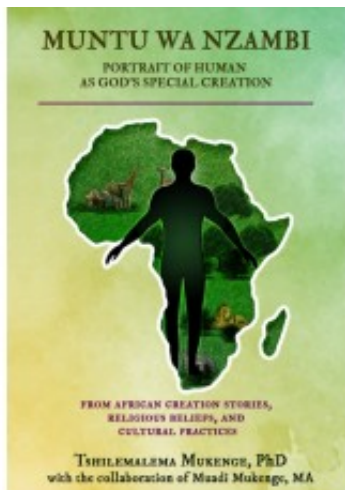


Muntu Wa Nzambi: PORTRAIT OF HUMAN AS GOD'S SPECIAL CREATION



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Short Description

This book provides a comprehensive, substantiated, response to a puzzling ontological question: “What specifically characterizes the human being as God’s special creation?”

Description

Muntu Wa Nzambi provides a comprehensive, substantiated, response to a puzzling ontological question: “What specifically characterizes the human being as God’s special creation?” An examination of creation stories, religious beliefs, and cultural practices from across Africa allowed for identifying numerous themes common to many African ethnic groups, from among them: (1) the Luba, Kongo, Mongo, Yansi, Bashi, Hema, and Lendu – from the Congo; and (2) ancient Egyptians, Bambara and Fulani, Dogon, Mande, Yoruba, Igbos, Gikuyu, and Zulu - from other parts of Africa. In turn, a comparative analysis of the themes made it possible to construct a multifaceted character; first identifiable as a spiritual being in a physical body, full of vitality and a creative mind, capable of conceptualizing ideas and expressing them through articulate language, behavioral adjustments, or concrete actions or objects. The human character, offspring of African theology, is a fervent devotee of life-giving and life-sustaining spiritual forces – the Creator, divinities, ancestors, and nature spirits. He/she is community-bound, protected by inalienable natural rights, subject to moral restraints, and accountable for moral violations. As a family and kinship builder, he/she also seeks to establish and preserve community territorial autonomy, national unity, and sovereign control over the national homeland. He/she strives to secure free access to the community’s natural resources and positions his/her self as steward of these very resources through its

judicious use, as well as spiritual and totemic partnerships. Animated by an inquisitive mind, the human of African creation stories is an inspired explorer and transformer of physical spaces from near and from far, and thereby a civilization builder wherever he/she lives. This book and its personified presentation of beliefs and customs of African peoples will be inspirational not only to the learner, but also to the specialist who wants a fresh synthetic perspective on African culture and spirituality.

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Author

Tshilemalema Mukenge (former Léonard Mukenge), is a retired Professor, and Professor Emeritus from Morris Brown College, in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. While at Morris Brown, he founded the Africana Studies Department and served as its Chair. His research interests to the present have expanded from family and religion among the Luba of Congo (1967), to culture and customs of the Congo (2002), and now to the portrait of Human from the African universe of creation stories and religious beliefs. In recent years, he has developed a strong interest in reformulating written academic knowledge from Luba ethnography into a language that the general public can understand and appreciate. Among his publications, he is the author of *Culture and Customs of the Congo*, by Greenwood Press. Born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dr. Mukenge is the founder and leader of Coins of Hope, a charitable ministry in Congo that provides education to the youth and functional literacy to adults in preventive health and sustainable farming. Dr. Mukenge holds the PhD in Social Anthropology from McGill University, Montreal, Canada. He is married to Dr. Ida Rousseau Mukenge, Professor of Sociology, Morehouse College, in Atlanta. They have four children Ndaya (deceased), Muadi, Tshimpo (wife Jewett), and Malongo; and three grandchildren: Mfumu Ngoyi, Mulaya kudi Maweja, and Kazadi Mukumbaji.

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