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**British Imperialism in India Through
Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Books***

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the Degree of Master in British and American studies

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Abstract

This work aims to investigate the history of British Imperialism in India through Rudyard Kipling's animal fable, *The Jungle Books*. The main argument of this study is that historical events have a great impact on literature and Rudyard Kipling as an Anglo-Indian writer mirrors and reflects the real face of the British presence in India by his imperialist and racist views and his support to British invasions. Britain's and Kipling's connections with India are both analyzed in *The Jungle Books* which are seen as an allegorical imperial colonization.

Résumé

Ce travail a pour objectif d'examiner l'histoire de l'impérialisme britannique en Inde à travers la fable de Rudyard Kipling, *Les Livres de la Jungle*. L'argument principal de cette étude est que les événements historiques ont souvent un certain impact sur la littérature et Kipling, en tant qu'écrivain anglo-indien, reflète le vrai visage de la présence britannique en Inde à travers ses points de vue impérialistes et racistes et son soutien aux différentes invasions britanniques. Les relations de la Grande-Bretagne et de Kipling avec l'Inde sont analysées par le biais des *Livres de la Jungle* qui eux-mêmes sont perçus comme une allégorie de la colonisation impériale.

ملخص

إن هذا العمل يرمي إلى تقصي تاريخ الامبريالية البريطانية في الهند على ضوء الرواية لروديارد كيبلينغ *The Jungle Books*. إذ أن الحجة الرئيسية لهاته الدراسة من شأنها في أي حال من الأحوال تبيان الأثر العظيم للأحداث التاريخية في ساحة الأدب. إن روديارد كيبلينغ بصفته كاتباً أنجلو-هندياً يعكس هيئة التواجد البريطاني في الهند من خلال تعاليقه وأرائه الامبريالية العرقية في كثير من الأحيان، مدرجاً مساندة لبريطانيا المبتاحة. هذا وقد وضعت كل من روابط كيبلينغ وبريطانيا مع الهند تحت المحك في كتاب *The Jungle Books* والتي لا تعدو أن تكون هي الأخرى استعماراً امبريالياً رمزي البصمة. وبناءً عليه تقدم هاته الأطروحة التاريخ والامبريالية البريطانية في كتاب الحيوانات لروديارد كيبلينغ.

Introduction

'The issue is not a mean one. It is whether ... you will be a great country – an Imperial country – a country where your sons, when they rise, rise to paramount positions, and obtain not merely the esteem of their countrymen, but command the respect of the world.'

(Benjamin Disraeli in 1872)

Benjamin Disraeli gave the term imperialism a respectable political currency in England and then he made Queen Victoria Empress of India. His enthusiasm for empire was perhaps a little ahead of its time. By the 1890s, however, Rudyard Kipling was writing for an audience made familiar with the 'new imperialism' by continuing support of the British expansion. But what were Kipling's views of empire and imperial relationship? Critics like Edmund Wilson saw him as a racist who made Kim (a major character of his novel *Kim*) turn his back on the black man and identify with the white conquerors. George Orwell saw him as “the prophet of empire in its expansionist phase”.

The first British outpost in India was established by the English East India Company. The British expanded their influence from these footholds until, by 1850s, they controlled most of present-day India. In 1857, an unsuccessful rebellion in North India led the British parliament to transfer political power from the East India Company to the Crown. Great Britain began administering most of India directly and maintained both political and economic control, while controlling the rest of its colonies through treaties with local rulers. Imperial India became the ‘Jewel of the Crown’ of the rapidly expanding British Empire.

Indian born Rudyard Kipling’s relation to India greatly influenced his works through which he established for himself the reputation of a strong and loyal supporter of Britain’s imperialism. *The Jungle Books* are motivated by the fact that literature and history are

intimately connected, and that writers often endeavor to transform historical events into works of art, therefore, using writing as a tool to defend their own convictions. In this respect, Kipling is best known for his support of racism and imperialism.

The present work attempts to show that Kipling's fiction, *The Jungle Books*, cannot be separated from his own experiences and from the history of India. Since he was an Anglo-Indian writer, he believed in the supremacy of the British who were in India and in the usefulness, if not the necessity, of their presence there. Consequently, this dissertation consists mainly of two chapters. The first one explains the historical background of the presence of the British in India starting by the East India Company's trading and ending with a crown rule's control. It shows how Britain started a new form of imperialism by justifying cruel exploitations of the Indians in terms of 'a noble mission.' This brief historical background will certainly help the reader get a full understanding of Kipling's animal tale in relation with India.

The second chapter provides a discussion of *The Jungle Books* and their relations with the British presence in India and shows that the famous Indian Mutiny and imperialism are the major contributors that influenced Rudyard Kipling and made him develop a strong belief in and a long-lasting support to the British Empire and its numerous invasions of other sovereign territories.

Sources utilized in the research for the dissertation include specialized books written by prominent writers and critics in history and literature, and official reports and recent articles published in journals and magazines. All have a significant importance in relation with British imperialism.

In conclusion, the overriding goal to be achieved is to shed some light on the results of British imperialism in India and the reaction of nationalists that brought independence in 1947. As well as the great impact of imperialism on British children, the future leaders, which is depicted in children's fiction, *The Jungle Books*.

Chapter One

The British Empire: India

"Ask any man what nationality he would prefer to be, and ninety nine out of a hundred will tell you that they would prefer to be Englishmen". (Cecil John Rhodes)

"I think I can save the British Empire from anything—except the British." (Winston Churchill)

Introduction

India was considered of great importance since the sixteenth century, it was seen as a bridge between the European countries, especially for the Netherlands in their way to the Dutch India Company, and the gainful East Indies.

An active phase of colonization started for Britain from the British defeat in America to the end of the French War. Britain acquired new territories; as she could reduce the control of the other competitors; she was able to make the most of her productivity. So, by 1815, Britain had a great empire that was able to protect a group of ports which gave her the name 'imperial pre-eminence'.¹

India was exceptional for Britain; it was always treated differently from the other colonies. Its importance is presented in the political and the military supremacy it gave to Britain. It was already divided before the coming of the British because of several religions and languages that were characterizing its huge number of population. The first British merchants in Asia needed the authorization of local rulers such as the Moguls which show their military authority and power before the coming of the British.

In this chapter, I intend to introduce the beginnings of the British presence in India since the first merchants who aimed to trade and invest in Indian lands. However,

¹ Levine, Philippa. The British Empire: Sunrise to Sunset. England: Pearson Longman. 2007. 60.

circumstances, desires, and power changed the path of the British from trade to taxation to expansion and then to rule and control. Since India was a unique case for Britain, the British could not leave these advantageous people and territories.

The Victorian morality played an important role in justifying the takeover of the Indians. Noblesse oblige was their belief to take care of the 'uncivilized' and gave the meaning and purpose of their lives and works in India. It's their mission then to spread European culture all over India, but conditions worsened for the Indian nation; famine, poverty, regional struggles, racism, and division were the results of the propaganda of the British Imperialism.

Nationalism and self-awareness penetrated the Indian population to remove the British from India and conquer people's moral authority as Gandhi said: 'I am an uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest of cause. Experience convinces me that permanent good can never be the outcome of untruth and violence.'

1. The Jewel in the Crown

1.1. *The East India Company*

After the Persian king, Nadir Shah, destroyed the Mogul's army in 1739, the emperor's power was reduced and weakened. It was time then for the British East India Company to replace the declining powers* and impose its control over the Indian territories. This was after long hostilities and wars with the French**.

The East India Company was established in 1600 as a 'private joint-stock corporation'². It was chartered to have trade with India, Southeast Asia, and East Asia and it was launched in London by 24 directors. It had the benefit of trade domination as well as bargain with local rulers. India became a precious marketplace thus the by the nineteenth century, Britain went behind free trade.

After the loss of the American colonies, Britain was faced by an economic and psychological depression; she also lost trade in the East Indies which changed the balance to give India a special position among Britain's colonies. This was more symbolic for Britain to regain her overseas power, especially after the loss in America.

Britain needed to protect India from rival powers and neighbouring countries. She took parts of Burma, the island of Mauritius from the French and Java from the Dutch. She seized a series of places en route to India in the Napoleonic Wars: Seychelles(1794), the Cape of Good Hope (1795) and Malta was captured in 1814. To the east, India was of great importance to China because of opium which led in 1839 and again in 1856 to war and Britain annexed the island of Hong Kong in 1841 to the British territories.

* The Moguls were so weak by the mid-18th century that they had become, in effect, a regional power such as Nawabs and the Battle of Plassey in 1757 led by Robert Clive is a date often used to mark the beginning of British rule in India.

** Carnatic Wars (1746-49, 1751-54, 1756-63)

² Walsh, Judith E. A Brief History of India. New York: Facts on File, Ink.2006. 89.

With these occupations and colonial possessions, Britain formed a circle of protection around India. By that, the East India Company became a global business and as Philippa Levine argues: ‘These close ties-political, military, geographical, economic-exemplify the interconnection of imperial interest and expansion, each colony influencing and shaping other British possessions.’(63)

By 1700, three organizations were shaped for the company: Bombay (to the west), Madras (in the south) and Bengal (to the east). The role of the company to collect taxes was of growing importance which brought prosperity both to the company and to individual officers. So the focus on trade by the East India Company shifted from trade to taxation.

Farmers and agricultural labourers, in the company, were obliged to pay considerable land taxes. ‘From 1765 on, [...] Land taxes paid for company armies and were “invested” in company trade. Local company monopolies of saltpeter, salt, indigo, betel nut, and opium improved the company’s position in international trade’³. It was a lucrative system for the well-off that brought India to be the heart of British imperial interests.

1.1.1. The Regulating Act and Warren Hastings as a governor-general

In the years after Plassey, conditions were worsening because of the political self-interest of the company’s servants. One third of Bengal’s peasants died from famine in the years between 1767-70. As a result, two acts were passed by the parliament; the first one was to give permission to a loan of £1.5 million in order to help the famine conditions. The second one was the Regulating Act of 1773 which was put by Prime Minister, Lord North. It changed the course of ‘British colonialism in India.’⁴ It was to create a governor-general to control the

³ Walsh, 94

⁴ Philippa, 67

three united presidencies (Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras). Warren Hastings was the first governor-general to be appointed*. He brought the collected taxes directly under the company control and he brought Bengal under the company's direct political rule.

1.1.2. Pitt's India Act and Lord Cornwallis

Pitt**'s India Act was passed in 1784 to bring Indian activities under the control of parliament in which the company's directors had the right to recall the governor-general. After that act, Warren Hastings resigned.

In 1785, Charles Cornwallis was appointed as a governor-general of the company. He was known for his rigid correctness, he introduced extensive reforms which were collected into the Code of Forty-eight Regulations; he put an end to the disloyal company officials. He excluded Indian civilians and sepoys (Indian soldiers) from 'rising to commissioned status in the British army.'⁵ He also changed regional Indian judges by local courts under the control of British judges. The collectors became the company official who works on tax collection.

'The Permanent Settlement' reform of Bengal that was introduced by Cornwallis was the most striking one. He gave an eternal heredity to the Zamindars*** since they were able to pay the company or the crown after 1857. He brought this reform in 1793 in order to create a class of Bengali landowners corresponding with the gentry of Britain. But because of the bad corps and the economic failure that faced the Zamindars, it was abandoned to appoint officials not to be perpetual.

* Warren Hastings (1732–1818), a 20-year veteran of company service in India who held the appointment from 1774 to 1785.

** William Pitt the younger, a British Tory Prime Minister 1783–1801 and 1804–06.

⁵ Walsh, 97–8.

*** Bengali tax collectors under the Moguls had been the zamindars (lords of the land), an appointed, nonhereditary position.

1.1.3. Land Revenues and Pax Britannica

Between 1790 and 1826 the company had two goals; to re-evaluate taxes in the new territories that were gained after the Anglo-Mysore Wars^{*} (1767-1799) and the Maratha Wars^{**} (1775-1818), and to conciliate the villagers, peasants, and tribesmen to guarantee the ordinary collection of taxes. There was an increase in the Bengal land taxes from £3 million to £22 million by 1818. These collected taxes were paid to finance both the company's trade with India and China and the cost of company's army. They were also paid for home charges^{***}, its equivalent is £6 million in 1820. All these everyday expenditures pressed a senior company official to note in a letter to the new governor-general, Lord William Bentinck in 1828 that India: 'has yielded no surplus revenue. It has not even paid its own expenses'⁶

The weakness of the permanent Settlement that is represented in low taxes and the creation of wealthy class turned the system to be a direct taxation on peasant cultivators (the ryots) since the company's focus was revenues and tax collection. It was put by the Madras governor-general, Tomas Munro. Munro's ryotwari system was applied in other regions.

Company officials were also concerned with bringing order to the new territories. They honored some armies and gifted migrant tribes and forest people's landholdings in part to fix their location. So the pacification of company lands was labeled Pax Britannica^{****} by which peace and stability were brought to many places. As Judith E. Walsh adds: 'Recycled Mogul rest houses along major routes helped farmers and merchants move goods to regional markets. In Delhi, urban property values almost tripled between 1803 and 1826, and interest

^{*} Because of his anti-French instructions, Richard Colley Wellesley attacked Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore in South India.

^{**} Wellesley turned to fight Marathas who had fought the British East India company troops over company territorial expansion.

^{***} The monies the company spent for offices, salaries, pensions, and other expenses associated with the running of its Indian empire.

⁶ Walsh, 102

^{****} Pax Britannica was the period between 1815 and 1914 when the British Empire controlled most of the sailing trade routes in which a phase of British imperialism and expansionism started.

rates fell sharply both in Delhi and throughout India. By the 1830s British armies had brought peace and order—and heavier taxation—to much of urban and rural India.’(103)

2. The Indian Uprising

‘The Burmese are under the protection of a despotism which defends them for its own ends, but which would abandon them without hesitation if they ceased to be of use. Their relationship with the British Empire is that of slave and master. Is the master good or bad? That is not the question; let us simply say that this control is despotic and, to put it plainly, self interested.’⁷ (George Orwell)

The Indian Rebellion, or Mutiny, of 1857 was one of the most significant events in the history of the British Empire. Indian soldiers in the army of the East India Company in Bengal rose up against their officers, captured and killed many civilians, and nearly overthrew British rule in northern India.

The Indian Rebellion had many causes. The traditional explanation of the unpleasant search of cartridges causing the initial outbreak of mutiny is only part of the story. Many native infantrymen (sepoys) believed that these new cartridges introduced in early 1857 had been greased by cow and pig fat. The sepoys would come into direct contact with the cow and pig grease, which was insulting to Hindus and Muslims respectively. But the cartridges were only the catalyst for a revolt that was based on long-standing grievances.

Sepoys in the East India Company army had seen their pay (and therefore their status) decline in these years, and many felt that the new officers serving in the Company army since the 1840s did not have the same respect and sympathy for sepoys that had been a feature of the previous generation of Company officers. Lord Dalhousie, Governor General of India

⁷ Mishra, Pankaj. ‘The White Man’s Burden’. New Statesman.vol.134.issue.4758.sep 19,2005.48+.

(1847-56) introduced the so-called Doctrine of Lapse^{*}, a formula which allowed the East India Company to extend its control into Indian territory when a native ruler died without what the Company considered a legitimate heir. Indian tradition held that adopted children had the same inheritance rights as birth children. But the Company did not recognize adopted heirs. In Oudh, the application of the Doctrine was considered a final outrage of British conquest. Oudh was such a rich and historic part of India that this seizure was seen as a cultural insult. According to Christopher Hibbert, the outbreak of hostilities in the army would not have spread so quickly or gained much-needed local support had not the sepoys' grievances been echoed by discontent in many parts of Bengal, both rural and urban. (203)⁸.

Life inside native walls was not necessarily good. Vishnubhat Godse was in the rebel fort of Jhansi when it was attacked by the British in April 1858. Although this story refers only to the Jhansi attack, it gives us some sense of the fear that many Indians had of the British army, which they assumed would be revengeful:

‘The English began entering the city and shooting down every man that they saw and setting fire to houses. They first commenced burning and killing in the Halvaipura quarter. They sought out males from the age of five to the age of eighty and killed them ... Thousands of white soldiers entered the city from all side and commenced massacring people. The terror in the city at this time was immeasurable. The screaming and crying was endless, at that time there was a small garden in the middle of the city. People fled into it from all directions. Up to 20,000 people were gathered there. The English soldiers came, whereupon all the people lay prone on the ground and begged for mercy, saying that they were ordinary folk and none of them was a soldier. The English had pity on them, posted a guard at the gates and went elsewhere. They began entering homes and killing men they encountered; sometimes they caught and tortured them, demanding rupees, gold, pearls or other valuables. If they found these, then they sometimes let them go. Sometimes they dragged them about with their own waistcloths tied about their necks in force them to show where valuables had been buried; if they were found the men might be released, only to be killed by the next party' of English that came by. But they did not kill women. However young women of good families feared that they would be defiled, and so, as soon as the English entered their houses they went to the well at the back and drowned themselves. Sometimes when they were "killing men, their womenfolk sought to protect them and were killed by gunshot. The men would still be taken and killed. But women were not deliberately killed. If soldiers came to a house where there were only women they stood at a distance and

^{*} The Dalhousie government used the administrative tools of ‘Lapse’ and ‘Paramountcy’ to expand British land and land revenues in India by arguing that there should be no biological male heir to a throne, ‘Paramountcy’ said that as the British were the paramount power in India, they had responsibility for each ruler’s behavior and could annex territories where rulers governed irresponsibly.

⁸ Hibbert, Christopher. The Great Mutiny: India 1857. New York: Doubleday, 1911.224-7.

made them surrender their ornaments, searched the house and left. Horses, camels, cows, dogs and cats wandered the streets howling from thirst. At dusk I climbed up to the roof to survey the city. Such was the destruction that I trembled in every limb at the sight. I was filled with dread. The whole city had become a land of corpses ... Beyond the Halvaipura, the city was ablaze. Huge tongues of flame blown by the wind leapt from house to house. Such a dreadful fate overtook Jhansi as no other town has suffered'.⁹

The number of soldiers had grown to 271,000 men, and European officers were only one out of every six soldiers. After the rebellion, the army was unified under the British Crown: In Bengal there was one European soldier for every two Indians; in Bombay and Madras, one for every three.¹⁰

3. Crown Rule Begins

'As long as we rule India we are the greatest power in the world. But if we should lose it we shall drop straightaway to a third-rate power'. Viceroy Lord Curzon (qtd. in Judd).¹¹

The 1857 Sepoy Rebellion initiated by Indian troops, who formed the size of the company's armed forces, was the key turning point. One important consequence of the revolt was the final collapse of the Mogul dynasty. The mutiny also ended the system of dual control under which the British government and the British East India Company shared authority. In 1858, after 258 years of existence, the company abandoned its role.

The East India Company's administration was blamed for the loss that cost Britain a full year of Indian revenues, £ 36 million during the 1857-58 rebellion. Hence, in 1858 parliament abolished the company entirely and placed the Indian empire directly under Crown rule. Lord Canning kept the title of governor-general but added to it that of viceroy. Queen Victoria herself would become empress of India in 1876:

⁹ Coohill, Joseph. 'Indian Voices from 1857 rebellion' History Today.vol.57.issue.5.May 2007.48+.

¹⁰ Hibbert,224-7

¹¹ Judd, Denis. 'Hanging on the Jewel in the Crown.' History Today.vol.59.issue.11.Nov 2009.34+.

‘When, by the blessing of Providence, internal tranquility shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful industry of India, to promote works of public utility and improvement, and to administer its government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward’.

(Proclamation of Queen Victoria of Great Britain, 1858)¹²(qtd.in Sitwell).

Her proclamation declared that there would be no further religious interference in India and Dalhousie’s doctrine of ‘lapse’ was rejected. From 1858 to 1947 the princely (or Native) States made up almost one-third of British India and 600 Indian princes became supporters of British rule.

3.1. How did the British govern India?

They divided India into two parts; one was under direct rule which was British India and the Indian states were under indirect rule. They justified their autocracy in British India by inheriting the eclipsed Mogul authority. However, as their constitutional tradition dictates, they have to defend the direct control for themselves. Their first claim was as T.B.Macaulay said in 1833:

‘It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system ;that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government ;that , having become instructed in European knowledge ,they may , in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or retard it’, and he adds: ‘A class of persons Indian in colour and blood, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect.’¹³

In this quotation, we see that the British claim that the Indians have no wish to be represented in government and if they would be, they have to be fit in the parliamentary

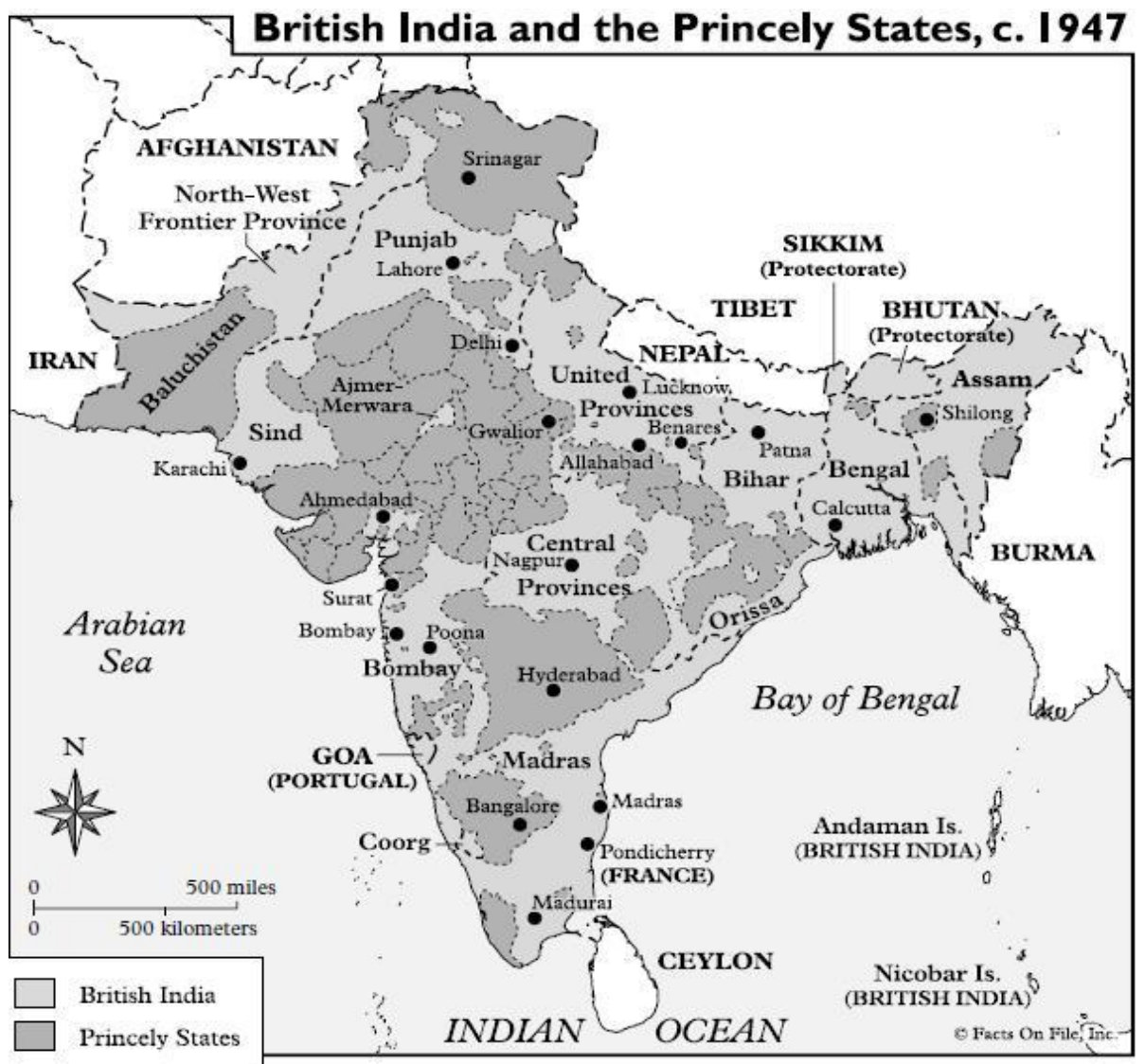
¹² Sitwell,Edith. Victoria of England.London.Francis Sitwell,1936.274–75.

¹³ Fieldhouse, D.K. The Colonial Empires. A Comparative Survey from the Eighteenth Century. London. Dell

system by changing their appearances and language. So here the British were able to justify their power as a noble morality.

Their second argument is refusing to share power with the Indians by claiming that they are untruthful. Sir John Strachy says:

‘although I suppose that no foreign government was ever accepted with less repugnance than that with which the British Government is accepted in India, the fact remains that there never was a country... in which the government of foreigners is really popular. It will be the beginning of the end of our empire when we forget this elementary fact, and entrust the greater executive powers to the hands of Natives, on the assumption that they will always be faithful and strong supporters of our government.’¹⁴



¹⁴ Fieldhouse, 274

3.2. The Civil Service

A single civil service for the country and the unification of the Indian army and police forces were the sources of the unity of British India. Because the Indian practice had not used the self-governing units and since Britain was a foreign occupying authority, the civil service as a first administrative body in British or European colonial history was the establishment of British government.

Until 1853, employment was by support; there was an examination whereby 'élite corps' tended to be in conditions. 'The service set the tone of British rule in India: autocratic and alien, but just and anxious to improve the country.'¹⁵The treaty of the service, the covenanted service, was a little element of the Indian service: there were only 898 out of 4,849 civil servants in 1893 and the rest were uncovenanted service. However, it was modified in 1889 to be the Provincial and Subordinate Services. It consists of Indian majority which did not deteriorate the British monopoly of power. But the question is should the Indians be in the covenanted service and share responsibilities.

The fact is that in 1833, Indians were made qualified for the first time, but they could only enter the service in 1864 because of conditions that were facing the Indian candidates like post-1853 entrance examination in Britain .However, by 1915 there were only sixty-three Indians which means five percent of the total. The civil servants who were trained in British universities were set out to rule India.

¹⁵ Fieldhouse, 276

3.3. The British in India

The British residents of India, Anglo Indian in the nineteenth century were numbering more than 100.000. They ran the upper levels of the Indian government and the Indian civil service. The Anglo-Indians had a strong faith in their authoritative power and the importance of the continuation of British rule in India. Judith Walsh argues that the Anglo-Indian community was often the source of ‘racist and supremacist ideas about India and its people.’ (114). They believed in the benefits of British rule in India and they consider it ‘civilizing mission’ of British imperialism. The civil lines for Anglo-Indians and Europeans included the bungalow –style residences, churches, clubs, polo grounds, and cemeteries.

The English writer, Rudyard Kipling, wrote many stories in relation with Anglo-Indian life in India. Kipling himself came from an Anglo-Indian family. Kipling’s famous 1899 poem ‘The White Man’s Burden’ although written about U.S involvement in Philippines, had nevertheless captured the Anglo-Indian community’s own sense of its purpose and function in India:

Take up the White Man’s burden —
Send forth the best ye breed —
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives’ need. . . .

It is to say that the quality of duty and self-sacrifice were the purpose of the lives and work of the Anglo-Indians in India. Kipling’s views were not entirely unchallenged. The British daily, London’s Truth, added this poetical coda to Kipling’s Poem:

Pile on the brown man’s burden
To satisfy your greed¹⁶

¹⁶Derming Lewis, Martin, ed. Imperialism or trusteeship? Boston, D.C. Heath, 1962. x.

4. Imperialism

‘India to me is ‘duty’ written in five letters rather than four’

(George Nathaniel Curzon)

Imperialism is defined as the extension of rule or influence by one government, nation, or society over another.¹⁷

European Imperialism brought economic expansion and new standard of official administration to subject countries; at its worst, it meant brutal exploitation and dehumanization in every instance. However, imposition of new forms of social organization meant the breakdown of traditional forms of life and the disruption of native civilizations.

The British Empire grew over many centuries and her imperial expansion was commercial, not military or governmental in nature. The British East India Company is an example of commercial enterprises that used a lot of control over foreign territory.

At the end of the nineteenth century, there was a strong reaction against the most inhuman forms of imperialist exploitation. The encouragement and glorification of military force to both expand and maintain the empire; the support of the racial superiority of white Europeans, and especially Englishman, over darker skinned non- Europeans; the waving of the flag of patriotism and nationalism; the civilizing of spiritually and morally ‘dark’ areas of the world. Without these ideologies of imperialism, expansion of empire is impossible, and it is these ideologies that are presented in classic British children’s books.

Efforts were made to improve the standards colonial administration; and a new justification of the rule of non-Europeans by the European powers was found in the idea of

¹⁷ The Columbia Encyclopedia. 6th ed. 2009.

‘the white man’s burden’, which advanced the notion that the developed nations of Europe had a duty to rule Asians and Africans in order to lead them to a higher level of civilization and culture. Among the leading critics of imperialism at that time were the Marxists, who saw imperialism as the ultimate stage of capitalism and made much of the connection between imperialist rivalries and war. (Fieldhouse, 174-76) ¹⁸.

The reign of Victoria (1837-1901) covered the period of Britain’s commercial and industrial leadership of the world and its greatest political influence. In India conquest and expansion continued; Great Britain’s commercial interests advanced by the British navy, brought on in 1839 the First Opium War with China, which opened five Chinese ports to British trade and made Hong Kong a British colony. The aggressive diplomacy of Lord Palmerstone in the 1850s and 60s, including involvement in the Crimean War, was popular elsewhere. From 1868 to 1880 political life in Great Britain was dominated by Benjamin Disraeli and William E. Gladstone, who differed dramatically over domestic and foreign policy. Disraeli, who had attacked Gladstone for failing to defend Britain’s imperial interests, followed an active foreign policy, determined by considerations of British prestige and desire to protect the route to India. Under Disraeli (1874-80) the British acquired the Transvaal, the Fiji Islands, and Cyprus, fought frontier wars in Africa and Afghanistan, and became the largest shareholder in the Suez Canal Company.

Kipling earnestly believed in the mission of the White races in civilizing backward peoples of the world because he believed that educationally, scientifically, and technologically they were well equipped to carry out this mission.

Kipling’s notion of the white man’s burden was also religious and moral. It was essentially a call to moral duty. The British Whigs, like Chamberlain and Hobson, agreed that

¹⁸ Fieldhouse, D.k. The Theory of capitalist Imperialism. Ed. Hugh F.Kearney. London. Longman group, 1967.

the only justification for the British Empire was its contribution to the civilization of the world. Lord Curzon stated that he found, in the empire not merely the key to glory and wealth, but also ‘the call to duty’, and ‘the means of service to mankind.’¹⁹

This concept of duty and steadfast devotion to the cause was central to British imperialism in India and it passed from one generation to the other. It is interesting to observe the reactions of Jawaharlal Nehru, an inveterate enemy of British imperialism, who said that the British approach to Indian problems ‘fascinated while it irritated’²⁰ and that their calm assurance in face of the greatest provocation aroused mixed reactions. The adverse critics of the concept of imperialism accused its advocates of clever ‘phrase-mongering’, and using ‘masked words’. The White Man’s Burden is, in their view, an example of this credulous phrase-mongering.

The publication of Charles Darwin (1859) reinforced the attitude of racial superiority of the whites against the blacks or of the Europeans against the Asians and Africans. It is curious that Darwin’s great work was published only two years after the great uprising of 1857 in India. The fact remains that the Indian rebels were defeated by the superior force of the British arms. This military defeat of Indians was interpreted as another important piece of evidence in support of the racial and political preeminence of the British. Although it was conceded that the British Empire in India was one of the accidents of history, acquired almost in a ‘fit of absentmindedness’²¹, as the empire grew in stature, it became a focal point for the assumption of racial and intellectual superiority. As Donald C. Gordon has pointed out that perhaps the explanation for British power that was most likely to justify a permanent British Raj in India was the notion that ‘British power in India was based on some special

¹⁹ Shahane, Vasant.A.Rudyard Kipling, *Activist and Artist*. Carbondale, Illinois University Press, 1973.31-40.

²⁰ Wilson, A.N. ‘So who are the savages now?’*The Daily Mail*, Jan 20, 2007.14+.

²¹ Shannon, Richard.*The Crisis of imperialism, 1865-1915*.England. Paladin, 1976.40-76.

characteristics of the British people.’ ‘ Or in the more popular language of the day, on the unique qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race.’²²

This sense of supremacy was the source of the imperialistic stance of nineteenth-century England. It is mirrored in, for example, Joseph Chamberlain’s belief that ‘the British race is the greatest of governing races that the world has ever seen’. Cecil Rhodes, a friend of Kipling, believed that the British were ‘the best people in the world.’ Similarly, Lord Grover thought that the British in extending their dominion on the face of the earth were fulfilling the mission of a truly Christian civilization. (Darwin, 55-108)²³.

Not all historians of British imperialism have emphasized these justifications and the dynamic and expansionary nature of British commerce as a factor in the conquest of India. Just over a hundred years ago J.R. Seeley, the veritable founder of British imperial history, argued that the conquest of India was made ‘blindly’. He claimed that ‘nothing’ the English had ever done had been done ‘so unintentionally, so accidentally, as the conquest of India.’ Seeley characterized the English East India Company's wars of conquest in the subcontinent as defensive. In his analysis the Company and Britain's ‘first step to empire’ in India was made for the sole purpose ‘of protecting Fort William (Calcutta) and punishing . . . the Nawab of Bengal.’²⁴(qtd. in Berger).

Seeley's ‘defensive’ interpretation of the conquest of India was typical of late nineteenth-century British historical writing on South Asia. Historians writing at that time, and in the early twentieth century, usually represented eighteenth-century imperialism in India as a ‘defensive’ response to French military and commercial competition, and to the anarchical political situation which developed with the decline of the Mogul Empire. These

²² Lloyd, Trevor. *Empire. The History of British Empire*. London. Hambledon and London, 2001.78–89.

²³ Darwin, John. *The Empire Project*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

²⁴ Berger, Mark T. ‘Review Essay: From Commerce to Conquest.’ *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*. vol.22.issue.1.1990.62.

historians interpreted events in basically political terms, explaining Anglo-French rivalry as primarily a dynastic or political struggle, while ignoring or downplaying the Company's expansionary and disruptive commercial activities and the private trade and profiteering of the Company's employees. They focused narrowly on the major actors involved, such as Clive and Dupleix, and they did not seriously analyze economic forces or the nature of European capitalism.

According to Fieldhouse, the British conquest of India in the eighteenth century grew from the need to defend Britain and the Company's position from French and Indian enemies; although he does mention that the Company's employees were also motivated by the possibility of receiving presents, as the Company and British military might move inland. But ultimately he characterizes the British conquest of Bengal and the rest of India as defensive and reluctant. Elsewhere Fieldhouse has argued that British imperialism, be it based on commercial capitalism or industrial capitalism, was generally 'the consequence of instability generated on the frontiers of empire by advancing parties of traders, missionaries and other Europeans coming into conflict with indigenous societies.' In his view, 'Europe was pulled into imperialism by the magnetic force of the periphery.' This particular interpretation even appears to have been adopted by the Marxist historian V.G. Kiernan, who has argued that it was not British 'ambition that precipitated change' in India, but the collapse of Mogul power and the global competition of France and England that served to drag the Company and the British government into 'the maze of Indian politics and wars.'²⁵(qtd.in Smith).

An important and well-known example of the economic interpretation of the British conquest of Bengal and India can of course be found in the work of Andre Gunder Frank. Frank has argued that the eighteenth century was preeminently a period of competitive

²⁵ Smith, Tony. The Pattern of imperialism. The United States, Great Britain, and the Late Industrializing World Science 1815.London: Cambridge University Press, 1981.6.

economic expansion on the part of Britain and France. Although the wars of the eighteenth century between the European powers have often been characterized as dynastic and political, Frank argues that they were fought mainly ‘for reasons of commercial rivalry.’ He notes that the conquest of Bengal at midcentury, while occurring against the backdrop of the Seven Years War (1756-63), also coincided with an ‘expansive boom in both production and trade.’²⁶ (qtd.in Brown). Frank cites with approval other historians who have also emphasized the economic nature of Anglo-French rivalry.

²⁶ Brown, Judith. Modern India: The origins of an Asian Democracy. Oxford University Press, 1985. 41-43.

Conclusion

Historical events showed the gradual presence of Britain in India from trade and taxation to direct rule. Different interpretations were given by many historians and critics to shed light on the British imperial power in India. In fact, several justifications were brought by the British to guarantee their supremacy over the natives which are reflected in The Jungle Books that were written by one of those Anglo-Indians, Rudyard Kipling, whereby they deal with this belief of being superior and mirrors the historical background of British imperialism in India. However, the British beneficial needs that strengthen her power militarily and economically were behind the justifications that were presented.

Chapter Two

Imperialism in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Books*

Introduction

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) is an English author who was born in Bombay, India. He was educated in England and he returned to India in 1882 to be an editor on a Lahore Paper. Later in 1889, he returned to London. Kipling's masterful stories and poems interpreted India in all its sense. His imperialist views and his characterization of the true English-man as brave, hard-working, and self-reliant did much to enhance his popularity. These views are reflected in such well-known poems as 'The White Man's Burden', 'If', and 'Recessional'.

In a completely different vein Kipling's genius for the animal fable as a means of incalculating human truths opens up a new world of joyous imagining in the two Jungle Books. They show what T. S. Eliot describes as 'the development of the imperial...into the historical imagination.'²(qtd. in Robson). Two of Britain's most important areas of activity in the nineteenth century were those of industrialism and imperialism, both of which had been neglected by literature prior to Kipling's advent.

Kipling's imperialist attitude sprang from diverse beliefs which were in part racial and political and in part moral and religious. The early Kipling's outlook was molded by many contemporary notions regarding the 'superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race'.³He believes in

² Kipling, Rudyard. *The Jungle Books*. Ed. W.W. Robson. Oxford; Oxford University Press. 1992. xi.

³ Shahane, Vasant. *A. Rudyard Kipling; Activist and Artist*. Carbondale. Illinois University Press, 1973.31-40.

differences on the basis of nation or race that is, defining Indians as animal-like and sensual, and the English as fully human rational.⁴

In this chapter, I will strive to show how British imperial history shape most of Kipling's fiction. Imperialism, however, is always there in the Indian scene. The Jungle Books, specifically the Mowgli Saga, allegorized an imperialist worldview.

⁴ Battles, Paul. 'The Mark of the Beast: Rudyard Kipling's Apocalyptic Vision of Empire'. Studies in Short Fiction. Vol. 33. Issue: 3.1996:333+.

The jungle Books

The Jungle Books (1894-5), like two other great English works, Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) and Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), can be regarded as stories told by an adult to children. They constitute a complex work of literary art in which the whole of Kipling's philosophy of life is expressed.

1.1. Imperialism in British Children's Fiction

Daphne Kutzer considers Rudyard Kipling as the logical beginning point for a study of empire and imperialism in children's books. Kipling's inspiration and obsession was India, 'The Jewel in the Crown' of Britain's empire. V. G. Kiernan has pointed out "the main patterns of all British colonial administration were formed [in India]; and the public, empire with all its romantic associations meant chiefly India."⁵

Kipling was born in India, a complex and contradictory country of jungle and desert, mountain and plain, drought and monsoon; a country populated by a bewildering number of ethnicities and religions, languages and customs; a country with large numbers of native princes, but ultimately under the rule of white Europeans. That such a country spawned as contradictory and at times confounding a writer as Kipling is not surprising.

The Jungle Books are a series of British children's texts from the late nineteenth century. They are texts that reflect imperialism and empire as a moral part of the world and often encourage child readers to accept the values of imperialism. Patrick Brantlinger has noted: 'Much imperialist discourse was ... directed at a specifically adolescent audience, the

⁵ Kiernan, V.G. *Lords of Human kind .Black Man ,Yellow Man ,and white Man in an age of empire.* Boston : littel,Brown & Co,1996. 32.

future rulers of the world.’⁶(qtd. in Kutzer). The same idea was explained by Edward Said in his ‘Culture and Imperialism’ where he argues that the novel was: “immensely important in the formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experience.”⁷ This gives us the idea that any literary work is holding a message to be expressed.

In an ‘*Introduction to the political unconscious*’⁸, William C. Dowling said: “to imagine a story... is to imagine the society in which it is told”. So a story, even children’s story, is more than just a story, no matter how simple it may seem. Stories grow out of particular cultures and societies and reflect the values of those societies. Shakespeare’s history plays reflect Elizabethan politics of King John’s time, or King Richard’s. Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* tells us as much about the rise of the eighteenth-century mercantile class as it does about shipwreck. Children’s texts, often ignored by literary critics: children are the future of any society, and the literature adults write for them often is more obvious and insistent about appropriate dreams and desires than the texts they write for themselves.

Empire is everywhere in classic children’s texts of the late nineteenth century, and its presence continues well into the twentieth. It appears as major setting and, arguably, as character in Kipling’s fiction. Jacqueline Rose claims that innocence is not “a property of childhood but...a portion of adult desire.”⁹ Adults who produce children’s books are nearly always conscious of conveying morals and values to their young audience, and want to ensure that those morals and values are culturally acceptable. J. D. Stahal and others have asserted,

⁶ Kutzer, M.Daphne. Empire’s Children: Empire and Imperialism in classic British Children’s Books. New York:Garland,2000.xii

⁷ Said, Edward. Culture and Imperialism. New York. knopf,1993.78

⁸ Cavanagh Hodge,Carl,ed.Encyclopedia of the Age of Imperialism,1800-1914.2008.

⁹ Kutzer,18.

“children’s literature [is] one of the most forceful means of acculturation [and] reflects the cultural aims of imperial policy.”¹⁰

Britain’s and Kipling’s connections with India were both romantic and complicated. British involvement in India began not with military or governmental intervention, but with the commercial interests of the British East India Trading Company, founded in 1600 in an attempt to break the Dutch monopoly of the spice trade. By 1657 the company was successful and powerful enough that the British government gave it the authority to coin money and to make war and peace with non-Christian powers in India, making the company the de facto governor of India, a role that was to expand over the years.

In 1929, Bonamy Dobrée wrote that ‘The more one reads Kipling, the more complex and baffling he becomes.’¹¹(qtd. in Rain). This is as true today as it was seventy years ago. Although Kipling’s texts range from the fantastic to the realistic, they share a common concern with invasion, and invasion is clearly linked with issues of empire and imperialism. *The Jungle Books* give us Mowgli, an intruder first in the jungle, later in the village, where not only does he invade what should be his homeland, but with the help of outside animal allies.

A theme in Kipling’s *The Jungle Books* is the quest for a home. The hero is caught between worlds, comfortable to different degrees in two or more cultures. Kipling’s obsession with home and belonging is caused in part by his own homeless state: born in India, banished to England for schooling, he returned to India, but spent much of his adult life moving restlessly between Africa, Vermont, England, and points between. He was looking not so much for a domestic home as he was for a national home, a country and set of values he could

¹⁰ Kutzer, 19.

¹¹ Rain, Craig. A Choice of Kipling’s Prose. London: Faber and Faber limited, 1987.30.

claim. Kipling's lack of a sense of national origin and national home accounts in a large measure for his obsession with empire and imperialism. Although he clearly suffered psychologically in his eviction from India to England, the effects of this eviction show up not in fictional dramas of family life, of psychological separations from and losses of family, but rather are reflected on the broader scale of dramas of nations as families, and of protagonists who struggle to belong to a national 'family' either by masquerading or by marrying into or adopting a foreign culture as one's own. (Kutzer, 30).

Kipling's works are also concerned with the differences and the intersections between play and work¹². Mowgli finds being schooled in the law of the jungle hard work, but the work often dissolves into a game with Bagheera, Baloo, or Kaa. It is to teach through amusement and play. How do 'home' and 'nation' shift their meanings in the context of imperialism? The idea of home is linked to another common metaphor for empire, that of family, with Queen Victoria and England as mother, and colonized peoples as children too immature and unstable to govern themselves, and thus, dependent upon an older and wiser nation (adult, parent). Children—both literal children and the metaphorical 'child' subjects of the empire—often play at being adults, and through this play learn some of the lessons of empire. (Kutzer, 32-3).

1.2. Imperialism in The Jungle Books' Series

My own focus is on the non-Mowgli Jungle Book tales set in India, but to put these tales in context it is useful to consider the imperial framework of all the Jungle Book tales. Randall asserts that 'Kipling's Indian jungle is not simply a culturally unmarked 'world'; it is India as jungle,'¹³(qtd. in Kutzer) a seemingly confusing and confused space, which

¹² Carrington, Charles. Rudyard Kipling, His Life and work. London. Macmillan, 1955.314-93.

¹³ Kutzer, 37.

nonetheless has an internal code or law that Mowgli masters and, to some degree, he has the power to shape and change by the end of his story. Mowgli can be seen as invader or colonizer of the jungle, one who is changed by the jungle as he himself changes it. The native animal inhabitants of the jungle tell him again and again that ‘man must return to man,’ and that the colonizing man-cub can never be a natural part of the jungle.

Reading Mowgli as an allegorical imperial colonizer of the jungle is problematic, however. Mowgli must stand by the animals’ rules and Law, even if he can dominate them with his human look. He does not exploit the resources of the jungle, but lives in harmony with them, and even fights on the side of the animals in his battle with Shere Khan. He is ultimately exiled from the jungle. Most importantly, Mowgli is no Tarzan, no European boy raised by jungle animals, but an Indian boy. This alone would problematize his status as imperial proxy¹⁴, but his situation is further complicated by the fact that when he returns to the village to rescue his parents, his human mother and father must flee for aid to British order and law in a cantonment some miles away. The British surround and contain the village and jungle, Mowgli and the animals: Mowgli, although he does not realize it, is as much colonized as colonizer.

Mowgli's jungle history repeats, in ideal form, the history of the British presence in India: a newcomer establishes himself in jungle society, gradually rearranging the jungle world around him and emerging, with time, as master. As "Kaa's Hunting" clearly reveals, Mowgli receives an education in which imperial codes are re-envisioned as jungle laws: under Baloo, ‘the Teacher of the Law,’ Mowgli learns more and different lessons than the young wolves do. The imperial force of Mowgli's jungle shape appears in the boy when he establishes relations with the Indian world of the village. Native-born, yet set apart, caught

¹⁴ Kipling, xxx.

between two opposing worlds, an India-born Englishman (like Rudyard Kipling). However, one can discover in Mowgli an allegorical representative of a youthful British imperial project and a figure of Kipling's ideal imperial subject.

The tiger's name associates him with the conquest of empires. Significantly, Kipling's Shere Khan is old and lame, yet very dangerous, a cattle-killer, a man hunter. Both in relation to the wolf pack and in relation to the human society of the village, he is an outlaw. Mowgli becomes a representative of the law, kills the tiger and by this symbolic action establishes himself as an imperial protagonist.

As Sujit Mukherjee emphasizes in *Tigers in Fiction: An Aspect of the Colonial Encounter*,¹⁵ the tiger and the tiger-slayer are significant figures in British imperial mythologies. The myth-tiger of imperial imaginings has its origins in the north and is frequently envisioned as a "white tiger." A pale invader from the north, this tiger 'is clearly reminiscent of the fair-complexioned Indo-Aryan or Caucasian tribes who are believed to have entered from the north and conquered India several thousand years before the British did'¹⁶. The tiger hunt thus takes shape as a contest between conquerors, one modern and one archaic. By his victory over the tiger, the British tiger-slayer implicitly lays claim to imperial authority. Similarly, the killing of the tiger refigures the British conquest of India as a kind of return, as the reenactment of an earlier "white" conquest. (Ronald, 102).

Mowgli, by defeating Shere Khan, stands in the place of the British imperial adventurer in India. As the rebel Sepoys of 1857 looked to Bahadur Shah for leadership, so, during a troubled period, young wolves' assembly turned against Mowgli. Just as the British,

¹⁵ Rondall, Don. 'Post-Mutiny Allegories of Empire in Rudyard Kipling's Jungle Books'. Texas Studies in literature and language.vol.40.issue.1.1998:98 -101.

¹⁶Rondall,102.

in 1858, put an end to the symbolic kingship of Bahadur Shah, so Mowgli puts an end to the lame tiger's power. The story of Mowgli's victorious struggle against Shere Khan thus mirrors key features of Mutiny history and of the British reconstitution. (Rondall, 106).

Mowgli's revenge upon his enemies is inspired not by violence against himself, but by violence against his mother: upon seeing Messua's blood, Mowgli declares, 'There is a price to pay.' Messua's role in Kipling's story parallels that of 'the English lady'. In the course of the Mutiny crisis, British women were captured and killed, most notably at Delhi and Cawnpore.

However, the non-Mowgli stories set in India often specifically mention the British Empire, or use episodes in British imperial history as plot devices for the animal tales. The first of these stories is perhaps the best-known and best-beloved, "Rikki-tikki-tavi." The hero is an endearing young mongoose, described as being catlike, yet somehow foreign and exotic: 'His eyes and end of his restless nose were pink; he could scratch himself anywhere he pleased with any leg, front or back, that he chose to use; he could fluff up his tail till it looked like a bottle-brush, and his war-cry as he scuttled through the long grass was: Rikk-tikk-tikki-tikki-tchk!'. Although Kipling could have given us an allegorical initiation tale of the mongoose without including humans at all, he instead gives us Rikki-tikki facing adulthood rites in the garden and bungalow of a British colonial officer, his wife, and young son. Yet unlike many animal fantasies where authors include human characters as a kind of bridge into the fantasy of talking animals, the humans in this story are apparently secondary to the central plot of snake-killing. However, their very presence gives the story an imperial subtext, one that is apparent in every one of the non-Mowgli Indian stories.

Rikki-tikki, when swept away from his family's tunnel in a flood, ends up disheveled in the garden of the British family, whose son Teddy first thinks the small animal is dead. The

father, however—, who, it becomes clear, is much more conversant with India and its wildlife than his wife or child—suggests they dry it off and see if it is alive, and he also patiently tells his wife that the mongoose will not hurt their son, that indeed the mongoose may be useful to them. The animal is allowed to sleep with the son because, as the father says, ‘Teddy’s safer with that little beast than if he had a bloodhound to watch him. If a snake came into the nursery now...’

Rikki is pleased to be living with the family, and especially with their young son, because ‘every well-brought-up mongoose always hopes to be a house-mongoose someday’. Rikki earns his keep by killing first a small (but dangerous) snake in the garden, and then the larger and more deadly cobras that are intent on killing both the family and Rikki-tikki himself. After his first kill, he denies himself the pleasure of eating it, because ‘he remembered that a full meal makes a slow mongoose,’ and he has other snakes to kill. His self-denial is emphasized a paragraph later, when that night at the family’s dinner table ‘he might have stuffed himself three times over with nice things,’ but he remembers the two cobras in the garden, and as he is petted by Teddy and his mother, his eyes go red and he repeats his war-cry.

Although this is an animal fable, the presence of the humans gives the story a peculiar British twist. Rikki-tikki is between domesticated and wild, both catlike and weasel-like, as the narrator tells us. He finds himself between the worlds of the domesticated and the wild in the family garden, which is only ‘half-cultivated’, and contains hybrid roses as well as bamboo, a garden containing poisonous snakes that threaten the idyllic life of the colonizers. The ‘half-wild’ garden the British family has invaded and colonized is a metaphor for India itself, a garden-paradise harboring dangerous ‘natives’ in the form of the snakes who resent the intrusion of humans into their kingdom. The colonizers—the British family—are

incapable of fully taming the garden of India without help from cooperative natives. Rikki-tikki, in fact, can be seen as one of these helpful natives. The bungalow is conspicuously free of native servants—there is not a cook, nurse, butler, gardener, or housemaid to be seen—leaving the role of servant to the mongoose. Rikki exists, in the context of the tale, in order to make life safe and tidy for the European settlers.

The natural enemy of the mongoose is the snake. The cobra villains of the tale are highly emblematic of India itself; they are representative of that element of Orientalism that considers Orientals to be two-faced and untruthful. The cobra couple in “Rikki-tikki-tavi” plot, lie, scheme, hide, and otherwise behave in ways that link them with stereotypical portrayals of exotic Orientals in much Western writing. The snakes are also representative of another aspect of Orientalism that Said discusses at length in his book: the seductive, dangerous qualities of the Orient¹⁷. When a garden bird is threatened by the cobra, who says, ‘Little fool, look at me!’, we are told that the bird ‘knew better than to do that ,for a bird who looks at a snake’s eyes gets so frightened that she cannot move’. This rhythmic fascination is repeated when the same cobra threatens Teddy and his father, who says to his son ‘Sit still, Teddy. You mustn’t move’. Looking too closely at the cobras, the face of India makes one vulnerable to the dangerous qualities of the land and its natives.

The cobras are threatened first by the white family who threaten to domesticate the snakes’ garden habitat, and second by Rikki-tikki, who refers to the human family as his family whose ‘honour’ he is fighting for by fighting the cobras. Fighting for the honor of a white family effectively undercuts the natural animosity between the snakes and the mongoose, putting Rikki-tikki—an indigenous Indian animal, like the snakes—clearly on the side of European humans. Like many domestic Indian servants, he is willing to further the

¹⁷ Said, Edward. Oreintalism. London. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.226-7.

interests of the white ruling class because some of that privilege and power will transfer to the individual servant, if not to the entire class of native servants. Like Hurree Babu, Rikki-Tikki helps the colonizers at least in part from desire for individual gain.

As in the Anglo-Indian world of colonizer and native, the colonizer depends upon native protection and interpretation in order to keep control of the country. The unnamed Englishman in “Rikki-tikki-tavi” has learned enough of native life and custom (unlike his wife, the Mem Sahib) to know that the mongoose can be helpful, just as he no doubt knows a certain kind of native can be useful as sepoy or servant. But despite his colonial powers, the Englishman is incapable of protecting wife and child from native dangers—he only clubs or shoots snakes after they have been killed by Rikki-tikki, and, in fact, seems incapable of telling whether the snakes are dead or alive.

The native snakes in this story are threatened by the Europeans because only so long ‘as the bungalow is empty we are king and queen of the garden’ and their yet-to-be-born children will need ‘room and quiet’ in order to grow up well and strong. Their primary motive is to remove the white owners of the bungalow and to provide a proper, wild, and Indian environment for their growing children, thus to perpetuate the race of cobra, that is to perpetuate the native population. This Darwinian struggle is framed not so much in animal terms, but in human ones: the cobras are fighting humans for habitat, not mongooses. Kipling emphasizes this for us by having the boy child threatened with death by the cobra, thus symbolically threatening the continued life of the British in India—just as Rikki-tikki, faithful native servant, destroys not only the parent snakes, but their eggs as well, effectively ridding colonial space of troublesome natives.

The British Empire itself is never overtly mentioned in “Rikki-tikki-tavi,” and is only suggested by the presence of the sahib and his family in the bungalow. But elsewhere in The

Jungle Books imperialism plays an overt role. 'Toomai of the Elephants' is told from the perspective of the young elephant handler or mahout, not of the animals, but his story is filtered through a European narrator, who mentions the 'Afghan war of 1842' in the first paragraph of the story, in order to tell us that Kala Nag, the central elephant of the tale, pre-dates this event. Kala Nag is in the service of the British and has been used to 'carry a mortar upon his back' and to carry 'twelve hundred pounds' weight of tents', and since he is in the employ of the British army, he has also seen 'Emperor Theodore lying dead in Magdala' and has performed so nobly in wartime conditions that the soldiers think him 'entitled to the Absynnian War medal'. The war referred to here is the First Afghan War, during which the British invaded Afghanistan and placed a puppet-figure of the East India Company as shah. The British were eventually undone by a native uprising, and after briefly recouping their losses, withdrew from Afghanistan altogether. During the course of the story, Toomai's status rises partly because Kala Nag makes it possible for him to witness the elephants' wild dance, and partly because this event so impresses the resident sahib and elephant-hunter Peterson. As in "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi," the status and importance of native figures is linked to their association with and usefulness to the colonizers: both Toomai and Kala Nag are important only because of their associations with the colonizers. Empire is also an important part of the last story of the first Jungle Book, "Servants of the Queen," which will be discussed in greater detail below. But the story that combines the animal-fable qualities of "Rikki-tikki-tavi" with explicit uses of empire is "The Undertakers," in which a crane, a crocodile, and a jackal trade stories, the crocodile having center stage for most of the tale.

The crocodile is old, huge (twenty-four feet), and venerable. For obvious reasons, he is feared and respected by both the other animals and by the natives in the village. In fact, he has been the "godling" of the village ever since the villagers perceived him to be sending back floodwaters within their banks. The crocodile tells the listening crane and jackal that 'You do

not know the English as I do', and proceeds to tell a long story about some of the best eating he ever had, the eating of "white-faces." The story concerns a time in his youth when first white, then Indian, bodies came floating in multitudes down the river. From the geographic and temporal clues given us by the crocodile, it is clear that the 'rich waters above the Benares' are rich with the dead from the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

At least fifty novels about the Mutiny appeared before 1900, but Kipling himself, often considered the most patriotic of British writers, wrote nothing about this crucial event except what appears in "The Undertakers." The Mutiny itself had a number of causes, the underlying one being Indian discontent with colonial rule. More specifically, ammunition for a new kind of rifle was suspected by sepoy soldiers of being greased with cow and pork fat. This was bad enough for observant Hindi and Muslims, but the ends of the cartridges needed to be bitten before they could be used, forcing both Hindu and Muslim, from their point of view, into sacrilege. On 10 May 1857 the sepoy forces at Meerut mutinied, killing British officers and other Europeans. They then marched to Delhi, where more killing occurred and where they named the aging Mogul emperor as emperor of all India. By July the mutiny had spread to Cawnpore where, notoriously, a number of British were slain, including women and children. The mutiny was finally put down in 1858, but not before England had become nearly riotous over atrocities committed against the British. The net result was that the British government took sole control of the government in India, Victoria was crowned Empress of India in 1876, and the British empire had received an early warning signal that the glory days of its empire were beginning to wane.

There is an irony at work in "The Undertakers," whose central trope has to do with eating and being eaten (Darwin, 114-30)¹⁸, the issue behind the beginning of the Mutiny. But

¹⁸ Darwin, Charles. The Origin of Species. England: Penguin Group, 1968. 114-30.

Kipling sidesteps the troubling questions raised by the Mutiny by putting his story in the mouth of the crocodile, a good opportunist who finds that the Mutiny serves his appetites quite well: ‘...the dead English came down, touching each other. I got my girth in that season’. When the dead English stop floating down the river and into the jaws of the crocodile, they are replaced by ‘one or two dead, in red coats, not English, but of one kind all—Hindu and Purbeeahs—then five and six abreast, and at last, from Arrah to the North beyond Agra, it was as though whole villages had walked into the water’, and during the night the crocodile hears guns and cartwheels and shod feet marching. Later, he hears the people of his village say ‘that all the English were dead; but those that came, face down, with the current were not English, as my people saw. Then my people said that it was best to say nothing at all, but to pay the tax and plough the land’. Without becoming explicit, Kipling takes note of the huge number of Indian victims of British retaliation for the Mutiny.

Here, in a nutshell, is a crocodile-eye-view of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, complete with a proper imperial ending, as the natives learn to say nothing, to pay (taxes) to their imperial lords, and to go back to ploughing the land so they have the money for the taxes and can avoid further retribution. The crocodile is an equal-opportunity hunter, aggressive on the British as well as the Indians, but he ultimately gets his comeuppance from the British, and in quite an interesting way. At the same time the crocodile is feasting on victims of the Mutiny, a boat filled with women and children sails by him in the river. He is not hungry so much as interested in practicing his hunting skills and he rises in the water to try “for sport” to grab the trailing hands of a small white child. Amazingly, the child’s hands slip through the crocodile’s teeth and he is saved, aided by pistol shots from his brave mother. After the crocodile has told his story to the jackal and the crane, he goes to sleep and is spied by two white men upon the bridge. One is warned by the other not to shoot the crocodile, since he is revered by the villagers. But the rifleman says, ‘I don’t care a rap. He took about fifteen of my

best coolies while the bridge was building'. The crocodile is shot, killed, and decapitated by the soldier, who then says that the last time his hand was in a crocodile's mouth he was going downriver by boat: 'I was a Mutiny baby, as they call it. Poor mother was in the boat, too, and she often told me how she fired dad's old pistol at the beast's head'. The crocodile—a dangerous indigenous Indian crocodile—is killed by the grown-up white child he once tried to eat. Just as the British successfully put down the Mutiny, they successfully put down another emblem of dark and dangerous India, the crocodile. Just as Teddy, at the end of "Rikki-tikki-tavi," lives on to continue the British race and rule, so the white boy in this story lives on into adulthood and soldierhood, conquering animal and human life along the way.

Don Randall, in his argument for the Jungle Books as post-Mutiny allegory, says that the death of the crocodile 'seems almost to be a necessary effect of the triumphant manifestation of British technological and administrative know-how,' and that the 'British-Indian colonial confrontation resolves itself once again in favor of the imperialist and by means of extreme violence. 'I would take Randall's argument a step further: "The Undertakers" is a story of cultural destruction. The crocodile has been both revered and feared by the native population: he is a god to them, responsible for the behavior of the life-sustaining river. His death suggests the death of native Indian culture and religious belief, subsumed by British rationality and engineering. The Indians have dealt with the changeable river by worshipping its *genus loci*; the British simply override the river by building a bridge. Of course, bridges may be washed out by floods, which from an Indian perspective become more possible now that the crocodile is dead: both the Indians and the British may suffer from the absence of the river "godling."

The last story in the First Jungle Book, "Servants of the Queen," signals with its title its central concern with hierarchy and imperial duty. This story, alone among the tales in the

Jungle Books, concerns domesticated animals that serve humankind and who lack independent lives of their own. All of the animals, whether indigenous to India or to the West, are in a lower “caste” than all of the humans in the story, because they are in servitude to humans. And this story, among all of the Jungle Book stories, spells out a moral concerning imperialism most clearly and unambiguously. In this story, thirty thousand men and many thousands of animals have come together in order ‘to be reviewed by the Viceroy of India’. The adult narrator of the story, routed from his tent in the middle of a rainy night by escaped camels that have gone on a rampage, overhears a conversation among loose bullocks, camels, mules and horses, a conversation that sheds light upon how the British have maintained their empire.

The camels—animals indigenous to the East and not to the West—are the instigators of the animal rampage. The Eastern camels are presented as being inferior to Western mules and horses. When he meets some horses who have broken loose, the camel says, “humbly,” ‘My lords...we dreamed bad dreams in the night, and we were very much afraid. I am only a baggage-camel of the 39th Native Infantry, and I am not as brave as you are, my lords’. The camel’s humble speech, his identity as a member of the native infantry, and the faintly foreign cadence of his speech mark him as Other to the English horses. His weakness to superstition and dream also mark him as Oriental. The loose bullocks are also Indian, and they tend to speak (as they pull) in cycle. They have a certain dullness of mind, and whereas the camels are linked with the dark and mysterious aspects of the Orient, the bullocks are associated with another Oriental “otherness”—dullness of mind and a lack of individuality. One bullock is the same as another, just as one native often appeared no different from the next to the European eye. They also have an Oriental fatalism about fellow bullocks killed in battle: ‘This is Fate—nothing but Fate.... There is all the more grazing for those who are left’. The only native animal who escapes being treated as a stereotypical Indian is Two Tails, the elephant, who is

superior because he is self-conscious and understands the nature of battle and what his fate might be as a participant in that battle. The elephant sees himself as “betwixt and between,” and hence, not always able to obey, because he is too aware of the nature of the link between human and animal. He is, in many ways, similar to the sepoy soldiers: aware of the links between colonizer and colonized, on the side of the colonizer for the moment, but harboring the ability to disobey and revolt.

Among the British animals, the mules rank slightly lower than the troop horses, since the mules are used as beasts of burden and the horses are partners, of a sort, with their human masters. Interestingly, the mules and horses—that we might see as the animal equivalent of British infantry soldiers—are bred in Australia, one of the so-called white or settler colonies, and in fact, much of the colonial infantry in India was made up of regiments from white colonial holdings, such as Australia and Ireland. All of these animals, in the night, share conversation about their roles in the human world, about why they have to fight at all (‘Because we’re told to’ is the troop-horse’s response), and then they all go back to their proper places, in order to be ready for the mustering of troops in the morning.

When the reader is finally given a description of these thirty thousand troops, the English (adult) narrator tells of a Central Asian chief who asks how such an event was organized. A sepoy officer answers, ‘An order was given, and they obeyed’. The chief responds by saying ‘Would it were so in Afghanistan! for there we obey only our own wills.’ The officer responds, ‘And for that reason, your Amir whom you do not obey must come here and take orders from our Viceroy’, providing the closing words and moral of this brief tale. The sepoy officer has completely allied himself with “our Viceroy,” with the colonial power, seemingly unaware that he is participating in his own colonization.

The story is appealing for its brief, evocative sketching of the personalities of the various animals and their relationships with one another, and appealing especially to children because of the pride that animals can talk among themselves, and occasionally humans are lucky enough to overhear and understand them—a conceit quite common in writing for children. But the story also functions as an allegory of imperialism. Kipling quite carefully orders his animals in a hierarchy that is dependent upon birth and upon caste, and emphasizes that convincing others to obey orders is at the heart of successful governments. Obeying orders—obeying the Law—is at the heart of Mowgli’s jungle, too, but that Law has explicit imperial overtones.

Conclusion

Kipling wrote of empire more than any other writers for children. He supported the British Empire and Imperialism which is reflected more in his words: 'Take up the white man's burden'. Despite the fact that Kipling was an Anglo-Indian citizen, he called for expansion and invasion under the umbrella of noble morality. The Jungle Books showed the implicit message of the British Empire and her superiority over the natives; Indians. They illustrated the British treatment of the Indians as savages and dangerous. The British History in India is revealed in Kipling's animal fable as a concrete truth to support the idea of British imperialism in India.

Conclusion

Britain's expansion into territorial imperialism had much to do with the great economic benefit from collecting resources from colonies, in combination with assuming political control often by military means. Most notably, the "British exploited the political weakness of the Mogul state, and, while military activity was important at various times, the economic and administrative incorporation of local elites was also of crucial significance".

India both benefited from and was harmed by British imperialism. On the negative side, the British held much of the political and economic power. The British restricted Indian-owned industries such as cotton textiles. The emphasis on cash crops reduced food production, causing famines in the late 1800s. The British officially adopted a hands-off policy regarding Indian religious and social customs. Even so, the increased presence of missionaries and the racist attitude of most British officials threatened traditional Indian life.

On the positive side, the laying of the world's third largest railroad network was a major British achievement. When completed, the railroads enabled India to develop a modern economy and brought unity to the connected regions.

A controversial aspect of imperialism is the imperial power's defence and justification of such actions. Most controversial of all is the justification of imperialism done on scientific grounds. J. A. Hobson identifies this justification: "It is desirable that the earth should be peopled, governed, and developed, as far as possible, by the races which can do this work best, i.e. by the races of highest 'social efficiency'." This is clearly the racial argument, which pays heed to other ideas such as the "White Man's Burden" prevalent at the turn of the nineteenth century.

If children's fiction is one way of educating children into an acceptable ideology, then classic children's texts from the Boer Wars to World War II suggest to children that Britain's imperial rule over other countries is a good thing, for both Britain and for imperial outposts. These issues of empire are so closely woven into fiction by Kipling and others is an indication of how closely empire was woven into the everyday lives of different classes that produced this literature for children.

Children's fiction also presents the reader with the lives of children who will grow up to be adults, and the adult lives, either imagined for these children or that the children are likely to grow into, reflect the wishes of their adult creators more than the wishes of the children themselves. Children's fiction provides, as I indicated, a mirror of adult desires. The desires of the adult creators of classic children's books include a desire that children grow up not only to be honorable and respectable, but that they grow up into the kind of adult who can maintain Britain's strength—and that strength was an imperial strength. There is a desire, from Kipling, for Britain to maintain imperial strength and the hopes for that strength lie in children, the future adult leaders of Britain.

Beginning in 1920, Indian leader Mohandas K. Gandhi transformed the Indian National Congress political party into a mass movement to campaign against British colonial rule. The party used both parliamentary and nonviolent resistance and non-cooperation to agitate for independence. During this period, however, millions of Indians served with honor and distinction in the British Indian Army, including service in both World Wars and countless other overseas actions in service of the Empire.

With Indians increasingly united in their quest for independence, Britain led by Labor Prime Minister Clement Attlee began in earnest to plan for the end of its suzerainty in India. On August 15, 1947, India became a dominion within the Commonwealth, with Jawaharlal

Nehru as Prime Minister. Strategic colonial considerations, as well as political tensions between Hindus and Muslims, led the British to partition British India into two separate states: India, with a Hindu majority; and Pakistan, which consisted of two "wings," East and West Pakistan--currently Bangladesh and Pakistan--with Muslim majorities. India became a republic, but chose to continue as a member of the British Commonwealth, after promulgating its constitution on January 26, 1950.

Index

'The White Man's Burden'

Take up the White Man's burden -
Send forth the best ye breed -
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild -
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden -
In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
An hundred times made plain.
To seek another's profit,
And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden -
The savage wars of peace -
Fill full the mouth of famine
And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest
The end for others sought,
Watch Sloth and heathen
Folly Bring all your hope to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden -
No tawdry lie of kings.
But toil of serf and sweeper -
The tale of common things.
The ports ye shall not enter,
The roads ye shall not tread,
Go make them with your living,
And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden -
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
The hate of those ye guard -
The cry of hosts ye humour
(Ah, slowly!) toward the light: -
"Why brought ye us from bondage,
"Our loved Egyptian night!"

Take up the White Man's burden -
Ye dare not stoop to less -
Nor call too loud on Freedom
To cloak your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper,
By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
Shall weigh your Gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden -
Have done with childish days -
The lightly proffered laurel,
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
Through all the thankless years,
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgment of your peers!

'Recessional'

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle line,
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart;
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts its faith
in reeking tube and iron shard,
all valiant dust that builds on dust
and guarding calls not thee to guard
for foolish boast and frantic word
thy mercy on thy people lord!

‘If’

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it...

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 way 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 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 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!

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