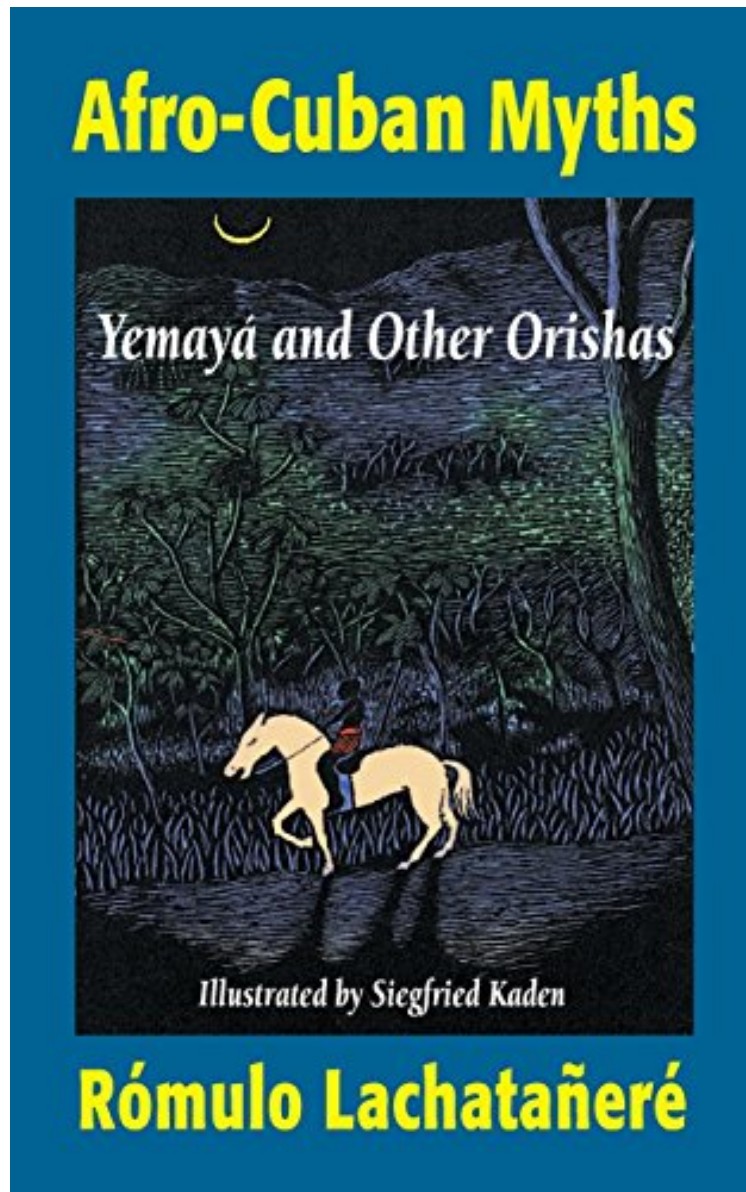


[Library ebook] Afro-Cuban Myths: Yemaya and Other Orishas

Afro-Cuban Myths: Yemaya and Other Orishas

Romulo Lachatanere

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#4543162 in Books Markus Wiener Publishers 2006-05-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.02 x .44 x 5.981, .90 #File Name: 1558763171156 pages | File size: 23.Mb

Romulo Lachatanere : Afro-Cuban Myths: Yemaya and Other Orishas before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Afro-Cuban Myths: Yemaya and Other Orishas:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Afro-Cuban Myths By Markus Wiener This book deals with the myths of the orishas. Since it was published in 1938 under the title Oh, Mo Yemay!, it has become a classic in the field.

It was the first attempt in Cuba to gather a sizeable sample of the numerous patakes or myths characteristic of the Regla de Ocha or Santería, the most widespread of the Afro-Cuban religions practiced on the island. The author had to overcome prejudice that considered the religion and its associated literature undeserving of intellectual attention and at the same time penetrate the secrecy in which black believers cloaked their beliefs and practices, fearful with good reason of attracting disdain, desecration, and persecution. About Romulo Lachatanere: The author (1909-1952) was the first Afro-Cuban intellectual to write extensively on Afro-Cuban religious practices. Together with Fernando Ortiz and Lydia Cabrera, he was the founder of Afro-Cuban research and made it part of the Cuban heritage. His main works offer a description of Santería and fall somewhere between ethnology and literature. Since its publication in 1938 under the title "Oh, mio yemay," this book has become a classic in its field. The book is illustrated by Siegfried Kaden, Instituto Superior de las Artes Plásticas, Havana. About Siegfried Kaden: Painter and book designer living in Havana, Cuba and Munich, Germany. He illustrated this book and Cuba Legends by Salvadore Bueno. Hardcover Info: ISBN 1-55876-317-1 180pp \$49.95 Paperback Info: ISBN 1-55876-318-X 180pp \$24.95 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A collection of myths and tales first published in 1938 under the title "Oh, Mio Yemaya!" By Midwest Book Review The late Romulo Lachatanere (1909-1952) was the first Afro-Cuban intellectual to write extensively on Afro-Cuban religious practices. Afro-Cuban Myths: Yemaya And Other Orishas is a collection of myths and tales first published in 1938 under the title "Oh, Mio Yemaya!". The first book to collect a sizeable sample of Cuban myths characteristic of the most widespread Afro-Cuban religion, Regla de Ocha, also known as Santería, Afro-Cuban Myths is both exciting to read and thought-provoking in its responses to fundamental questions of popular theology and philosophy. Most of the myths are quite brief. Although they are no more graphic or gruesome than uncensored Greek and Roman myths, these uncensored Afro-Cuban fables (just like original Greek, Roman, and many other myths) are emphatically for mature readers only. Afro-Cuban myths includes stories of taboo subjects such as a son submitting to the incest of his mother, and tragic tales such as a wife who sacrifices her ears for her husband yet is then rejected for compromising her beauty. The black-and-white illustrations perfectly complement this recommended addition to mythology shelves.

This book deals with the myths of the orishas. Since it was published in 1938 under the title Oh, Mo Yemay !, it has become a classic in the field. It was the first attempt in Cuba to gather a sizeable sample of the numerous patakes or myths characteristic of the Regla de Ocha or Santería, the most widespread of the Afro-Cuban religions practiced on the island. The author had to overcome prejudice that considered the religion and its associated literature undeserving of intellectual attention and at the same time penetrate the secrecy in which black believers cloaked their beliefs and practices, fearful with good reason of attracting disdain, desecration, and persecution.

"A collection of myths from the Yoruba branch of Afro-Cuban religions, the Spanish original of this book (1938) was a pioneer publication in the field. Lachatanere interviewed a practitioner of the most widespread Afro-Cuban religion; taking special care to maintain the oral style in the development of the stories, he reveals the freshness of the narrator's perspective as he outlines the cosmological fabric created by the encounter of the African people with the Catholic religion. The book includes stories of important deities, that will help the reader understand the conceptual world of the believers. Those interested in learning about Afro-Cuban music, art, and poetry will find in this translation an introductory manual to the language, certain foods used in ceremonies, and the role of divination and figures such as the trickster. Jorge Castellanos, a scholar who has published widely on the influence of African culture on Cuban society, provides an introduction that places the author's work in its social and cultural context. The volume includes a short glossary and a selection of songs and prayers dedicated to the deities. Summing up: Recommended. General readers." --O.B. Gonzalez, Loyola University for Choice Magazine About the Author Romulo Lachatanere (1909 1952) was the first Afro-Cuban intellectual to write extensively on Afro-Cuban religious practices. Together with Fernando Ortiz and Lydia Cabrera, he was the founder of Afro-Cuban research and made it part of the Cuban heritage. His main works offer a description of Santería and fall somewhere between ethnology and literature. Since its publication in 1938 under the title "Oh, mio yemay," this book has become a classic in its field. The book is illustrated by Siegfried Kaden, Instituto Superior de las Artes Plásticas, Havana. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. The River : The hordes of men advanced deep into the impenetrable forest, savagely tearing down the dense trees, trampling the green grass that grew on the paths and pulling up by the roots the slender bushes that blocked their destructive impulse. They built roads. Narrow paths carpeted with fallen leaves appeared that gave way to wide roads skirting the high and inaccessible mountains that rose to meet their natural ceiling: the sky. In this way man created his communication routes and extended the boundaries of the villages, establishing new links and taking possession of more and more of the forest's jealously guarded secrets. In the wildest and densest part of the forest where the harshness of the terrain curbed man's audacity, the river flowed, majestic and menacing. From the highest plateaus it could be seen meandering through the mountains like a silvery monster that moves forward sluggishly. But when the distance was covered in a determined effort, the river, seen from nearby, revealed all its fury, its choppy water, its raging eddies rising, writhing like a wounded serpent rippling its back in the throes of death. The river roared

lugubriously, a thunderous and menacing sound. Even the bravest hearts were filled with awe, and no one dared risk the dangerous undertaking of conquering the current. When all the others had left, convinced that any attempt to conquer the river would be fruitless, Agay Sol, a farmer who was elderly but as strong and vigorous as a young warrior and irascible and hardworking, stood beside it looking at it defiantly. After thinking for a moment, he took his sharp axe and began to cut down a huge tree. Its trunk was so wide that it could not comfortably be encircled by the arms of five people. When he had finally felled it, he stripped away the branches with his battle machete. He made a bonfire whose sputtering flames rose, illuminating the sky with its bright sparks. Then he let a slow fire bore through the resinous trunk of the felled tree while he shaped the wood until he had fashioned a crude boat. He made two powerful oars out of the same wood. When he considered his work done, he put some provisions in his boat and set out on his adventure. He rowed, cutting through the current, beating it tirelessly with his oars. The river put up a resistance equal to that of a thousand animals pulling in the same direction. But Agay Sol cut through the river in his small boat. All his muscles flexed, and the veins on his neck stood out, his chest expanding and contracting like an accordion. The oars hit the water, thwack, thwack, thwack. The river raged furiously, rrr rrr. Rocking wildly, the boat moved forward. Agay inched forward. Every inch gained was one less opportunity for the river to swallow him and his boat. The daring boatman rowed more swiftly though the current that gradually became less strong. Once he had covered half the distance, Agay gathered strength and, with odd movements, he broke through the current, making the boat move forward rapidly until it reached the opposite bank of the river. He leaped ashore and, rubbing his hands together, said: "I have conquered you; now I will finish you off." Without pausing for breath, he climbed into the boat again and crossed the river, this time with much less effort than in the first contest. Agay Sol did this ten times until he turned the river into a calm, quiet stream on which the boat glided slowly and smoothly. Thanks to Agay's efforts, contact was established between the villages that had the river as their boundary. In return for his achievement, anyone who wanted to cross over to the other side had to pay a fee to the farmer who had become a boatman. He also became a wealthy man. One day a woman arrived on the riverbank. Dressed in a voluminous coarse woollen cloth, she had a beautiful face and good manners. She climbed into the boat, indicating to the boatman that he should take her to the other side. When he saw her distinguished appearance, Agay thought it prudent not to mention the fee for his work. Settling her comfortably in his boat, he began to row. When they reached the bank, the woman jumped up and began patiently arranging the folds of her skirt, scarcely looking at the boatman. This gave Agay an opportunity to claim his payment. "Omord, pay me the fee." The woman responded by taking off her dress and lying down on the grass. Agay, seeing her thus, mounted her, and they had sexual intercourse. Afterwards the woman said: "You have had the great honor of sleeping with Obatal." And she disappeared, leaving the boatman bewildered. And that was that.