



Misleading Portrayals in David Rubadiri's "Stanley Meets Mutesa"

Chinedu Ogoke^{1*}

¹Department of English and Communications Studies, Federal University Otuoke

*Corresponding Author

Chinedu Ogoke

Department of English and
Communications Studies, Federal
University Otuoke

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Abstract: This work interprets the poem "Stanley Meets Mutesa" the way it has never been interpreted. The poem has enjoyed favorable comments and reviews, and remains one of the student's most cherished poems in Africa. Students see their world through the poem. It is fortunate to be a recommended poem from high school up to the tertiary level, its unhelpful underlying background story undetected. The poem celebrates an African King Mutesa 1, the king of Buganda who receives Stanley, a European. The tale drawn is so colorful and harmless. The African reader is only aware that Stanley and his potters endure a difficult journey through the African jungle, a jungle that is not more brutal than the page they read the information from. The reader discovers that Stanley is met by a confident, tall African king, who speaks his language to the European visitor, then the "West is let in." It thus symbolizes the friendly reception given to a worthy visitor. Examination of the historical background to the poem uncovers the identities of the two actors, who are Mutesa 1 and Henry Morton Stanley. Morton Stanley found good company in Leopold II of Belgium, who hosted the partitioning of Africa and under whose quest millions of Africans in the Congo were murdered. The poem is therefore a product of compromise. It glorifies what people of conscience should have aversion for. The people position taken in this undertaking is that this revelation should guide scholars' appreciation of the poem. The research does not call for an entirely new position on the poem, but that works of literature should be thoroughly scrutinized. It becomes obvious that literature can act as important guide in a society. Years of research actually led this writer to this discovery. Interest groups have to play a role in the proper education of the populace, and more work needs to be done in this area. Books, journal articles and newspaper publications were relied on for this article.

Keywords: Literature, Narrative Poetry, Colonial, Historical Context, Slavery, Resources.

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INTRODUCTION

It is important to scrutinize literatures put out for consumption. This is especially so when the works are recommended texts nationally or internationally. Over a generation, a poem like "Stanley Meets Mutesa" has been among the collection of African literary works that introduced indigenous writing when the natives took administrative control

of their countries. The poem, like many others, has naturally been enjoying good reviews. Though a work of fiction it is a historical literary work that is accepted as containing historical truths. What the poem projects is quite different from the reality. When the historical contexts of the two personalities in the poem are examined, the reader becomes confronted with shocking revelations. Without such

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exercise, the reader is misled to make the wrong assumptions. For instance, the man Mutesa has hardly faced any scrutiny in any discourse. He has in fact been shielded by various scholars. This essay is designed to correct that falsehood. The portrayal of Henry Morton Stanley in the poem is also worrisome. African readers and experts are obliged to make enquiries and obtain background information about some of the literary books and texts they read. Who were Mutesa and Stanley?

Mutesa was someone who interfered in the succession disputes in neighboring kingdoms, like making troops available to one ruler to weaken the other. The purpose was to strip rivals of any power as much as possible. He built relationships with Europeans, leading a stream of them being his guests. His friendship network began to include Europeans and Arabs who started to show up at his palace. Notable names were Khamis bin Abdullahi, Tipu Tip, James Augustus Grant and John Hanning Speke. Speke's visit was facilitated by a friend of Mutesa's Rumanyika Orugundu I, the king of the kingdom of Karagwe. It opened the door for Henry Morton Stanley, who was received in 1875. General Charles Gordon, Pasha, governor of Equatoria province, the Khediva of Egypt's delegations frequented the Buganda kingdom. Charles Chaille-Long was there in 1874. The processes were often initiated by Mutesa. Mutesa certainly contracted a venereal disease, for which he was cured. What however is contentious is if homosexuality was at play. Expectedly, foreign influences were imposed on the kingdom of Buganda, thereby threatening the kingdom's political, religious and cultural institutions.

In addition, Mutesa is curiously being spared criticism of heinous crimes he committed against humanity. Observers are so lenient that they ignore the executions the man ordered in Buganda. He first resorted to imprisoning his brothers on the suspicion that they posed threats to his reign. There are disclosures that two of his brothers, were his father's favorites for the stool. ... especially had been a perfect candidate for the throne. Mutesa's father may have been doubtful of Mutesa's abilities. The father's intentions resonated with the majority of the people of Buganda, making his choice after his father's passing unwelcome. As the absolute ruler Stanley became, he had the freedom to frame charges against people he disliked, and eliminated them. There has not been any independent enquiry into what transpired in all of the cases. Instead, commentators have maintained silence on the fate of Mutesa's blood relations, whose lives Mutesa cut short. Having exhibited that form of recklessness, Mutesa went further to execute an unknown number of people.

His role in the Trans-Saharan Slave and the Trans-Atlantic Trade qualifies him to be named among the enemies of humanity. It affirms that he contributed in no small measure in the displacement of people of the east African region and in different parts of the world. There is strong evidence that, not only did people perish in their millions during slavery, the hunting grounds widened and the grim experiences of those who were affected rose. It could have been averted, as not all African rulers in that time participated in slavery, even when slave trading corridors ran close to their territories. People are still traumatized by the outcome of those events. Mutesa was not unaware of the rampage championed by his associates like Tipu Tip and Khamis. He had firsthand information of the magnitude and the end game of trading in human beings and possessing humans as properties. Children could not venture outside to play. Fear reigned and Mutesa ruled. Clearly, he had the reputation of building alliances with individuals associated with vice. Tip and Khamis, who operated in Mutesa's vicinity went exclusively for Africans, who were the only inhabitants in the area (Kenny).

Who was Henry Morton Stanley? Stanley was the man Leopold II of Belgium betted on to help him suppress the local people in the Congo region and to secure the area for economic and cultural exploration. Stanley had a career and skill of taming difficult terrains for European benefit and amusement. He made himself available to Leopold II, who was an uncle of Queen Victoria. It should be recalled that a great lake is named Lake Victoria in east Africa. There is Victoria Garden City as well as Victoria Island in Lagos, Nigeria. It was in the exercise of the colonial enterprise around the world that these places and over 2000 others bear Queen Victoria's name. Chinua Achebe was named after Prince Albert, the German husband of Victoria. The world has come to know that these places, today, are perpetually devastated.

Relationship between History and Literature

Literature is one medium for conveying history. More than that, Traveyan posits that "the Bible and the Classics are history and literature in one, so closely interwoven, that it is impossible to say where history ends and literature begins" (82-86). Omri discloses that the "study of history through literature and the study of literature as a product of history allow a dialectic vantage point of considerable richness". He goes further to say that "the movement of peoples and ideas tend to shape and reshape literary production and reception." One is simply attached to the other. Gossman has researched a lot about this connection, assessing the place of literature in historiography. He also discusses the place of history in literary studies. He says that "history is critically relevant to the study of literature in many

ways." He informs the reader that "written texts have the capacity to survive in a more or less fixed form through time, reading them usually requires, sooner or later, some degree of historical reconstruction. He clarifies the issue as follows: "The historical knowledge that was applied to the elucidation of texts was itself derived, of course, from texts of one kind or another" (). Literature thus has essential features of literature when talk about historical context.

According to Flemming, historical context is "all the details of the time and place in which a situation occurs, and those details are what enable us to interpret and analyse works or events of the past, or even the future, rather than merely judge them by contemporary standards"(). In this connection, Parker writes, "Whether you are reading for pleasure or purpose, your experience can be enhanced by knowing the historical context of what you are reading" (). She explains further, saying, "When we look at political context, we look at who was ruling the country in the text, what the government was and if there was any political unrest. For instance, in *The War of the Worlds*, the unnamed protagonist questions if the Martian's behavior on earth is any different to the English behavior in the colonies and one of the political contexts to research would be Britain's Victorian empire" ().

"Rather than treating a text as an isolated work, context allows you to place literature within the world that shaped it" (RevionDojo). It is one medium of preserving historical experiences; events passed down over the generations in written form, through novels, poems and plays. When a work is not separated from its author, history becomes very relevant to literature. The reader then obtains more information about the account. What transpired before the story was written can be observed in the work. We can then learn from literature the experiences and fashion and attitudes to life of ancient people who lived at an earlier time. Literature and history serve the same purpose, but literature adds color to history. According to Andrews, it is also necessary to look closely at the context in which the author puts his characters in. The same process happens here. The characters may be put into a historical context that illustrates that period of time and this can help the readers understand decisions and situations that may happen inside the book.

A writer may choose to present his or her work in various ways. The writer may produce a work of non-fiction or fiction. He or she may prefer a novel, a work of drama, an academic work or a poem. The work being analyzed here is a poem. There are different types of poems. These can be ballad, epic, ... and ... Stanley Meets Mutesa, the text being discussed here is an epic poem as well as a narrative poem. It is

an epic poem because it celebrates two great historical individuals. This also makes it a historical poem. On another hand, it is a narrative poem. It is a narrative poem because it recounts an event, beginning from one point to another.

Narrative Poetry

Recounts an event. It is structured in verse form, but makes use of element of prose like characterization, plot and setting. The reader follows the story through the voice of the story teller. It can dispense with the rhyme scheme. Most narrative poems keep to the epic tradition. It commits to informing the reader what took place in times past. It is therefore also historical. The inspiration comes from how the narrator feels about the achievements of a legendary personality or of some persons. It can be dramatic and shares a lot with ballads and idylls. Even after the passage of time, like in most stories, the accounts appear like insider reports. The narrator usually is not a participant in the events, apart from keeping records of the episodes. It hardly dwells on the weaknesses of the main character. It is optional whether it is factual or not. Some are expected to be based on facts to enjoy favorable opinions from the reader. When this is the case, the narrator's biases cannot be ruled out ().

The actions of the characters shape future events in history. The form in the distant past was the oral tradition form where recitation was the norm ().

It utilizes various figures of speech like metonymy, personification, alliteration, etc. Popular narrative poems are "The Ring and the Book" by Robert Browning, "Idylls of the King" by Tennyson, Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," "Metamorphoses by Ovid, "Hudibras" by Samuel Buttler, "The Dunciad" and "Rape of the Lock" by Alexander Pope, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, etc. (). With the foregoing knowledge, it becomes important to reopen some events in the lives of the two men represented in the poem, Mutesa I and Stanley. We will observe their credentials to understand what qualifies them to be elevated to this stage. In an exercise like this one, one question that arises is what do we recognize that will entitle them to make them have so many admirers. We begin again with Mutesa I, the Bugandan king.

King Mutesa was one of the offspring of Kabaka Summa II Kaloma Kasinji of Buganda in present day Uganda. His mother was one of the 148 recognized wives of his father. To the succession to the throne, one of Mutesa's brothers Kajumba made an impression on the father. The other contender was Kiyimba. Mutesa was quite an unlikely candidate. Minders of the kingdom, led by Katikkiro Kayira

anticipating Kajumba turning out to be a strong-willed king, in a departure from adhering to a king's wishes in the succession process, chose Mutesa I. Mutesa I had a conciliatory nature. The generality of the people, anyway, were displeased by the decision (Kenny).

Despite the strong disapproval, Mutesa successfully steered his regime effectively. He continuously relocated his seat of government. The king indulged in executions of people while resident at Kabinja. The distinction of being a center of executions account for the name of the capital of the place, which means fatal snake bite. To curtail threats to his throne, Mutesa turned his attention to rival princes whom he incarcerated, with Kayira's assistance, on Kisimui Island. He spent his early years on the throne consolidating power. There was plan by some senior officials to replace him with Prince Kiyimba. The people identified were executed alongside the main sources of the threats, Prince Kajumba and Prince Kiyimba (Kenny).

The surrounding regions continued to be theaters of wars, as Mutesa's ambition, like his ancestor's, of territorial enlargement, grew. His interests lay especially in trade and control of trade routes. He earnestly sought for weapons, gun powder, clothing, salt, copper wire, farming implements and knives in exchange for Bugandan bananas, slaves, fish and ivory. He was also determined to keep away powerful and potential adversaries. They came from the direction of the coast of east Africa, where lay Zanzibar, and where individuals like Tipu Tip operated. Tip was reputed to own 10,000 slaves. Mutesa was also committed to eliminating middle men as well as to starve the kingdom of Bunyoro of those contacts (Kenny).

King Mutesa also tried to increase his influence over areas like the Nnalubaale lake, islands of Sesse and Bavuma. He would become a Moslem, as a result of direct interactions with Arab traders like Khamis bin Abdullahi. In 1875, Col. Earnest Litant de Bellefonds W. Gordon was sending pleas to Mutesa to reconsider granting the sultan of Zanzibar access to Buganda's ivory, but to give the Khedivate of Egypt that privilege. Seeking protection against the calculations of the Khedivate of Egypt, who was intent on subduing Buganda, Mutesa switched to a course of action, which was to seek a bond with England, a stronger nation, to restrain the Khediva. He attempted correspondence with the English ruler through an open letter authored by Stanley. Areas of immediate needs were in Christian missionary work. The points raised were Christian conversion of the local people, siting of health centers and modern buildings, special services and engagement in agricultural activities. The bearer of the letter Col.

Earnest Linant Bellefonds was killed in Sudan, but the letter was delivered to Gordon in England and the aim of getting it published was achieved, as it appeared in the Daily Telegraph in 1875. Stanley had come in contact with Linant at Mutesa's palace (Kenny).

The letter motivated Protestant and Catholic missionaries who responded two years later, in 1877. T. Shergold Smith of the Church Mission Society (CMS) led the likes of Rev. C.T. Wilson, Henry Cole and Edward John Baxter. The Catholic Church followed in 1879, represented by the White Fathers. There were Brother Delmas Amans and Fr. Simeon Lourdel Marpel. Mutesa misled the Catholics, Protestants and Moslems into believing each team was the most favored. He was perceived as a worthy ally, given reports each group sent to its home country. Eventually, instead of colonization, Buganda was given the concession of a protected territory by Britain. He passed on in 1884, at the age of 47. He has been severally celebrated. He was honored in 2007 with a university Mutesa 1 Royal University. The record says it is for the progress in the educational sector in his time. The benefits are still being felt in the country (Kenny).

Buganda underwent tremendous change in his lifetime. There was also internal stability in the kingdom. The propagation of foreign religions is cited also as one of the great developments during his reign. Criticism of him dwells on his romance with foreigners, an act that resulted in interference in the affairs of the kingdom. Mutesa was obsessed with visits from Europeans and Arabs and pressed for recognition by those people. One after the other, they arrived at his palace. He obviously embarked on appeasement drives to sustain their friendship. Agreements were reached with people who plundered east Africa and who instituted structures that continue to devastate the region and the rest of Africa. He openly advertised his subservient nature by appealing in a British newspaper to Queen Victoria of England to come and lay claim to a part of Africa. Mutesa dressed it up as a plea for missionary presence. It was a shift from the operating fashion of people like Sir Walter Raleigh, John White and Richard Haklyut the Younger pleading with their leaders and people to go to places some of them had spied on to colonize. Mutesa's step was cheering news to the British people, as it pandered to their pride and importance. It was a period Africa was going through capture by Europe. It was also a period when Sarah Baartman was paraded in European streets naked. This was the era of the engineering of racism and racial classification of people. Mutesa's antics rather inspired those Europeans (Kenny). Among Mutesa's friends was Henry Morton Stanley that David Rubadiri's poem "Stanley Meets Mutesa" celebrates.

Henry Morton Stanley

Stanley was of Welsh origin. He did not grow up with any of his parents or siblings. The mother left the marriage with Rowland's father without taking Rowlands with her. The father died shortly after Rowland's birth. He only found out he was at the same so-called poor's house with his mother and siblings, who were also inmates. It was the nearest they came close. The man who should look after him, along with some boys in the poor's house molested Rowlands occasionally (Smith). He gained passage to the United States of America.

According to his account, he started a conversation with a stranger in front of the stranger's shop. In New Orleans, and was fortunate that the man granted his request for "a job for your boy" as he put it, but adopted him, as the man was childless. Rowlands says he dropped his name and took the man's name Henry Morton Stanley. Some observers have concluded that Rowlands' story at this time was faulty. Morton Stanley's time of death contradicts Rowland's account (SLOTOW 558-559). The inaccuracies were quite many.

He had a short carrier in the army, even though he is listed as the only man to fight in the Confederate army, in the Union army and in the American navy. His role in the battlefield changed as he became a war correspondent, writing for the New York Herald (SLOTOW 558-559).

He did not cross over, but was captured by the Unionists. He adjusted quickly to this job. The work gave him a perspective about expeditions and colonizing strategies that would be useful eventually. He knew how to fit out his team and how to engage the locals and how to find his way through the tropical jungle. His trips with various forces to Constantinople, Persia and even Abyssinia, shaped his understanding of colonization. First, the publisher of New York Herald placed a bet on Stanley to find David Livingstone, which Stanley did, after travelling for ... and with over 114 men. What each porter carried was indeed not light. Many succumbed to diseases or weaknesses. They were slowed down by the terrain and other challenges. Mosquito bites and exhaustion took a toll on them. Stanley's skills and experience were in high demand.

Leopold II, dissatisfied by the outcomes of missions he sponsored, was too elated to engage Stanley. Stanley had very impressive records. He commissioned Stanley to help him bring the Congo under Belgian control. Both men had disregard for the people's entitlements. They upset the lives of the natives. Stanley and Leopold II were incurably ... They did not bother about trespassing into people's lands (Greaves). Recounting Stanley's tactics in

dealing with the local people, Murray writes, "After prolonged negotiations, Stanley and his Ki-Kongo translator eventually convince the locals to trade their labour in exchange for gifts of cloth, beads and rum" (1-3). Stanley, definitely was as shroud as Leopold II. He proceeded with his goal of stamping European hold on the Congo, in spite of the consequences. Murray carefully puts it clearer, when he remarks, American explorer Henry Morton Stanley was one of the most important figures in the foundation and development of the Congo Free State. He was also one of the most consistently popular European travel writers of the late nineteenth century, and his bestselling narratives of African expeditions did more than any other literary source to foster what Patrick Brantlinger has labeled the 'myth of the Dark Continent'. Stanley's bestsellers, such as *Through the Dark Continent* (1878) and *In Darkest Africa* (1890), were characterized by dramatic and violent encounters with the indigenous population and fleeting impressions. [1]

Stanley worked with determination. His "preferred formula," Murray says, "was a sensational quest towards an ostensible goal: the search for Livingstone or the hunt for the sources of the Nile" [1-2]. Stanley was so familiar with the Congo environment that, at a time, he "narrated the experiences of a resident colonizer rather than the fleeting impressions of an itinerant explorer (Murray 1-2). He and Leopold II subjected the local peoples to extreme distress, leading to the deaths of over 4 million people (Murray 1). Murray reveals that "[h]istorians and biographers have given significant attention to Stanley's work in the Congo - especially in relation to subsequent scandals and Atrocities" [1-3]. Murray continues, remarking,

Stanley's references to tempering the 'obstinacy' of the African bush and reducing 'grim defiance to perfect submission' clearly highlight the close relationship between the taming of the environment and the subordination of local populations. But he also quickly moves beyond the immediate colonial content to make a more general point about the 'power of man' to make his mark upon an indifferent landscape. (Murray 4)

People used sticks to clear the paths for Stanley while he supervised the work. We learn more from Murray, who writes, Stanley narrates his experiences as an evangelist for the gospel of work. Waxing lyrical over the 'inspiring sound' made by his own men ('striking picks, ringing hoes, metallic strokes of crowbars, and dull thudding of sledgehammers [4].

It was unreasonable for Stanley to have agreed to give Leopold II the results the man wanted.

Indeed, this echoes Stanley's reports to Leopold II about the resources of the place, which were made so palatable that Leopold knew he had the right person for the job at hand. Stanley wrote to Leopold II, was pouring from the trees. It was pouring so hard that he watched in awe. He wrote about how his garments were soaked in them. Fruits nestled on trees. When he was still talking about rubber and fruits, there was build up from copper. At the top of the wealth was ivory. In an indirect reference to that action, Murray notes.

Stanley directly quotes from *Sartor Resartus* in a self-justificatory fashion as an epigram to Chapter Three of *The Congo*: How often have we seen some such adventurer, and much censured wanderer, light on some outlying and neglected province, the hidden treasures of which he first discovered, and kept proclaiming till the general eyes and effort were directed thither, and the conquest was completed, thereby in these his seemingly aimless rambles planting new standards and founding new habitable colonies [4].

In his writings, he revealed his motivations, meditating on Thomas Carlyle and Hegel. Murray thus notes.

In the original passage, Carlyle had specifically located these 'new habitable colonies' in the immeasurable circumambient realm of Nothingness and Night' [...] a formulation that chimes with Hegel's characterization of Africa as a 'land of childhood ... enveloped in the dark mantle of Night' [4]

Such persuasive words coming from an individual like Stanley would make anyone stake fortunes in the colonial enterprise. He made it appear like anyone keen on acquiring fortune would be helping himself. He was amazed that the world was neglecting what that region in Africa had to offer. Stanley's and other explorers' campaigns were seen as worthy causes in Europe and the USA. As Murray reports.

The search for Livingstone and the subsequent 'Anglo-American' Expedition across the African continent had been portrayed in public as the combined achievements of the Anglo-Saxon race and as a collaboration between the British and American presses. [8]

In effect, Stanley went from being a possible candidate for the job of searching for David Livingstone to being a strong voice for colonization and to dismiss the local people's rights over their territory (Hochschild). Stanley and the other explorers acted naturally as if the people were not

good enough to be the lords of a place so bestowed with such natural resources. Everything pointed to dispossession of lands. The implying message was that the Europeans were chosen to lead. It was similar to what the likes of Sir Walter Raleigh promoted for a people that thirsted for foreign goods. Stanley broke it down to Leopold II. Would he be a spectator while the British or French carted away everything? Certainly, Stanley had to help keep British or French fingers away from Congo. Leopold should not hesitate at all to fully engage in something as important as taking over a place waiting to be occupied. He had searched everywhere to see any sign of Leopold II's claim to the land and found none. He should hasten before the door closed on acquisitions (Smith).

He was also offering his services and tended to magnify the real situations. When Leopold II shopped for Stanley, he had no doubt Stanley's potentials. Therefore, the people of the Congo region brought Stanley and Leopold II together. Leopold fits into the leader who would provide the instruments Stanley would require to subdue the people, and Stanley the means Leopold II would require to execute his plans (Murray 13). The only person standing in his way was himself. Stanley had been told by leaders of industry to pack his bags and embark on journeys. This time, it would be the leader of a European country. Stanley had the reputation and the ruthless credentials. He had been a colonial character (Smith).

They cared less about trespassing in other people's territories. It would involve a set of wars. It would be marked by resistance. Stanley and Leopold II cared less about trespassing in other people's territories. In fact, the likes of Leopold II simply employed people to do the work of securing lands and resources of others for themselves. Like the English, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and French in the Americas, they did not recognize the local people's rights over those areas and the resources in them. There had been models before. It only had to follow a pattern. There are no new methods. The cover had to be religious, civilizing and humanitarian. It had to have a soft nomenclature. It had to be polished with the best image possible (Greaves).

By the time Leopold II and Stanley were able to achieve their goals, millions of lives had been wasted. They shut out of their minds the ethnic compositions of the people they intended to bring under colonial supervision. There were no normal consultations. They forced people to abandon traditional (Hochschild).

Murray assesses the situation, when he observes.

Like the exploration narrative, colonial spectacles had a performative and perlocutionary force: they enacted and enforced the imperial fantasies they claimed to represent. By naturalizing the 'primitive' nature of African culture, the modernity and maturity of European civilization was enshrined and vindicated. (murray12)

Murray writes further about "Stanley's exploitative tactics in securing treaties with Congolese chiefs and sovereigns" [12]. Stanley knew what the instructions were, even though it appeared noble. There was hardly anything noble in the types of correspondences Stanley and Leopold II had. Any dissenting African leader or individual was marked as a nuisance that must not be tolerated. Stanley was in the news and was mobile because he was laying the foundations of European take over of east and central Africa. If Europeans had to venture into these areas, then they had to know the source of the Nile, the Congo river and Lake Tangayinka. They needed to work with some information in moving inland in those areas. Stanley documented that type of information, confirmation or correcting the reports of earlier explorers (Smith).

The lands contained people with names, distinct cultures and beliefs. They gave priority to boundaries recognized by their fellow Europeans and not the Africans. The geographical lines were the designs of the Europeans. They ignored the protestations of the indigenous people. They were merchants. Therefore, the people had the misfortune of being blessed with so many natural resources.

The people are stripped of their territories, having coming into the notice of some Europeans. There were new confrontations in the areas where slave raids had recently taken place. As one of the chief actors in the process, Stanley could count his blessings, which led to his being the first governor of the Congo Free State. For Stanley, it was easy to have a mix up of people, even when their roots were diverse and to treat the local people who opposed him as irrational people and to take legal measures to silence them (Hochschild).

Dunu recounts that, in 1879, Leopold II deftly collapsed the IAA into his new creation, International Association of the Congo (IAC). Leopold II also directed Henry Morton Stanley to establish treaties with local leaders that effectively ceded their land to the Belgian crown (not the Belgian state) and to build a railroad and establish the groundwork for a colonial state. The result was the creation of the Congo.

Analysis of "Stanley Meets Mutesa"

In the poem, the speaker tries to recount what he assumes transpired when King Mutesa welcomed to his palace in 1875 Henry Morton Stanley, the colonial agent. It shows that Stanley's journey was not a pleasure trip. In the poem, Stanley visits a restful and regal King Mutesa (Poemhunter, line 51-57). If there is any anxiety on the part of the African king, it is mild or subdued. In his analysis, Adoki remarks that Stanley experiences "exhaustion" while there is conditional hospitality on the part of the African. Clearly, the analysis modifies the reality of that encounter and its depiction in the poem (109). The mood may not be a cheerful one. The European and the African are at peace with each other. Adoki says that the predominant perspective is the African perspective is an improvement and change from the authorial standpoint that had previously been Western. In that regard, the African status is not a subordinate one. Even if that is true, it does not give Africa any advantage. It does not put the African in charge of his affairs. The Africans do not get what is hoped for, if we should accept this argument (Adoki 109).

In the second stanza of the poem, the commentator goes on to imply that the poet is being fair to the colonialists by making the reader of the poem aware of the risks and losses associated with colonialism. This is observed in the lines The sun fierce and scorching/With it rose their spirits/With its fall their hopes/As each day sweated their bodies dry and/Flies clung in clumps on their sweat scented backs./Such was the march And the hot season just breaking (Poemhunter, line 12-18). If we replace colonialism with enslavement or murder, we may perhaps understand how illogical the observation is. Interestingly, the remark unlocks and exposes the poet as a sympathizer of colonialism. It is a clear approval of the quest of the European. Man does not leave his place of residence on a given day in pursuit of the means of survival without encountering difficulties. The reader is persuaded to be a witness to a reasonable venture that is unfolding. There is the usual grit and labor to conclude a task, which is what is happening in the poem. We have the lines: Such a time of it, they had/This heat of the day/The chill of the night/The chill of the night/And the mosquitoes that followed/.../They bound for a kingdom (Poemhunter, line 1-6).

According to Adoki, in his analysis of the poem, "Western culture is represented by Stanley's exploring party while Mutesa's Buganda stands for African traditional culture". (109). This is too simplistic and removed from the historical context. It is true when Adoki writes.

Personification is the device used in these lines. As a result, this mood shows that there is a hesitation and an indecision in the mind of these African inhabitants. This uncertainty is revealed since children look with difficulty and concentration. A look, full of suspicion because there is a doubt related to the arrival of the foreigner, 'Stanley' (113).

It is a proven fact that it was Mutesa who set in motion the visits by foreigners to his palace. It contradicts Adoki's opinion. In his perception, 'silent nods' are signs of mutual respect or a friendly recognition, acknowledging another's presence without being pushed. It implies that the reception reserved is full of distrust. A long look.(114)

The poem is hinged on the belief in celebration of endurance and hard work. The severity of the deaths of some of the carriers is not really felt, contrary to Adoki's argument, as they are bound for a kingdom in a manner that is not quite hostile. The lines The village looks on behind banana groves,/Children peer behind reed fences. Such was the welcome/No singing women to chaunt a welcome/Or drums to greet the white ambassador;/Only a few silent nods from aged faces/And one rumbling drum roll/To summon Mutesa's court to parley/For the country was not sure bear that out (Poemhunter, line 42-49). The narration does not fault the fate that befalls the carriers, who are local people of the Congo region. There is a prize to be won, which the reader will witness soon. There is a foreshadowing, given the title of the poem and the line "they are bound for a kingdom." With the use of the pronouns 'their' and 'they', we view the players collectively. There is the case of shared burden. There is "their tempers high and hot, the sun fierce and scorching/with its fall their hopes. (Poemhunter, line 11-12). The carriers are as anxious as the Europeans for a glorious outcome. The manner in which the story teller relates the event, there is little room to blame anyone, even though we may have our biases as African readers due to our perception of colonialism. "The sun fierce and scorching" is a condition experienced by every one of them; no one is exempted.

The words "its khaki leader in front" bring the European leader of the delegation into view. We read: "He the spirit that inspired/he the light of hope" (Poemhunter, line 24-25) opens up another perspective. It is clear to the mind that the European is playing his well-suited leadership role. He is doing it diligently, and his profile is growing. Hope may have eluded the team. The may have been swarmed with doubts, but there is relief now. Confidence has been restored, with his appearance. A leadership position is occupied. He is the eyes of the delegation, and awakens hope in the delegation. He not only

beams the light and points to the right direction, he symbolizes light. Any local person who may know the way is eliminated and left out in the narrative. Stanley knows this way. He can spare himself the employment of a guide. It could be that the poet did not choose his characters wisely. What he promotes blends with many European commentators amplify. Murray refers to this thinking when he discloses how, in Stanley's adventure, "the cult of Anglo-Saxon manliness was transformed into the more expansive and ecumenical 'gospel of enterprise (Murray 8)

This is the type of man who set out to meet an African leader. The transformed Stanley gets a favorable coverage. The atmosphere described in the poem "Stanley Meets Mutesa" is only unfavorable to the man and his entourage, as the poet speaker's prayer is with this visitor. The poet omits the violence, the displacements and anxieties caused so many people because of this man' adventures. They always thought of the lands and resources of the local people as objects to possess. The poet speaker obviously supplanted Mutesa and Stanley with other personalities and sweetened the narration. The poet peeled off all those reprehensible aspects of their lives. We do not read about the leader raising a stick or his voice; yet he is not a weak leader. Duties had already been delegated and things happen like clockwork.

The lines "The Nile and the Nyanza/Lay like two twins" (Poemhunter, line 28-29) is a signal that they are in the open and worst times are almost over. It is the beginning of a new phase. This is also what one conceives when one is delighted by a condition. The feeling is contagious and passes onto the reader who is now a real convert of the poet speaker's message, which is the glorification of an adventure. He writes that Heart beat faster/Loads felt lighter/As the cool water lapt their sore feet/No more the dread of hungry hyenas /But only tales of valor when/At Mutesa's court fires are lit/No more the burning heat of the day/But song, laughter and dance (113-114) is a celebration of the achievement of a goal. The trekkers are overwhelmed with joy. There is a reason to dance. There is a reason to sing. It is curious that King Mutesa's court sits at the edge of the town. They passed no one on the way before they reached Mutesa's palace. Does Mutesa take his security so lightly that his warriors bearing arms are not seen anywhere, even if they may not threaten the visitors. Adoki, again, misinterprets the situon when he asserts "[a]s a matter of fact, this can lead to a conflict because there is a meeting of two different ways of life" (113). Conflict cannot arise during a friendly visit by friends who are committed to their relationship. We must admit that Mutesa must be on his guard, which does not pose any threat to any of the two parties. At the sight of Mutesa's palace, the story

begins to take its true shape. It is the pattern a peace meeting takes. There is hesitation in Mutesa's court that is not understood. Women and children fix their gazes on the strangers.

When the arrival of a group of over 100 people bearing undisclosed baggage arrive in a place, then the visitors are not perceived as people who could pose danger to the hosts. There is a roll of drums inside Mutesa's palace and, when Mutesa emerges, he is not rude. In reality, the movement of Stanley and his men in Mutesa's domain has Mutesa's approval. Mutesa's friendly disposition to Europeans and Arabs in his time was common knowledge. The visitors felt gratified. The poet does not treat it like a visit to a king; the fellow that directs them to the king's palace deserves mention; unless Stanley has a special gift of finding out without assistance. No one who spotted the party turned round to inform the king of the presence of a large number of strangers. Which means does Mutesa use to ascertain the status or nature of the visitors? Adoki's assertion that Stanley's height put the West at disadvantage is false. Perhaps, the advantage was erased shortly after the meeting. There is no study that can back such claim. In reality, physical strength or diplomacy may have failed Buganda or Africa as small England dictated to Buganda and Uganda how to live their lives. Is Adoki and other commentators who mention physical height unable to note that Stanley became the first governor of the Congo Free State, a position that dwarfed that of the king of Buganda? It is to suggest that Senegal under Abdou Diouf, the tallest president in the world at the man's reign intimidated other presidents, thereby making Senegal the most powerful country in the world. Would it work for Malawi that just elected someone who is taller than any president in the world, at 2 meters? Adoki views Mutesa's use of Swahili to address Stanley as signifying courage is not convincing. It might be a piece of music in the ears of some Africans, but we should not forget we have not been told if Mutesa already could speak the language of the stranger or he is speaking to someone he knows understands Swahili. Stanley is not his neighbor. Any friendly sound made by Mutesa at this time obviously can be interpreted as salutation. One must agree with Adoki, when he mentions Congo's flora and fauna with the following words:

They are important economic drivers supporting agriculture and fishing. Referring to "the green countryside", it symbolises agricultural harvests and features and mineral resources. Hence, these elements are some factors of wealth or economic impact that the visitors are looking for. (115)

What Adoki is not saying is that Mutesa was complicit in the danger that lay ahead of the eastern

region with the type of companions Mutesa had, among them Stanley.

The narrative perspective is more omniscient than the historical event could have been reported at the time of occurrence. Whatever it was, it raises a question. Is there the chance that there is a witness to this meeting, who is now giving the readers information on what transpires between Stanley and Mutesa?

The arrangement of the names shows that Stanley comes first. It is not difficult to know that the visit is a planned event. In the actual history, Mutesa encouraged visits by Europeans and Arabs. He had to do it, he thought, if he had to protect his kingdom. One of the visits recorded was the one by Morton Stanley. Mutesa's rating among the Europeans was very high. Eventually, Buganda was not spared European colonization. What was written on a paper was illogical. Buganda was not given a waiver.

The use of Swahili, instead of English cannot be counted as a triumph for Mutesa and Africa. Besides, was it used at a point of Bugandan and African dominance over Europe? What happened is that English took up a position of superiority in communication in Buganda. The Europeans made their languages the languages of communication in the colonies, relegating the indigenous languages. Overtime, many African languages are threatened and going extinct. It is also doubtful that Mutesa spoke Swahili to Stanley. On an important occasion as the publication of Mutesa's open letter to Victoria of England, in which he pleaded for British involvement in the development of his kingdom, he should have used Luganda. Stanley to whom Swahili was spoken, actually wrote Mutesa's letter to Victoria in English.

African Resistance to Foreign Intervention

The Berlin gathering, where Africa was shared among European countries, at the invitation of Leopold II, took place outside Africa. It was a painful period for Africa. The Europeans spent considerable time concluding the process of occupation in most African territories. They were not given an open check, like Rubadiri tries to portray, or like Mutesa did in real life. The amount of resistance is often downplayed or attributed to European attempts to dissuade African leaders from continuing with slavery trade. Like slave revolts in Haiti, by the Maroons in Jamaica, by the Nathaniel Bacon Revolt, the uprising by Denmark Versey, Igbo Landing, John Brown's act and Nat Turner's, people in Africa did not permit intrusion in their lands. They may have refrained from attacking Stanley and Livingstone, for obvious reasons, but they understood the dangers of allowing any form of takeover of their territories. The local people tried to stop them in Chinua Achebe's

Things Fall Apart (Achebe 23). The story did not change in real life in Algeria, in Sudan, in the Congo, where Leopold II and Stanley operated, with the Benin Empire, in Itsekiri land, in Yoruba land and in Igbo land. Kosoko and Akintoye tried to shut out the British in Lagos. The heavy losses and casualties recorded in Benin tell the story of what happened. Colonialism could not take hold in Ethiopia, as Ras Menelik II and John IV proved stubborn. They were not welcomed by Shaka of Zululand and Mizilikazi of South Africa. There was strong opposition by the Asantehene of Asante land. The armed struggle in Algeria generated interest and commentary around the world. It was confrontation with the British that led to the exiling of Jaja of Opobo. The Ekumeku was against British colonization attempts in Igbo land persisted for 33 years. It was for these reasons that the British formed the West African Frontier Force, moving with large numbers of infantry men from India and, in Benin, from Fulani and Zimbabwean fighters.

In Stanley's letter to Leopold II, Stanley talked about unusual sizes and abundance of fruits and other products. Stanley let him know there was more to exploit in any region of the world. He appeared to hint that the resources had grown beyond what any European could contemplate. The resources simply needed people to exploit them. Mutesa listed a lot of favors he thinks Queen Vitoria could do to improve the economy and the educational and health services in Buganda (Greaves). It was a plea from a poor country to a rich country. Interestingly, Stanley sat down with Mutesa to draft the letter. Due to Mutesa's inferior status, it would be beneath the queen to be communicated to directly. A different channel is resorted to. The letter is harmful to the image of Africa; an African king begging for assistance, Asking for the Christianization and islamization of his people is Mutesa's best way of saying the African traditional religion and the African cultures are defective and should be replaced. There is therefore a vacuum to be filled. The new culture to be imbibed can come from Arabia or England ()

Ekumeku War

An even that has not received the attention it deserves in history is the Ekumeku rebellion that took place between the late 1880s and 1914. The resistance took the form of guerilla warfare and rattled the British Royal Company and the British colonial administration. The Royal Niger Company had a moderate attitude to its relationship with the locals before the Berlin Conference. Following agreements reached at the conference, British grip became formalized. The British utilized the courts, force of arms and other means of administration to control trade, to enforce laws and to repress the people. Seeing that local authority was slipping away,

the people of the Igbo areas of Anioma. Onicha, Ndoni and Obosi were obliged to respond to the colonial excesses appropriately. Some of them closed ranks, but it led to the burning down of most of Obosi and Asaba towns. An underground movement of mainly young men emerged, with inferior weapons, they fought the British forces (Igbafe). According to Igbafe, "British rule led to regulations against aspects of the people's religious and political practices and to the establishment of native courts."

The British excuse was that they wanted to stamp out human ritual practices. They opened many fronts and struck unseen. It eased off for a while, but started again. The British carried out punitive measures against relations of members, members and communities perceived to have sympathies for the movement. There was respite for the colonial administration eventually around 1914. They now issued instructions. It was something the people knew they had to eliminate or live with it forever. They would realize that it would be difficult to uproot (Igbafe).

There were hired fighters from India and Zimbabwe ready to go in anytime to confront the indigenous people. In Igbo land, there were conflicts because the local people rejected the idea of taking orders from strangers. How the local people in Igbo land operated and how they struck British positions; it confounded the British. They believed their communities were under siege by foreigners. Each community fought independently to eradicate the threat. It meant that the British were fighting in many fronts, as there were communities... It was really frustrating for the British, even when superior firepower faced local people wielding cutlasses and other crude weapons. Instructions or authority did not come from one ruler or king. The British did not understand and did not know the depth of the leadership structure (Igbafe).

Ethiopia and European Colonial Designs

Among the local people in Africa, the Ethiopians stand out in their opposition to foreign rule. They had always had a message for Europeans and other foreign invaders. The message was that the European presence would not be tolerated in Ethiopia. Ethiopia remained shut to those groups until 1936 when Mussolini invaded the country. The Ethiopians placed a lot of value on their sovereignty. They tried to make the Europeans stop considering Ethiopia as a candidate for occupation. Therefore, they were meant to see that they went to the wrong place. Consequently, the Europeans paused in their Ethiopia quests. Though the Ethiopian leader committed society, to avoid capture, the British became war weary and discontinued whatever intentions they had for Ethiopia. The cost of

occupying such stubborn may have been considered too high. They were usually nervous about engaging the Ethiopians. The Ethiopians showed determination when they fought the British between 1867 and 1868. During the war, the Ethiopians thought they could achieve victory as they charged at the British contingent that consisted Indian and African fighters with cutlasses against canons and other strong firearms. They were lenient and allowed some captured British soldiers and their commander *to live*. The Ethiopian leader eventually surrendered and was executed by the British (Bizuneh 25-34, Rodgers 128-135). The Ethiopians would be involved in another war with Italians when Menelik II and John IV, at the battle of Adowa, defeated and chased away the Italians. Subsequently, the Europeans skipped Ethiopia, until 1936 (Gebrekidan 463-46)

Who Was David Rubadiri?

He was born 19th July 1930 and died 15th September 2018. He was a Malawian poet, novelist, playwright, educationist and diplomat. He is celebrated and remembered for his contributions to African literature and human rights activism. From Malawi, he was born in Tanganyika, in Tanzania, where his father worked as a colonial civil servant. His formative years were spent in Uganda, where he attended high school, enrolling at Makerere University. He acquired degrees later in Britain. On his return to Malawi, he served as principal of Soche Hill Teachers' College between 1962 and 1963. He was nominated his country's representative to both the United States of America and the United Nations the following year by Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi. He was received by Lyndon Johnson of the US. Rubadiri however disagreed with Banda's intolerance of dissent and dictatorial tendencies, opting to be life president and leaning towards European colonists like Portugal against countries like Angola and Mozambique. He withdrew from the diplomatic service and chose exile, an experience that lasted for 30 years, until 1994, when Banda was overthrown. The years of exile was spent in the classroom, in Uganda and Nigeria He was reappointed by Bakili Muluzi, the president of Malawi as the Malawian ambassador to the United Nations in 1994. As a mark of honor, he was made the Vice Chancellor of the University of Malawi in 2000. On Ribadiri's literary output and preoccupation, Chipembere lists several of them. He writes.

Rubadiri's primary literary genre was poetry, characterized by vivid imagery, dramatic tension, and explorations of African landscapes, colonial legacies, and postcolonial challenges. His most prominent collection, *An African Thunderstorm and Other Poems* (East African Publishing House, 2004), comprises 23 poems, including the widely anthologized "An African Thunderstorm," which

depicts a village's frantic response to an approaching storm as a metaphor for upheaval. [...] This work draws on personal and biographical elements to critique repression under colonial and postcolonial regimes.

On fiction," Lwanda states

Rubadiri produced *No Bride Price*, a novel of political intrigue set in a newly independent African state, centering on the tragic arc of Lombe, an ambitious civil servant navigating corruption and power struggles within government corridors.

CONCLUSION

The poem "Stanley Meets Mutesa" is one of the frequently-encountered poems in the classrooms in Africa; from high school to the university. Students carry the memories of what they read and were taught with them all their lives. Interestingly, the content comes from an African poet who was once Malawi's ambassador to the USA. The poet used the occasion of his reception by Lyndon Johnson the USA president to beg for aid for his country, thereby presenting himself as a hungry man and his people as people incapable of improving their lives without kneeling down before foreigners. This partly explains why foreigners act with contempt while dealing with Africans. It is a trait the poet has in common with the historical Mutesa. Mutesa was helped by the historical Stanley to compose a letter, pleading with the queen of England to come and deliver the people of Buganda from poverty and heathenism. Being the Malawian ambassador to the USA, the poet transfers his attitude to his poetry. Stanley represents both the US and Britain, being a citizen of the two countries. David Rubadiri is seized by his connections to Uganda and the USA no to realize the implications of drafting such a poem with misleading content.

It has been pointed out in this work that King Mutesa 1 continues to escape scrutiny by literary scholars. Observers should stop to ponder if Mutesa 1 deserves all the great tales woven in his name. A man who murdered his brothers to maintain his grip on power, and who turned the city he chose as his capital into a slaughter house, should not get positive publicity. People should not expand their sweet narrative on him by raising a stature of him and naming a university after him. Was he always a favorite of the people? Did his image undergo objective reviews? Was he not the same man who issued orders for the execution of numerous people? Was he not the man who decided to turn over Buganda to Britain? Was he not the man who befriended men with terrible reputations and invited them to his palace? The man not only had strong links with slave hunters, he participated in the hunting and selling of humans. One personality after the other visited him and he flaunted his relationships with

them. Stanley was one of them. That Stanley was an agent of colonialism, who was in partnership with the notorious King Leopold II of Belgium. Leopold II's and Stanley's activities disrupted the lives of people in the Congo area, leading to the deaths of millions of them. The people have been handed political systems that continue to make the region unstable. Scholars have to revisit some of these works.

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