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# Building a better Brit: Imperialism and masculinity in the lives and works of H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling

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Building a Better Brit:  
Imperialism and Masculinity in the Lives and Works of  
H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling  
Zachary David Cady

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

History Department

May 2011

## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this work to a number of people that have all played integral parts in not only this particular project, but in my life thus far. First and foremost, I dedicate this to my family. My mother, Jan, my father, Jim, and my sister, Gillian, have shown nothing but support to me for my entire life. Without their unwavering encouragement I would have never made it this far in my education. They instilled in me a love for learning and quest for knowledge. I would also like to dedicate this to my Uncle Dave. He has been a constant supporter of my love for history, and has pushed me to develop that passion to my utmost potential. Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to Megan. She has been my rock throughout these last two years of graduate school, and has supported me the entire way. Without her love and support I would not have been able to finish this accomplishment. It is therefore that I dedicate this thesis to all of these people who have meant so much to me over the years. Thank you all.

## Table of Contents

Dedication.....	ii
Abstract.....	iv
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Historical Context.....	8
III. Masculinity in H. Rider Haggard’s Life and Works.....	28
IV. Masculinity in Rudyard Kipling’s Life and Works.....	51
V. Conclusion.....	76
VI. Bibliography.....	83

## **Abstract**

This work began as an investigation of the role that literature played in conveying imperialistic values to children during the Victorian period. Over the course of my research into the fiction of H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling, I began to question the role of masculinity in the imperial project. This work has developed out of that line of thought. Maintaining and defending the British Empire was a man's business, and as such the British required a generation of men that held the masculine ideals and values required to undertake such an endeavor. This need manifested itself in many ways, such as in the fictional stories that boys read. Having lived abroad in the colonial possessions of the British Empire, Haggard and Kipling both understood and lived this ideal, and this presented itself in their respective writings. Masculinity plays a major role in each of these two author's writings. Both authors make use of characters and themes that push the Victorian ideas of manliness onto the young male readers that so readily devoured their works. This thesis examines the role of masculinity in Victorian society and in the lives and works of both Haggard and Kipling. Furthermore, this same examination of the role of masculinity in juvenile literature could easily be undertaken for several other authors of the period.

## Introduction

The history and culture of Victorian Britain continues to fascinate historians on many levels. The period itself still resonates with a certain sense of familiarity in today's minds. Although the reign of Queen Victoria ended over a century ago, the time still feels close enough to be familiar, and yet at the same time long enough ago to be slightly foreign and exotic in our minds. This draw of the parallels and the alien has generated an enormous amount of scholarship in the field. There are countless encyclopedias, books, articles, websites, and all manner of other historical outlets that focus directly on the Victorian period in Britain. While some of this fascination can be explained by this dichotomy of the common and the foreign aspects of culture between this traditional society and the current, there are a whole host of reasons and explanations why historians continue to focus their scholarship on the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

For starters, Queen Victoria reigned for longer than any other English monarch, and longer than any other female monarch in history. Victoria ascended the throne of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, hence forward called Britain, on 20 June

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<sup>1</sup> There have been many books, articles, and monographs that have been influential in forming the argument of this thesis. Most prominently is John Tosh. *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), which actually provided the main argument of this work. His conception of masculinity being threatened by external factors from the empire, as well as being threatened by the increasing roles and freedoms of women in England itself caused an awakening in my own research. Added to this the two books; Kelly Boyd and Rohan McWilliam, eds. *The Victorian Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007); and Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, eds. *At Home With Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), provided several articles each that informed my argument deeply. I started off my research by wanting to look at what values were being taught to children during the Victorian period, and in that line Ginger Frost. *Victorian Childhoods* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2009), provided the bulk of my background in the history of children form the period.

1837, and ruled over the empire until her death in 22 January 1901. That amounts to a rule of sixty-three years and seven months. In that span of time a great deal of change happened not only in Britain, but around the world. Throughout the course of the nineteenth century mankind made drastic strides forward in any number of fields ranging from biology to economics to transportation to warfare and to anything in between. Over the course of the century Britain became one of the major industrial powers in the world. The British empire expanded under Victoria to spread across the globe. The British military, which was already considered one of the strongest in the world, solidified its role as one of the strongest armed forces following the defeat of France in the Napoleonic wars. London was becoming the center of the world politically, economically, and socially. Advances in transportation allowed European civilization and trade to spread around the globe at a rate hardly anyone believed possible less than a century prior. All in all this was a time of monumental change both in England and abroad. Man's grasp was beginning to slowly catch up with its reach.

In addition to the length of time that Victoria ruled over the British empire, as well as the strides taken in numerous fields, another major consideration of the period was the vast amount of people that were under the direct or indirect sovereignty of the British crown. The population in Britain itself expanded dramatically over the course of the Victorian period, growing from fifteen million people in 1830 to around thirty-two and a half million people by 1900. This growth in population was coupled with the shift in where people were choosing to live. When Victoria became monarch in 1837 England was still very much an agrarian based society. The population of the time reflected that

fact, and more than two-thirds of the population lived on farms. This would all change with the industrial revolutions of the nineteenth-century, when by 1900 around eighty percent of the population of England had moved into the cities to find work. The home population was not the only thing expanding in this period.<sup>2</sup>

The empire itself began to spread across the globe, growing drastically after recovering from the misfortune of the American Revolution. The famous saying “the sun never sets on the British empire” really did expound upon just how expansive the empire became under Victoria. At the beginning of the century the British crown only had direct control over modern day Canada, several islands in the Caribbean, and the newly founded colony in Australia, but by the time of Victoria’s death the empire grew to include colonies in south and central Asia, as well as across the African continent. The empire was fixed in the minds of the citizens of Britain. This expansion of British influence around the globe generated a new imperial ethos that swept through Victorian society. This ardor for empire was not universal of course. There were certainly groups, politicians, and private citizens that decried the evils of empire, but for the most part they were relegated to the outskirts of the colonial arguments. An empire was deemed necessary in order for a nation to be considered a world leader during the last half of the nineteenth century. It was believed that Britain’s empire gave it power, and the British had become accustomed to being at the forefront of European, and indeed world, power.

The high point in British imperialism occurred in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. During this period the empire held a prominent place in the British

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Price. “One Big Thing: Britain, Its Empire, and Their Imperial Culture,” *The Journal of British Studies* 45 (July 2006): 603-606.



psyche; more prominent than it ever had been, or ever would be again. The British public itself called out for new heroes to take the helm of conquests and fights overseas, and it was important that they did so. During this period of high imperialism, owning colonies only served the interests of an elite few in Victorian society, so it was absolutely critical that there was a “psychological pay-off” for the rest of the nation.<sup>3</sup> This pay-off manifested itself in many ways, but one of the most prominent forms was in publishing. Books were becoming a hot commodity during this period. Rising literacy rates created a clamor for literature that had not been seen before. Writers rose to the level of modern rock stars. Names like Dickens, Tennyson, Conan Doyle, Haggard, and Kipling were instantly recognized across the country as easily as Victoria. Empire became an easy topic for authors to cover during the period as it was on everyone’s mind in one form or another, and along with empire came a link to British views on masculinity.

Recent historians have spilled a great deal of ink on women’s roles in the imperial project, but surprisingly little work has been done on how the empire appealed to men and their reactions to it.<sup>4</sup> The empire was a projection of British manliness. The fact of the matter is that running an empire was inherently masculine in that it was almost entirely a male dominated business during this period. While women certainly did play an integral role in colonizing, most importantly as missionaries and colonizers, men held all of the positions of power in the military and the Foreign Service; the two groups in charge of the day to day functions of running the empire. It was because of this that the

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<sup>3</sup> Jacqueline S. Bratton, *Acts of Supremacy: The British Empire and the Stage, 1790-1930*. (Manchester; Manchester University Press, 1991), 18.

<sup>4</sup> Of the many works on imperialism and women, most notable is Antoinette Burton’s *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915*. (Chapel Hill; The University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

empire's place in the popular imagination was generally presented through images and depictions of the colonies that emphasized masculine values. Both the empire itself, and British manliness, revolved around the key concepts of duty, action, struggle, force of will, and upright character. The British desired a class of men to run the empire which was inherently self-reliant, resourceful, and most of all practical. The empire itself was a test of Britain's manliness as it shipped more and more young men overseas to partake in its struggles to maintain English control of a large portion of the Earth.<sup>5</sup>

British concerns of empire and masculinity were linked in two separate ways. The first of these links was the belief that threats to the empire created a stronger sense of masculinity in the metropole. To combat the external threats that played out over the last half of the nineteenth century men were needed that could maintain and defend the colonies. In this sense manliness was more important than ever as the men that went abroad to serve in the military and the Foreign Service had to be tougher, less squeamish, and more stoic than ever before. This sense of the empire being in a constant state of crisis, while not entirely warranted, did exist and caused a new appeal in imperial jobs for young men coming of age. Shipping off to serve the empire was the new ultimate test of a person's manliness, and also their civic duty. Added to this sense of needing to generate hyper-masculine men to run the colonies, the fluctuating gender roles at home led to masculine insecurity which in turn was transferred into an ardent enthusiasm for empire. Women were gaining new rights, and were maneuvering out of their traditional space in the private sphere, for new roles in the public sphere. This increase in women's role in

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<sup>5</sup> John Tosh. "What Should Historians Do with Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain," *History Workshop* 38 (1994): 196-198.

society meant, or at least was perceived as, a decrease in men's, and this led to a new fervor for empire as an incomparable nucleus of masculinity. These two concepts worked in tandem with each other, reinforcing each other, and influenced the popular response to empire and masculinity in general.

This becomes especially apparent when looking at ways in which Victorian values were presented to children. When trying to determine and examine a culture's value system children provide an easy lens to get at the values that a society deems most important. Raising children is predominantly about teaching them a set of norms and customs so that they will be successful adults. Another reason why children can provide such an excellent lens of study is because they are one of the few constants in human society. Every society has children. Everyone was a child at some point, and as such can relate to them in some way, shape, or form. Children generally make up the largest minority group of any population as they traditionally are not granted full rights until adulthood. This was certainly the case in Victorian Britain. The Victorian period also began to produce a new media that is perfect for examining what values were being taught to children; children's literature saw an explosion in popularity in this period. The majority of books, stories, and poems written for children have a twofold purpose. Firstly, they are written to entertain children, and secondly to teach a lesson that the society from which the author comes from finds important.

In the case of empire and masculinity, there was an eruption of books for boys centered entirely around the subject. In fact an entirely new genre of literature was created in the last few decades of the nineteenth century that focused on these concerns.

While adventure literature had existed prior to the Victorian period, it really came into its own thanks to a small cadre of authors publishing in the 1880s and 1890s. The most prominent of these new romantic authors were H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling. Both became major figures in the literary world, and to this day are some of the most published authors in history. Haggard and Kipling also focused the bulk of their work, and certainly the stories most well received by the public, on adventures that took place out in the colonies, and just beyond their borders. This was almost certainly influenced by the fact that both men spent a considerable amount of their younger years living in South Africa and India respectively. The fact that their best selling novels and short stories took place on the outskirts of the empire speaks volumes about what the British public was clamoring for. These two authors became the voices of the imperial movement in the metropole, and as such provide an excellent lens for looking at the role of empire and masculinity in Victorian society.

## **Chapter One**

### **The British Empire 1850-1901**

When most people today think about the second half of the nineteenth century in Britain two things generally come to mind; Queen Victoria and imperialism. It has often been suggested that the period was an assertion of strength and a high point in national self confidence, but this is a mistake. In reality it is now widely identified as a period characterized by strong reactions to an increasingly perilous international situation. There were several brief periods where Britain considered herself at war, such as during the Crimean War and the second Boer War, yet the general public was convinced of the need to defend the empire throughout, as they perceived it as being constantly under the threat of attack. This belief caused an increase in the awareness of empire during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, as well as creating a demand for quality manpower to serve in both the military and the foreign service. By the turn of the century the empire became central to the identity of many who directly or indirectly served the imperial cause. Compounded onto this was that imperial characteristics became central to the dominant belief of what made up the British national character.

The second half of the nineteenth century saw a vast increase in Britain's imperial possessions both in terms of actual landmass as well as in the popular imaginations of the

British people. The conclusion of the Crimean War in 1856 focused peoples' attentions on Britain's ambitions beyond the European continent, as did the vast technological improvements in transportation and warfare that made a global empire more feasible than it had ever been previously. While the foundations of the British empire can be traced as far back as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was not until the British government's official acquisition of the Indian subcontinent following the Indian Mutiny of 1857 that their control over the region became official. The placement of India under the direct control of the crown vastly increased the official holdings of the British empire, and brought about the ensuing period of imperial expansion that characterized the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the decades following the Indian Mutiny the British empire continued to expand into Central Asia and the African continent causing a number of events, including a new period of exploration and small scale colonial wars. Britain had a need for strapping young men who could further the imperial cause abroad, and inspired the creation of a new genre of books for boys that encapsulated the values needed to sustain a successful global empire.

The Victorian period in Britain is often remembered for its romanticism. The period saw the creation of romantic literature, and much of the metropolitan world view was shaded by romantic sentiments. While there are many points in history that can be cited as the beginnings of this period of romanticism, for the romantic views of the imperialistic mission the major starting point was the Crimean War in the middle of the century. The Crimean War was the largest armed conflict in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century. What started as a local dispute between the Russian Empire and the

Ottoman Empire quickly escalated bringing several European powers into the fray in 1853. The war began from squabbles over control of certain territories in the Ottoman Empire as its power waned in Europe. France and Russia argued over who should protect Christian rights in the Holy Land, with France having the backing of the Catholic Church and Russia being the champion of the Greek Orthodox faith. As diplomacy broke down, and Russia began to threaten Ottoman sovereignty, Britain and France stepped in to defend the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The war lasted for nearly three years, and while both sides had marginal victories throughout the campaign, Russia relented its attack on the Crimean and accepted peace terms on 16 January 1856.<sup>1</sup>

The Crimean War is well known today for the logistical and tactical errors made by both sides throughout the conflict. The combination of combat, disease and poor food took its toll on British troops, which suffered a twenty-five percent casualty rate.<sup>2</sup> The war was also characterized by the major technological advances of the nineteenth century that made their first appearances on the battlefields of Europe. These advances included the first tactical uses of railways and the telegraph, as well as the first appearances of more modern forms of artillery. It was also the first war to be photographed, and when this was combined with the use of telegraphs, the Crimean War became the first major conflict to be covered extensively in the British press. For the first time in history, people living in the metropole of England had precise knowledge, and images, of the horrors of war. This inherently affected the perceptions of the war by the British people in general.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pradip Bhaumik, "Crimean War." In *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, ed. James S. Olson and Robert Shadle (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 338-339.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Brown. "'Like a Devoted Army': Medicine, Heroic Masculinity, and the Military Paradigm in Victorian Britain," *The Journal of British Studies* 49 (July 2010): 606-610.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

The next major event in British imperial history was the Indian Rebellion of 1857. This is quite possibly the most heavily written upon subject in Indian history, and marked a major turning point in the history of British imperialism. Prior to the rebellion, the Indian subcontinent had been under the exclusive control of the royally chartered British East India Company. This meant that while the East India Company itself had to report directly to the crown, the territory itself was a privately owned piece of property. The rebellion began in May of 1857, when a group of native Indian soldiers in the employ of the East India Company's army rebelled because of racial injustices. This conflict soon spread, and became a full civilian rebellion. With help from the British army, the rebellion was put down within six months, and order was restored within a year. The British people were caught entirely off guard, and placed much of the blame for the event on the ineptitude of the East India Company for not keeping a closer eye on the public opinions of the native Indians. By the beginning of 1858 a new bill had been put before Parliament, which brought about the passing of the Government of India Act of 1858. This act formally handed control of the Indian subcontinent over to the British crown. The British government quickly took a more firm stance in India, not only controlling foreign policy for the colony, but internal politics as well. The British assured the Indian princes that they would be allowed to keep their thrones, but in reality British imperial policy stripped the princes of any real power.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the nineteenth century Britain continually tried to expand its influence over central Asia in order to combat Russian expansion southward. Even

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<sup>4</sup> Arnold P. Kaminsky, "Indian Rebellion of 1857 (Sepoy Mutiny)." In *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, ed. James S. Olson and Robert Shadle (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 566-568.



before the British crown took control over the Indian subcontinent, it intervened in Afghanistan's internal politics in a bid for control of the region. Afghanistan held a vital position in the minds of British imperialists. While the country was rather barren and provided no substantial wealth for the empire, it provided a valuable buffer zone between the Russian Empire and the rich lands of India. The British would spend the bulk of the nineteenth century embroiled in conflicts in Afghanistan, known as the Anglo-Afghan Wars. The first Anglo-Afghan war began in 1838 when British military forces intervened on behalf of Shah Shuja in his bid to regain power. After easily achieving their first objectives, the British invasion soon turned into a tragedy after many British soldiers were massacred in the guerilla warfare that ensued after pushing further into Afghanistan. By 1842 the British decided that this was a war not worth fighting, and hastily retreated from Afghanistan, leaving the current rulership in place.<sup>5</sup>

This did not end Britain's involvement in central Asia. Thirty-six years later, the British were once again embroiled in a conflict in Afghanistan, this time as part of a new "forward policy"<sup>6</sup> meant to halt the advance of the Russian Empire into the region. The British plan was to place a forward line of defense for India on the northern stretch of the Hindu Kush, the traditional invasion point for the Indian subcontinent. To this end, the British began their second invasion of Afghanistan in November 1878, and met with immediate success. By May 1879 a treaty had been signed, and the Afghani ruler, Yaqub Khan, agreed to the British placing permanent representatives in Kabul and other strategic cities around Afghanistan. The British also gained unilateral control over the

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<sup>5</sup> Roy E. Thoman, "Afghanistan." In *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, ed. James S. Olson and Robert Shadle (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 12-13

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

Khyber Pass, and several districts near the border to India. This peace agreement did not last long however. Within a year, the people of Afghanistan had once again risen up in rebellion against British rule, but the British response was swift, and soon Kabul was once again under British control. Having taken total control of the Afghani treasury, they set up a puppet government to control the region and to try anyone accused of taking part in the uprising. Finally the British gained total control over the area, and acquired an important buffer zone between the expanding Russians and the profit rich lands of the Indian subcontinent.<sup>7</sup>

Though for the first half of the nineteenth century the British had focused their attentions in expanding the empire to the central regions of Asia, it was not long before their gaze began to peer elsewhere. As the century progressed on, the nations of Europe began to focus in on expanding western control into the largely unexplored interior of the African continent. While Europeans had held outposts in Africa for centuries, these were almost entirely small trading centers located along the coasts. The western coast of Africa in particular had been pivotal in the slave trade of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but beginning in the early nineteenth century the slave trade began to slowly be banned by European nations, with England abolishing the slave trade in 1807, and slavery itself in 1833. The slave trade itself did not require massive effort on the part of the Europeans on the continent itself, but following the abolition of the slave trade European nations slowly realized that in order to extract the maximum amount of wealth out of Africa a much greater presence was needed on the ground. This led to a desire to

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 13-14.

explore the interior portions of the continent, and it was these explorations, and the reports that flourished in newspapers back in Europe, that led to a greater interest in Africa by the British public.

One event during this period of exploration stood above all others in the British press; the discovery of David Livingstone by Henry Morton Stanley in 1872. David Livingstone was a Scottish missionary that was accepted into the London Missionary Society in 1838. Though he originally wanted to be sent to China, the London Missionary Society chose to send him to Africa. Livingstone arrived in Africa in 1841, and would spend the next thirty years both converting the native Africans, and opening new territories for western, and more specifically British, expansion into Africa. From the years 1853 to 1856, Livingstone undertook to cross the continent by way of the interior, and having completed his quest returned to England in 1856 to publish the record of his journey. This garnered quite a bit of press for the man, and he became something of a national hero virtually overnight. Following this wave of success, Livingstone accepted the post of British consul for eastern Africa, and returned to the continent in 1858. Once again Livingstone found himself exploring beyond the known reaches of British influence, and published a second volume following his return to England in 1864. He was quickly rewarded for this latest success with the post of British consul to central Africa in 1865. Upon returning to Africa, Livingstone decided that it was imperative that the British be the first to discover the headwaters of the Nile River, and organized another expedition into the interior of the continent. The expedition would last

for years, and would eventually lead to the famous meeting between Livingstone and Stanley.<sup>8</sup>

Over the course of this particular expedition, Livingstone eventually briefly lost contact with the Western world. The growing concern over the safety of the British hero caused James Gordon Bennett, owner of the newspaper the *New York Herald*, to commission an up-and-coming explorer named Henry Morton Stanley to travel to Africa in search of Livingstone. Stanley's search for Livingstone was indeed a fruitful one, and led to one of the most well known phrases in the history of journalism. Whether or not Stanley actually said his famous phrase, 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume?' is actually under a certain amount of doubt, as Stanley almost certainly embellished his story, but the impact it had was very real.

With Africa now firmly placed in the back of the British public's mind, it would be less than a decade before another major event would turn their gaze back to the southern continent. Following British expansion on the southern tip of Africa throughout the late 1850s and through the 1860s, the European colonists were soon embroiled in a conflict with the native empire, the Zulus. The Zulus had been unified over the course of the first half of the nineteenth century by the influential Shaka Zulu. Following their unification into a native empire, the Zulu almost immediately came into conflict with the Boers, the descendants of the original Dutch settlers in the area. The Boers initially turned to the British for help, though later regretted this move. After the British formally took control over the region, the colonial administration attempted to mediate the border

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<sup>8</sup> A. D. Roberts, "Livingstone, David (1813–1873)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16803> (accessed February 11, 2011).

disputes between the Zulus and the Boers without much success. Early in 1877, the British had ruled in favor of the Zulus during a border dispute between them and the Boers, but as fighting intensified between these two groups a British official ruled in 1878 that the previous ruling had been unfairly biased against the Boers. He went on to rule that all Boers left residing in the disputed region were either free to leave as they wished for which they would be compensated for their losses, or would be protected from the Zulus if they decided to remain.<sup>9</sup> This obviously sparked a reaction from the Zulu leader, Cetshwayo, who permitted small attacks to be made in the border areas that were in dispute. Following the attacks, the colonial governor offered Cetshwayo an ultimatum on 11 December 1878, which among several other clauses included the total dismantlement of the Zulu army, the abandonment of the Zulu warrior tradition, and the appointment of a permanent British agent in Zululand to oversee the Zulus' activities in the future. When Cetshwayo failed to meet these terms at the turn of the year, the British began to mobilize an army for the invasion of Zululand.

The war itself was a rather short affair, but the events of the British invasion of Zululand had a lasting impact on the British psyche. The British advance into the Zulus' territory began in January 1879, and the final battle of the war was fought on 4 July 1879, with Cetshwayo captured in August of the same year, bringing the war to a conclusion. The majority of the war was unremarkable; this was like any number of other colonial skirmishes that Britain faced in the nineteenth century, but there were two major events which had a much larger impact. The first was the defeat of the main British army

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<sup>9</sup> Norman Etherington, "Shepstone, Sir Theophilus (1817–1893)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25353> (accessed March 6, 2010).

column by Zulu forces at Isandlwana. It fell to Lord Chelmsford, commander of the British forces in southern Africa, to lead the charge to the Zulu capital of Ulundi. Chelmsford chose to split his army into three prongs to separate on the march to Ulundi, and then simultaneously converge on the royal kraal.<sup>10</sup> On 21 January the middle column under the control of Chelmsford himself camped at the base of a small mountain named Isandlwana. Early in the morning of 22 January, Zulu forces launched a surprise assault on the British camp, and slaughtered nearly all of the one thousand eight hundred troops that made up the center column. It was the worst military disaster in British colonial history. Never before had such a large force of British regulars been defeated by a native army. On the same day as the disaster at Isandlwana the British also tasted one of the most dramatic victories of British history. The British had posted a limited contingent of troops at the small supply outpost of Rorke's Drift, one of the strategic crossing points of the Buffalo River. The Zulu attacked the British force of just over one hundred fifty men with a vastly superior force numbering somewhere between three and four thousand warriors. In a feat of extreme military valor, the British force was able to hold off the Zulu assault until reinforcements arrived. In the same day, the British had suffered one of the largest defeats in the history of the empire, and witnessed an act of extreme valor by British soldiers.<sup>11</sup>

The British invasion of Zululand in 1879 was nothing more than a colonial skirmish, but had much greater impacts on the British psyche. The defeat at Isandlwana

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<sup>10</sup> A Kraal is a traditional Zulu structure that included an enclosure for cattle as well as living spaces surrounded by a palisade or mud wall. In the case of the royalty, these enclosures could be massive, the size of small villages by themselves.

<sup>11</sup> Pradip Bhaumik, "Zulu Wars" In *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, ed. James S. Olson and Robert Shadle (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 1184-1186.

and the success at Rorke's Drift showed that the British army was both not invincible to native forces in the colonies, and at the same time that they had it in them to overcome great odds and snatch success from the jaws of tragedy. As the actor Stanley Baker said in the film adaptation of the battle at Rorke's Drift, "The army doesn't like more than one disaster in a day."<sup>12</sup> While this quote is a piece of artistic parlance from the movie, it does sum up a real British sentiment. To the British public, the fact that the army had recovered from such a horrible defeat so quickly, not only to win at Rorke's Drift, but to end the war by the end of summer spoke volumes about the resolve of the servants of the empire. The conclusion of the Anglo-Zulu War meant that the British had nominal control over the southern tip of the African continent, but Britain's problems in Africa were far from over.

One of the major triggers of the scramble for Africa was the continued rivalry between Britain and France. The two major powers in Europe had been colonial rivals since the first wave of colonization in the seventeenth century, and their rivalry began to heat up in the 1870s over the issue of Egypt. In 1869, a team led by a French engineer completed a canal that connected the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, running through the Isthmus of Suez. The canal was of great benefit to the British as it cut the distance between England and India, its prize colonial possession at the time, in half. Unfortunately the construction of the canal caused severe financial difficulties for the ruler of Egypt, the khedive Ismail Pasha, and in 1875 the British bailed out the bankrupt state by purchasing considerable shares in the canal. This control gave the British

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<sup>12</sup> *Zulu*, directed by Cy Endfield (1964; Los Angeles, CA: MGM Home Video, 2003), DVD.

considerable influence over both the canal, and the country of Egypt in general. Following the bailout there was continuous social and political strife which threatened British interests in the area, and in 1882 a British fleet shelled the coastal city of Alexandria. Following the bombardment, and after a small show of force, Egypt was established as a protectorate of Britain, though it technically remained part of the Ottoman Empire. This greatly aggrieved the French who had lent practically the same amount of money to the khedive as the British had, and sparked a scramble for control of the rest of the African continent.<sup>13</sup>

British interest in the African continent was further solidified by the events that followed a revolt of Islamic fundamentalists and nationalists in the Sudan. In the early 1880s a former slave trader declared himself to be the Mahdi, the prophesied redeemer of Islam, and challenged Egypt's authority over the Sudan. He led his followers in a holy war against the Egyptian forces which were being led by British officers, defeating them with relative ease. In 1884 the British government sent an expedition to the Sudanese capital of Khartoum to evacuate the Egyptian population. The expedition, led by the famous British adventurer General Charles "Chinese" Gordon, was cut off upon reaching Khartoum, and after holing up in the city for ten months were finally overrun in 1885. The Mahdists killed many of the survivors inside of the city, including Gordon, which enraged the British public back in the metropole. Following the defeat at Khartoum, Britain abandoned the Sudan to the forces of the Mahdi.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> John Merriman. *A History of Modern Europe: From the French Revolution to the Present*. Second Edition. (New York; W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2004.), 906-907.

<sup>14</sup> Merriman, 910.



As the scramble for Africa heated up in the 1880s and early 1890s, the British government began to reevaluate its decision to abandon its claims in the Sudan. General Herbert Kitchener was placed in charge of an army twenty-five thousand strong, and tasked with the mission of retaking the Sudan in the name of the empire early in 1896. The invasion began in March; the British forces working their way down the Nile River towards Khartoum. Just outside of the famous city, British forces mauled the Mahdi's army in the Battle of Omdurman on 2 September. This defeat was essentially a death blow to the forces of the Mahdi, who never recovered from the loss. Anglo-Egyptian forces would spend another couple of years mopping up small pockets of resistance around the territory, but the Sudan was effectively back under the control of the British. During this period, the French attempted to stake their own claim in the area, occupying an old Egyptian fort, but after Kitchener moved his army on the French forces they hastily retreated back to French possessions and never again attempted to colonize in the Sudan. By 1899, the British felt that they had successfully pacified the region and signed the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, which set up joint control of the Sudan between Britain in Egypt, but in reality the former held all of the power in the relationship.

The final colonial conflict of the nineteenth century would again see the British engaged in a war in South Africa. This time it was not native tribes that opposed the British army, but the Boers. The British and the Boers had fought another war prior to this which started shortly after the conclusion of the Anglo-Zulu War in 1880. Following the British defeat at Isandlwana, the Boers believed that they stood a fair chance of being able to throw off the yoke of British oppression. Their belief in independence was

strengthened by the then current Prime Minister, William E. Gladstone, who had recently denounced the previous Prime Minister's imperial policies. In this vein, the Boers launched a war of independence. Being more native to the land than their British adversaries, the Boers had a distinct advantage during the war, and inflicted heavy losses on the British forces. By 1881 the Boers had managed to kill the British commander, and force an armistice in which they were allowed internal self-government under the sovereignty of the British crown. The British maintained control over their foreign affairs and treatment of the natives, but for all internal purposes, the Boers had won their freedom.<sup>15</sup> Over time the British attempted to gain more control over the new South African Republic, placing British troops on the Transvaal's borders, and continually bringing more troops into the region. Feeling that their independence from British rule was under threat, the Boer president issued an ultimatum to the British to remove their troops from the region, and when these demands were ignored, a war sparked in 1899.<sup>16</sup>

The war lasted for three years, and was one of Britain's bloodiest imperial struggles to date. At the beginning of the war the British were vastly outnumbered in the region; only maintaining around twelve thousand soldiers in the region as opposed to the Boer force of roughly thirty-five to sixty thousand men at any given time, but the British quickly responded by sending vast amounts of personnel. Within months the British reinforcements landed on the continent, and the British army numbered around four hundred thousand men at arms. The Boers struck first, invading Natal, Rhodesia, and

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<sup>15</sup> Patricia Ashman, "Anglo Boer War, 1880-1881" In *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, ed. James S. Olson and Robert Shadle (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 44-45.

<sup>16</sup> Patricia Ashman, "Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902" In *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, ed. James S. Olson and Robert Shadle (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 45-46.

Cape Colony, as well as laying siege to several major centers. By the end of 1900 the war had turned around for the British. After a change in leadership, the British army managed to capture Johannesburg and Pretoria, the two largest cities under Boer control. Thinking that the war had been won, the British commander sailed back to England leaving a subordinate in command, but the Boers did not surrender; instead they intensified their guerilla tactics, and penetrated deep into British territory. The British commander ordered a scorched-earth policy, and opened refugee camps which many Boers were forced into. Conditions in the camps were horrid, and somewhere between eighteen and twenty-eight thousand Boer refugees died. The war continued on for another couple of years, but the Boers slowly realized that their chances of winning were slim. Boer leadership capitulated to British demands and signed the Treaty of Vereeniging on 31 May 1902, thus bringing to a close the second conflict between the long standing white powers on the southern tip of Africa, the Britons and the Boers.<sup>17</sup>

The Anglo-Boer had a lasting impression on the British public. The British army suffered twenty-two thousand casualties, while the the Boer numbers were between twenty-five and thirty-five thousand dead, and those numbers did not even include the number of civilians that had died in the British refugee camps. On top of the drastic price paid in the lives of British soldiers, the government spent almost £200 million on winning the war. The British public was appalled by the loss of life, both of British soldiers and in the refugee camps. When the substantial financial losses were factored in, the British public's enthusiasm for imperialism was greatly diminished.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

All of these events were interpreted by the British public as threats to the empire itself. With hindsight it is easy to see that the empire was never really under any tangible threat until the twentieth-century. The British did not face any large losses of territory until the 1920s, and the real debates about ending the empire did not even take off until the 1940s, but nonetheless the general public of the metropole continuously perceived the empire to be under threat throughout the latter decades of the nineteenth century. As can be seen with the prior list of events, this is fairly understandable as the British were almost constantly involved in some colonial squabble or another. The major difference here is that none of these events, with the possible exception of the Crimean War, really ever threatened to bring down the British Empire. The worst case scenario for almost all of these events was a loss of territory and influence in the specific region of the conflict. Regardless of this fact, the metropole considered the empire to be under threat, and as such were concerned with the need for a strong corps of men to rule and defend the empire.

Compounding the perceived threats from the colonies affecting the empire and the metropole itself was the perception that manliness was under threat on the home front as well. The empire itself provided both the reasoning behind a need for masculine figures as well as a good marker, or test, of one's own manliness as men would venture out to serve in the army or the foreign service. At the same time as all of this was happening there were also threats to masculine status back in England. The major difference between the two was that in the foreign service or the army these pursuits were meant to cement masculinity in the eyes of other men, while the crux of the problem in England

revolved around men maintaining their status in context to the rising role of women in the society. In this sense the masculine status in British society was also dependent on maintaining the traditional dominant role of men through privileged access to the public sphere, domestic authority, and a double standard in regards to sexual conduct.<sup>18</sup> Gender relations in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century were in a state of flux. This caused a sense of masculine insecurity which would in turn feed into enthusiasm for empire as a site of unqualified manliness.

During the 1880s and 1890s women were beginning to make inroads into a wide number of areas that had been traditionally reserved for men. This can not be seen as the beginning of the feminist movement, and therefore the label 'first wave feminism' is something of a misnomer, as women had begun making advances in society much earlier than this, but this was a period of expansion that was unprecedented. One of the most concerning things about the movement to men was the breadth of areas and fields that women began to maneuver into.<sup>19</sup> Probably the most obvious area of women's advancement was into areas of employment, particularly in office work. Office work was traditionally seen as a route of advancement for upwardly mobile working and lower middle class men, but by the beginning of the twentieth century women were firmly entrenched in the work place taking jobs as typists and telegraphists for some of the larger corporations. In fact by 1901 women accounted for eleven percent of clerks working in England, and their numbers went as high as twenty percent in places like

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<sup>18</sup> John Tosh. *Manliness and Masculinities: Nineteenth-Century Britain*. (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 203.

<sup>19</sup> John Tosh. "Masculinities in an Industrializing Society: Britain, 1800-1915," *The Journal of British Studies* 44 (April 2005): 337.

Birmingham.<sup>20</sup> The men in the profession were generally against this increase in female employees, not only because of a fear of wage reduction or over saturation of the job market but also because the gender status of the whole occupation was at stake. This was the case across the board as women continued to advance in the workplace, especially into arena traditionally reserved for men.

The upheaval of gender relations extended beyond the realm of employment, including into the personal sphere, especially regarding sexuality and marriage. In the last few decades of the nineteenth century women, especially unmarried women, gained greater freedoms than ever before. Some of these were officially sanctioned acts which gave women rights, such as the Married Women's Property Act of 1882 which gave women control of the assets that they brought to a marriage. Some advances were more colloquial. In major cities older, unmarried women ceased to be associated with social failure, and it was increasingly accepted that this was a preference for some. Women were increasingly able to live alone or in all-women households, and it became more acceptable for women to choose their own male company, or dispense with it entirely if they so chose. These advances inspired feminist attacks on the whole institution of marriage and the modest freedom of men's sexual practices. All of this change caused men to conceive of their masculine authority beginning to decline in the face of feminist opposition and advances.<sup>21</sup>

Women's social organizations were one final arena which saw considerable growth during this period. Throughout the Victorian period there were major social

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<sup>20</sup> Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, 204.

<sup>21</sup> Tosh, "Masculinities in an Industrializing Society," 335-340.

concerns that played out, most particularly the problem of urban poor. The most prevalent theory on how to cure this particular blight to British society was by forming organizations, mostly made up of upper middle class and upper class citizens, to aid the poor of the country. This civilizing mission was increasingly taken up by women's groups over the last few decades of the nineteenth century. Mostly women provided the necessary manpower and financial support for this movement, and generally played up their feminine influence as pseudo wives and mothers to the people they were trying to help. On top of this, women emphasized the traditional idea that they were the more virtuous of the sexes, and they were responsible to help out those that they could. All of this moved women even more out of the private sphere and into the public sphere. Women began to maneuver quite effectively in an increasingly public world that had traditionally been dominated by men. Women filled the ranks of the multitude of social support organizations such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and many others.

Over the last half of the nineteenth century British masculinity was perceived as being under threat from all sides. Running an empire was an inherently manly occupation as men essentially held all of the positions in the military and the Foreign Service, which were the two establishments in charge of the day to day maintenance of the colonies, and the fact that the colonies themselves were settled predominantly by British men. This is not to say that families or single women never settled in the colonies, but the fact of the matter is that in the British colonial population the majority of people were men. With this being the case, threats to the empire were seen as being

threats to British manliness. The British were supposed to be the shining beacon of good, civility, and modern society to the rest of the world, and when they were attacked, and especially when they suffered defeats, at the hands of the less civilized groups of the world it was a hit to their collective machismo. Added to this was that male hegemony was coming more and more under threat at home as well. In the metropole of the empire women began to take more prominent places in society, making the transition from the private to the public sphere. The reaction to all this was a new conception of what it was to be a man, and a new set of masculine values that developed over the last few decades of the nineteenth century. These new values and views on manliness presented themselves in many different fashions, ranging from the creation of sports and the new public school described previously, to presentations of overtly masculine literature. Books for boys became the perfect way to present this new version of masculinity to the British public in hopes of creating a hyper-masculine generation of men that was capable of withstanding the affronts to manliness that were ever present, and to run the empire in the future.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Masculinity in H. Rider Haggard's Life and Works**

The focus of Victorian society on masculinity, and how to increase manliness in the face of the problems both internally and externally of maintaining such vast empire proliferated in many different patterns and through different outlets. Simultaneous with this need for machismo, was the growing evolution and expansion of the popular media industry, mostly through printed materials. This congruous expansion of both of the masculine concept and the print media industry spawned a perfect opportunity for a particular form of propaganda which was fit to serve both purposes. Juvenile literature could be exploited to popularize the perception of the need for the hyper-masculine throughout the empire as well as creating an exciting new genre that would become one of the most popular styles of literature to this day. The adventure novel would be developed in the early years of the high imperialism period, around 1880, and during this early stage in its development one of the heavyweights of the genre would step into the limelight for the first time. H. Rider Haggard began to publish his fantastical stories in

the mid 1880s, and continued to write highly successful novels for boys for the next four decades.<sup>1</sup>

Henry Rider Haggard quickly became one of the most prolific authors of juvenile literature after he published his first major success in 1885, *King Solomon's Mines*. His tales of adventure, which predominantly took place on the African continent, gripped the imaginations of a generation of young men across Britain. While they were purely meant to serve the purpose of most literature, to entertain the readership, they also contributed to a greater movement that was taking place across the nation at the time. In the metropole of Britain there was a conscious effort to create a class of young men who were perfectly suited to running the vast empire that they controlled by the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Young men were continuously drilled with the newly created ethos of Victorian masculinity, an ethos that emphasized the ideals of adventure, male comradeship, and licensed aggression. From the time they entered school they were beginning to be taught what it meant to be a man in Victorian society, and were taught a

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<sup>1</sup> While there has been a great deal of ink devoted to the works of Haggard, they are almost entirely devoted to critiquing his work from a literary perspective. They often regard him as the founder of the adventure novel and creator of the "lost world" genre, but writings on his role in the greater range of imperialism are almost nonexistent. Haggard is often mentioned as being a major champion of imperialism and masculinity, but that is where it predominantly stops. The focus taken in this examination on several of Haggard's most prolific works is based upon the theoretical foundations of several other articles and monographs. James Epstein's "Taking Class Notes on Empire," in *At Home With the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 251-274, was highly influential in my conceptualization of what the desirable values were for young British gentlemen. Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow. *The Myth of Africa* (New York: The Library of Social Science, 1977), provided the background for how Africa itself was being perceived by the greater British public during the Victorian period. Finally, Bernard Porter. *The Absent-Minded Imperialists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), was of great importance in providing my theoretical understanding of Victorian society in the metropole, as well as the public's views of the imperialist project, and John Tosh. *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), was greatly informative on the development of my argument about masculinity.

set of values which included muscular Christianity<sup>2</sup>, patriotism, fellowship, and a chivalric sense of honor and loyalty.<sup>3</sup> Haggard grew up during the early stages of this movement, and became indoctrinated with the need for manliness in the face of the dangers of empire. His life and his writings bear witness to how British masculinity was formed both in response to external threats perceived across the empire, as well as internal threats to manliness at home.

This new ideal of masculinity was certainly present in the most famous of Haggard's novels, *King Solomon's Mines* and *She: A History of Adventure*, as well as in most of the rest of his adventure stories. Both novels were intended for an adolescent audience, and contain numerous direct representations of Victorian masculinity, most notably Allan Quatermain. In opposition to these representations of British gentlemen are the native Africans that are prevalent in both works. While Haggard was to a small degree more sympathetic with the Africans than some of his colleagues in the empire at the time, they were still nominally portrayed as the antithesis of the British main characters. It may not have been an intended goal of Haggard, but his works of fiction are prime examples of the portrayal of Victorian masculinity. This had a great impact on the generation of boys growing up during this period as they devoured his stories, and further indoctrinated themselves with a sense of the manliness that society considered desirable.

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<sup>3</sup> William E. Winn, "Tom Brown's Schooldays and the Development of 'Muscular Christianity,'" *Church History* 29 (March 1960): 67-71.

Henry Rider Haggard was born 22 June 1856 in Norfolk, England. He was the seventh child born to William, a country squire and respected gentleman, and Ella Haggard. Growing up as a member of the landed gentry class in rural England had its effects on him as a boy, and as such he was much more interested in masculine pursuits such as riding, shooting, and hunting on his family's land. It was not a particularly intellectually challenging life for the young boy who ended up spending more time reading novels that were popular for young boys, such as *Arabian Nights* and *Robinson Crusoe*, to the neglect of his traditional readers for young boys. This led to the young Haggard leading a particularly physically active lifestyle, to the detriment of his studies.<sup>4</sup>

Haggard began his formal education at age eight when he was placed into a day school in London. It was not long before he was pulled out of the school by his father after hearing rumors that the young boy had been beaten by a school usher. This would begin a recurring theme that would haunt Haggard for the rest of his educational career. For the next nine years, Haggard was shuffled in and out of three separate schools, each time being removed from the institution by his father mostly because of his general lack of any real progress academically. It is noteworthy that Haggard was the only one of his six brothers that was denied a proper education at a public school or university. There have been many theories about this, but it is most likely that his father did not want to waste money on an education for the son that was deemed the least intelligent out of all six. After having been deemed to have received enough formal schooling, Haggard's father decided that it was time to find his son a profession.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Morton Cohen, *Rider Haggard: His Life and Works*. (London; Hutchinson of London, 1960), 19-21.

<sup>5</sup> Cohen, *Rider Haggard*, 23-26.

Haggard's upbringing had its affect on the values that he would eventually portray with the characters of his novels. Between his country upbringing and his school years, the new Victorian ideals and values were ever present in his life. He was indoctrinated with a longing for adventure. This would be fulfilled later in life by travel, and especially by his writing. Haggard often referred to writing as his escape, as an outlet for his longing for the adventures of his youth. Male comradeship was present in the form of his six brothers and his schoolboy days. This would be a recurring theme of his novels which predominantly featured several British males as the protagonists. Licensed aggression was a way of life for a young upper class male in Britain at the time. By the time he was five years old Rider owned his own gun, and was a talented shooter before he left for school at age eight. Once in school, Rider participated in several sports, mainly focusing on football,<sup>6</sup> which was much more aggressive and violent then the modern incarnation of the sport. His upbringing was practically a model of the Victorian masculine ethos.

After considering the different avenues available to the young man, Haggard's father came to the conclusion that the best bet was to enroll Haggard in the foreign service. Over the course of the previous few decades the foreign service was becoming more of an attractive career option for members of the higher classes of society, especially those whom were wishing to increase their rank in society. Haggard was enrolled with a private tutor in London to begin preparing for the entrance exam, but was again quickly pulled out by his father and in turn enrolled in a crammer<sup>7</sup> where he would

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<sup>6</sup> This is European footall, or soccer.

<sup>7</sup> A crammer is a school that specifically prepares an individual for an examination of some sort.

remain for a year and a half. While away on holiday with his family, Haggard's father learned that his good friend and neighbor, Sir Henry Bulwer, was about to take the post of lieutenant-governor of the Natal Colony in South Africa, and immediately he jumped on the opportunity for his son. After a brief exchange of letters, Bulwer decided to take on Rider as a member of his staff sight unseen, and the young man hurried back to London to prepare for his departure for Africa.<sup>8</sup>

The next few years spent working in the employ of the foreign service in South Africa were some the most formative years of Haggard's life. His experiences abroad would shape his opinion of the British imperial project, as well as constitute the beginning of a life long interest in the African continent. Haggard arrived in South Africa in 1875 at the age of nineteen. The tensions between the three major groups in the area, the British, the Boers, and the Zulu, were slowly boiling up, and would eventually come to a head during his stay in the colonies. Haggard quickly made a name for himself with his hard work, and before long Bulwer had him managing the entire household. Haggard flourished in his new surroundings, and began to study law. For two years he worked hard at his job and his studies, and was rewarded for his efforts by being appointed special commissioner to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Theophilus Shepstone, who he had grown close to over the course of his time in South Africa.<sup>9</sup>

Shepstone would have a profound influence not only on Haggard's career, but on how he felt about Africa for the rest of his life. Under Shepstone's guidance Haggard

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<sup>8</sup> Cohen, *Rider Haggard*, 26-28.

<sup>9</sup> Morton N. Cohen, "Haggard, Sir (Henry) Rider (1856–1925)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33632> (accessed April 20, 2010).

raised the British flag over Pretoria when the British annexed the Transvaal, and was appointed to the position of Master and Registrar of the High Court of Natal at the age of twenty-one. He was the youngest man to ever be appointed to the head of a government department in South Africa. Beyond just his career, Shepstone had a profound influence on Haggard's perceptions of the native Africans. During his time as Secretary for Native Affairs Shepstone developed a reputation for his attempts to understand the native tribes according to their own customs and traditions. He secured large tracts of lands for the native Africans, used traditional African chiefs to directly rule over the native population, was tolerant of native customs of polygamy and bride prices paid in cattle, and was lauded for his superb use of taxation of local peoples. At the same time, Shepstone was not afraid to use force to show British control over the native population, and ruthlessly crushed several tribes that were opposed to British rule. These general philosophies would be passed on from Shepstone to Haggard, whom he always regarded as his greatest student. For his part, Haggard dedicated several of his published works to Shepstone, whom he regarded as his greatest teacher.<sup>10</sup>

The latter part of Haggard's time in South Africa would end up being less eventful than his first few years in the colonies. Before departing for South Africa, Haggard had been introduced to a young woman, Mary Elizabeth Jackson, with whom he would carry on a tumultuous love affair with for the rest of his life. On the outset of the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879 he joined the Queen's cavalry volunteers to fight against the Zulu nation, but found out shortly after the war started that Jackson had married another. This news

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<sup>10</sup> Norman Etherington, "Shepstone, Sir Theophilus (1817–1893)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25353> (accessed April 20, 2010).

devastated the young man who had entertained hopes of marrying her on his return to Britain. Haggard resolved to leave public service and resigned his post with the foreign office. After resigning his post, Haggard moved out into the veldt to start an ostrich farm with a friend. After having an affair with a married woman who would eventually bear his illegitimate child, Haggard left his troubles behind him and returned to England at the end of 1879.<sup>11</sup>

On his return to England he was introduced to Louisa Margitson, a friend of his sister's, and hit it off with her immediately. Within a week the two were engaged, and the wedding followed on 11 August 1880. Following the marriage, Haggard decided to return to South Africa with his new bride to settle down to a quiet life of ostrich farming. Their first son was born shortly after their arrival, but unfortunately for the young family the Anglo-Transvaal War began and they decided to return to England August 1881. In order to look after the well being of his new family, Haggard decided to pursue a career in law and began to study for the bar. While working towards becoming a lawyer, Haggard decided to begin writing small works of fiction as a creative outlet. He published his first work, *Dawn*, in 1884 which received mixed reviews, and sold almost no copies. Haggard was not to be discouraged, and began writing a second book, *The Witch's Head*. The work also did not sell many copies, but he gained some recognition for his writing when the story switched from England to Africa. When the main character was forced to flee the country, Haggard had him go to Africa.<sup>12</sup> The section of the book that took place in Africa was considered quite brilliant, and further encouraged Haggard

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<sup>11</sup> Cohen, "Haggard, Sir (Henry) Rider (1856-1925)"

<sup>12</sup> H. Rider Haggard, *The Witch's Head*. (London; Clay and Taylor, 1885), 61, Google e-Book.



to continue his blossoming writing career. Following a bet with his brother that he could not produce a novel that was as compelling and popular as the recently published *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson. The resulting novel was Haggard's first major success, *King Solomon's Mines*, published in 1885. This would mark the beginning of his tenure as one of the most popular authors of the Victorian period.<sup>13</sup>

This period abroad, both serving the empire directly through the Foreign Service and informally as a colonist had a great impact on Haggard's world view. He saw first hand what the empire both entailed and required. The external threats to the empire which were sometimes imaginary or on the periphery of consciousness back in the metropole were very real and present to Haggard. From just about the moment that he set foot on the African continent he witnessed that the maintenance of the empire was a daily struggle, and this point was hammered home by the Anglo-Zulu War. Strong men were needed to serve in the army and act as administrators to guide the colonies through the ever more complicated international world of the late nineteenth century. This sense would manifest itself in Haggard's literary endeavors. His fictional stories would focus heavily on the colonies and were centered around characters that embodied the norms and values of what masculinity meant to the British.

Over the course of his career as an author, Haggard wrote a total of seventy works. There were forty-eight adventure stories, twelve novels dealing with contemporary issues in England, and ten works of nonfiction focused on a wide range of issues. Haggard was a talented writer, generally working on multiple books

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<sup>13</sup> Cohen, "Haggard, Sir (Henry) Rider (1856-1925)"

simultaneously and usually finishing a single volume in four to eight weeks. Many have argued that the death of his only son in 1891 caused a drop off in his work, but even if that was the case he had already published nineteen separate works. He is most widely known for the first category, his adventure novels. Haggard was at his authorial best when he was writing about Africa. Africa had been firmly planted in his consciousness after his formative stay there as a young man. His adventure novels would go on to be some of the best selling novels of his day, and of all time. Of these stories, two particular sets of characters stood out above the rest as being particularly popular with the general populace of England. *King Solomon's Mines*, his first adventure novel created the character Allan Quatermain who would feature as the main character in another fourteen books, and *She: A History of Adventure*. Both creations were instant successes, selling copies around the country.

*King Solomon's Mines* was Haggard's first commercial success. After accepting the challenge from his brother to write a novel as well received and successful as Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, Haggard produced *King Solomon's Mines* in a little under six weeks, only writing at night as his need to support his family kept him at his job during the day. When Haggard was finished with the work he began to shop around for a publisher, and the book was eventually picked up by Cassells, a famous publisher of books for boys which had also published *Treasure Island*. When Haggard went into the publisher's office to discuss the terms he was given the offer of either £100 or ten percent of the profits of the novel. Haggard was ready to accept the £100 when a clerk working in the office convinced him that the royalty was the better option. Haggard changed his

mind and took the royalty, and the instant success of the novel changed his life. For the first time in his life, being a writer became his primary pursuit.<sup>14</sup>

Over the course of the next six months Haggard would churn out a further three works of fiction. The third of which would cement his status as a household name, and as one of the literary giants of the Victorian period. *She: A History of Adventure* was Haggard's fourth successful adventure novel, and much like *King Solomon's Mines* was produced at a blurring pace. Like his first novel, *She* was produced in a little under six weeks. Haggard would later look back at the experience of writing *She* and say that he wrote it "at white heat, almost without rest...it came faster than my poor aching hand could set it down."<sup>15</sup> The novel met with similar, if not more success than *King Solomon's Mines* and cemented Haggard's status as a popular author.

The two novels are similar in composition. Both books take place in Africa and have a cohort of British protagonists. The story line of both works revolves around an adventure to find a lost civilization in the uncharted interior of the "Dark Continent." *King Solomon's Mines* follows the adventures of the professional hunter Allan Quatermain, Sir Henry Curtis, and Captain Good as they go in search of Curtis' brother who went missing after going in search of Solomon's fabled diamond mines. After an arduous journey the trio, along with an African guide named Umbopa, eventually discover a lost civilization of Africans that are similar to the Zulus of South Africa. They soon find out that Umbopa is actually the long lost heir to the throne of the civilization, Ignosi. After a bloody battle in which Ignosi and his British allies are victorious they are

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<sup>14</sup> Cohen, "Haggard, Sir (Henry) Rider (1856-1925)"

<sup>15</sup> Cohen, "Haggard, Sir (Henry) Rider (1856-1925)"

led to the famous diamond mines of Solomon by the former king's witchdoctor. Unfortunately for the trio they are tricked and trapped inside the treasure room, but eventually find an escape route, after filling their pockets with as many diamonds as possible. Having not heard anything of Curtis' brother, and having made themselves rich men, the three Englishmen decide to head back for the British colonies, and along the route end up finding Curtis' brother stranded at an oasis with a broken leg. The four men successfully make it back to Durban, and return to England rich men.<sup>16</sup>

*She: A History of Adventure* follows along similar lines. The story opens with a young Cambridge fellow, Horace Holly, being asked by a dying friend to take on his five year old son, Leo Vincey, as his ward. After Holly reluctantly accepts he is given instructions for raising the boy, which included an iron box that was to be given to the boy on his twenty-fifth birthday. When the box is finally opened twenty years later it is discovered that Leo is descended from an Egyptian princess and a Greek priest who was slain by the evil queen of a lost civilization in the heart of Africa, which starts a quest for revenge a millennia in the waiting. Leo decides to venture to Africa to ascertain if the tale is truth or not, and persuades Holly to accompany him.

After a rough journey, the pair, along with Job, Holly's British servant, and their Arab guide, Mahomed, reach the lost civilization of Kôr, which is inhabited by a backwards race of Africans known as the Amahagger. The native leader of the tribe, Billali, welcomes them to the tribe, but after leaving to inform the mysterious white queen only known as She the rest of the natives decide to eat the British trio. After a

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<sup>16</sup> H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*. (London: Cassell & Company, 1907).

scuffle Mahomed is killed and Leo is mortally injured, but Billali returns just in time to save the British men and takes them to the queen. Once under her care, Holly learns that she is actually an Egyptian sorceress named Ayesha that has lived in Kôr for two thousand years. After Holly begs her to heal Leo, Ayesha falls in love with Leo when she sees him, believing him to be the reincarnation of his ancestor whom she had slain. After some time in the lost city, Ayesha takes the three British men to the pillar of fire, which grants everlasting life. The three protagonists doubt the safety of stepping into the flames, and Ayesha enters to prove that they can do no harm, but as she enters her true age returns to her and she withers and dies in front of the men, causing Job to die of fright. Holly and Leo decide that they had seen enough, and the story ends with them venturing back to England.<sup>17</sup>

Both novels are prime examples of the portrayal of key Victorian values in juvenile literature. Books for boys were a perfect means of persuading the youth of the nation to become prime candidate to manage the empire. Though this was most likely not a specifically targeted expectation when Haggard wrote his novels, it was definitely present. Most of this can be traced back to his upbringing in a system of indoctrination of Victorian values and his work for the foreign service in South Africa. The values of adventure, male comradeship, and licensed aggression were ever present in Haggard's life from a young age, and those traits were passed down through his literature.

Allan Quatermain was the main character of Haggard's first commercial success, and continued to be the subject of fourteen more of Haggard's novels, and no other one

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<sup>17</sup> H. Rider Haggard, *She: A History of Adventure*. (London; Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1919).

character so adequately embodies many of the ideals fundamental to Victorian masculinity. The British perception of manliness emphasized physical preparedness over intellectual capabilities, and throughout his books, this is precisely the way that Quatermain is portrayed by Haggard. What is especially significant with Haggard in particular is that he himself was something of a colonial man, and a colonial administrator. Having spent much of his young life in southern Africa, and the majority of it serving in the colonial government, Haggard knew precisely the kind of man that would have been considered a hero to the British on the African continent, and he wrote Quatermain to be precisely that.

In the opening chapters of *King Solomon's Mines*, the very first book in which the famous character appeared, Allan is described as being a hunter who has spent much of his own life plying his trade across the African continent. Within the first couple pages of the text Allan is quoted as saying that he is "more accustomed to handle a rifle than a pen... but at the same time I cannot help thinking that simple things are always the most impressive."<sup>18</sup> In this early quote from his writing, Haggard already establishes that Allan is precisely the kind of man that a society concerned with simplicity and masculinity was concerned with producing. Allan continued to embody this movement throughout the period, appearing in a further three books prior to 1900; *Allan Quatermain*, *Allan's Wife*, and *Maiwa's Revenge*.

In an empire that spanned the face of the globe, and into such exotic areas as Africa and India, it is easy to see why adventure was so highly valued to Victorian

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<sup>18</sup> Haggard. *King Solomon's Mines*, 10.

society. Adventure is probably the most easily traced of all three of the major values in the Quatermain series and *She*. Haggard is generally considered to be one of the founding fathers of the genre of adventure literature. Both the character of Quatermain and the story of *She* revolved around the idea of going on a breathtaking adventure across the heart of uncharted Africa, and this was primarily why they were such major successes. A fascination with adventure is something that practically all humans can attest to. Braving the unknown captures an audience's attention, and both novels certainly captured England's attention.

In *King Solomon's Mines*, the three British protagonists are set off on an adventure to find Sir Henry Curtis' brother, but it takes some persuading to attract Allan Quartermain to the venture. Quartermain is hesitant because he had already had nearly forty years of adventures as a big game hunter in Africa, but finally consents because of the promise of wealth, not for himself but for his son.<sup>19</sup> The three men then set out on a journey that would end up taking them through the veldt, deserts where they nearly die of thirst, over snow covered mountains, and into a fertile valley inhabited by a lost civilization. The story is wrought with the kinds of things that people in the Victorian period would expect to hear about Africa; a scene where good bags a giraffe in a supreme account of big game hunting, the savagery of the natives when the three protagonists are forced to witness the slaughter of innocent men under the command of the evil king, Twala, and the mineral riches of Africa.<sup>20</sup> *King Solomon's Mines* was a prime example of

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<sup>19</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, 30.

<sup>20</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, 39-40, 108-113, 178-183.

an adventure novel, and as such it most certainly passed on that value to the readership in Britain.

The next example of Quatermain's sense of adventure comes in *Allan Quatermain*, the second book which Haggard wrote about the character, but also meant to be the final story from Allan's life. At the beginning of the story Allan's son dies of small pox, and this sparks a desire to return to the simple life of adventure in the African wilderness.<sup>21</sup> Quatermain reunites with Curtis and Good, his companions in *King Solomon's Mines*, and the trio go out in search of a lost civilization in uncharted Africa. Along the way the mighty Zulu warrior Umslopogaas joins the three Englishmen to aid them in their search. This was a prime example of Haggard's mixed views on native Africans, as the Zulu warrior plays a pivotal role in the story.<sup>22</sup> After fighting off a brutal assault from the Masai and saving an English damsel in distress, the group finally reaches a sophisticated lost civilization known as Zu-Vendis populated by a group of people whom Allan postulates as being a lost tribe of Persians. After the two female rulers of the Zu-Vendi fall in love with Curtis a civil war breaks out, which is won predominantly with the help of the main characters, but Quatermain suffers a fatal injury, and dies. In the end, Allan dies as he lived, adventuring through Africa.

In this particular book Haggard focuses a considerable amount of his attention on the superiority of the British 'race' over all others. While in the end it is mainly the valiant work of Umslopogaas that wins the civil war for the British trio and their allies, in the end it is the Briton Curtis and white queen of the Zu-Vendi that rule over the empire.

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<sup>21</sup> H. Rider Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*. (London; Harper & Brothers, 1887), 3-7.

<sup>22</sup> Bradley Deane. "Imperial Barbarians: Primitive Masculinity in Lost World Fiction," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 36 (2008): 210.



In fact Haggard ends the story with Curtis reflecting on what happened, and telling of the birth of his son to the 'African' queen. He describes his son as being a "regular curly haired, blue eyed young Englishman in looks," and that even though his son is destined to be the next king of Zu-Vendi, Curtis hopes "to bring him up to become what an English gentleman should be, and generally is - which is to my mind even a prouder and a finer thing than being born heir-apparent to the great House of the Stairway, and, indeed, the highest rank a man can reach upon this earth."<sup>23</sup> This is the last thought that Haggard leaves in the minds of his readers as they finish *Allan Quatermain*.

The story line of *She* falls directly into the same vein of adventure as *King Solomon's Mines* and *Allan Quatermain*. In this case, the adventure that the British protagonists undertake was started for them two millennia prior. It is a journey of discovery more than anything else. Leo, an almost stereotypical British hero because of his physical fitness, intelligence, and classic good looks, is taken with the urge to follow in the footsteps of his father to ascertain the truth of his family's history. It was only natural for a young man in England to have the urge to go on an adventure of some sort, and this was an extraordinary adventure that was laid out before him. Their journey to the lost city of Kôr was wrought with adventures. On their journey to the lost city they get shipwrecked in a storm off of the coast of Africa, they witness a lion and a crocodile fight to the death, and they discover a lost tribe in the heart of darkest Africa who attempts to eat them.<sup>24</sup> Upon arriving in Kôr, they discover an ancient sorceress who had

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<sup>23</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 350.

<sup>24</sup> Haggard, *She*, 58-67, 77-79, 105-113.

discovered the secret to everlasting life. The tale is adventure at its very best, and captivated the readership of Victorian Britain.

Male comradeship is another value that can easily be seen as desirable in Victorian masculinity. Even though they saw a need to further manliness in their culture, Victorian society was still a highly masculine culture, and men held all the major posts in both government and the foreign service. The comradeship between males was further heightened in the colonies, which were predominantly inhabited by male colonizers. In the British colonies around the world there was a heightened sense of what it meant to be British in the face of the native cultures which surrounded the British men. Males were forced to cling together, and form nucleus groups to ward off any temptations to partake in the indigenous culture at any considerable scale. Both *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* provide prime examples of this value to the readership of Britain.

In both novels the protagonists are a group of British males that exemplify differing aspects of male comradeship. In *King Solomon's Mines*, Good and Curtis are old friends, but they quickly befriend Quartermain to the point that he is willing to go on what he considers to be a suicidal journey into the desert to find Curtis' lost brother.<sup>25</sup> Over the course of their adventure, the three men grow quite close. They cling to each other in the face of an overwhelmingly alien civilization. At the same time, they become close enough with their African servant, Umbopa, to the point that they are willing to fight to the death to place him back upon the throne that is rightfully his. When asked if

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<sup>25</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, 29-31.

they will help him in the fight, Umbopa offers them riches in return for their support.

Curtis scoffs at the offer and responds,

“he mistakes an Englishman. Wealth is good, and if it comes in our way we will take it; but a gentleman does not sell himself for wealth. But, speaking for myself, I say this. I have always liked Umbopa, and so far as lies in me will stand by him in this business.”<sup>26</sup>

Though wealth is certainly important to the three Englishmen, but their comradeship with this fellow man is more important to them. To these men, nothing is more important than their loyalty and friendship to each other.

Yet again *She* falls into the same vein, though it displays a different set of characteristics of male comradeship. The first major example comes at the very beginning of the story when Holly agrees to take on Leo as his ward. Holly is described as being an almost grotesque looking figure, and as such never had much luck in making any real friends, but he still has one man that he considers his best friend in the world. This man, Vincey, comes to him late one night forecasting his imminent death, and asks Holly to take charge of his five year old son whom Holly has never met, nor knew existed until that moment. After a brief reluctance Holly agrees because of his devotion to his only friend.<sup>27</sup> After Vincey dies that night, Holly enacts the plan that Vincey had laid out for him, and for the next twenty years acts as Leo’s guardian. Leo grows to regard Holly as a friend as well as advisor, and refers to him affectionately as “uncle Holly.” Over the course of their subsequent adventure the two again cling together in the face of an alien

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<sup>26</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon’s Mines*, 104.

<sup>27</sup> Haggard, *She*, 17-23.

culture that surrounds them. Holly's affection for Leo can be seen in greater detail when he begs Ayesha to save his life from an injury he sustained during a scuffle earlier in the story. Ayesha is described as being so beautiful that any man that sees her face would lose all control of himself as he was filled with longing for her. This is the case when Holly first sees her face, but after a short while he regains his wits and remembers that Leo lay dying in another cave. He begs for Ayesha to go save him, to which she eventually consents.<sup>28</sup> The two Englishmen share a bond that is stronger even than the legendary beauty of Ayesha. They are a shining example of male comradeship to the general readership of England.

The final trait under consideration was that of licensed aggression. Compared to the other two values, adventure and male comradeship, this was a more esoteric value. Certainly no gentleman of the Victorian period would have admitted to the need for aggression, quite to the contrary in fact many men of the time stated that the main difference between Englishmen and the savage natives of the world was that Englishmen were able to control, and even suppress, the more primal instincts and emotions, such as aggression. At the same time, many agreed that a certain level of aggression was vital to maintain order in the colonies. On a regular basis rebellions and tribes unwilling to submit to British rule were ruthlessly put down in a show of force. This trait, while it may have been frowned upon in polite society, was one of the most vital values a man could master. This was started early on in most men's lives through various avenues, such as shooting, hunting, and physical sports like rugby and football. All of these were

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<sup>28</sup> Haggard, *She*, 160-164.

seen as healthy pursuits, and as good outlets for a man's natural aggression. Though this trait is somewhat more obscure in Haggard's two novels, it is still most certainly present.

In both *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* there are several instances of the British protagonists displaying their mastery of licensed aggression for the reader to see. In *King Solomon's Mines* the most obvious is Quartermain himself. Quartermain is a professional big game hunter, a pursuit that was highly valued by the British populace as the perfect outlet for aggression as it was towards animals instead of other human beings. On their journey to Solomon's mines, the three Englishmen regularly partake in a bit of hunting, including a riveting scene in which they track down a herd of elephants.<sup>29</sup> In even more powerful displays of licensed aggression, twice the Englishmen kill members of the evil ruling family of the lost civilization. In the first instance they killed the king's son, Scragga, after he attempts to drive his spear into Curtis' chest only to be foiled by a chain-mail shirt that Curtis was wearing under his clothes. Curtis in return snatched the spear out of his hands and drives it back into Scragga's chest.<sup>30</sup> In the second instance, Curtis kills the king, Twala, after he is challenged to a duel during the battle for control of the civilization. The two fought a great duel, and in the end Curtis decapitated Twala with a swing of his battle axe.<sup>31</sup> In all of these instances the Englishmen showed their capacity to kill if need be, and displayed their proficiency for doing so.

The story is a bit different in *She* where instead of displaying their ability for aggression, the protagonists instead showed their capacity for restraint. There were two

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<sup>29</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, 42-46.

<sup>30</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, 124.

<sup>31</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, 154-156.

major instances where aggression would have been warranted, but the Englishmen showed great restraint. The first is during the scuffle in which they saved themselves from being eaten by the Amahaggar. The fight was clearly one sided as the two Englishmen were equipped with revolvers in opposition to the natives' spears. When Holly realized that they were about to be eaten, he drew his pistol and shot a woman dead who was grabbing for their Arab guide, Mahomed. Haggard writes,

“The bullet struck her in the back and killed her, and this day I am glad of it, for, as it transpired afterwards, she had availed herself of the anthropophagous customs of the Amahagger to organise [sic] this sacrifice in revenge of the slight put upon her by Job.”<sup>32</sup>

The natives were ready to eat the white men for the slightest offense, but in stark contrast the Englishmen only killed when their lives were in danger. The second instance is when Ayesha kills an Amahagger woman, Ustane, who had fallen in love with Leo, and whom he reciprocated some feelings for. After Ayesha killed Ustane, Leo for a moment was filled with rage and threatened to take Ayesha's life, but his Holly calmed him and the two restrained themselves from the aggression of a vengeful death.<sup>33</sup> In both instances the Englishmen could have easily displayed their more primitive, aggressive sides, but in both cases they showed the restraint expected of British gentlemen.

Both of Haggard's novels, *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, present excellent displays of the traits that were highly valued for the young men of Victorian Britain. The values of adventure, male comradeship, and licensed aggression were seen as being

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<sup>32</sup> Haggard, *She*, 109.

<sup>33</sup> Haggard, *She*, 231-234.

absolutely vital if Britain was going to succeed in its imperial project. A crop of young men that embodied these traits was seen as an essential part of Britain's empire, and as such there were active steps to create this class of young men. These young men were counted upon to become the leaders of the British empire, to hold down the many posts in the colonies, and become an example to the world of Victorian Britain's superiority over all others. The traits of adventure, male comradeship, and licensed aggression fit in perfectly with the projected view of themselves, as well as what was seen as being needed practically in the administration of the empire. While it remains to be seen as to what exact role Haggard's works of fiction directly effected the contemporary generation of young men, it can be inferred by his overwhelming popularity that the message was getting out to readers across England, and that message fit in perfectly with the greater trend of producing a class of imperialist young men that was occurring across Britain at that time.

## Chapter Three

### Masculinity in Rudyard Kipling's Life and Works

When asked about Victorian literature most people will practically always bring up the same few names of the most distinguished authors of the period. Names like Charles Dickens, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Rudyard Kipling are among some of the most well known authors of not only the Victorian era, but of literature in general. Of course this list could quite easily be expanded to any number of other prominent authors. When asked to narrow down this list to the most infamous writer in regards to writing about empire, the obvious answer is Kipling. Rudyard Kipling is quite possibly the most prolific author of imperial novels and short stories. He was immortalized by his most famous stories, such as *The Jungle Book*, *Kim*, or *The Man Who Would be King*. His stories still fascinate to this day. Every year there is scholarship produced looking at Kipling's life and works. As a man that grew up and lived a considerable amount of his life in the outposts of the empire, most specifically India, there probably was no single person as qualified to write fictional accounts of what happened there. This was the obvious draw for readers in Victorian England, but what was curious was his stance on



imperialism and the treatment of native peoples and cultures. It is this that fascinates modern scholars.<sup>1</sup>

While the fact that Kipling took a complicated stance towards imperialism is indeed interesting, what is more pertinent, and possibly even more fascinating, in regards to this current work is that Kipling was sincerely focused on masculinity. Much like his good friend H. Rider Haggard, Kipling focused his most famous stories on male characters. On top of this fact is the predominant theme of his work; the theme of a boy coming of age and transitioning into manhood. This idea of how a boy became a man was obviously of great interest to the author. So much so that in 1910 Kipling published a poem for his son entitled “If.”

“If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or, being lied about, don’t deal in lies,  
Or, being hated, don’t give to hating,  
And yet don’t look too good, nor talk too wise;  
If you can dream - and not make dreams your master,  
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with triumph and disaster  
And treat those two imposters just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,  
And stoop and build ‘em up with wornout tools;  
If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breath a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve

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<sup>1</sup> There have been countless works, both academic and popular, published about Kipling. From biographies to studies in literary theory, there are nearly endless sources one can turn to for information about the man and his literary works. The most informative to this particular study have been William B. Dillingham, *Rudyard Kipling: Hell and Heroism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), and David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2002), for biography on Kipling’s life and views on imperialism. In regards to his literature itself, Andrew Hagioannu, *The Man Who Would Be Kipling* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); John McBratney, *Imperial Subjects, Imperial Space: Rudyard Kipling’s Fiction of the Native Born* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2002); Diane Simmons, *The Narcissism of Empire* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2007); and Jonah Raskin, *The Mythology of Imperialism* (New York: Random House, 1971), have all been greatly informative in my interpretation of Kipling’s writing. Finally, the main argument about masculinity in Kipling’s life and literature has been greatly influenced by John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2005).

and sinew To serve your turn long after they are gone, And sol hold on when there is nothing in you Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on'; If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch; If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you; If all men count with you, but none too much; If you can fill the unforgiving minute With sixty seconds' worth of distance run - Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, And - which is more - you'll be a Man my son!"<sup>2</sup>

The theme of the poem is simple, all of the things that his son must be able to do in the face of adversity if he is to truly call himself a man. Kipling ends the poem with the lines that if his son can do all of the things listed, "Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, And - which is more - you'll be a man my son!"<sup>3</sup> This poem became one of the most famous English poems of all time, especially to the British people. It does an amazing job at succinctly summing up an ever present thread in Kipling's life and work, and in Victorian society in general; what it mean to be a man.

Rudyard Kipling led a fascinating life that saw him spend much of his time living on the outposts of empire. His upbringing had a profound impact on his views on a number of key issues, imperialism and masculinity included. He was born in Bombay, India on 30 December 1865 to John Lockwood Kipling and his wife Alice Kipling. His father was a professor of architectural sculpture at an art school in Bombay at the time, and the arts continued to play a major role in Rudyard's life. When he was six years old the family, now including his little sister Alice, returned to England when his father was granted a leave from work. When his parents returned to India they decided that it was best to leave the two children under the care of a woman named Pryse Agar Holloway in Southsea. While Kipling would later immortalize his time under her care in his fictional

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<sup>2</sup> Rudyard Kipling, "If," *Rewards and Fairies*. (London; Doubleday, Page & Company, 1910), 140.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

works as a particularly horrible time in his life, there is not much evidence to support this claim. In fact the children stayed there for another five and a half years, and even after Kipling went off to public school, his sister elected to stay under the care of Holloway. While staying in Southsea Kipling turned to reading as a way of ignoring the world around him. Holloway insisted on him reading devotional literature, which led to his mastery of biblical phrase and imagery. Kipling's mother returned to England in April 1877, and the children moved in with her. The following year Kipling began public school, attending the United Services College at Westward Ho! in Bideford, England.

After a bit of a rough start, Kipling settled into a fine groove at Westward Ho!, and the school remained a fond memory for the rest of his life. The school's headmaster, Cornell Price, was an old friend of Kipling's mother, and seemed to leave a lasting impression on the young boy. Kipling went on to portray Price in his novel *Stalky & Co.*, and more tangibly helped him financially after he retired as well as becoming a trustee to Price's son after his death. On his end, Price did a number of things to gain the boy's favor. While Kipling was at school he was given the run of Price's private library and became editor of the school newspaper which Price revived specifically so Kipling could edit it. It was also at this point in his life that Kipling first displayed his literary talents, producing poetry, and in 1881 his parents personally published some his work in the book *Schoolboy Lyrics*. This was not well received by Kipling, and he continuously stated how embarrassed he was at its publishing both as a boy and as an adult. Still, his burgeoning literary talents were beginning to poke through.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling*. (New York; Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2002), 12-14.

While Kipling seemed to enjoy his schooldays very much, he was not a model student, and his mediocre grades combined with his family's lack of funding meant that university was not an option when he finished school in May 1882. His parents saw the potential of his writing ability, and managed to secure him a job working as a sub-editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette*, published in Lahore, India. This began a roughly six year period of Kipling working for newspapers in India. Kipling's father was appointed the head of the Mayo School of Art and the Lahore Museum in 1875, so his family was already pretty well established in the area. It took a couple of years before Kipling really established himself as a writer, and not just an editor, but in 1884 he produced a highly successful report on the viceroy's visit to Patiala, and from there on out his writing was a fixture in the paper. Also at this time he began to publish some of his own lyrical works outside of the world of journalism. For such a young man, Kipling was only nineteen when he started working at the paper, his writing career was already shaping up to be an incredible one.

While working for the paper in Lahore, Kipling found that he was able to maneuver through the varied society of the cosmopolitan town. As a journalist he was neither a civil servant nor an officer in the military, and this allowed him to move freely among the different groups of people in the Punjab capital. He was particularly adept at creating friendships with the soldiers and officers stationed at the fort in Lahore. This greatly informed him in his writings portraying soldiers as he had first hand knowledge of some of the things that they did on a regular basis. At the same time Kipling paid a great amount of attention to the native life in the city. While he almost certainly exaggerated as

to the extent of his experience with the natives later on in his life, this was still more than most other Englishmen in India could say. He also joined the Freemasons in 1886, and their lore would play a prominent role in a great many of Kipling's later stories. All of these experiences in the early days of Kipling the journalist impacted his later fiction writing. From being in this malleable position in Lahore society, he learned to appreciate the different sects of imperial life on the ground in a colonial setting. Kipling's later work was deeply grounded in this idea of presenting imperialism from the viewpoint of the soldier, of the native, and in general from the common man. This understanding led the young man into prominence in a number of ways.

Within five years of his arrival in India, Kipling had already made a name for himself as one of the leading journalists in the colony. This notoriety led to him being offered a writing position at a much larger paper, *The Pioneer*, in November of 1887. Along with a change of scenery from Lahore to Allahabad, he transitioned from a Muslim city to a Hindu one. He was taken off of writing news stories, and instead the paper had him focus almost entirely on providing verse or fiction, with Kipling only covering certain special assignments from time to time. This freedom from having to cover local news provided him the opportunity to spend some time traveling around India. The stories he collected and wrote during his journey were published over a decade later in *From Sea to Sea* in 1900. He also continuously sent stories back to the paper to be published, and within a year published a book, *Plain Tales from the Hills*, which was based on stories he had been producing for his previous paper about Simla, the summer capitol of British India in the foothills of the Himalaya. The book was an instant success

and led to Kipling being given the new appointment of editor of *The Pioneer's* weekly supplement called *Week's News* in 1888, also meaning that he was responsible for producing and publishing a full page to be filled each week with new works of fiction.<sup>5</sup>

Kipling's successes with his now weekly works of fiction led to a prodigious span of authorship, which saw him publish six separate books in a single year's time, and put the idea in his head that he should return to England and try his fortunes as an author. Early in 1889, he booked passage from Calcutta to London, but decided to reverse his direction and sailed to Singapore, China, and Japan before crossing the Pacific Ocean to San Francisco where he traveled across land, including staying briefly in Pennsylvania where he became engaged, but this did not last long past his return to England. Having finally arrived in London in October 1889, Kipling quickly transitioned into the life of a relatively famous author. News of his writing had already reached the ears of publishers in London, and the ones that had not quickly became aware of his talent after reading a few of his stories. Kipling himself had no nose for the business side of things, and put his affairs in the hands of an agent, and had no direct dealings with the publishers for the rest of his literary career.<sup>6</sup>

During his time in London, Kipling made connections with several different writers and artists, but for the most part he tried to stay out of the public eye as much as possible. He joined the Savile Club, a gentleman's club centered around artists and writers primarily, and became friends with eminent authors Andrew Lang, Thomas Hardy, and even H. Rider Haggard, among others. While Kipling made friends with

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<sup>5</sup> Gilmour, 15-28.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

several eminent authors, he seems to have preferred the company of public men and men of action throughout his lifetime. At the height of his career he had links to influential men like Theodore Roosevelt and Sir Leander Star Jameson, who was famous for the raid he conducted which was an inciting factor of the Second Boer War. This fact can not be overlooked in regards to Kipling's views on manliness. It is obvious both from his social life, and his writing as will later be discussed, that he preferred the idea of a man as someone more in line with the traditional Victorian ideal of what it took to be considered a man. Manliness required action, physical action, not just intellectual endeavors. By no means does this suggest that intellectual pursuits were shunned, but rather that in general Victorian society simply placed men of action over artists and scholar, and for what they perceived as very realistic reasons. They saw the empire as being under tangible threats, and this called for men that could meet these antagonists in the demands of everyday life, not in the intellectual realm. This theme was a present one for Kipling, just like it was for Haggard and many other authors and public figures of the day.

When Kipling first arrived back in England he became well aware that the people living in the metropole generally had no idea what everyday life was like in the colonies. His own views on imperialism did not really form until after his return to England, when he realized that he could easily carve out a space for himself in the literary world by becoming the voice of the men and women who made the empire function by serving as administrators, soldiers, and colonists to the empire. This became his greatest impact on the public consciousness in the last decade of the nineteenth century; Kipling became the poet of British India. His depictions of everyday life in the Indian subcontinent went a

long way to inform the Britons who had never seen what happened on a day to day basis in that outpost of empire. In his own way Kipling did his best not to portray his characters as debonair adventurers, but rather as simple men whose work had been laid upon them by virtue of their situation. To the British public, these fictional men were meant to not differ from the average person in England itself. Kipling laid the foundation for people to see the colonies for what they really were. While not engaging in the spectacular as much as other authors, like Haggard and Henty, Kipling still depicted the colonies as being a place of adventure, and where men could become real men, not in the fantastical sense of discovering lost civilizations and hidden, biblical diamond mines, but as ordinary men put into extraordinary situations.<sup>7</sup>

By 1892 Kipling had gone from being an up-and-coming young author of imperial India, to practically becoming a household name. People who had never heard of the man just several years before, could have an entire shelf of his work after just three years of him publishing in England. Practically all of his works from this period were collections of short stories. Between 1890 and 1892 he published four collections; *The Light that Failed* in 1890, *Life's Handicap* in 1891, and *The Naulahka and Barrack-Room Ballads* in 1892, as well as republishing most of his work from his time in India for the British public. It was a meteoric rise, not unlike the one Haggard experienced at the beginning of his own career.

Even with such a spat of writing, Kipling was as restless as ever and in August of 1891 he set out to see South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, with a short stop over in

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<sup>7</sup> Gilmour, 70-86.



his beloved India. The trip was cut short when shortly after arriving back in Lahore he learned of the death of a good friend, an American named Wolcott Balestier, in London. Kipling immediately canceled the rest of his trip and departed for London, where curiously enough he immediately married Balestier's sister, Caroline, on 18 January 1892. It was an odd episode in his life, but the two had known each other for several years prior and there is some speculation that the marriage had actually been arranged prior to Balestier's death, and his untimely demise simply expedited the process. The newly married couple traveled around the world on their honeymoon voyage, but ultimately ended up purchasing a home in her native Vermont, where they would spend the next four years starting their family, and Kipling continue to write.

The time spent in Vermont proved to be some of the most productive years of Kipling's life both socially and professionally. Two of his three children were born there; Josephine in 1893 and Elsie in 1896. This was also the period when he produced some of his most famous work. He wrote *The Jungle Book* which was published in 1894, *The Second Jungle Book* published in 1895, and *Captains Courageous* which would be published shortly after leaving the United States in 1897. His second collection of poetry, *The Seven Seas*, was published in 1896. While living in Vermont, Kipling became increasingly interested in the possibility of writing some stories about America, while the subject of India became less prominent in his work. Unfortunately his spell in Vermont was cut short when he decided to return his family to England following a quarrel and

legal dispute with his brother-in-law. In September 1896 his family boarded a ship and returned across the Atlantic to London.<sup>8</sup>

The Kipling family would return to America once, in 1899, when he had a view to repair his reputation in America, but this was short lived, and they quickly returned back to England. In between American ventures Kipling final child, and only son, John, was born in Sussex in 1897. While in England he returned to his writing career, publishing both *Stalky & Co.* and *Kim* in 1899. Two years later he would publish his *Just So Stories*, a collection of short stories for children. The first decade of the twentieth century saw Kipling at the height of his popularity. By then he had fully matured into his role as the writer of the empire, and probably did more than any other author to further the knowledge about the empire to the common citizen of the metropole. In his early days as an author, Kipling had portrayed the everyday struggles of the people that actually made the empire function, and over the course of the next decade and a half his writing had subtly changed to a more mainstream view of imperialism. Kipling would spend the first eight years of the twentieth century traveling in between England and South Africa because of his health. While in South Africa he would befriend Cecil Rhodes and Alfred Milner, with the former becoming his benefactor for the rest of his life. Kipling would use his popularity as an author to become an ambassador of the empire, including traveling to places like Canada to preach the gospel of empire. The crowning jewel of his career came in 1907 when he was awarded the Nobel prize for literature, becoming the first English author to be thusly awarded. Though ironically in an attempt to not be

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<sup>8</sup> Gilmour, 98-113.

officially tied with any government he refused to accept any official honors, including the Order of Merit. This aside, Kipling is still best remembered today as one of the penultimate champion authors of empire, and this is what is meant to be examined next.

While most of Kipling's work was well received, probably the longest lasting in popularity were his *Jungle Books*, *Kim*, and his short story *The Man Who Would Be King*. Part of this has to do with the making of several film and radio versions of the three tales, but they were also three of his most popular works during the Victorian, and early Edwardian, periods as well. The four works were published at the height of the imperial period, between 1888 and 1900. All four provide excellent examples of Kipling's personal views on imperialism and masculinity, but more importantly for this study is the way that they portrayed these things to the public that read them. All of these stories are centered around male protagonists, including both *Kim* and *The Man Who Would Be King* being centered around British characters. All three follow different themes, but provide excellent incites to British views of manliness. *Kim* is a coming of age story of a boy caught between the British and Indian cultures in British India, and as such is probably the most useful in examining how a boy became a man in British eyes. *The Jungle Books* are two collections of short stories that use anthropomorphic depictions of animals in the jungles of India to teach moral lessons to children. Finally, *The Man Who Would Be King*, is centered around two British adventurers who set out to become kings of an unconquered land. All three stories provide brilliant insights into British views on manliness.

The first to be written of these four stories was *The Man Who Would Be King*, which was first published as part of Kipling's collection of short stories, *The Phantom 'Rickshaw and other Eerie Tales* in 1888. It would later be republished as part of *Wee Willie Winkie* in 1895, giving the story further prominence with the British public. The story centers around two main characters, Daniel Dravot and Peachey Carnehan, whom are British adventurers and somewhat seedy characters who decide to become kings of Kafiristan. The story is narrated by a British journalist based in India, who for all intensive purposes could be Kipling himself. On the course of his own journeys, the narrator meets Dravot and Carnehan, and while he does seem to like the pair, he eventually stops them from blackmailing a a rajah. Several months later the adventurous duo arrive at the narrator's office at the newspaper late one night to tell him of their plan to become kings of Kafiristan, and to have a look at any sources that he might have with information on the area they wish to conquer. Their plan itself is quite simple; being former soldiers themselves, they will find the first king they can and offer to drill his men so he can conquer his enemies, and once they have trained the men they will overthrow the king and take power themselves. After looking around the office for a bit, and the narrator providing them with some sage advice, the two head off into the night. The following day they say farewell to the narrator for what they hope is the last time, and set off for Kafiristan.

The story then jumps to two years later when Carnehan returns to the narrator's office, but this time he is a shadow of his former self. He appears as a cripple clad only in rags. Carnehan imparts on the narrator the story of how he and Dravot indeed

became kings of Kafiristan, in large part thanks to their being Masons, and knowledge of Masonic lore. After conquering several villages, the natives of the region, who are actually white and not Indian at all, believe that Dravot is a god, and the immortal son of Alexander the Great. But it all comes to not when Dravot decides to marry a native girl, who afraid of being burned alive after marrying a god, bites him when he tries to kiss her. The Kafirs immediately know that he must not be a god if he can bleed, and the majority turn against the two Englishmen. When Dravot and Carnehan try and flee the area, Dravot ends up falling to his death after the natives cut the ropes of the rope bridge that he was on, and Carnehan is crucified between two trees. After Carnehan survives an entire day, the Kafirs believe it to be a miracle and let him go free. The story ends with Carnehan showing the narrator Dravot's head, still wearing his crown, as proof of his tale before leaving into the night. The next day the narrator sees him laying in the street, and sends him to a local asylum, where he dies.

Probably the most notable feature in regards to masculinity from this tale is the almost complete lack of female characters besides the native woman Dravot intends to marry, and in that case she is the one that ends up bringing down the two adventurers' plan and ultimately leads to their demise.<sup>9</sup> In fact, Dravot and Carnehan sign a contract while they are in the narrator's office the first time around that states,

“This Contract between me and you persuing witnesseth in the name of God - Amen and so forth. (One) That me and you will settle this matter together; i.e., to be Kings of Kafiristan. (Two) That you and me will not, while this matter is being settled, look at any Liquor, nor any Woman black, white, or brown, so as to get mixed up with one or the other

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<sup>9</sup> Bradley Deane. “Imperial Barbarians: Primitive Masculinity in Lost World Fiction,” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 36 (2008): 207-209.

harmful. (Three) That we conduct ourselves with Dignity and Discretion, and if one of, us gets into trouble the other will stay by him. Signed by you and me this day. Peachey Taliaferro Carnehan. Daniel Dravot. Both Gentleman at Large.”<sup>10</sup>

This contract quite clearly, and in as many words, states that the two men see women as a common distraction, and as such they desire to be without their company for the duration of their quest. This is quite similar to the way that Haggard had his main character Allan Quatermain start his narration in *King Solomon's Mines* by stating that there would not be a single woman mentioned in the tale. This lack of female characters, and the male characters belief that women are at best a distraction, point towards male hostility towards women during the period. Women's role in society was steadily increasing throughout the high imperialism period, but in this and many other books for boys, the tales are either devoid of women, or essentially argue that women are a distraction from what a man should see as his goals and values.

Besides this lack of feminine wiles, the story presents other fine examples for British boys to follow. While the two main characters are presented as being something of the seedier underbelly of British India, the fact of the matter is that they are indeed the main characters. This is important because even though they can easily be interpreted as being on the lower side of the British colonial spectrum, they are still Englishmen, and hold certain values above others. The contract that is quoted above makes reference to the fact that Dravot and Carnehan consider themselves gentlemen, and as such that they will act with “Dignity and Discretion.”<sup>11</sup> Along with this decision to act in accordance

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<sup>10</sup> Rudyard Kipling, *The Man Who Would be King* (London; Doubleday and McClure Company, 1899), 18.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

with what British custom deemed acceptable, is the fact that these two adventurers are extremely devoted to each other. This is the same principle of male camaraderie that was so prevalent in Haggard's work. It is obvious that Kipling felt the same way, which is not surprising as his upbringing was not that much different from Haggard's, and even more masculine by virtue of his time spent in an all male public school that specialized in producing men for military service.

The values present in *The Man Who Would Be King* are generally in line with the established masculine values of Britain. Through military might and skill the two British adventurer were essentially able to conquer an entire region by themselves, and brought society and civility to the barbarians that lived there. The story also pushes the highly valued concept of modesty, because if Carnehan and Dravot had not claimed to be gods, than there was a chance that the whole downfall could have been avoided. In addition to this is the theme that women are seen as at best a distraction, and eventually led to Dravot's downfall. If he had followed the contract that he and Carnehan had signed in the narrator's office then he would not have been killed, and the two Englishmen could have continued to rule as kings.

Kipling's *Jungle Books* are actually two separate books, *The Jungle Book*, published in 1894, and *The Second Jungle Book*, published in 1895. Both books are collections of short stories which are centered around anthropomorphized animals. The individual stories generally attempt to teach moral lessons to children. Collectively the two books present twenty-two separate stories, of which eight star a wild boy by the name of Mowgli. While these eight stories are probably the ones most people today

associate with *The Jungle Books*, mostly because Disney produced an animated version of the story which only featured the Mowgli story arch, they only make up a small number of the total stories presented. Probably the most famous story outside of the Mowgli story line is “Rikki Tikki Tavi,” a story about a mongoose who protects an English family living in India from a pair of deadly cobras. The Mowgli story arch and “Rikki Tikki Tavi” present the best cases for studying masculine values as presented in *The Jungle Books*.

Mowgli is probably one of the most interesting characters that Kipling ever writes about. The boy was lost in the Indian jungle after his parents were attacked by a tiger, and subsequently was raised by a pack of wolves in the jungle. Several of the stories about him revolved around his conflict with a tiger named Shere Khan, who it is implied is the tiger that attacked his parents. As a wild boy with no real experience in human society at first, Mowgli is the perfect outsider to use to examine human society. He is totally naive to the ways in which human society functions, and provides a blank slate for looking at British values. At the same time, Mowgli is always portrayed as being significantly different than the animals around him. In the first story about him, “Mowgli’s Brothers,” he protects his familial wolf pack by stealing coals from a local village and using fire to ward off Khan and his followers because Mowgli is the only animal in the jungle not afraid of fire because he is a human.<sup>12</sup> At the end of the story it becomes obvious that by virtue of his inherent humanity Mowgli will never really be a

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<sup>12</sup> Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*. (London; MacMillan Publishers, 1894), 15-22.



part of the wild jungle. At the end of the story Mowgli leaves the jungle to return to the world of man.<sup>13</sup>

One of the most remarkable stories about Mowgli is “Kaa’s Hunting” in which the young boy is learning about the Law of the Jungle from the bear, Baloo. The story highlights one of the most critical ideas of what the British saw as separating them not only from the animal world, but from the more barbarous areas over which they held sway as well; the capacity to learn. At the very beginning of the tale, Kipling writes that “[t]he big, serious, old brown bear was delighted to have so quick a pupil, for the young wolves will only learn as much of the Law of the Jungle as applies to their own pack and tribe...but Mowgli, as a man-cub, had to learn a great deal more than this.”<sup>14</sup> It was Mowgli’s capacity to learn that really separated him from his animal brethren. The bulk of the Law of the Jungle revolved around the social protocols that Mowgli needed to know in order to maneuver amongst the different groups of animals in the jungle. This becomes the perfect analogy for the different social protocols that an Englishman must learn in order to serve in the Foreign Service. A Briton abroad had to learn how to integrate himself into the society in which he was living. While there were certainly enclaves of Britishness which someone could return to if need be, the fact of the matter was that moving to a colony meant that a man was entering into a foreign culture, and he needed to know how to interact with that society.

While there are many more lessons that can be gleaned from the stories of the man-cub Mowgli, the last one to be studied here is how he easily moved back and forth

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<sup>13</sup> Kipling, *The Jungle Book*, 20.

<sup>14</sup> Kipling, *The Jungle Book*, 24.

between the world of man and the world of the jungle. In the story “Tiger! Tiger!” Mowgli goes to live in a human village, and is adopted by a couple who believes him to be their long lost son. It follows in the story line right after the end of “Mowgli’s Brothers.” The story tells the tale of how Mowgli learns human language and customs in an attempt to integrate himself back into human society. While this ultimately fails when he is accused at the end of the story of being a sorcerer because of his ability to communicate with the beasts of the jungle, Mowgli’s ability to interact with both the human and the jungle worlds becomes a major part of the rest of the stories about him. After Mowgli is cast out of the human village he returns to Council Rock, the main meeting place of the wolf pack, to place the hide of Khan who he had killed earlier in the story. Interestingly, this draws many parallels with the British fascination with tiger hunting, and its relationship to masculinity.<sup>15</sup> After finishing this task that he promised to complete in “Mowgli’s Brothers” the wolf pack asks him to return to their ranks, but Mowgli refuses, stating “Man Pack and Wolf Pack have cast me out, Now I will hunt alone in the jungle.”<sup>16</sup> This idea that he must go his own way would be later echoed in the novel *Kim*. In a way this shows the British sense of identity, especially for those Englishmen that were born out in the colonies. They were not a part of the culture’s in which they had been born, but at the same time their Englishness was slightly in question. As such they had to choose their own way, and stick to that decision.

The final story from *The Jungle Books* to be examined here is “Rikki Tikki Tavi.”

This is the story of a brave mongoose who defended an English family from the deadly

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<sup>15</sup> Joseph Sramek, “‘Face Him like a Briton’: Tiger Hunting, Imperialism, and British Masculinity in Colonial India, 1800-1875,” *Victorian Studies* 48 (Summer 2006): 668.

<sup>16</sup> Kipling, *The Jungle Book*, 71.

snakes of India. Rikki Tikki is a mongoose whom a British family save from drowning after they first move into a bungalow in Bihar State, India. The family decides to keep the mongoose as a pet, and for his part the mongoose protects the family from the dangerous snakes which had their run of the property prior to the family moving in, especially the two deadly cobras Nag and Nagaina. This is first displayed when Rikki Tikki saves the family's youngest son, Teddy, from a small snake who's poison was as deadly as a cobra's.<sup>17</sup> This earns Rikki Tikki the praise of his new family. Though the trouble is far from over, when later that night the mongoose hears the two cobras planning to kill the family so they can once again rule the property and their unborn babies will have space to grow. The male cobra, Nag, waits in the bathroom for the father of the family, but Rikki Tikki attacks him, and the ruckus caused wakes the family and the father shoots the snake dead before it can kill the mongoose.<sup>18</sup> Rikki Tikki decides that he must put an end to the brooding snake family, and enlists the aid of a bird to help him find the nest of eggs and to keep Nagaina occupied so he can destroy the eggs. He eventually finds the nest and starts to crush the eggs when the birds wife flies up to tell him that Nagaina cornered the English family at their breakfast table and is threatening to kill Teddy. Rikki Tikki races back with the last egg in his mouth, and while he and Nagaina look for an opening to attack each other the family pulls Teddy to safety. Eventually the cobra sees an opening and steals back the egg and races off to her hole in the garden. Rikki Tikki follows her, and in the ensuing fight kills the cobra and the last egg. From that day on no other snakes try and live in the garden.

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<sup>17</sup> Kipling, *The Jungle Books*, 101-102.

<sup>18</sup> Kipling, *The Jungle Books*, 105-106.

This is probably the easiest story to understand in terms of masculinity. The lesson is clear; Rikki Tikki is a hero because he saves the English family from the evils of India, and having done that provides peace in their garden for the rest of his life. Rikki Tikki's defining characteristic is his courage in the face of great danger. This was certainly a lesson that the British public wanted to pass on to the next generation of boys. The previous half century had been a period of colonial skirmishes which saw some of the greatest feats of bravery in common memory. The charge of the light brigade and the victory at Rorke's Drift, were popular examples of the bravery of British soldiers, and this story exemplified this bravery to the boys who read it.

By far the longest of Kipling's books was the novel *Kim*, first published in 1900. Kipling often presented *Kim* as a work of love that developed over the entire span of his life up until it was finished. This idea is not hard to understand, as the story presents the greatest amount of detail on India and Indian culture, which was the place where Kipling spent a large portion of his life. The story itself revolves around the main character, Kimball O'Hara, for whom the title is based. The novel is essentially the coming of age tale of young Kim, who although being born to an Irish soldier who was stationed in India, grew up more under the influence of Indian society than British society. This leads to a long standing struggle as the boy tries to figure out to which world he belongs. At the beginning of the story Kim comes under the influence of a Tibetan Lama who is on a quest for enlightenment. He takes on Kim as his chela, or disciple, and the young boy begins to accompany on his journey around India. Along the way Kim gets involved in the Great Game, after delivering a message to a British military commander who realizes

that Kim can easily pass for both a Briton or a native Indian.<sup>19</sup> This would make him extremely useful as a spy, but for the time being Kim stays with the Lama on his quest. Later, Kim is incidentally recognized by the chaplain of his father's old unit in the army because of the Masonic certificate that his father gave him before he died. Kim always wore the certificate around his neck so as to never lose it. The chaplain believes that it is in Kim's best interest that he attends a British school, and the Lama agrees and pays for the boy's education himself.

Kim spends the next few years at the top British school in Lucknow, but maintains his friendship with the Lama, as well as his contacts in the secret service. While at school he trains himself in espionage so that he can aid the British in the Great Game once he is finished with his academics. After spending three years at the school he takes a government position, mostly to engage in espionage for the British, but before taking his place in the Great Game, Kim joins back up with the Lama who is still on his quest for enlightenment. At the behest of Kim's superior, the pair of them travel to the Himalayas where Kim steals vital intelligence from the Russian spies working to undermine British control of the region. While in the Himalayas the Lama falls afoul of the Russian spies who take him prisoner, but Kim is able to rescue him, and the Lama realizes that he has gone astray from his quest. Kim and the Lama turn around and head back for the plains of India. Back in India, Kim is able to pass on the information he stole to his superiors, and the Lama finally finds the rived he was seeking and achieves enlightenment. At the end of the book, Kipling leaves the reader to decide which way

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<sup>19</sup> The Great Game is the term generally used to describe the conflict between the British and the Russian Empires over supremacy in Central Asia.

that Kim will go with his life; whether he will follow the spiritual path of the Lama, or if he will continue in his role as a spy for the British in the Great Game.

The story of *Kim* is an interesting way to look at British views on masculinity for several reasons. First of all, and probably the most obvious, is the fact that the novel tells the coming of age tale of a young British boy in India. Kim was the son of an Irish soldier, and had certain obligations to the British, but after growing up as part of Indian society he also felt a strong connection with their culture, and especially to the Lama whom he befriended. In a way the boy belonged to two very different worlds, and it was up to him as to which culture he would devote his life to.<sup>20</sup> In his own way Kim is actually free to become the quintessential imperial servant, as he can move freely among the native population, while still reporting information to the British.<sup>21</sup> By the end of the novel Kim has grown up to become the ultimate cosmopolitan British subject. He is a loyal citizen, and still able to maneuver seamlessly in native society. This was the ideal British agent in the colonies.

This book is Kipling's penultimate view of the way imperialism should be. In his mind the Englishmen that should lead the colonies follow Kim's example. Kipling firmly believed that a creole class was the most fit to run day to day aspects of the empire because they were raised in the native society, and as such knew how to govern over the people most effectively. Kim himself vows to maintain the two separate sides of his identity, the Indian and the British, because he is the ideal multiethnic entity.<sup>22</sup> On top of

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<sup>20</sup> Teresa Hubel, "In Search of the British Indian in British India: White Orphans, Kipling's Kim, and Class in Colonial India," *Modern Asian Studies* 38 (February 2004): 233-238.

<sup>21</sup> John McBratney, *Imperial Subjects, Imperial Space: Rudyard Kipling's Fiction of the Native Born*. (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2002), 105.

<sup>22</sup> Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*. (London: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1905), 351.

his ties to both English and Indian societies, Kim is also a poor orphan, which actually helps him maneuver more effectively as he exists special zone beyond the reach of either Englishman or Indians who would want to tie him to a specific caste.<sup>23</sup> He is not tied down to anything, beyond what he has chosen to connect himself to. Kim has no defined home, caste, or ethnicity, and is free to serve indiscriminately.

In his own way Kim is sort of the antithesis of Mowgli. While the man-cub Mowgli is not accepted by any group, and still is able to effectively move between them if need be, Kim is accepted by everyone, and that is why he can maneuver so easily.<sup>24</sup> At the beginning of the novel, Kipling states that Kim's "nickname through all the wards was 'Little Friend of all the World.'"<sup>25</sup> Kim is essentially a near perfect colonial man. He speaks multiple languages well enough that people believe they are his native languages. He can maneuver through the seedier parts of society, and yet is still spiritual enough to become the Lama's chela.<sup>26</sup> This is also supplemented by another key absence of women in Kim's life. In fact Kipling again presents women as being distractions at best. In one example the Lama is attempting to meditate and comments that it is hard to meditate when women are around.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore Kim received the advice that women are dangerous to a man's work, and that "[m]ost true is it in the Great Game, for it is by means of women that all plans come to ruin and we lie out in dawning with our throats cut."<sup>28</sup> All of this advice is apparently well received by Kim who never falls into female

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<sup>23</sup> McBratney, 107.

<sup>24</sup> Diane Simmons, *The Narcissism of Empire*. (Brighton; Sussex Academic Press, 2007), 97.

<sup>25</sup> Kipling, *Kim*, 6.

<sup>26</sup> Simmons, 97.

<sup>27</sup> Kipling, *Kim*, 98.

<sup>28</sup> Kipling, *Kim*, 218.

entanglements throughout the course of the story. Much like Haggard's work, Kipling generally portrayed women as being harmful to the running of the empire, and dangerous to a boy becoming a man.

Rudyard Kipling is best remembered today as the poet of empire, and while his views on imperialism certainly come out in his writings, so too do his views on masculinity. Many of his stories are written directly for children, and of those he showed a certain concern for how a boy became a man. Other stories, like *The Man Who Would Be King*, depicted British men in colonial settings. Either way, his stories predominantly feature male protagonists in the colonies, especially India. Much of this concern for the role the British man played in India came from Kipling spending a good deal of his young life there. There have been countless literary scholars that hypothesized the Kim was the boy Kipling dreamed of being while he was trapped at school in England. India left a huge mark on Kipling as he himself became a man and a famous writer, and this was especially hit home upon his return from India as a young man when he learned that the majority of the population of the metropole had little to know idea about the day to day happenings in the colony. Kipling gave a voice to those not heard from before, and became the poet of imperialism. As such his life and writings provide fantastic examples of Victorian views on masculinity.



## **Conclusion**

It should come as no surprise that during the last two decades of the nineteenth century ideas and topics relating to Britain's resurgent imperialism were quite popular topics on the minds of many of the people living in the metropole, much less for the colonists living in the outposts of empire around the world. The business of empire was never that far from the collective British mind, and as such, media in which colonial locations and imperial ideals were prevalent became a staple in English culture at the time. The citizens of England had a thirst for all things colonial, and at the time a whole new generation of writers stepped up to the challenge of delivering the general public a picture of colonial life. At the head of this movement were H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling, the most successful of this new brand of authors.

Having spent a significant chunk of their own lives living and working out in the colonies of South Africa and India respectively, they were perfectly suited to give the British public a taste of the colonial life, though they certainly went about it in separate fashions. Haggard basically created the new genre of adventure literature, and presented imperial ideals in a fast paced, action-packed fashion, that glorified the kind of man that the empire needed to both expand, and maintain what it held. Kipling took a different route. While his stories still definitely have a certain flair for adventure and the exotic, what set him apart from other colonial authors was not his use of fantastically tall tales

about exotic locals, but rather a portrayal closer to everyday life on the ground in Britain's colonial possessions. When he first returned to England after his early days as a journalist in Lahore, India, Kipling quickly realized that people in England were sorely lacking any basis of understanding what it was like to live in the colonies, and he rose to fill that niche. In both cases, Haggard and Kipling were wildly successful authors for a number of reasons. The first, as stated earlier, was that they were hitting on the hot topic of the day; imperialism and adventure in the exotic locations of the colonies. Secondly, they both were writing from their own personal experiences from living abroad in the places where they decided to place their stories. And finally, the values and ideals, particularly in regards to masculinity, that played such a central role to their most successful books were the same values that had been instilled in them since they were boys.

Tied up in all of this imperial fervor, new ideas about masculinity began to form. Running the British empire was simply a man's business. Men held all of the positions of power in the Foreign Service, the military, and in the governmental positions in England. Decisions about the empire were made by men. The empire was expanded by men. The empire was administratively maintained on a day to day basis by men. This is not to say that women did not play a significant role in the colonies. Women certainly were involved in many ways both home and abroad, but the fact of the matter is that men were seen as the sole rulers of the empire. With that being the case, over the course of the last half of the nineteenth century as the empire expanded to its largest size ever, the British started to perceive the need for a new breed of Englishmen that had to possess several

characteristics which would ultimately make him the best possible servant of the empire. The concepts of duty, action, struggle, force of will, and upright character became the paramount ideals of British masculinity, and it was these values that manifested themselves in the works of Haggard and Kipling.

The collected works of these two authors encapsulates the prevalent British views of manliness during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. As the century wore on, the British began to believe more and more that manliness was being contested both at home and abroad, and it was this that led to the development of a new sense of what it meant to be a 'man' in Victorian England. Throughout the Victorian period women continuously discovered new ways of maneuvering into public spaces that had formerly been the sole domain of men. This caused a new fluctuation in gender roles that had simply not existed before as women gained new rights and started participating more in the workplace and charitable organizations. Obviously, this increased role of women in the public sphere led to the men in the metropole believing that their own role was decreasing. It was this belief that their place at home was under threat that British males turned to the empire as the bastion of masculinity. One of the major reasons that they turned to the empire was because it was the perceived threat that the empire was constantly under threat that had also simultaneously created another new sense of manliness in Victorian England.

With the exception of maybe a couple of times, the empire was never really under any major threat to its world supremacy over the last half of the eighteenth century, but this did not stop the British public from believing that it was under the constant strain of

possible collapse; it was this idea that generated the idea that a new breed of Englishmen was needed to maintain the empire while it was crumbling at the edges. While it was never under any real threat of collapse, the empire was almost constantly engaged in some sort of colonial skirmish of some sort or another, and to combat both these real and perceived, external threats men were needed to serve in positions around the empire. Manliness became evermore crucial as men were needed to go abroad and serve in the Foreign Service and in the military. These men needed to be tougher, less squeamish, and more stoic than ever before if they were going to successfully withstand the tests associated with colonial service. As the British public believed that the empire was under constant threat, these jobs began to appeal to more young men coming of age over the last few decades of the century. Serving Britain by shipping off to the colonies became the ultimate test of manliness that a young man could possibly do. The British public perceived that their masculinity was under threat from all sides, both at home and abroad. This manifested itself in many ways as the values associated with masculinity were presented to young men and boys.

One of the easiest ways in which to examine a culture's core values is to look at what they are teaching their children. Children provide an easy lens for looking at a society's values for a number of reasons. First, there are generally always children in a society, so they form a sort of constant in just about any human culture. Second, the experience of being a child, and learning core values as a child, is culturally universal. While there are many other reasons, the final one for this argument is that raising children is almost entirely about teaching them a set of norms, customs, and values that a society

finds to be critical to being a successful adult. In that form, societies have also tended to come up with creative ways of teaching those norms, customs, and values to their children, and of those creative ways probably none is more universally popular than through fictional stories. Whether it be Greek myths, Grimm's fairy tales, or modern Harry Potter books, fantastical stories provide the best way at getting through to children. It is a fact that is as true today as it was in Victorian England, and Haggard and Kipling are no strangers to this.

As masculinity and empire increased in importance in the minds of the British public, so too did the topic begin to invade the realm of books and stories for boys and young men. The adventure literature that was skillfully raised to prominence by Haggard and Kipling provided the perfect platform for passing on the new masculine values of Victorian society to the sons of empire. Whether it be Haggard's character Allan Quatermain, or Kipling's Mowgli and Kim, these male figures were the direct representations of Victorian manliness. In somewhat different ways, all of these characters embodied this shared set of masculine values. Quatermain's bravery and sense of adventure, Mowgli's ability to move between the civilized and uncivilized worlds, and Kim's keen intellect and cosmopolitanism were all values that the British hoped the current group of men coming of age would possess. The fact that they were presented in fictitious stories is irrelevant because the message was still received all across the British isles and their colonies beyond. The British public ate these books up. Haggard and Kipling became the best selling authors of their day, and by virtue of the pure size of how

many people read their books, the values encapsulated in them were both well received and already tied deeply into the society that produced these two authors.

It does not end with these two authors. While they provide an excellent example because of their overwhelming success, there was a whole cadre of other authors and public figures that could have been equally convincing in making this argument. G.A. Henty was another highly successful author of books for boys that were centered around Englishmen's exploits around the globe. Following in line with Haggard and Kipling while deviating slightly, Henty centered the bulk of his around the coming of age tale of a young British boy in the employ or in direct contact with some great figure from British or world history. His books expounded upon the same core set of values as Haggard's and Kipling's works. And it was not just authors that got into the mix either. Robert Baden-Powell was another public figure whose life and professional works encapsulated British manliness. Baden-Powell was himself a war hero from the Second Anglo-Boer War, and used his fame to publish his *Scouting For Boys*, a book based off his guides for military reconnaissance. Though boys brigades had existed before this, it was under Baden-Powell's leadership that the scouting movement really took off, and created a concrete platform to push masculine values on boys and young men in Britain. These are only another two examples, and with enough research another fifty could easily be unearthed to make this argument.

In the wake of the ever changing world of the late nineteenth century, the British people's values began to shift as the empire took over as the dominant topic of the day. After a half century of colonial struggles, imperial expansion, and a tumultuous social

scene in the metropole, the British public saw its masculinity as being under threat. This perceived threat sparked a new period in which a sense of hyper-masculinity developed as the obvious answer to changes going on around the world and at home. This new masculinity reached children in a number of ways, but probably none so prominently as through books for boys, and most specifically in the works of the two most successful authors of the day, H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling.

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