

Gacab

The story of how Gacab got its name.

In the beginning of time, people lived in different places. And there were big people which the old people called ‘*alan*.’ Now, this Gakab couple, they lived in Gacab, he and his wife Talvung. And when they looked for their food, it is said that when Gakab went looking for their food, he would ransack the two rice granaries in Jay-as and bring [the food] to Gacab. When he went back again, he would simply shoulder a whole carabao. And that was where they got their food.

And during a storm, [he] did not... Gakab would not be worried for he would step over the river for he was a huge man. And it is said that one day, there was a storm, now his children went playing on the other side. For the area they played at was beautiful for it was flat. And because his children could not cross it, Gakab had to make a remedy so that he could cross his children over. Now, he placed across [the river] a big tree and thereupon, as his children were [crossing], unfortunately, the water swept away the rock where he had set the tree on, for the water had started to swell. Now then, Gakab’s children fell and all of them were swept away. Then only the couple Gakab and Talvung were left.

The... There were also those Agta who were fishing along Maḷanas. For they wanted the river to go, er, Maḷanas, to divert it to the Jupagan river, for that river passed through Sisim and went to Gakab, Juljulaw, and Talipan. And it is said that as they were digging the side of the mountain, for they wanted to direct the river Maḷanas towards that area in Sisim, all of a sudden there was a landslide that came upon them. But there were no rains. They were puzzled. “Why, where did this landslide come from?” they said. When the mudslide came, it is said that it was foul-smelling. “Ay, why is it that this mudslide is rotten?” they said. When they looked up, there was Gakab defecating. And the Agta got angry. It is said that the two Agta got their arrows and hit Gakab who was then sitting, squatting, but he did not see them. And because Gakab was hit, two arrows went through his stomach, and so he was gone.

And before that, let me go back to [the earlier part of] the story, there was a man who went to hunt whose name was Sidjayaw. He went hunting here upstream towards Gacab,

upstream towards Sisim, he was overtaken by the night. And so there. But Gakab was not there for he went out, went to that area which had the widest plains. For he often went, it is said, to Ilocos Sur but it just took him a little while for he was such a big man. Gakab, er, Sidjayaw was overtaken by the night. And he went, it is said, to Talvung.

“Come in here. Do not be afraid. If the night overtakes you, come to the house,” so said Talvung. And that night, it is said, when they slept, Talvung slept, it is said, near the door. But because Talvung was such a huge person, Sidjayaw was afraid [to stay there] till the morning. Now, it is said that Sidjayaw followed the... he got to the ceiling and would have swung out. When he got directly over Talvung, his hands slipped and fell on Talvung’s belly. And Talvung awoke, it is said. When he looked, it was Sidjayaw, and she laughed, it is said.

“Why didn’t you wake me up? What are you doing passing across the ceiling? she said.

And, “Because I am afraid. I wanted to go across the ceiling and when I got directly above you, I slipped because my hands got tired,” he said.

And, “Don’t be afraid. See, you would not have fallen. It was just good you fell on my belly. Had you hit the ground or this stone, you would have died,” she said.

And she advised them [him], it is said: “Tell your fellow hunters not to be afraid. When you are overtaken by the night, come to the house,” she said. And that was the...

When they were making, er, the Agta were fishing in Malanas, that was where they shot Gakab with arrows for he defecated on where the Agta were digging. And two were the arrows that struck Gakab. And he passed away. When he was brought to Gakab’s place, Talvung his wife set him on a death-chair at the big mountain and the plain on where he sat is still there and his feet she set at the river where he was put in a death-chair, upstream towards Gacab where Talvung placed Gakab in his death-chair.

And from then on, none ever ransacked the rice granaries in Lacub at the plains for there was no Gakab any more. Even carabaos, for whenever he took a carabao, they would chase him, [but] they could not catch him for he would just skip over the mountain.

And that is the reason Gacab was named Gacab for that was where Gakab lived and that was also where Gakab died and that was also where Talvung set Gakab on a death-chair that one... That was how Gacab got its name. And that is the story of how Gacab got its name.

Recorded on December 4–5, 2006, in Kalinga, Philippines

Oral account by Barcelon Panabang

Transcription and Translation by Scott M. Saboy & Lawrence A. Reid

Assisted by Warren Panabang

Recorded and supervised by Michiyo Yoneno-Reyes

<http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~yoneno/database.html>