

## **Learning by Ear**

### **“Once upon a time... in Africa”**

### **Episode 8: “COLONIALIZATION”**

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#### **CHARACTERS:**

Intro/Outro (female/male)

#### **Scene 1:**

- Neighbour (43, male)
- June (13, female)
- Grandpa (77, male)

#### **Scene 2:**

- Mohammed (27, male)
- Georg Schweinfurth (32, male)
- Pygmy Adimokoo (30, male)
- Interpreter (40, male)

#### **Scene 3:**

- Grandpa (77, male)
- June (13, female)

Scene 4: All characters in this scene with respective accent!!

- Otto von Bismarck (40, male)
- France Representative (40, male)
- Britain Representative (45, male)
- Italy Representative (42, male)

Scene 5:

- Grandpa (77, male)
- June (13, female)

### **Intro:**

Hello and welcome to another episode of “Once upon a time... in Africa”, the “Learning by Ear” series about African History! Today, the Neighbour from the house next to June’s gets upset when he finds out that the parents from Philipp, June’s new classmate and friend, want to buy a plot of land so that they can build a house. June wants to know from Grandpa Peter why their Neighbour reacts like that. Stay with us and find out more about colonialism...

**Music 1, then cross fade with SFX**

**First Scene: In the village at the end of the afternoon.**

**SFX: People talking. In the background: chicken, goats, cows, birds, then fade under**

**1. Neighbour:**                    **(angry)** That's just not acceptable! They've only just moved here to Mbazi and already they want everything!

**2. Grandpa:**                    Huh, Mr. Neighbour, calm down! Where do you want them to live? At your place?

**3. Neighbour:**                    Oh, man, don't be naive!

**SFX: People talking. In the background: chicken, goats, cows, birds, then fade under**

**4. June:**                            **(whispering)** Grandpa, why is our Neighbour so angry? Philipp's parents haven't done him any harm, have they?

**5. Grandpa:** (sighing) No, Daughter, they haven't...  
(whispering) You know, there are still some people thinking that Europeans will take over the whole of Africa if they get a plot of land here... Of course, there are many who don't just want a plot of land. But you have to notice the difference.

**6. June:** (confused) Ha? I don't understand...

**7. Grandpa:** Come, let's go home! I'll explain it on the way!

**SFX: Footsteps from two people on gravel path. In the background: people talking, chicken, goats, cows, birds, then fade under**

**8. June:** (curious) Go on, Grandpa, there's nobody listening now...

**9. Grandpa:** There are many people who still have problems with foreigners, mainly white people, settling here because it reminds them of colonialism. And they see a sign of neo-colonialism in any acquisition of theirs...

**10. June:** Neo what, Grandpa?

- 11. Grandpa:** Neo-colonialism, the modern sort of colonialism. Do you know what colonialism was? **(June: Hmhm!, like saying “No”)** It was when many, many Europeans started coming to Africa at the end of the 19th century. They took African land and made it theirs, forming colonies and with them big empires. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Europeans had taken over 90% of African territory!
- 12. June:** **(shocked)** Why did they do that? Don't they have coffee plants in their homelands?
- 13. Grandpa:** **(laughing)** No they haven't them back home. But above all it was the competition between France and Great Britain that led to that. The Europeans had already been here in Africa for a long time. But in the last decades of the 1800's they started taking direct influence on African affairs. At that time, European markets were suffering from a long economic depression which meant business was going very badly.
- 14. June:** And it was Africa that paid for that depression?

**15. Grandpa:** Well, Africa offered an additional market for European products. And it was also the source of goods which were very attractive in the eyes of the Europeans: ivory, coffee, gold and other natural and mineral resources.

**16. June:** **(confused)** I still don't understand, Grandpa. Did they send soldiers to take all that?

**17. Grandpa:** No, daughter, the European nations sent adventurers, biologists and geographers to explore and map the interior of Africa. Only after that did they take the goods they were looking for. **(pause)** By the way, that reminds me of an interesting story about what happened to Georg Schweinfurth, a German biologist and adventurer who travelled through Africa from 1868 until 1871. He often heard his escorts talk about the existence of what they called dwarves in Central Africa – small people, skillful elephant hunters. And couldn't get the myth of these people, the pygmies, out of his mind. Until one day he had a surprise...

**Flashback music**

**Second Scene: Meeting the pygmies.**

**SFX: Footsteps from one person on gravel path. In the background: birds, then fade under**

**18. Mohammed:**                    **(calling)** Georg! Georg, come out of the tent!  
Look whom I have brought to meet you...

**SFX: Someone coming out from a big tent (removing some thick cloth), footsteps approaching on gravel path. In the background: birds, then fade under**

**19. Schweinfurth:**                Good morning, Mohammed! **(pause, then surprised)** No! What you bring there in your arms can only be a pygmy!!!

**20. Mohammed:**                   **(proud)** He is! You've been waiting for a long time to see one, and now you have!

**21. Schweinfurth:** Mein Gott! At last! **(enthusiastic while walking)** Come, bring him into the tent! I have to draw him! And I have to measure him! Oh, I have to gather all the information I can get! Come on, we cannot lose any more time! I'm going to start by drawing him!

**SFX: Footsteps on gravel path entering a tent (removing some cloth). Background: birds, then fade under**

**22. Schweinfurth:** Please, sit down!

**SFX: Footsteps on gravel path, someone sitting on a chair. Background: murmuring of fear, birds, then fade under**

**23. Schweinfurth:** **(murmuring while drawing)** Very well... yes... Oh, mein Gott, I actually have him in front of me!... yes... ha-ha...

**24. Mohammed:** It's not easy to keep him quiet! He's small but really strong! **(pause)** Ah!

**SFX: Someone jumping from someone's lap onto the floor. In the background: birds, then fade under**

**25. Schweinfurth:** Well, I see I have to try it with something else...

**SFX: Someone standing up, footsteps going away on gravel path, someone picking a plate, footsteps approaching on gravel path. In the background: murmuring of fear, birds, then fade under**

**26. Schweinfurth:** I tell you, Mohammed, I'm going to take one with me! I can imagine the news spreading throughout Europe: German explorer returns from Africa hand in hand with a pygmy!  
**(dreamily)** Ah!

**27. Interpreter:** **(shy)** If you allow me, Sir...

**28. Schweinfurth:** Yes, my interpreter...

**29. Interpreter:** I've heard his name is Adimokoo. It seems he's from the Akka people. One part of that tribe is under the rule of the King of the Mangbettu. **(pause)** Look, the spear and the bow and the arrows there – they're all typical for the Mangbettu!

**30. Schweinfurth:** Hmmm... I see. **(cautious)** Come here, Adimokoo! I have the best food for you!  
**(talking to the others)** He doesn't seem to be more than one and a half meters high...  
**(cautious)** Come, Adimokoo, come eat with me!

**SFX: Light, slow, footsteps from one person approaching on gravel path. In the background: birds, then fade under**

**Flashback music**

**Third Scene: At home at the end of the afternoon.**

**SFX: Kitchen (pots, fire). In the background: chicken, goats, birds, then fade under**

**31. Grandpa:** Georg Schweinfurth wasn't the most important of the Africa explorers. But this story helps to show two things: the first one being the encounter between an European and an African culture practically unknown until then.

**32. June:** But that German adventurer wasn't that bad, was he, Grandpa?

**33. Grandpa:** No, Schweinfurth was a peaceful man. But unfortunately not all of the adventurers sent to Africa were like him: Henry Morton Stanley, for instance, has gone down in history for questionable reasons, namely for helping Leopold II of Belgium retain his influence in the Congo. Despite his reputation as an explorer he is said to have treated his expedition team and local residents quite brutally.

**34. June:** **(surprised)** That's why our Neighbour is so angry then...

**35. Grandpa:** And at that time, in the 19th century, the Europeans' thirst for land grew and grew. In 1881, France established a protectorate in Tunisia and in the following year, the British occupied Egypt.

**36. June:** What about the others? Had they given up?

**37. Grandpa:** Ha! We wish! The others – both colonial nations and the ones who tried to become colonial powers – also wanted their share. One of them was Germany!

**38. June:** I'm beginning to understand...

**39. Grandpa:** In 1884, the German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, invited the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, Russia and other countries for a meeting: the Berlin Conference. And there, Africa was divided up between the European nations...

**Flashback music**

**Fourth Scene: At the Berlin Conference.**

**SFX: Pencil drawing a line on paper. In the background: middle-aged men murmuring**

**40. Bismarck:** **(speaking slowly with GERMAN accent while drawing a line)** From Say, here in Niger, to Baroua, on the northeast coast of Lake Chad will run a line. The territory to the North of this line belongs, from now on, to France, and Britain gets the southern part.

**41. France Representative:** (speaking with **FRENCH** accent) Oh oui! C'est bon! Ahhh, ver-ry good!

**42. Britain Representative:** (speaking with **BRITISH** accent) Very good, indeed!

**SFX: Pencil drawing a line on paper. In the background: middle-aged men murmuring**

**43. Bismarck:** (speaking slowly with **GERMAN** accent while drawing) The Nile basin will be British land...

**44. Italy Representative:** (interrupting, speaking with **ITALIAN** accent, impatiently) Mama Mia! Chancellor Bismarck, I'm sorry for interrupting but... don't you think the British and the French already have enough? When does Italy get its turn?

**45. Bismarck:** (speaking with **GERMAN** accent) I was just coming to Italy! There is no reason for us to get upset...

**46. Italy Representative:** (calming down) Buono, buono...

**SFX: Paper, then pencil drawing two lines. In the background: middle-aged men murmuring**

**47. Bismarck:** (speaking slowly with GERMAN accent while drawing) Well-ll... These two lines here for-rrm an intersection: between the Trropic of Cancer-r and the seventeenth mer-ridian with the fifteenth par-rallel and the twenty fir-rst mer-ridian. Gentlemen, my suggestion is that Italy will get the part north of this line...

**Flashback music**

**Fifth Scene: At home in the evening.**

**SFX: Kitchen (pots, fire, kerosene lamp). In the background: crickets, then fade under**

**48. June:** (shocked) What? They just took the map of Africa and put there any lines?

**49. Grandpa:** Well, it won't have been exactly like that. But one thing is for sure: people today still sometimes say that Africa was divided up by the Europeans with a ruler. If you look carefully, you'll see that many borders between African countries are straight! Nobody paid attention to ethnic groups or other cultural contexts. And no African country was invited to or signed anything either at the Berlin Conference. **(pause)** Look here at the map!

**SFX: Paper, kitchen (pots, fire, kerosene lamp). In the background: crickets, then fade under**

**50. June:** You're right, Grandpa! Here! Look at Angola! Or Sudan! **(pause)** And did Germany also have colonies in Africa at the end?

**51. Grandpa:** They had some. Togo, for instance, and Cameroon, Namibia, at that time German South-West Africa, or German East Africa, what now are Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda...

**52. June:** Ihhhh! But were at least the Germans good to the Africans?

**53. Grandpa:** Hmmm... The Germans also committed their crimes... the massacre of the Herero, an ethnic group in Namibia, for example. But they weren't the only ones: we just have to think about the Belgians in Congo or the Portuguese who let the overseas war against its colonies for a very long time!

**54. June:** Until the Africans got fed up with it, rioted and achieved independence, right, Grandpa?

**55. Grandpa:** Exactly! But that's another story I can tell you about next time. Now, go help Mum, she hasn't even complained yet today...

**Outro:**

And this is the end of the eighth episode of "Once upon a time... in Africa", the "Learning by Ear" series about African History!

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Good-bye until next time!