Underlying complexities of origin and identity aside, Livingstone’s act in the 1870 Field Diary of naming the local population and fixing it in at Bambarre or more regionally has an important discursive implication.

The act enables Livingstone to introduce a key set of protagonists into his narrative, to characterize them, and, as Livingstone and many others after him do, to point to “the isolation in which they live” (1870a:[1], cf., e.g., Northrup 1988:19-20).

Against these protagonists, Livingstone’s diary pits the Arab traders and their followers.

Livingstone distinguishes this group as the “Ujijians” or “Ujijian traders” (1870a:[69]; 1870e:XIII; 1870i:XXXV, XLII; 1871e:CI), thereby associating them with what would soon become the East African gateway to and easternmost edge of Tippu Tip’s Central African trading empire (see above).

In other words, Livingstone composes the 1870 Field Diary from a place that he categorizes as isolated, that lacks overarching local political mechanisms to regulate affairs, and that, as noted earlier, effectively lies at the edge of the Sultan of Zanzibar’s sphere of influence.

In such a distant and lawless place, the 1870 Field Diary suggests by turns, someone who refrains from violence can be a friend of the local population (1870a:[49]), a coward (1870e:XIII), or a dependant of the Arab traders and so no friend at all.

No one underscores this last point better than Livingstone himself.

The 1870 Field Diary contains numerous instances of Livingstone turning to the Arab trader Mohamad Bogharib for aid (e.g., 1870i:XLII) and especially memorable references to the kindness of Katomba, another Arab trader, (1871e:LXXXIX-XCIV, cf. 1866-72:[649]).

Most striking of all, Livingstone himself gifts his “double barrelled gun” (1871e:XCI) to Katomba in return for this kindness – an odd decision indeed given 1870 Field Diary’s endless descriptions of Arab and Arab-led violence.