun and the ancestors who all have specific roles in the community. Occasion: Staged

Summary	Once upon a time, there was a girl named Ku Tchetche. She had never worked all her life. She lived with her parents. Each time her parents went to the farm, she stayed at home and a mystical animal called Pi Bwo would come and visit her. Whenever it came, it would sing: Ku Tchetche, where is your mother? She is in the farm. Ku Tchetche, where is your father? He is in the farm. Ku Tchetche the beautiful girl, beautiful, beautiful. Then it would tell her: "Go to the storehouse and bring some millet, let's cook." She would obey. She would bring out the millet, pound it and grind it and all the while, Pi Bwo would sing: "Ku Tchetche, you say you do not grind flour? You will grind today."

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Ku Tchetche, you say you do not fetch water? You will fetch today."

Ku Tchetche, beautiful girl, beautiful, beautiful.

And it is to this rhythm that she stirred the *foufou** and asked it:

"With what sauce are we going to eat?"

It told her:

"Put the pot on fire let me enter in it. When you hear me cry, open the pot."

She did as she was told. When it got out of the pot, some sauce was found in it and they would eat. It was like that everyday. They thought they were doing all these in hiding but in a nearby house, a grandmother was observing them.

One day, she told the mother of the girl not to go to the farm but to stay and see what was going on in her absence. In the morning, she went and hid herself in the grandmother's house and Pi Bwo came as usual and the scenario was repeated. When it was time to open the pot, the grandmother signaled the mother of the girl to go and lock the pot, which she did rapidly. Then Pi Bwo started calling Ku Tchetche, singing:

"Ku Tchetche, let me out"

and she replied,

"I am not the one, it is her mother."

It finally died in the pot and the mother put it in the storehouse to wait for three days before eating it as was the practice of that time.

The third day, when the parents of the girl had gone to the farm, the animal transformed and called the girl saying:

"My friend, hide yourself under a canary when I come to swallow everybody"

and she did. In the evening, when everybody was back from the farms, the monster came out of the storehouse and swallowed everyone except the girl who had hid herself. A chameleon inadvertently

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entered her hideout and they became two on earth. She had reserved a loaf of *foufou*, which she ate and became thirsty. She exclaimed:

"If only I had some water to drink!"

The chameleon urinated in her mouth and she drank. After that, she became pregnant by the chameleon and gave birth to two boys whom she named Left and Right. They grew up and became blacksmiths. One day, they asked their mother:

"Mother, are we the only ones on earth or were there other people before us?"

She told them the whole story and they asked:

"If you call your friend, will he come?"

She then decided to call by singing:

"My friend, my friend,

My personal friend,

You have eaten everybody,

I am left alone,

Come and take some air with me."

It came with a wild wind; Left shot a machete at him and Right threw an axe at him and all the people he had swallowed came out from him. They asked:

"But who freed us?"

The girl told them that it was Left and Right.

So they made Right chief** and made Left notable***. That is how the first Mundang chiefdom started, which exists to this day.

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* Maize, wheat, millet or cassava flour cooked into a thick paste and eaten with vegetable sauce.

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** Head of a traditional village community.

*** A person who sits close to the chief in village council meetings and participates in decision making.

Analysis	The myth of the origin of the Mundang chiefdom does not only reveal the mystery behind the origin of certain societies but proceeds to reveal the cardinal role of obedience as a moral yardstick in many ancient and classical communities. The performer of this myth re-echoes the fact that many things, including salvation can come one's way if s/he is obedient. The child in this context becomes a symbol of virtue. The myth also introduces two cardinal themes (providence and eschatology) recurrent in classical and ancient mythology. Such literature can be useful to people of all ages. The myth shares the motif of people being swallowed by a monster with the following myths: *The swallowing monster*, *Maiden and the pumpkin* or *Miseke and Thunderman*, where all swallowed people eventually survive without any harm.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Obedience Parents (and children) Society Talking animals Transformation
Further Reading	Azara, Pedro et al., "The Mythical Foundation of Cities" in *The Foundation of the City*, Barcelona: Centre of Contemporary Culture, 2000.

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Addenda

Researcher: Divine Che Neba.

Assistant Researcher: Fanta Rita Christine.

Method of data collection: tape-recording and note-taking.

Editors: Daniel A. Nkemleke and Eleanor A. Dasi.

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