In other words, the emphasis of such work falls on Livingstone’s thoughts and his activities, and the authorities (Bridges excepted; also see Ross 2002:216-17) don’t explore the larger contexts for Livingstone’s ideas about Africa or the contemporaneous global events that helped shape these ideas.

More importantly, the authorities fail to conceptualize nineteenth-century Central Africa as a complex place teeming with activities, cultures, invididuals, motives, and forces that far exceed Livingstone’s activities and that certainly do not focus all on him.

The issue, particularly in thinking in terms of locally-based Central African actors extends as well to some important historical scholarship (e.g., Bennett 1986:113-14), and even some landmark studies limit their scope, ultimatley, to the porters, interpreters, and guides that assisted travelers like Livingstone (see Simpson 1976) or to the most famous “intermediaries” that worked with Livingstone specifically, such as Chuma, Wekotani, Susi, and Wainwright (Kennedy 2013:170ff., see also 159-94; cf. Bridges 1987:191).

Such approaches, especially those cited in the previous paragraph, follow what is evident of Livingstone’s own assessment of the period covered by the 1870 Field Diary (17 August 1870-22 March 1871).

In revising this diary to create the corresponding segment of the Unyanyembe Journal (1866-72), as we detail elsewhere in this edition, Livingstone compressed the bulk of the diary – and all the rich local cultural detail contained therein – to a few longeurs and just over three pages in the journal and massively expanded the diary’s last segement to focus on his impressions as he traveled in eastern Congolese region of Manyema between Bambarre and Nyangwe.

Such inversion gives a good indication of what Livingstone valued and thought was worth discarding.