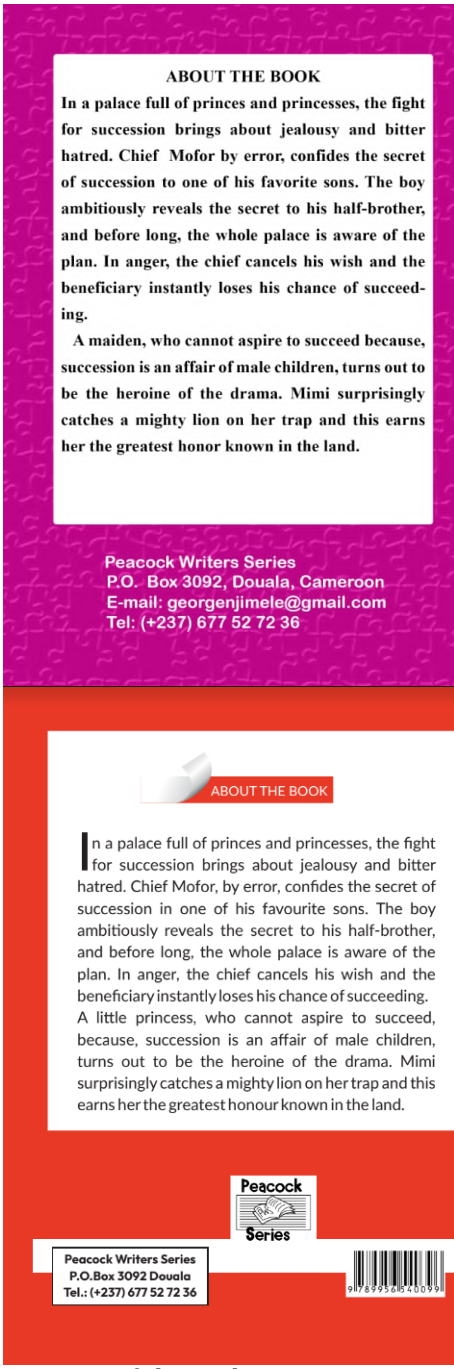
Eleanor A. Dasi, "Entry on: The Princess of Bamba by George Mbona Njimele", peer-reviewed by Divine Che Neba, Daniel A. Nkemleke and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2022). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1547. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

George Mbona Njimele

The Princess of Bamba

Cameroon (2005)

TAGS: African Traditions



Courtesy of the Author.

General information	
Title of the work	The Princess of Bamba
Country of the First Edition	Cameroon
Country/countries of popularity	Cameroon

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Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2005
First Edition Details	George Njimele, *The Princess of Bamba*. Douala: Peacock Writes Series, 2005, 56 pp.
Genre	Drama
Target Audience	Children
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Creators



Courtesy of the Author.

George Mbona Njimele , b. 1973
(Author)

George Njimele was born in Awing, Northwest Region of Cameroon. He attended the University of Buea in Cameroon where he earned a BA in English and French. He started writing at an early age and writes mostly for children and young adults. He took up writing full-time and started the Peacock Writers Series in Cameroon. Some of his works viz, *Madmen and Traitors* (2015), *The Queen of Power* (1998), *Undeserved Suffering* (2008) and *Poverty is Crazy* (2012) are prescribed in the Cameroon school curriculum (literature awareness) for beginners in secondary school. Other of his works include: *King Shaba* (2006), *House of Peace* (2007), *Land of Sweet Meat* (2017), *A Time to Reconcile* (2020). He won the National Poetry Prize in 1995 organised by the National Book Development Council. His other work, *The Lion and the Tortoise and other Stories* was selected for the Cameroon/World Bank Read at Home Project in 2021. He lives with his family in Douala, Cameroon.

Source:

Information provided by the author.

See also *The Forum with George Njimele* at Elie Smith YouTube channel (accessed: September 22, 2022).

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Additional information

Summary

Chief Mofor is in his palace talking with his son Chi. Chi is proud to tell his father that he has completed his chores. His father encourages him to remain hardworking as it will fetch him a reward in future. Then his father reveals to him that he is his favourite son; imploring him to keep it a secret. Chi happily agrees.

Mimi, the Chief's little daughter, comes in. She has just finished helping out her mother in the kitchen. Her father enquires about the kind of man she will like to get married to in future. She emphasizes a rich man. But her father tells her to be careful because not all rich men are good.

Chi, Mimi and Tita, their step brother, are playing in the yard. Mimi soon leaves them. Tita is leading in the game they are playing and Chi soon gets jealous and they start an argument about who is best. Chi boasts of his intelligence to Tita so it does not matter if Tita wins him in a game. In the course of the argument, Chi inadvertently reveals the secret his father told him about him being his favourite. Tita is sad and complains of unfair treatment. When Chi realizes his mistake, he begs Tita not to tell anyone. Tita agrees though still unhappy.

Later back at home, Mimi and Chi are sitting by their mother's kitchen arguing about who is more important, their father or their mother. Chi holds that their father is more important. He brings up a number of arguments to support his point of view but in the process of doing so, he says odd things about their mother. When he realizes this, he begs his sister not to tell their mother. She agrees and leaves but later tells the mother who becomes furious at Chi. She starves him for a week as punishment. Chi is angry at his sister and beats her up for betraying him.

Some time later, he goes to greet his father. On telling his father the reason his mother refused him food, the chief summons his mother and tells her that no matter the child's offence, she does not have to starve him. She agrees to give him food on the condition that he apologises and does some punishment, which he agrees to. However, the father also reproaches him for revealing their secret. He adds that he is disappointed and does not consider him the favourite any more. The next day, Chi confronts Tita for revealing the secret he had confided in him. He is now at logger heads with both Mimi and Tita.

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But they blame him for being talkative and for gossipping and that he is the cause of his demise.

A few months after, news goes around that Mimi's trap has caught a lion. Mimi confirms this news to her father while acknowledging that Chi taught her how to set traps. The chief is thrilled and appoints Mimi head of women's affairs and his second in command. A big feast is organised in her honour. Everyone celebrates except for Chi who regrets that he had lost his position to Mimi because of bad conduct.

Analysis

Most, if not all royal families in traditional African set-ups are polygamous in nature. Amongst the many children that the chief may have, there is always a favourite, to whom he would bequeath the throne. However, this favourite is expected to be of good behaviour to merit what is intended for him. Chi, in the story, loses his position as favourite due to bad conduct: boastfulness, prejudice and volubility.

That notwithstanding, the story raises questions on whether secrets should be revealed to children since they may not be mature enough to keep them and/or may simply be excited to reveal them. None of the characters in the story can keep a secret. Secrets are a source of conflicts since they may carry some information that may not be pleasing to others. Tita and Chi, in the story, are both sons of the chief but he has a softer spot for Chi, making Tita feel hurt.

Lastly, the story brings to light the importance of wild game in traditional Africa. Divine favour, strength and might are sometimes determined by what game one brings home. Mimi brings home a lion, which in itself is a symbol of strength and royalty, and this earns her a position of honour.

In all, the story emphasises the need for young adults to obey instructions at all times for little mistakes can cause a life-time regret.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

African Traditions

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Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Boys Desires Emotions Family Girls Hierarchy Parents (and children) Relationships Siblings Tradition
Further Reading	Twum-Danso, Afua, "Reciprocity, Respect and Responsibility: The 3Rs underlying Parent-Child Relationships in Ghana and the implications for children's rights", *The international Journal of Children's Rights* 17.3 (2009): 415–432.
Addenda	*Liste des manuels scolaires autorisés en 2012/2013. Enseignement Maternel et Primaire*, official textbook list for nursery and primary education published by the Ministry of Basic Education of Republic of Cameroon (the scholar year 2012/2013) includes *The Princess of Bamba* as readers for Primary Four.

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