

Beyana Ngarbai

Ping the Precious Monkey

Chad

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	Ping the Precious Monkey
Country of the First Edition	Chad
Country/countries of popularity	Chad
Original Language	Mundang: The original language of the myth is Ngambay, but because the researchers could not understand the language, and there was no translator available, the narrator decided to tell the story in Mundang which they could understand.
Country of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Chad
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Database	December 24, 2019
More Details of the Recording of the Story for the Database	Pala
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
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Creators



Beyana Ngarbai (Storyteller)

Age of Narrator: 62 (in 2019)

Social status: Notable

Profession: Teaching

Language of narration: Mundang

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural
Background/Dating

Origin/cultural background: See myth of [Burma Te-Dge](#).

Summary

From the beginning of time, when the women of the Pala clan in the western part of Chad were pregnant, there was only one way for them to give birth - their wombs had to be opened with a knife to remove the baby, and they would inevitably die in the process. One day a pregnant woman, realizing that she would soon go through the same fatal process, escaped to the forest and sat under a big tree, lamenting her situation to the forest. Then, the forest god appeared to her in the form of a monkey coming down from a tree. The Monkey harvested leaves, which he chewed, then ground with red (palm) oil and gave to the pregnant woman to swallow. After that, the woman gave birth naturally.

After her delivery, she took the Monkey with her back to the village. When men were threatening to kill the Monkey, she protected him. Later, the Monkey taught the men of the village how to make the concoction he had given to the pregnant woman in the forest. From that day on, the Monkey became a sacred animal for the Bebaalem clan.

Analysis

Some animals occupy a prestigious position in many world myths, either by their involvement in incidents or activities that are beneficial to humans or by their favour from the gods. In the myth above, the Bebaalem people of Chad consider the Monkey as sacred because of its role in showing the people the natural birthing method, significantly reducing the mortality rate of women during childbirth. The Monkey then becomes a sacred animal to the people by virtue of this life-saving contribution. The Monkey is also popular in other mythologies and folklore. Such as in China, where it is considered as the "Great Sage Equal to Heaven*", in Hindu mythology, as a representative of Shiva, and in Japanese mythology, representing the god of fertility and safe childbirth (interestingly, the same role it plays in the myth of Ping the Precious Monkey!).



* Qítiān Dàshèng (齊天大聖). See: *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio* (tr. John Minford), London: Penguin, 2006.

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

[Animals](#) [Child, children](#) [Gender, female](#) [Nature](#) [Religious beliefs](#)

Further Reading

[Animals in Mythology](#), mythencyclopedia.com (accessed: August 16, 2021).

Jokinen, Anniina, "[Monkeys and Monkey Gods in Mythology, Folklore, and Religion](#)", luminarium.org, published March 8, 2007 (accessed: August 16, 2021).

Addenda

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