



**COLLECTION
OF
INTERNATIONAL
STORIES AND
LEGENDS**

école _____
normale _____
supérieure _____
paris-saclay _____

*The 2020-2021 international students
of ENS Paris-Saclay*

école —————
normale —————
supérieure —————
paris-saclay —————

*The
International Relations Office
presents*

COLLECTION
OF
INTERNATIONAL
STORIES AND
LEGENDS

université
PARIS-SACLAY

FOREWORD

For the last two years, the International Relations Office of ENS Paris-Saclay, offered and worked with international students in the creation of an international book of recipes especially made during the festivities of the end of the year.

This year, we wanted to maintain this cultural project but also to change its principles. In doing so, instead of collecting recipes we asked the 2020-2021 international students to participate in telling us their favorite childhood stories and legends from their home countries. The project was well received and we obtain multiple stories as beautiful as interesting.

From four continents, we are glad to offer you the first collection of international stories and legends. We do hope that reading this book gives you as many joy as it gave us while making it.

From Marocco to China and Germany to the United States, enjoy this collection made by some of the 2020-2021 promotion of ENS Paris-Saclay international students for all students.

The International Relations Office would like to thank all students who participated in this project despite all circumstances as well as Jérôme Foubert who helped us make it real.

Well wishes for 2021 and good reading to you all!

**THIS BOOK IS
MADE FOR AND WITH THE
2020–2021 ENS PARIS–SACLAY
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
IN THE HOPE OF OPENING
EVERYONE TO OTHER CULTURES
AND CELEBRATIONS**



**THE INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS OFFICE
WOULD LIKE TO THANK
ALL THE STUDENTS
WHO PARTICIPATED
IN THIS BOOK.**

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GHIRIBA & VAVA INOUVA

Il était une fois dans une contrée lointaine une jeune fille qui s'appelait Ghriba*, l'aînée adorée de son papa Vava Inouva.

Depuis que sa mère ait rendu l'âme, Ghriba s'est vue porter une lourde responsabilité malgré son jeune âge, elle est devenue soutien de sa petite fratrie et de son vieux père.

Elle se levait tous les jours au petit matin, se promenait de champs en champs, de forêt en forêt, pour chercher de la nourriture et du bois pour se chauffer. Elle était aussi bergère, elle s'occupait des moutons des voisins pour subvenir aux besoins de sa petite famille. Ghriba rentrait toujours au crépuscule avec le fruit de sa longue et éprouvante journée de travail.

Tous les soirs, le monstre de la forêt sortait de sa cachette. Il parcourait les demeures du village et frappait à la porte des modestes villageois. Il guettait les cabanes avec des petits enfants en imitant la voix de leur mère ou de leur grande sœur, pour les dévorer.

Un soir, le soleil s'était couché longtemps avant que Ghriba ne soit revenue rejoindre sa famille, Vava Inouva s'inquiétait pour sa fille à mesure qu'elle tardait à rentrer au village.

Au retour chez elle, effrayée par le monstre de la forêt, elle frappa à la porte de sa cabane, « Vava Inouva... ouvre... la... porte, c'est moi... ta fille Ghriba » dit Ghriba essoufflée. L'idée qu'il puisse s'agir du monstre de la forêt traversa l'esprit du père qui s'était habitué à reconnaître sa fille au son de ses bracelets. Horrifié, il rétorqua avec une minuscule lueur d'espoir : « Fais résonner tes bracelets ma fille que je sache que c'est bien toi ». Ghriba, horrifiée, répondit en pleurant : « On m'a volé mes bracelets papa, ouvre vite j'ai peur du monstre... ».

L'espace d'un instant, Vava Inouva, le regard vide, fixa ses enfants avec ses yeux usés par l'âge, il était dans un dilemme cruel : ouvrir la porte et risquer la vie de ses petits enfants ou laisser sa fille proie au monstre. Il pensa au

Student
Ziyad Benkhadaaj

Country
Maroc



Formation

Licence double diplôme
Mathématiques,
Physique et Sciences
pour l'ingénieur,
parcours Physique

Ce conte est
un héritage culturel
des autochtones
de l'Afrique du Nord,
les Berbères ou comme
ils aiment s'appeler :
Imazighen ou
au singulier *Amazigh*,
qui qualifie les hommes
libres ou les hommes
nobles.

* en français :
l'étrangère

sort de sa fille aînée et éclata en sanglots... Il ne connaissait de sa fille que son pénible labeur et ne reconnaissait d'elle que le son de ses bracelets.
Ghriba était étrangère...



DAME LÉOPARD PREND SERVANTE

Il était une fois une chienne qui alla offrir ses services à Dame Léopard. Au cours de la négociation, Dame Léopard dit à la chienne :

– Vous les chiens, vous aimez bien les os. Mais chez nous, les léopards, les os sont tabous. On ne peut pas toucher à un os. Et tu voudrais que je te prenne comme servante ?

La chienne lui répond :

– Peut-être ignores-tu pourquoi nous, les chiens, nous rongeons les os ? C'est parce que nous ne trouvons pas de viande. Moi, si j'avais de la viande à manger, penses-tu que je rongerais les os ?

– Bon, fait Dame Léopard. Je t'engage, mais garde-toi bien de toucher à un os ! De la viande, je t'en fournirai autant que tu en voudras.

Dès ce jour-là, la chienne devient la servante de Dame Léopard et habite avec elle.

Dame Léopard a trois petits. Elle dit à la chienne :

– Voici mes trois petits. Je t'engage pour que tu les gardes. Lorsque je partirai à la chasse, tu resteras à la maison et tu en prendras soin. Tu les occuperas et tu les feras jouer pour ne pas qu'ils s'ennuient. Tu veilleras à ce qu'ils ne vagabondent pas dans le voisinage et qu'ils soient toujours près de toi. Et, je te le rappelle, pas d'os ! Mes petits pourraient en crever. Lorsque je rentrerai de la chasse, tu me les apporteras pour leur tétée.

La chienne assure Dame Léopard qu'elle a bien compris et qu'elle fera tout selon ses désirs.

Chaque jour, Dame Léopard va à la chasse. La chienne reste à la maison. Elle mange la viande que sa maîtresse lui donne et s'occupe des petits. Puis, à son retour de la chasse, Dame Léopard donne de la viande à la chienne. Ensuite, elle lui réclame ses petits pour leur donner la tétée. La chienne en amène d'abord un. Puis lorsqu'il a terminé sa tétée, elle en amène un second et, quand il a fini, elle amène le troisième. Dame Léopard est très satisfaite de sa servante. Chaque jour, la chienne mange de la viande à satiété et elle jette les os loin dans le champ. Les choses se passent bien durant un bon bout de temps.

Written by
Pierre Crépeau

Student
Philemon Mugisha

Country
Rwanda



Formation
M1 Economics

Mais un jour, Dame Léopard revient bredouille de la chasse. Il n'y a pas de viande pour la chienne. Tôt le lendemain, Dame Léopard repart à la chasse et la chienne reste à la maison pour garder les petits comme d'habitude. Mais, se mourant de faim, elle se rend à l'endroit où elle a jeté les os, en déterre un et commence à le ronger. *Crunch, crunch, crunch!*

Soudain, tabou de malheur, un éclat d'os s'envole *pfuit! Et pink!* dans l'œil d'un petit léopard! La chienne accourt et trouve le petit agonisant, l'œil arraché. Elle lui coupe la tête d'un coup de crocs, et l'enterre. Puis elle dévore le corps. Rassasiée, elle s'assoit dans la cour en attendant le retour de Dame Léopard.

De retour de la chasse, Dame Léopard réclame ses petits pour la tétée. La chienne lui amène le premier petit, ensuite le second. Puis elle reprend le premier et le ramène à sa mère pour une seconde tétée. Dame Léopard est satisfaite à l'idée que ses trois petits sont rassasiés. Mais, ce jour-là encore, elle n'a pas rapporté de viande pour la chienne.

Le lendemain, Dame Léopard retourne à la chasse. Torturée par la faim, la chienne se dit en elle-même :

– Si hier un éclat d'os a tué un petit de Dame Léopard, c'est que je rongerais trop près de la maison.



Elle va donc déterrer un os et court le ronger sur l'autre versant de la colline. *Crunch, crunch, crunch!*

Soudain, tabou de malheur, un bruit sec se fait entendre, *pfuit!* La chienne croit qu'un éclat d'os vient de s'envoler vers un petit de sa maîtresse et qu'il le tuera. Elle descend la colline à la course et, de fait, trouve un petit de Dame Léopard baignant dans son sang. Sans hésiter, elle lui coupe la tête et l'enterre. Puis elle dévore le corps et s'assoit dans la cour en attendant le retour de sa maîtresse.

De retour de la chasse, Dame Léopard réclame ses petits pour la tétée. La chienne lui amène le seul petit qui reste. Après sa tétée, elle le ramène une deuxième puis une troisième fois. Le petit n'y comprend rien, trois tétées d'af-

filée! La chienne le ramène à la niche. Dame Léopard se réjouit que sa servante sache si bien élever ses petits.

Le lendemain matin, Dame Léopard s'en va chasser au loin. Sachant maintenant que des éclats d'os peuvent voler très loin, la chienne se dit :

– Deux petits sont morts parce que je rongerais les os trop près de la maison. Aujourd'hui, je vais aller ronger mes os par delà deux collines. Aucun éclat ne pourra venir jusqu'ici.

Elle se hâte, passe deux collines, trouve un trou de fourmilier abandonné, s'y enfouit avec son os et se met à ronger. *Crunch, crunch, crunch!* C'était sans compter le tabou de malheur. Le même bruit sec se fait entendre, *pfuit!* Un fragment d'os vient de voler et plane jusqu'au dernier petit de Dame Léopard. La chienne sort aussitôt la tête du trou, mais elle n'entend plus rien, ne voit plus rien. Elle s'inquiète :

– Tabou de malheur! Vite, vite! Le dernier petit!

Enfin revenue à la maison, elle trouve le petit hébété, un œil pendant hors de son orbite. Elle se dit :

– C'est le seul qui restait. Qu'est-ce que je vais dire à ma maîtresse lorsqu'elle rentrera de la chasse ?

Elle achève le petit et le dévore. Et, prenant ses jambes à son cou, elle s'enfuit chez les hommes.

Dame Léopard rentre de la chasse et réclame ses petits pour la tétée. Pas de réponse! Elle va voir dans la niche et la trouve vide. Folle de rage, elle hurle :

– Cette maudite chienne m'a volé mes petits! Elle me le paiera!

Et, d'un bond, elle s'élançait à la poursuite de sa servante. En passant devant une maison, la chienne entend Dame Léopard qui s'approche à toute vitesse. Morte de peur, elle se précipite dans la cour. Un devin est assis près de la porte avec sa boîte de dés à deviner. La chienne lui dit dans un souffle :

– Homme, cache-moi! Vite! On veut me tuer!



– Va dans la chambre du fond, dit le devin sans même se retourner.

Apercevant une grande corbeille appuyée contre le mur, la chienne supplie :

– Vite, cache-moi dans cette corbeille !

Le devin cache la chienne dans la corbeille et revient s’asseoir près de la porte avec sa boîte de dés.

Au même moment, Dame Léopard surgit et demande au devin :

– Sais-tu où se trouve cette chienne maudite qui m’a dévoré mes trois petits ?

– Je ne sais pas, répond le devin.

– Peut-être ne l’as-tu pas encore vue, reprend Dame Léopard. Lance tes dés pour moi. Je veux connaître le moment propice et la manière la plus efficace de me venger de cette chienne.

Le devin ouvre sa boîte et jette les dés sur sa planchette. Puis il dit son oracle :

– Tu seras bientôt vengée.

– Dis-moi où la trouver, demande Dame Léopard hالتante.

Sachant que les voisins se préparent à offrir un sacrifice aux défunts, le devin annonce à Dame Léopard :

– Tu la trouveras en train de fouiller dans les entrailles d’une vache offerte en sacrifice.

Dame Léopard remercie le devin et s’en va rôder dans la bananeraie, derrière la maison où on prépare le sacrifice. Le moment venu, on immole une vache. Du fond de sa corbeille, la chienne flaire l’odeur du sang chaud. Elle demande au devin de la sortir de la corbeille pour lui permettre de humer l’odeur du sacrifice.

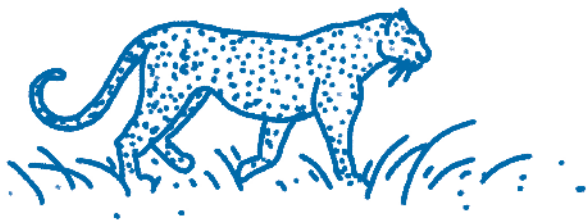
– Tu n’as donc rien compris? lui reproche le devin. Lorsque j’ai lu les dés, j’ai pourtant parlé à haute voix pour t’avertir du danger que tu cours.

– Je ne passerai pas le seuil, promet la chienne. Sors-moi tout simplement de la corbeille.

De guerre lasse, le devin sort la chienne de la corbeille. Elle tend les narines, elle flaire, elle hume, elle renifle. Elle sort dans la cour, mais prise de peur rentre aussitôt dans la maison. Pendant ce temps, Dame Léopard rôde silencieuse tout près du sacrifice. La chienne sort de nouveau dans la cour et se hasarde jusqu'à la barrière. Mais le cœur lui saute dans la poitrine et elle revient se cacher dans la maison.

Finalement, n'y tenant plus, elle se glisse hors de l'enclos, s'approche des bouchers, rafle un morceau de viande et revient en toute hâte dans la maison du devin. Puis, se rendant compte qu'elle est sortie sans dommage, elle s'imagine qu'il n'y a aucun danger. Elle retourne donc dans la bananeraie et se met à fouiller les entrailles de la victime du sacrifice. C'est le moment que Dame Léopard attendait. Elle lui saute dessus, lui brise la nuque et la réduit en charpie. C'est ainsi que Dame Léopard a vengé la mort de ses trois petits.

Ce n'est pas moi qui m'arrête, c'est la chienne dévoreuse des petits de Dame Léopard qui est morte.



THE SQUIRREL'S ADHERENCE

A Tale from the Ramayana

Student

Tamizhmalar
Sundararajan

Country

Inde



Formation

M1 Molecular
Nano Bio Photonics

Once upon a time in ancient India, there lived a King named Rama and a Queen named Sita. Everyone loved the king and the queen for their integrity and pure heart. One day, a ten-headed monster named Ravana kidnapped King Rama's beloved wife Sita. King Rama set off to rescue his wife with the Monkey King, Hanuman leading an army of monkeys.

King Rama and the team traveled without a pause until they reached the end of the land and they had to cross the ocean to reach Ravana's kingdom. The King of the Sea rose up and said, "The ocean cannot be overcome with force, but only by building a strong bridge." So, Sri Rama ordered the monkeys to construct a stone bridge that could hold his entire invading army.

Monkey after monkey set to work carrying huge stones and enormous boulders to the seaside. Thousands of monkeys worked ceaselessly. Then the king noticed that a small brown squirrel rushed up and down from the hills to the shore carrying little pebbles in her mouth. "What is that little creature doing?" he wondered.

The monkeys also saw the squirrel and grew angry. "Get out of our way, you are too small and you are not needed" they screeched.

The little squirrel looked up and said, "I am helping to build the bridge to save Queen Sita." All the monkeys began to laugh. They held their sides, hopped, and mocked the little squirrel. "We have never heard anything so foolish in our entire lives," they said. The squirrel answered, "I cannot carry rocks or stones. I can only lift small pebbles but that is what I can do to help. My heart weeps for Sita and I want to be of assistance."

The monkeys moved the squirrel away but she continued to carry small pebbles and pile them up nearby. Finally, one monkey became so irritated that he lifted the little animal and threw her into the air. The squirrel cried out, "Rama Rama!" The king lifted his hand and caught the squirrel safely in his palm.

Lord Rama said to the monkeys, “Never despise the deeds of those who are not as strong as you. Each serves according to their strength and is much needed to build this bridge.” It was just at that moment the monkeys realized they needed the little pebbles to place between the larger stones to prevent the bridge from falling and that is how the strongest bridge across the sea was built.

Moral

Each serves according to their strength and no one should be underestimated.



THE RACE AROUND THE WORLD

Student
Tamizhmalar
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Country
Inde



Formation
M1 Molecular
Nano Bio Photonics

A plump little boy with the head of an Elephant, Ganesha is a very intriguing character from Indian mythology. This story depicts a charming tale of the cute sibling rivalry between the little Ganesha and his brother Karthikeya.

One day, Naradhar is known for being mischievous visited Lord Shiva and Parvathi on Mount Kailash with mango in his hand. The mango is considered special because the one who ate it would gain knowledge and wisdom. Naradhar had asked them not to cut the mango as it would lose its vitality.

Lord Shiva and Parvathi decided to give the mango to one of their children but choosing one among the two was difficult. Hence, Naradhar stepped in with a solution. He asked the two children to travel around the world three times and said that the one who wins the race would be rewarded with the mango.

Both boys were eager to win the mango. However, Ganesha understood that his vehicle, the mouse would not be able to compete with Kartikeya's vehicle, the peacock.

Karthikeya did not waste any time on thought. He instantly mounted on his vehicle and embarked on his voyage to make a quick trip around the world. In the meantime, Ganesha called his parents and asked them to sit together. Then, he started walking around his parents three times!

Bewildered Shiva & Parvathi asked Ganesha why he was moving around them and not circling the world instead. Little Ganesha's eyes twinkled and he answered "Being my parents, you are the world to me. Thus, when I went around you thrice, it was equal to going around the world."

Pleased with his cleverness, Shiva and Parvathi handed over the mango to Ganesha as the reward. Karthikeya gracefully accepted his defeat.

Thus, Ganesha won the mango !!

Moral

A wandering mind cannot get enlightened but a stable one certainly will.

Respect your parents, there can be no one as important as them in your life.



MOTHER HULDA

Written by
Grimm Brothers

Student
Robert Schädlich



Formation
M1 Master Parisien
de Recherche
en Informatique



A widow had two daughters; one was pretty and industrious, the other was ugly and lazy. And as the ugly one was her own daughter, she loved her much the best, and the pretty one was made to do all the work, and be the drudge of the house.

Every day the poor girl had to sit by a well on the high road and spin until her fingers bled. Now it happened once that as the spindle was bloody, she dipped it into the well to wash it; but it slipped out of her hand and fell in.

Then she began to cry, and ran to her step-mother, and told her of her misfortune; and her stepmother scolded her without mercy, and said in her rage:

– “As you have let the spindle fall in, you must go and fetch it out again!”

Then the girl went back again to the well, not knowing what to do, and in the despair of her heart she jumped down into the well the same way the spindle had gone.

After that she knew nothing; and when she came to herself she was in a beautiful meadow, and the sun was shining on the flowers that grew round her. And she walked on through the meadow until she came to a baker’s oven that was full of bread; and the bread called out to her:

– “Oh, take me out, take me out, or I shall burn; I am baked enough already!”

Then she drew near, and with the baker’s peel she took out all the loaves one after the other. And she went farther on till she came to a tree weighed down with apples, and it called out to her:

– “Oh, shake me, shake me, we apples are all of us ripe!”

Then she shook the tree until the apples fell like rain, and she shook until there were no more to fall; and when she had gathered them together in a heap, she went on farther. At last she came to a little house, and an old woman was peeping out of it, but she had such great teeth that the girl was terrified and about to run away, only the old woman called her back.

– “What are you afraid of, my dear child? Come and live

with me, and if you do the house-work well and orderly, things shall go well with you. You must take great pains to make my bed well, and shake it up thoroughly, so that the feathers fly about, and then in the world it snows, for I am Mother Hulda.”

As the old woman spoke so kindly, the girl took courage, consented, and went to her work. She did everything to the old woman’s satisfaction, and shook the bed with such a will that the feathers flew about like snow-flakes: and so she led a good life, had never a cross word, but boiled and roast meat every day. When she had lived a long time with Mother Hulda, she began to feel sad, not knowing herself what ailed her; at last she began to think she must be home-sick; and although she was a thousand times better off than at home where she was, yet she had a great longing to go home. At last she said to her mistress: – “I am homesick, and although I am very well off here, I cannot stay any longer; I must go back to my own home.”

Mother Hulda answered:

– “It pleases me well that you should wish to go home, and, as you have served me faithfully, I will undertake to send you there!”

She took her by the hand and led her to a large door standing open, and as she was passing through it there fell upon her a heavy shower of gold, and the gold hung all about her, so that she was covered with it.

– “All this is yours, because you have been so industrious,” said Mother Hulda; and, besides that, she returned to her her spindle, the very same that she had dropped in the well. And then the door was shut again, and the girl found herself back again in the world, not far from her mother’s house; and as she passed through the yard the cock stood on the top of the well and cried:

– “Cock-a-doodle doo!
Our golden girl has come home too!”

Then she went in to her mother, and as she had returned covered with gold she was well received. So the girl related all her history, and what had happened



to her, and when the mother heard how she came to have such great riches she began to wish that her ugly and idle daughter might have the same good fortune. So she sent her to sit by the well and spin; and in order to make her spindle bloody she put her hand into the thorn hedge. Then she threw the spindle into the well, and jumped in herself. She found herself, like her sister, in the beautiful meadow, and followed the same path, and when she came to the baker's oven, the bread cried out:

—“Oh, take me out, take me out, or I shall burn; I am quite done already!”

But the lazy-bones answered:

—“I have no desire to black my hands,” and went on farther.

Soon she came to the apple-tree, who called out:

—“Oh, shake me, shake me, we apples are all of us ripe!”

But she answered:

—“That is all very fine; suppose one of you should fall on my head,” and went on farther.

When she came to Mother Hulda's house she did not feel afraid, as she knew beforehand of her great teeth, and entered into her service at once. The first day she put her hand well to the work, and was industrious, and did everything Mother Hulda bade her, because of the gold she expected; but the second day she began to be idle, and the third day still more so, so that she would not get up in the morning. Neither did she make Mother Hulda's bed as it ought to have been made, and did not shake it for the feathers to fly about. So that Mother Hulda soon grew tired of her, and gave her warning, at which the lazy thing was well pleased, and thought that now the shower of gold was coming; so Mother Hulda led her to the door, and as she stood in the doorway, instead of the shower of gold a great kettle full of pitch was emptied over her.

—“That is the reward for your service,” said Mother Hulda, and shut the door.

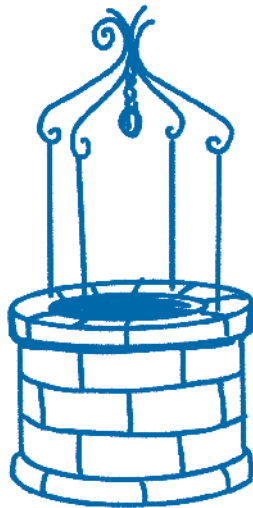
So the lazy girl came home all covered with pitch, and the

cock on the top of the well seeing her, cried:

–“Cock-a-doodle doo!

Our dirty girl has come home too!”

And the pitch remained sticking to her fast, and never, as long as she lived, could it be got off.



THE TALE OF THE THREE BROTHERS

Written by
J. K. Rowling



There were once three brothers who were travelling along a lonely, winding road at twilight. In time, the brothers reached a river too deep to wade through and too dangerous to swim across. However, these brothers were learned in the magical arts, and so they simply waved their wands and made a bridge appear across the treacherous water. They were halfway across it when they found their path blocked by a hooded figure.

And Death spoke to them. He was angry that he had been cheated out of three victims, for travelers usually drowned in the river. But Death was cunning. He pretended to congratulate the three brothers upon their magic, and said that each had earned a prize for having been clever enough to evade him.

So the oldest brother, who was a combative man, asked for a wand more powerful than any in existence: a wand that must always win duels for its owner, a wand worthy of a wizard who had conquered Death! So Death crossed to an elder tree on the banks of the river, fashioned a wand from a branch that hung there, and gave it to the oldest brother.

Then the second brother, who was an arrogant man, decided that he wanted to humiliate Death still further, and asked for the power to recall others from Death. So Death picked up a stone from the riverbank and gave it to the second brother, and told him that the stone would have the power to bring back the dead.

And then Death asked the third and youngest brother what he would like. The youngest brother was the humblest and also the wisest of the brothers, and he did not trust Death. So he asked for something that would enable him to go forth from that place without being followed by Death. And Death, most unwillingly, handed his own Cloak of Invisibility.

Then Death stood aside and allowed the three brothers to continue on their way and they did so, talking with wonder of the adventure they had had, and admiring Death's gifts.

In due course the brothers separated, each for his own destination.

The first brother travelled on for a week or more, and reaching a distant village, he sought out a fellow wizard with whom he had a quarrel. Naturally, with the Elder Wand as his weapon, he could not fail to win the duel that followed. Leaving his enemy dead upon the floor, the oldest brother proceeded to an inn, where he boasted loudly of the powerful wand he had snatched from Death himself, and of how it made him invincible.

That very night, another wizard crept upon the oldest brother as he lay, wine-sodden, upon his bed. The thief took the wand and, for good measure, slit the oldest brother's throat.

And so Death took the first brother for his own.

Meanwhile, the second brother journeyed to his own home, where he lived alone. Here he took out the stone that had the power to recall the dead, and turned it thrice in his hand. To his amazement and his delight, the figure of the girl he had once hoped to marry before her untimely death appeared at once before him.

Yet she was silent and cold, separated from him as though by a veil. Though she had returned to the mortal world, she did not truly belong there and suffered. Finally, the second brother, driven mad with hopeless longing, killed himself so as truly to join her.

And so Death took the second brother for his own.

But though Death searched for the third brother for many years, he was never able to find him. It was only when he had attained a great age that the youngest brother finally took off the Cloak of Invisibility and gave it to his son. And then he greeted Death as an old friend, and went with him gladly, and, equals, they departed this life.

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

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Formation
M1 Histoire Politique
des Mondes
Contemporains

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



WHY MOSQUITOES BUZZ IN PEOPLE'S EARS

One morning a mosquito saw an iguana drinking at a waterhole. The mosquito said:

– “Iguana, you will never believe what I saw yesterday.”

– “Try me,” said the iguana.

The mosquito said:

– “I saw a farmer digging yams that were as big as I am.”

– “What’s a mosquito compared to a yam?” snapped the iguana grumpily.

– “I would rather be deaf than listen to such nonsense!”

Then he stuck two sticks in his ears and went off, *mek, mek, mek*, through the reeds.

The iguana was still grumbling to himself when he happened to pass by a python. The big snake raised his head and said:

– “Good morning, Iguana.”

The iguana did not answer but lumbered on, bobbing his head, *badamin, badamin*.

– “Now, why won’t he speak to me?” said the python to himself.

– “Iguana must be angry about something. I’m afraid he is plotting some mischief against me!” He began looking for somewhere to hide.

The first likely place he found was a rabbit hole, and in it he went, *wasawusu, wasawusu, wasawusu*. When the rabbit saw the big snake coming into her burrow, she was terrified. She scurried out through her back way and bounded, *krik, krik, krik*, across a clearing.

A crow saw the rabbit running for her life. He flew into the forest crying, *kaa, kaa, kaa*! It was his duty to spread the alarm in case of danger. A monkey heard the crow. He was sure that some dangerous beast was prowling near. He began screeching and leaping *kili wili* through the trees to help warn the other animals. As the monkey was crashing through the treetops, he happened to land on a dead limb. It broke and fell on an owl’s nest, killing one of the owlets.

Mother Owl was not at home. For though she usual-

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*The story might
actually come from
West Africa,
but my family
is from the Caribbean
and my grandmother
would tell me this
tale growing up.*

ly hunted only in the night, this morning she was still out searching for one more tidbit to satisfy her hungry babies. When she returned to the nest, she found one of them dead. Her other children told her that the monkey had killed it. All that day and all that night, she sat in her tree so sad, so sad, so sad! Now it was Mother Owl who woke the sun each day so that the dawn could come. But this time, when she should have hooted for the sun, she did not do it. The night grew longer and longer. The animals of the forest knew it was lasting much too long. They feared that the sun would never come back.

At last King Lion called a meeting of the animals. They came and sat down, *pem, pem, pem*, around a council fire. Mother Owl did not come, so the antelope was sent to fetch her. When she arrived, King Lion asked:

– “Mother Owl, why have you not called the sun? The night has lasted long, long, long, and everyone is worried.”

Mother Owl said:

– “Monkey killed one of my owlets. Because of that, I cannot bear to wake the sun.”

The king said to the gathered animals:

– “Did you hear? It was the monkey who killed the owlet and now Mother Owl won’t wake the sun So that the day can come.”

Then King Lion called the monkey. He came before him nervously glancing from side to side, *rim, rim, rim, rim*.

– “Monkey,” said the king, “why did you kill on of Mother Owl’s babies?”

– “Oh, King,” said the monkey, “it was the crow’s fault. He was calling and calling to warn us of danger. And I went leaping through the trees to help. A limb broke under me, and it fell taaa on the owl’s nest.”

The king said to the council:

– “So, it was the crow who alarmed the monkey, who killed the owlet and now Mother Owl won’t wake the sun so that the day can come.”

Then the king called for the crow. That big bird came flapping up. He said:

– “King Lion, it was the rabbit’s fault! I saw her running for her life in the daytime. Wasn’t that reason enough to spread alarm?”

The king nodded his head and said to the council:

– “So, it was the rabbit who startled the crow, who alarmed the monkey, who killed the owlet and now Mother Owl won’t wake the sun so that the day can come.”

Then King Lion called the rabbit. The timid little creature stood before him, one trembling paw drawn up certainly.

– “Rabbit,” cried the king, “why did you break a law of nature and go running, running, running, in the daytime?”

– “Oh, King,” said the rabbit, “it was the python’s fault. I was in my house minding my own business when that big snake came in and chased me out.”

The king said to the council:

– “So, it was the python who scared the rabbit, who startled the crow, who alarmed the monkey, who killed the owlet and now Mother Owl won’t wake the sun so that the day can come.”

King Lion called the python, who came slithering, *wasawusu*, *wasawusu*, past the other animals.

– “But, King,” he cried, “it was the iguana’s fault! He wouldn’t speak to me. And I thought he was plotting some mischief against me. When I crawled into her rabbit’s hole, I was only trying to hide.”

The king said to the council:

– “So, it was the iguana who frightened the python, who scared the rabbit, who startled the crow, who alarmed the monkey, who killed the owlet and now Mother Owl won’t wake the sun so that the day can come.”

Now the iguana was not at the meeting. For he had not heard the summons. The antelope was sent to fetch him. All the animals laughed when they saw the iguana co-

ming, *badamin, badamin*, with the sticks sill stuck in his ears! King Lion pulled out the sticks, *purup, purup, purup*. Then he asked:

– “Iguana, what evil have you been plotting against the python?”

– “None! None at all!” cried the iguana. “Python is my friend!”

– “Then why wouldn’t you say good morning to me?” demanded the snake.

– “I didn’t hear you, or even see you!” said the iguana. “Mosquito told me such a big lie, I couldn’t bear to listen to it. So I put sticks in my ears.”

– “*Nge, nge, nge*,” laughed the lion. “So that’s why you had sticks in your ears!”

– “Yes,” said the iguana. “It was the mosquito’s fault.”

King Lion said to the council:

– “So, it was the mosquito who annoyed iguana, who frightened python, who scared rabbit, who startled the crow, who alarmed the monkey, who killed the owlet and now Mother Owl won’t wake the sun so that the day can come.”

– “Punish the mosquito! Punish the mosquito!” cried all the animals. When Mother Owl heard that, she was satisfied. She turned her head toward the east and hooted:

– “*Hoo! Hooooo! Hooooooo!*”

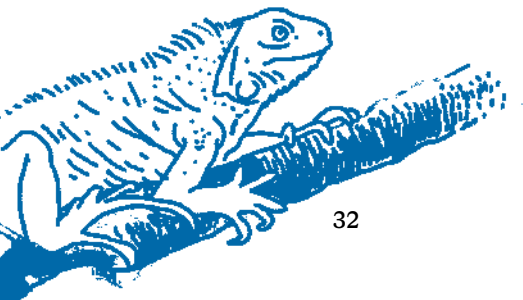
And the sun came up.

Meanwhile the mosquito had listened to it all from a nearby bush. She crept under a curly leaf, *semm*, and was never found and brought before the council. But because of this the mosquito has a guilty conscience. To this day she goes about whining in people’s ears:

– “*Zeee!* Is everyone angry at me?”

When she does that, she gets an honest answer.

KPAO!



A MAGIC PAINT BRUSH

The story of Ma Liang

Once upon a time, there was a young man called Ma Liang. He was poor and kind and helped a rich man to tend cattle. He liked drawing and drew pictures everywhere. One night, he dreamed that an old man gave him a magic paintbrush and asked him to use it to help poor people. When he woke up, he found the magic paintbrush in his desk.

From that day on, he used the paintbrush whenever people needed help. When he saw that people had no water to use in the fields, he drew a river and the river came to life. People could bring water from the river to the field and save a lot of time and energy.

When he saw it was difficult for people to till lands, he drew a cow and the cow came to life. People could use the cow to till lands very easily.

So when he saw the peoples' troubles, he would use his magic paintbrush to help. Then many people knew about the magic paintbrush.

But a few days later, the rich man whom Ma Liang helped heard that the magic paint brush could turn everything to life. He was a bad man so he had an idea to steal the paint brush from the young man. He knew that he could make a lot of money by turning things to life and keeping them, so he sent some people to the Ma Liang's home and took him to the prison. He got the magic paintbrush and felt very happy.

Then he invited a lot of his friends to come to his home and showed them the magic paintbrush. He drew a lot of pictures, but they could not become real. He was very angry and asked some people to get Ma Liang.

When Ma Liang came, he said to him, «If you draw some pictures for me and turn them to life, I will set you free.» The young man knew that he was a bad man in the village. Of course he did not want to help him. He had an idea. He said to the bad man, «I can help you, but you should obey your words.»

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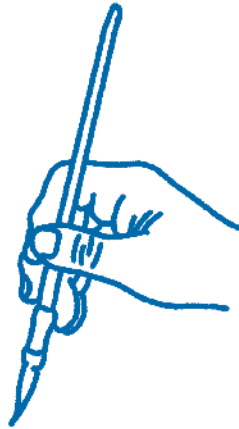


Formation
M1 Master Parisien
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en Informatique

The bad man felt very happy and said, «I want a golden mountain. I will go there to gather gold.» The young man drew a sea first. The bad man was angry and said,» Why did you draw a sea? I do not want this. I want a golden mountain. Draw it quickly.»

Then the young man drew a golden mountain which was far away from the sea. The bad man saw that and felt very happy. He said, «Draw a big ship quickly. I want to go there to gather gold.» The young man smiled quietly and drew a big ship. The bad man jumped into the ship first and a lot of his family and friends jumped in too. When the ship sailed to the middle of the sea, the young man drew a large wave and it destroyed the ship. So the bad man and his friends died.

After that, the young man lived with his family happily and kept on helping the poor people. So the magic paintbrush was known by everyone.



BRÜDER GRIMM: DIE HASELRUTE

Eines Nachmittags hatte sich das Christkind in sein Wiegenbett gelegt und war eingeschlafen, da trat seine Mutter heran, sah es voll Freude an und sprach:

– ‘hast du dich schlafen gelegt, mein Kind? Schlaf sanft, ich will derweil in den Wald gehen und eine Handvoll Erdbeeren für dich holen; ich weiß wohl, du freust dich darüber, wenn du aufgewacht bist.’

Draußen im Wald fand sie einen Platz mit den schönsten Erdbeeren, als sie sich aber herabbückt, um eine zu brechen, so springt aus dem Gras eine Natter in die Höhe. Sie erschrickt, läßt die Beere stehen und eilt hinweg. Die Natter schießt ihr nach, aber die Mutter Gottes, das könnt ihr denken, weiß guten Rat, sie versteckt sich hinter eine Haselstaude und bleibt da stehen, bis die Natter sich wieder verkrochen hat. Sie sammelt dann die Beeren, und als sie sich auf den Heimweg macht, spricht sie: – ‘wie die Haselstaude diesmal mein Schutz gewesen ist, so soll sie es auch in Zukunft andern Menschen sein.’

Darum ist seit den ältesten Zeiten ein grüner Haselzweig gegen Nattern, Schlangen, und was sonst auf der Erde kriecht, der sicherste Schutz.

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BROTHERS GRIMM: THE HAZEL BRANCH

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One afternoon the Christ-child had laid himself in his cradle-bed and had fallen asleep. Then his mother came to him, looked at him full of gladness, and said:

– Hast thou laid thyself down to sleep, my child?» Sleep sweetly, and in the meantime I will go into the wood, and fetch thee a handful of strawberries, for I know that thou wilt be pleased with them when thou awakest.»

In the wood outside, she found a spot with the most beautiful strawberries; but as she was stooping down to gather one, an adder sprang up out of the grass. She was alarmed, left the strawberries where they were, and hastened away. The adder darted after her; but Our Lady, as you can readily understand, knew what it was best to do. She hid herself behind a hazel-bush, and stood there until the adder had crept away again. Then she gathered the strawberries, and as she set out on her way home she said:

– «As the hazel-bush has been my protection this time, it shall in future protect others also.»

Therefore, from the most remote times, a green hazel-branch has been the safest protection against adders, snakes, and everything else which creeps on the earth.



IKOMPIA ET ITRIMOBE

Ikompia est le seul garçon, paraît-il, qui n'avait pas peur de l'ogre Itrimobe.

Un jour, Itrimobe rentrait chez lui, marchant lentement, le dos courbé, s'arrêtant de temps en temps. Il était tellement las et avait extrêmement faim. Mais arrivé près de chez lui, il courru s'asseoir rapidement car il était accueilli par une bonne odeur de nourriture apportée par le vent. Il respira fortement pour apprécier.

Il entendit alors clairement la voix d'Ikompia qui l'appelait :

– Ô, Monsieur Itrimobe, venez prendre des forces car le feu est en train de faire fondre la graisse; je suis également extenué du feu, vous devez avoir faim, en plus il fait chaud.

– Ce gars est gentil ! dit Itrimobe en s'approchant de lui. Ikompia lui tend alors de suite un morceau d'intestin de mouton. Il enfonce tout dans sa bouche et émet des bruits de contentement en le mangeant. Seulement, le morceau était tellement petit qu'il n'a pu être rassasié.

– Mais où as-tu trouvé d'aussi bonnes choses, Ikompia ?

– Pas loin, c'est mon intestin que j'ai creusé et que j'ai grillé pour toi parce que je me suis dit, Père Rattrimobe doit avoir faim.

– Si ton petit intestin de la taille d'un vers est si bon, le mien si gras doit être encore meilleur ?

– C'est évident !

– Mais dis-moi, comment as-tu fait pour l'enlever ?

– Très simple !

– Très simple comment ?

– J'ai brûlé ce morceau de fer, j'ai enfoncé dans mon nombril et mon intestin est sorti tout seul

– Je vais aussi prendre le mien !

Va te reposer à l'ombre car tu es fatigué, et je vais te le faire dit Ikompia, en mettant le morceau de fer dans le feu et en ajoutant du bois pour que le feu prenne bien.

Après un certain temps :

– Vas-y maintenant car c'est trop long ! J'ai vraiment trop faim !

– Sois patient, père, c'est pour bientôt. Le fer doit être rouge sinon il ne pourra pas pénétrer entièrement.

– Fais vite !

Ikompia s'active pour bien faire prendre le feu. Très vite

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Formation

M1 Enveloppe

et Construction

Durable

il a été satisfait de la chaleur du fer.

– Me voici, on y va dit-il ; alonges-toi s’il te plaît.

De suite, Ikompia enfonça le fer brulant dans le ventre d’Itrimobe qui le transperça jusqu’à son dos. Itrimobe avait tellement mal qu’il tomba sur sa tête, se tortilla dans tous les sens, cria, retomba violemment dès qu’il se relevait en cassant tout là où il tomba.

– Supportes, dit Ikompia, c’est bientôt fini.

Et c’est vrai, rapidement, Itrimobe se plia. Il tomba par terre, hurla une dernière fois et mourut.

Alors Ikompia a pris toute la fortune de Itrimobe. Et c’est aussi depuis ce jour qu’il n’y a plus de Trimobe d’après les angano.

Mais tout cela n’est que « angano » et « arira ».



HISTOIRE DE LA GUINÉE-CONAKRY

Présentation

La Guinée, en forme longue la république de Guinée, est un pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest. Riche en ressources naturelles, elle est surnommée le « château d'eau de l'Afrique » et possède le tiers des réserves mondiales de bauxite, elle est surnommée le « scandale géologique ». Elle prend son indépendance de la France le 2 octobre 1958, ce qui en fait le premier pays de l'Afrique française subsaharienne à le faire.

Agriculture

La Guinée a une superficie de 245 857 km², la majorité des Guinéens travaillent dans le secteur agricole qui emploie plus de 75% de la population apte au travail du pays (24% du PIB).

Le mil et le fonio sont les principales cultures de la Haute-Guinée, tandis que l'on produit de l'arachide dans la région de Koundara. Le riz est cultivé dans les zones inondées en bordure de rivière et de fleuve mais la production locale est insuffisante et le pays importe du riz asiatique. Les cultures vivrières traditionnelles comme celle du manioc restent largement pratiquées autour des habitations.

On cultive le café, l'ananas, les pêches, les nectarines, les mangues, les agrumes, les tapiocas, les oranges, les bananes, les pommes de terre, les tomates, les concombres, les poivrons et d'autres légumes. La Guinée est un des producteurs régionaux émergents de pommes et de poires. Il y a de nombreuses plantations de raisins, de grenades et de plaquemines.

Ces dernières années ont été marquées par le développement de plantations de fraises basé sur le système hydroponique vertical.

Il y a des élevages de bovins, de moutons et de chèvres.

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Formation

M1 Matériaux
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LA GUINÉE PAYS DES EAUX-PORTUNITÉS

28 septembre 1958, un pays a voté NON au referendum C'était à l'unanimité, ils se sont tous levés comme un seul homme Prendre en leur destin en main était la préoccupation Se soucier du lendemain des descendants était le point poignant de leur réflexion. Ils ont levé le ton, Ils ont montré l'exemple de la dignité, sans flancher, de l'intégrité sans baisser le front... En dépit de tout ce que j'essaie de vous dire, Jusque-là je ne trouve pas des mots juste pour vous le décrire Un pays avec une telle hospitalité, je n'en ai pas trouvé un second Un pays si modeste que chez lui le roi c'est l'étranger, oh que c'est bon!

Ce pays est bien planqué quelque part sur la côte ouest Africaine, ce n'est pas une galaxie (*rire*)... Il a environ 13 millions d'habitants, 245 857 km² de superficie Il est carré? Non. Et il est appelé château d'eau de l'Afrique de l'Ouest Ou est ce que tu préfères Pays des rivières du Sud? Tu suis? C'est le pays dont la capitale est Conakry Pays des grands et vaillants soldats du Sud... C'est le pays dont le drapeau est... Le Rouge Ce rouge qui symbolise le sang Ce sang versé par ses martyres pour la quête de son indépendance Ils ne manquent de rien, en plus ils avaient du cran Du cran pour faire volt face à l'indépendance Son drapeau c'est le Rouge mais il y a aussi le Jaune Ce Jaune qui représente toutes ses richesses Ses richesses du sol mais aussi du sous-sol L'or, le diamant, le fer, la bauxite, l'eau Il en a en quantité immensurable, et le climat est beau Ces plantes n'en souffrent gère Sieur soleil et Dame pluie courtisent, cohabitent, jamais ne font la guerre Le pays est tellement beau et riche qu'il n'a pas encore fini d'explorer toutes ses potentialités D'ailleurs, ailleurs on l'appelle pays des opportunités Son drapeau c'est le Rouge, le Jaune mais aussi le Vert Ce vert qui dénote sa belle végétation jonchée de forêt, Ce vert couleur de ses grandes étendues de forêt Sa végétation n'a point d'égale, allez! Viens qu'on découvre ce pays sans ride Viens et vois par toi-même, Rien que les couleurs de son drapeau fait bien plus que t'effleurer la peau, il est beau

Il est subdivisé en quatre régions naturelles Je suis moulé dans cette foule et diversifiée autour d'une vraie unité Je suis fils de la Basse, fils de la Moyenne, fils de la Haute, fils de la Forêt, c'est pareil Je suis fils de cette Guinée dont les barrières régionales ne font point barrière à notre fraternité Je suis fils de cette Guinée de la Guinée qui inculque ses vertus à ses filles et fils Qu'ils les sachent et en fassent de même à leurs tours à leurs filles et fils, et ainsi de suite quelques soient les supplices Allez viens, que je t'amène balader dans ma Guinée, ici nous sommes un, nous sommes une légion Allez monte que je te fasse découvrir une des facettes de mon pays, que je te fasse découvrir ses régions D'abord, Il y a... La basse Guinée C'est la Guinée Maritime, la Basse Côte C'est la zone côtière, des basses plaines, des poissons on en a plein L'eau, De l'eau qui coule à flot au point d'arroser ses voisins Ce n'est pas donné, non... Il faut avoir du coeur pour tenir plus d'une main qui vers toi sont perchées, Poumons du Pays, la Basse Côte est en majorité peuplée de Sousous, Et Conakry se trouve être dans cette région de la Guinée, rassurez-vous Allez ! Embarquez-vous dans ma barque Nous naviguerons jusqu'en Moyenne Guinée On arrive au Fouta Djallon C'est cette zone qui abrite les plus grands et les meilleurs éleveurs du pays Elle est en majorité Peulh, ainsi dit, Au fouta le climat est extraordinaire au point de t'éclaircir la peau sans même le vouloir Du Lakiri-Kossan, une spécialité hors paire Si t'en a pas encore goûté, t'as encore rien mangé d'aussi bon – du lait pur de vache, du maïs des champs... Une délice Ami, mais au Fouta fais surtout attention, il y a des déesses sur le chemin Rien qu'un regard et le soleil qui illumine le visage, hypnotisé, on se laisse emporter Mais ce n'est rien de grave, la prochaine station sera la bonne Puis la suivante encore meilleure, tu sauras où est ce que le vrai amour abonde Sois prêt, juste devant c'est la... La Haute Guinée, Tellement haute, que son sol est constitué de plateaux En Haute Guinée, en journée on ne manque pas de chaleur, il fait excessivement... beau oups chaud... C'est pareil la beauté et la chaleur se courtisent, jamais ne se refont la peau La mélanine est à son sombre soir puis il fait froid En Haute Guinée, le sol est tellement riche qu'à un simple creusé tu peux dénicher de l'or En Haute Guinée on tutoie le soleil, on vouvoie la lune On est tellement

poète de ce côté-ci de la Guinée, qu'on a ni par déplumer toutes nos volailles Allez montez les amis, on arrive enfin au dernier virage de notre voyage On pose nos valises en Guinée Forestière, De par son nom tu sais à quoi t'attendre Déjà arrivé tu vois tout ce monde autour pour te souhaiter la bienvenue, il y a même une liste d'attente En effet en forêt, plusieurs ethnies y se sont données rendez-vous C'est bien ce qui crée toute cette belle ambiance autour de nous Ce qui marque, c'est qu'ici l'harmonie est plus qu'une simple expression, c'est le mot d'ordre Depuis belle lurette, on est là on vit, on se marie, on revit, on se remarie, et on n'est pas prêt de s'arrêter Pour tout vous dire, on se plaît dans notre diversité Et jamais, Jamais on ne se plaint de notre pluralité En Forêt, le sol est tellement fertile qu'il en est poussé des forêts Pour le pays, la Guinée Forestière est son coeur, il se pourrait.

Je suis de cette Guinée où la paix n'est pas un vain mot
Je suis de cette Guinée où on se plaît avec son frère d'un
autre bord Je suis de cette Guinée, Pays riche et beau Je
suis de cette Guinée, Pays de mes pères braves et forts.

LA LÉGENDE DE ABLA POKOU

La culture africaine, on ne le dira jamais assez, regorge de véritables richesses. Nous sommes à quelques jours d'un évènement culturel qui révélera encore une fois ses grandes richesses. Nous avons nommé cet évènement « Les Journées de l'Oralité ». En prélude à cet évènement, nous choisissons de vous entraîner sur les traves d'une Reine Africaine au Grand Cœur. Son nom vous le connaissez certainement (La Reine Abla Pokou); mais connaissez-vous bien son histoire ?

Les contes sont de belles histoires.

Allons à la « re-découverte » de la Légende d'Abla Pokou.

Abla Pokou (ou Aura Poku) est une reine africaine qui mena le peuple baoulé du Ghana vers la Côte d'Ivoire. La légende raconte qu'elle aurait sacrifié son fils pour traverser une rivière.

Le mot « Baoulé » par lequel on désigne désormais les descendants du peuple qu'elle conduisait provient de l'épisode du sacrifice de son fils unique.

Après l'immolation de son rejeton, elle déclarera « Ba ouli », ce qui signifie « L'enfant est mort », d'où le nom « Baoulé ».

L'origine et la fuite d'une reine

Née au début du XVIII^e siècle, Abla Pokou était la nièce du roi Ossei Tutu, fondateur de la Confédération ashanti du Ghana. A la mort de ce dernier, son neveu lui succéda sur le trône, en vertu de la loi matrilineaire, c'est-à-dire la loi de succession par lignée maternelle.

En effet, chez les Ashanti, l'enfant issu de la sœur d'un roi défunt a plus de chance de succéder à ce dernier que l'enfant d'un frère dudit roi...

Aussi, au décès du neveu de Ossei Tutu le fils de sa sœur donc, une guerre de succession éclata entre Itsa – un vieil oncle issu de la famille régnante – et Dakon, le second frère d'Abla Pokou.

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Alors, dans la capitale du royaume, Koumassi, une lutte fratricide s'engagea sans merci, au cours de laquelle Dakon fut tué. Dès lors, Abla Pokou comprit le terrible sort qui l'attendait, si elle restait. Elle devait donc s'enfuir vers le nord-ouest avec sa famille, ses serviteurs, ses soldats fidèles et tous ceux du peuple qui se reconnaissaient en elle ou en Dakon.

Sous sa conduite, les fugitifs marchèrent des jours et des nuits, fuyant la meute de poursuivants lancés à leurs trousses.

Ils arrivèrent finalement, exténués, devant le fleuve mugissant de la Comoé, une frontière naturelle entre le Ghana et leur prochaine terre d'accueil, la Côte-d'Ivoire. Mais les pluies hivernales ont gorgé le fleuve, le rendant pratiquement infranchissable.

Et les poursuivants étaient tout proches. Il fallait donc faire très vite pour trouver le moyen de gagner l'autre rive : il y va de la sécurité, sinon du salut de toute la tribu.

Le sacrifice

En désespoir de cause, la reine Abla Pokou leva les bras au ciel et se tourna vers son devin : « Dis-nous ce que demande le génie de ce fleuve pour nous laisser passer ! » Et le vieil homme lui répondit tristement : « Reine, le fleuve est irrité, et il ne s'apaisera que lorsque nous lui aurons donné en offrande ce que nous avons de plus cher. »

Aussitôt, les femmes tendirent leurs parures d'or et d'ivoire ; les hommes avancèrent qui leurs taureaux, qui leurs béliers. Mais le devin repoussa toutes ces offres et dit, encore plus triste :

– Ce que nous avons de plus cher, ce sont nos fils !

Dès lors, Abla Pokou comprit qu'aucune offrande venant de ces hommes et femmes ne serait acceptée par le génie des eaux, fut-elle ultime. Et que seule, elle devait accomplir ce tragique devoir.

Alors, elle s'avança au bords du fleuve, détacha l'enfant qu'elle portait au dos, le couvrit de bijoux et dit solennellement :

– Kouakou, mon unique enfant, pardonne-moi, mais j'ai compris qu'il faut que je sacrifie pour la survie de notre tribu. Plus qu'une femme ou une mère, une reine et avant tout une reine !

Puis, sous le regard douloureux de ses soldats et serviteurs, et malgré les sanglots déchirants des femmes, Abla Pokou éleva son enfant au-dessus d'elle, le contempla une dernière fois et, en se détournant, le précipita dans les flots grondants... Aucune larme ne jaillit de ses yeux pourtant rougis, aucun tremblement ne secoua son corps pourtant éprouvé ! Sitôt après ce geste irréversible de la reine, les eaux troublées de la Comoé se calmèrent comme par magie, et toute la tribu franchit le fleuve sans encombre.

«L'enfant est mort!»

Les versions diffèrent, quant à la façon dont la tribu de la reine a franchi le fleuve. Selon d'anciens généalogistes de la tribu, un immense fromager, situé sur l'autre rive du fleuve, avait courbé son tronc entre les deux berges pour offrir un pont à la reine Pokou et son escorte. Aux dires d'autres conteurs, d'énormes hippopotames s'étaient rangés dos à dos pour leur servir de passerelle.

Toujours est-il que juste après le passage de la tribu, le fleuve reprit son bouillonnement d'avant. Mais en dépit de l'explosion de joie de ses protégés, la reine Abla Pokou ne put s'empêcher de murmurer dans un sanglot, comme par regret, «baouli» ce qui, en ashanti, veut dire : «L'enfant est mort !» Aussi, lorsqu'il fallut célébrer leur nouvelle patrie, les anciens décidèrent de commencer par les funérailles de l'enfant sacrifié de la reine. C'est ainsi qu'en souvenir de cet enfant, la tribu d'Abla Pokou fut appelée «Baoulé», et que le berceau du peuple Baoulé reçut le nom de Sakassou en Côte d'Ivoire, autrement dit, «lieu des funérailles».

Après de longues années d'un long règne dont la splendeur fut sans égale dans toute la contrée, la reine Abla

Pokou s'éteignit vers 1760. De son berceau d'origine du Ghana à sa terre d'exil de Côte d'Ivoire, sa célébrité n'a été égalée par celle d'aucun autre monarque Ashanti. Cette reine est la mère de tous les baoules en Côte d'Ivoire.



A MONKEY AND A CROCODILE

Once there were a pair of crocodiles who lived in the river. There was a tree beside the river which bore very sweet fruits. There was a monkey who lived on this tree. The monkey once became a prey to the crocodile and then traded the sweet fruits in exchange for his life. This led to friendship between the monkey and the crocodile. They used to share fruits and have a good time talking. One day the crocodile took the fruits for his wife. When she tasted such sweet fruits she said that the monkey eats only these fruits, imagine how sweet would be his flesh and organs. She forced the crocodile to invite the monkey on dinner. The crocodile suspected the true intentions of his wife and was not willing to invite the monkey, but when she threatened him he agreed to do this. But being a true friend, he told everything to the monkey, even the evil intentions of his wife. The monkey agreed that he will come with the crocodile and as a present he would give his heart to her, but he needs little bit of time to get ready. The crocodile waited for the monkey. Then, after sometime the monkey came with a box and told the crocodile that this is the present. The monkey sat on the back of crocodile and they went to the crocodile's home. As soon as they reached, the monkey gave the box to crocodile's wife. She opened and tasted something which was the sweetest eatable that she has ever tasted. The monkey then has dinner with both of them and then asks the crocodile to drop him back near the tree. He quickly climbs the tree and tells the crocodile that it was an over-ripened fruit and also mocks him that if I would have taken the heart out, how will I be alive? The crocodile then understands the cleverness of the monkey and appreciates his presence of mind.

Moral

One must never panic in difficult situations, instead one must show presence of mind to win over them.

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JACKAL AND THE COLOUR

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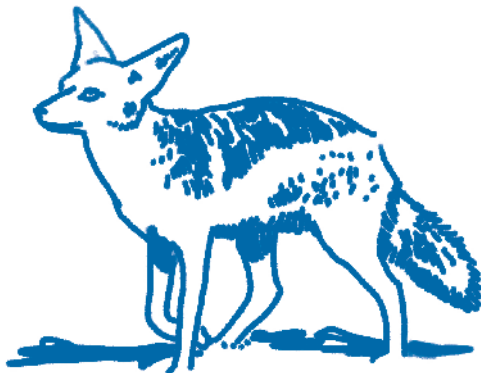
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Once there was a jackal, who while running from a predator entered into the city nearby the forest and accidentally fell into a large tub full of colour, which belonged to a cloth dyer. When he came out he was coloured in blue colour which made him look like a new species of animals. He then went to the forest and kept telling everyone that he is the king of them all. Everyone became scared of him and functioned as he ordered. Then one day, a lot of other jackals were howling. Following his real nature, he also started to howl. This broke the illusion that he was someone else superior to all the animals.

Moral

We should always be the person on the outside as we are on the inside.



A MOUSE AND A LION

Once there was a famine, forests were destroyed and animals were perished. In such conditions, one day a lion was looking for some animal to pacify his hunger. When he saw a mouse, he quickly bounced upon him and tried to eat him. The mouse pleaded that he has a family who are waiting for him to get food to eat. The lion thought for a minute and then let him go.

After some days, the lion was captured by some men. The lion was put into a trap made of ropes. He cried for help but there was no one. He got tired of crying and slept. Just then he heard some sounds like someone is cutting something.

When he woke up he saw a lot of mice around him, cutting the ropes using their teeth. Soon the lion was free. He thanked the mouse for coming and saving him to which the mouse replied that it was his kindness that convinced all other mice to cut the rope for him.

Moral

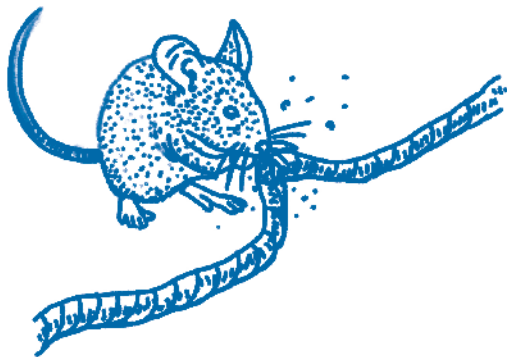
A little selfless act of kindness always sparks another.
A good deed you do always comes back to you.

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TURTLE

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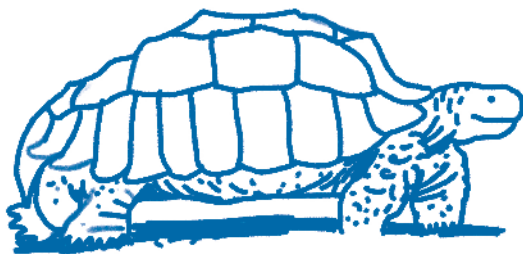
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Once there was a beautiful princess, there was a search for suitable groom for her. One such proposal was from her father's friend's son. His name was Turtle. The princess was repulsed by this name but she couldn't say no because she wanted to keep her father happy. So she agreed. But she kept telling her friends that she didn't like the boy. Word went around, and the Prince turtle came to know about this. He wanted to surprise the princess. So he ordered his men to arrange a fake wedding where he would come as a groom and princess will see him. As this happened, the princess's friends saw the groom and called her, to see how magnificent he looked. The princess came and admired him but felt sad because she was marrying someone named "Turtle". Just then the King revealed to his daughter that Prince "Turtle" is the same man that she saw as groom. Hearing this the princess realized her mistake and was elated. She came as a bride and married her Prince Turtle.

Moral

There is nothing in a name, a person's qualities are much more valuable.



THE STORY OF MENG JIANGNV

The legend of “Meng Jiangnv bringing down the Great Wall with her tears” is a famous folktale of ancient China. Operas, ballads, and musical narrations etc featuring this story are widely spread among the people. The tale is almost known to every household.

Legend has it that Meng Jiangnv’s husband Wan Xiliang was seized by emperor Qinshihuang’s army and sent to build the Great Wall. No one knew about his fate. Meng Jiangnv missed her husband so much that she traveled a long distance to the Great Wall, only to find that her husband had died and his remains were buried under the Wall. Not knowing exactly where her husband’s body was buried, Meng Jiangnü was in great sorrow. She cried three days and three nights in a row and her wailing touched God. All of a sudden, several miles of the Great Wall collapsed and the remains of Wan Xiliang appeared. The legend about Meng Jiangnv is a typical example of the evolution of Chinese folk culture. The story archetype comes from the legend in the Warring States Period, when Qi Liang of the State of Qi died in a battle, his wife was wailing outside the city wall for ten days, waiting his body to be sent home to the Qi Capital. The wall then collapsed. In the Han Dynasty, due to people’s hatred toward Emperor Qinshihuang, the story of “Meng Jiangnv” was created.

People of the Han Dynasty believed in the telepathy between heaven and man. They thought man’s cries could move God. The Shuoyuan (Garden of Stories) and Lienü Zhuan (Biographies of Exemplary Women) of the Han Dynasty both included the story of “bringing down the Great Wall with tears”. In the Six Dynasties, there were lyrics about Meng Jiangnv sending clothes to her husband in the official music collection of the Sui and Tang dynasties. So, the plot of Meng Jiangnv traveling thousands of miles to send clothes to her husband was added to the original story. The story of Meng Jiangnv can also be found in Tang Dynasty poems and Yuan Dynasty songs.

The story of “Meng Jiangnv bringing down the Great Wall with tears” reflects the grievances ancient people

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had about tyrant rule as well as the praise of unyielding women. Another interesting fact is that over the long evolving process of the story, plots representative of traditional Chinese culture have been continuously added in, making the story more widely circulated and known to nearly everybody.





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