

# The Functional Analysis of Nuer Folktales in Gambella Region with Reference to Wantowa Woreda

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## Abstract

The main objective of this article is to examine the folktales used for social-economic function in Gambella region with specific reference to Wantowa woreda. To achieve this objective, interview and focus group discussion were used to collect the data from 25 elders selected from six kebeles using purposive sampling on the basis of their knowledge of Nuer folktales and oral traditions. These instruments were chosen because they appear to be the most practical for gathering data considering the majority of the community's elders are illiterate. The data gathered were translated into English and analyzed using a qualitative thematic content analysis approach. The study showed that folktales are narrated for different functions in Nuer people of the area. To this fact, it was found that folktales are used for communicating various social aspects of their life. In addition, it was found that folktales can contribute for economic transaction among the society. Moreover, it was pointed that a single folktale can be used for multiple purposes in the Nuer people of the study area. Finally, the researcher recommends that folktales should be: incorporated in Educational Curriculum of the region in detail, promoted by the regional government using various social and mainstream Media and further researcher should be done on the area.

**Keywords:** Folktales, Wantowa Woreda, Socio-economic, Functional Analysis

**DOI:** 10.7176/HRL/55-03

**Publication date:** April 30<sup>th</sup> 2024

## Introduction

The study of folklore in our country seems to be of recent phenomenon though attempts have been made to collect oral literature for quite long. Oral literature in Ethiopia is a product of the country's being home for diverse and colorful ethnicities which have their own unique folktale heritage. Although the country is rich in folktales, the folktales materials of Ethiopia's numerous ethnic groups have not been explored or broadly disseminated (Fekade, 2001). Folktales have a potential contribution to cultural, political, social, and economic realities, but it has not been understood in context of functions (Gumi Boru, 2017). Therefore, even though folklores have potential contribution to cultural, political, social, and economic realities of a society, it seems to have scarcity of investigation made so far on the area. To best of the researchers' knowledge there are no studies conducted on the area in Gambella regional state in general and Wantowa woreda in particular.

Consequently, this article deals with the folktales of Nuer people in Gambella regional state. The Nuer tribes are one among the five indigenous people found in Gambella region, and belongs to the Nilotic language family in Ethiopia. The Nuer people are well known to be rich for their use of folktales for various purposes among the tribes in the region. Within this in mind, the researchers believe that making investigation on the area is strongly related to the social realities, traditional practices as well as economic transaction of the society. In addition, this article can serve as a base having the potential to spark further research into the numerous Gambella folktales in general and the Nuer tribes in particular. Thus, the current article focuses on the analysis of some selected folktales of Nuer people for socio-economic functions.

## The Concept of folktales

Folktales are defined in a variety of ways by different scholars. A folktale, according to Abrams (1988), is a brief prose narrative written by an unknown authorship. A folktale is defined as "the prose narrative type" of oral literature, which encompasses myths, fables, hero stories, and fairy tales. A folktale, according to Harry (1972:163), is "a legend narrative originating in and traditional among people, especially one forming part of an oral tradition." Some folklore scholars regard folktale as an umbrella term that encompasses all traditional prose narratives such as legends, folktales, myths, fables, and others. Oral tradition, according to Cuddon (1998), includes folk narratives such as legends, fables, tall tales, and others. As a result, the society instructs its youngsters through relating various sorts of folklore. These folktales give rise to stories that are passed down through the generations via word of mouth. These stories were not written down, but existed in the collective consciousness of humans. As oral storytelling gives way to books and media, such tales are being gathered and written down in the oral tradition (Peak and Yank, 2004).

According to Donald (2008), Folktales are a type of traditional, fictitious, prose narrative that circulates orally. They are not to be taken seriously because they are not regarded dogma or history. They may or may not

have occurred. Nonetheless, despite the fact that they are frequently believed to be recounted solely for entertainment, they have other vital purposes, as the class of moral folktales should have implied. Folktales can take place at any time and in any location, making them nearly timeless and locationless. Therefore, from aforementioned discussion among many scholars, the term folktale has been defined as an oral literature genre that refers to a type of traditional prose narrative. Folktales appear to originate from all around the world, and are clearly colored and shaped by the location from where they came. Folktales, like all forms of oral literature, are passed down the generations via word of mouth. In short, folktales are a type of folklore that has sparked a lot of interest among researchers and resulted in a lot of research.

### **Function of folktales**

Oral literature has been utilized for a variety of purposes in order to resemble humanity. Folktales represent a society's philosophy and beliefs, and they have traditionally fulfilled a variety of functions (Green, 1997). As a result, oral storytelling can be employed to aid in the resolution of many problems faced by ethnic groups in conflict. These issues are specifically tied to ethnic conflicts that occur on a daily basis. Finnegan (1976) made investigation on the function and purposes of stories and different types of the narrations. She argued that in studying of oral literature of any particular peoples, it suffices to know about the view point of the people themselves with respective to outlook and functions of their narration about the local typology of the narration.

In addition, Tadesse Jalata (2004), stated folktale is an element of a prevailing societal culture through reflection of the popular societal, cultural, political, economic and traditional practices. Therefore, folktales serve valuable functions in the society they belong to. Generally, folklores are used for the reflection of social, cultural, political, traditional practices, and economic development. Therefore, folktales serve valuable function in the society and it serve for manifold purposes that formally and informally refers to various aspects of human life.

### **Classification of folktales**

Folktales are a term used by certain scholars to describe a variety of oral prose narratives. Others, on the other hand, regard this oral prose storytelling as distinct genres. Oring (1979) divides prose narratives into three categories: myths, legends, and stories. Many scholars also categorize folktales based on their function, character, shape, substance, and purpose. As a result, folktales are classified according to a number of factors, including function, form, context, and character.

While dealing with Limba stories, Ruth (1966) appears to have classified the stories into no more than three general sorts, which are based on the people in the stories. There are three types of stories: human stories, animal stories, and origin stories. From the above point, it is possible to deduce that there is no single and consistent way of classifying folktales. But, scholars classify folktales on the basis of various criteria; these are, function, form, context, character and so on. However, this article gives special attention to folktales based on their function which is socio-economic purpose.

### **Characteristics of Folktales**

Folktales have the following major characteristics, which are also seen in other folklore forms including proverbs, riddles, ballads, and fables. They are universal, timeless and authorless.

**Universality:** This feature is one of the basic features of folklore in general and of folktales in particular. To this regard, Ruth Finnegan (1976:1) asserts that "There is no mystery about the first and most basic characteristic of oral literature even though it is constantly overlooked in collection and analyses." She further elaborates the importance of folktales with respective to actual performance; it is by far dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion and there is no other way in which it can be realized as a literary product.

In article written by Gumi Boru,(2017:227), Richard Dorson suggested that folklore embrace peoples, verbal and material arts, custom and the form of cultural elements. He also categorizes folklore in to four broad subdivisions. These are; verbal, material culture, social folk customs and folk arts. In addition Dudes (1965) mentioned that folklore involve myths, legends, folktales, and jokes. This shows the universality of folklore in general and folktales in particular.

**Timelessness:** Oral literature is ageless or timeless. Scholars of folktale, belongings that various work of oral literature like myths, folktales, and legends and others from that of genres product of society indefinite time (Gumi Boru, 2017). On the other hand, Dorson, (1972) said that, folktales narration is ageless. Even though they are timeless, they serve certain functions in the society. For instance, they serve to justify the past and perpetuate the status quo of the society that produces them. Moreover, with this regard, Berhanu, (2008) suggests that the folklore in general and oral literature in particular has no definite time.

**Authorlessness:** The same is true to timeless; this means that it hasn't its own authorship. In other word when we compare oral literature with written literature it is authorless. In fact, specific author of oral literature cannot be determined because; it is the source of the society that it is collected from. As Berhanu, (2008) quote from

Sokolov, (1971) works of folklore are an anonymous, timeless, for the reason that the name of authors, in the vast majority of cases, have not been revitalized, have not been discovered, because for the greater part they were not written down, but were preserved only in the memory of the people. It signifying that the works of folklore has no specific time and authors

### Methodology of the study

A qualitative, thematic content analysis was used as a principal research approach to design the study and to collect and analyse data. Folklore studies are usually conducted based on data collected through fieldwork (going out to meet their informants where they live, work, and perform), accessed from archives of unpublished folklore collections, from bibliographies maintained by libraries and on line (DWP, 2014; Kozinets et al., 2014). The present study used interview and focused group discussions with 25 elders selected using purposive sampling method based on the information obtained from the woreda culture and tourism office about the participants. The elders were selected due to being well known in the society for their knowledge Nuer folktales and oral traditions in the study area. However, though the Nuer tribes in the area comprises of many clans with diverse cultural practices, a representative sample was taken from each clan in which the research participants represent most Nuer clans, and it is possible to generalize the findings of the study to all Nuers in the area.

The study's data were gathered in the form of raw data the participants native language (i.e., Nuer language), after which descriptive analysis was performed and the results were reported in English. Therefore, the study's findings are made based on direct quotations from in-depth interviews and concentrated group discussions with Nuer folktale practitioners from different kebeles in Wantowa woreda. The folktales gathered were analyzed using functional theory and contextual analysis.

### Result and Discussion

Folktales reflect the socio-economic function of the society in which they are told. Any civilization, from the past to the present, uses folktales to convey their feelings, attitudes, and ideas in order to illustrate its socio-economic function. In Gambella Nuer Zone Wantowa Woreda, folktales were also employed to express their economic value and function in society. Attempts have been made to analyze the role of folktales in the context of socio-economic environment in this section. As a result, folktales can show their people's socio-economic level in a certain situation. Therefore, these folktales are used by Wantowa society's culture to transmit their economic standing to the families. The researcher further illustrates the concept using the following folktales.

#### 1. *C`y M42th d4n-d4aal*

M22 dan, diit dial la ci2x kv kvvl. K` mith kv kvvl. Kv c`x kvl cukv mieth mi d55t rialik` kv f66 bikv mith, k` tee guak kvvl kv kv. Min cikv nyuur k` cus mieth n66x nhiamdivn, cukv wee i banv th11x din lip. K` k` t v nyiman guak. Kv f66 k` t v cuer, lokv liep din tin tee jssr. Cuv ben ka pvcv r5x. Cu kiel wee i guak, gatmaar, luek gatnyimusr, bv mieth xar xar. Bit guak. Cu k` t rs nysk kv ben k` pvcv rix. Cu kiel lvni wee i guak, luek gatnyimusr, bv mieth xar xar. Bit guak. M22 ci kiel v guic cuv wee i cv la kac vn v te kv guak kvnv gatnyiman v. cuv rs moc dhuon rix cuv ruoc, k` nysk v jv. Am`ni tamv ci kiel la ruuc xsaani am`ni w1lv. Cu nyuak din d1k piny kv jvn dusp vms.

#### Translation: The banquet of the birds

Once upon a time, Birds used to live in close quarters. They convened a large banquet one day, during which the Fox was also present. "Let us wait for the birds that are still missing," some suggested as they sat and food was handed to them. The kite, who was the offspring of the fox's sister, was now a glutton. As a result, he began picking up bits of meat and eating them by himself. "Rebuke your nephew," the Marabou stork said to the fox. He'll sabotage the feast." The fox, on the other hand, remained silent. "These two individuals don't listen," the stork muttered, losing patience. He would take a piece of flesh and devour it whole, over and over. The marabou stork still doesn't chew its meal before swallowing it whole. The gathering came to an end at that point, and all of the birds flew away.

#### Analysis

The folktale here shows how the impact of one element within a group can break the group's togetherness. Being organized in social life creates a powerful overall community that encourages people to cooperate with one vital culture, rule, and norm. As a result, this folktale is relevant to Nuer society, notably the Wantowa people in Gambella region. In short, this folktale teaches us that a person may use his or her plan to sabotage a dinner with others since he or she must prepare his or her own feast and dine alone as marabou.

#### 2. *Ji7b Musn*

C`x kvl cu r7lc`p duelv l1t wic jiath min ms n66r k` cuv toox dap thin, kv c`x daar cu guak ben kv dusp vms, cuv l]]x thaar jiath kv f66 ca n`k v c`x. Min cv nhial live, cuv r7lc`p nvn wic jiath. Cu guak v ji6k i, v xu civxi nhial wic jiath vmv? Cu r7lc`p wee i c` l` t thin, k` c` dap kv toox thin. Cu guak wee i v jiathd` vn nvmv. T`mv g66r` f66 b` jisb. B` nax rvy yieer v la rieyd`. Cu r7lc`p v ji6k i k` b` w` ni k`? F]]n mi g66ri f66 bi c`x thin, bi f` la moci tox kvl ni civx. Cukv mat kv jv ruac vms, Ni ciav bv ben b` moc tox am`ni m22 ci dusth ni tox kvl. K` ni

cì'x la b77x a bee, bvben l]jx wic n66r vms. Cuv r7lc'p v luoc i ca kv thuk v guak. Cuv r7lc'p thiec i kv kuicxu k'? Cuv wee i v jvn i bv jiath vmv j]b. Cu b77x v jì6k i k' guak jek v j]b ni k'? K' j]b v dux ran. Ji7b v ms v ji7b musn, v dux kac'. Cuv wee i mi wv ben a jv j]bv. Cu r7lc'p v lix.

M22 rusn cu guak ben, cuv wee i k'mni f' toxd'. Cu r7lc'p luoc i ci dusth ni kvl k' f, /c' jv bi k'm ji kv f66 cikv thuk. Mi v jin bi jv j]b, j]b duxdu. Mi v tox kvl vmv bv ksath g]rk'. Cu guak rsdv rialik', cuv jiath y]t kv ji7b, cu ji7bdv t7l. Cuv wee i b' min dsx w' n66x. Cuv nysk kv f]n cu ji7b t7l. Cu guak tox r7lc'p thuk kv ji7b mu]n v ni kvl k' rsa min ci k'n. V jvn la Naath a wee i /cu Naath cam kv ji7b mu]n. Kv c'x kvl in diskdivn cu guak rs nysk kv ben cuv r7lc'p thiec i m'thd' v xa l]r ji c]p vmv. Cuv wee i v b77x. M22 rusn cu guak w' thok yieer k' cuv b77x nvn mly. Cuv jv thiec i mi ci jism pu]t, k' deri w' ni k' rvy yieer vmv? Cuv wee i dee ben inv gulth vms. K' nyuuth v jv guak puonydv. K' cu guak v nysk thiec i k' mi bv v pek vmi? Cu b77x wee i dee w' inv gulth vms. K' mee larv jv inv cu b77x thi]k kv guak. Niv wans cu guak b77x k'p k' du'c v jv. Cuv jv jì6k i wii ksx xi3c ni r7lc'p a /keri rs ni xi3c?

### **Translation: The axe made of clay**

The black stork built his nest on top of a palm tree and laid one egg every morning. At midday, I came down that path and sat under a tree to take a break from the heat. He happened to look up and saw the stork. "Why did you take this tree?" he exclaimed. The stork simply replied that she built her nest in order to lay her egg. However, she stated, "This is my tree, and I just came to cut it down," displaying a clay axe, "I want to create a canoe out of it." "Where can I go now?" the stork replied. "If you want to stay, you can, but you must give me one egg every day," the fox said. They were in agreement. The stork would lay one egg each day and give it to the fox. She just had one egg left to hatch.

The pelican would frequently land on the palm tree's top. "Where are all your eggs?" he said of the stork one day. The stork said, "They were finished by the fox." The pelican inquired, "How come?" The story was narrated by the stork, who stated that the fox would cut down his palm tree. "Where would the fox find an axe?" the pelican retorted. Only one guy owns the axe. It's a deception because his axe is made of clay." "If he comes back, let him cut down the tree if he can," he ended. When the fox came to claim an egg the next day, the stork refused and said, "As you said, cut your tree." "I'm going somewhere else with the one and only egg under my wing." The fox said he hit the tree with his axe, but the axe shattered into pieces when he struck it. The fox stated that he would acquire another axe. It turned out to be a clay axe as well. The fox had obtained the stork's eggs by simply displaying a clay axe. People still say things like, "Do not fool people with a clay axe."

### **Analysis**

In the folktale above, truth triumphed against falsehood and remained for all time. It is clear from this that using one's bogus identity can kill a lot of people if you don't know his or her character. Honesty and truthfulness are valued in Wantowa society's culture, and youngsters are trained to be honest and use genuine language. In the context of our daily actions, it informs us that stealing someone's property because you have authority is a sin in this society's culture. Like a result, the folktale teaches us that when someone is hungry, they can use technique to obtain food, just as the fox did in this story. In summary, a researcher emphasized this folktale, stating that Wantowa elders teach their offspring to utilize socio-economic terms in this manner and to follow rules when conversing with others.

### **3. Guak kvnv Yak kv Yi=w kv Luth**

Yak kvnv guak maarkvn. Guak v gat nyiman yak'. K' guak nhskv mly vlsx. Kv c'x kvl cuv w' mly yier. Cuv pul yiiwni jek. Cuv kv n66x k' thalv kv. Cuv n'rv ni yak csl kv f66 bikv ben mith. Cukv mith, min cikv thusk, cu yak v thiec i jeki kv ni k' gat nyimaar vn com com vmv? Cu guak wee i mi w' jv l]r ji f'n xlc' jv vn f66 bi g7r ni camd'. Cu yak v jì6k i gat nyimar, /cien ji bi cam am'ni c'x kvl. Cukv w' wic yier. M22 cikv cop cuv yak jì6k i bi rs yusr piny taar' rvy piini titi. K' cu guak jivn. Niv wans cu yak rs yusr rvy piini tin tee yiiw thin. K' cua yak yivth v yiiw ti xuan. Mi wv ben raar, cuv kiel jì6k i bi kv k1m raar. Cu kiel wee i gsaav duxdv f66 ba diitkivn nax. Cu yak wee i eey. K' yak bvc pusnydv vlsx. Min cv pusnydv d'k kv bvcdivn, cuv kiel jì6k i naxkv. Cu kiel yiiw dial k1m raar. Cu yak wee i vn guak b' jek. Mi w' jv w' jek bv ruacd' nvn.

M22 rusn cukv r6m kvnv guak. Cuv xvny kv guak. K' cu guak v l]x, cuv jv jì6k i n`ran wanv, bi mieth mi d]divn w' met ciex. Min cikv cop ciex, cu yak guak jek cv thal kv luuth ti w' n66x mly. Cu yak mith, cuv kv jek cuom vlsx. Cuv guak jì6k i jeki kv ni k'? Cu guak wee i mi w' jv lar ji f'n xac' jv vn f66 bi g6ri bi f' cam. Cu yak v jì6k i gat nyimar, /c' ji bi cam am'ni c'x kvl. Cukv w' thok yieer. Cuv yak nax duel lu]th mi diit, k' jì6k v jv i culu yusr thok duel vmv. K' cu guak w'. Cu yak nax v f]n. Cuv culv yusr thok duel. Cu luth ben cuv cul yak' kac a cuv jv xok. Am'ni t'mv /cu yak a cul jusc. K' cu cul yak' tee jiiic lu]th am'ni w]lv. K' cu Naath mi tee jiiicdv csl i cu] kv f66 v cul yak' mi cv xok.

### **Translation: The fox, the hyena, the spiky fish, and the mud fish**

The hyena and the fox are related through blood. The fox is actually the hyena's nephew. Fishing is a favorite pastime of the fox. He went fishing one day. He discovered a pond full with prickly fish. He apprehended them and grilled them. To share the fox dinner, he summoned his uncle hyena. They had a meal. When they were done, the hyena inquired of the fox as to where he could get such good fish. "If I tell you what I know, you could

decide to devour me,” the fox replied. “Dear nephew, you are the offspring of my sister, I will never eat you,” the hyena replied. “Jump into the water on your back,” the fox instructed the hyena as they approached the pond. The fox walked away. As the fox predicted, the hyena dove into the water. Many spiky fish punctured the hyena's back and stayed there.

The hyena emerged from the water and requested that the fish be removed by a marabou stork. The stork desired to receive the fish that he would catch as a present. The hyena initially protested, but he had no choice but to accept. The hyena was relieved when the stork removed all of the fish. The hyena cried, “When I meet with the fox, I will fix him.” The hyena and the fox met the next day. He was yelling at him. But the fox kindly said, “Uncle, let's travel together.” I'll prepare another dinner for you to try.” They returned home, where the fox had prepared some mud fish. It was devoured by the hyena, who thought it was delicious. The hyena inquired, “Where do you get this excellent fish?” “If I tell you what I know, you could decide to devour me,” the fox said again. “Dear nephew, you are the offspring of my sister, I will never eat you,” the hyena replied. They made their way to the river. “Just wave your penis at the mouth of this den,” the fox told his uncle as he escorted the hyena close to the mud fish den. The fox walked away. The hyena followed the fox's instructions. The mud fish arrived and ate the hyena's penis.

#### Analysis

The hyena's character is portrayed as silly in this folktale by the narrator. The elders of the Wantowa Woreda community teach their children not to be foolish, and this helps them gain wisdom throughout their life. On the other hand, to recognize the person who may be teaching you incorrectly, but you are in need of something right now, such as food or anything you want to consume, as we see in the example of the hyena that was taught by the fox. Through this folktale, the Wantowa people used to say, “The mud fish has the hyena's penis inside it.” As a result, the hyena struggled to understand all of these procedures, and we must not be like that. Therefore, elders convey this story to act as a confirmation of thoughts for others, even if the person enjoys food.

#### 4. *Guak kvnv Yak kv T]]x*

Kv c`x kv l cu guak c`p c`p kv f66 dualv kv yak. Dualv vn f66 ba jv cam v yak kv f66 la mvtv ni ciaux. M22 cikv r6m kvnv yak cu yak guak ji6k i gat nyimaar, /cic`x bi nysk kv nvn vn wllv. K` guak pvlv vlsx. Cuv wee i n`ran, v xu /c` ji l`r ruac v dux gsaa vmv? Cu yak v ji6k i l`ri jv f`. Cuv wee i ci nyimus r5x mi dux gsaa thal. Cv r5x mi cuay vlsx rialik` kv kuicdu. Cv f` ji6 i wer esl yak. Cu yak lscdv tvvth k` l`r v jv i te kv ram mi dee cam ni gat nyiman? F]] wanv ciex. M22 cikv cop gek` ciexdivn, cuv yak ji6k i n`ran t`mv ci ciex cop, mi waa ji nvn ba ji n`k. Cu yak wee i k` b` w` ni k`? Cuv yak ji6k i b` ji yian rvy t]]x ni. Bi f` lip wanv mv b` ji w` n6x r5x. Cu yak v nhsk. Cuv yak yian rvy t]]xni k` wv ciex k` man. M22 ca moc kv r5x cuv yak n66x r5x kv guvk. Cu yak v cam. Cuv nysk ni k` di]]k. Kv ksr v cu yak guvk b` t kvvl kv r5x. Cu guak yak ji6k i lucni f` guvk. K` /ken yak v lu`x kv f66 bv guvk x6k raar. M22 cv guak wicdv yic kv f66 ca guvk b` t v n`rv, cuv man ji6k i ma. Tee jivth ti xuan rvy t]]xni t]]t. Wer tvxkv. Cu man rs moc g` k mi gsaa. Cuv t]]x tin ca yian w` du l c. Xacv ni f66 tv kv jivth v puc, kuicv jv i ca d` man ni yak yian rvy t]]xni. Cuv t]]x du l c kv du 2c mi diit k` cuv yak yst ni ci6kdv. Cu yak kac nhial kv jsw mi diit k` baarv rs a ca ci7k nhiamdv t7l.

#### Translation: The fox, the hyena and the fire wood

The fox was afraid that the hyena would bite and consume him after everything that had happened. “My beloved nephew, you will not see the sun again,” the hyena informed him one day when they met. The fox, on the other hand, is an extremely cunning creature. “My dear uncle, I have some fantastic news to share with you,” he replied. The hyena said, “Tell me.”

“Your sister just grilled a delicious piece of meat and sent me to call you,” the fox explained. The hyena was overjoyed and cried, “Is there a man who could eat his sister's son?” “Let us return home.” “Uncle, there are people here: If they see you, they will murder you,” the fox warned the hyena as they approached some houses. “Where should I go?” replied the hyena. “I'll tie you together with the firewood and hide you,” the fox said. Please wait for me here. “I'll return with the meat.” The hyena nodded. The fox returned home with some meat and a spoon made of a shell. The hyena ate the meat that the fox placed in his mouth. More meat was sought by the fox. The hyena consumed the meat with the shell the third time. The fox tried but failed to make the hyena puke it up. “There are many scorpions in that firewood beat it!” the fox said to his mother. The mother whacked the firewood with a hard stick. She slammed her fist into the hyena's leg, which screamed. The hyena bolted, but his front leg, which had been shattered by his sister, remained twisted.

#### Analysis

This folktale was utilized by Wantowa communities to criticize selfishness and urge young people not to have such a selfish attitude when forming relationships with others, as the fox did to his uncle hyena many times. This story demonstrates how the humanities must be used in the community to distinguish between being crass and being popular. So, a person offers property to another on the condition that, even if they live together, they must build a socio-economic environment to avoid hungry in the event that they always live happily.

#### 5. *Mier*

Mier v ley mi ciex rvy yieer. K` kv th l l x gul thni la bee raar b`. Jv cetvkv ku0t duxdv f66 lenyv ku0t kv dit. K`



juv b' v kar kvl k' thok duel ciex guvt tin ts nyax, gany, ker-ker, ror, kv ku0t b'. Kv c'x kvl te kv mieth mi ca rialik' ni nhial kiv pu1r'. K' caa diit dial csal thin. K' mier nhskv mieth vlsx. G66rv w' thin, rivkdv f66 thilv gsk ti p'r kiv baarv rs mi w' c'x vms cop. M22 cv guic inv, cuv dusl kv diit dial, k' j66kv kv i gaat maar, f'n g66r' w' gu1th in ca yv esl thin. K' thil f' gsk ti bi cop kv f'. Mi luotv rs, bi dit s'f' moc kv ju1t kvl. K' cukv mat, cua moc ju't. K' cuv rs f]n i bv p'r. Cuv gsaa. Cua j66k i mi wvvi d'k ba ji lv w' lu1k kv nax nhial. M22 ci c'x jivn' cop, cukv p'r w'kv nhial. Min cv mier w' d'k nhial, cu th1lx din v k'p am'ni f66 cikv cop nhial. Cukv nyuur. Kv guath mi tst, cu l't warvgak n66x kv f66 ba ci66t diin dial g]lr piny k' ba pekdivn x1c. Bi dit s'ci6tdv g]r k' kvn dial am'ni m22 cv cop k' mier. Cuv ci6tdv g]r i yvdial.

Kv ksrv cua mieth in ca rialik' n66x nhiamdivn. Cu mier diit thiec i yv v xu /cia miethdu csl s? Cu diit wee i /k1 mi3th vmv v dux xa? Cuv wee i duxd'. Cu diit l't thiec k' cu l't v luoc i v mi3th k' yvn dial. K' cu mier wee i cia lix? V mi3thd'. Cu mier mith kv r5x, liinyv gskivn. M22 cv thusk, cu diit tin dusth k' jvcam kv x00ny. M22 cikv thusk kv mieth bi dit s'jivn bv ju1tdv pusnydv am'ni min cv dusth lsr'. Cu diit p'r lunykv piny k' mier dusth k' rsa kvnv jak]k. Cuv jak]k j66k i bi ciekd' 11r f66 a jv rial gu1th ik' kv kuicd'. A jv duol bieyni tin ksc ksac d'r d66r. Cu jak]k v j66k i b' jv w' lar jv. K' ji'k lscdv kv mier. M22 cv cop ciex mier, cuv ciek mier w' lar ruac mi dsx. Wee i riali yieethni ik', k' bikv car d'r d66r. I ruun bi mier ben. M22 rusn cu mier rs yusr piny. Cuv pvn piny wic yieethni. K' cuv jskdv t71 a cuv rs rvt ni d'r. Cu ciekdv l't w' n66x. Cuv jskdv ben k]c. V jvn la nvn ksn mier te jskdv kv tvt am'ni t'mv kv k7c tee ca ksc ni jv.

### Translation: The Turtle

The turtle, like the crocodile, monitor lizard, several types of lizards, and tortoise, is a riverdwelling animal that belongs to the „kuvt' family. Once upon a time, in heaven, birds planned a fantastic feast. All of the birds wanted to go, and the turtle also wanted to go. He had a reputation for being a terrible glutton. His difficulty was that he lacked the ability to fly to the heavens. “My brothers, I wish to attend the feast with you,” he said to the birds. But I lacked the necessary wings to go there. I thought you might be able to assist me: each bird gives me one of their feathers.” The birds agreed and surrendered their feathers to him. The turtle attempted to fly after repairing the feathers, and it was successful. “Don't worry, if you become tired on that day, we'll help and carry you up,” the birds said. So, when the time came, the turtle embarked on his adventure with the birds. When he becomes fatigued, the birds assist him in ascending to the cloud where the feast had been prepared.

They were all seated. After a while, a piece of paper with each bird's name on it arrived, allowing the organizer to identify the attendees. Each bird scribbled his name on a piece of paper, and the turtle wrote, "I am 'all-of-you' ". The food was delivered by them. “Why don't you call your food?” the turtle said as he began to devour as if all of the food was his. The birds inquired,

"Who do you suppose this meal is for?" The turtle said, "It is mine." “It is for all-of-you,” the organizer told the birds when they inquired about the meal. “Do you see, I am all-of-you,” the turtle added. “It's my food.” While the birds watched, the turtle ate the flesh and loved the meal. The birds ate the leftovers once the turtle was pleased. They were irritated. They left the meal after eating, leaving the turtle alone in heaven with the crow. The crow was dispatched by the turtle to his wife. “Please inform her that I am on my way down. She should provide a safe landing area with plenty of clothes,” "Says the crow." “I'll go tell her,” he said, but he was upset, and he told the turtle's wife something different. “Distribute hard poles across the field to cover it. The turtle will arrive the next day.” The turtle jumped down the next day. He shattered his back after falling on the poles. The wife contacted a doctor, who was able to sew his back, but it remained knotted as it is now.

### Analysis

Elders used to teach their youths that selfishness is the most things that hinder unity in any species by narrating this folktale. Furthermore, this folktale depicts a struggle between turtles and birds as a result of the turtle's forgetting how to reach the heavens and consume food on his own. To demonstrate to future generations that natural resources are not valued equally to human beings, the turtle and birds were compared. The turtle used his own plan to obtain food at the time, but birds were very wise and knew how he would travel to the earth. As a result, the Wantowa community uses this folktale to teach that you should not base your decisions on what you have seen, but rather on what will happen next. In other words, in terms of socioeconomics, someone who has something now will lack something or be in need of several things tomorrow. The elders of Akobo teach and urge their culture to treat individuals equitably, regardless of wealth or poverty.

#### 6. Yak kvnv d'man ni Kacikv

Yak kvnv kacikv, v ran kvnv d'man. Gu1ndivn csalv D]l, k' Mandivn csalv nyiguok. Kacikv luotv ni f66 la yiankv jv, kv civk ca cu wee i cv civk kac, csal kv jv b' i mul. Kv run tee ci w', yak te kv ciexdivn kvnv d'man ni kacik kv gu1ndivn kv mandivn. Kv c'x kvl cikv gu1ndivn j66 i b'ksn w' rvk. Cu gu1ndivn v 17k. M22 l6kv vn gu1ndivn v f66 lar v i gaat ti ci w' rvk ba kv w' luvx kv lsc nyiguol k' bi ran ji ciexdivn cu 17k. K' duxdv f66 cu mandivn wee i a kv w' gatmaar ba w' kvk ni ksn. Cu gu1ndivn v nhsk. Cu gaatkivn jivn w'kv rvk. M22 ci yak kvnv kacik cop rvy rvk, cu kvn v jek i xuvtni dial m'thkv kv ksax bvvl kiv ksax v c1r, kv f66 jakv xuvtni k' bum. Cu kacik math kv ksax a cuv y]x. K' jv maathv ksax kv xu1l.

M22 rusn cu yakv j66k i d'man banv luoc ciexdan. Cuv w33 b' ls ben kssr. Cu yak jivn. M22 cv cop

ciexdivn cuv gulndivn jek cv liw. Kv ksr nini ti tst cu nyiguok yak i gatd', bi d'musr w' luor, ba ji'k gurun ben wuoc. Cu yak tvvth piny. M22 cv cop rvvk cuv d'man jek a cv ysx kv ksax t]]c v ni d''r du]p. Cu yak v ker, larv jv i kacik, kacikv, ker. Cu kacik jv luoc i v jin xa? Cu yak wee i v f'n, gatmaar cuv wee f]] gatmaar, ku lv g7r ni ksaxd'? cu yak v luoc i fey, ca f' jlk v mandan kv f66 ci gulndan liw, ban w' ba ji'kv w' wuoc. Cuv wee i /k1 jv lix, /k1 jv lix. M22 ci fsw baak cu yak v nysk kv thiec. Cuv wee i b' ls ben kv ksr nini d'bar]w. Cu yak jivn. M22 cv cop ciex cuv ruac vms l1r man. Cukv livp am'ni m22 ci nin thuk. Cu nyiguok gatdv ji6k i ba gur ji'k kv wuoc. K' tvmv niv t'mv mi wi kacik v jek biv cam kv f66 cv ben guath wuoc' ji'kni csad' l7k. Am'ni t'mv yak cam v kacikv kv kuic ruac mandivn.

**Translation: The hyena and his brother donkey**

Once upon a time, the hyena and the donkey were brothers. Their father's name was Dsl, and their mother's name was Nyiguok. The hyena and the donkey used to live in the same house with their parents. They told their father one day that they wanted to go to the metropolis. The father was opposed to the notion since he had heard that those who went to the city could be poisoned by the vulture's heart, causing them to disregard their parents. However, his mother persuaded him to let them go. As a result, the hyena and the donkey left their house to travel to the city. When they arrived, they noticed that many people had consumed large amounts of alcohol, which made them feel powerful. The donkey drank till he was completely inebriated. He didn't have any money, so he drank and borrowed.

In the days that followed, the hyena sought to persuade his sibling to return home. The donkey, on the other hand, answered, "Go ahead, I'll follow you." The hyena left and returned to its den. When he returned home, he discovered that his father had recently died. After a few days, the mother instructed the hyena to return with his brother to pay his respects to the deceased father. The hyena returned to the city and discovered the donkey passed out on the street, thoroughly inebriated. "Donkey, wake up!" he yelled. "Who are you?" said the donkey, who was suffering from a horrible hangover. "I am your brother," the hyena explained. "Oh. "Do you want any of my alcohol?" the donkey inquired. "No," the hyena said, "our mother sent me to inform you that our father had died." Let us go pay our respects to him." "I don't understand you," the donkey said. The hyena tried to persuade his brother to accompany him on his journey, but the donkey rebuffed him, saying, "Go ahead, I'll follow you after seven days." The hyena returned home and told their mother everything that had happened. They waited, but the donkey never returned. As a result, nyiguok decided to go ahead with the funeral. "From now on, you will bite the donkeys when you see them because your brother did not come to your father's burial celebration," he instructed the hyena. The hyena continues to attack the donkey because of their mother's remarks.

**Analysis**

The folktale cited above is told by Wantowa elders to describe how a person develops a terrible habit that is unintentionally different from their previous behavior. The main objective of this folktale, which has a connection to societal socioeconomic issues, is to encourage hard labor, strengthen diligence, improve daily living, and alleviate poverty. Laziness, thievery, begging, and reliance on one's character or the family as a whole, on the other hand, are all condemned. As a result, folktales aid in the economic development and advancement of society. Therefore, this folktale tells us that a person who consumes alcohol will experience the problems listed above, as well as becoming weaker, losing their mind, and becoming homeless. Similarly, elders teach and urge their children not to utilize whatever they find as a new object or in a nearby city, and to take care of their own lives as well as the society.

**7. Guak kvnv Ny7xguol kv Nyaxlew**

Kv ruun tee ci w' guak kvnv nyiguol te kv ciexdivn kvvl. Ni cix la w'kv may kv rvc, mi cikv rvc n'k la w' guak kv thal. Bv rvc tin gsw moc kv xvth, bv tin ji'k moc kv thiiir. Mi ci nyiguol ben bv ji6k i bi cam ni ti gsw kiv bi cam ni ti ji'k? Bi nyiguol wee i ba cam ni ti gsw. Bikv miith. Cukv tee thin kv gul l1th mi b''r vlsx, k' xotdv /ca jv x'c v nyiguol. Kv c'x kv l cu nyaxlew ben civx kvvl kv kv. K' nyaxlew x'cv pvl in te kv guak. M22 ci w' may cukv rvckivn n66x, cu guak rvckivn thal. Cuv jv l1t cetkv t1l ee la l'tv k' nyiguol, cuv rvc tin gsw moc kv xvth, k' cuv rvc tin ji'k moc kv thiiir. M22 ci nyaxlew ben, cuv jv ji6k i bi cam rvc ti gsw v ti, kiv bi cam ni rvc ti ji'k v ti? Cu nyaxlew wee i b' cam ni rvc v ji'k v ti. Cu guak v mivr i ca pvl' x1c v nyaxlew. Cuv t77k dsl, cuv wee i v lew v lew, f]] kuaan mith. Cukv mith.

Kv c'x in dsdivn, cuv rvc thal k' cuv th'xkivn w' tsw thar thu]c, k' kuicv jv i tee nyaxlew vn wans. Cuv luoc c'x, cuv rvc tin kskivn w' thal, k' l'tv kv cetkv t1l in ciavax kv. Cu nyaxlew rvc tin ca tsw cam kvn dial. Kv ksrv cuv ben, cukv ben mith kvnv guak. Kv ksrv cukv w' xar rvy kueer kv walee, walee v ji'th mi ca l1t mi la du1ckv kv kvvt, mi ci guak walee y]t, bv wee i tee tut kv mix'thv, bi nyaxlew v loc mi mix'thi cv ri1r. Bv lix ni ruac vms bv wak, bi nyaxlew v thiec

i v xu? Bv wee i tiim' ni ciex maari tee ci liw. Bi nyaxlew v ji6k i /ci l7k ni f66 c' pvlv x1c? Cuv wee i v lew, v lew gat nyimaar gsa ni pvl. Min cv x1c ins vn guak, cu lscdv tvvth kv nyaxlew.

**Translation: The fox, the vulture and the nightjar**

Once upon a time, the vulture and the fox shared a home. They would go fishing every day. The fox would then

cook the fish and deceive the vulture as follows: He'd rub ashes on the good fish and cover the bad ones in oil to make them look better. The fox would ask the vulture if he would eat the good or bad fish at the meal, and the vulture would invariably cry, "I will eat the good fish," but take the nasty ones into his dish. The fox's ploy worked for a long time, and the vulture never discovered the truth.

On the other hand, the night jar came to live with them one night. The night jar was well aware of the fox's deception. They went fishing and returned with the catch. The fox cooked the fish and used the same trick: he dusted ashes on the nice fish and sprayed oil on the bad ones. "Would you like these good fish or those awful fish?" the fox asked the nyanglew as they sat at the table. "These terrible fish are good for me," the night jar replied. The fox was taken aback and thought to himself, "He's figured out my trick," so he grinned and sang, "You'lew' you'lew', it's all right, let us eat." The fox fried the fish another day and concealed some of it in the grass. The fox was unaware that the night jar had appeared in the grass and had seen him. The fox returned home, prepared some more fish, and went about his business as usual.

After eating all of the fish that the fox had concealed in the grass, the night jar returned home and had lunch with the fox. Then they went outside to play hockey with the stick. The fox sang "Every man has secreted" when he hit the rubber ball. "Yes, a lost secret," the night jar replied. The fox sobbed multiple times when he heard those remarks. "Why do you sob?" the night jar inquired. "I'm just remembering my loving ones who have died away," the fox replied. "Isn't it instead that you don't like that I discovered your trick?" the night jar responded. As a result, the fox reasoned, "You'lew', you'lew', son of my sister, crafty are good," and was pleased with night jar: he did not attempt to deceive him again.

### Analysis

By recounting the above folktale, "The fox and the vulture were living together," the author demonstrates how societies should teach their citizens the importance of solidarity in the struggle for survival. As a result, it emphasizes that people who work together may solve a lot of problems inside their organization and even defeats their adversaries. Furthermore, being in the company of wonderful people allows you to have disagreements, just like the fox did with the vulture. However, cunning may have an expiration date after a lengthy life. As a result, this folktale instructs individuals to do what is right for a human being like you rather than offering superfluous things to your family members that the norms and society will not allow. In short, the elders of Nuer societies teach their children that it is easy to have your own problem in society if they cheat their brothers and sisters.

### 8. *Rilx jio*

M22dan v waa la pur ji77k kv k11k bvvl, x`cv pur vlsx. Ruunni dial la civk bvlkivn, k` ri`xkv vlsx. Kv c`x kv cv wicdv car, cuv wee i rilxd` vmv /cv bi thuuk. M22 cv raan nvn t]]xv wax, cuv raan ji6k i mali ji7xd` y]]t mac, mi luot ni f66 wax ji7xd`. Cua bvlkv wax. Kv ksr nini ti tot, cu buoth mi diit tuok k` kv. Am`ni w1lv, guath we cee wax ji7x bvl thin csalkv jv i ystni-ji7xd` mac. Jvn te kam wiccdvix kvnv kaay rvy gaaw`r k` Ayod. M22 cv wicdv g2y, cukv dusl kvnv n`rv ni guak. Cuv guak ji6k i f` ca cuuc kv buoth, b` rsd` ml t raan. Cu guak v ji6k i a jv guvc`, kv f66 guak v t53t. cuv guvkv n66x. K` yusrv kv piny. Cuv wee i eey gat nyimaar, bv jithku tem. Cuv nysk, cuv wee i eey gat nyimaar bv ji kuit, k` bv ji moc piny, bv ji du`c, k` yivnv ji kv dep, k` mi wii ruac bi cuuc kv ji`kni k` raan. Jakni rs k` mix, t]]t bikv lu`x? Cu ji7k wee i k` b` xu lvl gatmaar? Gsaa ni f66 b` kv w` rut k` f66 b` liw kv busth.

### Translation: The wealth of dog

Once upon a time, the Dogs cultivated the land. Sorghum is hoed and harvested with this tool. They had a lot of money. A dog once believed that his prosperity would never stop. When he sees a man burning the dry grass, he challenges him to "fire my granary." The sorghum was completely consumed. A tremendous hunger broke out in the land after only a few days. The dog was well aware that he had committed a grave error. He had a conversation with his fox uncle. "I` am weary by the famine," he told the fox. "I'm going to stay with some people." "Let me look into it first," the fox replied. He was, after all, a fortune teller. He brought a few little compensations and began throwing them. "Ouch! People will chop your ears, my brother, said the

fox. "Ouch!" says the narrator once more. You will be castrated by others. Your food will be thrown to the ground by them. They will thrash you with a rope and beat you. And if you speak up, you will witness all of the horror that they will do against you. Make your ear deafeningly deafeningly deafeningly they`ll have you mastered!" "What shall I do, my brother?" the dog asked, "it is better to bear this evil than to die of hunger." The dogs have been living with people since then.

### Analysis

Elders teach and advice their children not to use their own properties unwisely in the Wantowa district's community, according to this folktale about socio-economic views. The dogs torched his stockpile in the above-mentioned folktale because he assumed there would be no more hunger for him and he didn't see the near future. This folktale instructs society to use property wisely and to consider economics as a cultural tool. Therefore, the elders of this district employed folktales to assist their people as well as the government in socio-economic development. In short, this tribe used to say, "Don't be pleased with today's meal; worry about tomorrow."



Overall, the impoverished are seen as second-class citizens by the wealthy because they can survive.

### 9. *Wut mi J11*

M22dan tv kv wut mi ci kuvvn, k' tv ciexdv. Kv c'x kvl cuv te kv j11 mi ci ben, bee r77l mi n1ln. Cuv cop c'x k' te guln ciex ruup. M22 ci ciek wut in j11 nvn, cuv jv ner. K' nyuurv jv luak, k' muocv jv pi. Niv wans cu ciek gatdv t]lc rvy luak, k' wvv j11 th11 ku'n. M22 ci ku'n tuak, cuv jv nax luak k' te ji7k kssrv, k' te manpalvkv luaak b', k' te dsw mi k]11 thar luaak gulth in ca yian thin. K' gat a t]lc' rvy luak. Cu ciek ku'n l1th nhiam j11'. Cuv luoc dueel. Cu j11 mith, k' ji7k a guicdv. Cuv ji7k moc ku'n. M22 ci manpalvkv v nvn cuv kac thin. Cu ji7k kac k' jv, cu manpalvkv kac nhial. Cuv w' pvn jsk dsw in k]11. Cu dsw p`r k' cv dual, cuv dep put k' cuv kac nhial, cuv gat w' ds1ny. Cu gat liw.

#### **Translation: A traveller man**

Once upon a time, a traveller came to a stop in a homestead when the family's head of household was not there. His wife was present at the time. She greets a visitor and places him in the barn. She offered him a sip of water and prepared some food for him. The woman's baby was sound asleep on a mat in the barn. A dog, a chicken, and a calf were present. A traveller was provided meals by the woman. She returned to her errands. A man began to eat. He was being watched by the dog. He handed the dog some food when he was done. When the chicken noticed, it dashed off to steal some food. It was chased away by the dog. The chicken jumped onto the calf's back. Fearful of the child, the calf trod on him and then a child passes away.

#### **Analysis**

The society of Nuer dwelling in the Wantowa district used the above-mentioned folktale to judge their wrongdoings in ancient times. This folktale is more about what might happen to communities without their knowledge and the necessity to remedy it right away. Elders teach their children through the experience of this folktale that anyone might confront an emergency situation, and that there are many problems that humans face on our planet. As a result, it persuades people that donating something that brings happiness might equally bring grief to society. In short, the elders of Wantowa Woreda passed along this folktale to the younger generation, emphasizing the importance of protecting one's own property, regardless of whether it is visible to others.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

#### **Conclusion**

The goal of this research was to examine the function of Nuer folktales in the context of Wantowa Woreda. As a result, Nuer civilization, like every other society, has its own history, culture, norms, and language in Gambella region. Nuer people are ironic in various genres of folklore, such as folktales, and their folktales appear to be different in approach, to be grateful to the citizens in in the given area. Like other people in Gambella, the Nuer people of Gambella's Wantowa society use various folktales to teach Nuer culture, history, and language, as well as their identity. A part from these folktales in Nuer people of Wantowa woreda serve the following various socio-economic function:

- To indicate how to use folktale to teach a person to use his or her plan to sabotage a dinner with others since he or she must prepare his or her own feast and dine alone as marabou.
- To point out how folktale is used to teach that when someone is hungry, they can use technique to obtain food, just as the fox did in this story.
- To convey story to act as a confirmation of thoughts for others, even if the person enjoys food.
- To show that a person offers property to another on the condition that, even if they live together, they must build a socio-economic environment to avoid hugry in the event that they always live happily.
- To teach and urge children not to utilize whatever they find as a new object or in a nearby city, and to take care of their own lives as well as the society.
- To indicate importance of protecting one's own property, regardless of whether it is visible to others.

#### **Recommendation**

As an attempt is made to present in the analysis part, folktales of Nuer at Wantowa woreda serve various Socio-economic functions in the life of the society. Then, based on the findings the researcher made the following recommends:

- The regional and woreda culture and tourism offices should to promote the socio-economic and other functions of the Nuer folktales.
- To transmit Nuer folktales from generation to generation in formal way folktale should be given attention in the daily communication particularly Nuer community.
- To document and introduce the Nuer folktales, the regional government should support and strengthen the regional tourism office research culture promotion sector.
- Folktales should be incorporated in Educational Curriculum of the region
- Regional folktalesa promotion need to be done by regional government using various social and mainstream Media

- Further researchs should be done on folktales or other genres of folklore like; proverb, epic song, riddles, songs of heroes, religious song, and folksong to depict the socio-cultural life of the society.

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