



Dr. Livingstone, I Presume?: Missionaries, Journalists, Explorers, and Empire (Profiles in History)

Clare Pettitt

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When the American reporter Henry Morton Stanley stepped out of the jungle in 1871 and doffed his pith helmet to the Scottish missionary-explorer Dr. David Livingstone, his greeting was to take on mythological proportions. But do any of us really know what his words meant at the time--and what they have come to mean since?

Far from meeting in a remote thicket in "Darkest Africa," Stanley met Livingstone in the middle of a thriving Muslim community. The news of their encounter was transmitted around the globe, and Livingstone instantly became one of the world's first international celebrities.

This book shows how urgently a handshake between a Briton and an American was needed to heal the rift between the two countries after the American Civil War. It uncovers for the first time the journeys that Livingstone's African servants made around Britain after his death, and it makes a case for Stanley's immense influence on the idea of the modern at the dawn of the twentieth century. Drawing on films, children's books, games, songs, cartoons, and TV shows, this book reveals the many ways our culture has remembered Stanley's phrase, while tracking the birth of an Anglo-American Christian imperialism that still sets the world agenda today.

"*Dr. Livingstone, I Presume?*" is a story of conflict and paradox that also takes us into the extraordinary history of British engagement with Africa. Clare Pettitt shows both the bleakest side of imperialism and the strange afterlife of a historical event in popular mythmaking and music hall jokes.

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