Daniel A. Nkemleke, "Entry on: Sudika-Mbambi: The Hero Child Who Saved His Tribe by Clyde W. Ford", peer-reviewed by Divine Che Neba and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/189. Entry version as of September 14, 2026.

Clyde W. Ford

Sudika-Mbambi: The Hero Child Who Saved His Tribe

United States (1999)

TAGS: African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Hero(es)

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General information	
Title of the work	Sudika-Mbambi: The Hero Child Who Saved His Tribe
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	Angola
Original Language	Unknown
First Edition Date	1999
First Edition Details	Clyde W. Ford, *The Hero with an African Face: Mythic Wisdom of Traditional Africa*. New York: Bantam Books, 1999, 227 pp.
ISBN	0553105442
Full Date of the Recording of the Story for the Databasey	1999 (date of publication of the book from which the story was summarised)
Genre	Myths
Target Audience	Crossover
Author of the Entry	Daniel A. Nkemleke, University of Yaoundé 1, nkemlekedan@yahoo.com

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Creators

Clyde W. Ford (Author)

Clyde W. Ford is African-American native of New York City. He is the author of three other books: *Where Healing Waters Meet: Touching Mind and Emotion Through the Body* (1989); *Compassionate Touch: The Body's Role in Healing and Recovery* (1993) and *We CAN All Get Along: 50 Steps You Can Take to Help End Racism* (1993). As a prominent guest speaker on American TV, he has taken part in more than 150 TV shows. He has written numerous articles in journals and newspapers. For more on Ford see here (accessed: July 3, 2018).

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Additional information

Origin/Cultural Background/Dating

Origin: Unknown. However, Clyde Ford states in the Preface to his book that "the myths in this book come from numerous sources, principally from the published transcriptions and translations of missionaries, ethnographers, and anthropologists" (p. xiii).

Cultural Background*: The Ambundu, also called the Mbundu, are Bantu-speaking people, who live in Angola's North-West, North of the river Kwanza. Their main language is Kimbundu. Their main activity is agriculture, and their society is matrilineal. That explains why land is inherited through it and access to the land also requires lineage membership. The Mbundus believe in the communication between the living and their ancestors. Furthermore, the Bundu have a diviner, widely called Kimbanda, who communicates with spirits and looks into people's difficulties to determine whether they are linked to sorcery or not. Yet, they celebrate the Mukanda, a passage ritual (carried out during birth, death, puberty, seasonal etc) performed during the dry season.

*Sources:

Mbundu (Ambundu) People: Angola`s Matriarchal Tribe that Ruled the Kingdom of Ndongo and Matamba in the Ancient Kingdom of Kongo, kwekudee-tripdownmemorylane.blogspot.com, June 16, 2013 (accessed: May 6, 2019).

Mbundu, britannica.com (accessed: May 6, 2019).

Summary

The full text of this myth is found in: *The Hero with an African Face: Mythic Wisdom of Traditional Africa* by Clyde W. Ford, in the United States and Canada by Bantam Books, 1999, pp. 41–45). This is only a brief summary of the story. The full text of the myth and others can be read in the book cited above.

A certain Ambundu man, Kimanaueze goes to Luwanda to find work leaving behind his old father and young wife. While he is away, warriors from an enemy tribe, Makishi invade his tribe and kill everyone. Only his wife escapes narrowly and hides in a nearby bush

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till her husband returns. When he returns and learns of the calamity, he decides to stay back in the village and start a new life. Soon they give birth to twin boys who start speaking while still in the womb and continue immediately they are born. The magical twins soon construct a bigger home for their family. The elder twin, Sudika-Mbambi, asks his brother Kabundungulu to stay back and look after their parents while he goes to fight against the Makishi. He raises an army of four supernatural beings called *Kipalendes* on his way to help him in the battle. He assigns the other one to stay back and watches the camp while the rest go with him. In his absence, an old woman visits the camp with her beautiful daughter and challenges the guarding Kipalende to a duel in exchange for her beautiful daughter. In the fight that ensues, the Kipalende is defeated and imprisoned under a huge rock. Sudika-Mbambi, through his supernatural clairvoyance, sees what has happened, stops the fight and rushes to the camp just in time to rescue the dying Kipalende. This happens for three more days, and on the fifth day Sudika-Mbambi sends the three Kipalendes home to help their counterpart while he fights alone. Together, they are able to defeat the old woman and seize her beautiful daughter. Sudika-Mbambi returns and gets married to the beautiful lady.

Analysis

Twin children are viewed differently across world cultures and appear in the mythologies of many cultures. In Africa, there are certain myths associated with twins that have not changed, despite the influence of Western civilisation and globalisation. In some African cultures, like the Yoruba of Nigeria for example, twins are considered a blessing or a curse depending on how they are treated. In other cultures, they are seen to be born with divine powers and extra-ordinary strength which they use to perform heroic deeds for the benefit of their families or communities. In some cases, one of the twins is active and strong while the other is docile and weak. This is the situation with Sudika-Mbambi and his twin brother in the above myth. Sudika-Mbambi single handedly fights and defeats the Makishi invaders while his brother is left behind to take care of their parents.

Other examples of themes and concepts elaborated in the myth include the fight against evil, the need for justice, togetherness, and filial bonding.

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Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Mythologies African Storytelling African Traditions Hero(es)
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Child, children Death Family Heroism Magic powers Old age (Old people) Parents (and children) Revenge Siblings Supernatural creatures (non-classical) Violence
Further Reading	Ford, Clyde W., *The Hero with an African Face: Mythic Wisdom of Traditional Africa,* New York: Bantam Books, 1999. Peek, Philip M., ed., *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed,* Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2011. Ward, Donald, *The Divine Twins: An Indo-European Myth in Germanic Tradition,* California: University of California Press, 1968.

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