

Serer Creation Mythology

The Serer people have many gods, goddesses, and Pangool (the Serer saints and ancestral spirits represented by snakes), but one supreme deity and creator called Roog. Roog is synonymous to the deity Koox (or Kooh), the name the Cangin refer to the supreme being. Serer creation myth developed from Serer oral traditions, Serer religion, legends, cosmogonies and Serer symbols, which only the initiated can decipher. The specifics of the myth are also found in two main Serer sources : A nax and A leep. The former is a short narrative for a short myth or proverbial expression, whilst the later is for a more developed myth.

The creation myth of the Serer people is intricately linked to the first trees created on Planet Earth by Roog. Earth's formation began with a swamp. The Earth was not formed until long after the creation of the first three worlds : the waters of the underworld; the air which included the higher world (i.e. the sun, the moon and the stars) and earth. Roog is the creator and fashioner of the Universe and everything in it. The creation is based on a mythical cosmic egg and the principles of chaos.

A leep details the scene of the primordial time in the following terms :

"A leep à joon maaga
a roxondox o maaga,
a gad'wa roog,
a saay'a lang ke."

Which translates to :

The Words leap into space,
He carried the sea on his head,
the firmament on his shoulders,
the earth in his hands.

The mythical words established the three worlds (water, air and earth) based on the prologue of the Serer genesis provided by A nax. In A leep, it gives the order in which they were created and elaborated on it. A leep posits that, with the words of Roog, the three worlds (the Universe) began to take shape. The first to be created was the deep sea waters (waters of the underworld); the second was air including the high heavens (Kuul na, in Serer) such as the sun, the moon and the stars; and third was earth. However, the Earth was not one of the first primordial worlds to be formed. It will take a long time before the waters and the Earth were separated.

Before humans existed, there were three stages in the creation of the Universe and each of these steps followed a consistent order. The first phase was the first three elements : air, earth and water. The mythical words of Roog (or Kooh) found in A nax, led to the formation of the heavens, earth and the sea. The second phase of the creation was the primordial trees (i.e. Somb, Nqaul, Nquf, etc.,). The third phase was the creation of the animal world : the jackal

and "Mbocor" (which means : "The Mother") - mother of all animals except the jackal. In each of these phases, and before the creation of the first human couple, the supreme deity did not directly create each species, but only the primogenitors who then went on to populate the world with all the species of plant and animal life. The same was the case at the creation of the first humans. By thought, the supreme deity planned for the creation of human beings (a female and a male). By words, Roog went through a gestation phase which signalled the gestation of man and woman, paired within the divine placenta. Through its maternal nature, Roog projected a female and male human being as in childbirth. The first human was a female, named YAAB. The second human was a male named YOP (var : YOB). YAAB and YOP were the first humans that walked the Earth according to the narrative. The ancient and sacred village of Yaabo-Yabo (var : Yaboyabo or YABO-YABO, in present-day Senegal) also derives its name from this couple.

Complete the word search and pick one of the order-from-chaos based creation myths.

Tell me what it has in common with the Serer myth. How is it different?

NAME

EMAIL?PHONE#

Creation Myths- Order from Chaos

S	U	U	K	A	H	C	O	C	A	R	I	V	A
C	R	D	S	U	M	E	R	I	A	N	H	M	N
H	A	G	U	N	N	R	A	U	C	G	G	A	N
U	V	U	E	T	U	N	G	U	S	I	C	N	A
S	E	L	U	R	L	M	I	O	N	E	N	P	H
S	N	U	M	U	V	N	V	V	R	L	N	L	T
D	T	K	S	V	V	S	I	S	A	N	U	N	A
L	A	N	E	N	C	G	E	N	E	S	I	S	I
U	L	U	K	U	M	U	L	I	P	O	S	S	V
G	E	L	M	A	N	D	E	U	E	I	I	R	E
N	S	U	J	E	N	U	M	A	E	L	I	S	L
A	T	K	R	E	G	G	G	R	E	E	K	K	N
P	L	N	D	I	H	S	M	A	J	G	N	S	U
R	I	U	V	A	I	N	A	M	O	I	N	E	N

VIRACOCHA
 TUNGUSIC
 GENESIS
 RAVEN TALES
 MANDE
 LEVIATHAN
 VAINAMOINEN
 ENUMA ELIS
 GREEK
 JAMSHID
 PANGU
 SUMERIAN
 UNKULUNKULU
 KUMULIPO