


RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Woman between Us: Sarah Nakimu Nalwanga and the Founding of Uganda's Anglican Tradition

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(Received 25 May 2023; revised 5 August 2023; accepted 5 August 2023)

Abstract

There has always been a debate about the location and role of women during the persecution of Christians under Mwangi II's first reign as Kabaka of Buganda. Kabaka is the Luganda equivalent of the English word king. The debate is partly fueled by a total absence of women from the pictures of Ugandans historically referred to as the Uganda Martyrs. This paper uses archival research to tell the story of an African woman who, in her adult life, married two devout Anglicans, in whose lives she was actively involved, laying a foundation for Uganda's Anglican tradition. Evidence shows the first Anglican baptism, teacher and burial in Uganda are traced to her first marriage, which ended in early 1884 with the death of her husband from smallpox. Nakimu Nalwanga Sarah would have been the first martyr if not for the timely discovery that she was Mwangi's relative. Still, as a punishment, she was ordered to witness the cruel burning of the first martyrs on January 31, 1885. She married again in a marriage that produced Uganda's first catechist, deacon and priest. Her second husband was part of a team that completed the translation of the first Luganda Bible in 1895.

Keywords: baptism, burial, East Africa, mission, persecution, Uganda, widowhood, women

On November 7, 1917, Nakimu Nalwanga Sarah died and was buried three days later at Namirembe, Kampala, Uganda, by the Revd George Knyfton Baskerville, the Archdeacon of the Church of Uganda, a province of the Anglican Communion.¹ Nakimu, a feminine Luganda name whose meaning is closer to the English word *oneness*, was the widow of the clergyman and translator Lutamaguzi Henry Wright, who had died on June 11, 1913. Lutamaguzi was her second husband following the death of her first husband to smallpox in 1884. In this article, I argue that Nakimu was

¹*The Church Missionary Intelligencer*, vol. 16 (3) (London: Church Missionary Society, 1891), p. 895. Available through Adam Matthew Digital.



not a typical housewife in early colonial Buganda but was actively involved in her two husbands' lives as they planted and nurtured the seeds of Anglicanism in what is today the strongest Anglican province in sub-Saharan Africa.² She first stepped into the limelight at the advent of Anglicanism in Uganda as the prospective wife of Mukasa (later also Firipo or Philip) and, in the following years, worked behind two young men to contribute to the foundation of Uganda's Anglican tradition.

Mukasa, whom she married shortly afterward, was Uganda's first Anglican when he was baptized in 1882.³ While Mukasa was a permanent resident of the mission station established in Nateete, Kampala, Uganda, in 1877, he soon left after he was offered an opportunity to earn a wife. He, however, returned after an absence of about two months and with his prospective wife, then known as Nakimu Nalwanga. The two were married in a union that the historian Sarah Geraldina Stock described as 'Christ's way',⁴ and had a child not long afterward. With her help, Revd Philip O'Flaherty performed the first Christian burial on her first husband, who unfortunately suddenly died. A widow and a single mother, Nakimu did not lose hope of finding love again, and married Lutamaguzi before the outbreak of Christian persecution in January 1885.

Building onto where Mukasa stopped, and supported by Nakimu, Lutamaguzi became a key leader in Uganda's first three Christian decades. He was called, by the historian Eugene Stock,⁵ the leading Muganda clergyman.⁶ The linguist George Lawrence Pilkington – with whom he translated the first Luganda Bible, completed on June 28, 1895⁷ – considered him 'a very clever man who might have been a big chief in Buganda, but preferred the position of a simple teacher'.⁸ Ordained the first (of three) priests in Uganda on May 31, 1896, by Bishop Alfred R. Tucker, the bishop said afterward that while other priests were deployed in rural areas, provisions were made for Lutamaguzi to stay in the capital because of his value in translation work.⁹ Moving on from the adage that behind every successful man is a woman, this article argues that Nakimu was heavily involved in the lives of the men she married, and their credit ought to be shared with her.

The article is sourced mostly from the Adam Matthew Digital Archive. It starts by clarifying issues surrounding the names of key people involved.

Nakimu Nalwanga Sarah's name and marital life are confusing depending on the source one looks at, raising the issue of whether she is the same person who married

²Andrew McKinnon, 'Demography of Anglicans in Sub-Saharan Africa: Estimating the Population of Anglicans in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda', *Journal of Anglican Studies* 18.1 (2020), pp. 42-60 (42).

³Alexina Mackay Harrison, *The Story of the Life of Mackay of Uganda* (New York: A.C. Armstrong & Son, 1895), p. 223.

⁴Sarah Geraldina Stock, *The Story of Uganda and the Victoria Nyanza Mission* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1892), p. 79.

⁵Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, its Men and its Work* (4 vols.; London: Church Missionary Society Salisbury Square, 1836-1928), IV, p. 86.

⁶*Muganda* is a person from Buganda kingdom; two or more are called *Baganda*. Their culture is called *Ganda* or sometimes *Kiganda*.

⁷Louis Timothy Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo: Language, Literacy, and Bible Translation in Buganda 1875-1931' (PhD dissertation, Indiana University, 2008), p. 134.

⁸Charles F. Harford-Battersby, *Pilkington of Uganda* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1899), p. 130.

⁹Alfred R. Tucker, *Eighteen Years in Uganda and East Africa* (2 vols.; London: Arnold, 1908), p. 56.

Mukasa and Lutamaguzi.¹⁰ The Catholic priest and historian John F. Faupel says Sarah Nalwanga married Mukasa Philip.¹¹ Manarin confirms that 'Duta [Lutamaguzi] married Sarah Nalwanga, Mukasa's widow before persecution broke out in 1885'.¹² None include Nakimu. In a short biography of a woman described as Mrs. Duta [Lutamaguzi], Stock, writing earlier than the two authors above, uses the name Sarah Nakimu with no mention of Nalwanga, addresses her as Mrs. Duta [Lutamaguzi], and also confirms she was Mukasa's widow.¹³ Stock adds that she grew up as Nakimu. O'Flaherty, who baptized her, Mukasa, and their child, also referred to her as Nakimu.¹⁴ The complete name – Sala Nakimu Nalwanga – albeit with an attempt to localize Sarah appears in the *Original Papers of the Uganda Mission, 1923*.¹⁵

Mukasa's name appears in most historical records as Filipo Mukassa.¹⁶ Alexander M. Mackay, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionary who headed the CMS mission in Uganda at the time, wrote his surname as Mokassa.¹⁷ Firipo, not Filipo, is the correct localization of Philip in Luganda, while Mukasa, not Mukassa (or Mokassa), is the correct spelling of his surname.

Her second husband's name raises even more issues, as his surname was bizarrely disjointed during his time.¹⁸ Interestingly, there are letters attributed to him where he spelled it as Duta.¹⁹ He is also consistently referred to as Duta in every writing in which he appears. But the absence of the name in Uganda alienates him from both people and place despite his towering contribution to founding the Church of Uganda.²⁰ Friends called him Kitakule, a name he adopted to disguise himself on one of his flights to Bulemeezi during the persecution.²¹ Ugandans trying to connect with his legacy also prefer the name. He was a son of the *Kangaawo*,²² whose name the author does not reveal, as *Kangaawo* is a title for a chief.²³ Manarin claims he was a nephew of the *Kangaawo* Namalere of the Lugave clan.²⁴ Son or nephew of a member of the Lugave clan meant he too belonged to the same clan. Lutamaguzi is a well-known Lugave name and was likely his actual surname. Luta, not Duta, is its short form. The long form is Lutamaguzi, not Dutamaguzi.²⁵ Hereafter, I refer to the above three individuals as Nakimu, Mukasa, and Lutamaguzi.

¹⁰John Francis Faupel, *African Holocaust* (New York: P.J. Kenedy, 1962), p. 90.

¹¹Faupel, *African Holocaust*, p. 89.

¹²Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', pp. 82-83.

¹³*The Children's World, 1895-1899* (Government Papers, The National Archives, Kew, 1895-99), pp. 52-54.

¹⁴*Church Missionary Paper*, issue 273 (3) (London: Church Missionary Society, 1884), p. 3.

¹⁵*Uganda Mission: Original Papers, 1923* (Government Papers, The National Archives, Kew, 1923), p. 178.

¹⁶Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 77.

¹⁷Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III, p. 108.

¹⁸Stock, *Story of Uganda*, pp. 72-75.

¹⁹Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III, p. 417.

²⁰J.D. Mullins and Ham Mukasa, *The Wonderful Story of Uganda; to Which Is Added the Story of Ham Mukasa, Told by Himself* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1904), p. 28.

²¹C.W. Hattersley, *The Baganda at Home* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1908), p. 212.

²²*Kangaawo* is the title of the Bulemeezi chief; Bulemeezi is one of the counties of Buganda.

²³J.W. Harrison, *A.M. Mackay Pioneer Missionary of the Church Missionary Society in Uganda* (New York, US: A.C. Armstrong, 1890), p. 193.

²⁴Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', p. 81.

²⁵Buganda has a clan system where each clan has its male and female names.

The story of the three Ugandans' involvement in the East African country's emerging Anglican tradition can be traced to July 1879 when Muteesa I, the 30th Kabaka of Buganda, proclaimed Islam the state religion of his kingdom.²⁶ The proclamation required Baganda, particularly those who belonged to the institution of *Bagalagala*, to participate in learning activities that Zanzibari-Arabs organized. Arabs, who first came to Buganda during the reign of Muteesa's predecessor, Ssuuna II, saw their prominence – in culture, trade and religion – grow under him.²⁷ Henry M. Stanley, the English explorer who visited Buganda in 1875, described their influence on him and his people in a letter published by the *Daily Telegraph* on November 15, 1875.²⁸ Muteesa himself never converted due to a *Ganda* custom forbidding Kabakas from intentionally shedding blood, but many people around him did.²⁹ One of them is Nuhu Kyabasinga Mbogo, his equally prominent brother who is considered the grandfather of Islam in Uganda today.³⁰ Within the precinct of Muteesa's place, a mosque called 'Muteesa's Mosque' was erected and, in due course, placed under the stewardship of a young man called Mukasa.³¹

Mukasa was a *Mugalagala*, which explains how he got into this position,³² but besides being a steward of the mosque, he was also expected to follow the Kabaka's decree of attending Islamic prayers and Arabic lessons. He met and became friends with Lutamaguzi, another *Mugalagala* from the chiefly establishment of Bulemeezi;³³ while in this position they both learned to recite the Koran and speak Swahili, a language that was emerging as an intercommunication language in East Africa.³⁴ In 1880, learning Islam stopped making sense to them, and they made a counter-proclamation that the white man's faith was the right religion.³⁵ This did not go down well with many leaders in Buganda, especially the *Mukwenda*, the chief responsible for the Bagalagala.³⁶ The origin of Mukasa's and Lutamaguzi's response to Muteesa's earlier proclamation goes back to Stanley's visit in early 1875.

Concerned by the influence of Arabs on Muteesa, Stanley's letter (mentioned earlier) called for 'practical Christian tutors' to be sent to Uganda, a fertile missionary field where they were eagerly awaited, it said. On July 8, 1877, the first two CMS missionaries, Revd C.T. Wilson and Lt Shergold Smith, arrived in Buganda's capital and were received by Muteesa, who settled them at Nateete. Two years later, Fr. Simon Lourdel and Br. Delmas Amans of the Catholic White Fathers

²⁶Faupel, *African Holocaust*, pp. 48-50, 97.

²⁷A.B.K. Kasozi, 'The Impact of Islam on Ganda Culture 1844–1894', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 12.2 (1981), pp. 127-35 (129).

²⁸On April 14, 1875, Stanley wrote this letter while a guest of Muteesa in Buganda, where he had come to, among others, survey Lake Nalubaale (Victoria).

²⁹Chris Wrigley, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 3.

³⁰Sadab Kitatta Kaaya, 'After 124 Years, Mbogo's Legacy Still Stands Out', *The Observer – Uganda*, July 16, 2019.

³¹*The Children's World*, pp. 52-54.

³²*Mugalagala* was a young Muganda sent to the Kabaka's palace to receive training before deployment in chiefly positions throughout Buganda. The plural is Bagalagala.

³³Harrison, *Pioneer Missionary*, p. 193.

³⁴W.H. Whiteley, 'The Changing Position of Swahili in East Africa', *Africa* 26.4 (1956), pp. 343-53 (343).

³⁵*The Children's World*, pp. 52-54.

³⁶Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III, p. 111.

arrived, with Muteesa extending the same welcome gesture and allocating them a place to settle in Nabulagala (near Kasubi Tombs). Thus began Uganda's Christian story. Mukasa and Lutamaguzi were frequent visitors of the CMS mission (then called Nyanza Mission) at Nateete, which meant they possessed knowledge of the so-called white man's religion before they countered Muteesa's proclamation of 1879. The two *Bagalagala* also knew some English, which they had learned in interesting circumstances.

During his visit, Stanley donated an English Bible to Muteesa but quickly realized English was not one of the languages spoken in Uganda. He then decided to leave behind Dallington Scopion Mufta, who was part of his caravan, so that he could read the Bible for Muteesa. Another source, however, claims Muteesa had already enticed Mufta to remain behind as his secretary, and Stanley only noticed his absence days after leaving Muteesa's capital. Regardless, he became Muteesa's secretary, writing several letters in English for him; a few appeared in Stock's authorized *History of the Church Missionary Society*.³⁷ According to Sembera Mackay's memorialization authored by Revd E. Cyril Gordon, Sembera – one of the first five Anglican converts in Uganda – was Mufta's student for English classes he ran in the afternoon after Arabic classes ended.³⁸ At 16, Lutamaguzi was one of the *Bagalagala* selected to study with Mufta, an opportunity he took up.³⁹ He and Mukasa had been exposed to Christianity and English when they rejected Islam.

Yet, as the two young men began demonstrating Uganda's interest in Christianity, CMS missionaries struggled to settle in the country and even considered abandoning the mission.⁴⁰ Smith was killed within the first two months of his arrival, and Wilson returned home in mid-1879. Those who had succeeded them were also leaving. In June 1880, Lutamaguzi, Mukasa, and three other *Bagalagala* were violently prevented by the *Kangaawo* from accompanying Revd George Litchfield to Khartoum, Sudan. Litchfield was returning to England via the Nile route, where he, Robert Felkin (later Dr.), and Revd Charles Pearson arrived in Uganda on February 16, 1879. The five boys were returned to the *Mukwenda* for close supervision when caught.⁴¹ When they took their proclamation a notch higher by refusing to attend Islamic prayers, he banished them to an island on Lake Wamala to take away their ability to access either the Anglican or Catholic mission stations. They returned to the capital after receiving information that the *Mukwenda* was deployed to war.⁴² Muteesa's fascination with Islam may also have relaxed as missionaries attracted prospective converts freely again.

In March 1881, Lutamaguzi embarked on a long journey to accompany the home-bound Pearson to the East African coast. On getting there, instead of returning home, with Pearson's help, he enrolled in a one-year program leading to baptism with the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) at Kiungani,

³⁷Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III, p. 100.

³⁸*The Church Missionary Gleaner*, vol. 20, issue 235 (7) (London: Church Missionary Society, 1893), p. 106.

³⁹Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', p. 81.

⁴⁰A.T. Matson, 'The Instructions Issued in 1876 and 1878 to the Pioneer CMS Parties to Karagwe and Uganda: Part II', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 13.1 (1982), pp. 25-46 (35).

⁴¹Like *Kangaawo*, *Mukwenda* is also the county chief of Ssinga.

⁴²Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', p. 82.

Zanzibar.⁴³ Simple as seeking baptism sounds today, this is the earliest case of an international student from Uganda. Lutamaguzi had already been introduced to Swahili in Uganda through Arabs and members of their caravans, but his time in Zanzibar would increase his proficiency even higher.⁴⁴ Reducing Luganda from a mere spoken language to written form, which he did well, required English missionaries and Baganda to learn three languages – English, Luganda and Swahili – with the latter being an initial bridge language. Not so long after he returned to Uganda, Luganda orthographically caught up with Swahili, rendering it almost useless. Revd William Crabtree, the linguist who came to Uganda in 1891, meant this when he said, ‘As far as he understood Uganda, Swahili was understood by a few leading men and tolerated as a necessity but never welcomed.’⁴⁵ He referred to Ugandans like Lutamaguzi, who had to learn other languages to develop their own.

When Lutamaguzi left for Zanzibar, Mukasa became a permanent resident at the CMS mission station that same month. On a visit to Muteesa’s court for further introductions, O’Flaherty, who arrived in Uganda on March 18, 1882, met Mukasa and saw that he was eager to learn. He then asked the Mukwenda to place him under his custody, a request he accepted, and Mukasa became O’Flaherty’s first student in Uganda.⁴⁶ Stock, Nakimu’s biographer, says Mukasa brought his wife to the mission station, which is true, but the reference is to a later event as he was not married when O’Flaherty first took him to Nateete.⁴⁷ O’Flaherty journaled later that he began by teaching him Swahili, a language whose importance at the time has been highlighted. Interestingly, O’Flaherty had not come to Uganda via the Zanzibar route, where it was the predominant language, but through the Nile route. Still, he had to learn it. Mackay, the only other CMS missionary left in Uganda, had learned the language, but he had arrived in Uganda via Zanzibar and was even delayed there, granting him more time to acquire the language. Learning Swahili was an essential aspect of preparations to become a Christian.

On March 18, 1882, in the first ever Anglican baptism, Mukasa was baptized as one of five Ugandans to be welcomed into the global Anglican communion.⁴⁸ Assisted by the unordained Mackay, O’Flaherty performed the baptism nearly five years after the first English missionaries had arrived in Uganda. Mukasa took up O’Flaherty’s Christian name, Philip, as his baptismal name, with both fondly called *Firipo* afterward. The other four also took up English or biblical names, marking the beginning of Ugandans adopting foreign names considered Christian upon baptism, a trend that continues today. Lutamaguzi was still at the coast as his baptism there edged closer, while Nakimu remained an unknown historical figure (Figure 1). Mukasa’s baptism may not represent the birth of Anglicanism and Protestantism in Uganda, but it represents the day the Church of Uganda was planted. Following the baptism, more Ugandans embraced Anglicanism by seeking baptism in the following months to the extent that some were willing to give up cultural aspects of their lives, like polygamy and

⁴³Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, p. 70.

⁴⁴Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III, p. 108.

⁴⁵W.A. Crabtree, ‘The Languages of the Uganda Protectorate’, *African Affairs* XIII.1 (1914), pp. 152-66 (153).

⁴⁶*The Children’s World*, pp. 52-54.

⁴⁷Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 76.

⁴⁸Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, p. 28.

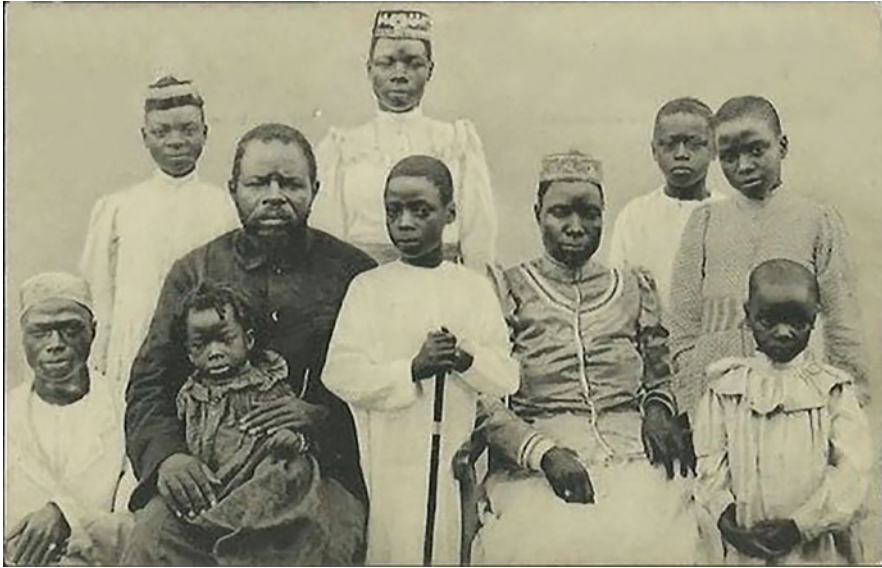


Figure 1. Sarah Nakimu Nalwanga (seated) with her second husband, Henry Wright Lutamaguzi, and their children (Photograph by C. W. Hattersley, in *The Baganda at Home* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1908), 355).

witchcraft. Sebwato (later also Nicodemus), a prominent chief from the county of Buddu, had to let go of all his wives but one for him to be baptized. By the end of 1884, Christians who identified as Anglicans had increased to 88.⁴⁹

But shortly after Mukasa was baptized, his brother and chief came looking for him with a job offer to take care of his *Lubaale* (mediums and spirits) in exchange that he would give him a wife. According to O'Flaherty, the prospect of getting a wife excited him the most, as many Baganda married at his age, and he left the mission station to take up his brother's job offer. In Zanzibar at St. Andrews Church, Kiungani, Lutamaguzi was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 9, 1882, by Revd F.R. Hodgson.⁵⁰ Considering the experience and stability of the UMCA in Zanzibar, Lutamaguzi accessed far better and more resources before his baptism which enormously benefitted his ministry when he returned to Uganda. As his baptismal name, he chose Henry Wright, the entire name of the honorary clerical secretary of the CMS of the day.⁵¹ Once baptized, returning home was on his mind, but he had to wait for a contingent of missionaries from England headed for Uganda that included Revds James Hannington and Robert P. Ashe.⁵² Hannington notes in his journal, 'I have commenced daily prayers in Swahili this morning. Henry Wright Duta [Lutamaguzi], the baptized *Waganda* [Muganda] boy attached to me, read them.'⁵³

⁴⁹Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 79.

⁵⁰*Uganda Mission: Original Papers*, 1923, p. 162.

⁵¹A.T. Matson, 'The Instructions Issued in 1876 and 1878 to the Pioneer CMS Parties to Karagwe and Uganda: Part I', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 13.1 (1982), pp. 192-237 (193).

⁵²Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III, p. 403.

⁵³E.C. Dawson, *James Hannington, DD, FLS, ERGS, First Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa: A History of his Life and Work, 1847-1885* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), p. 14.

At the mission station in Nateete, Mukasa abruptly shows up with Nakimu with no plans to return. He abandoned the job his brother offered him, took the prospective wife, and returned to his Christian family. Described by O'Flaherty as a 'haughty savage who would not touch their food' when he first saw her, Nakimu was reluctant about following her husband's faith, having reservations about whether women could become Christians as she wrestled with her inner self and processed her new environment. Soon, she posed a question to O'Flaherty: Can women learn?⁵⁴ Her concern was not baseless, as all missionaries and nearly all converts were men. No European female missionary or missionary wife had ever set foot on Ugandan soil. O'Flaherty did not know how to respond but asked her to join a women's class to find out herself. She was afterward baptized Sarah, O'Flaherty's wife's Christian name, who lived in England. She was not the only member of her family to be baptized on the day, as Sserunjogi, their son, was also baptized. Stock describes the baptisms, while Faupel reveals the son's name as Sserunjogi.⁵⁵ He was also called *Bulamu*, which means life in Luganda.⁵⁶ While Anglican baptisms in Uganda are predominantly infant baptisms today, this was not the case then, and *Bulamu* was one of the earliest infants to be baptized in Uganda.

O'Flaherty was, however, wrong to assume that someone refusing to eat food offered to them by strangers, especially a woman in early colonial Buganda, qualified them as savage, and Nakimu soon responded to him in a way he had not anticipated. One day, he found her in the plantation working and asked, 'Nakimu, who told you to work? I thought you were above working?' By providing him insight into her worldview, her reply was a veiled response to how she thought O'Flaherty perceived her. 'I cannot wash or sew like my sisters in England; I wish I could, but I can prune and hoe, and the plantains that feed us require both. I must assist in feeding this great family,' she said. Nakimu believed that a person had to earn the right to eat food, for which she should never have been called a savage. Yet an even bigger insight into how this woman thought was that she and her husband, being residents of the mission station, had to figure out ways of supporting the mission station, and currently, it was in cultivating the food they ate. But as Nakimu settled into her new environment, for Lutamaguzi, the journey back home proved rather hard.

Illness forced Hannington to return to England, even though Lutamaguzi did his job well. On February 9, 1883, Hannington noted in his journal that he was 'under the most tender care of the faithful boy [Lutamaguzi]. However ill, I am content to be in his hands. The Lord has indeed blessed me in this respect, for none of the others have been able to get on with their boys.'⁵⁷ Lutamaguzi continued to Uganda with Ashe, who was on his first trip to Uganda, as both arrived on May 2, 1883. Hannington later attempted to get to Uganda as the first bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa (including Uganda) but was again unable to arrive (or even return to England) as he was killed on October 29, 1885, by Luba, a chief from southern

⁵⁴Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 77.

⁵⁵Faupel, *African Holocaust*, p. 90.

⁵⁶*The Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record*, vol. 9 (12) (London: Church Missionary Society, 1884), p. 760.

⁵⁷Dawson, *James Hannington*, p. 270.

Busoga.⁵⁸ Lutamaguzi reconnected with his friend Mukasa, whom he found at Nateete, where, too, became a permanent resident as they worked under the guidance of O'Flaherty, Mackay and Ashe. No Ugandan boasted of Lutamaguzi's education, not even his friend Sematimba Mika, whom he first met in Zanzibar while delivering gifts to the Sultan Barghash bin Said from Muteesa.⁵⁹ As Ugandans coming to Nateete increased, the mission employed Mukasa and Lutamaguzi as teachers to support the three missionaries in Uganda, making them the first Ugandans to assume such teaching positions in history. While learning, Nakimu worked as a support staff to the mission, seeing it as a way to earn her residence and that of her husband.

In early 1884, Mukasa unfortunately suddenly died of smallpox.⁶⁰ It was not the first time *Kawumpuli*, as it was called in Luganda, ravaged Buganda, but for the first time, it got worldwide attention, and missionaries began immunizing Baganda against it. As many as 7000 people lost their lives.⁶¹ Ashe describes Mukasa's final days like this: 'This man [Mukasa] was never forsaken by his faithful wife [Nakimu], who tended him all through his loathsome disease until his death though he had been often unfaithful to her.'⁶² The unfaithfulness is an insight into Mukasa's imperfection as a man that Nakimu had to deal with while they were married. While missionaries preached and taught against polygamy and never married a man to more than one woman, most Baganda – men and women – were in the early stages of understanding Christian marriages. Ashe may not have had evidence about this claim because Mukasa would have been relieved of his duties as a teacher at the mission station if O'Flaherty and Mackay knew about his failures as a Christian husband. It is also possible that Nakimu did not know about it. Still, she was widowed, and Bulamu was orphaned.

After receiving the news of his death, Mukasa's brothers arrived to collect his body and give it a proper Ganda burial, but O'Flaherty had other plans.⁶³ Since Mukasa had become a Christian, he argued that his burial should be done according to Christian practice, and he wanted to bury him at the mission station. The brothers did not agree with him, preferring to take their brother's corpse away. When Nakimu saw that her in-laws were failing to get O'Flaherty's message, she joined the dialogue, insisting that her husband was a Christian and now belonged with his Christian family even in death, and they, too, could become a part of the family if they wanted.⁶⁴ Women's voices were not taken seriously even then, but Mukasa's family listened to Nakimu and agreed to let Mukasa be buried at the mission station.⁶⁵ Instead of wrapping him in bark cloth, he was wrapped in white cloth, which O'Flaherty had shown the relatives.⁶⁶ The distinctly

⁵⁸Busoga is an ethnicity on the eastern side of Buganda. The people of Busoga are called Basoga; one is a Musoga.

⁵⁹Kimeze Teketwe, 'Sematimba, Mika', *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, July 1, 2023. Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, p. 70.

⁶⁰Robert P. Ashe, *Two Kings of Uganda or Life by the Shores of Victoria Nyanza. Being an Account of a Residence of Six Years in Eastern Equatorial Africa* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1890), p. 300.

⁶¹Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, p. 181.

⁶²Ashe, *Two Kings of Uganda*, p. 132.

⁶³Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 79.

⁶⁴Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 79.

⁶⁵Ashe, *Two Kings of Uganda*, p. 331.

⁶⁶Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 79.

Ganda weeping by women reduced, giving way to Christian hymns, whose performance and production are still women's forte. Prayers accompanied Mukasa's send-off in the first Protestant burial in Uganda, which Ashe led.⁶⁷

On October 10, 1884, Muteesa died and was succeeded by his son Mwangwa II, who, in his first full year as Kabaka, began persecuting Christians, impacting Nakimu and Lutamaguzi's lives.⁶⁸ Interestingly, Prince Mwangwa received instruction from the Protestant mission but was not baptized, which made missionaries think they would be treated favorably once he became Kabaka. But barely four months after being crowned, he sent shockwaves throughout Buganda and mission stations when he ordered the 'slow-burning' to death of Serwanga Noah, Kakumba Mark and Lugalama Joseph.⁶⁹ The latter was only 11 or 12 years old and a smallpox survivor. Once burnt, their bodies were dismembered and displayed across strategic spots in the capital to deter Christian conversions. But while Mwangwa was even willing to kill to wipe Christianity out of his kingdom, his policies achieved the opposite results. Nakimu was arrested with the three martyrs and only survived death by a combination of faith and luck.

When Mukasa died, Nakimu stayed at the mission station, contributing in ways she could. Soon, she started teaching Christianity to women and children. Before the turn of the year, she caught the attention of Lutamaguzi, who was also at the mission station. They fell in love and as there was no Christian or Ganda custom against their union, they married in late 1884.⁷⁰ According to Faupel, the ill Nakimu was arrested with Bulamu while ministering to *Bambejja* (princesses) and bundled up with other Christians who had been arrested.⁷¹ For Manarin, Mwangwa's men went to arrest Lutamaguzi, but on reaching his house, he had already fled. When they saw her holding a recently translated Gospel of Matthew, they decided to take her instead with the book as evidence.⁷² While being taken to Mwangwa's place for trial, she read the book aloud without ceasing.⁷³

While on trial, information was delivered to Mwangwa that they were related, which is how she survived the execution of Serwanga, Kakumba and Lugalama.⁷⁴ Manarin also agrees with this version of how she survived.⁷⁵ The other version is that Nakimu's life was secured by a plea from missionaries to Mwangwa for her to be sent to them, where they would ensure she never left.⁷⁶ While Mwangwa let Nakimu go, he ordered her to witness the execution of the three young boys to discourage her from associating with Christians. But even after being taken through this experience, her faith only grew. When asked whether she would stop spreading the gospel afterward,

⁶⁷Stock, *Story of Uganda*, p. 79.

⁶⁸J.A. Rowe, 'The Purge of Christians at Mwangwa's Court', *The Journal of African History* 5.1 (1964), pp. 55-72 (55).

⁶⁹Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, pp. 31-32.

⁷⁰Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', p. 93.

⁷¹Faupel, *African Holocaust*, p. 90.

⁷²Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', p. 93.

⁷³Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', p. 93.

⁷⁴Faupel, *African Holocaust*, p. 90.

⁷⁵Manarin, 'And the Word Became Kigambo', p. 93.

⁷⁶*The Children's World*, pp. 52-54.

she responded, 'I won't, and my book is here.'⁷⁷ By 'book' she was referring to a Luganda version of the Gospel of Matthew that Lutamaguzi – her second husband – had contributed to translating. Translation, which her second husband excelled at, was a communal process where the translator consulted his household and community for the meanings of words and phrases, meaning that Nakimu participated in translation work. This meant that everyone was a participant in translation. She regularly helped with interpretation work, though. Edith Markham Furley, one of the first female missionaries to arrive in Uganda, journaled:

Sarah Duta [Nakimu] has been an immense help to us; when we were first left with only servants to whom we could not speak a word, she came in every day and . . . acted as interpreter between myself, Hannah, and the children. I don't know what we should have done without her those first days; she was a friend in need, ready to do anything, and offer immense help.⁷⁸

In July 1885, English missionaries realized they might be expelled from Uganda and devised a plan to create a church council comprised of Ugandan Christians to ensure their work continued in their absence.⁷⁹

We [CMS missionaries] felt this to be a very necessary step, for in case of our [CMS missionaries] being sent away, we [CMS missionaries] wished them [Ugandans] to have some organization. These elders were authorized to conduct service and to preach if we [CMS missionaries] left.⁸⁰

Lutamaguzi was elected a member of this 12-member council, and by the turn of the decade, he was its president.⁸¹ The council was the first act of localizing Anglicanism in Uganda at a leadership level, as Ugandans were, for the first time, elected to leadership positions to craft and advance their brand of Anglicanism. But no sooner had the council been constituted than it became apparent that no single woman was included.

Soon afterward, a council of six women was constituted under the same rules to ameliorate their absence from the council of 1885. The formation of the first church council was prompted by the onset of persecution on January 31, 1885, and according to Ashe, the idea originated from Mackay, who thought that Mwanga had had enough of Christianity and missionaries. On the other hand, the formation of the women's council was prompted by a realization by men – missionaries and Ugandans – that women were left behind, yet they formed a big part of the church. A need to reach women and children, which Nakimu had earlier illustrated to O'Flaherty, existed but became visibly clear with the constitution of the first council. Since this was Uganda's first Christian decade, women often worked behind men in

⁷⁷Duta, 'Ebyokingira Ekanisa Empya Eye Natete', pp. 27-28.

⁷⁸Elizabeth E. Prevost, *The Communion of Women: Missions and Gender in Colonial Africa and the British Metropole* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 104.

⁷⁹Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, p. 32.

⁸⁰*The Church Missionary Intelligencer*, p. 204.

⁸¹Ashe, *Two Kings of Uganda*, p. 161.

promoting Christianity, yet their interest steadily grew when Nakimu and others were involved in leadership.

On this council, which included two other relatives of Mwanga, Nakimu was elected, and her name appears on the roll in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 'as the wife of Duta [Lutamaguzi]', with Gordon writing that women elders were responsible for tasks women could naturally take on.⁸² In coming to this reality, Uganda's fledgling Anglican Church became more inclusive to women, making it more relatable to prospective female converts, which would not have been possible without the steady progress of women like Nakimu, who had embraced the faith early on, but also continued to learn so they could spread it even further. Tucker reflected years later that the wives of elders such as Lutamaguzi and Zakaliya Kizito Kisingiri were offered classes to teach fellow women and children, adding that this was to compensate for the absence of English women to work among women and girls.⁸³ While his comments came from a colonial mindset, Ugandan women had already risen to the challenge when English women arrived in 1895.

Mwanga's reign as the 31st Kabaka of Buganda abruptly ended when Muslims – with the support of Christians – turned against him, dethroning him in 1888. As he fled to the Ssesse Islands, Muslims and Christians installed one of his sons, Ssekabaka Mutebi Nnyonyintono Kiwewa, as Kabaka and distributed chieftaincies among themselves.⁸⁴ The alliance lasted two months as Muslims turned against Christians, dethroning Kiwewa, accusing him of disliking them. Against Ganda customs that prohibit the oldest son from becoming a Kabaka, they enthroned Ssekabaka Muguluma Kalema and, in the process, drove as many as 2500 Christians into exile in Kabula, Ankole.⁸⁵ Lutamaguzi was reportedly returning to the capital from Bulemeezi – where he had sought refuge with his family – only to find Christians fleeing for their lives. He turned back, only this time he went to Kabula, where most Christians sought refuge. In Kabula, he continued to teach with, among others, Sematimba Mika and Sembera Mackay, as Christians remained there for nearly a year. Nakimu had been taken to Bulemeezi with their children for safety.

Nakimu and Lutamaguzi returned to Buganda towards the end of 1889 when exiled Christians – Catholics and Protestants – led by Apollo Kaggwa (later Sir) invaded Buganda, defeating Muslims and driving Kalema to Bunyoro where he died shortly afterward. For a combination of reasons, including the lack of options, they reinstalled Mwanga for another reign as the 33rd Kabaka of Buganda. Kaggwa, a Protestant, emerged as a powerful leader as he became Katikkiro, holding onto the position for over three decades. But Mwanga saw his powers curtailed as Christians turned into what the historian Michael Twaddle called politico-religious groupings, drawing power away from the Kabaka to themselves.⁸⁶ Lutamaguzi was offered a chieftaincy, which he declined, choosing to commit himself to the emerging professions of preaching, interpretation and translation. Frederick Lugard (later

⁸²*The Church Missionary Intelligencer*, p. 204.

⁸³Tucker, *Eighteen Years in Uganda*, I, p. 340.

⁸⁴Ssekabaka is the Luganda word for a dead king.

⁸⁵The figure of 2500 was reported by the *Church Missionary Gleaner* of July 1893 in the memorialization of the life of Sembera Mackay, who was among the exiles.

⁸⁶Michael Twaddle, 'The Emergence of Politico-Religious Groupings in Late Nineteenth-Century Buganda', *The Journal of African History* 29.1 (1988), pp. 81–92.

Sir), who stormed Uganda on December 13, 1890, to take over the country on behalf of the Imperial British East African Company (IBEACo), wrote in his book *The Rise of our East African Empire*, that the Luganda version of the treaty he offered Mwanga on April 11, 1892, was translated by Duta (Lutamaguzi).⁸⁷

But as everyone was settling back in, Nakimu suffered an accident that damaged a bone in one of her fingers. Instead of naturally healing, the infection began to spread to the entire finger and would soon affect the rest of the hand. Revd R.H. Walker, the English missionary who had arrived in Uganda in 1887, stepped up to remove the entire finger through surgery even though he had no medical training or required equipment. In a letter to his brother dated December 9, 1890, he explained that he had to do it to save her hand.⁸⁸ She was in pain and would suffer even more pain during surgery, but trusting Walker, she agreed to the surgery. Assisted by Gordon, she was induced into a coma with opium, and the finger was amputated. While Walker was unsure whether he had solved the problem, Nakimu never reported an issue with the hand again.

On January 18, 1891, Lutamaguzi and Nakimu were confirmed in the church by Tucker, who had arrived in Uganda for the first time on December 27, 1890, as the third bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa (including Uganda). Tucker confirmed all Christians baptized from the previous decade as no other confirmation had taken place because no bishop had arrived in Uganda.⁸⁹ The first, James Hannington, was killed in Busoga on the way to the country in 1885. The second – Henry Parker – died of malaria in Ussagara (present-day Tanzania) while preparing to come in 1888. For Lutamaguzi, the confirmation was the beginning of a meteoric rise within the church ranks, as two days later, he was set apart as the first catechist (with five others) by the same bishop. On May 28, 1893, he was ordained the first deacon (with five others) when Tucker was in Uganda for the second time. And on May 31, 1896, he was ordained the first Ugandan priest (with two others).⁹⁰ Tucker believed the beginning of Uganda's church was connected to Lutamaguzi's and Mukasa's baptisms, as they were prominent in nurturing the seed sowed in 1882.⁹¹ Besides supporting his husband, Nakimu also performed her marital duties by growing the family with more children.

Lutamaguzi was a pioneer in the development of Luganda orthography, which he did with support from his household and community. While work in the grammaticalization of Luganda began with Wilson's *Luganda Vocabulary*, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), real work did not begin until the involvement of Ugandans in the process. With his aid, Pilkington published *A Handbook of Luganda* in 1901 and *Luganda-English and English-Luganda Vocabulary* in 1892. In 1902, his own *Engero za Baganda (Baganda Proverbs)* was published by SPCK. Pilkington, who contributed to laying a foundation for writing Luganda, is described as always with him (Lutamaguzi).⁹²

⁸⁷Frederick Dealtry Lugard, *The Rise of our East African Empire* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1893), p. 434.

⁸⁸*The Church Missionary Intelligencer*, vol. 16 (12) (London: Church Missionary Society, 1891), p. 896.

⁸⁹Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, p. 67.

⁹⁰Tucker, *Eighteen Years in Uganda*, II, p. 55.

⁹¹Tucker, *Eighteen Years in Uganda*, I, p. 14.

⁹²Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, p. 82.

When it became necessary to translate *James C. Robertson's Church History* for Christians in Uganda to read, Lutamaguzi and C.W. Hattersley were chosen to lead the project. With Hattersley, he also co-authored *Luganda Phrases and Idioms: English–Luganda for Everyday Use*, still in use today.

Like her husband, Nakimu continued working among women and girls as a Christian and an elder. When the first English female missionaries arrived in 1895, not only was work among women and girls thriving but Baganda women were already involved in the work, yet they welcomed their English counterparts for the common good of their society. In Edith Markham Furley's journal, we read:

When they [students] came back to me in the school, I said to my great friend among the teachers Ada Lumonde 'What shall we do with this big class, there is no teacher unless you will take them?'⁹³ She answered 'You must take them and I will help you' and somehow we came to this arrangement to take the class between us, she enlarging on my words and explaining them to the class; and it is a great encouragement to me to feel that it is easier to me now to speak than when we began, and I know by the way she repeats what I say when I have spoken correctly and my meaning has been clear.⁹⁴

The martyrdom of male Christians might dominate the early years of the establishment of Anglicanism in Uganda, but the everyday life of Ugandans during the period illustrates that women worked side by side with their male counterparts in shaping Anglican identities through baptism, education, love, burial, marriage, and so on. In Sarah Nakimu Nalwanga's life as one of many cases, we have a remarkable woman who not only witnessed the Anglican province of Uganda as it emerged from nothing but contributed to the development of multiple identities with the two men she married during her life. Nakimu's support of Mukasa and Lutamaguzi and her contributions cannot be overlooked in a church that today boasts 10.9 million people identifying as Anglicans.⁹⁵

The baptism that planted Anglicanism in Uganda might have been triggered by Sembera Mackay's immortal note to his friend and teacher Mackay and the testimony of Ddamulira.⁹⁶ But long before this occurred, God had called two young men – Mukasa and Lutamaguzi – to counter a proclamation from the highest authority in the land institutionalizing Islam and demonstrate that Christianity (not Islam) was the right religion. They were willing to be jailed for their claim, they were frequently persecuted in the following years, and on numerous occasions, they survived death.⁹⁷ As one trekked hundreds of miles to be baptized, the other enrolled at a mission station in self-doubt. Yet the contributions of both had to be complimented and completed by a single woman.

⁹³Ada Lumonde was a member of the original women's council.

⁹⁴Prevost, *The Communion of Women*, p. 105.

⁹⁵McKinnon, 'Demography of Anglicans in Sub-Saharan Africa', p. 43.

⁹⁶Mullins and Mukasa, *Wonderful Story of Uganda*, pp. 27-28.

⁹⁷Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III, p. 111.