

## **REASONS WHY KABAKA MUTEESA 1 INVITED MISSIONARIES TO BUGANDA**

Missionary influx into Buganda Kingdom was due to an invitation made by kabaka Muteesa 1 through Henry Morton Stanley whom he hosted into his courtyard in 1875 inviting missionary teachers, through a letter written to the queen of England to come into Buganda kingdom.

This consequently, in 1877 saw the first arrival of lieutenant S. Smith and Rev. C.T Willison, of the Anglican church missionary society (CMS) in kabaka Muteesa 1's courtyard. Two years later, these were followed by father Lourdel and brother Amans of the Roman catholic missionaries in 1879.

kabaka Muteesa 1 invited missionaries to Buganda kingdom because of the following reasons.

kabaka Muteesa 1 invited missionaries into Buganda with the intentions of counteracting the constant threats and unnecessary demands from other religions such as the Muslims and traditionalists especially the lubaale priests who enjoyed the religious monopoly in the kingdom.

He also invited missionaries with anticipations of attaining military help in form of guns and anti-Ballistic weapons against his external and internal enemies such as Omukama Kabalega of Bunyoro and his Egyptian oppressors who were busy extending the equatorial province southwards.

Muteesa 1 also wanted Christian missionaries to teach his subjects Christianity since Henry Morton Stanley had convinced him that the gospel missionaries were preaching to nations was as well good for his people and his leadership thus inviting them in 1875.

Muteesa 1 invited missionaries into Buganda hoping that, their presence into the kingdom would win him prestige and respect from his subjects and neighboring states such as Ankole and Bunyoro and others as the only great king capable of bringing the whites to his kingdom.

He also wanted to develop a strong trade relationship between his subjects in the kingdom and missionary countries of origin like France, Britain and German for the benefit of his subjects. Muteesa 1 hoped that inviting missionaries into Buganda would create a great market for the domestically produced commodities such as beads, bark clothes and agricultural products thus improving on the livelihoods of his people.

kabaka Muteesa 1 was a target seeker who invited missionaries into Buganda with anticipations of attaining gifts from them such as mirrors, clothes, guns and glassware among others. It is no wonder that a conflict between him and missionaries in 1882 emerged over missionaries failing to offer him guns as he had early on anticipated.

Muteesa 1 aimed at establishing a diplomatic relationship with missionary countries of origin like France, Britain and German simply because he looked at missionaries as representatives of such powerful states thus inviting them through Henry Morton Stanley in 1875.

Muteesa 1 also wanted missionaries to extend educational services to his people to enable them acquire knowledge and other technical skills such as carpentry, tailoring and modern agricultural skills like irrigation, mulching and crop rotation that would lead them to develop and attain self-sustainability hence inviting missionaries into Buganda kingdom.

He invited missionaries into Buganda in 1875 expecting them to render him maximum support towards the abolition of slave trade and slavery in the kingdom that had destroyed properties and lives, distracting peace and development in the kingdom.

kabaka Muteesa 1 anticipated to gain financial support from missionaries and their countries of origin to aid towards the development of his subjects and the kingdom through development of infrastructures like roads, hospitals and schools thus inviting various missionary groups into Buganda.

He also intended to bring about civilization and modernization to his people in Buganda thus inviting missionary groups from modern and civilized countries such France, Britain and German. He for instance hoped that with the presence of missionaries in Buganda, it would help to improve on ways of dressing among his subjects thus partly explaining why he invited missionaries into his kingdom.

Muteesa 1 was also advised by the palace officials to create a strong ally with the white missionaries for the benefit of his subjects and protection of the kingdom against its internal and external enemies thus inviting missionaries in Buganda in 1875.

### **REASONS WHY KABAKA MUTEESA 1 CONFLICTED WITH MISSIONARIES IN BUGANDA**

kabaka Muteesa 1 who invited Christian missionaries into Buganda through Henny Morton Stanley in 1875 had a lot of expectations from them most especially financially and militarily as analyzed above. However, when most of his expectations were not met, he started conflicting with various missionaries making their stay in Buganda too difficult and by 1882 kabaka Muteesa 1 ordered the catholic and protestant missionaries to quit Buganda forcing many into the coast though some stayed on the island of Lake Victoria.

The following reasons partly specify why he fell out with the missionaries in Buganda kingdom.

Frequent open conflicts, arguments, quarrels and revelries among various Christian sects in Buganda kingdom irritated kabaka Muteesa 1 to the extent that he begun doubting the major reasons for coming of missionaries into Buganda kingdom thus opting to chase them out of his territory.

kabaka Muteesa 1 feared losing Buganda's independence to missionary countries like Britain, France and German. The white missionaries in Buganda seemed to become more powerful with strong influence among the subjects thus causing fears to the king who reacted by sending them away from his kingdom before they gained dominancy.

He also conflicted with the missionaries over the Christian teaching of equality for all mankind regardless of gender, sex, age and authority. This was strongly against Buganda's culture and undermined the autocracy of the king, thus compiling kabaka Muteesa 1 into sending away Christian missionaries out of Buganda kingdom to safe guard its culture, his authority and powers against being eroded by the Christian teachings.

The disobedience of the first Christian converts in Muteesa's courtyard also caused the king into conflicting with the Christian missionaries. The pages for instance refused to obey the king's orders, objected eating the sacrificial meat and paying obedience to other traditional demands a factor that made kabaka Muteesa 1 become suspicious of the missionary preaching and interests and as such forced them out of his kingdom.

The Christian missionaries failed to extend financial support to kabaka Muteesa 1 as he had earlier on anticipated. this was a disappointment and frustration to the king who hoped to develop his kingdom through foreign financial support thus causing a conflict between him and the missionaries.

Missionary failure to militarily support Buganda with guns against its enemies also threw them into a conflict with kabaka Muteesa 1. Upon settling in Buganda, missionaries claimed that their work was purely to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and as such, had no guns to offer to the king hence causing the conflict very inevitable.

Kabaka Muteesa 1 also fell out with the missionaries because of the pressure from the Baganda traditionalists such as the chiefs and the lubaale priests. These mounted pressure onto the king, accusing him for closely associating with the Christian teachers who disregarded the traditional and religious beliefs of his great ancestors like sacrifices, polygamy, twin dancing and obedience to idol gods among other cultural norms and practices.

Muteesa 1 conflicted with missionaries over the Christian teachings against Buganda's cultural and religious practices such as building shrines, paying sacrifices, pulling among girls, twin dancing etc. These were strongly condemned and considered evil in Christianity thus forcing the king with the influence of other conservative traditionalists to chase missionaries out of Buganda kingdom in a bid to protect their traditional culture.

kabaka Muteesa 1 did not want to offend the Muslims and the Arabs whom he traded with in Buganda thus had to fall out with the Christian missionaries in order to preserve the trade relations with the Arab Muslims for the benefit of his people.

Missionaries were dividing people in Buganda on religious basis of Catholicism and Protestantism resulting into misunderstanding, hatred and conflicts among the natives. This greatly threatened unity in Buganda kingdom thus causing conflicts between missionaries and kabaka Muteesa 1.

Muteesa 1 was ill advised by the Arab Muslims against missionaries as imperialists and capitalists hence compelling the king to chase them out of his kingdom.

### **REASONS WHY KABAKA MUTEESA 1 DIED NEITHER A CHRISTIAN NOR A MUSLIM**

kabaka Muteesa 1 tactically worked with both Christians and the Muslims in Buganda kingdom, treating the two equally without taking a religious belonging till his death in 1884. surprisingly enough, was that he died a none Christian even when several missionary societies came into Buganda kingdom through his invitation in 1875. It thus comes to the notes of many that, Muteesa 1 had hidden motives of accommodating the Arab Muslims and Christian missionaries into his courtyard other than impressing their faiths.

Many scholars have however believed that, kabaka Muteesa 1 of Buganda died neither a Muslim nor a Christian because of the following reasons.

The disobedience of the first Christian converts in Muteesa's courtyard portrayed Christianity as a disobedient religion thus discouraging king from joining any of the foreign religions. These for instance denied to pay sacrifices to the lubaale gods, empress polygamy, take the orders of the king and other customs of the land thus living nothing for Muteesa 1 to admire from foreign religions.

kabaka Muteesa 1 feared losing Buganda's independence to foreign colonialism and as such, denied converting to any of the two foreign religions. converting to either Christianity or Islam would compel the king into taking foreign teachings and probably policies that would lead Buganda into losing her independence to foreign dominancy

The Christian teaching of equality of all people regardless of status also discouraged kabaka Muteesa 1 to convert into Christianity. This was contrary to the customs of Buganda kingdom where the king enjoyed autocracy and believed by tradition to be above his subjects.

The open conflicts, jealousy, rivalry and disagreements between the Catholics and protestants did not entice kabaka Muteesa 1 into join Christianity. Neither did the conflicts between Christianity and Islam in his courtyard convince him to convert to any of the two foreign religions simply because these failed to live according to their preaching of love for one another.

kabaka Muteesa 1 feared to betray his own culture and traditional religion thus avoided joining any of the foreign religion. Converting to either Islam or Christianity would mean abandoning Buganda's traditional believes and practices such as idol worship, polygamy among others hence opting to at list die neither a Christian nor a Muslim.

kabaka Muteesa 1 was interested at attaining military support in form of guns from both missionaries and the Arab Muslims to fight against his traditional enemies like Omukama kabalega of Bunyoro and the Egyptian oppressors. As such he decided to remain neutral to the two faiths, showing no religious conversion to either Islam or a Christianity till his death in 1884.

kabaka Muteesa 1 was also discouraged by the senior traditional elders of the kingdom such as the chiefs, traditional prophets and priests including his prime minister joseph Mukasa Balikudembe from joining any of the foreign religions. These fore saw possibilities of conflicts, hatred and misunderstanding between Christianity and Islam in the kingdom over Muteesa's conversion to any of the two faiths, thus sticking to his traditional religion.

Muteesa 1 was discouraged by the Christian teaching of monogamy and as such, he could not imagine himself getting married to one wife as Christianity demanded thus opting to remain a traditionalist since tradition in Buganda permitted polygamy.

He also refused to convert into Islam because of its painful initiation ritual of circumcision. It was thus the fear to undertake such a painful religious demand more so at an advanced age that discouraged the king from joining Islamic faith.

kabaka Muteesa 1 was more of a schemer, interested much at attaining foreign financial assistance from missionary and Islamic countries of origin such as France, Britain, German, Arabia among others to develop his kingdom but not joining any of their religions. this hence explains why by time of his death in 1884, Muteesa 1 had not converted to either Islam or a Christianity.

Muteesa 1 was discouraged by the Christian restrictive life styles such as obedience to food prohibitions, reciting of prayers and attending to bible lessons among others. This according to the king seemed to be inconveniencing with his other traditional responsibilities in the courtyard thus dying a none Christian.

Muteesa 1 died a none Christian because he was ill advised by Muslims in the courtyard against Christian missionaries as agents of colonialism, fore fronting ideologies of their mother nations and thus a threat to his throne. As such, the king mistrusted missionaries and their teachings in Buganda till his death in 1884.

Kabaka Muteesa 1 also died neither a Christian nor a Muslim because his sole reason was to trade with all foreigners but not converting to a foreign religion. He thus intended to trade with both Europeans and Arabs for the benefit of his subjects and development of Buganda kingdom.

The king refused converting into Islam because of its restrictive religious demands such as removing shoes before entering mosques, performance of ablutions, restrictions against taking alcohol and eating pork among others that seemed under mining his rights.

Muteesa 1 wanted to attain formal education from the foreigners for the good of his people but not their religions thus explaining why he died without converting to either Islam or Christianity.

kabaka Muteesa 1 also feared entering into a strong alliance with any of the foreign religions as this could cause rivalry, hatred and conflict among these religions in Buganda. This no wonder after his death in 1884, caused the outbreak of the 1888-1893 religious conflicts in Buganda under kabaka Mwanga when he sided mostly with the Catholics.

### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

- 1. why did kabaka muteesa1 invite missionaries into Buganda by 1875?**
- 2. Account for the conflicts between kabaka Muteesa 1 and the Christian missionaries in Buganda.**
- 3. Account for the fact that king Muteesa 1 who invited the missionaries died neither a Christian nor a Muslim.**

