Eleanor A. Dasi, Julius Mboh Angwah, "Entry on: Nongu by Musi Seth Pie", peer-reviewed by Daniel A. Nkemleke and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/620. Entry version as of November 06, 2026.

Musi Seth Pie

Nongu

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	Nongu
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon
Original Language	English
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Cameroon
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	March 18, 2018
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Bamenda
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover (young adults + adults)
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Creators



Musi Seth Pie (Storyteller)

Age of narrator: 30 (in 2018)

Social status: Notable

Profession: Teacher

Language of narration: English

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating

Background*: Bafanji is one of the thirteen villages that make up the Ngo-Ketunjia Division of 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 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. However he 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.

Occasion: staged

* Source: bafanji.org (accessed: January 16, 2019).

Summary

Many years ago, the entire community of Bafanji used to fetch potable water from Ndawi*. One day, a child was drowned in Ndawi and the river was desecrated. The Gods of Ndawi were not happy. All those who went there to fetch water after the tragedy died mysteriously around the banks of the river. It was a pregnant woman who went to Ndawi naked and in tears, begging the Gods of Ndawi to have mercy on them. The Gods were weakened by the spirit of the unborn child in the woman's womb, and requested, through Nongu the python, for a sacrifice of fowls and goats which was offered. From that event onwards, the villagers realized that whenever there was an issue at Ndawi, pregnant women would be allowed to go there first to calm the spirits before the chief priest could go there and perform the necessary rituals.

Not long after this occurrence, Nongu made constant visits to Ndawi from the land of the dead. Whenever Nongu was at the river, a rainbow would spread across the land to indicate to the people that there was a message for them from the Gods, and the message, for the most part, was that of peace. The rainbow assured the community that the ancestors were in harmony with the clan, and were still protecting

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the land. At such a moment, a pregnant woman would be identified and fortified by the traditional priest to visit Ndawi and get the message from the land of the ancestors. Pregnant women were chosen to do this because they carried in them the unborn, who were a source of consolation to the Gods.

Though Nongu lived in the land of the dead, he communed with the Gods of Ndawi once in a while. Indeed, it is often a wonderful feeling of excitement whenever the villagers see a rainbow in the sky. They feel confident that some good fortunes are coming to the clan. This has guided the people's perception of Nongu and has since left them with the belief that whenever the rainbow comes out, it is the reflection of the special python.

* Ndawi is small river in Bafanji, believed to have been given to the people by the Gods.

Analysis

The rainbow has been an important element in most world mythologies. It is considered by Virve Sarapik as "a source of positive emotions and an appearance gladdening the heart, a symbol of beauty and singularity" (Sarapik, 1998). More importantly, it is seen to represent a message from God or the gods. This significance of the rainbow, as documented by Sarapik, is clearly demonstrated in the relationship between Nongu and the community.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Gods

Further Reading

Lee, Raymond L. and Alistair B. Fraser, *The Rainbow Bridge: Rainbows in Art, Myth, and Science*, Penn State Press, 2001.

Sarapik, Virve, "Rainbow, Colours and Science Mythology", *Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore* 6/1998, folklore.ee, available at

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academia.edu (accessed: November 25, 2018).

Addenda

Researcher: Didymus Tsangue Douanla

Research Assistant: Julius Angwah

Editor: Eleanor A. Dasi

Method of data collection: Tape recording

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