

Environmental Ethics in Sub-Saharan African Literature through Myths and Legends

Ngayi Mvehe Alima

Received 01-01-2025

Revised 02-01-2025

Accepted 30-01-2025

Published 02-02-2025



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Abstract:

This paper aims to demonstrate how Language, Culture and Environment are linked. It examines the relationship between the Environmental Ethics and the Sub-Saharan African Literature. That is, how do Myths and Legends inspire the respect of the Environmental Ethics in Sub-Saharan Cultures. The method consists of an Anthropological Analysis of some African Myths and Legends from Scholars and other Authors who wrote on African Literature to illustrate the fact that, they carry Rules that govern Environmental Ethics and values that deals with our relationship with the physical milieu around us and how Myths permit to avoid pollution and ensure the protection of the endangered species. A Comparative Study of some Myths, in cultural Contexts, different from the Sub-Saharan one, indicates how Anthropocentric and Ecocide, Myths are. The result is the reality that, most of environmental Problems faced by the Humanity nowadays, are Anthropogenic. The Theoretical approach here is the Cultural Ecology to demonstrate how human adaptation to the natural Environment takes place by the Use of Cultural mechanisms. As a Result, the Paper demonstrate how Sub-Saharan African Literature is Environmentalist for Myths and Legends, constitute Charter for societies concerning Nature. They are Cultural Adaptation to natural Environment. They are adaptive Strategies for people to survive in their natural Environment. They convey messages concerning Rules that govern peoples' behaviour with social and natural environment. There is a harmony or an interdependence between People and their geographical Milieu. Through Myths and Legends, Sub-Saharan African Literature constitute a School of Ecology. Because, the advocate for a Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, through their beliefs systems. Myths and Legends carry Environmental Ethics. They are cultural strategies for the respect of Environmental values; they communicate fundamental conceptions of nature and society and how people ought to relate and behave with natural environment. The paper demonstrates how the perturbation of Sub-Saharan African Language and Beliefs System by the western Imperialism, disturbed the relationships between people and their physical milieu and how the Environmental Ethics has been demoted, as the result of that fact.

Key words: Sub-Saharan African Literature, Environmental Ethics, Ethno Ecology, Cultural Adaption, Sustainable Management.

Introduction:

Being the Cradle of the humanity, according to archaeological studies, Sub Sahara Africa has been

inhabited by populations who have being interacting with their Natural Environ. The

convenience of studying the Sub-Saharan Literature and the Environmental Ethics lays in the fact that, the geographical area is the second Lung Life in the World, depends on. For Decades, Experts have studied and documented the severe environmental and Land degradation across Africa. There is a link between tropical deforestation and Global change (Nkang , O, J. and Akpan, B.:2010). There is no society without Language. And each Language contains the world view, the aspirations and the preoccupations of people using that Language. Sub-Saharan African Literature has an important role in the relationship between people and their natural Environment (Calame-Griaule, G.:1977). The explanations of Sub-Saharan African peoples' ways of life and views of world lay in their oral literature. There is a close relationship between Culture and Nature (Moran, E.: 1998). Myths and Legends in Sub-Saharan Literature contain knowledge about sustainable management of natural environment (plants, animal and other natural features). People could accept them because, they are their traditions or their religious norms. And the implication of the population in environmental issues makes it more successful and more sustainable. People have been managing sustainably their natural resources through their beliefs systems. With some examples drawn from Africans' Literature, this paper will demonstrate how societies perceive that relationship and express it through their Language. An anthropological analysis of Sub-Saharan ethno ecology through the understanding of some Myths and Legends to demonstrate how people developed sustainable culture. And how Myths regulate interactions between people and their immediate environment.

Sub-Saharan African Literature:

There is no society without Language. The Language is an Instrument used for people to interact in a social and natural milieu; because, each Language contains the world view, the aspirations and the preoccupations of people using that Language. Sub-Saharan African Literature has an important role in the relationship between people and their natural Environment (Calame-

Griaule, G.:1977). The explanations of Sub-Saharan African peoples' ways of life and views of world lay in their oral literature. There is a close relationship between Culture and Nature.

Verbal Literature is an Art. It is the application of imagination that goes beyond what is purely practical. The Sub-Saharan African literature is a form of creative expression that contains Sub Saharan African cultural values, norms, needs, world view and aspirations. The light motive of Sub-Saharan African Literature is based on the principle that, People should maintain the biological systems upon which they depend. Sub-Saharan Literature is preservative in that, it is based on an attitude of reverence towards nature, especially wilderness, that advocates the protection of resources from any form of degradation (Moran, E.: 1998). Sub-Saharan Literature carries values that deal with people's relationships with physical Environment.

Environmental Ethics:

Ethics are principles that rule proper conducts in any society. They are systems of morale values. The environmental Ethics refer to peoples moral and values related to their Environment. Environmental Ethics are values that deal with our relationship to the physical milieu around us, that include pollution and the protection of the endangered species. In many societies, morality and Environmental Ethics may receive support from religious Beliefs. Each society has its' customs and laws to make this heritage to be respected from a generation to the next. And that constitute its' moral code. All are ultimately linked to practical responses to the world (Harris, M.: 1979). Environmental Ethics are necessary when needs for an orderly social life and for the awareness that natural resources are limited. People could accept them because they are their traditions or their religious norms (Havilland, 1990). And the implication of the population in environmental issues makes it more successful and more sustainable. People behaviour depend on their beliefs, their history and resources. Cultural designs are adaptive respond to basic problems of survival and reproduction (Steward, J. :1955).

Sub-Saharan African Literature and Environmental Ethics:

The ecological knowledge of Sub-Saharan Literature contains their Ethno ecology. Myths are religious stories that recount the origin of things. They explain such things as how the Universe came to be, how human beings, animals and plants were created. Myths involve supernatural and embodies Core values of the society. According to the Cultural materialist view, Art, Music, Dance, Literature, etc. has a function. Each of these behavioural categories has a correspondent within the system of culture (Harris, M.:1979). Harris cultural materialism is a theoretical position that takes material features of Life, such as the Environment, natural resources and mode of production as the basis for explaining social organization and Ideology.

Among Sub-Saharan Literature, Myths and Legends carry Beliefs and Patterns of behaviour by which Humans deal with what they view as important problems that cannot be solved through the application of known technology or knowledge to overcome these limitations and People turn to manipulation of Supernatural Being and Powers. Myths and Legends serve a number of social and environmental problems. They reduce anxiety by explaining the unknown by making it understandable, as far as provide comfort in the believe that supernatural aids are available. Myths contribute to the respect for the natural Environment (Havilland, W.:1990). They are instruments of social control.

A Myth is a doctrine, that contains peoples Ecology. One of Characteristics of Myths is that, it contains Believes in Supernatural Beings and Forces. They are presupposed to have an interest in Humans' affaires and whom appeals for aid may be directed (Havilland, W.:1990). People try to manipulate Supernatural Beings and Powers to their advantage like the protection and Conservation of the Environment through a sustainable management of natural resources (Steward, J.: 1955).

Myths and Legends as Cultural adaptation to natural environment:

Behaviours are motivated by beliefs in Supernatural forces, that help people to survive in their physical milieu. Myths and Legends have adaptive significance (Moran, E.: 1998). Myths carry rules that prevent environmental pollution, degradation and all types abuse on nature that can cause disaster, from Man. Nature should be preserved because, it provides foods, shelters, air and other items for the wellbeing and survival of Human. That is why it is necessary to preserve it. By satisfying needs and desires on which people depend and provide moral sanctions for the individuals conduct for the harmony between people and their natural Environment. Myths carries survival Norms and Values. Through Myths, Culture mobilize Supernatural Powers for the purpose of achieving and satisfying daily needs and, at the same time, preventing the degradation of natural Environment. (Ojomo, P. A.: 2011), Supernatural Powers are usually seen as controlling the Universe. Each Spiritual Being or Force is in charge of a particular part or of Aspect in peoples' Lives (Moran, E.: 1998). Myths and Legends are among the Cultural Strategies for Adaptation to natural environment.

Totemism:

It is the belief in totems. A totem is an ancestral animal or plant, an object or any environmental element for ritual in a community. It is any natural object or living creature that serves as an emblem for a tribe, clan or family (Durkheim: 1965). The belief in Ancestral Spirit carries traditional knowledge in environmental management. Totemism appear among methods and techniques for the protection of natural environment in Sub-Saharan African literature

Some Illustrations of Myths and Legends, as the Source of Totemism and Animism in Sub-Saharan African Literature

Religious beliefs determine people behavior with other fellow people and also their relationship with environmental features depends on the perception they have about the natural elements.

« (...) Camara's father is a blacksmith and jeweller in Kouroussa, Guinea. He is a renowned craftsman. One day, the child sees a small black snake heading towards his father's workshop. His mother warns him not to kill him and she adds. "This snake is your father's genius" . Intrigued, Camara asks his father for an explanation (...) and then he says (...) Yet I am better known than the others, and my name is on everyone's lips, and it is I who reign over all the blacksmiths in the five cantons of the circle. If this is so, it is by the grace of this serpent alone, the genius of our race. It is to this serpent that I owe everything, and it is also to this serpent that warns me of everything. (...) I know in advance what would happen. Everything was dictated to me at night. (...) I know how I will remedy what is presented to me, and that is what has established my reputation as a craftsman. But tell yourself, I owe it to the serpent, I owe it to the genius of our race. (...) Now I understand where my father got his knowledge of the events. (...) I have told you all this, little one, because you are my son, the eldest of my sons, and I have nothing to hide from you. There is a way of behaving, and certain ways of acting, so that one day the genius of our race will come to you too. I was in that line of conduct which determines our genius to visit us. Oh unconsciously perhaps, but the fact remains that if you want the genius of our race to visit you one day, if you want to inherit in your turn, you will have to adopt the same behavior, you will have to spend more time with me from now on... » (Camara Laye :1954).

The Author's mother stops him and makes him promise never to play with the snake. He describes his father's shamanic relationship with the black snake. The child in this text discovers the meaning of the snake that must not be killed, because it is the Fathers guiding spirit. Camara Laye realizes

that the particular snake is important compare to other snake. Camara Laye's fathers explains the snake is the guiding spirit of their race. He adds, He is the person the snake has made himself known. This makes sense to the child, because his father is the head of the settlement in which they live and in charge of the local blacksmiths the father explains to the child that the little black snake first to him in dream. The black snake is the guiding spirit of the family that brings good fortune. Camara Laye's father has looked upon the snake kindly. Although he is a man no different from any other, he knows exactly what will happen in a day, including which customers will come in with machines or objects in need of repair. He can fix anything because he has already worked out the problems in advance while sleeping. The says all this fortune is due to the snake. The Man told his child must act more like him if he wants to inherit the guiding spirit snake. Camara Laye's father is a selfless person, he gives what he has (Camara laye:1954).

Members of each totemic group believe that they are descendants of their totem or they believe, according to a Myth, that they have a particular link with their Totem. Traditionally, it is taboo to kill and eat one's totem. Yearly, according to society, people organize a ceremony dedicated to their totem. The practice of Totemism is necessary for the Survival and multiplication of the animal or the plant, and the environment where a totem lives is regarded as sacred (Durkheim: 1965).

PAnimism

It is a belief that Nature is animated, enlivened or energized by impersonal spiritual or supernatural Forces. It is also the believe that supernatural forces are inherent in each living object in the nature. (Havilland, W. and al. :2011). According to the Belief, Nature is animated by all sorts of spirits. Animals and Plants, like Humans have their individual Spirit. Those Spirits are invisible, omnipresent, omniscient and close to people. They are involved in daily affairs. They may be kind, nasty or awesome.

The following Literature, is an illustration of the interactions between Human beings and natural element.

"The people were impatiently waiting for the elders to consult the occult forces in order to calm them down, so that they could set fire to the bush and inaugurate the first hunt of the year. Hunting stories enlivened the discussions. The great hunter Ngni'nlé, namesake of the god of Nature, hid from anyone who would listen the mysteries of the bush and the forest, of which he knew, as well as the inhabitants, the nooks and crannies. "I assure you," he said, " that the bush is nothing but the hidden image of our towns and villages. It is a new world that the layman does not see or hear. I am not permitted to reveal all its secrets to you. But I can tell you that all wild animals and birds are labelled, just like our cattle and poultry. They have their owners, their invisible guardians. I will go further and say that they speak as you and I do. One day I shot a buffalo. Instead of being content with this, I lay in ambush at the edge of a pond, in the hope that luck would allow me to have within reach of my rifle a new prey of importance. The night overtook me. I must have regretted my gluttony. What I saw and heard frightened me: (...) The mysterious bush dwellers were waking up. (...) I heard very distinctly the expressions of humour of an old nymph, the one to whom belonged the wild ox I had just killed. She lamented, called me by name, insulted me, cursed me. (...) I instinctively squeezed around my Yaro bleeding, my hunting gris-gris, and conquered my own mastery. (...)

My namesake Gni'nlé, the god of nature, protects me and makes me see miraculous things. (...) I was attacked with embers by a mysterious woman whom I turned away, and who was unquestionably the nymph who owned the doe I had just shot. (...) The genii were galloping back in. (...) They thanked me, gave me not only the recipe for the best poisons, but also Yaro,

the fetish of hunting. If it pleased me to summon here, the elephant, the panther, any game, thanks to the power of Yaro, they would come without delay. But this method of ease does not suit me, for it deprives the hunter of the merit of effort, skill, courage, risk, and even knowledge of nature, (...) Animals," continued Gni'nlé, "hold the secrets of nature. In particular, they are familiar with the virtues of nemoral plants. Most of the drugs we use were discovered because of them. A hunter was lying in wait in a grove when he witnessed a single combat. The hunter spotted the plant. It now has the most effective remedy for all snakebites. But to keep the secret of his discovery, he combined the serpent with other plants to prepare the famous powder, the absorption of which immunizes against the venom (...)" Nazi Boni, (1962),,

According to the above Myths, Peoples' Success in Daily activities is not attributed to their own experience, strength or knowledge, but to the spiritual Being, that control them. They depend upon Spirits for a successful life. Those super natural beings can be pleased or irritated by humans' actions and behaviours; that is why, people are obliged to be concerned with them.

The analysis of the above Text on Animism, reveals how extensive and temporary the mode of production in Sub-Saharan African cultures is, and the mode of consumption, (the dominant pattern, in a culture, of using thing up or spending resources in order to satisfy demands) is minimalist (Miller, B.: 2006). The economic system (mode of production, of consumption) is a Sustainable system, because, dictated by the means of Myths to people who live in a particular environment. Reason for Production is not for Profit. Myths and Legends, dictate a mode of consumption that emphasizes simplicity, that is characterized by few and limited Consumers demands, and that involve an adequate and sustainable means to achieve them. The degree of Sustainability is high (Kohnert, D.: 2023), An Overexploitation of

Natural resources is reprimanded by Supernatural Beings and Forces who are Caretakers of the Environment and its Resources.

Another Illustration of Sub-Saharan African Myth and its implications on Environmental Ethics

It is to understand the ecological knowledge among the Bamun People. How people use Oral literature to interact with their natural Environment. And how some natural Species are protected through a Myth and a Legend.

The Ethno Ecology among the Bamun People in West Cameroon: The Myths of “the two heads Snake” or <nu pet tu > and the Spider or <ngaame >

One day, the Bamuns’ King named Nchare, the Founder of the Bamuns’ Dynasty and his people was in War against some farouche enemies who were about to defeat and decimate Bamun people. It was too difficult for the Bamun to win the Battle. During a night, The Bamun and their King hidden somewhere to rest, but their enemies discovered their hiding place and were about to exterminate them. Suddenly appeared a gigantesque Snake with two Heads and a Spider. They bite the Bamun’s enemies till death. King Chare intimated his people to cut their enemies heads. And The Bamun people won the War and obtained Peace.

From that day, the dual heads Snake” or < nu pet tu > and the Spider or < ngaame >, constitute the Symbol of Victory and Peace of Bamun people and of the Royalty of Fouban.

“The dual heads Snake” or < nu pet tu > and the Spider or < ngaame > in the Daily Life among the Bamun in West Cameroon

Both of them share the same Importance and Power in the Royalty of Fumban. Among the Bamun, daily, the Two Heads Snake and the Spider are hardly called by their real Name, that are < nu pet tu > and < ngaame >. It is taboo, because these animals are Sacred. Generally, People called the Two Heads Snake < ntu ngop >, //intestine of Fowl//, because of the resemblance. And the Spider <ngaame >, is popularly known as <guis >, //

smile//, to show respect to the Insect-Divinity. It is a Symbol of Life and Happiness. It is rare to meet them, and their presence somewhere means Occultism. It may be a good or sad presage. The two animals-divinities are real and evident, omnipresent and omniscient in people’s Mind and Awareness; so, nobody dare to call them by their real Names. They are Sacred. It is taboo to call their Name carelessly. By Sacred, Durkheim, E. (1965), meant, the feelings of awe, respect, or reverence that is inspired by things that were set apart and forbidden. They can be benevolent or malevolent, according to situations. (Durkheim, E. 1965). To Understand the situation, a French Ethno linguists, said:

« To name a reality from an Environmental milieu, a certain way, it is, for the Speakers of a given Language, in a given cultural context, to adopt an attitude and manifest a certain behavior vis-à-vis of that reality” (Guffe, C.1970: 77) (Our Translation of the French version above).

For Bamun people to call:<nu pet tu >: < ntu ngop >, // Intestine of Fowl//, and

<ngaame >: <guis > //Smile//, is a Euphemism.

To understand more, why it is taboo to call their real Name carelessly, a French Structuralist said:.

« Most of Cultures called primitive use language with parsimony. They don’t talk at any moment and about anything, verbal manifestations are usually limited to particular circumstances, out of which words are managed” (Levi Strauss, C.1978: 77). (Our Translation of the above French version).

Among the Bamun, < nu pet tu > and < ngaame > incarnate Divinities wich stay awake and watch over the Town of Fumban back, physically and spiritually. The protect the community from evil Persons or any evil thing. They are used to embellish Dance Masks, the royal Hat, Cloths and Throne. Their image is on the Princesses and Notables attires, Dresses, Garments. They are the Symbol of the Town, that remind the wisdom and the History of the Bamun people. The Snake and

the Spider are in the centre of Voodoo. They inspire fear, fright, alarm, veneration (Mveng, E. 1964).

According to Bamun Culture, the Tarantula spider, has the privilege to predict some Spiritual and Physical events. < *ngaame* > in Bamun Language means divination or the Secret the Spider can reveal (Mveng, E. Op. Cit).

A Comparative Analysis : Environmental Ethics in some Myths in the Bible

The important thing here is the fact that, they are all known and practiced in most of Cultures in the world. The comparative analysis is to see and understand the Environmental values in the biblical Context, that represents another Culture.

The Bible is one of the most spread Document in the world. It's considered as a "Sacred Book". It contains "revelations, instructions, norms, values, prophesies and moral Cods inspired by God to the Humanity". The first time the document came in to contact with Sub-Saharan African cultures was before the Colonization. According to Christians, Statements in the Bible are true, because they are "Words from the Immortal and Divine Gods". The Bible is among instruments used during imperialism era in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The contact of Traditional Sub-Saharan African cultures with the Bible contributes to the assimilation and the acculturation of the indigenous populations who could not differentiate Europeans Myths in the Bible, from the realities. That situation led to the transformation of local cultures. According to anthropologists, the Bibles is full of western societies' and cultures' Myths and Legends which have the same functions and role as Sub-Saharan African Verbal Literature, but in different cultural contexts. Some Myths and Legends drawn from the Bible will be analysed in an Anthropological perspective to understand their relationships with the Environmental Ethics.

The Myth of the creation in Genesis (1: 26-30) and the Environmental Ethics

And God created man in his own image in the image of god created he him, male and female created he them. And

God blessed them and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. And have dominium over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth, And God said, behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat. And every beast of the eart, and to every thin that crepeth upon the earth, wherin there is life given every green herb for meat, and it was so. (Genesis 1:26 -30)

An Anthropological analysis of Genesis (1: 26 - 30), reveals that the Myth of creation makes peoples from the concerned Culture to consider Nature as something to be conquered and used for their own profit. According to the above Myth, when God Created Humans, He gave them "Dominium" over Nature and told them to "Submi" the Earth and all its living Creatures. People have no Supernatural mandate to keep them self from fouling Land, Water and air or from destroying Hills, and the habitat of other fellow peoples and creatures with the so called "Development Projects". Another Idea from the Study of the Above Myth in Genesis (1: 26 -30), is the fact that individuals in Western Societies have any Opinion about ways, God want them to behave and to relate to Nature; They have to believe that God give it to Europeans to Exploit than to keep or to protect and to restrict their Consumption. From the analysis of Genesis (1: 26 -30) "But he shall destroy their altar, break their images and cut down their groves". (Exodus 34:13), Biblical Myths, are Ecocide and ethnocide in essence, for they promote the destruction of the Ecosystems. In that particular context, the interactions between Man and other living things in the Environment is submissive, exploitative and dominative (Genesis 1: 26 -30 Exodus 34:13, King James Version).

In Contrast, People in Western Societies, might show more Respect for Other living things, as it is in India, or in African context with beliefs like

Totemism, Animism, Ancestral Spirits, etc. If people had a Heritage with Sacred myths telling that Some of Individuals came from natural Environments, they came from the same ancestral with other natural elements, or if people know that some Spiritual Beings living in some natural elements can affect their live positively or negatively according to how individuals behave with them, people might hesitate to destroy forest, if God told us that plants, water or any environmental element are just precious to God as Human Being. People could have love and interact with Nature as it is with domestic animals at home.

Another Example of Biblical Myth

But he shall destroy their altar, break their images and cut down their groves. For thou shall worship no other god for the lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God. Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the Land, and they go a woring after their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifices. And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their god, and make thy sons go whoring after their gods (Exodus 34:13-17). Thou shalt thee no molten gods (Exodus 34:13).

The Destruction and Disappearance of Sub-Saharan African believe systems with myths, legends and others systems of worship is mandatory. For it is a divine Order to destroy non Western belief systems, according to the above mentioned Biblical Myths. Even the practice of “Eurocentrism” vis a vis the Sub-Saharan Peoples, natural Environment and other Cultures, is legitimate. So, the “*Mission Civilisatrice*” through Western Cultural Imperialism and Colonization in Sub-Saharan Africa are Rights and Duties (Kohnert, D. :2023).

The Sub-Saharan African Literature, Global Language and Environment Ethics

The present Paper is not an Advocacy or a Pleading. It is an anthropological analysis of some Literatures, through Myths, for the “Understanding of Ourselves and Others” (Crapo, R., 1990). It is

neither a tendency to view ones Culture as the best and to judge the behaviour and beliefs of Other Cultures different from our Standard. But, Peoples’ Cultures must be studied, described on their own terms and according to their Historical back ground; their cultural specificities should not be ignored by Cross Cultural comparisons and generalizations. (Boas, F.1988).

Global Language or World Language is a language spoken widely throughout the world and in diverse cultural contexts often replacing indigenous Languages (Miller, B. 2006).

It had started by the introduction of the western church and school in western Language, then followed the transformation and assimilation of Sub-Saharan African socio-political organization. The Mission assigned to the later is the continuation of Acculturation and Assimilation of the indigenous populations by force or voluntarily. The disappearance of Sub-Saharan African languages, leded to loss of indigenous knowledge, norms, Core values like their Literature, practices, believes systems and the whole cultural system. When their Literature through their Languages has gone lost, so their contents do, as well as their Environmental Ethics (Ojomo, P. A.:2011). The above presented Myths drawn from a “*Sacred Book*”, clearly demonstrate that Western World View, in general, is essentially based on exploitation, abuse, aggression, destruction, domination, for expansion and conquest. The economic, diplomatic and bilateral and multilateral relations, geopolitical situation in the World Today can illustrate to approve above mentioned Biblical Myths. The disappearance of Sub-Saharan African languages with their Myths and Legends, leads to loss of indigenous knowledge, norms, Core values like their Literature, practices, believes systems and the whole cultural system. That constitutes a threat to Environmental Ethics. The indigenous knowledge in Sustainable management of natural resources and in Conservation of the Environment has disappeared. Today, because Sub-Saharan African Languages, knowledge and their ancestral spirituality are threatened, Totems and Environment-Gradients Spirits have no place,

where they can high and live; all the forest and their hidden places have been destroyed by humans' activities. There is no more sustainable practices and adaptive interactions between Humans and their natural milieu.

Conclusion:

The objective of this paper was to examine the relationship between the Environmental Ethics and the Sub-Saharan African Literature. An Anthropological analysis of some Myths and Legends demonstrated they increase people respect for their natural environment. They also, reveal how extensive and temporary the mode of production in Sub-Saharan African cultures should be, and how minimalist the mode of consumption, should be. According to African verbal literature, the economic system needs to be Sustainable. Myths are cultural strategies for sustainability of natural resources. For the later to be always available. That is the Reason why, the acquisition of foods is not supposed to be for Profit. Myths and Legends in Sub-Saharan Literature, emphasize simplicity, characterized by few and limited consumer demands, and that involve an adequate and sustainable means to achieve them. Any Overexploitation of Natural resources is reprimanded by Supernatural Beings and Forces who are Guardians of the Environment. A Comparative Analysis of Environmental Ethics in Sub-Saharan Literature and Myths in another Cultural Context show the difference. These culturally different conceptions of realities also shape our perception of relationships people have with the natural Environment. Myths and Legends are ecologically more respectful than the one in another context cultural. The disappearance of Sub-Saharan African languages with their Myths and Legends, leads to loss of indigenous knowledge, norms, Core values like their Literature, practices, believes systems and the whole cultural system. That constitutes a threat to Environmental Ethics. The indigenous knowledge in sustainable management of natural resources and in conservation of the Environment have disappeared.

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