The Origin of Dak Nue

A MNONG ROLOM LEGEND
OBTAINED FROM MUOM NÕM

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Introduction

This legend is well known in the Rolom area near the district center of Lạc Thiện. Darlac Province. Lake Nue (Dak Nue) is at the village of Uon Dham, about six kilometers from the district center. Uon Dham is a Rade village, but the people know Rolom. Near the village is a little Lake called the Lake of the Flying Chickens. Uon Nđông Krieng is a village about one kilometer from the district center in the opposite direction from Uon Dham.

The legend was written from memory by Muom Nõm, twenty years of age. His village, Uon Yang Lan, is about two kilometers from the district center. He knew the legend well because it was used as a bedtime story when he was a child.

Pop Pro-pro ta Bal Dham Yau Lâk

Yau làk mau tlo-tlau bal uon Dham²sak wọ-wang jurl pom, mau ju nau nih ku-dôi sak re bu kan. Bal sak wowang kan, mau bã-bã níh ngan, bã-bã nih câk. Bal sak wọ-wang han dăng bu yûk uon Dham trûh ta yûk uon Nđông Krieng.² Bal han ay-so doi geh jurl pom. Lai jok ta ien bal han njoh, koyuadah ar. Blah ien mau nih câk lah ta kan nih ku-dôîi han, «Me jay sue, he cap mi, me jueh pue, hi be a-muh, me ji chue, hi ce map, me juru ne.»²

Lai djap pop kan ku-dôî eh han dôh jue, bal nih câk han dôh câp jong ti-u-pong. Nai phong uñ mau pueh bu, ndrâm bu, brua yae u-pong nai sit ta su-dieng. Blah ien to lai sun nai buh u-pong hau, nai bok boh mbraco, nai pac ting-tau, pruoc, tlo’m u-pong lé nai sa. Lai lé sa bal han ta-tã ndang bu-kan. Bu kan lah blah ieo, «To yo kan lûp ta uon tî ay rau bu me tê-lêh yuh. To de lûp bu me lah blah ieo, hi ay so gut so e, ay so kan sak bak hi, kan sak bak bal nih dih.» Blah ien, to bal han plô ta uon, truh ta uon yo kan lûp blah iao, «Mã so aûn dôh ay so di o-ho?» Nai lah ta de, «Hi ay so gutsoe, ay kan sak bak hi.». Blah ien yo kan han lûp hui-hai ok nih; nai lah nai ay so gut. De wih lûp surt nih sak ta nê. De lah blah iao, «mã so aûn dôh ay so di o-ho?» Kan han lah ta de, «So e lainai sa di-u-pàng dôh bô o-ho.» Nai ay so geh jurl pom dôh
han, eh hao nuih nai, nai buh u-pàng. Ān ndrom blah e ya, nhay nai buh kan doh eh huor dâk mat ān, ko-yuadah ān tâng ta kan. Blah ien de yo kan hau hao nuih ngan, de tong kan han doh tê-têh. Kan so nai sa u-pàng han doh ok ngan, công-gu kan ay so sa, kan trieng gu nai sa. Blah ien yo kan han de plô ta hih de tom, de sok kuon sau, de lang truôn su, soh ao, pan kon, lai han de hao mäng tom go-gier jua ngan. To de trùh màng nun râm eh, de gûk ta ien, lai han de cah-col kuon sau de han doh. Jok ta ien mau mih mbal ngan, blah ien mau nih peh pat teh han doh, Bu de so ka pat eh kah buk-dih, bu de gôm « rik-khik, rik-khik ». Lai han bu de so djap ka eh kah buk-dih han doh, bu de wih gôm « rik-khik, rik-khik ». Jok ta ien bu de so ta put uon bu de mau dâk-nung ku-it, mäng dâk han bu-de so ya eh ray tô-tô, au-au. Blah ien bu de gôm « rik-khik, rik-khik ». 8 Bâ-dah mih eh sak hui-hai, jok ta ien teh eh ham lê ju nguol uon han doh, mih yang, puh surr, lê ya coh. Lai han ier eh par tük dih, blah ien nar au nai nan dâk « Par ier ». Dâk eh ham uon lân, nih yang han doh nai nan « Dak Nue ». To lê bal han khurt, blah ien de yo kan nih ku-doi nai sa han doh, de gûk hui-hai mäng chi ien. Nai tên de han, âng dru de, lai han chi nai ndâng so de han doh, nar au hum, môñ ta lô Uon Ndông Krieng Nar au nai nan chi han « Blang Ndông doi ». Pp’p’ doi so trùh nar au Dâk Nue lai han Dâk Par Ier môñ ta Uon Dham lai han Tom Blang môñ ta Uon Ndông Krieng.

A long time ago the Uon Dham men went hunting deer. An orphan boy went with them. Of those who went hunting there were both ordinary men and men with evil spirits. They went from the mountain at Uon Dham to the mountain at Uon Ndông Krieng but they were not able to get any deer. After a while they rested because they were tired.

The men with evil spirits said to the orphan boy, « You look for rope. We’ll tie you up. You look for firewood. We’ll roast you. You look for tree. We’ll tie you to it. You look for fire. » After the boy had looked for all the things the men with the evil spirits tied his arms and legs and lit the fire. They had large logs and large dry sticks and they gagged him with rags. They roasted him until he was cooked and put on salt and pepper. They chopped up his bones and skin, and ate his intestines, liver, and all of him. When they finished eating they talked together and said, « When his grandmother asks about him at the village, don’t you tell. When she asks you, you say, “We don’t know abut your grandson. He didn’t go with us. He went with some other people.” So when they arrived back at the village the grandmother asked, “And where is my grandson?” They said to her, “We don’t know about your grandson. He didn’t go with us.”»
The grandmother kept asking everybody and they said they didn’t know. She asked a man who came later, saying, "And where is my grandson?" He said to her, "The people ate him already. They didn’t get any deer, so they were angry and butchered him. I feel the same as you. As soon as they butchered him, I cried, because I had pity for him." So the grandmother was very angry when she heard what the man reported. He saw many people eat the boy; he was the only one who didn’t eat; he only watched.

So the lady went to her house, took her dog, put a loin cloth and shirt on it and wrapped it in a cloth. Then she climbed up a very high tree. When she reached a large branch she sat there and bounced her dog up and down. After while it rained hard.

There were women pounding on the ground. They saw fish coming out of the earth. They laughed, "rik, khik, rik, khik." Then they saw many fish coming out of the earth and laughed again, "rik, khik, rik, khik." After a while the women saw a little lake around their village and in the water the women saw an alligator swimming to and fro. Because of that the women laughed "rik, khik, rik, khik." But it kept on raining, and after a while the village was flooded. The alligator ate all the people and animals. The chicken flew to another place, and so today people call the lake The Flying Chicken Lake. The water that flooded the village the people call Lake Nue.

When everyone was dead, the grandmother of the orphan boy that the people ate, stayed in the tree. People thought the spirits helped her.

And the tree where the people tied the orphan boy still is today near the rice field at Uon Ndông Krieng. People today call the tree Blang Ndông Đơi (tree-stake-orphan, the tree where they tied the orphan). These things you can see today: Lake Nue, The Lake of the Flying Chickens, near Uon Dham, and the Blang tree near Uon Ndông Krieng.

1M侬 RoLơm is a dialect of M侬, which in turn is a member of the Mon-Khmer language family in Vietnam. It is spoken in Lạc Thiện district, Darcac Province, within a radius of about ten kilometers from the district center.

2Uon Dham and Uon Ndông Krieng are villages in the M侬 RoLơm area. At Uon Dham is a lake called Dake Nue. Nearby is a little lake Called Par jer.

3The men with the evil spirits spoke with mixed-up M侬 when they talked to the orphan boy. "Me jay sue = Me jue say." (You look for rope) "He cap mi = Hi cap me." (We’ll tie you up) "Me jueh pue," = Me jue pueh." (You look for fireworks) "Hi be amuh = Hi buh me." (We roast you.) "Me jie chue = Me jue chi." (You look for a tree) "Hi ce map = Hi cap me." (We tie you up) "Me jie "ue = Me jue "ue." (You look for fire.)