



January 19, 2007

African followers of Livingstone

I should like to refer to the interesting letter, captioned, “Dr. Livingstone, I presume?”, by my two good friends Kanti and Nirmal and wonder if the local saying “*tel papa tel piti*” applies in this case!. However, they have made very interesting *exposés* on those so called “European heroes of Africa”.

I still do not understand why, after thirty years of independence. In our school history books, European murderers like Vasco Da Gama, Stanley etc... are considered as heroes while the Africans and Asians who resisted them for taking over their land and its riches are not. Secondly, please accept my congratulation for allowing your readers the right of reply.

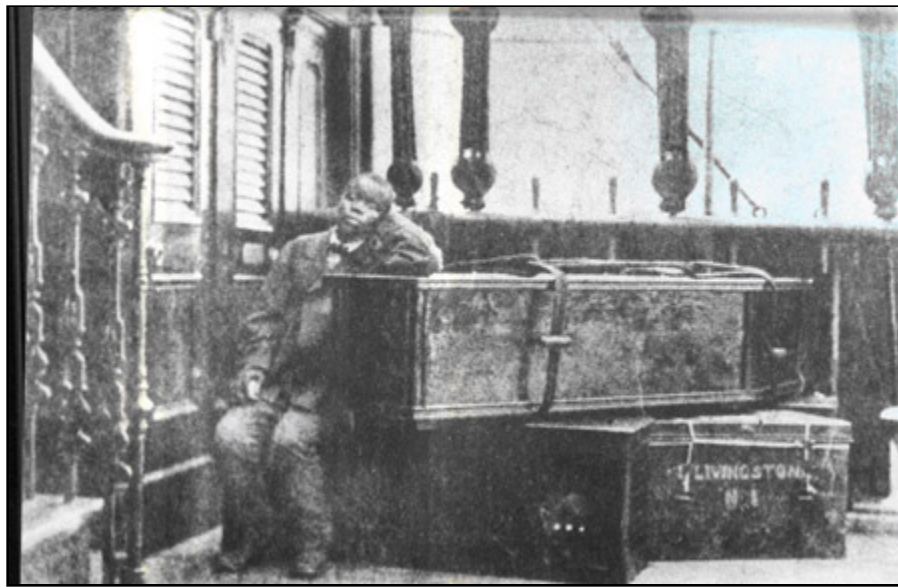
For the benefit of your readers, especially students of history, I would like, in particular, to enlighten them more on Susi and Chuma, two of the faithful African followers of Livingstone as mentioned by my two good friends. Abdulah Susi was born in the well-wooded region of Shupanga in the Zambezi. He joined the Livingstone’s expedition as a wood cutter. After Livingstone demise Susi joined as a vital figure in Henry Morton Stanley’s expedition in the search for the River Nile. Stanley was born in Denbigh (little fortress in Welsh) as “John Rowlands Bastards” (according to his birth certificate in the St Hilary Church in the parish of Llanrhos in North Wales). He was the illegitimate son of John Rowland and Elizabeth Parry. Stanley later described Susi as his “chief and confidential servant.” Later Susi became a caravan leader; in 1886 he was baptised in Zanzibar and took the name of David and died five years later in the same place.

James Chuma was born in 1850. After working with Livingstone, he became a caravan leader and died in 1882. However, it is interesting to note that both Susi and Chama went to study at the Wilson’s College in Nashik, situated in the northeast of Bombay and studied under Dr. John Wilson, one of Scotland’s most famous sons. More African followers of Livingstone studied at Dr. Wilson’s College; it is worth mentioning them as their story has been kept under the carpet by Europeans historians. They were: Mathew Wellington, Benjamin Rutton, Richard Rotton, Mambuiki and Jacob Wainright... all were free slaves rescued by the Royal Navy. Mathew Wellington (formerly Chengwimbe of the Yao tribe of Nyasaland) was the first to study with the C M S Mission in Freretown (named after the Irishman Sir Henry Edward Bartle Frere former governor of Bombay) near Mombasa.

Some European historians have wrongly attributed their study in India as the “prophetic intended vision of Livingstone”. This is now proved totally false because Livingstone had no intention of sending them to India. They arrived there because Livingstone could not sell his boat *Lady Hyassa* in East Africa. He then sailed to Bombay with those Africans as crew reaching there on 13th June 1864. He could not sell her for her costs price of £6,000. Livingstone then sailed to England leaving *Lady Hyassa* for sale and left the Africans at Wislon’s College to acquire a strong “British” education and disciplines including cricket!.

Dr Wilson was born on December 11, 1804 in Berwickshire, Scotland, and always wanted to work in India. In 1827 he reflected his longing in a letter, I quote: “*I rejoice when I think I shall live, labour*

and die in India.” Soon after he arrived, Dr Wilson became a scholar of Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindustani, Gujarati, Farsi and Greek. During their stay in Nashik, the Africans were taught student of theology, surgery, anatomy and physics. Mathew Wellington came out as the best students in anatomy and became an embalmer and, Jacob Wainwright’s forte was theology. Livingstone arrived back in India from London on 11th September 1865 and sold his boat for only £2,300. He left India on January 1966 for Zanzibar with all his African followers. Arriving back in Africa those Africans were referred to as “Bombayans” and most were based at CMS Mission at Freretown as potential theologians. They were surprisingly, at Stanley’s initiation, ordered to carry stores and medical supplies for Livingstone’s group in Tabora in western Tanzania. Later, when Livingstone died in the village of Chief Chitambo in Ilala Zambia they had a three days’s mourning. The Africans then decided to embalm the body so as to carry it to East Africa. Carrus Farrar and Farjalla removed the heart and internal organs and buried it under a tree. Mathew Wellington managed in fifteen days to preserve the body with salt and brandy and let it matured in the sun. 60 Africans started the long and hazardous journey carrying the body up to Bagamoyo. On the way 10 died and a few were lost. The attendant Mathew Wellington was amongst those who accompanied his body to Zanzibar. On 16th April 1874, 11 months after his death, Livingstone’s body, accompanied by Jacob Wainwright, finally reached Southampton, England. During the funeral in Westminster Abbey, Wainwright was amongst the pallbearers. He threw a palm branch as his last deed into his master’s grave.



Jacob Wainwright arriving at Southampton with Dr Livingstone’s coffin, 16th April 1874 (Livingstone, Memorial, Blantyre, Malawi)



Susi and Chuma showing Livingstone's diaries to his friends at Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire, England. June 1874, (R. Allen. Royal Geographical Society)

As for Chuma and Sussi they were sent to England to bring Livingstone diaries and other personal effects to Livingstone's relatives. They arrived in England in May 1874 and stayed in Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire. Their journey was financed by James Young (alias Paraffin Young) a Scottish Chemical Engineer.

After the demise of Livingstone, his famous "African Remedy" the three "Cs" "Commerce, Christianity and Civilization" became secondary to the new added "C" - Conquest! As can be seen, then, there are no remedies to Africa, the cradle of humanity!

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