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## Unmade and Unmanned Men: Reading Traumatized Masculinity in Late Nineteenth-Century British Adventure Fiction through the Lens of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857

Madison A. Bettle, *The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor: Rowlinson, Matthew, *The University of Western Ontario*

: Pennee, Donna, *The University of Western Ontario*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in English

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## Abstract

*Unmade and Unmanned Men: Reading Traumatized Masculinity in Late Nineteenth-Century British Adventure Fiction through the Lens of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857* examines the selected adventure fiction of George Alfred Henty, Rudyard Kipling, and Joseph Conrad through the historico-political context of India’s First War of Independence, known in Victorian Britain as the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. Examining masculine trauma in adventure fiction reveals how British men, who were themselves colonized by the Empire’s expectations of them, sought not only to recover from the scars inflicted by imperialism, but also to expose the Empire for inflicting the psychologically damaging expectations that produced their masculine trauma.

The Introduction explains the historical significance of the “Mutiny” and the gap in the scholarship on masculine trauma in relation to this event. Chapter one summarizes the history of masculinity and adventure fiction scholarship and argues that the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 was responsible for the traumatization of British masculine identities. Chapter two analyses the use of shock in Henty’s *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893) to argue how inherited historical remembrances of the violent “Mutiny” gripped Henty, prompting his depiction of re-imagined imperial masculinity. Chapter three analyzes the use of psychic splitting in Kipling’s *The Jungle Books* (1894, 1895) to argue how internalized, racially fraught remembrances of the repressed “Mutiny” haunted Kipling, prompting his depiction of destabilized imperial masculinity. Chapter four analyzes the use of post-traumatic stress disorder in Conrad’s *Lord Jim* (1899-1900) to argue how psychologically damaging remembrances of the unspeakable “Mutiny” unsettled Conrad, prompting his depiction of shattered imperial masculinity.

## Keywords

G.A. Henty, Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad, nineteenth-century adventure fiction, imperial adventure fiction, fin de siècle, New Imperialism, British imperialism, masculinity, masculinity studies, trauma, trauma theory, trauma studies, traumatized masculinity, masculine trauma, British masculinity, Victorian masculinity, 1857, “Mutiny”, Indian Mutiny of 1857, First War of Independence, India’s First War of Independence, Sepoy Rebellion, Great Rebellion, Indian Rebellion of 1857, Indian Uprising of 1857

## Summary for Lay Audience

As countries with a history of colonization continue to uncover and speak more openly about their dark histories, it is imperative to regularly reflect on the traumatic aftermath of imperialism and genocide to ensure that such atrocities never happen again. On May 10, 2022, Britain and India will observe the 165th anniversary of India's First War of Independence / Indian Rebellion of 1857. Known in nineteenth-century Victorian Britain as the "Indian Mutiny of 1857", the "Mutiny" foreshadowed the eventual downfall of the British Empire and permanently scarred the British nation on account of the violence its soldiers committed and witnessed. To understand how this trauma was internalized by nineteenth-century Victorians, I examine depictions of masculine trauma in late nineteenth-century adventure fiction that are explicitly set in, allegorically recall, or imaginatively displace the events of the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857. Through my close reading of G.A. Henty's *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893), Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Books* (1894, 1895), and Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1899-1900), I reveal how even the strongest proponents of British imperialism, men who were themselves colonized by the Empire's unrealistic expectations, sought to recover from the scars inflicted by imperialism and to expose the Empire for inflicting the psychologically damaging expectations that produced their masculine trauma.

## Dedication

For Ron and Maura Bettle, the best parents that any kid could ever ask for, who can finally tell people that their one and only child is a “doctor”.

For Bill and Renee Grosberg, the most devoted grandparents that any kid could ever ask for, who did not live to see this day, but who were always so certain that it would happen.

For Earl, the kindest great Uncle a kid could ever ask for, who brought a smile to everyone’s face with his easy-going sense of humour and warm heart.

For my Grammy Iris, the most generous grandmother that any kid could ever ask for, who provided me with some of my fondest childhood memories.

For my Grampy Darryl, the coolest grandfather I never met but was almost named after, who will always be with me in spirit.

And for Ilan Orzy, the best *partner* anyone could ever ask for. You’re my hero.

I love you all forever. I love you all for always.

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Without the endless love and support of my parents, none of this would have been possible.

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I'd also like to acknowledge my Queen's professors, Dr. Christopher Bongie and Dr. Catherine Harland. If it weren't for Dr. Bongie's seminar on the *bildungsroman* and his seminar on Herbert's *A War of No Pity*, I never would have come up with this project. If it weren't for Dr. Harland, I doubt I would have been accepted into graduate school. Thank you both for helping me get here.

A special thank you to Dr. Nandi Bhatia who believed in my project since the very beginning. Your graduate seminar got me started on my thesis research and inspired my love of postcolonial literature. Special shout outs to Dr. Alison Conway, my academic hero, who pushed me to be a better scholar; Dr. Kim Solga, my mentor and reason for my first academic job; Dr. Mary Helen McMurrin, my fellow lover of all things Austen; and of course, Leanne Trask, my guide to and through Western's English Department. I would like to especially acknowledge Dr. Bryce Traister, who—like me—never quite got *Lord Jim* out of his system. Marlow may believe that “no one is good enough,” but I like to think that we know better now.

I couldn't have made it through to the other side of the PhD without the love of my best friends: Kate Traill, my “person”, whose endless love and care saw me through the

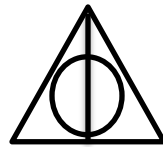
darkest days of graduate school (and her two wonderful children, Sanna and Emme, who I adore); Daniel Sloan, my Library M.D. Dude, whose dark humour and devotion saw me through the darkest days at Queen’s (the world ends with *us!*); and Evan deCatanzaro, whose kindred interests and tireless support (and all of your top-notch copyediting!) saw that I always strove to be my best self. You’re all wonderful. I love you so much.

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Ilan Orzy, my significant other, who arrived at the tail end of my PhD, helped me find the motivation and confidence to finally put this monster to bed. Love in the time of COVID has certainly been interesting, but I can’t imagine my life without you in it. I love you *and* I like you. Your proposal to me at Disney World is something I will never forget. Thank you for not waiting until I was “officially” finished my PhD like I originally asked!

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my theoretical child I (hopefully) will have one day. Perhaps you can look to my thesis as an example that anything is possible if you put your mind to it (or use it as a sleeping pill). Whatever you do, kid, dream big and be happy.

“After all this time?”



“Always.”

# Table of Contents

Abstract .....	ii
Summary for Lay Audience .....	iv
Dedication .....	v
Acknowledgments .....	vi
Table of Contents .....	viii
List of Tables.....	x
Introduction .....	1
Chapter 1 .....	6
Unmade and Unmanned: The Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 as Imperial Romance.....	6
1.1 Masculinity Discourse: Victorian Manliness and Unattainable Masculine Ideals .....	6
1.2 Empire Critiques: Nineteenth-Century British Masculinity and Adventure Fiction ..	10
1.3 Bringing Up Empire: Fashioning Boyhood through the “Romance” of 1857 .....	18
1.4 Masculine Trauma: The “Mutiny” and the Interrogation of British Masculinity .....	31
Chapter 2 .....	39
“Constitutional Horror” in G.A. Henty’s <i>Rujub, the Juggler</i> (1893): Re-imagined Imperial Masculinity of 1857 .....	39
2.1 Introduction.....	39
2.2 Sustaining the Empire: Henty’s “Confident” Masculinity.....	42
2.3 Inherited Trauma: The “Violent” Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 .....	48
2.4 Henty’s “Defective” Bathurst: Mapping “Shock” on the “Mutiny” Boy-Hero .....	62
2.5 “Unmanned” Subject of Empire: The Mutiny’s “Constitutional Horror” .....	81
2.6 Britain’s Supernatural “Mutiny”: Rujub and Re-imagined Imperial Masculinity .....	96
2.7 Conclusion .....	106
Chapter 3 .....	108



Haunting “Heartbreak” in Rudyard Kipling’s <i>The Jungle Books</i> (1894,1895): Destabilized Imperial Masculinity and the Repressed Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 .....	108
3.1 Introduction.....	108
3.2 Doubting the Empire: Kipling’s “Liminal” Masculinity .....	114
3.3 Racially Fraught Trauma: The “Repressed” Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 .....	123
3.4 Kipling’s “Fractured” Mowgli: Mapping the “Psychic Splitting” of the “Mutiny” Boy-Hero.....	136
3.5 “Unmanned” Subject of Empire: The Mutiny’s Haunting “Heartbreak” .....	154
3.6 Britain’s Mythical “Mutiny”: Shere Khan and Destabilized Imperial Masculinity .....	171
3.7 Conclusion .....	180
Chapter 4 .....	183
“The Seam of an Old Wound” in Joseph Conrad’s <i>Lord Jim</i> (1899-1900): Shattered Imperial Masculinity and the Unspeakable Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 .....	183
4.1 Introduction.....	183
4.2 Writing Back to the Empire: Conrad’s “Nervous” Masculinity .....	188
4.3 Psychologically Damaging Trauma: The “Unspeakable” Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 .....	196
4.4 Conrad’s “Haunted” Jim: Mapping “Post-Traumatic Stress” on the “Mutiny” Boy-Hero .....	211
4.5 “Unmanned” Subject of Empire: The “Psychic Wound” of the Mutiny’s Revenge.....	224
4.6 Britain’s Gothic “Mutiny”: Jewel and Shattered Imperial Masculinity.....	234
4.7 Conclusion .....	260
Conclusion.....	263
Echoes of 1857: Adventure Fiction’s “Destructive Element” and the Crisis of Masculinity .....	263
Bibliography.....	267
Curriculum Vitae.....	309

## List of Tables

<b>Table 1</b> Violated Chronology of Rudyard Kipling's <i>The Jungle Book</i> (1894) and <i>The Second Jungle Books</i> (1895) .....	133
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## Introduction

On May 10, 2022, Britain and India will observe the 165th anniversary of what was known in the nineteenth century as the “Indian Mutiny of 1857”,<sup>1</sup> a watershed geopolitical event that marked the most violent example of nineteenth-century imperialism, foreshadowed the eventual downfall of the British Empire, and represented “the supreme trauma of the age” that permanently scarred “the national psyche” (Herbert 2; Major & Bates xi).<sup>2</sup> For centuries, Britain faced endless resistance to its colonial and genocidal practices, but from the perspective of the Empire, as Jill Bender asserts, “there was only one ‘Mutiny’” (11). Reclaimed by postcolonial scholarship as the “Great Rebellion”, “India’s First War of Independence”, or “Indian Rebellion of 1857”, the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 (a nomenclature I will use due to the context of my project) sparked a “crisis” in the imperial British nation that was felt “empire-wide” and indeed globally (Bender 2).<sup>3</sup> According to Marie-Luise Kohlke, 1857 was a year of weighted significance beyond the historical destabilizing of British rule in India and the

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<sup>1</sup>Nicola Frith explains that the numerous labels ascribed to the event are determined by two groups of historians: Indian historians frame the event as a “prelude” to India’s independence while British historians reinforce nineteenth-century imperial ideology by calling it a “Mutiny” (*French* 28). Before Karl Marx and Frederick Engels published *The First Indian War of Independence (1857-1859)* in 1911 (though prior to this they published roughly 30 articles in the American press during the events of 1857), Indian political activist, Vinayak Damodar “Veer” Savarkar, published *The Indian War of Independence, 1857* in 1909, a text that was in fact banned in British India due to its anti-British sentiments. Marx and Engels and Savarkar were some of the first to label the event as a revolt and not a “Mutiny” (Bender 8).

<sup>2</sup>According to Douglas M. Peers, the exact tally of casualties will never be known for certain, but he estimates that between 6,000 to 40,000 Europeans living in India were killed, and upwards of 800,000 (potentially more) Indian lives were lost (*India* 64). On the 150th anniversary of the Rebellion, Amaresh Misra published *War of Civilisations: India AD 1857*, arguing that 1857 brought about an “untold Holocaust” resulting in the deaths of 10 million people spanning 10 years after the event (Ramesh).

<sup>3</sup>See Jill C. Bender’s *The 1857 Indian Uprising and the British Empire* (2016) and Crispin Bates and Marina Carter’s *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857, Volume 3: Global Perspectives* (2013) for more information on the global impact of India’s First War of Independence, which includes the British colonies of Ireland, New Zealand, Jamaica, and South Africa, as well as the United States, France, Germany, China, Russia (and beyond).

challenging of its “people’s very identity” (371). According to Kohlke, the event’s “excessive violence and conjunction of racial, religious, and nationalist causes could also be read as eerily presaging today’s ‘clash of cultures’ and the age of global terror, exacerbated by Western nations’ neo-imperialist engagements in the Middle East and Asian subcontinent” (371). Since the event, most Western historians labelled the Rebellion a “Mutiny” to explicitly signal the nineteenth-century *British* reaction to and remembrance of the event, but scholars now acknowledge the contentious and problematic nature of using imperialistic, outdated, and inaccurate language when discussing the historiography of 1857 (Herbert 289; Erll, “Remembering” 110; Kohlke 367; Bender 11; Major & Bates xviii; Bates & Carter 17).<sup>4</sup> Until the twentieth century, Western historians considered the “Mutiny” no more than a “lurid footnote” in the centuries-old narrative of imperialism (Herbert 2). Although not always in agreement about the name itself, most contemporary scholars writing about 1857 make three points especially clear: the “Mutiny” firmly took hold of the nineteenth-century British popular imagination (Gregg 218); represented a great crisis in British national history (Kaye qtd. in Herbert 2; Tosh, *Manliness* 194); and “meant the single most important, well-known, and violent episode of the nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian relationship” (Said, *Culture* 146). The event has now taken on new meaning for modern scholars, some even comparing its aftermath to “9/11” on account of the parallels between Nana Sahib (1824-1859?) and Osama bin Laden.<sup>5</sup> Overall, the overwhelming scholarship and fiction

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<sup>4</sup> I use “Mutiny” in quotation marks to reference the label’s imperialist origins while acknowledging it as problematic. Since I am discussing the event in relation to nineteenth-century authors and texts, I use the term only for context purposes (though I switch between “Mutiny” and “1857” for variety).

<sup>5</sup> See the Afterword of Diane Simmons’ *The Narcissism of Empire* (2007).

pertaining and returning to the event suggest, even after almost 165 years, its undeniable and inescapable significance and that there is still yet more to be said on the subject.<sup>6</sup>

Scholars have explored 1857 from numerous perspectives: gender and sexuality, race and racism, historical and literary depictions of the event in the cultural imaginary, as well as the event's relationship to Victorian trauma.<sup>7</sup> My project explores where these lines of inquiry converge, particularly by deciphering how nineteenth-century British adventure fiction writers, some of the strongest proponents of Empire, internalize Britain's fixation with the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857. I closely examine how my chosen adventure fiction authors affiliate Victorian Britain's cultural "wounding" from the "Mutiny" with the onset of their boy-heroes' masculine trauma. As both the Indian "Mutiny" and boys' adventure fiction involve a process of re-telling and re-thinking of narrative, both the event and the fiction evoke a double reaction in their shared audience of the British public. According to Herbert, "Mutiny" fiction reflects and perpetuates an "invariably glorified British heroism and imperial right" and explicitly participates "in the project of creating an idealized image of the British Empire" (7). At the same time, however, "Mutiny" literature expresses the "morally distorted dehumanizing logic of

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<sup>6</sup> To commemorate the 150th anniversary of 1857, SAGE published a 7-volume series entitled *Mutiny at the Margins* (2013-2017), a collaborative project that thoroughly details events leading up to and after the Rebellion, explores how the event left its mark throughout the world, and analyzes the event's portrayal in historical, literary, and academic documents. These volumes were written to "confront some of the many myths surrounding popular and academic conceptions of the revolt, to move beyond traditional nationalist and imperialist perspectives, and to explore previously neglected margins in the history of this tumultuous event" (Bates, *Mutiny* VI ix). Even in the last three years, scholars and historians continue to publish on the event: Jaine Chemmachery (2019), C.B. Singh Sheoran (2019), Priyamvada Gopal (2019), James W. Bancroft (2019), James W. Frey (2020), Bernard Porter (2020), and Douglas M. Peers (2021).

<sup>7</sup> See Patrick Brantlinger's *Rule of Darkness* (1988), Jenny Sharpe's *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (1993), Gautam Chakravarty's *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination* (2005), Christopher Herbert's *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (2008), Astrid Erll's "Remembering across Time, Space, and Cultures: Premediation, Remediation and the 'Indian Mutiny'" (2009) and Marie-Luise Kohlke's "Tipoo's Tiger on the Loose: Neo-Victorian Witness-Bearing and the Trauma of the Indian Mutiny" (2010).

imperialism itself” (6). Like “Mutiny” literature, adventure fiction reveals a simultaneous bolstering and challenging of the Empire. Therefore, the writers of these genres seek to construct an alternative means of responding to or writing back to the Empire. Only recent scholars, including Supriya Goswami, Ralph Crane, and Radhika Mohanram, have written on the “Mutiny” in relation to white masculinity, though they still focus primarily on earlier scholarly discussions of white femininity and race relations and do not explore gender in relation to trauma.<sup>8</sup> In *Allegories of Empire*, Jenny Sharpe argues how the bodies of English women served as a “metonym for a government that [saw] itself as the violated object of rebellion” and declares that these English women function as the “absent center around which a colonial discourse of rape, race, and gender turns” (7-8). My argument is parallel to Sharpe’s: I focus on the psychologically wounded boy-hero as representative of the internalized, British cultural trauma from the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, whereby these adventure narratives function as, in Sharpe’s words for white women, “the absent text of history in the margins of literature, as its unconscious or ‘unsaid’” (21). The attention in previous scholarship on the Mutiny’s traumatic effects on white women, also has its “unsaid,” in so far as a preoccupation with women in a

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<sup>8</sup> In *Colonial India in Children’s Literature* (2012), Supriya Goswami closely engages with the children’s story *The Story of Sonny Sahib* (1894). Duncan’s *Sonny* is about an Indian-born, English boy born during the “Mutiny” who escapes death and spends 10 years as an Indian child before being reunited with his father, a British soldier (81). Goswami argues that Sonny embodies an ideal post-“Mutiny” hero, a bridge between colonizer and colonized, that was necessary for preventing another “Mutiny” in India (81). I explore Goswami’s argument in my chapter on Kipling’s *Jungle Books* but focus on the significance of Mowgli’s racial (Indian) identity. In their book chapter, “Masculinity Forged Under Siege: The Indian Mutiny of 1857” (2013), Ralph Crane and Radhika Mohanram “examine Anglo-Indian identity, its formations of whiteness, and its relationship to gendered identity in Flora Annie Steel’s *On the Face of the Waters* (1896) and Charles Pearce’s *Love Besieged* (1909) (32). They argue that the “Mutiny” novel was “pivotal, not only to the remaking and re-situation of Anglo-Indian masculinity and femininity, but also to an increasingly repressive, militaristic, white patriarchy” (53).

“heroic” context cannot fail to also be about men: the scholarship has left conceptions of masculine trauma mostly unexamined, and my dissertation seeks to fill this gap.

By reading late nineteenth-century British adventure fiction (1890-1900) through the lens of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, I argue that the Mutiny’s hold on these adventure fiction writers reveals their deep masculine trauma, and that their fiction, because of their trauma, interrogates nineteenth-century cultural assumptions regarding British imperial masculinity. Instead of observing a perpetuation of unshakeable imperialist doctrine, I discern a pattern of ambivalence, doubt, and anxiety—characteristics belonging to *alternative* boy-heroes who do not unquestionably champion the Empire but are, instead, distinctly haunted by the Empire’s genocidal crimes. Despite having initially been framed as a heroic opportunity for young British men, the “Mutiny” did *not* make heroes out of men; it *unmanned* them. My reading of the works of G.A. Henty, Rudyard Kipling, and Joseph Conrad reveals how the violent, repressed, and unspeakable Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 re-imagined, destabilized, and shattered conceptions of white masculinity in the late nineteenth century and encouraged adventure fiction writers to voice their dissent regarding Britain’s damaging imposition of such constrictive gender expectations on its young men.

## Chapter 1

### Unmade and Unmanned: The Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 as Imperial Romance

#### 1.1 Masculinity Discourse: Victorian Manliness and Unattainable Masculine Ideals

Just as manhood has been made in many historical constructions, so too it can be ‘unmade’.

—John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (2005)

Since the 1980s, scholars have successfully demonstrated the relation between masculinity and the British Empire by assessing late nineteenth-century adventure fiction and imperial romances, which include the works of Captain Frederick Marryat (1792-1848), W.H.G. Kingston (1814-1880), Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), R.M. Ballantyne (1825-1894), Henry Kingsley (1830-1876), G.A. Henty (1832-1902), Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), Rider Haggard (1856-1925), Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), and Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). According to Andrea White, the imperial romance was characterized by its nostalgic yearning for the nation’s golden yet “imagined” and mostly endangered or lost past (36). Starring in its narrative was the hero—“England’s ideal imperial son”—who, through his adventures, enacted “England’s will to imperial dominance” (36). Modern critics remain fixated on the interconnection between masculinity and the imperial romance of adventure fiction, many exploring the same arguments but in different ways.<sup>9</sup> These arguments include: the constructedness of masculinity and its inherent tensions; the connection between masculinity and the need to

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<sup>9</sup>See Martin Green’s *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (1979), Jeffrey Richards’ *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (1989), Joseph Bristow’s *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man’s World* (1991), Graham Dawson’s *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (1994), Richard Phillips’ *Mapping Men and Empire: A Geography of Adventure* (1997), John Tosh’s *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (2005), Joseph Kestner’s *Masculinities in British Adventure Fiction, 1880-1915* (2010), and Bradley Deane’s *Masculinity and the New Imperialism: Rewriting Manhood in British Popular Literature, 1870-1914* (2014).



bolster the imperial agenda; and perhaps most importantly, the reinforcement, affirmation, and perpetuation of nineteenth-century British masculinity by both the Empire and adventure fiction (Green 3, 37; Brantlinger, *Rule x*, 47-70, 227-253; Bristow 53-92; White 8-39; Dawson 1; Dryden, *Imperial* 16-34; Tosh, *Manliness* 199; D. Simmons 18; Knuth 49-62). Just as nineteenth-century adventure fiction writers were captivated by the fictional and non-fictional stories of manly heroes told and retold by their predecessors, so too are modern critics fixated on deconstructing nineteenth-century British adventure fiction in association with “manliness”, a nineteenth-century concept that refers to “a single standard of manhood, which was expressed in different physical attributes and moral dispositions” and wholly distinct from post-modern conceptions of gender (e.g. “masculinities”) expressed in terms of “personal authenticity” (Tosh, *Manliness* 2). In nineteenth-century Britain, manhood was made through personal accomplishment and “lay within the power of one’s peers to confirm or deny” (Tosh, *Manliness* 14), but modern scholars also note its complexity, theatricality, performativity, and internal divisions (J. Adams 3, 4, 11) as well as its possibilities, pluralities, and constructedness (Sussman 8, 12). British Victorian male novelists were particularly concerned about what defined a man and endeavored to affirm manliness in their writing as something that was “obvious and natural”, yet their anxiety more often proved the opposite (Dowling 1). Mary Poovey labeled this dual process the “double duty of voicing and silencing ideological contradiction” (124). To many late nineteenth-century writers, “masculinity . . . [was] facing threats from every angle” (Mallett x). According to Andrew Dowling, Victorian male novelists defined themselves against the “demonised male ‘other’” (deviant men like Stevenson’s Jekyll/Hyde) and relied “on the necessity of

unmanliness in defining manliness” (24). Whereas Dowling claims that such definitions were used to stabilize “the meaning of manliness” for British Victorians, Bradley Deane argues that the masculinity associated with New Imperialism desired “better men” elsewhere, “even non-white, uncivilized colonial subjects - as exemplars of proper manliness” (3). In nineteenth-century British adventure fiction, the search for “better men” is most apparent. Such searches, however, forced a level of self-scrutiny that did not just unsettle nineteenth-century ideals of manliness but confirmed their impossibility. The recognition of these “imagined” and unattainable masculine ideals evoked *not* what White names as “nostalgic yearning” (36), but what I identify as genuine doubt, a crisis of heart, mind, and sometimes body, about the rightness of Empire.

Although this exhaustive body of scholarship helps redefine our understanding of Victorian manhood by examining combative, conflicted, and contradictory constructions of nineteenth-century masculinity within British adventure fiction, John Tosh argues that there remains a gap in attempts to understand *why* the promotion of empire was so successful and that there has been next to no interest “in the *terms* on which individual men internalized the discourse” (*Manliness* 72; my emphasis). Consequently, this dissertation is interested in the terms on which adventure fiction authors internalized imperial discourse by examining their adventure fiction through the lens of a specific moment in history, the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, when both the Empire and masculinity itself were under fire like never before. Although the concept of “manliness” in the nineteenth century was a given, an *individual’s* manliness was less so since it was something one perpetually needed to prove (Roper & Tosh 18). If the quest to prove one’s masculinity is endless, it is more useful to examine, in Michèle Cohen’s words,

“*how* the anxiety about masculinity is articulated at any particular historical moment - or geographical space” (9) to understand the *consequences* of internalizing the Empire’s imperialist discourse. The Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 offers both an ideal historical moment and geographical space.

Since the onset of masculinity studies in the 1970s, scholars have argued that there was a “crisis of masculinity” at several points throughout history (some even going so far as to assert that masculinity is in a perpetual state of crisis), which suggests, at the very least, that the internalization of masculine discourse was not always uniformly successful and indeed frequently (though not necessarily consciously) challenged.<sup>10</sup> In late-Victorian Britain, particularly, because of the rapidly changing social, political, and economic conditions, “Victorian manhood was by definition a state of permanent crisis, a site of anxiety and contradiction as much as a source of power” (Mallett vii). Scholars also point to the decreasing professional opportunities for men, the collapsing of gender and sexual identity categories, the weakening of patriarchy and growing feminist movement, as well as the worsening tensions between competing imperial powers and rebellious colonies for this crisis of masculinity (Showalter 9; Deane 9; Tosh, *Manliness* 21). If New Imperialism strengthened the interdependence of imperialism and masculinity, then a “crisis of masculinity” was unavoidable in Victorian Britain given the nation’s burgeoning awareness of the moral costs of its imperial exploits. Given that nineteenth-century codes of masculinity were irrevocably tied to the imperialist project,

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<sup>10</sup> See Regenia Gagnier’s *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (1986), Harry Brod’s *The Making of Masculinities* (1987), Elaine Showalter’s *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (1990), Anthony Clare’s *On Men: Masculinity in Crisis* (2001), J.A. Allen’s “Men interminably in crisis? Historians on masculinity, sexual boundaries and manhood” (2002), John Tosh’s *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (2005), and Phillip Mallett’s *The Victorian Novel and Masculinity* (2015).

this discourse of crisis can be traced throughout British adventure fiction, a genre which championed the Empire while simultaneously challenging it. Unlike most scholarship on imperial adventure fiction up until now, my project does not explore how imperialism and masculinity reconfirmed one another, but argues that *because* of this relationship, depictions of “unmade” masculinity within adventure fiction represent implicit critiques, or an unmaking, of Empire.

## 1.2 Empire Critiques: Nineteenth-Century British Masculinity and Adventure Fiction

Men made the Empire, according to countless stories consumed by late Victorian and Edwardian readers, and, according to other stories just as numerous, the Empire made men.

—Bradley Deane, *Masculinity and the New Imperialism* (2014)

By examining how a specific genre of Victorian literature offers implicit critiques of Empire and expresses “resistance to imperialism” (Brantlinger, *Victorian* 1), my project offers a postcolonial reading of adventure fiction. In *Victorian Literature and Postcolonial Studies*, Patrick Brantlinger asserts that the handling of masculinity in the imperialist adventure genre “is a problem only because it is no problem at all” (33). For Brantlinger, imperial boys are problem *solvers*, stereotypes, or “magical objects”, even “fetishes”, and perpetually young (*Victorian* 129). Although depictions of imperial boys were seemingly uncomplicated in some imperial narratives, Brantlinger asserts that “much nineteenth-century writing about the Empire was ambivalent, at once approving and disapproving” (2). In line with Brantlinger’s assessment about Victorian ambivalence towards the Empire, I explore how late nineteenth-century adventure fiction *complicates* masculinity through depictions of traumatized boy-heroes who are undone by Empire and imperial ideology. Although adventure fiction writers were themselves “indoctrinated” by the genre that helped reify the Empire, their distinct hesitancy, heartbreak, and horror at

the Empire's treatment of its colonized people, and even its own subjects, reveal an unmistakable trauma. On the surface, these boy-heroes may champion "can-do" problem-solving attitudes, but this strained bravado often hides deeper psychological problems.

Compelled by the British Empire's seemingly endless drive for more territory and having inherited the adventure novel as a literary genre that could be traced as far back as Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the Victorians were preoccupied with and constantly in search of heroes. Adventure fiction writers therefore came to be in the business of marketing "the idea of empire as a thrilling boys' adventure" (D. Simmons viii). Thomas Carlyle's *On Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841) exemplifies the Victorian fascination with and desire for heroes in that hero worship "was a form of self-help" (Knuth 49). Consuming heroic narratives, then, taught young boys the core principles of what it meant to be a British subject but most importantly how to be a man worthy of the Empire. Although the Empire relied on multiple forms of propaganda to perpetuate its imperialist endeavors, its most successful campaign was through widely published and consumed nineteenth-century adventure fiction. In *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (1979), Martin Green declares *Robinson Crusoe* to be the "prototype of literary imperialism" since Defoe began the novel in 1707, at the historical moment of the Union of England with Scotland (5). In alignment with Green's argument, Linda Colley's *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World, 1600-1850* (2004) makes a similar assertion, but she also declares that there are two different literary parables of empire building (1). The first involves a man who is shipwrecked on an island, but instead of despairing, he sets out to build a colony. This parable refers to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. The second parable involves a man who journeys to another land,

becomes captured, is made the leader of the natives, and then returns to Britain hating his own countrymen. For this man, adventure brings no glory or riches: “only terror, vulnerability, and repeated captivities, and in the process an alteration of self and a telling of stories” (Colley 2). This parable refers to Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726). From these parables, Colley asserts that “captivity was an integral part of Britain’s overseas experience” and captivities “were the underbelly of the British empire” (3-4). More significant is Colley’s decision to refer to two *literary* works as the original archetypes of the British Empire, as adventure stories often provide a means for narrating encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans (R. Phillips i). As Green points out, the birth of Empire simultaneously brought about the adventure tale and vice versa. Just as these stories fueled the British nation’s understanding of itself, so too did the Empire come to recognize and perpetuate itself *within* adventure fiction. Green’s most persuasive argument is his assertion that the adventure fiction succeeding *Robinson Crusoe* was the “energizing myth of English imperialism. These narratives were, collectively, the story England told itself as it went to sleep at night; and, in the form of dreams, they charged England’s will with the energy to go out into the world and explore, conquer, and rule” (3). For Green, to “celebrate adventure was to celebrate the empire” (37): the historical heroes of the empire, who were both like and unlike the heroes of adventure fiction, fueled the nation’s imagination. Based on my reading of these literary parables, although they involve the triumph of Empire either through creation or conquering, the British *subject* always remains captive or enslaved by their imperial desires.

Despite adventure fiction’s map-like realism, Richard Phillips recognizes ambivalence within its pages. While mapping out an adventure, these stories also

“unmap[ped] geographies and identities” and proved to be a “site of resistance” for those who wrote them (i). Moreover, Phillips argues that adventures made it possible to map new forms of masculinity and project “European geographical fantasies onto non-European, real geographies” (i). As Green suggests, there was often a blurred line between the adventure of fiction and adventure of history. Although most adventure stories read like fact, many did not acknowledge the “conventional boundaries between fiction and non-fiction” (R. Phillips 8). According to Green, because fiction and non-fiction involve the imagination, studying the difference between the two “will bring out a hidden structure, a cultural character, to the ‘literary’ form of imagination” (24). One example of the overlap between the adventurer of fiction and the adventurer of history is Captain Frederick Marryat, who successfully captured the imagination of the British nation through his fictional renditions of his documented real-life adventures at sea. As a founding father of nineteenth-century British adventure fiction, Marryat inspired a generation of adventure fiction writers through his manifold travels.

Over time, geographic and adventure narratives became interchangeable as geographic exploration was “reinterpreted as quest narratives, in which heroes explored the unknown” (R. Phillips 8). By participating in the cultural imaginary, adventure stories created a “space in which imperial geographies and imperial masculinities were conceived” (12). By the second half of the nineteenth century, “adventure stories became the medium for capturing the imagination of young boys ... and for convincing them that schoolboys turned adventurers had a key role to play in the high-stake games of imperial domination” (Knuth 52). Although adventure stories were marketed as “boys’ stories” (children under 14 never made up less than a third of the total nineteenth-century British

population) both sexes, as well as people of all ages and classes, made up its general readership (10). Today, the most well-known so-called children's story that was initially written for adults is J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1911). The story first appeared in sections of *The Little White Bird* in 1902, on stage in 1904, and then in novel form in 1911 as *Peter and Wendy*. As a story that champions, yet subverts imperial ideologies, *Peter Pan* embodies the ultimate adventure narrative. Although Peter Pan's refusal to grow up represents his rejection of the Empire, it also suggests his enslavement to it. Peter remains a prisoner of the adventure narrative—living from one adventure to the next—and by extension, perpetually taken in, and captivated by, the glories of empire. In *The Case of Peter Pan or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction* (1984), Jacqueline Rose declares that *Peter Pan* is about a boy who does not grow up not so much because he does not want to but “because someone else prefers that he shouldn't” (3; my emphasis). Although Rose focuses on the psychoanalytical reading of the relationship between the male author and the fictional boy, my project emphasizes the power of boys' own adventure fiction's ability to “colonize” the child and the genre's blurring of the imaginative space between the colonizer and the colonized. At the prospect of having to grow up, Peter remarks to Wendy and her mother: “no one is going to catch me and make me a man” (Barrie 171). His statement, although representative of the naïve and childish longing to remain young, also suggests a fear of being “captive” or enslaved by, in J.A. Mangan's words, the Empire's “conveyor belt” (9). He is not necessarily anxious about growing physically old, but of being sent to school and an office—both institutions of Empire but lacking the adventure of being “in the field,” so to speak—where he would be expected to perpetuate its aims, and in turn, breed the next generation of “boy-heroes”. Peter's ultimate rejection



of this “captivity” allows him to exist in the imaginative space between colonizer and colonized *without* consequence. Barrie’s Indians and Pirates represent the figure of the “Other” and are nothing more than imaginary projections of the boys’ fantasies. When Wendy asks Peter, after he returns to visit her after his year-long absence, if he remembers his archenemy, Captain Hook, Peter “carelessly” remarks, “I forget them after I kill them” (172). This statement, although said with the usual carelessness of a child, is unsettling due to its broader historico-political connotations. Although British boys were meant to inherit the Empire, they clearly lacked empathy for those they conquered. To British boys, the colonized were supposed to be not just inferior people; they were not *real*. Although framed as a children’s story about the myth of eternal youth, the truth behind Peter Pan is that he refuses to take his place in the Empire and face the consequences of its carelessness and violence against its colonies. Peter Pan’s refusal to grow up is not necessarily a boy longing to remain innocent, but a desire to perpetuate the adventurous, yet violent spirit of the Empire without consequences. Barrie’s story reveals the captivating, enslaving power of the adventure narrative—the ultimate tool of Empire to perpetuate its own imperialist aims—and Peter Pan’s ironic inability to recognize his own captivity (in an imperial fantasy) even though captivity is what he fears above all else.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, he represents not the freedoms and carelessness of youth, but a masculine identity perilously imprisoned within the cultural imaginary of British imperialism.

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<sup>11</sup>In the theatrical production of Peter Pan, Barrie provides a stage direction in response to Peter’s declaration that no one will “catch” him and that he wishes to remain a boy forever: “So perhaps he thinks, but it is only his greatest pretend” (qtd. in Alton 50).

According to Graham Dawson, “masculinities are lived out in the flesh, but *fashioned* in the imagination” (1; my emphasis). He goes on to suggest that masculinity and the nation were two sides of the same coin in understanding nineteenth-century conceptions of the British Empire: masculinity, like adventure fiction, helped in imagining the nation, while the nation played an integral role in perpetuating “preferred forms of masculinity”—they each reinforced the other (1-2). Dawson asserts that masculinity and adventure fiction are inseparable, in the sense that the hero of adventure fiction is the “quintessential figure of masculinity” (1). Like Brantlinger and Green, Dawson asserts that adventure stories “became myths of nationhood itself” which provided a “cultural focus around which the national community could cohere” (1). Moreover, Dawson stresses that these imagined forms of masculinities are “‘made up’ of creative cultural activity and yet materialize in the social world as structured forms with real effects upon both women and men”, which suggests that the constructed masculine hero of the fictional world, in various forms, exists outside the pages of adventure texts, and reveals that fictional heroes held sway over real people in the everyday world. According to Dawson, since the imagining and recognition of identities is a process of wish-fulfillment fantasy, these constructed forms often emphasize ideal masculinities. However, in alignment with Joseph Bristow’s argument, because everyday life is multi-faceted and contradictory, “the achievement of an absolutely unified and coherent gendered social identity ... is an impossibility” (23). Sussman declares Victorian masculinity is “so irreconcilable within male life in the present as to be harmonized only through fictive projections into the past, the future, or even the afterlife” (3). Sussman’s study seeks to understand masculinity as an “historical construction rather [than] an

essentialist given” and remains “responsive to the complex ways that these unstable and conflicted forms of literary and artistic manhood simultaneously subvert and maintain patriarchal power” (14-15). For the writer on Victorian masculinities, the issue of power and patriarchy “calls for a double awareness”—on the one hand, formations of the masculine created conflict and anxiety, while on the other hand, despite these tensions, “men accepted these formations as a form of self-policing crucial to patriarchal domination” (9). This double awareness is mirrored in what Joseph A. Kestner calls the “double structure” found within the adventure fiction story, involving “a sublimation of the uncomfortable pressures of the European class-system into a positively heroic encounter with the world outside” (16). Critics agree that adventure fiction interrogates models of masculinity. Adventure fiction thus offers implicit critiques of Empire.

In *Masculinities in British Adventure Fiction* (2010), Kestner explores how the adventure genre “can be the focus of inquiry, examination, challenge, doubt and dispute” (2). Several scholars, including Bristow and Green, identify the period of the 1880s as a time of English discontent with adventure fiction due to its emphasis on the exploits of Empire, the several military defeats Empire suffered towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the fact that the general public began to question the effectiveness of British rule over the colonies (Kestner 3). To compensate for the nation’s shaky confidence in the British Empire, adventure fiction after the 1880s “acquired fresh energy, reached out in new directions and began to appeal to a much broader audience than just boys” (Belk 151). Although some of the original champions of imperial adventure fiction, such as Henty and Haggard, introduced a “contentious note” while addressing the imperial project in their fiction (White 82), they still perpetuated an inherently violent

understanding of Empire which carried with it a deeply troubled sense of humanity that later adventure fiction writers inherited. Recognizing this deeply troubled imperialist ideology, these romance writers produced fiction that was “clearly a subversion of the adventure genre, accompanied by a profound interrogation of masculinity, which is regarded as conflicted and problematical” (Kestner 4). Brantlinger, Bristow, White, and Linda Dryden have also successfully argued this point through the careful examination of the dissemination of juvenile literature (Bristow 4-52), public school fiction and imperial propaganda (Brantlinger, *Rule* 47-73; Bristow 53-92; White 8-39; Dryden, *Imperial* 16-34), the direction and subversion of the adventure story (Brantlinger, *Rule* 227-253; Bristow 93-126; White 39-62, 82-99; Dryden, *Imperial* 195-199), and a close examination of the fictional “boy hero” (Brantlinger, *Rule* 255-274; Bristow 170-226; White 62-82; Dryden, *Imperial* 137-195). Given the “crisis” of masculinity that occurred in the 1890s, it is significant that this decade was also considered “the most productive period in the history of the ‘Mutiny’ novel,” for the Indian Rebellion was transformed “into a site of heroic imperial adventure” (Chakravarty 6). The Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 was one of many historical events depicted in popular nineteenth-century British literature, and “Mutiny” literature echoed the same implicit critiques of Empire found within boys’ own adventure fiction.

### 1.3 Bringing Up Empire: Fashioning Boyhood through the “Romance” of 1857

If a writer of fiction were to imagine the circumstances under which the national fortitude of a body of men could be most severely tried, he could hardly invent conditions better calculated for the test than those, under which, in May and June 1857, our countrymen were surprised in Hindostan.

—Charles Ball, *The History of the Indian Mutiny* (1858)

In an 1897 article that appeared in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, Hilda Gregg, a critic and novelist herself, argued that no other event besides the Spanish Inquisition

“irresistibly impelled” fiction writers as the “Mutiny” did (219). Noting the long “sea-fights” with France as well as the Crimean War, Gregg asserts that all other English historical events, as far back as the Jacobite outbreak of 1745, “paled before the tragedy of the Indian massacres and the splendours of Lucknow and Delhi” since none appealed “with equal vividness to *the writers and readers of romance*” (218, my emphasis). In the voluminous “Mutiny” scholarship written since the publication of her article, Gregg has become inseparable from that scholarship due to her oft-cited declaration, “Of all the great events of this century, as they are reflected in fiction, the Indian Mutiny has taken the firmest hold on the popular imagination” (218). As Astrid Erll observes, incorporating Gregg’s famous quotation in seminal scholarship on the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 “has become by now a topos in itself” (“Remembering” 163).<sup>12</sup> Countless contemporary writers on the “Mutiny” have cited Gregg, yet only two scholars, Flaminia Nicora and Christopher Herbert, engage with her article beyond citation alone. In her article, “‘Thrilling Empire’: Indian History and Questions of Genre in Victorian Popular Fiction,” Nicora analyzes the “Mutiny novel” and its standardized narrative sequences and tropes to explain how it originated as a literary subgenre and cites Gregg to help establish her framework for identifying the characteristics of these novels. To demonstrate the overwhelming popularity of “Mutiny” novels, Nicora observes that in addition to the number of “Mutiny” novels, numerous publications, including *The Union Jack*, *Boy’s Own Paper*, and *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, frequently serialized and reviewed these novels, and that these novels occupied a significant space in British

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<sup>12</sup> Erll names Thrope (1986), Brantlinger (1988), and Chakravarty (2005) as scholars who have included Gregg’s famous quotation (180). Erll (“Remembering” 2006) is now part of this group of scholars along with Crane (1992), Nicora (2007; 2009), Lakshmi (2007), Herbert (2008), and Crane & Mohanram (2013).

library catalogues well through the late nineteenth-century (106).<sup>13</sup> In *Empires of Print: Adventure Fiction in the Magazines (1899-1919)* (2017), Patrick Scott Belk explores the far-reaching, complex network of British periodicals that housed popular adventure fiction (1800-1900) and asserts that “a close, symbiotic relationship existed between magazines and adventure fiction,” this literary industry becoming “firmly embedded in this modern imperial cultural space of increasingly integrated global communities of readers” (7, 39). Given the extent to which nineteenth-century adventure fiction writers rubbed shoulders with another, which included consuming each other’s work in these popular publications, if these authors were not explicitly writing about the “Mutiny” (e.g. Henty), they were avidly critiquing “Mutiny” novels (e.g. Kipling) or unavoidably reading about them (e.g. Conrad).<sup>14</sup> Even Stevenson, who never explicitly wrote about 1857, owned a copy of William Forbes-Mitchell’s *Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny 1857-9*.<sup>15</sup> Stevenson was so moved by Forbes-Mitchell’s memoir that he wrote to the author to tell him as such: “just returned from reading a chapter of your book to my wife

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<sup>13</sup> Nicora lists several prominent magazines in which non-fictional and fictional renditions of the “Mutiny” appeared, along with reviews of such works: *Cornhill Magazine*, *Longman’s Magazine*, *Fraser’s Magazine*, *Edinburgh Review*, *Bentley’s Miscellany*, *The Calcutta Review*, *The Saturday Review*, and *The Athenaeum*. She also names *Mudie’s Select Library* as the most popular circulating library in the 1890s, which regularly included several “Mutiny” novels as part of its catalogue.

<sup>14</sup> In addition to writing for the *Boys’ Own Paper*, Henty was the editor of the *Union Jack* (from 1880-1883) and *Beeton’s Boy’s Own Magazine* (from 1888-1890), and his works were regularly reviewed in *The Saturday Review* (in addition to other periodicals such as *Academy*, *Observer*, *Spectator*, *School Guardian*, *Times*, *Harper’s Monthly Magazine*, and *Standard* (Butts, *Children* 159). Like Henty, Kipling and Conrad were familiar with the publications listed by Nicora especially given how often reviews of their works appeared in them. Kipling was regularly reviewed in the *Edinburgh Review*, *The Saturday Review*, *The Athenaeum*, and *Blackwood’s Magazine*, the latter being of particular importance to Conrad, who was likely aware of the publication as early as 1883, having referred to it on 94 separate occasions in his personal letters (Chambers, *Conrad’s Reading* 85; Chambers, “A Sort” 11). In fact, Conrad confessed in 1899, “that he regularly scanned the (many) pages of advertisements [in *Blackwood’s*] for new book releases” (*Letters* 2:186).

<sup>15</sup> Stevenson’s copy was “well-thumbed” and bore a hand-written inscription from his 13-year-old step-grandson, Austin Strong: “this book has a value as R.L.S. use [sic] to read it to us all at Vailima” (qtd. in Towheed 10). Like his step-godfather, Strong was particularly moved by the memoir for he adapted it for the stage, a play entitled *The Drums of Oude* (1918) (15).

and her daughter. There was not a dry eye at the table, and the reader had to suspend operations, choking upon sobs” (Stevenson qtd. in Towheed 14).<sup>16</sup> Based on the reading habits of adventure fiction authors in the late nineteenth-century, there was no avoiding fictional or non-fictional accounts of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.

Like White and Dryden, Belk observes that those who inherited the adventure writing tradition, including Haggard, Henty, Stevenson, Kipling, and Conrad, ultimately “adopted the end of geographical adventure and the demise of heroic idealism as central organizing themes in their writings at the fin de siècle” (43-44). Their disillusionment, anxiety, and fear of the waning of Empire and even the criticism of its colonial practices is evident in their collective body of writing, their crisis of confidence giving way to masculine trauma. As the only other scholar to closely engage with Gregg’s famous *Blackwood’s* article, Herbert cites Gregg to develop his argument about the “traumatic” aspects of 1857 and, using Herbert’s framework, I analyze the masculine trauma of adventure fiction writers who wrote and read about the “Mutiny”. In *A War of No Pity* (2008), Herbert observes Gregg’s failure to answer why an event of such “unbearable horrors” became something of a fixation for late nineteenth-century readers (19). Herbert argues that instead of framing the “Mutiny” as trauma, Gregg transforms the event “into a sensation melodrama performed ... according to the tried-and-true formulas of popular fiction” (19). Although Herbert is right to draw readers’ attention to this issue, his assessment does not seem to take into consideration that Gregg’s depiction of the “Mutiny” as a popular romance is, in fact, symptomatic of the “unhealing national trauma” that Herbert declares Gregg ultimately ignores (19). After all, nineteenth-century

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<sup>16</sup> Isobel Strong, Stevenson’s stepdaughter, wrote that she recalled Stevenson lying in bed alone reading Forbes-Mitchell’s memoir “weeping the whole morning” (qtd. in Towheed 14).

adventure fiction writers who championed the imperial project, despite their influential power in captivating British audiences, were themselves “deeply scarred” and sought to treat themselves “through fantasies of empire” (D. Simmons viii). Given the British public’s fixation with 1857 and the pervasiveness of “Mutiny” literature as imperial romance, adventure fiction writers unconsciously did more than just draw on the event as inspiration for their stories: they internalized the event’s traumatic aftermath. When the “Mutiny” ended in 1859, Britain seemed less interested in factual depictions of the “Mutiny” and more concerned with “controlling its figurative implications” (Pionke, “Representations”). Although periodical accounts of the “Mutiny” dwindled by 1860, the *story* of the “Mutiny” was taken up in other forms, including lengthy historical volumes such as Charles Ball’s two-volume *History of the Indian Mutiny* (1860-61), R. Montgomery Martin’s *The Indian Empire* (c.1861), George Trevelyan’s *Cawnpore* (1865), and John William Kaye’s *History of the Sepoy War* (1864-1876). Along with historical overviews of 1857, biographies of famous “Mutiny” war heroes, such as William Brock’s *A Biographical Sketch of Sir Henry Havelock* (1858), as well as personal diaries, such as Henry Russell’s *My Diary in India*, were published. The “Mutiny” archive that “spawned” from the “insatiable fascination that the great Indian upheaval exercised upon the Victorian imagination” ultimately surpassed, in volume, “representations of any other historical event during the long nineteenth century” (Herbert 134). As Gregg surmises, 1857 “loomed large” in English fiction and non-fiction: the events of the time provided “every element of romance that could be desired in a story”—much like Charles Marlow’s assessment of a hero’s life in Joseph Conrad’s



*Lord Jim*.<sup>17</sup> These elements, for Gregg, included “[v]alour and heroism, cruelty and treachery, sharp agony and long endurance, satiated vengeance and bloodthirsty hatred” (219), suggesting that “Mutiny” fiction, even 40 years after the event occurred, was categorized, problematically or not, in the genre of imperial romance, just as other imperial adventure stories had been.

As genres that galvanized and captured the Victorian imagination, “Mutiny” and adventure fiction both perpetuate the glory of Empire and reveal, in Dryden’s words, “the empty promises of an imperial nation” (*Imperial* 9) now consciously aware of its own deficiencies and moral failings. In addition to the elements Gregg mentions, “Mutiny” and imperial adventure fiction are also markedly influenced by a genre from an earlier time: the chivalric romance, which included the figure of the English gentleman as the imperial hero. Chivalry became an “obsession” in the nineteenth century; it shaped social behaviour, the family, sexuality, and gender (Dryden, *Imperial* 18). The nineteenth-century concern with medieval chivalry began as early as 1822, with the publication of Kenelm Henry Digby’s *The Broad Stone of Honour*, which “provided the foundations on which the nineteenth-century notion of the gentleman was built” (18). References to gentlemanly conduct were invoked frequently in the pages of early adventure fiction, especially in the works of Captain Marryat, Charles and Henry Kingsley, and Rider Haggard. By the middle of the nineteenth century, “the language and imagery of chivalry had been so far absorbed into the fabric of Victorian life and thought that it was automatic to see the gentleman exclusively in terms of a latter-day medieval chivalry” (J. Richards, Introduction 6). Championed by political and social movements such as

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<sup>17</sup> Marlow describes Stein’s life as possessing “all the exalted elements of romance” but both Marlow’s and Stein’s thoughts are turned towards Jim, a “romantic” (Conrad 131).

“Young England”, Christian Socialism, and the Boys’ Brigade, chivalry played an integral role in public education as Britain’s imperial school system was ultimately responsible for producing “new knights” (7). In fact, notions of what it meant to be an English gentleman, including depictions of the hero and manliness, are not only central concerns of the imperial romance, but also function as an important motif of “Mutiny” literature (Herbert 96). The gendered “motif” of “Mutiny” narratives stems from Anglo-Indian correspondence during the events of 1857. Letters from British women missionaries to British publications depicted “manly” soldiers saving “captive” (and/or violated) women, a subject that was integral to the valorization of British men and the reaffirmation of feelings of unified “Britishness” in these publications’ English readership (C. Lewis 97). In these carefully woven 1857 narratives, “manliness and imperial loyalty” were determined only by how successfully British women in 1857 were protected from threat and harm (105). Given 1857’s damaging impact on the Empire’s image and the destabilization of its place on the international stage, Britain felt compelled to restore its honour “in visible ways to negate the humiliation caused by its loss” (Merritt 20). It therefore fell to British men to reassert Britain’s position on the map, and if these chivalrous, heroic men could not protect their women, how could they be expected to protect their country? Such pressure no doubt contributed to the need for more violent forms of masculinity.

Although the idea of gentleman-as-knight carried well into the late nineteenth century, the ideology of England’s New Imperialism was underpinned by the nationalistic and racialized backlash against the “post-Mutiny crises of conscience” of previous decades (56). This called into question the very notion of what it meant to be an English

gentleman, an imperial subject of a nation whose ideals, especially in India, proved impossible and immoral. As an historical event repeatedly framed by Britons' desire to position themselves "not as India's oppressors but as its gallant and benign victims," the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857 and its military celebrities came, for Victorian writers, to embody "the ancient ideal of 'chivalry,'" though not one of the Middle Ages but the "'stern', pitiless Puritan warriors of the English seventeenth century, to whom Havelock, Neill, Nicholson, and other Mutiny celebrities are habitually compared" (Baucom 106; Herbert 141). However, the descriptions of the "stern determination" of British soldiers in "Mutiny" narratives do not, according to Herbert, portray a "unified honourific English identity"; instead, they reveal a "punitive masculinity" that is both "monstrous and perverse" (142). This type of masculine personality came about due to the overwhelming patriotic and religious motives behind Britain's desire to assert imperial rule over India (143). In many ways, the "Mutiny" offered British subjects a larger-than-life imperial romance narrative: "pitting white heroes, the representatives of Anglo-Saxon courage, integrity, and industry," against those who ultimately opposed them: the "mutinous" Indian rebels, a framing of "Mutiny" events which allowed Britain to transfer its guilt for its violent and genocidal actions "from the home government or the British people as a whole to aggressive individuals acting in the periphery, and then from these individuals to the peoples they conquered" (Brantlinger, *Rule* 81). Despite all evidence to the contrary, Britain's "work of imperializing Asia" was not a formalized government plan—"it was instead the natural—almost accidental—result of the virtues of individual British adventures" (81). From the mid-nineteenth century onward, imperialism was by far the "dominant national ideology" comprising concepts such as empire, race, and nation as

well as definitions of masculinity, chivalry, and patriotism (J. Richards, Introduction 1). For Victorians, race and character were essentially interchangeable: “because of their racial superiority, the conquering and colonizing heroes have ‘character,’ amounting to virtues” (Brantlinger, *Victorian* 38). As Green and Bristow demonstrate, Britain’s push for the expansion of its colonies and realization of the importance of youth in its governance fueled and fanned the flames of the spirit of imperialism within juvenile literature. With the rise of the mass market and mass media, no other body of work constructed or perpetuated the imperialist doctrine better than the juvenile adventure fiction consumed by a new generation of readers, and few geographic sites inspired such imperialistic fervour as much as India under British rule.

For centuries, India held Britain’s fixed interest, particularly the interest of young British men, as they sought to make their own fortunes in the name of Empire. As Edwin Hirschmann observes, British India “was such stuff as dreams are made of” because it provided “a career *worthy* of a man” (1). Between British arrival in 1608 until India’s independence in 1947, India wielded profound influence over Britain in terms of ideology, war, and culture; it also “captured the British imagination in a way that no other part of the Empire ever managed to do” (Said, *Culture* 133; Crane 3). India’s hold over Britain was due in large part to it offering “the ideal link between, on the one hand, the strong English literary tradition of adventure novels and historical fiction, and, on the other, the problems of Empire and the human spirit” (Crane 3). In 1783, while delivering a speech in British Parliament in response to Fox’s East India Bill, Edmund Burke declared that “Young men (boys almost) govern there [India]” (275). As the British Empire continued to expand in the eighteenth century, young men were sent to India to

join the East India Company to impose and assert British imperial control; they were thus allowed to experience first-hand the fantasies of empire found in the pages of adventure fiction. Although in his speech, Burke is referring to the corruption and reckless behaviour of these young soldiers, “he is one of the earliest to characterize Britain’s colonial endeavors in India in terms of youth” (Goswami 11). According to Goswami, children’s literature written by Anglo-Indian authors such as Mary Sherwood (1775-1851), Barbara Hofland (1770-1844), Sara Jeanette Duncan (1861-1922), and Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) particularly championed the need for “youthful British intervention” in India, and most of these authors’ writings draw on the “Mutiny” to reinforce their argument (5). These texts, Goswami argues, participate in the indoctrination of “young readers to the colonial or the anti-colonial enterprise in India” (3). These Anglo-Indian boy-heroes who survive the “Mutiny” function as “bridge-builders” that eradicate representations of 1857; for example, Kipling’s *Jungle Books* story “The Undertakers” (1894) and Duncan’s *The Story of Sonny Sahib* (1894), a children’s “Mutiny” story, which Gregg reviews in her 1897 article on Indian “Mutiny” fiction (2). As an allegory of the empire saved and reborn from the “Mutiny”, Duncan’s *Sonny* reimagines the “post-Mutiny British hero” as the one to “bridge the cultural gap between colonizers and the colonized in order to prevent another Mutiny from occurring in India” (81). In addition to snuffing out colonial rebellion and reinforcing British control, most of the eighty “Mutiny” novels published between 1857 and India’s independence in 1947, “feature the soldier hero defending threatened white British womanhood as their central narrative trope”: with this trope, they elide the political or social significance (resistance to British imperialism) behind the event altogether (Crane and Mohanram 22). Despite representing

an event that carried with it profound “historical trauma,” Anglo-Indian writers were able to frame the “Mutiny” as a heroic narrative, one that offered “the correct kind of imperial governance” since the protagonist, often a young boy, exhibited the characteristics of a “natural-born soldier” who possessed a “thirst for adventure and the unknown” (Goswami 91). Due to the cult status achieved by British “Mutiny” soldiers, such as Henry Havelock, the English reading public, particularly in imperial juvenile literature, now re-imagined soldiers as heroic saviors (Dawson 80). Even immediately after 1857, and through to the 1890s, critics associated the fiction produced by the “Mutiny” with “writers for boys” (Gregg 218). I am particularly interested in how, at the height of New Imperialism, there was a simultaneous rise in the publication of “Mutiny” novels and adventure fiction that was notably subversive.

The Mutiny’s impact on Britain’s cultural imagination sparked “popular interest in England’s overseas enterprises, which provided the political basis for the imperial adventures of later years” (Hutchins 83). Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney observe that the publication of “Mutiny” novels in the 1880s and 1890s “reached a peak” coinciding with the height of New Imperialism, “an age of self-confident and aggressive imperialist self-fashioning” (118) and defined by “the cultural conviction . . . that the Empire was the source and proof of Britain’s glory” (Deane 9). Recent “Mutiny” and gender scholarship assesses the connection between British imperialism and children’s boys’ adventure stories as the majority of the 1890’s “Mutiny” novels were, according to Gautam Chakravarty, “aimed primarily at a juvenile readership” since they highlighted themes such as “character-building, empire, military exploits, and state security and espionage” (16). Many if not all these novels championed heroic white masculinity and fervent

imperial martyrdom while simultaneously expressing a panicked and widespread worry “that the [Indian Mutiny] had been won at the cost of the soul of the nation” (Herbert 190). In *Terrorism, Insurgency and Indian-English Literature* (2013), Alex Tickell asserts that late nineteenth-century “Mutiny” writers “exploited the colonial historical archive” to create a new historical sub-genre of “increasingly popular” 1857 narratives in the 1880s and 1890s. As a sub-genre that combined the central tenets of adventure and “Mutiny” fiction, the “Mutiny romance” served as the “literary counterpart” to the New Imperialism that reified “India’s place as a favoured jewel in the crown of national-imperial identity” (Tickell, *Terrorism* 118). Tickell distinguishes the “Mutiny romance” from the “boyish idealism” of the imperial romance (119). He explains that the plots of these reimagined “Mutiny” narratives centered on more mature and complex love plots, medieval chivalry, and heroism in order to counter the “colonial melancholy post-1857” (*Terrorism* 120, 115, 118). For Tickell, imperial romances more often reaffirm accepted gender relations while the “Mutiny” romance “represents both an exploration and recasting of ‘the boundaries of class and gender relations’, but also uses a wide range of strategies to effect a ‘syncretic’ reassertion of male power and authority” (Roy qtd. in Tickell 120). Although I consider my chosen texts as part of the sub-genre of the “Mutiny romance”, my reading diverges from Tickell in that I examine depictions of traumatized masculinity in boy-heroes that results in their internalized memories of 1857.

“Mutiny” narratives for juvenile audiences flooded the late nineteenth-century literary market: G. A. Henty’s *In Times of Peril* (1881), Katherine C.M. Phipps’ *Douglas Archdale: A Tale of Lucknow* (1885), D.M. Thomas’ *The Touchstone of Peril* (1887), Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Sign of Four* (1890), R.E. Forrest’s *Eight Days* (1891),

Maxwell Grey's *In the Heart of the Storm* (1891), Hume Nisbet's *The Queen's Desire* (1892), G.A. Henty's *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893), George Manville Fenn's *Begumbagh: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny* (1893), H. C. Irwin's *A Man of Honour* (1896), J. E. Muddock's *The Great White Hand, Or The Tiger of Cawnpore* (1896), Henry Seton Merriman's *Flotsam: The Study of a Life* (1896), J.F. Fanthorne's *Mariam: A Story of the Indian Mutiny* (1896), Flora Annie Steel's *On the Face of the Waters* (1897), Lucy Taylor's *Sahib and Sepoy* (1897), and A.F.P. Harcourt's *Jenetha's Venture* (1899).<sup>18</sup>

Although these texts offered British readers, in Gregg's words, "every element of romance," for Herbert, the consumption of "Mutiny" novels—through the repeated internalization of these haunting narratives—became "a nightmare from which Britain was long unable to awake and was compelled to relive in communal memory, in a mode antithetical to that of patriotic commemoration, over and over again" (277). Already a "traumatizing experience" (277) for the general public, the reading of "Mutiny" narratives would be especially difficult for some adventure fiction writers who were working through their own crisis of identity since, at the height of New Imperialism, the British Empire was no longer a site that instilled confidence in the British national identity, but a "place where England los[t] command of its own narrative of identity" (Baucom 3). Given that adventure fiction was full of stories that "England told itself as it went to sleep at night" (Green 3), readers of the genre, particularly boys, experienced the pressures of imperialist expectations and inherited and internalized the nation's crisis of

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<sup>18</sup> In addition to "Mutiny" novels, late nineteenth-century readers could also purchase accounts of 1857 in the form of personal letters, such as Octavius Henry St. George Anson's *With H.M. 9th Lancers During the Indian Mutiny: The Letters of Brevet-Major O.H.S.G Anson* (1896), or historical overviews, such as Lieutenant General McLeod Innes' *Lucknow and the Oudh in the Mutiny* (1896), Ascott R. Hope's *The Story of the Indian Mutiny* (1896), and Colonel G.B. Malleeson's *The Indian Mutiny of 1857-1858* (Volume 1), which continues from the close of the second volume of Sir John William Kaye's *History of the Sepoy War* (initially published in 1864).



identity which, in turn, contributed not just to a crisis in their own masculinity, but to a distinct masculine trauma.

## 1.4 Masculine Trauma: The “Mutiny” and the Interrogation of British Masculinity

The potential loss of the ‘Jewel in the Crown’ threatened to leave Britain unrecognisably diminished, the British cultural imaginary of heroic nationhood by now inextricably entwined with her colonial ‘Other’. ... India at the time of the Mutiny becomes the quintessential trope of (Western-defined) trauma, simultaneously its source and site, cause and symptom.

—Marie-Luise Kohlke, *Neo-Victorian Tropes of Trauma* (2010)

Empire literature and adventure fiction around the turn of the century became more secular, violent—and with the rise of evolutionary theory—predominantly more racist (R. Phillips 70). Moreover, narratives themselves become violent when literalized and mapped onto real people and places. For example, when an “ideology of manliness, articulated in the uncomplicated setting of a boys’ adventure story ... is literalized as a realistic and plausible representation of manliness, the heterogeneity and difference among boys and men is denied; all are forced, violently, into a narrow, uncomfortable box” (R. Phillips 168). In *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire, and the Imagining of Masculinities* (1994), Dawson uses a Kleinian psychoanalysis to define the relationship between adventure heroes and readers, arguing that “[readers’] identification with heroes involves violent ‘psychic splitting’ in which readers’ psychological wholeness is compromised in favour of coherent, recognizable masculine identities” (qtd. in R. Phillips 51). British readers of nineteenth-century adventure fiction and its fictional boy-heroes were therefore witnesses to and victims of psychological violence. As one of the “fathers” of British adventure fiction criticism, Bristow asserts that “dominant, or hegemonic, masculinity is endorsed by a longstanding genealogy of violence” (1), which has inspired my own interest in masculinity studies, specifically how literary

constructions of masculinity become destabilized (are “unmade” or “undone”) when authors internalize deeply troubling and traumatizing historical events. I observe that alternative or even failed boy-heroes in these fantasies of empire are often denied subjecthood (they are prevented, like Peter Pan, from accessing their truths) as their authors are unable to reconcile the characters’ individual identities with an “approved” imperially defined masculine identity shaped by the discourse of Empire. In short, these boy-heroes’ psychological needs are denied, resulting in the unsettling of their masculine identities and shared misery.

Most fictional children in Victorian bildungsromans led “misery-filled lives” and even Victorian autobiographies reveal neglected children and “an adult world unable to ‘fathom childish needs’” (D. Simmons 8). Mirrored in the pages of British boys’ adventure fiction and its literary boy-heroes was the same unrealistic and “enormous burden of expectation” placed on Victorian children. According to Bristow, to perpetuate its aims, the Empire invested a great deal in “glamourizing” literary heroes “because they represented ... a tremendous lack: they were not to be found in the empire”; subsequently, many “incompatible demands” were placed on these young men, preventing them from ever attaining their imperially-defined “male identity” (225). Although British nineteenth-century adventure fiction certainly participated in the construction of manhood or “man-making”, there is enough evidence to suggest that it also accomplished the exact opposite, a process of “unmaking” or undoing, as I demonstrate in each of my chapters on Henty, Kipling, and Conrad. Within the world of nineteenth-century adventure fiction, boy-heroes were ultimately witnesses to the crimes of Empire. Due to placing extreme and irreconcilable demands on its young men, the

British Empire was not only responsible for setting up their boy heroes to fail, but it was also, through the likelihood of their failure and overwhelming violence these men bore witness to—such as the violence of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857—responsible for the traumatization of their masculine identities.

The Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 irrevocably altered the trajectory of imperialism because it marked an erosion of white male patriarchal authority and permanently threatened British masculinity (51).<sup>19</sup> Moving beyond Jenny Sharpe’s and Nancy Paxton’s argument regarding the connection between white womanhood and 1857, Crane and Mohanram contend that “a specifically gendered Anglo-Indian identity was made possible through a break, a rupture, caused by the 1857 “Mutiny” and in fact the event contributed to a “discursive shift undergone by Anglo-Indian masculinity” (11, 41). This gendered, white, *vulnerable* identity formed in response to the violation and mutilation of Anglo-Indian bodies that required “white men and imperial rule to protect them” and the championing of militaristic manliness over the previously preferred “monastic” manliness (11, 14, 43). In addition to this shift in the nineteenth-century construction of masculinity because of the “Mutiny”, I argue that this drive for “militaristic” masculinity, the Empire’s need for violent men, suggests an aporia between what adventure fiction writers understood (unconsciously or not) as the Empire’s fictionalized ideal of manliness versus an alternative masculinity that went beyond, in Conrad’s words, “the morality of an ethical progress” (*Lord Jim* 308). It is precisely this conflict that triggers the onset of masculine trauma and crisis of masculinity in adventure fiction.

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<sup>19</sup> In the same year as the “Mutiny”, the Matrimonial Causes Act allowed women the right to divorce their husbands (if they could prove adultery, violence, incest, or bigamy). Further patriarchal decline occurred through the 1873 Custody of Infants Act, 1870, and the 1882 Married Women’s Property Act, as well as the 1890 Matrimonial Causes Act (further divorce rights for women) (Crane and Mohanram 51).

With a prominent rise in trauma theory and testimony studies due to an increasing public awareness of genocide, human rights abuses, and social inequity, trauma theorists such as Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub, and Dominick LaCapra have rejected a solely objectivist critique of history. They recognize, especially in dealing with cases of trauma, that the traumatized subject is, in LaCapra's words, a "living archive" whose subjective memories, feelings, and thoughts are integral to the reconstruction of past events (92).<sup>20</sup> As perhaps the most troubling and violent events to haunt the British Empire well into the twentieth century, the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857 and the writing that came out of it, according to Kohlke, "anticipated" the emergence of trauma theory, especially since it directly deals with the unimaginable, incomprehensible, and unrepresentable (374). Kohlke even goes so far as to argue that the event "functions as an imaginary point of origin for the twentieth-century British identity crisis and 'trauma' of the loss of empire" (371). Although speaking about neo-Victorian literature, Kohlke's discussion of the "traumatic displacement" that occurs looking back on the "Mutiny" from the modern age is relevant to my reading of late nineteenth-century adventure fiction: "the cultural imaginary seeks recourse to a time before imperial decline, but paradoxically relives that trauma through the moment of foundational violence that both *creates the empire and pre-figures its eventual demise* (373; my emphasis). The Indian "Mutiny" of 1857 therefore serves as an important case study when assessing the extent to which late nineteenth-century adventure fiction readers

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<sup>20</sup> See Felman and Laub's *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1992), Caruth's *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995), *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996); and LaCapra's *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2001).

internalized the discourse of imperialism given the British public's renewed fixation with the event and the rise in adventure fiction novels that challenged said discourse.

Decades after the "Mutiny", Britain could not seem to get the event out of its system. In *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination* (2005) and *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (2008), Chakravarty and Herbert respectively examine the Mutiny's impact on the British imagination and the intersections of literature and history in nineteenth-century fiction; Chakravarty covers the vast jingoistic and vindictive British writing in response to the "Mutiny" and Herbert explores the extreme backlash against such writing. They both assert that the "Mutiny", as a cultural phenomenon, not only "represent[ed] the recurring obsessions of the colonial state" but also continued to "galvanize the Victorian imagination" long after the event occurred (7; 18). Neither Chakravarty nor Herbert, however, closely examines boys' adventure fiction, though Chakravarty briefly observes that nineteenth-century British adventure fiction shares with the "Mutiny" novel "a similar valorisation of history as the region of extraordinary adventure and national achievement" and that there is a "double significance to the *fin de siècle* colonial adventure hero in disguise who penetrates into rebel conclaves to thwart rebel plans or to gather intelligence ... that sutures actual intelligence failures during the rebellion" (7). Herbert explores the significance of the Indian "Mutiny" on the British cultural imaginary for the event's unspeakable nature of violence and the traumatic shattering of British national identity and cites examples of fictional and non-fictional writings to reinforce his argument. His framework provides the foundation and inspiration for my project.

Since Kohlke observed ten years ago that scholarship was just beginning to connect the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 to trauma discourse, few beyond Herbert have since explored this link, though Jill Matus’ *Shock, Memory and the Unconscious in Victorian Fiction* (2009) argues that Victorian fiction “most fully articulated the idea of the haunted, possessed and traumatized subject” (i) and Lisa Kasmer’s recent study, *Traumatic Tales: British Nationhood and National Trauma in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (2018) assesses the “unimaginable trauma” involved in the British Empire’s nation-formation in Romantic and Victorian literature (4). Although the term “trauma” (psychic injury) was unknown to writers for most of the nineteenth century, the term materialized in late Victorian Britain when *physical* wounding (shock) “came to be associated with a mental state” (psychical wounding or trauma) (Matus 7). Matus recognizes the potential problems that may arise when applying trauma theory to literary texts yet argues that because of Victorian literature’s preoccupation with dreams, memory, and mental disorders, its framework may “recover and illuminate the array of specifically Victorian ideas about the mind and its operation in the aftermath of emotional shock” (7). With its haunting depictions of “the mind in shock, overwhelmed, stunned, and arrested, Victorian fiction shapes an incipient discourse of trauma” (191). Given the pervasiveness of shock, psychic fracturing, and horror in late nineteenth-century adventure fiction, Matus’ approach to Victorian literature—analyzing “conceptions of emotional injury and the psychic wound” to better understand how the mind responds to “overwhelming experience” (9)—is particularly useful for examining the psychological impact of imperialism on British men. Matus believes that because of the existence of a “missing perpetrator” in Victorian fiction (those culpable for inflicting

trauma) there must be, in turn, a “missing victim”; for her, this liminal figure represents “the perpetrator who goes missing to himself as the result of guilt or conscience” (190). I apply Matus’ idea of this haunted “missing” self that is both perpetrator and victim to the boy-heroes I study in my close reading of adventure fiction texts. Complicit yet traumatized by the Empire, Henty’s Bathurst, Kipling’s Mowgli, and Conrad’s Jim undergo a loss of self due to having felt, in Matus’ words, “the pain of having been ‘there’ at the unspeakable and inassimilable event” —in this case, the “Mutiny” of 1857.

As Kasmer observes in her reading of prominent trauma theorists Caruth and Felman, “trauma’s incomprehensibility precludes having immediate access to the experience: the occurrence is ‘not fully perceived’ at the time and ‘only later revealed often in not fully articulated ways’” (4). At a time when Britain felt that it was losing hold of its imperial narrative even at the height of New Imperialism, the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 became a productive and poignant site for authors to return to as it was a defining moment, in Kohlke’s words, “before imperial decline” yet in their repeated return they “relive” the same initial trauma that triggered the Empire’s demise (373). My project incorporates Kohlke’s, Matus’, and Kasmer’s premises within Herbert’s framework, whose examination of Victorian trauma in connection to British national identity is essential to my exploration of traumatized masculinity. I will demonstrate how the “Mutiny” haunts Henty, Kipling, and Conrad by examining works that are explicitly set in 1857 (Henty’s *Rujub, the Juggler*), allegorically recall 1857 (Kipling’s *Jungle Books*), and imaginatively displace 1857 (Conrad’s *Lord Jim*). Each author’s alternative boy-hero must face a traumatic crisis metaphorically affiliated with 1857 when they face the infamous “Mutiny” villain, Nana Sahib, who appears as himself in Henty’s *Rujub*, as

Shere Khan in Kipling's *Jungle Books*, and as Gentleman Brown in Conrad's *Lord Jim*. Each author's boy-hero must also face his own personal trauma in the context of the post-"Mutiny" crisis of Empire. Henty's Bathurst struggles to overcome the "shock" of his inherited trauma from the violence of the "Mutiny"; his initial failure as a soldier because of his "constitutional horror" of firearms, representative of the British public's reaction to the Mutiny's horrific violence, prevents him from acting heroically in the eyes of his peers and the woman he loves. Kipling's Mowgli struggles to overcome the "psychic splitting" of his racially fraught remembrances of the repressed "Mutiny"; his "haunting heartbreak" from his initial expulsion from the jungle, representative of the irrevocable, traumatic "break" between Britain and India and the repression of that grief post-1857, prompts his unheroic departure from the jungle at saga's end. Finally, Conrad's Jim struggles to overcome his "post-traumatic stress disorder" as a result of the psychologically damaging internalization of the unspeakable "Mutiny"; his permanent "wound" from his forced exile over his abandonment of the Patna ship, representative of the larger cultural wounding of post-"Mutiny" Britain's trauma, triggers his death and exposes the fatality of heroism's unrealistic ideals. By re-imagining, destabilizing, and shattering constructions of imperial masculinity explicitly in relation to the "Mutiny", Henty, Kipling, and Conrad seek to champion the New Imperialism while simultaneously "writing back" to the Empire. I closely examine the boy-heroes of these chosen British adventure texts as, in LaCapra's words, "living archives" in which nineteenth-century adventure fiction writers represented their imperialist views and, in the process, their masculine trauma.



## Chapter 2

### “Constitutional Horror” in G.A. Henty’s *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893): Re-imagined Imperial Masculinity of 1857

#### 2.1 Introduction

Celebrated as the “king” of both late nineteenth-century boys’ writers as well as the new genre of “secularized” historical adventure fiction, George Alfred Henty (1832-1902) inherited the mantle of boys’ adventure fiction when editorship of *The Union Jack: Tales for British Boys*—a penny weekly that championed “fearless imperialism and wholesome manliness”—passed to Henty after the death of W.H.G. Kingston, a famous writer of maritime adventure fiction (J. Richards, “Henty” 73; Knuth 57; Vuohelainen 192; J. Richards, “Popular” 100; M. Paris xiii). Although Henty never produced a “classic” novel that defined his career, no other writer “matched [his] passionate imperialism”, “could with equal success sustain the attention of boy readers” or became an “institution” in quite the same way (Butts, *Children* 39; Bristow 146; Arnold 20). As one of the most prolific British adventure fiction writers of the nineteenth century, Henty’s writing became “deeply embedded in the consciousness of English children”, made evident by the fact that British children, throughout Henty’s career, demanded a “new Henty” for school prizes and for Christmas and birthday presents (Knuth 57; Arnold 25; 176). Firmly believing that the sun would never set on Britain’s Empire, Henty took pride in his role as the Empire’s resident “publicist” and “recruiting officer for a generation of schoolboys” (Turnbaugh 734). Each Henty story made “empire into an adventure” (Bristow 146). Known as “The Boys’ Historian” (McMahon 154), Henty captivated generations of readers across four continents with his adventure fiction, which “outnumbered even [H. Rider] Haggard’s”, selling an estimated 25 million copies by the end of his life (Bristow

147). Of his more than 120 literary works, Henty set almost 50 of them in the nineteenth century and 10 of them primarily in India (Paxton, “Mobilizing” 247; Arnold 85; Clark 43). Henty scholars such as Linda Dryden (1999), Lawrence James (2000), and John Miller (2012) even use the phrase “Henty’s India” when discussing his novels set in India, although notably scholars do not use comparable labels for any other region he writes about, including Africa, in which Henty set at least eight of his novels.

Impressing an entire generation of English youth (and even many adults) with his “special image of India”, Henty positioned India as both a synecdoche and justification for the British Empire (Naidis 49; Crane and Fletcher 161; Arnold 100). During Henty’s literary career, India became a “symbol of British imperialism”, and after the “trauma” of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, it “dominated Victorian imperial thinking” (Naidis 49; Arnold 100). For Henty, India provided a “vision of the empire” and a site on which British boy-heroes were physically and mentally “tested” in their roles as upholders of the imperial agenda (Clark 47; Crane and Fletcher 170). Henty spent a year in India, circling it almost twice, having gone as part of a “select” group of artists and journalists on a Royal Tour of India (1875-76) with the then Prince of Wales (Fenn 276). A favourable change from his time covering the Crimean War, the tour offered Henty the opportunity to observe the region’s splendors a year before Victoria was named Empress of India (277). While there, Henty witnessed several violent sports: tiger and cheetah hunts, elephant beatings, and pig-sticking. He also visited several Indian cities, including Bombay, Lucknow, Calcutta, Madras, and Cawnpore, where the group paid their respects “to the graves of the Mutiny victims” (Naidis 51). Of his 10 novels set in India, Henty set two in the year 1857, citing significant “Mutiny” events that his characters participate in

and survive. He also refers to the “Mutiny” in several other novels, short stories, and publications including his two-part essay on the Defense at Lucknow in *Battles of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (Arnold 100; Ashley 269). Henty may have written about hundreds of historical events, but his work on India, particularly the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, reveals a noteworthy fascination and fixation.

With the exception of a Master’s Thesis,<sup>21</sup> only two scholars, John Miller and Rachel E. Johnson, have explicitly discussed masculinity in Henty’s “Mutiny” fiction.<sup>22</sup> In general, Henty’s work has been mostly “neglected” by modern scholars (Butts, “Exploiting” 149); in particular, there has been next to no scholarship on Henty’s contribution to the watershed of late nineteenth-century “Mutiny” novels, nor has any scholar yet written on the significance of Henty’s choice of placing his first and only physically “defective” hero in the historical battleground of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. Since late nineteenth-century anxieties within Henty’s work “expose ideologies about the relation of the body to the nation that inform both Victorian Britain’s imperial zeal and our own historical moment”, Henty’s *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893) challenges the nineteenth-century British belief that “the body itself stands as the natural, visible guarantor of one’s claim to Britishness and England’s right to rule its empire” (McMahon 156). In this novel, the hero’s congenital condition challenges this “genetic imperative”

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<sup>21</sup> Amanda Lynn Phillips’ Master’s Thesis, “Masculinity in Peril: Mutiny Fiction and Victorian Man-Making” (2009) examines how “children’s adventure novels about the “Mutiny” depict tensions inherent in late-Victorian constructions of masculinity” (ii). Whereas my project argues that the inherited remembrances of the “Mutiny” prompts white masculine trauma in Henty, Kipling, and Conrad, Phillips explores how Henty’s *In Times of Peril*, Fenn’s *Gil the Gunner*, and Field’s *Bryda* explore “anxieties concerning fantasies of male self-fashioning” (8).

<sup>22</sup> In *Empire and the Animal Body* (2012), Miller briefly explores the connection between masculinity and imperial interactions with animals in *Rujub, the Juggler* (45-46). In *A Complete Identity* (2014), Rachel Johnson explores the “flawed” hero in *Rujub, the Juggler*, but only in relation to the Henty hero and not to the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.

and thus functions as the site of the traumatized male subject, one whose white imperial masculinity is under scrutiny as a result of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. I therefore offer a new reading of *Rujub, the Juggler* that examines how Henty’s use of the Mutiny’s violence, which came as a “traumatizing shock” to the nineteenth-century British public (Herbert 59), reveals traces of the late Victorian crisis of masculinity and white masculine trauma within and on his “Mutiny” hero, Ralph Bathurst. I explore the significance of how *Rujub, the Juggler* challenges Henty’s traditional “Boy-Hero” mold through the construction of Bathurst, a young man with a debilitating physical and hereditary condition that initially prevents him from acting “heroically” in the eyes of his comrades and the woman he loves. Bathurst’s condition and the inescapable memory of his failure as a British soldier in India suggests, as Caruth might argue, that he carries “an impossible history within [him]” and that he ultimately “becomes ... the symptom of a history that [he] cannot entirely possess” (Introduction 5). I argue that Bathurst’s “alternative” heroism signifies how inherited historical remembrances of the violent Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 continued to grip even Henty, the staunchest of imperialists, resulting in the temporary “unmanning” of Henty’s adult male hero and the onset of the late nineteenth-century re-imagining of white imperial masculinity.

## 2.2 Sustaining the Empire: Henty’s “Confident” Masculinity

Henty made it a point to endow his heroes with the attributes required to sustain the empire.

—Mawuena Kossi Logan, *Narrating Africa: George Henty and the Fiction of Empire* (1999)

Although a successful journalist and novelist by trade, Henty was primarily in the business of “man-making”. Until the age of 14, Henty spent most of his childhood in bed as a “confirmed invalid”; due to his sickly nature, Henty’s relatives considered him as “one who could never by any possibility attain to man’s estate” (Arnold 4; Fenn 1-2). As

a frail child, Henty (in his own words) “read ravenously”, having learned that in order to survive “one must put on bravery (or bravado) and act boldly even when hesitant and afraid. In the long run one would naturally be a doer, a hero” (Henty qtd. in Fenn 3; Ashley 13). At Westminster School, Henty was lonely and struggled a great deal, often “roasted” for his intellectual pursuits, which included an interest in flowers and writing poetry (Fenn 5; Arnold 4). Drawing upon his negative experiences to steel himself against the world, Henty believed that young boys needed to be “tried in the same cruel furnaces” (Ashley 15). Because of his struggles, Henty turned to boxing; not because he wished to be a bully, but on account of his “genuine ambition to hold his own in the matter of self-defence and to be able to protect those who looked to him for help” (Fenn 7). His enhanced athleticism proved useful when he went off to fight in and report on the Crimean War (Arnold 4; Ashley 29). While there, Henty witnessed firsthand the general “disorganization throughout the British army” and became “unsparing of incompetence” (7). Although many pegged Henty as an “arch-conservative” in his day, Henty was in fact entirely informed about social inequality, particularly “critical of mistakes his country made abroad” and insisted that fairness and responsible governance be maintained both at home and overseas (Ashley xiii). After he was invalided in the war, Henty’s desire and quest for order was realized when he was promoted to top official in the Purveyor’s Department (Arnold 7). At the end of his war correspondent career, his health was “completely broken down, and for some time he was an invalid” (Fenn 302). Several Henty biographies, including George Manville Fenn’s *George Alfred Henty: The Story of an Active Life* (1907), Guy Arnold’s *Held Fast for England: G.A. Henty, Imperialist Boys’ Writer* (1980), and Leonard R. N. Ashley’s *George Alfred Henty and the Victorian*

*Mind* (1999), elide Henty's more so-called effeminate childhood in favour of securing the adult Henty as the embodiment of the same imperial masculinity he championed in his novels. But Henty shares far more in common with Ralph Bathurst, Henty's "alternative" hero in *Rujub, the Juggler*, than with his other boy-heroes. Like Henty, Bathurst is bullied by his peers at school as a small child due to his frailness and his preference for academic pursuits over physical ones. Bathurst also never once tells a lie "to avoid punishment", his peers shunning him for his "readiness to speak the truth" and labelling him a "sneak" for doing what is right (Henty 135). Like Henty, Bathurst also breaks down while fighting as a soldier, and soon secures a position in the Civil Service, whereupon—like Henty—he defiantly and frequently comments on the general ineptitude of his superior officers and the state of the British army.

Whereas Bathurst repeatedly finds himself in trouble with his superior officers, Henty gained success over his 10 years as a journalist for the *Standard* through his commentary on more than half the world's war zones and the general mismanagement of the British army (Arnold 8). Henty developed the idea for his first "boys' book" (*Out on the Pampas*) from his experience on the frontlines, initially sharing his adventures as a bedtime story for his children before he published it in 1871 (8). In addition to successfully "translat[ing] the national imaginary into everyday reality", Henty made history more palatable for British youth by positioning his fictional adventure-obsessed boys or youths as the "reader's surrogate" and thus encouraging his readers to identify with historical heroes (Knuth 57; Crane and Fletcher 164). Henty believed more than anything that the stories of great men could raise a strong generation of boys and inspire them, in turn, to greatness (Ashley 50; Knuth 58). Addressing his readers as "My Dear

Lads”, Henty’s “old boy” persona moved away from the religious didacticism of Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes towards an emphasis on the virtues of “pluck” and the belief in the British Empire and its imperial quest (Arnold 30, 32, 34; Crane and Fletcher 163). Consequently, his literary heroes produced adventure-obsessed young men eager to serve the empire and his writing prepared young men for the military (parents repeatedly thanked him for inspiring their children to enlist) (Ashley 50). Henty’s popular writing also “profoundly affected foreign policy” (Knuth 57-58). Around the 1850s, adventure fiction writers began penning stories that focused on prime examples of “muscular Christianity”—physically active, young middle-class Christian heroic men who sought adventure in the name of the British Empire. Dennis Butts asserts that the Crimean War of 1845-1856 (which Henty reported on as a war correspondent) and the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 are specifically responsible for this demand for literary heroes (*Children* 26-27). Heroes of the “Mutiny” especially provided models of muscular Christianity, and adventure writers used these historical examples for their work.<sup>23</sup> It was necessary for Henty that these historical figures, the majority of them “warlike” in nature, would function as a “vessel for all of the lessons learned by the nation during their lifetimes”; this, in turn, would unify and empower his readership, creating “historical memories to centralize future generations around a national consciousness” (Jones 163). Henty’s historical adventure fiction, then, played a vital role in sustaining the British Empire.

Henty’s ability to produce on average four books a year was in part due to reusing his tried and true “Boy-Hero” formula, a formula which he used as the means to

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<sup>23</sup> Interestingly, the Oxford English Dictionary pinpoints the origin of the term “muscular Christianity” to 1857, the same year as the Indian “Mutiny” (Butts, *Children* 24).

encourage “compliance with [his] version of national history”; his fictional characters prompted “empathy as a method of historical inquiry” (Jones 164). Scholars agree that Henty’s heroes are the “predictable”, “never-changing” imperial stereotype; they are often a young, physically active, middle-class, gentle(manly) teenaged boy of average intelligence who leaves home (often to India) in search of adventure—returning only after having achieved great success in some historic battle, never once “showing weakness or deviating from a mold of heroic capability” (M. Logan 82; Ashley 69; R. Johnson 130; Butts, *Children* 41; Butts, “Exploiting” 155; Arnold 32-38, 165; Knuth 60-61). Often, Henty’s Boy-Hero “had no real personality, but was, in fact, a kind of abstraction of pluck, physical endurance, and honor” (Naidis 51). Due to their lack of “individuality”, Henty’s heroes function more appropriately as “a collective imperial identity”, one that was often built on the notion of war, a framework which “helped Henty to construct a hierarchal model of values for boys with courage, a militant characteristic” (Jones 162, 164). As Britain began losing control of its colonies by the end of the nineteenth century, “it became expedient to revive the cult of hero worship in order to maintain the image of the ‘greatest empire’” (M. Logan 81). It is on account of the Empire’s potential collapse that there was a desperate need for heroes and Henty offered up his heroes as a “solution to a problem of an era” defined by its anti-imperialist sentiment (82). Henty may have brought history to life for British youth through his boy-heroes, but in the process, he conveyed questionable and damaging racist attitudes and stereotypes.

Although scholars identify Henty’s (and most nineteenth-century adventure fiction writers’) preoccupation with the fixity of race and gender in shaping British



identity and driving British imperialism—and ignoring “the responsibilities of imperial rule would be to threaten civilization itself”—Henty’s writing also reveals that the flexibility and mutability of race and gender is “crucial to [his] vision of white Britishness as a historical absolute” (McMahon 160). Historians certainly did not doubt Henty’s unwavering imperialism or his “unashamedly jingoistic attitudes” (Dryden 45), but recent scholarship has shown that Henty’s works brought to light “some of the contradictions and conflicts of attitude in British society” and even Henty himself frequently expressed his criticism of the British Empire, especially when it failed, in Henty’s mind, to “live up to certain standards of conduct” (Richards, “Henty” 73). His nineteenth-century texts, many of which depict “rebellious colonies”, frequently criticize the ineffectiveness of British leadership, governance, and military (Jones 169). Henty would even make a habit of drawing on “traumatic events of the past as precedent for the dangers of empire”, including the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857; for example, he referenced the “shock and horror” of its massacres in his preface of *The Dragon and the Raven* (1886) to bring home for his readers the level of violence committed by “invading” Danes against the English Saxons (Jones 170). Henty’s stories therefore attempt to “function on a level of bibliotherapy” in that they allow for the “cathartic retelling of what are essentially the most traumatic episodes in British history” (164). Although most of his work exhibits “the cool, casual nature” of the British empire’s violent and aggressive nationalism (Mangan 137), in *Rujub, the Juggler*, a novel about the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, Henty’s boy-hero’s constitutional horror of firearms challenges J.S. Bratton’s assertion that “Henty’s imperialism suffers from no sudden doubts about the legitimacy of violence” (197). In addition to featuring a Henty boy-hero “grown up” and

a “fantasy world less truthful about India and life than the worlds Henty creates for [his] adolescent readers” (Brantlinger 217), *Rujub, the Juggler* breaks abruptly with Henty’s formula by “creating a space in imperial discourse for an alternative, even effeminate” male-hero (John Miller, *Empire* 44), one who challenges the violent masculinity found in nineteenth-century adventure fiction and especially within historical and fictional renderings of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.

### 2.3 Inherited Trauma: The “Violent” Indian “Mutiny” of 1857

a messenger from Havelock brought down the terrible news that [the British] had fought their way to Cawnpore, only to find that the whole of the ladies and children in the Subada Ke Kothee had been massacred, and their bodies thrown down a well. The grief and indignation caused by the news were terrible; scarce one but had friends among the prisoners. Women wept; men walked up and down, wild with fury at being unable to do aught at present to avenge the massacre.

— G.A. Henty, *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893)

In his second chapter of *A War of No Pity*, Herbert names one of the most

“transformative lessons” of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 as the British nation’s

recognition of its own fixation with

both the violence of the massacres and also [sic] the extravagant violence of the British counterrevolution, came as a *traumatizing shock*. ... Not all writers were willing to cooperate in purging the British victory of its almost demented intensity of violence. What they reported back, in startling acts of nonsolidarity with official modes of representation, was that on the ground in India, the sole value was *violence itself*. All other considerations were eclipsed by the supremacy of violence. What such writers intimated and sometimes distinctly analyzed was the profound self-contradiction that Victorian society exposed in itself by sponsoring and glorifying such a war. (59; my emphasis)

Herbert groups Henty's "Mutiny" novels with the more than 60 "Mutiny" novels published at the end of the nineteenth century, identifying many of these lesser-known works as "particularly valuable as indices of popular consciousness at the time" (273). Herbert suggests there is a kind of intertextuality between these novels through their shared "emotional trauma" (274); a trauma that becomes evident through the authors' repetitive, compulsive, and "almost obsessional need to bring the 'Mutiny' to account, to register every detail of its origins" (Randall & Keep 212). Although Henty's *In Times of Peril* (1881) and *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893) were published almost 40 years after 1857, "campaigns in India against insurgent elements were still ongoing at the end of the century ... so a sense of the Raj as at least intermittently embattled would have been fresh for [Henty's] readers" (John Miller, *Empire* 35). Henty's "Mutiny" novels draw extensively from actual events during 1857, many of which are described in gratuitous detail. As he was known to absorb every detail he could on the historical events he was writing about (often taking out 10 books at a time from the London Library), and given his devotion to his career as a journalist, Henty was inevitably familiar with William Henry Russell's *My Diary in India, in the Year 1858-9*, "that vivid narrative of the suppression of the Indian Mutiny" (Fenn 42). Russell also worked as a war correspondent reporting on the Crimean War, where he became famous for his war coverage (Herbert 65). Russell's *Diary* breaks with other contemporary "Mutiny" writing "for it plainly predicts the collapse of the empire and of British world dominance, as a result not of geopolitics or shifts in global markets but of the deep moral and political failings of the imperial system itself" (Herbert 65). Henty's *Rujub, the Juggler* echoes Russell's criticism of the British Empire by offering an alternative form of masculinity that is better

fit to govern Britain's imperial system. Moreover, the novel's exploration of more serious and nuanced themes such as trauma, shame, suicide, cowardice, and rape distinguish it from Henty's other historical adventure novels that glorify and reinforce the British Empire and British imperialism.

The "Mutiny" in general, however, was still considered an appropriate historical subject for young people, and Henty's earlier and only other "Mutiny" novel, *In Times of Peril*, was specifically aimed at a juvenile audience with its teenaged boy-heroes, the 15- and 16-year-old Warrener brothers, Ned and Dick. These characters are "typical Henty heroes: prone to neglecting their study; self-confident to a degree that borders on impudence at times; intensely loyal, ... resourceful; and honourable" (Crane and Fletcher 161). Unlike Bathurst, who dreads the possibility of fighting again, the Warrener brothers enthusiastically adapt to their situation and survive the historical events of 1857 (e.g. the Cawnpore massacre, the siege of Lucknow, and the storming of Delhi) mostly unscathed and all the richer for it. In the oft-cited 1897 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* article, Hilda Gregg praises Henty's *In Times of Peril* for conforming to the standard juvenile adventure fiction narrative. Declaring that Henty is a "veteran favourite of young England", Gregg describes how the novel's heroic brothers "perform deeds of valour, instruct their elders, outwit the enemy, and gain promotion in a miraculously short time, after the manner which endears Mr. Henty to all his youthful readers, and, wonderful to relate, their manifold successes arouse no hostility in the minds of those who behold them" (225). Gregg's commentary reveals that, at least for her, there is nothing out of the ordinary about this novel since it perpetuates the same type of heroic masculinity nineteenth-century readers would have come to expect from Henty, and that it could

appropriately be categorized in the same genre of juvenile adventure fiction as his other novels during this time period.<sup>24</sup>

Despite Gregg's praise of *In Times of Peril* for its perpetuation and bolstering of "boys-own" adventure fiction, the novel reveals the instability of the masculine plot through its integration of strong female characters, both white and Indian, and the fact that the Warrener brothers continuously don *female* Muslim disguises in direct challenge to notions of unified selfhood "demanded by Victorian masculinity" (A. Phillips 9). Although Henty certainly plays into the idea of "stiff upper lip" manhood that Gregg commends him for, his exaggerated and near-meta acknowledgement of his own participation in the genre suggests at least some awareness of the theatricality of imperial masculinity and therefore the possibility of its façade and volatility.<sup>25</sup> For Amanda Phillips, *In Times of Peril* reveals a kind of masculinity "under stress" on account of the "patently un-masculine fluidity of identity" of its boy-heroes (15). The brothers first appear like any other Henty boy-hero as they are almost interchangeable (readers often do not know which one is speaking), are devoid of interiority, enjoy pig-sticking, and are always in good humour. Once word of the "Mutiny" reaches the Warrener family, however, the brothers, with their sister and female cousin, are sent off in disguise to avoid the possibility of their being murdered by the sepoy soldiers. Later, the boys are sheltered by an Indian princess who constantly reminds them that they are "only" boys who make "very pretty girls" (141). Phillips reads Henty's use of disguise and Dick's attraction to

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<sup>24</sup> As Gregg remarks, school children would have read *In Times of Peril* "again and again in their school-days, [the novel causing] a delightful thrill to behold on their tables" (225-226).

<sup>25</sup> For example, Henty has a dying British officer utter the following words: "Well, old fellow, *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, and you see it's my case," and dies with a smile, enacting perhaps the most perfect scene of manly British patriotism one could imagine" (*Peril* 108).

the Indian princess as their barrier to achieving British manliness (18, 22). Even when the boys achieve heroic status for successfully crossing “no-man’s land” and blowing up a native base (something no other adult British officer within the barricade thinks possible), Phillips argues that the Warrener brothers are still barred from the masculine world as they remain “darling boys” to the women in the camp (24). Nor do they seem to ever “seal” their masculinity in the same “characteristic manner of the masculine plot” (25) given that the novel ends in a double wedding. Yet it is not merely the feminization and domestication of the two brothers that contribute to the destabilization of their imperial masculinity; it is the perpetual threat of danger and violence of the “Mutiny” itself that initially drives them away from the masculine world of their father, Captain Warrener, and the other British soldiers who stand their ground and fight against the sepoy rebels.

In addition to the violent pig-sticking that the boys participate in at the beginning of the novel (a common pastime in India, one that Henty himself witnessed while on Tour with the Prince in India), the boys “listened with pale faces” as their father describes to them (from the letter he receives) the “scene of murder and atrocity which is happily without parallel in history” and reveals that “the whole of the white population inside the walls of Delhi were murdered under circumstances of the most horrible and revolting cruelty” (22-24). After their father lays out a plan for his sons to dress in Muslim women’s garb and after the “Mutiny” reaches their village, the brothers witness the violent bayonet stabbing of their nursemaid and the burning of their childhood home as they hide in the bushes with their sister and female cousin (*Peril* 31). They remain frozen in their hiding place as their village is ransacked by the mutineers:

The night was hideous with noises; musketshots, the sharp cracks of revolvers, shouts, cries, and at times the long shrill screams of women. It was too much to be borne, and feeling that for the present Saba's [their nursemaid] act had saved them, the boys, laying down their weapons, pressed their hands to their ears to keep out the din. There they sat for half an hour, stunned by the awful calamity, too horror-stricken at what had passed, and at the probable fate of their father, to find relief in tears. (33)

Overwhelmed by the Mutiny's violence, the four teenagers press their hands against their ears to block out the sounds of death and destruction, ultimately paralyzed by horror and fear as their childhood home burns to the ground. Symbolic of their coming of age and loss of innocence, from then on, the teenagers have no trouble witnessing and participating in violent acts as they make their way across Indian terrain to safety. Ned shoots and kills a native man, Kate receives a gunshot wound to her arm, and Dick bleeds "copiously from a wound across [his] cheek" from native gunfire (39-41). In addition to the narrative's explicit and perpetual violence, Henty also makes rather unpatriotic observations when describing the outbreak of the "Mutiny" at Meerut: a British force "if properly handled ... [could] have nipped the mutiny in the bud" (*Peril* 21). "Unhappily," Henty goes on, "they were not well handled. ... and the action of the troops was paralysed by the incompetency of the General, an old man who had lost all energy, and who remained in a state of indecision while the men of the native regiments shot their officers, [and] murdered all women and children" (21). Henty similarly takes issue with the orderly who was sent off with dispatches to the Delhi commanding officer in that he "might have saved the lives of hundreds of Englishmen and women, even if it were too

late to save Delhi; but nothing whatever was done” (21). According to Erll, the novel also participates in a kind of memorialization of the “Mutiny”, pausing at times to “question ... what the ‘Indian Mutiny’ actually meant with respect to the larger, mythical horizons of cultural memory: ‘This is no ordinary war, Dick; it is a struggle for existence’” (“Rewriting” 168; Henty, *Peril* 56). Although Henty suggests at various points in *In Times of Peril* a connection between violence and incompetent British governance in India, the novel ultimately reinforces Henty’s pattern of the imperial masculine plot.

For Gregg, Henty’s hand “has lost none of its cunning” when penning *In Times of Peril*, but her tone switches abruptly when turning her attention to *Rujub, the Juggler*. Providing a more thorough review of Henty’s adult “Mutiny” novel, Gregg takes a much harsher tone towards *Rujub, the Juggler* than the 20 other “Mutiny” novels she reviews in her article. Ignoring the fact that this was Henty’s most successful adult novel (out of the 11 that Henty published), selling approximately 11,000 copies within three years, Gregg suggests Henty has taken a false step with *Rujub, the Juggler*: “he has chosen for himself a hero who labours under the serious disadvantage, for one in his stirring circumstances, of becoming paralysed with fear at the sound of a discharge of firearms” (226). Although Gregg acknowledges the hero’s ailment to be “physical and hereditary,” she appears to take great issue with the “unfortunate” Ralph Bathurst, declaring him to have been “thrust upon us” (226). Like Gregg, Henty’s British publishers, Chatto and Windus, in the “Publishers’ Introduction” of the novel, comment on Bathurst’s stark difference from other Henty heroes, declaring him a “natural-born coward, who cannot stand the noise of gunfire” (iv). To absolve the hero in the minds of their readers, just as Gregg attempts to do, Chatto and Windus emphasize that Bathurst’s shortcoming is “hereditary” and that he



makes every desperate attempt to aid his friends in fighting, scouting, and physical labour (iv). Henty's publishers also incorrectly label Bathurst's physical impairment as cowardice and fear (v), for Bathurst is never actually afraid of any of the dangers he faces, only the *noise* (specifically gunfire) that accompanies them. What is particularly strange about these descriptions of Henty's central character, and particularly Gregg's criticism of *Rujub, the Juggler*, is their fixation with justifying Henty's choice of male hero to the reader. Gregg especially seems personally affronted by Bathurst's position as hero since, in her opinion, it is "difficult even for the reader to remain in sympathy with this luckless young man when his peculiar malady has overpowered him several times at the most critical moments, and we really cannot wonder that it creates a breach, which threatens to be permanent, between himself and the heroine" (226). Gregg appears perturbed by Bathurst's deficient masculinity, a deficiency she defines by his inability to master himself and his failure to immediately secure the love of the heroine through heroic deeds. She worries that Bathurst's physical defect may "expose" him to readers' misconceptions and questions whether Henty may have been tired of the stereotypical construction of "astonishingly brave, muscular, high-principled, and appallingly ingenious youth as the central figure of his stories" and therefore "resolved to pay back his critics in their own coin" through his creation of Bathurst. Gregg's apprehension of readers' misconceptions is well-founded since she herself misinterprets Bathurst as cowardly and weak even though Henty makes a point to emphasize, after Bathurst's disorder is made public, that Bathurst is neither of these things. He is simply unable to act in a manner that is considered "heroic"—he is unable to fire or hear the firing of guns—due to a physical impairment akin to blindness, deafness, or disability. The fact that

Gregg cannot imagine a symbolic function for Bathurst's condition perhaps indicates the degree of disbelief that Empire and its prescribed masculinity could be questioned at all.

Despite his impairment, Bathurst still takes physical action and demonstrates bravery in other ways: he volunteers to disguise himself and go alone, unarmed, to see how the "Mutiny" progresses outside their British encampment, and he forces himself, despite the physical agony he endures, to station himself atop the encampment with the other soldiers during several onslaughts of gunfire. Bathurst's first meaningful act of heroism, however, is his saving of Rujub, an Indian magician, and his daughter Radba, from being killed by a tiger, *without* the use of firearms (14). This first instance of Bathurst's heroism in saving a young woman from a tiger when her own father cannot, pointedly suggests Henty's criticism of British governance in India, for Bathurst also succeeds where his own father does not: his father fails to protect his wife from violent burglars, which results in her eventual death. Bathurst may not be able to participate in violent battles, but he can be heroic when it matters. Bathurst also demonstrates his alternative heroism in this episode, as he does not drive off the tiger with lethal violence but only his whip. Whereas other British men in the novel participate and talk at length about their enjoyment of killing tigers, Bathurst is less interested in killing them for sport than ensuring the protection of the native inhabitants. According to John Miller, Henty's "Mutiny" novels "use tigers in representations of British benevolence that aim to short-circuit anti-colonial grievances" ("Rebellious" 483). Miller argues that Bathurst's heroism in saving Rujub and his daughter from a "man-eater" tiger at the risk of his own life functions as a "valiant act that keeps the Indian loyal to the crown" and that the novel "carefully extends the range of Britain's predatory violence from protection of its own to

a far wider remit, bringing Indian colonial subjects into the safety of British care” (“Rebellious” 484; John Miller, *Empire* 42). Yet it is not the “crown” that earns Rujub and his daughter’s loyalty, but Bathurst himself, since Rujub declares that he is at Bathurst’s “service henceforth” (Henty 14). In a Victorian context, Bathurst may “embody ... the nobility of the British national mission in India” (Herbert 281), and therefore function as a stand in for the “crown”, but his use of non-lethal violence and his challenging of British policy in India suggest Henty’s mixed feelings regarding Britain’s governance leading up to 1857.

Historians of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 often invoked animal imagery to describe the Indian rebels, likening both their ferocity and savagery to that of the Indian tiger, “an animal that became a defining image of the conflict [of the Indian Mutiny]” (John Miller, “Rebellious” 480). Having spent a year (1875-6) in India as a correspondent for the *London Standard*, Henty regularly witnessed the Prince of Wales participate in tiger-hunting, which served as both an enjoyable pastime and a practical “imperial service”, one that positioned the British administrator as the benevolent protector of the colonial subject (483). Since the symbolism of tiger-hunting combines imperial rule with colonial administration, Henty’s *Rujub, the Juggler* suggests a more complicated reading of the tiger metaphor in that it also appears to be a stand-in for the “counterattacking Briton [...and his] animal nature,” who in turn victimizes the Indians in the name of Britain’s quest for imperial control (John Miller, “Rebellious” 481, 484). Before the “Mutiny” breaks out in the novel, Dr. Wade and several other English officers successfully protect a neighbouring native village from a man-eating tiger—though they use a native woman and child as bait to do so—by capturing and killing it, as tiger

hunting “represents an opportunity to prove themselves the right kind of men” (John Miller, *Empire* 39). Dr. Wade takes particular pride in the service they have rendered for the natives: “They have been living a life of terror for weeks. They must feel as if they had woke from a nightmare” (Henty 113). When the “Mutiny” breaks out, however, the English soldiers no longer participate in the “zoological hygiene” (John Miller, “Rebellious” 483) of hunting tigers that continuously attack the Indian villages; instead, their desire to hunt tigers switches to Indians: “I have always been a hunter,” Dr. Wade remarks as they prepare to fight off the Mutineers, “and this time it is human ‘tigers’ I am going in pursuit of” (Henty 379). John Miller reads Henty’s interchangeable tiger-Sepoy metaphor as evidence of the genocidal practices of nineteenth-century British imperialism: “killing Sepoys is an administrative duty that aims towards political stability through the control of wildness” (“Rebellious” 485). Bathurst’s favourable, non-violent view of the Indian natives is therefore out of step with the other British male officers and many nineteenth-century “Mutiny” historians: he recognizes them as people and *not* ferocious tigers.

Although Rujub’s effusive gratitude towards Bathurst for saving his life certainly reinforces Miller’s argument that “Henty’s insistence on the administrator’s heroism [as opposed to the soldier’s] has the effect of dressing up self-interested legislation as colonial altruism” (“Rebellious” 484), Miller fails to account for Bathurst’s outright dismissal of Rujub’s praise or his defense of the Indian population, including Rujub himself, after Rujub questions whether any of his own countrymen would have saved him and his daughter from a man-eating tiger: “Yes, I think there are many [Indians] who would have done so [. . .] You do your countrymen injustice. There are plenty of brave

men among them, and I have heard before now of villagers, armed only with sticks, attacking a tiger who has carried off a victim from among them. You yourself were standing boldly before it when I came up” (Henty 14). Bathurst does, like the majority of his fellow countrymen of the nineteenth century, problematically speak about Indian natives using patronizing, infantilizing, and orientaling rhetoric (e.g., “when one sees this hard-working, patient, gentle people making their lot so much harder than it need be by their customs and observances one longs to force them even against their own will to burst their bonds”), he remains the only British male character to express affection and support for their well-being: “When you get to know the natives well you cannot help liking them and longing to do them some good if they would but let you” (88). His positive perception of the Indians and his assertion that they are more than capable of looking after each other and themselves disrupts Britain’s position as the superior colonial protector. Bathurst may be an example of an “ideal portrait” of British administrators, but he and other “Mutiny” literature fictional representations “testify clearly to a society seeking in retrospect to construct a securely nationalistic and affirmative mythology of the great Indian war and expressing a wracking uncertainty in doing so” (Herbert 281). Unlike Henty’s other imperial white adventurers, Bathurst never overindulges in his own heroism, nor does he ever have a harsh word for the native men and women of India, separating him even further from his fellow “white sahibs” who believe themselves superior.

Although Henty never reveals his motive for describing Bathurst as someone with a unique physical condition of debilitation at the sound of firearms, Gregg makes a strange remark regarding Henty’s positioning of Bathurst as the novel’s hero. She asserts

that Henty's decision serves to avoid "punish[ing] the boys for the sins of their elders" (226). Gregg's meaning is not immediately clear since she does not expand further, yet her observation does suggest an awareness of something different at work in Henty's *Rujub, the Juggler*. By championing a hero who suffers from a physiological aversion to gunfire, Henty suggests Bathurst's distinction from imperial soldiers, like Bathurst's father, who protect (often with violence) the Empire's interests overseas. Bathurst's condition *is* the punishment for the sins of his father: internalizing that trauma from those sins, Bathurst rejects traditional forms of imperial masculinity in favour of a more understanding and sympathetic form of manliness. As a metaphor for his inherited trauma, Bathurst's condition speaks to Henty's recognition of what Bristow observes to be the unrealistic expectations placed on British boy heroes. His condition therefore reveals that the unchecked violence connected with imperial masculinity, and the oppressive imposition of such a role on its boy-heroes, is psychologically damaging. For Henty, then, this violent form of masculinity does not make men "men" but unmans them. Originating while still in his mother's womb, Bathurst's trauma is inherited, the trauma inextricably tied to the explicit violence associated with the "Mutiny" and with Britain's weakening imperialist rule in India. Bathurst's traumatic response to violent forms of imperialism (the "sins of his elders") becomes Henty's alternative approach to the imperial "conveyor belt" (Mangan 9) of man-making and empire building. Bathurst may insist that he is "constitutionally" a coward, a problematic measure of cowardice perpetuated by upholders of the imperialist tradition, yet he never shrinks from any danger, labour, or pain involving the protection of others above himself, unlike his father, who leaves his son and wife unprotected in the name of Empire.

Gregg's analysis of Bathurst's "hereditary" condition is in line with nineteenth-century understandings of legal inheritance (the primogeniture passing of property) as well as concerns about degeneration brought about in response to Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Up until the mid-nineteenth century, however, "hereditary" was still being used as "a simple suggestive metaphor" rather than as a scientific term *except* in the case of hereditary disease, which, like property, was considered (as far back as antiquity) something that one inherited (López-Beltrán 106, 5). By the late nineteenth century, Victorians were convinced that any physical or mental impairment was likely hereditary and that "biological inheritance determines destiny" (H. Logan 2-3). Due to the conflicting medical discourse on physiological and neurological disorders, however, Victorians were equally aware of the possibility of being "misdiagnosed" and suffering the consequences for it (5). Although women were the ones most often associated with mental instability, and Henty too suggests that Bathurst inherits the shock his *mother* experienced the night she died, Gregg's reference to the "sins" of Bathurst's "elders" evokes the patriarchal line, an unconscious recognition of the inherent failings of the more violent forms of masculinity Bathurst's father represents. Bathurst's aversion to noise is not necessarily genetic in the way that Gregg and Henty's publishers appear to be using "hereditary", especially given how Bathurst defies the "destiny" of his debilitating affliction by overcoming his inherited trauma when he accepts that he is, as Deane might argue, a "better man" than his father before him. Instead, Henty's use of heredity is a metaphor for Bathurst's trauma. His physical inability to hear noise is symptomatic of the unhealed inherited wound in the British cultural imaginary and associated with the violence of the "Mutiny" of 1857.

## 2.4 Henty's "Defective" Bathurst: Mapping "Shock" on the "Mutiny" Boy-Hero

It seems to me that I could undertake any desperate service; I dread it simply because I know when the din of battle begins my body will overmaster my mind, and that I shall be as I was at Chillianwala, completely paralysed.

—Bathurst describing his physiological condition in *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893)

Despite it being one of Henty's more popular adult novels, most scholars continue to dismiss *Rujub, the Juggler* as another one of Henty's characteristic historical adventure novels. Ralph Crane and Lisa Fletcher assert that *all* of Henty's Indian novels "conform to his formula for historical adventure ... [which] include plucky heroes; a cut-and-paste approach to the inclusion of historical detail; and an episodic narrative structure, which concludes with the hero's return to England" (161). By opening their article with an analysis of the cultural significance of the illustrations within Henty's Indian novels with an image from Henty's *Rujub, the Juggler*—a novel that *challenges* Henty's "cut-and-paste" historical adventure approach—Crane and Fletcher reveal that they have failed to adequately explore the novel's nuances in terms of its most important figure: Henty's "alternative" hero, Ralph Bathurst. Crane and Fletcher assert that their chosen *Rujub, the Juggler* scene (which is meant to depict Bathurst on horseback) is one that pictures a "British soldier, his sword drawn, rid[ing] away from three armed sepoys" and anticipates "the possibility of a hero's death at the hands of mutineers" (155). They conclude that the image "is not a scene of defeat, retreat, or cowardice, but one of heroism in the face of peril" (156). Although the image they describe is certainly "an exemplar of the illustration of popular imperial adventure fiction in the closing decades of the nineteenth century" (156), Crane and Fletcher incorrectly label Bathurst a "British soldier" and problematically ignore that Bathurst suffers from a crippling physiological disorder, a kind of shell shock, where he cannot endure the sound of gunfire, which results in his



having to *leave* the British army to become a government official. The framing of this image (which, while accurately depicting Bathurst's heroic act) reveals that even Henty's illustrators attempted to smooth over the less flattering characteristics of Henty's "alternative" hero by refusing to illustrate Bathurst during moments when he is "unmanned". Crane and Fletcher are therefore certainly correct that the illustrations within Henty's novels "reaffirm[...] the iconography and the ideology of Britain's empire" (172) since they erase the possibility of alternative forms of imperial masculinity that *Rujub, the Juggler* showcases.

Henty's hero is conspicuous by his absence. Whereas most Henty's novels open with his stereotypical "Boy-Hero", *Rujub, the Juggler* opens with a party hosted by the novel's villain: Nana Sahib. As the Rajah at Bithoor, Nana Sahib is extremely well-liked by the English officers and ladies due to his extravagant parties; there is no other Rajah in India, according to Henty's narrator, "with more pronounced English tastes or greater affection for English people" (2). Henty describes Nana Sahib as an ideal Englishman given that he speaks English fluently, enjoys dining with English officers, is "a good shot", can "hold his own at billiards", owns "first-rate English horses", always pays compliments to the English ladies (even declares that his greatest regret is that "his color and his religion prevented his entertaining the hope of obtaining an English wife"), and believed to be "a thoroughly good fellow all round" (1-2). Henty ascribes to Nana Sahib the characteristics of the nineteenth-century British "gentleman"; in many ways, Nana Sahib could easily be the hero of this narrative since he possesses many of the necessary "qualifications", barring his "color and religion", of course (2). Henty deliberately makes a show of presenting the Rajah as an English gentleman to demonstrate to his readership

how Nana Sahib successfully deceives the English officers in India that he is their friend and ally. Henty's exaggerated caricature, however, also conveys his criticism of British authority in India as the officers are so easily flattered by Nana Sahib's generosity. Henty achieves this by reminding his readers about the justifiable grudge Nana Sahib still must have against the British: "All this [the Rajah's generosity], as everyone said, was the more remarkable and praiseworthy, inasmuch as he had good grounds of complaint against the British Government" (2). Speaking with General Wheeler, an important "Mutiny" historical figure in Henty's narrative, the Rajah declares that the "Government has treated [him] so badly that [he] must try to take something out of the pockets of its officers" (3).<sup>26</sup> Henty's acknowledgement of these "good grounds" and General Wheeler's failure to see through Nana Sahib's flattery again suggests Henty's criticism of British rule in India leading up to the "Mutiny". Events might have gone differently, according to Henty, had English officers been a different kind of "gentleman".

Bathurst never directly stands opposed to Nana Sahib nor does he even have direct interaction with him, calling further attention to his general absence as the narrative's hero. According to Nancy Paxton, Isobel Hannay, the novel's heroine, "participates more fully in the hero's adventures" ("Mobilizing" 264). After the death of her brother, Isobel journeys to India to keep house for uncle, Major Hannay. Soon after her arrival, Isobel catches the eye of Nana Sahib. Unlike the novel's hero, it is Isobel who frequently interacts with the Nana and remains the only person who sees beyond the

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<sup>26</sup> In June 1818, Peshwa Baji Rao II suffered a defeat by Brigadier General Sir John Malcolm. To compensate the Peshwa, and to allow him to continue living in the style to which he was accustomed, the East India Company granted Baji Rao II a pension of £80,000 per annum. Having no natural heirs, the Baji Rao II adopted two sons: Nana Govind Dondhu Pant (Nana Sahib) and Sadashur Rao (Dada Sahib). Although Hindu law recognized adopted sons, the British refused to acknowledge Nana Sahib as his heir and claimed that the pension was only meant to last for the duration of Baji Rao II's lifetime (Frith 370).

Nana's "gentlemanly" façade. Although Dr. Wade too remarks more than once on his suspicions regarding the "unnaturalness" of the Nana's desire to be on good terms with the British given his "considerable grounds for grievance", he is nevertheless taken in by the Nana after the Nana offers him the use of his elephants to aid with his shooting, a pastime of which he is particularly fond—a fact on which Isobel indignantly calls out Dr. Wade (78; 96; 100). When Isobel catches her first glimpse of the Nana during her first time at the Cawnpore racecourse, she remarks that his face "does not tell [her] anything, it is like looking at a mask" (77). Before even meeting him, she declares she does not like him, and her impression of him only worsens upon attending one of his garden parties where he refuses to leave her side throughout the evening. Her uncle, Major Hannay, chides Isobel for her "unfounded" dislike and reminds her that the Nana is "a general favorite; he is open-handed and liberal; very fond of entertaining; a great admirer of [Britain] as a nation. He is a wonderfully well-read man for a Hindoo, can talk upon almost every subject, and is really a pleasant fellow" (96). Isobel is adamant in her passionate dislike of the Nana, declaring that he gave her a "creepy feeling," that not "one single word he said was sincere," and even compares him to a snake: "They say snakes fascinate birds before they eat them by fixing their eyes upon them. I should say it was something of that sort of look" (97). Her uncle dismisses her concerns, remarking that the Nana is not going to "eat" her, which is all the more significant given that Isobel's intuition regarding the Nana's predatory nature (his capture of and intention to rape her) proves correct.<sup>27</sup> Removing the hero from his customary position of explicit

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<sup>27</sup>A plot device not dissimilar to the one staged in the October 1857 Surrey Theatre production of William Creswick and Richard Shepherd's *India in 1857*, the first "Mutiny" play performed in London. Emily, daughter of Colonel Morton, is the only one – on account of her "female intuition" – to see through Nana Sahib's "façade" (Wallace 595-596).

adversary of the narrative's villain and framing the heroine as more competent than most British soldiers in India, Henty further implicates the British government in the events that led to the outbreak of the "Mutiny". Bathurst's absenteeism is therefore not suggestive of any inherent failings, but the failure of the British Empire to recognize alternative heroes.

Ralph Bathurst does not appear on the scene until the second chapter and is altogether different from Henty's typical boy-heroes due to his non-violent nature. As Bathurst, the District Officer at Deennuggur, readies to mount his horse to travel 40 miles from Deennuggur to settle a dispute in the neighbouring town of Narkeet, two English male acquaintances, Mr. Hunter and Mr. Garnet, approach Bathurst to warn him that there is a man-eating tiger in the jungle and therefore encourage him to bring a "pair of pistols" to defend himself (7). Bathurst rejects their suggestion of firearms, informing them that he prefers his hunting whip since he is a "peaceful man by profession" and leaves "firearms to those whose profession it is to use them" (7). When Bathurst rides off, Mr. Hunter and Mr. Garnet acknowledge that Bathurst is a "fine young fellow [...] full of energy, and, they say, the very best linguist in Oude" (18), a description, according to Rachel Johnson, that loosely resembles the "Mutiny" historical "hero" of Major John Nicholson (1821-1857) who, in addition to mastering the Urdu language, "worked in India between 1839 and 1857 and carried only a hunting-whip on his journeys" (152). Although Johnson is correct that Bathurst shares some biographic details with Nicholson (both secure their respective positions in India from their uncles; fight in the Battle of Chillianwala; possess a strong belief in the "civilization" of India; and earn a year's leave after spending 10 years in India, but refuse to take it), Bathurst is the opposite of his

historical counterpart. Whereas Nicholson remains infamous within British historiography as the puritanical, dogmatic butcher of 1857—and carried a whip (in addition to a sword and pistols) specifically to brutalize Indian Sepoys for disobedience—Bathurst does everything in his power to avoid violence altogether. Nicholson embodied the British imperial ideal of masculine heroism, “incarnating ... the ancestral or mythic father of the nation at large” (Herbert 52). Bathurst has more in common with the public school Arnoldian boy than the Henty hero, “for he is prepared not only to act on his own initiative, but to record unfairness with a view to rectifying it” (R. Johnson 152). It is particularly interesting, then, that Henty should suggest a connection between Bathurst and Major Nicholson, a man notoriously known as one of the most violent figures of the “Mutiny”. Henty’s loose fictional rewriting of Major Nicholson’s role in the “Mutiny” suggests a rejection of Britain’s celebration of violent masculinity and a desire for an alternative boy-hero, one who brings about change through the pen (e.g., policy) and not the sword.

Bathurst’s non-violent nature is not all that separates him from other men: his work ethic and even personality are off-putting to those around him, which results in other characters questioning his manhood. Mr. Hunter and Mr. Garnet are the first to comment on Bathurst’s strangeness after Bathurst rides off to Narkeet, remarking that they do not “understand” him: “I like a man who is like other fellows; Bathurst isn’t. He doesn’t shoot, he doesn’t ride—I mean he don’t care for pig-sticking; he never goes in for any fun there may be on hand; he just works—nothing else; he does not seem to mix with other people; he is the sort of fellow one would say had got some sort of secret connected with him” (7). Shooting, riding, and pig-sticking are common pastimes for British men in

India, and Bathurst rarely participates in these activities, and only rides for work-related purposes. Whereas Nana Sahib enjoys having fun and participates in all the usual “English” pastimes, Bathurst “takes no interest in sport of any kind; he does not care for society; he very rarely goes to the club, and never touches a card when he does” (92). Although most British officers enjoy explicitly violent sports or vice-like activities, Bathurst avoids them altogether. It is his deliberate avoidance of violence that distinguishes Bathurst from other men, and in the opinions of his fellow men, makes him “unmanly”. Mr. Hunter and Mr. Garnet’s description of Bathurst’s work ethic (“he just works—nothing else”) reveals that it is uncommon and even unnatural for British men to be that devoted to and invested in their professions. Dr. Wade, Bathurst’s closest friend, teases Bathurst for being a “monomaniac” about his work, and Bathurst even remarks later to Isobel Hannay—after asserting that social balls are “altogether out of [his] line”—that he in fact has no “line” (hobbies): “The fact is, there is really more work to be done than one can get through” (88). Like Mr. Hunter and Mr. Garnet, the women in Bathurst’s social circle question Bathurst’s work obsession. Mrs. Hunter, a close friend of Isobel Hannay, warns Isobel to “beware” of Bathurst because he might “inoculate [her] with some of his fads” (91). Bathurst even earns himself an insulting nickname (“Timon of Athens”) with the women since none of them take seriously his desire to effect change (92). The negative and uncomfortable response to Bathurst’s work ethic and his disinterest in “play” suggest Henty’s criticism of British rule in India and his offer of an alternative type of administrative structure to rectify this weakened governance.

Those around Bathurst are so mistrustful of his fixation with work that they assume something must have happened in his past to make him this way. Although

Bathurst has never done anything wrong, he does—as Mr. Hunter and Mr. Garnet correctly observe—possess a secret: his physiological inability to endure noise, which is the root cause of his aversion to firearms as well as an outward representation of his pacifist nature. It is his pacifism and opinionated nature that make him an “altogether unusual” young man, one who becomes known among the English officers as a “sort of knight errant, an official Don Quixote. Perhaps the best officer in the province in some respects, but hopelessly impracticable” (8). Frequently finding himself “thoroughly out of temper” when conducting business with other men due to their “pig-headed stupidity and obstinacy”, Bathurst cannot help but “make a dozen suggestions for the improvements of things in general” and is therefore considered a “thorn . . . in the side of the big-wigs” (72, 74, 89). Since Bathurst is no “mere official machine”, insists on getting “to the bottom of things”, and continually challenges decisions that he considers unfair, he is “always cordially disliked” by and frequently getting into “hot water” with his fellow officers and the Chief Commissioner because they have a “horror of enthusiasm” (8; 89). It is Bathurst’s “earnestness [that] injures both his prospects and his utility”, which speaks more to the poor calibre of the other men than it does about Bathurst. Bathurst, if anything, has *too much* personality and interiority, a trait in direct contrast with Henty’s distinctively “masculine” boy-heroes. Unrecognizable from Henty’s boy-heroes, Bathurst functions as an alternative and even a response to what Henty saw as an unfit type of masculinity that resulted in Britain’s near loss of India in the mid-nineteenth century.

Whereas Henty’s boy-heroes are often unquestionably masculine and rarely emotional, Bathurst owns his deficiencies and admits—even in front of Isobel Hannay, his eventual love interest—to possessing what are generally considered feminine

characteristics. At the Cawnpore horse races, Isobel and Bathurst speak privately for the first time. Assuming due to his unsettled appearance that Bathurst has lost money on one of the races, Isobel attempts to comment on his current state: “‘You are looking—’ and she stopped” (86). Bathurst understands her hesitation and has no qualms about completing the description she dares not speak aloud: “‘Shaky?’ he said. ‘Yes, I feel shaky’”, and explains that it was the “shouting and excitement at the [race’s] finish” that made him breathless and feel “quite faint” (87). Isobel sympathizes with him because she experiences a similar reaction at the close of the last race, remarking that she “did not know men felt like that. They don’t generally seem to know what nerves are” (87). Bathurst explains that he has suffered from nerves since he was a small child, without going into too much detail, and that this has proven a great “nuisance” to him in that he “can’t get over it” (87). Isobel does not think Bathurst looks as though he is a nervous man, and Bathurst observes in frustration that men who appear “bronzed” and physically healthy never will receive “credit for being nervous”; for him, his condition is “a most serious misfortune” (87). Bathurst’s use of the word “credit” suggests that it is a particularly sore point for him, in that his physical appearance has essentially trapped him within expectations of a specific type of masculinity that he himself cannot emulate or perform due to his invisible physiological condition. Isobel is surprised by Bathurst’s passionate “earnestness”, suggesting that it is not often she encounters men who are not just willing to speak honestly about their emotions, but openly (87). Isobel observes how nervousness is generally “regarded as a feminine quality” and that if men do feel nervous, it must certainly be very disagreeable to them (87). Bathurst then confesses to Isobel that his “pet horror is noise; thunder prostrates [him] completely, and in fact all noises,



especially any sharp, sudden sound, affect [him]" (87). He goes on to compare himself to women, clearly frustrated that they are able to experience such feelings and not thought lesser for it: "I fancy a woman with nerves considers herself as a martyr, and deserving of all pity and sympathy. It is almost a fashionable complaint, and she is a little proud of it; but a man ought to have his nerves in good order, and as much as that is expected of him unless he is a feeble little body" (87). Bathurst's passionate diatribe reveals an important distinction between "feminine" and "masculine" nerves, where women are commended for their sensitivity, while men are condemned for showing any sign of physical weakness. Bathurst also argues for the need for compassion over force to bring about social change when he expresses his desire for access to "an army of ten thousand English ladies all speaking the language well to go about among the women and make friends with them; there would be more good done in that way than by all the officials in India" (88). Bathurst's preferred method of diplomacy runs counter to the British mentality towards India, as the British relied on their histories and literature post-1857 to "justify the extremely violent British military campaign ... to legitimize more authoritarian, forceful, and racist policies in British colonial strategies of control" (Paxton, *Writing* 6). Bathurst's assertion that "feminine" characteristics possess greater value in establishing diplomacy than the use of military force parallels Henty's critique of Britain's governance of nineteenth-century India and his belief that a more socially-minded, less physically-violent masculinity was *required* for this effective governance.

Bathurst's aversion to force positions him as better fit to govern than conventionally masculine nineteenth-century men since he never abuses his power as a British administrator, nor does he use excessive force when interacting with Indian

natives or fauna. According to John Miller, Bathurst's first interaction with Indian villagers is representative of the hierarchical structure of British administrator and colonial subjects, specifically through their "differing approaches to the man-eating tiger that has for some time been ravaging the neighbourhood" (*Empire* 36). Miller argues that Bathurst's laissez-faire attitude towards the knowledge of the tiger's presence in the forest identifies him as "the natural master of this terrain and highlights the ongoing task of British rule in bringing this dangerous region into the safety of colonial administration" (*Empire* 36). However, Bathurst is certainly no master or dominator of India's terrain; his skill lies elsewhere, specifically in his "perfect knowledge of [the native's] language, [and] the pains he took to sift all matters brought before him to the bottom" (Henty 11). His "popularity" among the natives stems from his ability to regularly seek out justice for them and more specifically his "sympathy, the real interest which he showed in their cases, and the patience with which he listened to their stories" (11). Even when Bathurst rules in favour of one group of natives over another, the "defeated party admired the manner in which the fabric of falsehood was pulled to pieces" as a result of Bathurst's thorough detective work (11). Although Bathurst does possess more authority to bring about justice for the Indians than they currently possess themselves, he does not take advantage of their trust, nor does he ever act in a manner that suggests he considers himself above them. His particular devotion and loyalty to the natives distinguish him from other British men of his acquaintance who frequently express confusion over Bathurst's dedication to bringing about peaceful mediation between Indian villages. Bathurst clearly functions as a bridge to the divide between British settlers and Indian natives. Based on his reading of several "portraits of idealized

British administrators” in “Mutiny” literature, including Henty’s Bathurst, Herbert argues that characters like Bathurst do not reflect “imperial reality”, but “wish-fulfillment fantasies” given that the British public in 1857 was painfully aware “of the bitterest grievances expressed by native Indians against British rule” (282). In addition to Bathurst being “deeply loved” by the natives, Herbert argues that Bathurst’s “high-minded altruism, hatred of racism, and devotion to the welfare of the Indian population are in many ways sharply at odds with prevailing attitudes in the British imperial establishment” (282). Although Bathurst’s “ideological function” does reinforce the British public’s belief in the inherent “humanitarian” nature of imperialism, Henty’s portrait of Bathurst may not “unequivocally glorify the raj after all” (282). Bathurst’s pacifist masculinity therefore exposes the Empire for its questionable administrative practices and suggests an alternative approach to British governance in India.

Despite Bathurst’s manifold qualities as a British administrator and gentleman, he feels himself inferior to most men due to his physiological condition which prevents him from taking part in military action. According to Bathurst, his aversion to gunfire and noise in general can be traced to before he was born, while still in his mother’s womb. When Bathurst’s father, “a very gallant officer” (67), was in India becoming a decorated war hero, Bathurst’s mother had had a “great fright” after burglars broke into their family country home and “threatened to blow out her brains” (135). Falling ill for weeks after the event, Bathurst’s mother dies a few days after Bathurst is born “never having ... recovered from the shock she had suffered that night” (135). Her death leaves Bathurst without any parental figures until the age of 10, when Bathurst’s father finally returns home from India (135). Upon his return, Bathurst’s father discovers that his son is “a

weakly, timid boy—that sort of boy who is always bullied at school” (135). Bathurst believes that his father’s disappointment in him “added to [his] timidity, for it grew upon [him] rather than otherwise” (135). Since Bathurst’s father’s “heart [is] set” on his son joining the army (135), Bathurst feels that he must live up to his father’s expectations of a rigidly defined imperial masculinity. Before he joins the British regiment in India to distinguish himself like his father, Bathurst’s father forces his son to practice shooting. Although already knowing at this point in his life that gunfire was “abhorrent” to him, Bathurst obeys his father and takes the gun that his father forces into his hand (135). Upon firing, however, Bathurst faints, which further alienates him from his father and exacerbates Bathurst’s initial trauma. The absentee or failed father (in this case, both) is a common theme in Henty’s work. Whereas mothers are the “paragons” of ideal parenthood, “fathers fail”; they are either dead, absent, captured, or incompetent, acting “as poor models for their children” and often forcing their sons “into the wilderness of the colonies” (McMahon 163). Whereas some Henty scholars suggest that the plot device of the failed father figure is to make room for the boy-hero’s adventure narrative, McMahon argues that “paternal failure not only positions colonial forays as a matter of family pride and survival but also establishes an explicitly gendered division of imperial labour in which young men are expected to protect women” (163). Yet *Rujub, the Juggler*’s emphasis on the double cruelty of Bathurst’s father—his lack of remorse over the loss of his wife and his harsh treatment of his son—suggests something more insidious at work here. Although Henty does not openly criticize the parental failings of Bathurst’s father in forcing him to become a soldier, the fact that Bathurst’s father’s disappointment in his son exacerbates Bathurst’s physical condition suggests that, in

Henty's mind, not all men must be soldiers capable of exacting violence to be considered a man or a hero, and that imposing such constricting expectations on all men will only do them further harm and indeed traumatize them. Assuming that his reaction to gunfire was simply due to "nervousness", however, and that he would get over it in time, Bathurst follows through with his father's wishes and makes the journey to India to fight in the Punjab war (135). Having never been in battle, however, Bathurst is unprepared for the overwhelming sound of gunfire all around him: "from the moment the first gun was fired to the end of the day I was as one paralyzed" (136). Bathurst must relive his trauma, for he sees and hears nothing during the battle; collapsing "insensible" when the gunfire finally ceases, he is discharged from the army (136). Bathurst's early departure from the war due to his physiological and seemingly psychological condition anticipates the twentieth-century British medical community's work on discharged soldiers at the end of the First World War.

In his Preface to Frederick Walker Mott's *War Neuroses and Shell Shock* (1919), Dr. Christopher Addison asserts that in Colonel Mott's study of discharged soldiers, Mott identified, in a large percentage of men, "an inborn or acquired nervous predisposition, who when put to the severe nervous strain of shell fire and the stress of trench-warfare break down after a short time, either from exhaustion or from emotional shock" (viii). Although Henty's *Rujub, the Juggler* was published well before World War I, Henty's description of Bathurst's condition anticipates what the British medical community would eventually define as "shell-shock". In *Shell-Shock and Medical Culture in First World War Britain*, Tracey Loughran identifies hysteria and neurasthenia as the two main nervous disorders recognized by British psychiatry before 1914, and shell-shock was

comprised of these and other “nervous and mental disorders of war” (52). As a disease defined as nervous weakness, neurasthenia was originally made popular in the 1880s and 1890s by American neurologist, Dr. George Beard. In *The Age of Noise in Britain: Hearing Modernity*, James G. Mansell argues that Beard’s “formulation” of neurasthenia portrayed the disease as “*both* a medical diagnosis *and* a cultural critique of modernity” (43). Mansell also observes that late nineteenth-century fiction writers “had been keen to incorporate neurasthenic and noise-sensitive characters into their literary narratives” to critique the future of modern civilization (43). As a “noise-sensitive” character with implied characteristics of a neurasthenic, Bathurst’s condition does not suggest a return to the eighteenth-century “nervous” man but embodies an alternative masculine ideal to an unchecked violent imperial masculinity. For Henty, this new man would balance wisdom with industry—desired qualities in “middle-class manhood” (Micale 56)—and prioritize moral over “physical” bravery. Henty’s combination of Bathurst’s ideal characteristics of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century conceptions of manhood with his physiological aversion to gunfire parallels Henty’s criticism of conventional nineteenth-century masculinity and Britain’s violent colonial practices abroad.

In addition to his open criticism of Britain’s governance in India, Bathurst’s physiological condition mirrors Henty’s rejection of nineteenth-century violent masculinity. Bathurst’s reaction to his participation as a soldier in warfare is quite extreme; he is left in a stupor for an entire fortnight, unable to remember anything and too unwell to leave his bed (Henty 136). The army doctors attribute Bathurst’s collapse to a high fever to cover up what they ultimately suspect: Bathurst’s cowardice. Rumours circulate about “the real cause of [his] illness” and Bathurst feels that he has no choice

but to resign from his post and return to England to face his father (136). The news comes as a “blow” to Bathurst’s father “that his son should be a coward” (136). Unable to bear his father’s anger and disappointment, Bathurst’s home becomes “too unhappy to be endured”, and he returns to India to try his hand at the Civil Service, where he assumes that he will never have to fire a gun again (136). Although Bathurst’s trauma originates from the physical shock that ultimately kills his mother, the significance of Bathurst’s father (a “successful” heroic representative of the British Empire) fighting in India at the time of Bathurst’s birth—instead of practicing effective governance at home (i.e., protecting Bathurst’s mother)—morally implicates Britain in its dealings abroad and in its dealings with its own people. Bathurst’s condition is therefore symptomatic of a larger cultural trauma: the “sins of his elders” that are visited upon him signal the inherited legacy of Britain’s violent participation in the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. Although Bathurst may suffer from a physiological condition that initially prevents him from taking part in battle, he does not abandon his post or the people around him during the “Mutiny”, thus demonstrating that, at least for Henty, “physical” courage alone does not make a man.

Henty is particularly preoccupied with constructions of masculinity based on the number of conversations that occur surrounding Bathurst’s condition and the difference between heroism and cowardice, a debate which comes to a head as a result of the “Mutiny”. Johnson briefly explores how Bathurst “differs from the critiqued [Henty boy-hero] stereotype” and how this generates “discussion within the narrative on the nature of courage” (8). The first of these conversations transpires between Dr. Wade and Isobel, after Isobel learns from Captain Forster—who knew and bullied Bathurst at school—that

Bathurst once showed the “white feather” during the Punjab war. Already half in love with Bathurst when she learns of Bathurst’s abrupt departure from the war, Isobel feels betrayed and resentful toward Dr. Wade, who she believes misled her about Bathurst’s character: “If he did [show cowardice], and you know it, why did you invite him here? Why did you always praise him? Why did you not say, ‘In other respects this man may be good and estimable, but he is that most despicable thing, a coward?’” (150). Isobel demands that Dr. Wade tell her the truth, and Dr. Wade feels that he has no choice but to reveal—at least in part—what Bathurst confessed to him regarding his past. Like Bathurst’s father, Isobel experiences a great “blow” from the news and passionately questions Dr. Wade, “surely every man ought to be brave. Could anyone possibly respect a man who is a coward?” (149). Dr. Wade then philosophizes on the characteristic of courage, asserting that it is not “a universal endowment” and that there are physical and moral aspects of cowardice (149). While some people may be one or the other, Dr. Wade argues, “constitutional” cowardice may only occur “partially” (149). He then uses examples of men who are afraid of rats and thunder; while they may have childlike fears, they still are able to be brave in other aspects of their lives (149). He concludes that in neither of these instances are the men at fault because their fear is beyond their control and presses the point upon Isobel that Bathurst is “an exceptionally noble character” regardless of his constitutional weakness regarding loud noises (149). Yet Isobel remains unconvinced, for she believes that if a man cannot be brave in battle, then he must be a coward: “I have always thought that the one virtue in man I really envied was bravery, and that a coward was the most despicable creature living” (149). Isobel too has been indoctrinated by the narrative of imperial masculinity: “Tales of daring and bravery had



always been her special delight, and being full of life and spirit herself, it had not seemed even possible to her that a gentleman could be a coward” (151). The issue of “fault” in Bathurst’s case is therefore meaningless to Isobel, for to lack bravery “when [a man] is strong seems to put a man below the level of a woman” (149)—and quite literally “unmans” him in her eyes. Isobel cannot reconcile Bathurst’s other superior masculine qualities—his devotion to his work, his intelligence, his restrained manner (in contrast to the boyish humour of the other men of her acquaintance), his strength, his reliability—with his want of “physical” courage.

Until she learns of Bathurst’s condition, however, Isobel feels that Bathurst “approached her ideal of what a man should be” (151). Yet for Isobel, whose internalized beliefs are representative of nineteenth-century cultural expectations of British men, nothing is more “dreadful” than a man who is wanting in courage, “a man’s first attribute” (151). Bathurst may not have left the army in disgrace, Isobel silently argues with herself, but certainly “under a cloud” (151)—a phrase commonly associated with the “alternative” hero in Conrad’s *Lord Jim*, as I will discuss in my last chapter. Bathurst is therefore to be more “pitied” than blamed, and although Isobel cannot deny that she loves Bathurst, she knows that she “would have despised herself to love a coward” (151). Isobel is so embittered by the knowledge of Bathurst’s secret that she declares that she would rather marry Captain Forster, a womanizer, than a coward. For Isobel, despite Bathurst’s multiple ideal qualities, his past failure as a soldier and his likely failure to participate as one in the “Mutiny” bars Bathurst from being a man and therefore a suitable partner for Isobel. Although she has resigned herself to giving Bathurst up, Isobel cries “passionately” and mourns his “loss” when he stops visiting her at her

uncle's home once he learns that she is now aware of his condition (164). Isobel's struggle to reconcile her feelings for Bathurst with her torment over his conditions reveals how damaging the internalization of the imperial narrative can be and suggests the discursive potential of and need for championing alternative forms of masculinity.

Isobel's initial declaration of preferring Captain Forster to Bathurst is particularly telling of the damaging internalization of the imperial narrative given Forster's violent masculinity, his corrupt heart, and questionable morality. As the stereotypical imperial white adventurer and Bathurst's romantic rival for Isobel Hannay, Captain Forster is a "white sahib" who has no respect for the Indian sepoy, viewing them as nothing more than "dogs" (Henty 205). Captain Forster functions as Bathurst's foil and "exact opposite" in that Captain Forster exhibits a false courage ("recklessness in the guise of courage"), which is in stark contrast to Bathurst's "moral courage" (R. Johnson 153). When Captain Forster first arrives on the scene, readers learn that he is a man who has distinguished himself in battle and, in having done so, gains a reputation as a general favourite among the women. Readers also soon learn that Captain Forster bullied Bathurst while they were in school; even though they are now adults, Forster continues to frequently laugh at Bathurst's expense (132, 198, 202, 217). He also deliberately aims to reduce Bathurst in Isobel's eyes despite knowing there is a "flirtation" between them (164). Observing this flirtation, Dr. Wade describes Captain Forster to Isobel as "one of the best-looking fellows ... a dashing soldier, and a devoted servant of the fairer sex", yet Isobel can tell by his description that Dr. Wade does not like him (Henty 141). Dr. Wade explains that Forster has "a very good opinion of himself" and most likely feels it an "awful nuisance" to visit their quiet neighbourhood having become so used to his

adventures in the heat of battle (141). From Dr. Wade, Isobel learns that Forster is both “dangerous” and “not a good man”, for he has won and thrown away many hearts, caused several grave scandals, and brought about the financial ruin of several young men (141). Although “anatomically” he may have a heart, Dr. Wade concludes, “morally he has not a vestige of one” (141). Mrs. Hunter also warns Isobel to be on her guard against Captain Forster’s attentions, for while he may be the “handsomest officer in the Indian army”, there is not “much under the surface ... and what there is is just as well left alone” (161). Captain Forster’s questionable reputation is generally known among the officers and women, but because “he has never actually outstepped what are considered the bounds which constitute an officer and a gentleman, he has retained his commission” (143). Everything about Captain Forster is superficial and evidence of his moral bankruptcy because of his affiliation with unchecked imperial masculinity. Despite his so-called heroism, Captain Forster superficially represents a nineteenth-century “ideal” imperial masculinity found in the pages of its adventure fiction, but at heart, like the British nation that reared him, he is morally bankrupt—particularly so at the time of the “Mutiny”.

## 2.5 “Unmanned” Subject of Empire: The Mutiny’s “Constitutional Horror”

but the thought that if there is trouble, I shall assuredly not be able to play my part like a man, fills me with absolute horror.

— Ralph Bathurst, *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893)

Herbert cites Caruth to explain how, in cases of trauma, “the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” is the result of “the unavoidable and overwhelming imposition of historical events on the psyche” (274; *Unclaimed* 11, 58). In *Rujub, the Juggler*, Ralph Bathurst does carry with him an impossible history in that he is unable to escape from his past trauma, his unexplainable

physiological condition a symptom of a history that he continuously struggles to process and overcome. Despite his heroic saving of Rujub and his daughter from the tiger, Bathurst privately laments that he is cursed to be “unlike” other men because he “tremble[s] and shake[s] like a girl at the sound of firearms” (16). He admits to himself that had the tiger roared before he attacked it with his whip, he would “assuredly have run”; he would not have been able to help his running from the scene to “save his life” (16). Convinced that the incident was more luck than bravery, Bathurst feels ashamed over the *possibility* of his failure. The knowledge of that possible failure triggers the memory of his past failure during his brief time as a soldier in the Punjab war, eight years prior to the start of the narrative. Recalling that failure, Bathurst wishes he had been killed “by the first shot fired”, and appears suicidal at the memory of his shame, unconsciously seeking to carry out the threat of his mother’s would-be killers on himself: “It would have been better ... if I had blown my brains out at the end of the day” (16). Lamenting how much he has “suffered” since his time as a soldier, Bathurst attempts to divert his thoughts by reminding himself that he has his work to keep him busy: “as long as I keep my thoughts on that there is no room for the other” (16), the “other” meaning the painful memory of his failure as a soldier and the subsequent shame he carries due to his inability to live up to the Empire’s expectations. Bathurst’s inner monologuing separates him further from typical Henty heroes as they generally lack interiority of any kind, and his sensitive and anxious nature reveals that he is more interested in intellectual pursuits than the physical and violent exploits commonly found in Henty’s adventure novels. Bathurst’s trauma is therefore explicitly associated with Britain’s destabilized governance in India at the time of the “Mutiny” and embodied in his physical condition.

He is forced to relive his trauma with every gun fired and memory of his failure, the vivid image of which resurfaces in connection with the “Mutiny” through Rujub’s powers.

As part of his repayment to Bathurst for saving his daughter, Rujub wishes to show Bathurst “things few Englishmen have seen” (17). In addition to magically lifting his daughter on a cushioned plank of wood above the height of Bathurst’s bungalow, Rujub shows Bathurst images from his past and future; first, Bathurst witnesses his past-self fighting in the Punjab war, and then his future-self clubbing his rifle, leaping down into an onslaught of sepoy soldiers, and “fighting furiously” against them (20). Although Bathurst acknowledges the truth of the scene from his past, he does not believe what Rujub claims to be his future since it contradicts what he already “knows” about himself: that he is paralyzed by loud noise and would therefore be unable to successfully participate in battle in this manner without breaking down (20). Henty’s use of magic certainly plays into common nineteenth-century notions regarding orientalist depictions of India, but it more significantly functions as an imaged repetition of Bathurst’s embodied pathology. Bathurst continues to experience his trauma belatedly and repeatedly, in the past, the present, and now, he fears, his future: “to be traumatized”, in Caruth’s words, “is precisely to be possessed by an image or event” (Introduction 4-5). Henty’s narrative is therefore also symptomatic of, in Freedgood’s words, the “rupturedness of the [Mutiny novel] genre” (95), a characteristic of “Mutiny” writing identified by Herbert in *A War of No Pity*. Bathurst cannot escape from the memory and literal image of his failure as a British soldier, nor can he escape from reliving it through narrative itself since he is forced to divulge his “hereditary”, constitutional nervous

condition to Dr. Wade after Rujub reveals his future self fighting in the forthcoming “Mutiny”.

In *Hysterical Men: The Hidden History of Male Nervous Illness*, Mark S. Micale asserts that a “nervous culture” formed in eighteenth-century Britain and with it a “new type of male”, one of feeling and sensibility where manliness was “conceptualized . . . largely in moral, rather than physical, terms” (22, 25). In the nineteenth century, however, the word “nervous” came to describe persons suffering from a disorder of the nerves: “Nervousness is really nervelessness” (a failure of nerve)—the very opposite of what it meant a century earlier (Bock 64; Beard 158). In fact, Victorian medical discourse, “linked nervousness to a contemptible lack of will and a hereditarian scheme of degeneration”—a term coined in 1857 by Bénédict Morel, which gave rise to nineteenth-century fears that the decline of the British Empire suggested the degeneration of the English race (Micale 36; Shumate 52). In *The Anatomy of Nervousness and Nervous Exhaustion* (1890), Hugh Campbell argues that the British nation’s tumultuous history itself contributed to hereditary nervousness, which “increase[ed] rather than diminish[ed] as civilization advance[d]” (2-3). Henty alludes to the nineteenth-century British medical community’s understanding of the genetic component to nervousness by positioning his protagonist as someone with a hereditary nervous condition, one that even prevents him from playing pool because he is “too nervous” and “breaks down” over the easiest stroke (Henty 67). To explain why Rujub’s vision of his future involvement in the forthcoming “Mutiny” must be “impossible”, Bathurst discloses the painful truth about his condition to Dr. Wade, who refuses to believe Bathurst when he claims himself to be a “coward”. To provide Dr. Wade with evidence of his constitutional cowardice, Bathurst

familiarizes Dr. Wade with the circumstances that brought about his “hereditary” nervous condition, which Bathurst describes as the “bane” of his existence that is his misfortune, but not his fault (135). Bathurst believes that he could face any danger if it “were a silent one” because noise, specifically gunfire (even a blank cartridge), makes him “tremble all over” (135). Yet it is not only “constitutional horror of firearms” that Bathurst suffers from; he explains his hereditary nervousness after Dr. Wade states that Bathurst does not give one the impression of being a “nervous man”, and Bathurst responds, “Well, I am, Doctor, constitutionally, indeed, terribly so” (67). He reassures Dr. Wade that “morally” he is not a coward, but “physically” and he earnestly wishes he could “get over it” (67). Having never revealed his condition except to his father, Bathurst confides in Dr. Wade that he has “suffered so much in the last eight years” from the fear of anyone discovering his secret and that it is a “horrible” story for him to have to tell, but Bathurst believes the doctor will “pity rather than blame him” (137). Before beginning his narrative, Bathurst asks Dr. Wade if he ever heard the rumours that surrounded Bathurst’s arrival in Cawnpore after he left the army and joined the Civil Service, owing solely to Bathurst’s uncle, who was the director on the Company’s Board. Dr. Wade admits to having previously heard a rumour that Bathurst had shown the “white feather” in the Punjab war, but he dismissed it as gossip at the time (134). Bathurst confirms the truth behind the rumour and declares that he is “constitutionally a coward”, but Dr. Wade cannot believe this about Bathurst, even going so far as to say that Bathurst is “the last man” he would associate with cowardice (134). It is not the prospect of being killed that concerns Bathurst, but his debilitating shell shock and nervousness over the guaranteed gunfire that Rujub’s prophesized “Mutiny” will bring.

Leading up to the outbreak and even at the height of the “Mutiny”, the novel’s central characters are more preoccupied with the revelation of Bathurst’s condition than the fact that they are under siege. Although trapped in the British garrison, surrounded by Indian rebels, Henty’s characters frequently debate and even take sides over whether Bathurst is cursed or simply cowardly. Despite being a “Mutiny” novel, Henty devotes more space not to the *historical event* itself but to these debates about Bathurst’s condition and to a display of the *illusion* of Captain Forster’s heroism and his failed loss of Isobel to Bathurst, whose “higher type of courage,” in Henty’s words, positions him as the better man (217). Instead of elaborating on the battle of the “Mutiny”, Henty draws considerable attention to the battle between competing views of masculinity and the damaging result of imposing such unrealistic expectations by continuously invoking references to suicide. Before the “Mutiny”, Bathurst discloses to Dr. Wade that he would rather end his own life than face the prospect of shooting a gun or hearing gunfire ever again. Although the word “suicide” is only used once in the novel (mostly in jest and in reference to another character), Bathurst frequently dwells on thoughts of ending his life, especially at the prospect of the “Mutiny” reaching Cawnpore and later when he feels himself to be a burden to his fellow officers. Bathurst appears to have internalized the initial threat his mother received when burglars threatened to “blow out her brains” since he uses this phrase in reference to himself and what he believes to be his own cowardice (Henty 135). Initially using the phrase after the incident with the tiger (16), Bathurst repeats the phrase while conversing with Dr. Wade about the forthcoming mutiny: “I shall be shown to be a coward, and I shall do my best to put myself in the way of being killed. I should not like to blow my brains out, but if the worst comes to the worst I will



do that rather than go on living after I have again disgraced myself” (139). He repeats the phrase again to Dr. Wade while describing his failure to protect Isobel when they are attacked by gunfire and his senses become overrun; when he regains consciousness again, he resolves “that [he] would rescue her or die in the attempt, [he] would have blown out [his] brains” (358). Suicide is also repeatedly discussed as a mercy for Bathurst’s condition since the condition results in paralysis and “unmanning” during battle. Upon learning of Bathurst’s condition, Captain Forster remarks that he would “blow out [his] brains”, “drown [him]self”, or “put a bullet through [his] head” if he suffered from the same condition (198, 232). Even Dr. Wade, who acknowledges that Bathurst is not to blame for his condition (“one might as well blame a man for being born a hunchback”), imagines taking his own life if he suffered from Bathurst’s condition; he concludes that if Bathurst failed to perform his duty when the lives of women are at stake, “it would be a kindness to give [Bathurst] that dose of prussic acid” (141). Although Bathurst claims that he is not, in fact, suicidal, his actions and rhetoric could easily be construed as fatalistic: he carelessly remarks that he stays atop the barricade with the men so he “can run [his] chance of being killed” (253); he informs Wilson that he has kept a short mace “within reach of [his] bedside” since the “Mutiny” began (254); he leaps down among the Indian rebels in the middle of heavy artillery crossfire (256); and he accounts for his reckless actions afterwards by declaring that he scarcely knew what he was doing at the time, only that he “wanted to do something, even if it was only to get killed” (260). In his effort to explain Bathurst’s actions to Captain Forster, Dr. Wade reveals the inherent fatalism of imperial masculinity: “the effort that [Bathurst] made to put himself in the way of death must have been greater than either you or I can well understand” (202). The

weighted effort Dr. Wade invokes is the painful struggle involved in conforming to an unrealistic, ideal type of masculinity. Despite Bathurst's condition being beyond his control, Dr. Wade and the other males echo Bathurst's repeated sentiment: that even suicide would be far less cowardly than failing to "play [one's] part like a man" (136). Such extensive commentary on Bathurst's condition against the backdrop of 1857 reinforces Henty's critique of both imperial masculinity and insidious imperialist practices.

Up until their removal to the garrison when the "Mutiny" breaks out, only Dr. Wade, Major Hannay, and Isobel are aware of Bathurst's condition. It is not long, however, before his secret is made known. When the Major calls the men to the rooftop to return fire at the rebels, he encourages Bathurst to remain with the women below, yet Bathurst refuses and places himself where "the enemy's fire was hottest" and does not draw his gun (174). Dr. Wade and Captain Forster must physically drag him back to prevent Bathurst from being killed; overwhelmed by the sound of gunfire, Bathurst faints. Because everyone assumes Bathurst was wounded, Dr. Wade reveals Bathurst's condition and makes a passionate speech in his defense:

Poor fellow, he is extremely sensitive on the ground of personal courage. In other respects, I have known him do things requiring an amount of pluck that not one man in a hundred possesses, and I wish you all to remember that his nervousness at the effect of the noise of firearms is a purely constitutional weakness, for which he is in no way to be blamed. He has just risked his life in the most reckless manner in order to overcome what he considers, and what he knows some persons consider, is cowardice, and it would be as cruel, and I may say as contemptible, to

despise him for a constitutional failing as it would be to despise a person being born a humpback or a cripple. (204)

Dr. Wade's declaration that any person who despises Bathurst for a physiological condition must also despise a person for being born with a physical deformity is purposefully directed at Isobel, whose brother passed away before she arrived in India. Her brother had a physical deformity that made him subject to the horrible treatment of her narcissistic mother and sister and Dr. Wade clearly wishes to drive this point home to her during his speech, for she turns pale upon hearing his words (204). Bathurst's actions could have resulted in the loss of his own life and Dr. Wade's and Captain's Forster's, but Dr. Wade's sole priority after the gunfire attack is defending Bathurst to the group and privately scolding Isobel for her treatment of Bathurst. When the two of them are alone, Dr. Wade does not simply declare Isobel's conduct towards Bathurst "contemptible"; he declares he would have held her "morally responsible" for Bathurst's death had he been killed trying to accustom himself to gunfire (207). Dr. Wade continues his dressing down of Isobel by calling out her obvious flirtation with Captain Forster, a man who "is no more to be compared with Bathurst in point of moral qualities or mental ability than light to dark" (208). Held to a higher standard than the other women and even the other officers, Isobel receives the full weight of Dr. Wade's outrage even though he remarks throughout his tirade that she, in fact, behaved like most women would: "your point of view was that most women would take at a time like this; only, you know, I expected you would not have done just as other women would" (208). Although Dr. Wade considers Isobel "more sensible" than other young women her age and would therefore naturally assume she would have acted more rationally about Bathurst, it is

Bathurst's *attachment* to Isobel and Isobel's initial explicit interest in Bathurst that results in Dr. Wade's harsh reaction and higher expectation of Isobel *because* he considers no other man living more "morally" brave than Bathurst (74). Dr. Wade's tirade in defense of Bathurst is not the only one that occurs as the group waits out the "Mutiny". Henty's focus continues to remain on Bathurst's condition instead of the battle.

Mere hours after Bathurst's condition becomes public knowledge, everyone in the encampment becomes "divided into two parties": on one side is Dr. Wade, Major Hannay, Wilson, and the ladies (those who take a "common-sense view of the matter", in Dr. Wade's words, who "recognize that [Bathurst has] done all a man could do") and on the other side, the rest of the men, who have chosen to give Bathurst the "cold shoulder" (Henty 214). The crux of this debate is summarized by the male officers immediately after they learn Bathurst's secret: they go so far as to call an "informal Council"—despite being in the middle of a war surrounded by Indian rebels—because they are so disturbed by Bathurst's condition (208). Most of the men describe Bathurst's fainting as "disgusting", "disgraceful", and "revolting" and declare that they are "ashamed" that Bathurst belongs to their service (208-209). The opposing camp of men, led by Captain Wilson, remind the others that Bathurst attempted to face the gunfire despite his condition. Even Captain Forster, who acknowledges that he dislikes Bathurst, attempts to reason with the others that Bathurst is "morally brave" (words he has taken from Dr. Wade), but his nerves prevent him from acting like other men (209). All the men agree that Bathurst "is a man everyone has liked, a first rate official, and a good fellow all around", but many do not feel it right to "stick up" for a man "who can't behave as a gentleman ought to, especially when there are women and children in danger" (209-210).

One officer even goes so far as to declare that Bathurst “ought to be sent to Coventry”, a British idiom that denotes the act of strict ostracization. Mr. Hunter, a friend of Bathurst’s, rejects the use of this phrase and simply suggests no longer seeking out his company, instead of acting as if Bathurst is no longer present. Captain Doolan prevents Wilson from angrily attacking everyone by putting an end to the discussion: “You go your own way about Bathurst, I don’t blame you for it; . . . . At any other time one would not think so much of this, but at present for a man to lack courage is for him to lack everything. I hope he will come better out of it than it looks at present. He will have plenty of chances here . . .” (210). Having learned of the discussion second-hand from Major Hannay, Dr. Wade is ready to quarrel with all the officers in defence of Bathurst, yet the Major advises him to remain quiet and reminds him of the masculine culture in which they were all raised: “I really can’t blame the others for looking at it from a matter-of-fact point of view. Want of courage is at all times regarded by men as the most unpardonable of failings, and at a time like the present this feeling is naturally far stronger even than usual” (211). The debate over Bathurst pushes Dr. Wade to violent actions (in his anger at the other men’s unfair treatment of Bathurst, he “vengefully” shoots and kills any sepoy he catches sight of) and creates a rift between childhood friends, Wilson and Richards, who quarrel “so hotly” over the subject of Bathurst that they break off all communication with each other (211). Captain Forster in fact unsettles Wilson so much that he declares he would like nothing in the world better than to “punch” Captain Forster because Forster has ruined Bathurst’s chances with Isobel: “when I see that a fellow like that has cut Bathurst out altogether it makes me so savage sometimes that I have to go and smoke a pipe outside so as not to break out and have a

row with him” (248). The idea of Isobel choosing Captain Forster over Bathurst evokes such violent feelings within Wilson that he feels compelled to pick a fight with Captain Forster in defense of Bathurst, a fellow romantic rival. The revelation of Bathurst’s condition even drives Wilson to break social decorum by openly questioning Isobel, a woman he has only known for a short time, about her preference for Captain Forster and sudden coldness to Bathurst, imploring her to choose Bathurst over Forster since he too believes Bathurst to be the better man.

Henty continues to emphasize the moral superiority of Bathurst’s alternative masculinity by contrasting him with the superficial and morally bankrupt Captain Forster. Her opinion of Bathurst now altered, Isobel passionately defends Bathurst in her conversations with Captain Forster. Reacting like Dr. Wade, Isobel angrily informs Captain Forster that Bathurst shows “plenty of courage” and pointedly declares that everyone has “weak points, and, no doubt, many of them are a good deal worse than a mere want of nerve” (232). Unable to take a hint, Captain Forster proposes to Isobel, yet it is a proposal born out of cowardice rather than of love. His proposal does not showcase how he has run away with his feelings, but that he wishes to run away period: he does not wish to escape the garrison “alone”, feels that it is “hopeless” to remain behind, and believes that escaping is their only chance to survive (266). After Isobel coldly rejects him, Captain Forster privately admits to having had no initial thought of marrying Isobel when he first met her (yet conceitedly believes after the war he may still have a chance with her); he merely desired above everything to escape from the confines of the garrison (268). Declaring Bathurst to be a “fool” for not taking the opportunity to escape, Captain Forster’s eagerness to leave everyone behind reveals his true character: he is a man who

lives for only himself. His selfishness, the moral equivalent of cowardice, results in his eventual death and he, unlike Bathurst, receives no commendation from the British government for his service during the “Mutiny”. Isobel’s rejection of his attentions demonstrates that a man’s lack of *substance* is far more damning than an ability to emulate violent, “heroic” forms of masculinity in the heat of battle.

Considering himself a braver man than Bathurst, Captain Forster perpetually places his own interests above the needs and safety of the group while in the garrison. Dr. Wade and Major Hannay comment on the performative nature of Forster’s masculinity for he often rides into the fray for vanity’s, not community’s sake. Dr. Wade angrily criticizes Captain Forster for his unnecessary antics: “Here you are charging a host like a paladin of old, forgetting that we want every man who can lift an arm in defense of this place” (197-198). Failing to consider the safety of the women and children, Captain Forster “protests against being shut up like a rat in a hole” in the garrison and insists that the whole party make “off in a body, fighting their way if necessary down to Allahabad” (192). Captain Forster chooses carelessly to ride out from the barricade against the wishes of Major Hannay, and upon his return, the Major remarks that Captain Forster’s charge was “mad” and “magnificent” to behold but concludes that “it wasn’t war” (205).<sup>28</sup> The Major recognizes that Captain Forster can certainly perform the part of a heroic warrior, but it is only that—a performance. His questionable courage comes and is tested only when most of the men are wounded and with only a week’s supplies left. Whereas Bathurst declines the mission to sneak out for reinforcements on the grounds that he

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<sup>28</sup> The Major’s assessment echoes the comment of the Marshal of France, Pierre François Joseph Bosquet, when describing Britain’s failed military action against Russia, The Charge of the Light Brigade: “C’est magnifique, mais ce n’est pas la guerre: c’est de la folie” (qtd. in Raugh 93).

wishes to share his fate with the rest of the group, Captain Forster stuns everyone into silence by volunteering for a mission that “offered a far better chance of life than that of remaining behind”, especially one that was “refused by Bathurst on the ground that it offered a chance of escape from the common lot” (263). By drawing readers’ attention to the performative nature of Captain Forster’s so-called heroism and his careless selfishness, Henty emphasizes that Forster is more interested in the glory of battle than the human cost of war. Although Nana Sahib’s performance of Britishness to hide his true intentions is the result of what he considers British betrayal, Captain Forster’s bravery is more performance than substance and has no such legitimacy. Captain Forster may demonstrate his “physical” bravery to the men and women trapped in the garrison during the “Mutiny”, but he ultimately reveals his inherent weakness by overindulging in his own heroism at the risk of other people’s lives.

Despite shunning Bathurst earlier during the onslaught of the “Mutiny” for his inability to withstand the sound of firearms, the group realizes that Captain Forster, and most men like him, act on a violent “animal instinct” in the face of danger, while men like Bathurst possess a “higher type of courage”, a type of courage Captain Forster openly and laughingly declares that he “does not aspire to” (217). Dr. Wade distinguishes between Captain Forster and Bathurst based on the two types of “pluck” (264). Bathurst’s “pluck”, according to Dr. Wade, is more akin to courage and therefore makes him the worthier man. In response to Wilson’s reasoning that Captain Forster has not “funked” (run away in fear) for agreeing to leave the barricade to seek help given the “pluck” he has shown when charging out against the rebel sepoys, Dr. Wade explains that Captain Forster’s “pluck” may “carry a man through a desperate action and lead him to



do deeds that are the talk of the army” (264), but it is not sustainable nor an altogether useful characteristic given that war is made up of more than just a series of heroic and glorious battles. Although Captain Forster “is almost an ideal cavalryman—dashing reckless; riding with a smile on his lips into the thickest of the fray, absolutely careless of life when his blood is up”, he lacks the necessary “passive sort of courage” required to endure the length and drawn-out nature of war (264). It is Bathurst who possesses the latter kind of courage, one “which supports men under long-continued strain, and enables them, patiently and steadfastly, to face death when they see it approaching step by step” (264). Whereas Bathurst gradually becomes more of a hero everyone can depend on, Captain Forster—Dr. Wade observes—becomes less useful as a member of the community under siege: “he has been either silent, or impatient and short tempered, shirking conversation even with women when his turn was over. . . . [H]e cannot stand the waiting; he is always pulling his mustache moodily and muttering to himself; he is good to do but not to suffer” (264-265). Bathurst may not be able to control his nerves, but he demonstrates that there are, in fact, “many sorts of courage” (155). Bathurst’s “higher type” of courage certainly does not suggest Henty’s questioning of British imperialism; it does, however, reveal his uncertainty about the type of men sent there to govern and his view that unfit men bore partial responsibility for India’s rejection of British rule in 1857. Bathurst’s internalization of the British Empire’s problematic expectations of its boy-heroes results in his perpetual mental anguish and self-destructive actions. Symptomatic of the inherited cultural legacy of the violent Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, his physiological condition demonstrates the unraveling of nineteenth-century constructions of imperial masculinity.

## 2.6 Britain's Supernatural "Mutiny": Rujub and Re-imagined Imperial Masculinity

"But the others, Mr. Bathurst, can't you save them too?"

"Impossible," [Bathurst] said. "Even if they got out, they would be overtaken and killed at once."

—Bathurst rescuing Isobel from Nana Sahib's prison, *Rujub, the Juggler* (1893)

According to John Zubrzycki and Elaine Freedgood, Henty's Rujub is an essential figure and unlikely hero in the novel as his mysticism, mesmerism, and telepathy ultimately save Isobel, Bathurst's eventual wife, from being raped and killed, thus satisfying his debt to Bathurst for saving his daughter's life (161; 96). In her nineteenth-century review of *Rujub, the Juggler*, Gregg asserts that only Bathurst's heroic "display of gallantry" is likely to regain Isobel's "favour"; she identifies a "distinct relief" in Henty's readership "when the supernatural comes to [Bathurst's] aid", as his ability to save Isobel "seems impossible" otherwise (226). In fact, Rujub and his daughter's agency derives from their supernatural gift of "second sight" (R. Johnson 60); their prophetic and telekinetic abilities position them as game changers in quelling the uprising and re-establishing and strengthening British authority in India. Johnson goes so far as to argue that *Rujub, the Juggler's* "emphasis on the supernatural world is beyond the stereotypical critique of Henty as the archetypal portrayer of imperialist militaristic force" (60). The novel's supernatural undercurrent ascribes interiority to Rujub through Henty's emphasis on the significance of his hereditary powers—"handed down from father to son for thousands of years" (and also clearly from father to daughter)—and the condescending and dismissive attitudes of white people who treat Rujub and his fellow masters like "mere buffoons" (Henty 278-279). No longer occupying his honoured "position and standing" among his people, Rujub admits to having been "brought up to hate the whites", hence his years spent preparing for the "blow that was to sweep the white men out of India"; however,

his feelings and allegiance alter after Bathurst saves his daughter from the tiger (278-279). He now feels, as do the other locals who appreciate Bathurst's meditation skills, more positively about British rule in India (278-279). Although Rachel Johnson correctly asserts that Henty's placement of praise "in the mouths of colonized people" functions as a means to perpetuate "the ideology of the benefits of empire ... by a process of interpellation" (109), the emphasis on Rujub's justifiable reasons for hating the British and his active role in the uprising suggest his pointed critique of Britain's treatment of its colonial subjects, and more significantly, that the uprising was not only inevitable, but also deserved. Henty's return to these justifiable reasons "indicate[s] an understanding of the impact of British intervention in Indian affairs and another example of the Victorian mind's ability to live with what appears to the modern and post-modern mind as a contradiction" (R. Johnson 189). By blending historical events with the supernatural "world of the colonial east", Henty seeks to address what Rachel Johnson describes as "unsolvable problems" (62). Henty does not simply "therapeutically redefine" the heroic identity in general, as Johnson argues (62-63), but the historic event of the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857 through his re-imagining of an alternative type of imperial masculinity needed to fairly govern rather than unjustly rule. Henty accomplishes this through violating the chronology of historical "Mutiny" events; instead of allowing Isobel's rape and death to occur, Bathurst's interference, with the help of the supernatural, secures her safety.

Bathurst considers Rujub as more than a mere juggler or master of the mystical arts who is indebted to him. Bathurst shares a strong affinity with Rujub as a result of Bathurst saving his daughter, an affinity based on mutual understanding, respect, and

“true” friendship (Henty 306). Freedgood asserts that Henty’s *Rujub, the Juggler* “offers a world in which a deep level of sympathy obtains between colonizers and Indian decolonizers,” yet it is only Bathurst and Isobel who can benefit from this connection (98). The “mystic relation” that forms between Rujub and Bathurst can only be achieved through their shared sympathies, which is why Rujub cannot connect with other Englishmen or Nana Sahib. As the “ideal” colonial administrator, Bathurst is the only one who deserves Rujub’s trust, and the only one seemingly capable of returning that trust. Rujub also provides Bathurst with the means to retrieve Isobel; he brings him a native disguise and helps Bathurst dye his skin so that he can travel unnoticed among the natives. Bathurst’s ability to pass as native reinforces his ability to empathize with the colonial other; however, he too is guilty of making assumptions about Indian motivations when he disagrees with Rujub’s claim that the sepoy rebels are fighting for their freedom (310). Bathurst’s emotionally charged and lengthy diatribe about the Indians “exchanging one master for another” should not simply be read as imperialist doctrine: it leaves room, as Freedgood suggests, for the possibility of alternative voices; “Rujub’s statement and his subject position remain on the page, their elegant simplicity hardly gainsaid by Bathurst’s rant” (97). Although Rujub is not given the opportunity to respond to Bathurst’s position on the rebellion, his statement’s ability to upset Bathurst reveals a sore point that Henty himself fails to reconcile. Ideal depictions of British administrators like Bathurst are “too easy to construe in this context as an uncomplicated apologia for imperialism”, but in fact “function subtly in just the opposite sense, as a reminder of the well-documented grievous shortcomings of British stewardship in India” (Herbert 282). For Henty, then, it is impossible for Britain to achieve effective governance, and

therefore secure the Empire, if colonized subjects are continuously denied their subjectivity. Although Bathurst and Rujub's friendship does certainly perpetuate the "Mutiny" figure of the "benevolent" colonial administrator, and even more problematically, the loyal, obedient native, their mutual respect and appreciation, and its limits, suggest Henty's criticism of British dismissive attitudes and mistreatment of its colonized subjects in addition to his call for improved relations and understanding between Britain and India. The creation of a sympathetic British male hero who admits to desiring, at least in some form, the "emancipation" of the Indian people (88), even if he does parrot nineteenth-century imperialist rhetoric, suggests that, for Henty, the events of the uprising sparked doubt in the British Empire and the white imperial masculinity that co-constituted it.

Although Henty's incorporation of supernatural elements contributes to Bathurst's "unmanning" in that he is only able to save Isobel with Rujub and Radba's help, Bathurst's partnership with them suggests an alternative model for Britain's governance and role in India. Initially Nana Sahib's agent and spy, Rujub chooses instead to protect Bathurst and his friends, including aiding Bathurst in preventing Isobel's rape, a plot device often found in "Mutiny" novels to reinforce traditional gender roles by casting "English women as victims" and serving "as a check and reminder of the heroine's sexual difference" (Harman and Meyer xxxvi; Paxton, "Mobilizing" 264). Whereas Paxton argues that the novel "hinges" on Isobel's near rape (264), Johnson asserts that the novel "hinges" on the "gift of second sight" (8). Yet Henty is clearly most preoccupied with Bathurst's physiological condition—the question of his "manhood"—which is extensively debated during the "Mutiny" but reinforced by the novel's supernatural

elements and Bathurst's rescue of Isobel. After Bathurst saves Rujub's daughter, some of Rujub's prophetic intuition passes to Bathurst: he can sense the forthcoming "Mutiny" and when Rujub is nearby. This intersubjective connection deepens after Bathurst partners with Rujub to convince the nobles of Oude (leaders of the rebelling sepoy soldiers) to allow Bathurst's party safe passage on the river to Allahabad. This connection becomes even more pronounced when Isobel's white womanhood is threatened. Bathurst reveals this supernatural connection to Dr. Wade during their escape down the river: "I feel nervous, Doctor; more anxious than I have been ever since this began. There is an apprehension of danger weighing over me that I can't account for. . . . I am afraid I am getting superstitious, but I feel as if Rujub knows of some danger impending, and that he is somehow conveying that impression to me" (298). Bathurst senses the forthcoming rebel gunfire that results in most of their party being killed, the near drowning of himself, Wilson, and Dr. Wade, and the capture of the English women. When Bathurst finally awakens after passing out "insensible" from his gunshot wound after the attack, he throws "himself down among the bushes in an attitude of utter depression" and laments that he was not killed with the others due to having failed to remain by Isobel's side (304). Bathurst snaps out of his depression when he suddenly hears Rujub's voice in his head—"Wait till I come"—and concludes that without Rujub, he would not be able to save Isobel: "I know well enough I could do nothing by myself" (304). It is also the memory of Rujub's image of his future self and Isobel disguised as Indians that prevents Bathurst from giving up altogether: "I cling to it as my one ground for hope" (305). Henty's alternative hero, even after the heroine is captured, recognizes that, by himself, he cannot step into a heroic role. He is dependent on the assistance and support of Rujub,

a man who has been unfairly mistreated and disrespected by white men, yet Bathurst respects and trusts him implicitly nonetheless. Paxton declares Henty a “hack” for his use of magic “with such symbolic—and hilarious—naiveté” (“Mobilizing” 265), but without it, Bathurst’s friends and particularly Isobel would not have survived the uprising.

Henty’s use of the supernatural thus challenges the legitimacy of British superiority and stability of white imperial masculinity. By creating a fictional yet parallel situation to the historic “Mutiny” moment of Nana Sahib’s betrayal of General Wheeler after he and 450 British men and women are promised safe passage down the River Ganges, Henty “therapeutically redefines” an alternative “Mutiny” hero, one who succeeds where his historical male counterparts failed: he rescues a white woman from the fate of the Cawnpore well. Such violations of the chronology of actual events are characteristic of trauma narrative accounts of those events. Bathurst inherits the trauma of the “Mutiny”, so he can perform accordingly as a “hero” but not without its costs.

One of the most traumatic and frequently fictionalized “Mutiny” episodes that haunted the British cultural imaginary was the Cawnpore well massacre, an event that Henty re-imagines with his incorporation of the supernatural. Herbert identifies the phantasmatic, fantastical, and supernatural as a “fundamental trope” of “Mutiny” discourse; indeed, the “insistence” on imaginary rather than historically accurate 1857 events in nineteenth-century “Mutiny” fiction revealed, according to Herbert, that Victorian Britain remained traumatized by the event long after it occurred (276-277). Freedgood cites Gregg’s famous 1897 *Blackwood’s* article—that the 1857 “provide[d] every element of romance that could be desired in a story” (219)—as evidence that because history “*becomes* romance”, the Mutiny’s romance “makes history available as

fiction” (98). Henty’s infusion of the supernatural therefore produces, according to Freedgood, a “collective, if implicit, ‘what if’” (98). Isobel’s character appears to be loosely based on the historical “Mutiny” figure, Miss Margaret Wheeler (Sir Hugh Wheeler’s youngest daughter), an Anglo-Indian woman who was abducted and taken to Cawnpore, “discovered, several years later, living quietly with her ‘master under a Mohammedan name’” (Trevelyan qtd. in Paxton, “Mobilizing” 251). Henty rewrites the fate of Miss Wheeler (to ensure that she marries a white man) with the intervention of the supernatural and alternative “Mutiny” heroes: Radba telecommunicates with Isobel, Rujub purchases the lunar caustic and nitric acid Isobel uses to make herself odious to Nana Sahib (thus preventing her rape), and Bathurst breaks Isobel out of Nana Sahib’s prison. Henty thus alters 1857 events through fiction and prevents, at least on a small scale, the most horrific “Mutiny” narratives from playing out. In *Allegories of Empire*, Sharpe argues that the “idea of the rebellion was so closely imbricated with the violation of English womanhood that the “Mutiny” was remembered as a barbaric attack on innocent white women” even though no historical evidence could corroborate the reports of white women being raped, tortured, or mutilated (2). Sharpe explains that the trope of raping white women in “Mutiny” fiction represents the deliberate avoidance of describing what was the more than likely physical dismemberment of British men “since such a fragmentation of the male body would allocate British men to the objectified space of the rape victim—a status that would negate colonial power at the precise moment that it needed reinforcing” (67). In Henty’s “Mutiny” novel, however, this “crisis” initially occurs *within* the white male body; Bathurst’s internal psychological wound (his physiological condition) because of the Mutiny’s violence transfers to and becomes



externally represented on Isobel's body for he is "cured" not long before Isobel becomes disfigured. It is in fact Bathurst, and not a native insurgent, who brings about Isobel's mutilation since it is *his* idea for her to use acid on herself: "there are drugs that when applied externally would give the appearance of a terrible disease. There are acids whose touch would burn and blister the skin, and turn a beautiful face into a dreadful mask" (Henty 314). The prevention of rape through Henty's use of the supernatural, then, functions as a check to what Herbert identifies as "depraved in the British imagination itself"—the Victorian fixation with horror and atrocity often resulting in the uncontrollable intermingling of imaginary and real events in "Mutiny" fiction (27). The praise Isobel receives from her fellow British men and women for the courageous lengths she goes to (she becomes almost unrecognizable and falls deliriously ill) to protect her honour certainly showcases English women's "self-destructive responses to the threat of rape" (Paxton, *Writing* 265); however, her prolonged mental suffering and painful disfigurement may also be read as, according to Gregg, punishment for her initial "doubting" and cruel treatment of Bathurst (226), reinforced by Dr. Wade's declaration that he would have held Isobel "morally responsible" should Bathurst have died in his efforts to overcome his physiological condition in order to prove his manhood to her.

Gregg and Paxton misattribute Bathurst's "cure" for his so-called masculine performance issues to Rujub himself (226; "Mobilizing" 265); however, Bathurst's newfound strength of nerve derives more directly from the fact that his nervous system appears to have "reset" after a sepoy bullet grazes the back of his head and he experiences a "shock" when exiting the river—an injury that occurs immediately after Bathurst abandons Isobel to her fate after they are attacked by Nana Sahib's soldiers

(Henty 301). Dr. Wade later surmises that the “sudden shock” to Bathurst’s system when his nerves were already “in a state of extreme tension, may have set them right, and that bullet-graze along the top of the skull may have aided the effect of the shock” (361). Again echoing, in part, the fate of his mother who dies from the shock of being threatened to have her brains blown out by thieves, Bathurst’s shock from an actual bullet to his head signifies that Bathurst must pay for his father’s “sin” of failing to protect his mother and his own abandonment of Isobel: “Can it be imagined possible that I jumped like a frightened hare, and without a thought of her, or without a thought of anything in my mad terror, jumped overboard and left her behind to her fate? ... the thought occurred to me that I would rescue her or die in the attempt, I would have blown out my brains” (358). Despite Dr. Wade’s attempts to convince Bathurst that he could not have done anything for Isobel, and despite reminding him that all the other men jumped as well, Bathurst cannot shake his conclusion that he failed, again, as a man: “I, an English gentleman by birth, thought only of myself, and left the woman I love, who was sitting by my side, to perish” (360). Isobel too later confesses to Dr. Wade that she “felt a pang, when, without a word, [Bathurst] sprang overboard”, and thoughts of his desertion continue to plague her even more so than her grief for her dead uncle or the unfortunate reality of her situation in Nana Sahib’s harem (367). Isobel reasons that most other men would have jumped overboard “and would never have blamed themselves”—like Captain Forster’s abandonment of the British women and children in the garrison; however, Bathurst’s internalization of the failure of all white men, including his father, positions him to feel that failure more “deeply” and results in Isobel declaring that “there is no braver man living” (367-368). Henty reinforces Isobel’s claim with Captain Forster’s

death, which occurs not long after her marriage to Bathurst. To Dr. Wade, Bathurst acknowledges that Captain Forster “was a brave soldier” but believes that “if he had been brought up differently, he would, with all his gifts, have been a grand fellow” (383). Although definitively now the “better man”, Bathurst still feels that his saving of Isobel is not enough to “wipe out” his previous failings since, in Isobel’s words, a “coward would be more than satisfied with himself” (368). Bathurst therefore represents a more successful imperial masculinity as he chooses to remain in India to “rehabilitate himself in his own eyes” (372). Isobel feels “bound” to confess her love for Bathurst: she admits that she spoke “cruelly and wrongly before” and describes her confession as “penance” for her initial treatment of Bathurst (374). Just as Bathurst inherits the legacy of his father’s failure and subsequently suffers for it, Isobel’s internalization of the damaging imperialist narrative results in her “cruel trial” and the infliction of scars “which will probably be visible all her life” (Gregg 226). Bathurst and Isobel’s physical and psychological suffering and punishment evoke what Herbert describes as the “wound on the British psyche” as a result of the “Mutiny”: the empire’s confrontation with “terrifying physical violence” as well as the “shock ... to the moral order itself” (55). Although the supernatural connection between Radba and Isobel that lingers even after Bathurst and Isobel return home—“As I knew how you were in prison, so I shall know how you are in your home in England” (Henty 364)—is meant to symbolize the newly stabilized relationship between Britain and its subjects, it also suggests a darker message: a permanent reminder of the violent horrors of 1857 as well as a warning about the dangers of unchecked imperialism and the weakening of white imperial masculinity.

## 2.7 Conclusion

In many of Henty's texts he was eerily accurate in prophesising the threats posed by the aggressive nationalism he perceived in other nations and empires and appeared to be preparing his nation for what he read in the politics of the world. He could not.

—Laura Jones, "Writing and Righting History: Henty's Nation" (2012)

Henty may have created hundreds of literary heroes in his boys' adventure fiction, but *Rujub, the Juggler* is his only work to offer an "alternative" hero whose white imperial masculinity is frequently under fire. Although Rachel Johnson casually notes that Henty "subverts" his "Boy-Hero" stereotype in *Rujub, the Juggler* (175), she nor any other scholar has explained Henty's motive for casting his only "flawed" hero in a novel about the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857, late-Victorian fictional depictions of which frequently and paradoxically glorified "military masculinity" and Britain's retributive actions in India (Herbert 131). Isobel's pointed question, "but why should [Indians] hate us?" (Henty 156), then, reveals Henty's "discursive" and "subversive" narrative moments that give voice to the "colonized, marginalized and the oppressed" and ultimately undermine the idea of Henty "as a stereotypically insensitive propagator of the imperial myth" (R. Johnson 185). Henty's seeming fixation with the justification for the Indian motive behind the rebellion reveals an unconscious concern over the Indian natives' intense feelings of hatred directed at the British; in fact, the "shock" that accompanied Britain's discovery that their "supposedly grateful" Indian imperial subjects hated them "was in part the shock of finding that their national idealism and national self-esteem were self-deluding and morally corrupting" (Herbert 17). These "paralyzing contradictions" and "contradictory impulses" that characterized Victorian society can also be found within Henty's work: "the displacements and tensions found in the fractured structures of some of his stories reveal the contradictions and divisions which lay behind some of [the most

powerful ideologies of Victorian England]” (Herbert 17; Butts, *Children* 50). Since Henty successfully combined historical events with romanticized adventure, his readership considered his work “an ‘acceptable form’ for portraying the trauma of war”, but contemporary scholarship exposes Henty’s “socio-political position as one of complexity and plurality” (Jones 163). Henty’s “Boy-Hero” therefore embodies the site of white masculine trauma and the onset of the late nineteenth-century crisis of masculinity, a crisis that occurred as a result of the British Empire’s attempt to reconcile the violence enacted during the “Mutiny” with its belief in its own moral superiority. Although Bathurst ultimately reasserts his masculine identity by overcoming his congenital fear of firearms, his temporary “unmanning” and alternative heroism suggest Henty’s uncertainty regarding Britain’s role in and governance of India at the time of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.

## Chapter 3

### Haunting “Heartbreak” in Rudyard Kipling’s *The Jungle Books* (1894, 1895): Destabilized Imperial Masculinity and the Repressed Indian “Mutiny” of 1857

#### 3.1 Introduction

As “*the* representative voice” of the late nineteenth-century British Empire (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 12), Joseph Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) achieved far greater literary acclaim, scholarly attention, and fame than his contemporaries, his literary sales surpassing even Henty with more than “four thousand separate printings of his work” distributed across six continents (Arondekar 131).<sup>29</sup> Despite his apparent preoccupation with the “White Man,” Kipling’s work, as a site of cultural exchange and imperial resistance, “has transformed Kipling into an allegory of the postcolonial condition” (Rooney & Nagai 2; Randall, *Imperial Boy* 18). As one of the most “controversial” British adventure fiction writers of the late nineteenth century, Kipling “belonged, in cultural terms, not to Britain but to a larger conception of empire, one that made him both more intimate with and, paradoxically, more distant from, imperialist concerns” (Bristow 196, 200). Believing in the benevolent goodness and unwavering strength of the British Empire, Kipling—like Henty—served as Britain’s “high-paid publicity agent” (Singh 101; Wilson 148). Through his literary works’ imaginative landscape, Kipling desired to make accessible the imperial project, though at times his “style of writing suggests literary allegiances that were in some ways at odds with the cohesive spirit of imperialism” (Pafford 38). Unlike Henty, who offered an almost entirely uncomplicated

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<sup>29</sup> Kipling rejected the offer of knighthood and the role of British Poet Laureate. He is also the youngest recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature (1907). His works continue to be adapted for the screen.

perspective on the British Empire, Kipling understood that Britain occupied the geographic space of India without understanding India. Kipling's fiction expressed both the "quintessentially divided imperial subject" as well as the "full fragmentation of the colonizer's many subject positions" (Z. Sullivan 6, 9, 11). Kipling championed the British Empire but did so with "increasing pessimism" (McBratney, "India" 23). Sharing more in common with Conrad than Henty on account of said pessimism, Kipling's writing is "fraught with internal tensions, vacillations, ambivalences" (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 15). In fact, the "dividedness" within Kipling and his writing "foregrounds one of the most enduring and important cultural confrontations in the history of European empires, the confrontation between imperial Britain and India" and reflects his own complicated relationship with British India, "a key constituent of British imperial identity" (14), which plagued him throughout his life.

Known as the "Bard" of Empire and India, Kipling achieved international celebrity with his more than 350 works, most set in India even though he lived there for less than a quarter of his life. Although India occupied a prominent place in Henty's literary output, India was integral to Kipling's *identity*, a fact reinforced by the very recent publication of Harish Trivedi and Janet Montefiore's *Kipling in India: India in Kipling* (2021), a series of essays which explore how "India, England, and empire, and the looming loss of both" both preoccupy Kipling and define his work (Paranjape, Foreword xii). India was not simply Kipling's birth country or the country in which he launched his literary career: he "was *of it*" (Said, *Culture* 129); it lived within him, consumed his writing—even after his relocation to England, the United States, and back again—and functioned as the imaginative, elusive, and transformative space on which he

imposed his psychological, philosophical, and spiritual understandings of himself and the British Empire. Thanks to Kipling, readers were more interested in India, the ‘jewel’ in the British crown, “than they had ever been”; some might even argue that Kipling had “introduced India to the British public” (Pafford 1, 30). Since the 1890s, “Kipling’s engagement with India has been a matter of critical attention”, and although his writing is often labelled problematic, scholars recognize him “as a chronicler of India” (Mudiganti 228). Kipling’s Indian fiction also reveals that he was not uncritical of his homeland, his work suggesting “that the British would make fewer errors in India if they followed the lead of their children and intermingled with Indians rather than segregating themselves into all British social activities” (226). Kipling’s love of India conflicted with his imperialist desires: his “attitude to India was torn into two,” an attitude which “never resolved within him [... but instead] petrified in him” (Seymour-Smith 70). Kipling’s fascination with and nostalgia for India—its people, culture, and landscape—endured throughout his lifetime, but he remained determined to avoid writing on the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, one of India’s most defining events.

Scholars observe Kipling’s failure to write a “proper” “Mutiny” tale and note that his “unremitting silence upon the topic seems strange indeed” (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 97).<sup>30</sup> According to Don Randall, “the Mutiny constitutes, for Kipling, an *unavoidable* topic. The question is not if but rather *where* and *how* he addressed it” (*Imperial Boy* 97). As an “advocate of silence,” Kipling chose to process his issues by “suppressing” his emotions which resulted in his life-long physiological disorders; the “silences” in his

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<sup>30</sup> Francis Adams (1891), Hilda Gregg (1897), Patrick Brantlinger (1988), Edward Said (1993), Don Randall (2000), Jane Hotchkiss (2002), Kaori Nagai (“Writing” 2005), Astrid Erll (“Re-writing” 2006), Anjali Arondekar (2009), Catherine Elizabeth Hart (2012), Alex Tickell (*Terrorism* 2013), Philip Mallet (2015) acknowledge or gesture towards Kipling’s failure to write a “Mutiny” novel.



work are not simply “Kiplingesque,” but suggest “what [Kipling] most wishes to say” (Elliot 115). Kipling’s texts indeed use silence as a tool of “imperial discourse. . . . [For] “certain things stand outside [imperial] discourse and must not be said” (Morey 29). Kipling therefore may not have written a “Mutiny” novel, but his explicit references to the event within at least 12 of his fictional works suggest that he certainly had more to say about the event than he let on.<sup>31</sup> Kipling also indirectly evokes the “Mutiny” in several of his other works, including “The House of Shadows” (1887), *The Naulakha, A Story of West and East* (1891-1892), and “Rikki-Tikki-Tavi” (1894) (Generani 41; Pafford 21; L. Lewis 134). Moreover, Randall, Jane Hotchkiss, and Lisa Lewis identify several connections to the “Mutiny” in terms of key events, locations, and figures in Kipling’s *The Jungle Books* (1894, 1895).<sup>32</sup> Indeed, Lewis even wonders if Kipling had the “Mutiny” entirely in mind when writing *The Jungle Books* (138). Kipling’s treatment (or lack thereof) of the “Mutiny” reveals his anxiety through his struggle to distance himself from the event. Despite the Mutiny’s resurgence in popular literature during Kipling’s rise to fame, Kipling’s direct and indirect engagement with the event flouts his documented refusal and inability to write a “Mutiny” novel. The “Mutiny” for Kipling, then, was not just, in Alex Tickell’s words, a “complex creative problem,” (*Terrorism* 102) but a traumatizing event, made evident by its seemingly unavoidable and persistent reappearance in his writing.

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<sup>31</sup> “In the Year ‘57” (1887), “The Little House at Arrah” (1888), “On the City Wall” (1888), *The Man Who Would Be King* (1888), “The Enlightenments of Pagett, M.P.” (1889), “Gunga Din” (1890), “One View of the Question” (1890), “The Mutiny of the Mavericks” (1891), “The Lost Legion” (1892), “The Undertakers” in *The Second Jungle Book* (1895), *Kim* (1901), and “The Veterans” (1907).

<sup>32</sup> Randall argues that the Mowgli tales offer an “oblique, allusive, and allegorical” treatment of 1857 “scenes, situations, and events” (*Imperial Boy* 98); Jane Hotchkiss explores the connection between Kipling’s wolf boys and “Mutiny” historical documentation on the Boy of Lucknow (439-440); and Lisa Lewis explores key “Mutiny” locations and figures in “Rikki-Tikki-Tavi” and “The Undertakers” (134-140).

Although half a dozen scholars have written on Kipling's contribution to the watershed of "Mutiny" writing at the end of the nineteenth century, none have explored the connection between this contribution and the crisis of masculinity observed within his fiction or the significance of Kipling's choice in placing an explicitly Indian "fractured" hero within what Randall identifies as an allegorical "restaging" of the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857 (*Imperial Boy* 63).<sup>33</sup> Kipling may have taken a paternalistic view of India, but he departs from perpetuating the conventional "ideal" British masculinity and celebrates, instead, the radical "otherness" of the "native-born" (McBratney, *Imperial* xiv).<sup>34</sup> Kipling's "new" form of masculinity, however, champions an "alternative" more akin to Bathurst's "hyper type of courage", for Mowgli is *not* "Anglo-Indian," but a collection of endlessly competing hybrid identities. Kipling's idea of the Empire itself, and its inherent contradictions, is embodied within Mowgli's person. Given that the British Empire based itself and its right to rule on racial difference and distinctions, Kipling's "native-born's power to transgress racial boundaries mocked British authority" (McBratney, *Imperial* xiv). Mowgli's body, through his man-cub duality and race, challenges the "genetic imperative" of white imperial masculinity and thus functions as the site of the traumatized male subject, one whose alternative masculinity has become unsettled because of the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857. I therefore offer a new reading of *The Jungle Books* that examines how Kipling's use of the violated chronology of his children's fable

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<sup>33</sup> According to Caroline Rooney and Kaori Nagai, "Kipling's colonial space is now seen as containing moments of crisis, and as a place wherein can be found examples of the white man's panic as well as of subaltern agency undermining colonial authority" (2).

<sup>34</sup> Published one month before Kipling's *The Second Jungle Book* (1895), his poem "The Native-Born" celebrates white subjects born in all British imperial colonies. Although not biracial, the "native-born" embodied, for Kipling, a type of cultural hybridity. The "native-born" considered England home yet possessed equal love for their birth country. McClure (1981), Randall (2000), and McBratney (2002) explore the "hybrid" and "native-born" figure in their respective seminal texts on Kipling.

(Mowgli's repeated narrative oscillation between childhood and adolescence) to avoid directly dealing with the "Mutiny"—a "forbidden, strongly repressed" subject for the nineteenth-century British public (Herbert 206)—reveals traces of the late Victorian crisis of masculinity and masculine trauma within and on his allegorical "Mutiny" boy-hero, Mowgli. The achronological arrangement of the Mowgli stories do not only indicate Mowgli's personal trauma; the larger British trauma with the "Mutiny" emerges when Mowgli's encounters with Shere Khan are scenes of traumatic returns. As I argue later in this chapter, Kipling's Shere Khan is not only Mowgli's enemy but also proxy for the infamous enemy of the British, Nana Sahib, and thus signals Britain's traumatic returns to the "Mutiny" as well. I also explore the significance of how *The Jungle Books* redefine Kipling's liminal hybrid figure of Mowgli, a "radically" orphaned Indian boy adopted by wolves who struggles to find his place in the world, a symbolic struggle that reflects Kipling's own British-Indian identity as well as the traumatic "fatal split" at the very heart of Victorian Britain's "moral being" as a result of the "Mutiny", a split that caused a division "between two states of feeling or actually two opposed selves" (Herbert 18, 93). Mowgli's racial identity and his inability to reconcile his two selves evokes the haunting, revenge-obsessed alter ego of most Victorian fiction and particularly the "Mutiny Gothic" (Herbert 111; Druce 21). Mowgli's fractured selfhood that results in his unheroic departure from the jungle, symbolic of the psychic splitting of the "Mutiny", suggests a latent and belated trauma, one that becomes, as Caruth has said of other traumatic cases, "fully evident only in connection with another place, and in another time" (Introduction 8). I argue that Mowgli's "alternative" heroism signifies how racially fraught remembrances of the repressed Indian "Mutiny" of 1857 continued to haunt even

Kipling, who attempts to therapeutically reconcile the “Mutiny” with British imperial glory, resulting in the narrative “unmanning” of Kipling’s boy-hero and the late nineteenth-century destabilizing of white imperial masculinity.

### 3.2 Doubting the Empire: Kipling’s “Liminal” Masculinity

As it was, [Kipling’s] world had been torn in two and he himself in two: for under the part of him that extenuated everything, blamed for nothing, there was certainly a part that extenuated nothing, blamed for everything—a part whose existence he never admitted, most especially not to himself.

—Randall Jarrell, “On Preparing to Read Kipling” (1962)

Like Henty, Kipling began his career as a journalist before achieving overnight literary success, gaining a reputation for producing “boy heroes of empire,” though ones who possess “less-than-assured masculinity” (Landry & Rooney 59; D. Simmons 80). Having more in common with Conrad’s Jim than the Henty “Boy-Hero,” Kipling’s early male protagonists suffer from the same psychic trauma Kipling himself experienced as a child.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, Kipling learned early on, like Henty, the importance of bibliotherapy as a means to survive. Whereas Henty endured lengthy physical illness confined in bed, “Kipling was someone who spent six years in a concentration camp as a child” (Jarrell 227). Reflecting on his early experience in England, Kipling asserts that he suffered “a sort of nervous breakdown” and continued to experience “intermittent breakdowns” throughout his young adult life (*Something* 17; Welby 35). Due to his small frame and poor eyesight, Kipling never aspired to a military career like Henty, nor did he ever transform “into a stereotypical British boy who would become representative of

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<sup>35</sup> Based on anecdotes from Kipling’s autobiography, *Something of Myself* (1937), Kipling “was subjected to psychic and even physical torture” after his abrupt relocation to the “House of Desolation” in England (Simmons 82). Internalizing his shame and humiliation, Kipling dehumanizes himself in his short story “Baa Baa Black Sheep” (1888), embodying his feelings of racial otherness (his dark complexion and growing up “Indian”) and alienation in the metaphor of the rejected “black sheep” of the family. He continues this theme in *Jungle Books* through the creation of Mowgli the man-cub, the metaphor of the animalized boy now transformative: no longer weak, alone, and rejected, but strong, protected, and (to a greater extent) accepted.

Britain in India” (Mudiganti 232). Kipling may not have necessarily inspired a generation of boys to become soldiers, but his boy-heroes, particularly Mowgli, provided the mould and model for Baden-Powell’s Boy Scouts Movement as they would “fortify the walls of empire” (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 17; Said, *Culture* 297-8; Mudiganti 229). Although Kipling “attempts to project a masculinity ideology within, and as part of, an imperialist vision,” (Hampson, “Kipling” 7), his supposed “models” of masculinity did not go undamaged in Kipling’s mind. He was particularly critical of the young men who were sent to govern in the name of Empire believing that they ultimately lacked “the competence to command armies waging war overseas” (Bristow 199-200). The type of men needed to govern India, in Kipling’s view (which his father shared), were the ones that *knew* the people of India, had their trust, and applied this “personal” knowledge “in a professional and political capacity that was frequently, as Kipling termed it, ‘unofficial’” (Hagiioannu 18). His writing brought to the forefront a reality that Britain did not wish to face: the “errors” it continued to make in India and that the Empire’s desperate need to “acquire a deeper and more intimate understanding of India” (Whitlark 21; Mudiganti 228; Pafford 53). Kipling certainly did not “consciously oppose empire” (D. Simmons 81), but he was mindful of its conflicting demands on its young men, men who were expected to uphold the imperialist tradition even at their own painful expense.

As an expert on the British Army, Kipling shared Henty’s “damning” criticism of imperial bureaucracy, particularly the Indian Civil Service (ICS), for the harm it inflicted on British soldiers. Awareness of the ICS’ harm resulted in Kipling’s “ambivalence about British masculinity” (Mudiganti 231). Kipling’s attitude emerges through his depictions of British men in India “driven to distraction, crushed by the realisation of their work’s

ultimate meaninglessness” (Welby 166; Hagioannu 17). Kipling’s early stories explore “the gap between imperial ideology and reality,” a gap that Kipling fills with “frightened and fundamentally helpless young men struggling to survive”—a far cry from the “confident Empire” embodied in Henty’s fiction or in Kipling’s later boy-heroes of *Mowgli* and *Kim* (D. Simmons 80). Diane Simmons observes that most of Kipling’s Indian fiction breaks with conventional nineteenth-century writing that asserts that Englishmen return home “tainted” by their time in the colonies. For Kipling, it is the opposite: it is Britain in the colonies, the “senselessness and hopelessness of the imperial project itself,” that brings about the untimely end of those tasked to rule (88). His early writing exhibits what Simmons identifies as “post-adolescent male confusion”—Kipling’s boy-heroes often need to talk each other down from panic and even out of suicide (86). Madhu Grover observes that Kipling’s frame narrators also profess “accents of colonial uncertainty and even despair” and that such pessimism is evident of “an ideological fracture linked to an almost dystopian vision of colonial process in relation to its effects on the cogs in the imperial wheel” (121; 124). Kipling’s early works, in fact, reflect a criticism of the same type of imperial propaganda that circulated during the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857: just as the British public could not be given the full truth of the atrocities committed overseas, “England can’t be allowed to glimpse the reality behind the façade of empire” even though the nation was responsible for sending their men to “destruction” (D. Simmons 88). Kipling may have often asserted and celebrated Britain’s imperialism, but this did not prevent him from critiquing its governance, particularly in its treatment of its subjects who lived on the margins of empire, such as himself.

Kipling's unhappy childhood and subsequently his British-Indian identity played a role in instilling in Kipling a conscious awareness of the "hypocrisy that can lie at the heart of self-righteous authority" (D. Simmons 82). Simultaneously signifying "a psychological dilemma as well as a creative boast," Kipling's status as a colonial writer inspired the opposing, "irreconcilable" societies within his stories (Montefiore 3, 15). Kipling's "horror of psychic fragmentation" was also the result of his recognition of the "competing discourses of England and India," a conflict that reflected his own painful psychic splitting of himself in two (Welby 36). According to Zohreh Sullivan, Kipling's "pathology of selves ... illuminates the pathology of empire"—ultimately, Kipling's internal struggle is a direct result of being a child of Empire: a "split site ... full of contradictions" (180, 138; Welby 23). A distinct pattern of "bodies and minds in pain" marks much of his early fiction, a pattern which suggests his general awareness and understanding of the rapidly growing field of trauma in the late nineteenth century (Wynne 40-41). According to Catherine Wynne, Victorian clinicians, writers, and artists—like Kipling—"had a far greater understanding of psychological trauma than has been fully acknowledged" (42). In line with these psychoanalytic readings, scholars observe that because of his childhood and British-Indian identity, duality, doublings, and divisions feature prominently in Kipling's fiction, culminating in the recognized importance of Kipling's "hybrid" imperial boy-heroes, a category which Mowgli, according to Randall and John McBratney, falls within.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Many scholars explore the "two-sidedness" of Kipling and his fiction, though few discuss it in direct relation to trauma, and none argue that Kipling's trauma stems from the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857. Some of these scholars include John McClure (1981), Robert Moss (1982), Sandra Kemp and Lisa Lewis (1988), Zohreh T. Sullivan (1993), Salman Rushdie (1999), Don Randall (2000), John McBratney (2002), Jan Montefiore (2008), Leonard Shengold (2013), David Sergeant (2013), and Lizzy Welby (2015).

As a figure that disrupted nineteenth-century understandings of race, race relations, national and cultural identity, and imperialism itself, the hybrid—especially the adolescent hybrid—functions as an ambivalent, subversive, and unpredictable “physiological phenomenon” (Bhabha 112; Young 6; Randall, *Imperial Boy* 11). If the nation’s strength was arguably tied to the genetic makeup of every “empire boy,” the hybrid therefore unsettled and blurred lines between colonizer and colonized (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 3-7). According to Randall, Kipling’s imperial, “enduringly liminal” hybrid boy is significant because this figure, while on the one hand a subject of imperialism, “always has the potential to destabilize the systems and structures of power he inhabits” thus making him an “agent” of that same power (*Imperial Boy* 18). The Kipling imperial boy did not just exhibit the characteristics of the late nineteenth-century British boy-hero who embodied the “strength of the imperial order”; he was also a “vehicle” to challenge and “reconfigure that symbolic order of empire” (*Imperial Boy* 18, 20). It is ultimately the cross-cultural interactions and confrontations of the Kipling imperial boy that produces his troubled, divided, and undecided selfhood and self “who counters, yet confirms the fissuring of the masculine, authoritative subjectivity upon which a coherent, masculinist envisioning of the imperial project depends” (21-22). According to Landry and Rooney, Kipling possessed the special ability to simultaneously demonstrate the best and most problematic tenets of empire, and his “treatment of imperial masculinity is similarly nuanced” (59). Kipling believed that broader definitions of imperial citizenship needed to be incorporated into Britain’s self-identity or it would be unlikely to survive the new world order. It was through Kipling’s “native-born”, a figure who represented Kipling’s “dream” of a modernized British Empire, that this broader definition would be



realized (McBratney, *Imperial* xi, xvii). The hybrid was Kipling's ultimate ideal in terms of resourcefulness, knowledge, and effectiveness, yet his creation of the "native-born" clearly suggests Kipling's uneasiness about his own Anglo-Indian identity. Although the "native-born" successfully champions the Empire while simultaneously critiquing it, the young Mowgli in Kipling's *The Jungle Books* is not unscathed by his unavoidable connection to the Empire, particularly due to his racialized identity.

In *Imperial Beast Fables: Animals, Cosmopolitanism, and the British Empire* (2020), Kaori Nagai enters the conversation with other *Jungle Book* scholars who explore Mowgli's racial identity by pointedly asking: "Why is Mowgli a brown boy?" (90). She asserts that his "brownness" merely perpetuates the "racist and anthropological assumptions of the day"; after all, "Kipling could not have chosen a European boy to characterise the feral child" (91). Most scholars who explore Mowgli frame his "hybridity" as one that privileges his "English" characteristics, almost completely eliding the significance of the fact that he *cannot* embody an "Anglo-Indian masculinity" (Mudiganti 228) or be categorized as a "*white* creole"—a Kipling figure who is "racially 'white' but culturally mixed" (McBratney, *Imperial* xiv)—*because* Mowgli is neither bi-racial nor British. The adolescent Mowgli is "hardly aware of the English" (Mudiganti 234), and he is therefore pointedly *not* a "product" of British influences like most of Kipling's hybrid, "native-born" characters, especially Kim (McBratney, *Imperial* xiv). Even though Mowgli appears to accept their "primacy," the few references the narrator does make to the English ("it is said that [the white men] govern all the land, and do not suffer people to burn or beat each other without witnesses") can be read ironically (Moss 114). McBratney concedes "that it may seem odd" to affiliate the "brown-skinned"

Mowgli with Kipling's white creole, but accounts for his decision by arguing that Mowgli's "cross-species" experience is analogous to the racial hybrid who moves seamlessly between British and Indian identities (*Imperial* 85). Although scholars are correct that Kipling had no issue with the imperial project itself, their reading of Mowgli against Kipling's other "hybrid" characters is an odd and even inaccurate choice, for while Mowgli does champion an Empire of "multi-ethnic, liberal-humanist concerns," (Hagiiioannu 112), I argue that his man-cub duality and racial identity speaks more pointedly to Kipling's belief in the Empire's need for new blood to sustain it. What Deane calls the search for "better men", hence Kipling's rejection of limited forms of hegemonic masculinity in favour of an empowering fluid alternative. For Sue Walsh, the Mowgli stories can be "read as potentially destabilizing putative certainties around species and race"; as a man-cub with an "amphibious identity" ("Mowgli the Frog"), Kipling's emphasis on Mowgli's fluidity "destabilizes" the distinction between his two selves (50, 52), and in turn, his relationship with the animals and villagers. Mowgli, like the nonhuman animals, "vacillates between allegorical readings and literal ones" and that reading the text one way or another "contradicts *and* undermines the fable's allegorical drive to say one thing and mean another" (Nagai, *Imperial* 90). The fact that scholars cannot pin down Mowgli, for they "regularly switch their symbols around" regarding whether or not Mowgli embodies the British presence in India (Hassan 52) suggests that Mowgli's character actively resists categorization, positioning him as a politicized figure as much as an allegorical one. The adult Mowgli in Kipling's "In the Rukh" may eventually agree to become part of the imperialist project as a Forest Ranger, as Randall, Hutchkiss, and Nagai observe in their reading of *The Jungle Books* (*Imperial Boy* 67-71;

440-442; *Imperial* 90-94), but the jungle still remains part of Mowgli in the sense that he never lives outside of it and even indoctrinates his future wife and newborn child in its customs (e.g. Mowgli's wife chooses to live in the jungle and unconcernedly leaves their child in the protection of Mowgli's wolf brothers) (Kipling, *Many* 264). Scholars' careless categorization and near erasure of Kipling's most iconic boy-hero's racial identity calls to mind how Henty scholars mislabel Bathurst, again denying the space for "alternative" forms of imperial masculinity and the subsequent psychological harm of this denial.

Although the "wolf-boy" interpretation would provide Kipling more freedom "to explore his fascination with border-crossing" (McBratney, *Imperial* 85) and help him work through his own struggle with his Anglo-Indian identity, the placement of an explicitly *Indian* boy-hero within an allegorical restaging of the "Mutiny" evokes, instead, the weighted significance of Mowgli's heritage and its connection to British 1857 atrocities. The "fissuring" of Mowgli's masculine identity is therefore not merely the result of cross-cultural encounters, as Randall and McBratney argue, but his simultaneous complicity in and questioning of the Empire's crimes against India during the 1857 "Mutiny" as well as the internalization of the trauma inherited from this historical event. As an *Anglo-Indian*, Mowgli's "English" education through his "Jungle Law" training (no doubt a necessary measure to soothe Kipling's nineteenth-century audience's anxiety over degeneration) does invoke the common trope of the settler's anxiety over and desire for becoming the colonial "other" to experience the freedom from imperial responsibility (i.e., what Kipling felt to be his transition from his early childhood in India to his adulthood in Britain). However, Kipling's explicit choice to make Mowgli

a “brown boy” (Nagai, *Imperial* 90) speaks more to Kipling’s internalized, racially fraught remembrances of the “Mutiny”. As an “amphibious” being, Mowgli’s heartbreak embodies the trauma Britain inflicted on India as much as it does Britain’s trauma from the near loss of India. Overcome with grief and anger over his liminality that bars him from belonging, Mowgli frightens, murders, and destroys out of a desire to exact revenge, a discernably similar displaced rage identified in late nineteenth-century “Mutiny” writing. The “Mutiny”, after all, embodied a symbolic fracturing of the Anglo-Indian identity on a much larger scale. Whether in the context of history, fiction, or fable, Kipling’s “Mutiny” narratives explore “a new model of colonial masculinity,” (Arondekar 135) characterized by an alternatively heroic, haunted masculine figure, one who has internalized the traumatic memory of the “Mutiny” and is thus forced to relive its crisis in different contexts. Certainly, the return of “’57” in the British-Indian cultural imaginary and the possibility of future insurrection exacerbated what were already Kipling’s internalized feelings of anxious uncertainty regarding the vulnerability and potential decline of the British Empire. The ambiguity of Mowgli’s duality therefore serves as evidence of Kipling’s *Anglo-Indian* trauma; the man was not sure what to feel more heartbroken over: Britain’s failure to subsume India into itself or India’s rejection of Britain’s attempts to do so. Since the Empire’s loss of control and violent rejection of this control were not something easily ignored or forgotten, Kipling avoided directly looking at these cracks in the imperial nation’s armor all the while subtextually doing just that in his late nineteenth-century fiction.

### 3.3 Racially Fraught Trauma: The “Repressed” Indian “Mutiny” of 1857

Pack or council, hunt or den / Cry no truce with Jackal-Men. Feed them silence when they say:  
‘Come with us an easy way.’ / Feed them silence when they seek: / Help of thine to hurt the weak.  
— Bagheera, “The Outsong”, *The Second Jungle Book* (1895)

In his fifth chapter of *A War of No Pity*, Herbert cites Hilda Gregg’s observation that there was a “significant lag time” between the “Mutiny” itself and its treatment in fiction, and that British novelists’ “prolonged avoidance” of addressing the event signified

a recognition that it was impossible for the time being to treat this subject in fiction. For novelists in the postwar years, that is, the Indian calamity was not a neglected or inadvertently overlooked subject but a *forbidden, strongly repressed one*. A more vivid indication of the traumatic character of the Mutiny for the Victorian mind could hardly be wished for—a psychological trauma being precisely an event one cannot bear to remember (and remembers obsessively as a consequence). It is precisely the *absence* of this subject from contemporary fiction that betrays the powerful grip it exerted on Victorian consciousness. (206; my emphasis)

Herbert identifies Kipling’s *Kim* (1901) as a novel that explores the potential for “racial reconciliation” despite the lengthy damaging aftermath of 1857 (287). At first glance, *Kim* frames the “Mutiny” as a “distant memory” (Tickell, “Cawnpore” 102) or insensitively dismisses and reduces it to sheer “madness” (Said, *Culture* 147) to the point where the historical conflict between East and West disappears. Edmund Wilson and Edward Said comment on the erasure of this conflict: arguing that either Kipling “would never face one” or there simply “*was no conflict*” in Kipling’s mind (Wilson 126; Said, *Culture* 145). As Lisa Lewis observes, several scholars including Bhaskar Rao, Sara

Suleri, and Zohreh Sullivan, suggest that Kipling's need to account for the "Mutiny" this way was to calm his fears regarding "the possibility of a further rebellion" (137). Like Henty, Kipling believed "it was India's best destiny to be ruled by England" (Said, *Culture* 146); however, his fiction reveals his serious concern for the *manner* and implementation of this rule. The pervasiveness of the "Mutiny" in Kipling's works demonstrates how no imperial subject, no matter their level of displacement, was left unscathed by 1857, its "scars and superstitions" (Morris 246) permanently etched into the nineteenth-century British cultural imaginary. Having left its indelible mark, the "Mutiny" forever altered the Empire by casting doubt over its imperial destiny, and to "reassert the authority the rebellion had put into question," most British historians and novelists felt that the "encounter" needed to be framed "in terms of opposition and difference" (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 15). Although the "Mutiny" did reinforce the divide between colonizer and colonized, Kipling "could never (try as he might)" accept this difference (Said, *Culture* 147). In addition to Kipling being named "as the most likely person to write *the* novel of the Mutiny," (Nagai, "Writing" 93; Gregg 231) the fact that the event continued to directly and indirectly reappear in his writing suggests that it could not be avoided, as though it were, in Freud's words, a "return of the repressed" (124).

Kipling's letters reveal his psychological struggle with the event, acknowledging, on the one hand, that the "Mutiny" was something "we don't talk about," yet expressing, on the other hand, his desire "to see a good mutiny novel" (Kipling, *Letters* 2:219-220). The British public regularly consumed the "Mutiny" narrative, given the rise of "Mutiny" novels and histories in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and Kipling was the ideal candidate to contribute to this watershed of writing given that he was at the "zenith"

of his career when Gregg published her oft-cited review of “Mutiny” literature (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 62). Responding to Robert Underwood Johnson on December 14, 1895 regarding his proposal that Kipling write a “Mutiny” novel, Kipling declared the task to be “an exceeding big job and one altogether beyond [his] scope” and confessed that his attempt at such a novel years prior (what eventually became “In the Year ‘57”) in fact “cured” him of the need (Kipling, *Letters* 2:219). Describing his efforts to address his fixation with the “Mutiny” as akin to a type of medical recovery suggests that Kipling himself recognized his troubled relationship with the event and the fact that he felt psychically compelled to work through it. However, the fact that his writing contains explicit references to 1857 or gestures to its universal themes reveals that Kipling was not, in fact, “cured”. Despite acknowledging that “‘57” was something that he, like the British public, could not talk about (“I know *I* can’t”), Kipling was still keen to write about the “Mutiny”: “I’d try in a minute if I felt I had a call that way but I’m rather convinced I have not” (Kipling, *Letters* 2:220). A willing participant in the “open secret” of the British nation’s inherited “Mutiny” trauma, Kipling longed to possess the “calling” for “Mutiny” writing, as though the very act of sharing in the collective experience of being haunted by the event signified one’s British identity. His inability to write a “Mutiny” novel, then, suggests a perpetual trauma: the identity fracturing of the displaced and othered Anglo-Indian subject.

Kipling’s traumatic struggle with the “Mutiny” becomes evident through the very act of writing itself: torn between the “simultaneous need to remember and forget,” (Tickell, *Terrorism* 102) Kipling’s “Mutiny” narratives (his fiction which explicitly or indirectly recalls the “Mutiny”) represent, in Jenny Sharpe’s words, the “absent texts”

that allow for the reimagining of “events as they might have happened or in a way that history has failed to record” (21). Despite his documented reluctance to write on the subject, “native insurgency upset[ting] a British political” appears as a common plot device in his Anglo-Indian fiction (McBratney, *Imperial* 26). His writing in fact notably participates “in the literary production of ‘Mutiny’ memory,” (Erl, “Re-writing” 169) his historical recollections or fantastical “restagings” of the “Mutiny” subsequently yielding fractured narratives fixated with their own transmission. For example, Hagiioannu observes the “historiographical and hermeneutic issues arising from [Kipling’s] attempt to write about the Mutiny” (20); Arondekar argues how, for Kipling, the “associative afterlife” of the “Mutiny” archive generates the event’s “nonnarratability” and renders its telling “impossible”; its looming “threat . . . palpable even as it is held in abeyance” (134); and Tickell explores how Kipling grapples with his “unwillingness” to archive and memorialize the “Mutiny” in the face of its “disturbing” history, his difficulty suggestive of “a superstitious fear of imperial hubris and degeneration” (“Cawnpore” 104, 105). Less interested in the “solace” of offering a unified “Mutiny” narrative or “transforming earlier records of Mutiny failures into glorious stories of colonial success,” Kipling, instead, mirrors the same ambivalent, unsettled language of the “Mutiny” archive “in which the terror of the Mutiny becomes a source of extended male articulation” (Arondekar 19). Kipling’s gendering of the “Mutiny” narrative reveals his knowledge of and participation in “what would become the established literary means of recalling 1857: the historical Mutiny romance,” (Tickell, *Terrorism* 105) a genre which often elevated its male protagonists to the same heroic (though sometimes questionable) status as their historical counterparts.



Kipling's initially anonymous, never republished "In the Year '57" (1887) celebrates the alternative "Punjab-school heroism" of the "Mutiny" figure John Lawrence, the story's narrator taking on the "piecemealing" together of the fragmented, "nightmarish content" of 1857 history (Tickell, "Cawnpore" 103; Arondekar 136-137). Although Lawrence's reassuringly heroic handwriting promises the restoration of a stabilized Empire, the "narrative unhinging" of "In the Year '57" demonstrates that it was "too much for Kipling to take on," his attempts to "brace" against the "horrifying memory" of the "Mutiny" (Arondekar 139-140) evidence of his internalized trauma. Kipling's "The Little House at Arrah" (1888) recalls the heroism of British and Indian men during the "Mutiny" Siege at Arrah, yet simultaneously exposes the event's "inconsistencies" and "unromantic" nature due to the narrator's frequent interjections, correcting the already questionable "historically assumed validity" of 1857 records (Arondekar 143-144). The interrogation and unsettling of the "Mutiny" archive reveals Kipling's pained avoidance of the subject of '57 as reflective of "the well-known silence of the traumatized or grief-stricken witness" and symbolic of Britain's haunting failure to impose its imperial rule onto India (Tickell, *Terrorism* 105; Nagai, "Writing" 84). Kipling's ghost story, "The Lost Legion" (1892), continues the theme of haunted 1857 memory as a 30-year-old "Mutiny" massacre is supernaturally transported to present day late nineteenth-century British India, where racial tensions continue to destabilize the possibility of a unified Empire; the narrative "return" of the lost legion symbolic "of an immutable historic performance, repeated again and again" (Generani 43). The "Mutiny" thus serves as an inescapable trauma never to be healed or reconciled with British history, returning (in this case literally) as a ghost from the past.

Scholars now even consider Kipling's so-called pro-imperialist "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888)—an allegorical restaging of "'57"—as both a "trauma narrative" and criticism on unchecked imperialism that "raises the haunting possibility that something might be wrong with English rule in India" (Wynne 43; Kucich, Introduction 10).<sup>37</sup> The novella's narrative fracturing reflects the "psychic and bodily fragmentation" of its haunted male heroes, who meet with disturbing, violent ends, an outcome that reveals "the true nature of colonization" (Banerjee 17). More recently, Andrea Rehn suggests that the natural outcome of colonization *is* trauma; "would-be-conquerors" are unavoidably traumatized by their involvement in the crimes committed in the name of Empire (149). As men who seek to realize the aims of the violent adventure narrative tradition on which they were bred, Carnehan and Dravot inherit this same trauma and subsequently meet violent and unforgiving ends, an argument I explore further in my next chapter on Conrad's *Lord Jim*. Read through the lens of trauma, Kipling's "The Man Who Would be King" reveals the psychologically damaging and morally damning outcome of imperialism. Kipling emphasizes *not* the orientalist fear of the "Other" but the "terrifying recognition of '(an)other' image of the self"—anticipating the "horrifying self-recognition" (Banerjee 16, 18) of Kurtz in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) and one that Mowgli himself experiences in *The Jungle Books* in the form of his irrepressible alter-ego. Sometimes dismissed, downplayed, or dreaded, the "Mutiny" may have taken

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<sup>37</sup>Zohreh Sullivan reads the novella as an "anticolonialist allegory" (101); Edward Marx (1999) challenges simplistic readings of the novella's imperialist tone; and Albert Pionke argues the novella offers a "profoundly ambivalent" representation of British imperialism ("Epistemological" 337). Since the 1980s, the novella has received more nuanced readings of Kipling's treatment of imperialism (Pionke, "Epistemological" 336).

on multiple meanings for Kipling, yet its unmistakable theme of narrative fracturing reveals a distinct pattern of trauma in his “Mutiny” writing.

Kipling himself is a product of the “Mutiny” given how its history informs and shapes his writing (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 63; Hotchkiss 439-440; L. Lewis 134-140). His late nineteenth-century “Mutiny” fiction corresponds with key events that brought the historical trauma of the “Mutiny” to the forefront of British concerns: the Kohlapur Conspiracy of 1881 (an “echo” of 1857), the introduction and establishment of the Ilbert Bill (1883-1884), and the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885 (Arondekar 139). Like the “Mutiny”, these changes “left lasting scars” and heightened tensions between the British and Indians resulting in “genuine, widespread, and massive” protests (Hirschmann 3, 109). As a newly minted journalist in India, Kipling was well-informed on, and particularly anxious about, the Ilbert Bill controversy: a proposed measure which provoked an anti-Indian hysteria so overwhelming that it rivaled, according to Kipling, the racial animosity of the Indian “Mutiny” (Kipling, *Letters* 1:35). Kipling was swept into the Bill’s controversy further due to his employer, *The Civil and Military Gazette*, abruptly changing its position on the Bill from disapproval to praise (the paper’s proprietor having been bribed with knighthood), resulting in the Anglo-Indian community’s open censure of Kipling at the Lahore Club (Tickell “Cawnpore” 13). Having already felt abandoned as a child due to his abrupt removal from India, Kipling re-experienced this displacement soon after his return, learning the “devastating lesson in the price of community loyalty,” the theme of betrayal becoming a staple marker of his fiction (14). Based on Kipling’s reading habits leading up to and during his writing of the *Jungle Books*, the “Mutiny” also creatively shaped his research and writing on India. For

example, Kipling was influenced by the work of his father, John Lockwood Kipling, whose *Beast and Man in India* (1891) makes “oblique” reference to the “evil days” of the 1857 and the Boy of Lucknow, a real-life wolf-boy initially described by General William Sleeman in his *A Journey through the Kingdom of Oudh* (1858). Sleeman’s wolf-child stories were “extracted” from his initial report in 1852, which was reprinted again in popular magazines in the 1890s (Hotchkiss 438-440). For Hotchkiss, these wolf-boy stories were the “missing link” between Kipling and the “Mutiny”, as they explored “Victorian theories and anxieties about origin and inheritance” (436). John Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers in India* (1894), which Kipling was also significantly influenced by, aptly demonstrates how 1857 “was still fresh in British minds” since significant geographic regions in the book are described in relation to the “Mutiny” (L. Lewis 136). Kipling’s familiarity with the Mutiny’s history and its featured prominence in his research suggests it was an unavoidable subject even for Kipling who confessed to not desiring to write about it altogether.

The setting of Kipling’s *Jungle Books* also suggests his unavoidable connection to the “Mutiny”, given his travels in India as an adult. Originally set in the Aravalli Hills of Rajputana (now Rajasthan), “Mowgli’s Brothers” unconsciously evokes the first rebel Indian uprising on May 28 in Central India (at Nasirabad, near Ajmere and the Aravalli Hills), an uprising that eventually “took on a scale and significance” in 1857 (Frey, *Indian* 59). Kipling may have changed the setting of this story to the Seonee [Seoni] Hills before publication, but Mowgli’s jungle still retains the same imagery from Kipling’s month-long excursion in Rajputana in 1888 where he “saw panthers killed and heard tigers roar in the hills, and for six days had no white face with [him], and explored

dead cities desolate these three hundred years” (Kipling, *Letters* 2:149-152). Kipling’s alteration of the location of “Mowgli’s Brothers” to the Seonee [Seoni] Hills does not in fact distance the story from the “Mutiny” for Kipling drew extensively from Robert Armitage Sterndale’s *Seonee, or Camp Life on the Satpura Range: A Tale of Indian Adventure* (1877), an autobiographical novel that details the life of a district officer who resides in the Seoni jungle during the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. Sterndale narrates a dozen “man-eating” tiger hunting excursions leading up to the “Mutiny” outbreak, which he describes at length. Like most “Mutiny” literature with which Kipling was intimately familiar, Kipling’s fiction “rework[s] imperial history” and, particularly in the case of *The Jungle Books*, attempts to “make sense” of the “troubling, refractory aspects of the Mutiny” (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 63, 163). By invoking the “Mutiny’s” “emotionally fraught issues” in the Mowgli saga, Kipling’s efforts to reconcile this crisis in British history within the seemingly unexpected place of his most beloved and popular “fantastic boy-narrative” suggest that *The Jungle Books* is “not only for boys,” (63) but can indeed be included with other “Mutiny” narratives of the period, especially those that criticized British rule and the ill-qualified men sent to govern on its behalf.

Although *Kim* is considered Kipling’s “greatest work” on India (Said, *Culture* 133), *The Jungle Books* offers richer “Mutiny” echoes in terms of its themes of violence, retribution, and trauma. Moreover, Mowgli’s liminality between Master and Other, torn “between two opposing worlds, divided in his identifications and his affiliations” (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 73), offers a more trustworthy, non-violent “colonial administrator” of India than the soldiers Kipling and Henty felt were ill-equipped to run the Empire. Kipling’s Mowgli stories transform the “Mutiny” into both allegory and fable

since Mowgli's liminality positions him, in Randall's words, as an imperial "proxy" and "adventurer": his defeat of Shere Khan mirrors the historical British "triumph" over India during the "Mutiny" (*Imperial Boy* 72, 78). In line with his efforts with *Kim* and other "Mutiny" fiction, "Kipling produces a fictional 'prose of counter-insurgency', which attempts to resolve [through fantasy, in Hutchkiss' words] the enduring anxieties and tensions informing the history and discourse of British imperialism in India" (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 67; Hutchkiss 437). However, as anxiously as writers—including Kipling—sought to "assimilate" 1857 into the "Destiny of the British Empire," (Guha 74) Mowgli's unsettled duality disrupts any attempt to "colonize" "Mutiny" history. Randall also concedes that Kipling's "empire-affirming allegorization of the history of British India" is in fact both defined *and* "unsettled" and "disrupted" by the historical crisis of 1857 (63, 67). Even though Mowgli is ultimately the reason "mutiny" occurs in the jungle and the village (the rejection of his authority as the imperial "proxy"), Hutchkiss argues that Mowgli, for Kipling, represents the "'missing link' that would obviate the problem of the 'Mutiny' and its possible future re-eruptions; with sepoys like Mowgli, *the Mutiny never would have happened*" (442; my emphasis). If Mowgli serves as an allegorical "stand in" for the Empire, his perpetual estrangement signifies Britain's loss of control over India at the time of the "Mutiny", a trauma which is mapped onto his body in the form of the psychic splitting of his identity. Although Randall and Hutchkiss gesture towards the psychology of Mowgli in terms of his duality and preoccupation with revenge, they do not explore Mowgli in relation to masculine trauma because of British actions during 1857. Randall does, however, recognize the significance of Mowgli's curse-like situation, in which for every "mutiny" he puts down, he finds himself faced

with another. Just as the symbolic tiger in British imperial mythologies needed to be “shot again and again,” Kipling could not “put an end to the Mutiny story [but could] only return to it – again and again” (Mukherjee 11; Randall, *Imperial Boy* 87). Haunted by an “alter ego” representative of the vengeful spirit of 1857, Mowgli is undone by the Mutiny’s trauma.

Scholars may consider Mowgli to be one of Kipling’s most successful boy-heroes of Empire, but the insurmountable loss that patterns the Mowgli saga undermines Randall’s assertion that the *Jungle Books* narrates an “ideal” restaging of British presence in India. Instead, Mowgli’s perpetual loss and fractured selfhood reveals the destabilization of British rule and the psychological damage inflicted on the young men who served the Empire because of the irreconcilable differences between post-“Mutiny” Britain and India. Such psychological damage, particularly in Mowgli’s case as an Indian boy, was the result of the Empire’s genocidal actions against India, a crime for which Kipling could seemingly not forgive. To protect Mowgli from the emotional loss he endures, though unsuccessfully due to the extent of his repressed trauma, Kipling arranges the Mowgli saga in *The Jungle Book* (1894) and *The Second Jungle Book* (1895) not just in non-chronological order, but in a violated chronology, as shown below:

**Table 1** Violated Chronology of Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894) and *The Second Jungle Books* (1895)

<b>Mowgli Story</b>	<b>Mowgli's Age*</b>	<b>Major Events in Mowgli's Life</b>	<b>Narrative Significance</b>
“Mowgli's Brothers”	~1; 10-11	Orphaned as baby because of Shere Khan; the tiger swears revenge on him. After “ten or eleven whole years” pass, attacks Shere Khan and wolves with fire. Jungle now “shut” to him.	Expelled from jungle: traumatic heartbreak
“Kaa's Hunting”	~7-10	“Jungle Law” education; kidnapped and imprisoned by <i>Bandar-log</i> ; rescued by Kaa, Baloo, Bagheera.	Return to childhood: pain

“Tiger-Tiger!”	~11-12	Arrives in human village and creates chaos; murders Shere Khan and places his hide on Council Rick.	Expelled from village: rage
“How Fear Came”	~7-10	Shere Khan kills a man during the Water Truce; learns the history of the Jungle, which involves how the First Tiger brought fear to the Jungle.	Return to childhood: confusion
“Letting in the Jungle”	~11-12	Discovers the villagers have beaten and imprisoned Messua; razes the village to the ground with the help of Hathi and his sons.	Messua attacked: vengeful
“The King’s Ankus”	~11	Takes place after Shere Khan’s death but before his revenge on the village. Discovers six dead bodies of men who killed each other over the ankus he discards in the jungle; horrified to learn of animal blood sports and the greed of men.	Return to childhood: horror
“Red Dog”	~14-16	Wolf parents are dead; Red Dogs attack the Wolf Pack; Akela tells Mowgli to return to man and dies.	Death of parental figures: loss
“The Spring Running”	~17	Cannot participate in “The Spring Running”; destabilization of his position as “Master”; haunted by an inexplicable force (“double-step”).	Self-exile: fear and traumatic heartbreak

\*Kipling only makes explicit reference to Mowgli’s age in “Mowgli’s Brothers” and “The Spring Running”. The other stories contain narrative markers of time. For example, in “Kaa’s Hunting”, the story’s opening statement reads, “All that is told here happened some time before Mowgli was turned out of the Seeoonee Wolf-Pack, or revenged himself on Shere Khan the tiger” (55). I therefore give an approximate age range for each story.

Except for “In the Rukh”, which was the first of the Mowgli stories to be published in 1893, Kipling *initially* published his Mowgli stories in semi-chronological order over the course of roughly a year and a half between January 1894 and September 1895 in different magazines including *St. Nicolas*, *McClure’s*, *Pall Mall Budget*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*. In this initial arrangement, Kipling disrupts his narrative chronology when he returns Mowgli to his Edenic childhood in back-to-back stories (“Kaa’s Hunting” and “How Fear Came”), placed between “Tiger-Tiger!” and “Letting in the Jungle” respectively.<sup>38</sup> Given his *re*-arrangement of the Mowgli saga in the first and second

<sup>38</sup> Kipling’s initial order of the Mowgli saga: “Mowgli’s Brothers” (January 1894), “Tiger-Tiger!” (February 1894), “Kaa’s Hunting” (March-April 1894), “How Fear Came” (June 1894), “Letting in the Jungle” (December 1894), “The King’s Ankus” (March 1895), “Red Dog” (July 1895), “The Spring Running” (September 1895).



*Jungle Books* (and his second redistribution of the stories for the 1897 Outward Bound Edition, when he placed all the Mowgli stories in the first *Jungle Book* in the original order of their publication), Kipling was clearly fixated on the narrative *structure* of Mowgli's life, a fact which reinforces the text's theme of trauma. As Hotchkiss observes, Kipling writes "backward" into the past (436, 442). In his rearrangement of the Mowgli saga in *The Jungle Books* and *The Second Jungle Books*, Kipling oscillates the man-cub forward and backward in time during his adolescence within six other stories before returning Mowgli to almost adulthood again (at the age of 17) in the "final" Mowgli story, "The Spring Running" (1895) where he experiences afresh his painful loss of his (self-)expulsion from the jungle. Kipling returns Mowgli to the past (excluding "Mowgli's Brothers") after three separate traumas involving his rejection: Mowgli's first expulsion from the jungle, Mowgli's expulsion from the village after his murder of Shere Khan, and his vengeful destruction of the village. The more "human" experiences Mowgli gains, the more Kipling attempts yet fails to return him to the Edenic, pre-"Mutiny" jungle of Mowgli's childhood. Although Mowgli is almost deified by animal and villager alike throughout his adolescence, earning the title of "Master" in the same manner of the British Empire which sought to secure India, his endless experience with heartbreak, pain, rage, confusion, vengeance, horror, loss, and fear, feelings which he internalizes and cannot shake, distinguishes him from stereotypical imperial boy-heroes and signifies a larger cultural trauma because of the "Mutiny".

Mowgli may not suffer from congenital weakness like Henty's Bathurst, but his hybrid condition is fraught with suffering and rage for—as even Shere Khan himself observes—Mowgli is "neither man nor cub" (179). Possessing "the mystic of 'Man' or

the uncanny jungle knowledge,” (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 73) Mowgli is at once British and Indian (colonizer and colonized), yet not quite either. He may appear at first to be a more successful form of “hybrid” masculinity, yet he is painfully “othered”: abandoned by his biological parents; loved best, among his adoptive wolf-parents’ cubs; and rejected by the wolves and Indian villagers. Leading up to his painful acceptance of his differences from his adopted family and the villagers, Mowgli suffers heartbreak. As the most “fantastically allegorical” of all Kipling’s boy-heroes (McBratney, *Imperial* 85), Mowgli’s man/wolf duality represents endlessly competing, yet painfully irreconcilable identities. Suspended between childhood and manhood, wildness and civilization, Indianness and Englishness, Mowgli is simultaneously at home with, estranged from, and at war with himself: “Mowgli will drive Mowgli,” Akela (the wolf pack leader) ominously remarks, predicting the man-cub’s self-imposed departure from the jungle (Kipling, “Red Dog” 320). Kipling reinforces Mowgli’s fractured identity and his desire to repress the trauma of the “Mutiny” through the non-chronological narration of Mowgli’s adventures: moving from manhood to boyhood and (not quite) back again, Mowgli exists in a perpetual state of liminality, never leaving the jungle of his boyhood behind. The “otherness” of Mowgli’s man-cub duality and racial identity therefore simultaneously champions the cultural competence of the “native-born” boy-hero while signifying the racially fraught remembrances of the “Mutiny”.

### 3.4 Kipling’s “Fractured” Mowgli: Mapping the “Psychic Splitting” of the “Mutiny” Boy-Hero

The Jungle is shut to me and the village gates are shut. Why? ... / These two things fight together in me as the snakes fight in the spring. / ... I am two Mowglis ...

—Mowgli, “Mowgli’s Song”, *The Jungle Book* (1894)

Almost as soon as Mowgli enters the jungle (his introduction in the first Mowgli narrative), he is pitted as the mortal enemy of the lame-foot, fire-scarred tiger, Shere Khan. As such, he is marked as the story's predestined hero—a far cry from Henty's Bathurst, who already carries the weight of his "failure" when introduced. Kipling's use of Shere Khan as the narrative's villain is no accident, as the tiger came to symbolize for the British both India and the "Mutiny" of 1857 (Miller "Rebellious" 480). The jungle too served as a metaphor for India, for like the Bengal tiger, it was viewed as dangerous and untameable (A. Johnson 136; Colley 265). As the "Mutiny" hero, then, Mowgli – at first – serves as the narrative's "imperial" proxy, as Randall asserts, since his "jungle history repeats, in ideal form, the history of the British presence in India" through his hunting and killing of Shere Khan (*Imperial Boy* 72). Yet being both of the jungle and of man, and biologically a "brown" boy, Mowgli's role is more nuanced given that he is destined to protect the jungle, representative of Kipling's India, from tyranny, lawlessness, and violent cruelty. Foreshadowing Mowgli's attack on the tiger that triggers Mowgli's first exile from the jungle, Shere Khan fails to kill Mowgli and his parents after being burned by their campfire and vows his revenge: "The cub is mine, and to my teeth he will come in the end" (Kipling, "Mowgli's Brothers" 39). Although Mowgli is only an infant, Raksha (Mother Wolf) prophesizes that he will grow up to turn the tables on the lawless and violent Shere Khan: "[Mowgli] shall live to run with the Pack and to hunt with the Pack; and in the end, look you, hunter of little naked cubs ... — he shall hunt *thee!*" (39). The ever-present threat of Shere Khan, an explicit reminder of the "Mutiny", shapes Mowgli's understanding of himself, his purpose, and his continued existence: Raksha lovingly lulls Mowgli to sleep with her reassurances that the "time will come"

when he will hunt Shere Khan (40). Mowgli's adoptive wolf parents, the wolf pack leader, and Mowgli's eventual teachers, Bagheera and Baloo, all agree Mowgli's belonging to the pack will eventually prove a great asset to them against Shere Khan (43); and Raksha, and especially Bagheera, repeatedly remind Mowgli as he grows up that he must kill Shere Khan because the tiger has sworn revenge on him (44-45). As Mowgli becomes the resident "Mutiny" hero of *The Jungle Books*, his presence and eventual destruction of Shere Khan reflect Kipling's efforts to reassert British rule in India and "resolve, in fantasy, anxieties that persist from the Mutiny" (Randall, *Imperial Boy* 67; Hutchkiss 436). Randall's and Hutchkiss' reading, at first, appears sound: Mowgli engages in the "zoological hygiene" practice of tiger-hunting, like the men in Henty's *Rujub, the Juggler*, thus proving himself to be an ideal boy-hero.

However, Mowgli's man-cub duality and his racial identity complicate Randall's and Hutchkiss' reading of Britain's "ideal" presence in India. Instead of reaffirming British control of India, Mowgli, who is caught between two worlds, represents an alternative history to the counter-insurgency narrative and the bleak future of imperialism: the expulsion of the British *from* India. His "rivalry" with Shere Khan is therefore less representative of the British imperial adventurer suppressing the actions of the "corrupt" rule of Bahadur Shah, leader of the Mogul dynasty, as Randall argues (*Imperial Boy* 78), than of Britain's failure to reconcile with India and the inescapable trauma because of that failure. Mowgli may rid the world of Shere Khan like a successful colonial administrator of "Mutiny" narratives, but his rejection of his human heritage and revolt against the pack and village for exiling him signifies Kipling's repressed anger over Britain's unjust governance of India during and after the "Mutiny". In championing

a racialized boy-hero who embodies an alternative colonial masculinity, Kipling suggests anti-imperialist sentiment and his own mixed feelings about the aftermath of 1857.

Mowgli may be marked as the narrative's "Mutiny" hero from infancy, but his man-cub duality and racial identity distinguish him from conventional boy-heroes of nineteenth-century adventure and "Mutiny" fiction given that Mowgli identifies with and is most loyal to the jungle inhabitants, representative of the colonial other in Kipling's fable retelling of 1857.

As the "wolf boy", Mowgli spends the first ten seasons of his life living under the constant threat of Shere Khan, though still assured of his place within the wolf pack brotherhood due to their mutual protection of one another, his ability to help his wolf brothers hunt, and his dutiful obedience to Jungle Law. Mowgli is also unequivocally accepted by his wolf parents, "boldly" taking his place among the other wolf cubs upon entering the wolf den for the first time as an infant, earning Raksha's eternal and possessive devotion in that she is willing to risk her life and the lives of her other cubs to protect Mowgli from Shere Khan (Kipling, "Mowgli's Brothers" 39). At the same time, however, the imperial nature of Mowgli's education sets him irrevocably apart from his wolf brothers: he is "pupil" to old Baloo reciting his daily "lesson" (and physically struck when he fails to do so), and apprentice to Father Wolf as if he were, as Kipling describes, a "business man" in an office ("Kaa's Hunting" 55-56; "Mowgli's Brothers" 43). Kipling emphasizes Mowgli's imperial "power" through the man-cub's ability to stare down his wolf brothers, the rest of the wolf pack, Bagheera, and even Shere Khan, forcing them all to look away in discomfort and submission, and doing so not to assert unfair control, but often simply because he can ("Letting in the Jungle" 210-211; "Mowgli's Brothers" 44,

46; “How Fear Came” 179; “The Spring Running” 324). Mowgli also possesses the gift of tongues: he is the only human who can communicate with all the jungle’s animals, and the only jungle inhabitant with the ability to communicate with humans (“Kaa’s Hunting” 57). Mowgli does not just have the “double identity” (Karlin 9-10) of man and wolf; he can pass safely among *all* creatures without “accident”: “because neither snake, bird, nor beast, would hurt him” due to his possession of all their “Master Words” (Kipling, “Kaa’s Hunting” 57). Echoing Bathurst’s function as the bridge between Indians and the British, Mowgli exists between two worlds and can, for a time, live in both. Even when Mowgli reaches manhood in Kipling’s earliest written Mowgli story, “In the Rukh”, Mowgli still maintains the unwavering loyalty of his wolf den brothers who help him oversee the jungle. Mowgli is thus uniquely groomed like an English schoolboy, one who would eventually inherit the task of Empire building, yet instead of abusing his role as the “imperial” boy-hero, Mowgli embodies the wise, non-violent temperament of the ideal colonial administrator better fit to govern India. His fraternity with the wolves is therefore not simply cross-species, but cross-racial due to the imperial-like power that he *can* exert over them.

Instead of only serving as a form of power and protection as with other imperial boy-heroes, though, Mowgli’s gifts more notably mark him out as a target and continuously place his life in jeopardy. Because he is a would-be imperial administrator, the colonial forces that seek to destroy and drive out Mowgli represent an implicit desire to drive the British from India and the wolves’ betrayal suggests the breach of trust between the British and Indian soldiers during the “Mutiny”. Despite Baloo’s extreme efforts to teach Mowgli all “Master Words,” so the man-cub has “no one” in the jungle to

fear, Bagheera is confident that Mowgli is still in danger from “his own tribe,” (57)—a deliberately ambiguous and prophetic assertion, for both his “tribes,” the wolf pack and the villagers, turn against him because he is neither quite animal nor man. Mowgli’s imperial and colonial selves are perpetually at war and bar Mowgli, especially as he nears manhood, from ever feeling secure and at home anywhere. His desire to hold onto the jungle of his childhood and his quest for self-reconciliation are continuously thwarted by forces beyond his control. These forces, embodied by Shere Khan, and Mowgli’s thwarted state, are representative of the post-1857 uncertainties of British India.

Throughout his childhood, Mowgli remains oblivious to the dangers of Shere Khan “because he was only a boy” who never worried “about anything till it actually stares him in the face” (Kipling, “How Fear Came” 173). Indifferent to his biological heritage—“What have I to do with Man?” (181)—and therefore ignorant of how his identity threatens his very existence, Mowgli naïvely believes that all his extended family will protect him, and that Shere Khan is all talk and no bite (“Mowgli’s Brothers” 44-45). Mowgli is perfectly convinced, regardless of being a “man-cub,” that Shere Khan and his disciples (young wolves who side with Shere Khan) have no business doubting his place in the jungle: “I was born in the jungle. I have obeyed the Law of the Jungle, and there is no wolf of ours from whose paws I have not pulled a thorn. Surely they are my brothers!” (45). To convince Mowgli that he is in danger, Bagheera confesses to Mowgli that he, a panther, once lived among men, and because he learned their ways, “he became more terrible in the jungle than Shere Khan” (46). To be associated with men (and subsequently imperialism), as the lesson of Bagheera’s past suggests, is to break with Jungle Law and thus become feared. Mowgli may be the pack’s “brother” in everything

but blood, as Akela declares, but the fact that Mowgli is of man—his ability to stare down the other animals, his intuition, and his possession of certain skills (e.g. thorn removal, “gift of tongues”) that the wolves do not have—set him irrevocably apart and inspire intense hatred in the other wolves and their desire for Mowgli’s expulsion from the jungle (46-50). Until Bagheera convinces Mowgli of the serious threat that Shere Khan poses, Mowgli remains unaware that his “brothers” hate him and is therefore taken by surprise when half the wolf pack sides against him in favour of Shere Khan. Despite their betrayal, Mowgli has no intention of taking violent action against them due to his strict adherence to Jungle Law. He declares to the wolves: “when I am a man among men I will not betray ye to men as ye have betrayed me” (52). Mowgli laments the loss of their fraternity the most because, as Kipling emphasizes, Mowgli “has not the faintest idea of the difference that caste makes between man and man” (“Tiger, Tiger!” 83). Kipling again evokes the “Mutiny” in his fixation with betrayed brotherhood: the British who were “betrayed” by the Indian soldiers with whom they fought “side by side” leading up to 1857. Although the “Mutiny” destroyed notions of the idea of brotherhood that went beyond and ignored racial biology (Stocking 63), Mowgli’s unwavering loyalty to the pack emphasizes that Kipling may have hoped for reconciliation between Britain and India but implicitly understood that such healing was impossible. The lengths Mowgli goes to meet injustice with mercy instead of violence suggest that he harbours a similar “wish-fulfillment fantasy” similar to that ascribed by Herbert to Henty’s Bathurst (282), but with the particular twist that Kipling believed a “native-born”, imperially trained hybrid was better equipped to govern British India post-“Mutiny” than the violent, more commonly championed alternatives.



Mowgli's aversion to unnecessary violence and refusal to kill even in self-defence demonstrates an alternative to the idealized portraits of violent masculinity found within most "Mutiny" narratives. Like the imperial boy-hero indoctrinated to the Empire's calling, Mowgli is raised to obey "The Law of the Jungle", which echoes one of the principal laws that governs human society: "kill not for pleasure of killing, and *seven times never kill Man!*" (Kipling, "The Law of the Jungle" 189). Kipling, however, pointedly distinguishes Mowgli and his jungle family from the violent actions of humans and colonization: "The real reason [for the law to not kill Man] is that man-killing means, sooner or later, the arrival of white men on elephants, with guns, and hundreds of brown men with gongs and rockets and torches. Then everybody in the jungle suffers" (Kipling, "Mowgli's Brothers" 37). Killing for food or self-defence may be part of their survival, but the jungle inhabitants – and particularly Mowgli – shy away from killing at all costs since death only brings more suffering. It is only at Bagheera's urging that Mowgli takes aggressive action against Shere Khan, using man's "red flower" (fire) to scare the tiger and the traitorous wolves off, thus preventing Akela's death and Shere Khan from taking power (Kipling, "Mowgli's Brothers" 51). Mowgli also has considerable reason to physically harm the villagers for their violent actions against him: they throw stones at him, making him bleed; they beat, stone, and imprison his adopted village mother, Messua, only because she adopts him as her own; and they wish to kill him for being a "Devil-child," so they send the village hunter, Buldeo, to murder him. Despite the murder attempts, Mowgli spares the villagers' lives after sending Hathi, his sons, and the jungle animals to raze their village wishing "to do no [physical] harm" ("Letting in the Jungle" 217). Despite how much he despises mankind—"their talk, their cruelty and their

cowardice”—“not for anything the Jungle had to offer could he bring himself to take a human life, and have that terrible scent of blood back again in his nostrils” (referring to the scent of Messua’s blood) (225). Mowgli’s non-violent nature is particularly striking given that Kipling’s *Jungle Books* alludes to the conventions of the post-1857 “colonial hunting memoir” that contrasts the hunter’s administrative abilities against the “wild” backdrop of the jungle (A. Johnson 219). Unlike the typical colonial hunter in “Mutiny” narratives, Mowgli takes no pleasure in killing and refuses to take the life of another animal. Like Henty, Kipling rejects Britain’s celebration of violent masculinity in response to 1857 reprisals in favour of an alternative boy-hero who is more interested in reconciliation than division. Instead of offering an uncomplicated Empire-affirming narrative by framing Mowgli as the “colonial” hunter, Kipling reveals an internalized trauma regarding British actions in India during and after 1857.

Kipling may keep Mowgli from facing his trauma directly, but the man-cub cannot be shielded from danger or emotional suffering due to his hybrid identity and imperial ties that irrevocably set him apart from unaffected imperial boy-heroes who champion an uncomplicated view of Empire. In “Mowgli’s Brothers”, it is not until Shere Khan’s attempted coup that Mowgli takes assertive action by stealing fire from the village to defend himself, Akela, and the rest of the pack. Despite Mowgli’s success in scaring off Shere Khan and his wolf disciples, his use of the “man-made” weapon and the fact that he is overcome with “rage and sorrow” triggers his first trauma: “something began to hurt Mowgli inside him, as he had never been hurt in his life before, and he caught his breath and sobbed, and the tears ran down his face” (52). Never having cried before, Mowgli does not understand his heartbreak: he knows that he does not wish to

leave the jungle, and the pain is so overwhelming that he asks Bagheera if he is dying (52). Bagheera explains that his tears are only “such as men use” and that these tears are evidence that Mowgli is now a man. Swearing that he “would have been a wolf with you [the wolves] to my life’s end,” Mowgli accepts the truth of their words (that he is a man) and their rejection of him and declares that he “must forget” his time in the jungle and return to his “own people – if [man] be my own people” (51-52). In his heartbreak, Mowgli has transitioned, irrevocably, from man-cub to man and the jungle is now “shut” to him, as Bagheera asserts, because only men can experience such profound loss (52). It is in fact this “difference that splits Mowgli’s psyche, for his fear of humans stems, above all, from his realization that he is one of them” (A. Johnson 239). Mowgli’s heartbreak suggests the implicit recognition that the colonizer cannot live in peace among the colonized in parallel with Kipling’s own connection to India and his complicity in the British Empire’s crimes. Just as the “Mutiny” ensured the irrevocable break between Britain and India, Mowgli’s transition to manhood, his imperial identity, bars him from remaining in the jungle and from ever recovering from the trauma of the “Mutiny”.

Despite Kipling’s best efforts to narratively “unman” Mowgli by bringing him backward into the past, the man-cub’s trauma is inescapable for his childhood misfortunes foreshadow his future ones, suggesting that an ideal “restaging” of the “Mutiny” is impossible for the jungle continues to drive the hybrid man-cub out. Unable to face the trauma of Mowgli’s return to man in “Mowgli’s Brothers”, Kipling transports the man-cub three years into the past to recapture Mowgli’s so-called Edenic time in the jungle when he receives his “imperial” education (the “Law” and “Master Words” of the Jungle) from Baloo and enjoys the loving guardianship of Bagheera (“Kaa’s Hunting”

55). However, the “evil” unlawfulness of the *Bandar-log* (Monkey-People) abruptly interrupt the calm of Mowgli’s imperial boyhood by kidnapping and imprisoning Mowgli to use his special hybrid “gifts” (inherited “instincts” of being a woodcutter’s child and Mowgli’s wolf affinity with the jungle) in order that they may become the “wisest” jungle inhabitants (60). The Monkey-People view Mowgli as an easily disposable means to an end: “a man-thing in their hands is in no good luck. . . . They carry a branch half a day, meaning to do great things with it, and then they snap it in two. That man-thing is not to be envied” (66). Baloo, Bagheera, and Kaa even risk their lives to rescue the man-cub, Bagheera especially quite literally “fighting for his life” (60-63; 72). Having all three saved the man-cub, Mowgli is in their debt and calls them his “masters”, earning, in turn, Kaa’s loyalty for Mowgli has a “brave heart and courteous tongue,” traits which will, Kaa believes, carry the man-cub “far” in the jungle (75). Even though Mowgli successfully demonstrates his imperial boy-hero abilities of retaining Baloo’s lessons (he correctly communicates with Chil, a bird, to “mark his trail” for Baloo and Bagheera to follow while the Monkey-People carry him violently through the trees) in addition to possessing courage and courtesy, Mowgli still requires saving and acknowledges, while waiting to be saved, that if he is “starved or killed [among the Monkey-People], it will be all [his] own fault” (69). Once saved, Bagheera even physically (though lovingly) punishes Mowgli for his mischief by dealing him “as severe a beating as you could wish to avoid” as a 7-year-old boy, which knocks him into a deep sleep (78). Mowgli may command the protection of the jungle and possess human talents that set him apart from other animals, but he continuously finds himself in great peril due to his duality and requires the continued protection of his jungle family because of it. Just as Shere Khan

wishes to revenge himself on Mowgli due to his presence and “power” in the jungle, so too do other jungle forces seek him out. Kipling’s return to this story after Mowgli’s “coming-of-age” confrontation with Shere Khan suggests that the man’s cub fractured imperial-jungle selfhood is inevitable and symbolic of the irreconcilable fracturing of the British-Indian identity due to the “Mutiny”.

Kipling reinforces Mowgli’s fractured identity through his final encounter with Shere Khan in “Tiger-Tiger!”, which subsequently results in the man-cub’s violent expulsion from the village and his renewed trauma of displacement through narrative unmanning. When Mowgli arrives in the village, the villagers see a physical resemblance between him and Nathoo, Messua’s lost son who was taken by “the tiger” (Shere Khan, as readers learn later on), so Messua “adopts” Mowgli as her own believing that the jungle has sent him to her in her son’s place (81, 84). Yet Mowgli’s transition to “human” is a struggle and he must constantly remind himself of the Law of the Jungle not to hurt the village children: “but when they made fun of him because he would not play games or fly kites . . . only the knowledge that it was unsportsmanlike to kill little naked cubs kept him from picking them up and breaking them in two” (83). Mowgli’s fractured identity and displacement evoke continued rage within him, and he must fight to keep himself in check. Danger continues to follow Mowgli, for Shere Khan – as Mowgli’s wolf brother warns him – has again sworn to kill the man-cub and “lay [his] bones in the Waingunga” (83). Shere Khan’s vengeful threat is significant for the Waingunga ravine is where Mowgli ensures the tiger meets his end, and where he first speaks directly to Mowgli in “How Fear Came”, the Mowgli story that follows Shere Khan’s demise and returns the man-cub again to the jungle of his youth. In Kipling’s second narrative unmanning of

Mowgli, Shere Khan disrupts the scene at Peace Rock during the Water Truce, which dictates that “it is death to kill at the drinking places when once the Water Truth has been declared” (175). Having just murdered a man by “choice - not for food” (and bragged about it much to the horror of the other jungle inhabitants), Shere Khan speaks directly to Mowgli for the first time: he demands that Mowgli “look” at him and declares, in front of all the jungle animals, that Mowgli “is neither man nor cub” (179-180). Shere Khan anticipates Mowgli’s rise to “power” in the jungle and makes his distaste known: “The Jungle has become a whelping-ground for naked cubs now. . . . Next season I shall have to get his leave for a drink. *Aurgh!*” (179). Kipling thus pairs the story of Shere Khan’s demise with a return to when the tiger singles out Mowgli for his unsettling duality and proxy-British Empire status (given that India strove to drive Britain out). Mowgli may be destined to hunt and kill Shere Khan, and bring an end to the “Mutiny”, but his destiny comes with great cost to himself and British-Indian relations. When Buldeo, the village hunter, discovers Mowgli skinning Shere Khan’s hide and speaking to wolves (Mowgli commands Akela to keep Buldeo at bay), he learns from Mowgli about the man-cub’s “old war” with the “ghost-tiger”, as the village has dubbed Shere Khan (“Tiger-Tiger!” 92). Frightened by Mowgli’s abilities, Buldeo again emphasizes Mowgli’s ambiguity: “a wolf who obeyed the orders of this boy who had private wars with man-eating tigers was not a common animal” (92). Believing the man-cub to be guilty of “sorcery, magic of the worst kind” and even expecting Mowgli to transform into a tiger, Buldeo returns to the village and turns them against Mowgli (they whip stones at the man-cub, calling him “Sorcerer! Wolf’s brat! Jungle-demon!” and demanding that he leave the jungle) (92-93). Mowgli’s duality, his belonging to two worlds, again results in his expulsion and his

return, once more, to the jungle. Mowgli may return to the jungle having successfully killed Shere Khan, yet his time among men drives a further wedge between himself and his jungle family and prevents him from ever again feeling at home there.

Despite Kipling's narrative unmanning of Mowgli each time a new "human" trauma occurs, Mowgli cannot escape from the imperial destiny that will drive him (and eventually the British) out of India. In "Mowgli's Song" at the close of "Tiger-Tiger!", Mowgli celebrates his killing of Shere Khan, yet the "song" is not a happy one. Its diction, tone, and theme initially suggest confidence and excessive pride, yet these soon give way to descriptions of pain, uncertainty, and mourning. Unable to forgive the wolves for their initial rejection of him, Mowgli declares that he will now "hunt alone in the jungle" (though still accompanied by his four wolf brothers) "from that day on" (95). Although Kipling concludes "Tiger-Tiger!" with a gesture to the "In the Rukh" story when Mowgli "became a man and married," he dismisses its importance: "But that is a story for grown-ups" (95). Kipling's fixation with returning to Mowgli's childhood speaks to an unhealed trauma associated with accepting moral responsibility for post-"Mutiny" British-Indian relations made evident through Mowgli's exile from the jungle and village. Angry at the villagers and some of his wolf brethren, he laments his expulsion from the village and jungle as both are now "shut to [him]" (97). As evidence of his perpetual confusion, Mowgli repeats "Why?" four times after each description of the consequences of his liminal identity: stoned by the villagers, "cast out" from both of his tribes, being of two worlds but belonging in neither, feeling simultaneously happy, yet unhappy, and being internally at war with himself (97). As "two Mowglis," he bears a great burden: the weight of the "Mutiny" ("Heavy is the hide of Shere Khan") and its

subsequent trauma (his “heart [is] heavy with the things that [he does] not understand”) (97). Although growing up to accomplish what his wolf family insisted that he was born to do (like the boy-heroes of Empire sent to govern the colonial British Empire), Mowgli’s murder of Shere Khan, representative of the memory of the “Mutiny” that will not stop driving the “imperial” boy-hero from the jungle, prevents him from experiencing self-completion and from feeling “at home” in either world. Ultimately, Mowgli’s imperial destiny as a “Mutiny” boy-hero results in his masculine trauma, his fractured soul symbolic of an irreconcilable British-India in the post-“Mutiny” world.

Readers see evidence of Mowgli’s struggle with his two selves immediately after his murder of Shere Khan, which triggers the village’s decision to hunt and kill Mowgli. In the story, “Letting in the Jungle”, Kipling returns Mowgli to the present after “How Fear Came”, where Mowgli takes revenge upon the human village by razing it to the ground. Mowgli has just returned to Council Rock to lay Shere Khan’s hide on it in victory. The narrative refers to the “heavy weight” of Shere Khan’s hide on Mowgli’s shoulders suggestive of the burden of manhood and its subsequent trauma that Mowgli now carries (211). Associated with this heavy burden is the danger that continues to stalk Mowgli and drive him from the jungle: Buldeo, the village hunter, follows Mowgli’s trail within only a day of his witnessing Mowgli’s skinning of Shere Khan (211). Because man will not leave Mowgli alone, Mowgli’s conflicting identities of “Little Brother” and “man” result in Akela and his Wolf Brothers questioning Mowgli’s decisions. Mowgli bristles when Akela refers to men as Mowgli’s “brethren”: “speak of the Man-Pack and of Mowgli in *two* breaths – not one” (209). Mowgli also realizes that his time in the village “had put him back sadly” in terms of his ability to distinguish the scent of man in



the jungle; he is therefore more human than wolf now because of his time among men. His wolf brethren intend to kill Buldeo for entering their hunting grounds, yet Mowgli runs after them yelling, “Back! Back and wait! Man does not eat Man!” seemingly conflating himself and his brothers with humankind (210). Akela then accuses Mowgli of his own confused overlapping of his identities: “Who was a wolf but now? Who drove the knife at me for thinking he might be a Man?” (210). Furiously, Mowgli refuses to “give reason for” his actions and Bagheera declares this the behaviour of Man: “That is Man! There speaks Man!” and then argues that the same men who circled Bagheera’s cage when he was in captivity spoke as Mowgli does now (210). For the first time, Mowgli’s Four Brothers refuse to follow Mowgli: “Hunt alone, Little Brother. *We* know our own minds!” (210). Their reaction angers him; his chest heaves and his eyes fill with tears as though his initial heartbreak (his first expulsion from the jungle) forever threatens to overcome him. His subsequent rage at their disloyalty results in deliberately making his brothers submit against their will, which undermines his adamant rejection of his affiliations with man. Echoing Shere Khan, Mowgli demands, “Look at me!” and his brothers obey until their “hair stood up all over their bodies, and they trembled in every limb, while Mowgli stared and stared” (211). As though issuing a threat, he asks them “of us five, which is leader?” and while licking Mowgli’s feet, they concede his dominance. The fact that Mowgli has now, for the first time, turned his powers on his own brothers suggests Mowgli’s irrevocable transition to manhood, and the accompanied rage that blooms from his continued brushes with humankind drives him from the jungle, back to man, where he seeks out his revenge. Despite having lived out his wolf mother’s prophecy and avenged the death of his adoptive human mother’s son, Mowgli’s heroic

return to the jungle to lay Shere Khan's hide on Council Rock is not victorious for the man-cub continues to experience painful heartbreak, a definitively "human" experience. Upon his destructive revenge against the village, which I will discuss in more detail in the next section, Kipling narratively unmans Mowgli one final time in "The King's Ankus" to emphasize that, like the nineteenth-century British public at the time of the "Mutiny", Mowgli attempts to grip tightly the concept of mercy to repress his desire for all-consuming revenge.

In "The King's Ankus," Kaa takes Mowgli to Cold Lairs (where the monkey people took Mowgli prisoner) to see The White Cobra, who guards a treasure 11 and a half centuries old (Kipling 261; Karlin 380). Although the cobra threatens to kill Mowgli, and Kaa encourages Mowgli to kill the cobra, Mowgli refuses to do so: "I will never kill again save for food" referring to his murder of Shere-Khan in self-defence (Kipling, "The King's Ankus" 265). Mostly disinterested in the treasure that the cobra protects (because he "naturally did not understand" the treasure's value), Mowgli only takes with him the gold, jewel-encrusted two-foot ankus with "pictures of elephant-catching" on it because he wishes to show it to Bagheera (264). From Bagheera, however, Mowgli learns the object's purpose: "to thrust into the head of the Sons of Hathi, so that the blood should pour out" (267)—a man's violent weapon, according to Bagheera's description, for killing elephants, an animal, like the tiger and pig, that the British especially enjoyed hunting in India (MacKenzie 179). Mowgli is so "disgusted" with the object that he flings it away from him, recognizing that death follows him no matter what he does: "Always more blood when I come near, even to the things the Man-Pack have made! ... If I had known this, I would not have taken it. First it was Messua's blood on the thongs, and now

it is Hathi's. I will use it no more" (267). However, as the White Cobra predicts, death follows the ankus wherever it goes, and when Bagheera and Mowgli realize that someone has found the object, they trace its whereabouts for hours, finding several crime scenes, each one marked by a different cause of death. Mowgli is so horrified to witness that six men killed each other over want of the ankus that despite having "no love to men", he regrets their loss and claims responsibility for their deaths: "The fault was mine ... I will never again bring into the Jungle strange things" (272). Although Bagheera dismisses their deaths because "they are only men", Mowgli concludes that the men "are cubs none the less; and a cub will drown himself to bite the moon's light on the water" (272). Despite men's cruelty to one another, Mowgli likens their actions to children who do not know any better and even sympathizes and feels sorry for them. Risking his own life, Mowgli returns to Cold Lairs to ensure that the ankus never brings harm to anyone again. The White Cobra is surprised that Mowgli survives the ankus' curse, but this again emphasizes how Mowgli stands apart from the violent forms of masculinity championed in the pages of the adventure fiction as he does not fall victim to the lure of imperial conquest. Mowgli's ignorance of blood sports and his aversion to greed and cruelty suggest an implicit apology (and excuse) for British actions in India in 1857.

Inheriting the weight of the aftermath of the "Mutiny" and the irrevocable break between Britain and India, Mowgli is undone and cannot ever return to the jungle of his boyhood. Cast out from the wolf pack, Mowgli attempts to find a new home among the villagers, yet he is painfully othered from them: the children tease him for not participating in their games and the adults mistrust him because he has lived so long in the jungle. Despite Mowgli's successful defeat of his archenemy, a creature who has

plagued both the jungle and the village, Mowgli has still not secured himself a place in either world. Although the narrative would have readers believe that the jungle has groomed Mowgli to be its “Master,” his liminality prevents him from securely occupying the symbolic position of “colonial administrator” in either jungle or village. Instead, Mowgli’s yearning for fidelity and brotherhood suggests that he *belongs* to the jungle—“mine to me,” as Mother Wolf declares—as much as he desires for it to “belong” to him. Kipling may have set out to construct an alternative boy-hero to govern India, but Mowgli’s man-cub duality and racial identity destabilize his power and reflect Kipling’s questioning of Britain’s role in India. Mowgli’s fractured identity is thus symbolic of the Mutiny’s power to unman its imperial subjects and the failure of Empire to foster alternative forms of colonial masculinity—something that was, for Kipling, necessary to achieve reconciliation for British-India. Post-1857 India could no longer be governed by white British men whose interests were suspect because it required, instead, the expertise of boys (like Mowgli) who were “of” it.

### 3.5 “Unmanned” Subject of Empire: The Mutiny’s Haunting “Heartbreak”

I hear a double step upon my trail. When I turn my head it is as though one had hidden himself from me that instant. I go to look behind the trees and he is not there. I call and none cry again, but it is as though one listened and kept back the answer.

— Mowgli, “The Spring Running”, *The Second Jungle Book* (1895)

According to Caruth’s Freudian reading of traumatic experience, “the impact of the traumatic event lies precisely in its belatedness, in its refusal to be simply located, in its insistent appearance outside the boundaries of any single place or time” (Introduction 8-9). For Kipling, the “Mutiny” serves as an ever-present, distinctly unavoidable (and therefore unforgettable) memory that achieves, as Caruth might argue, the full force of its

“haunting power” specifically due to its “inherent latency” (Introduction 8). Kipling’s imagining of 1857 “only in connection with another place, and in another time” therefore demonstrates that his efforts to repress the event result in his delayed, yet perpetual confrontation with it. For Caruth, the transition from repression to latency—an act which occurs when dealing with trauma—“paradoxically is what precisely preserves the event in its literality” (Introduction 8). In preserving the “Mutiny”, then, Kipling relives the event in different forms, its distorted repetition signifying what Freud might label a “‘traumatic neurosis’ ... [which] emerges as the unwitting reenactment of an event that one cannot simply leave behind” (Caruth, *Unclaimed* 2). The internal “split” that occurs as a result of trauma is ultimately “the fundamental dislocation implied by all traumatic experience that is both its testimony to the event and to the impossibility of its direct access” (Caruth, Introduction 9). In answer to Nagai’s pointed question, “Why is Mowgli a brown boy?” (*Imperial* 90), then, it is because Mowgli embodies the racially fraught memories of the “Mutiny”, his fractured identity symbolic of Kipling’s own “psychic splitting,” a symptom (along with repression and denial) that Henry Krystal identifies as “one of the most devastating aftereffects of trauma” (85). In *The Jungle Books*, Mowgli’s continuous struggle with his man-cub duality embodies the destructive racial tensions of a post-“Mutiny” world, and his final, yet unwilling “return to man” at the close of the adolescent Mowgli stories suggests both masculine trauma and the endless liminality of a haunted soul in pain. Drawing on Dr. Shengold’s idea of Kipling’s “soul murder,” Dr. Narayanan re-reads the Mowgli stories through a psychoanalytic lens, exploring how the narrative’s geography (jungle as India) suggests Kipling’s “unconscious pairing of mother and India, and Kipling’s desire to murder India itself” (“Soul” 64). Although

certainly India came to be associated with the feminine and *The Jungle Books* is distinctly preoccupied with mothers, it is necessary to point out that Kipling's childhood experiences do not wholly support Narayanan's reading. It was in India, after all, where Kipling felt more at home (as much as one could as a child of two worlds), and his parents who abandoned him, his caretaker who abused him, and "his" country that rejected his duality are all "English". Kipling's desire to "murder India" is therefore far more nuanced than the straight psychoanalytic reading would suggest. Mowgli's anger and destructive actions against *both* the jungle and village inhabitants embody both a violent imperial masculinity and the vengeful spirit of the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857.

In her novel, *On the Face of the Waters: A Tale of the Mutiny* (1896), Flora Annie Steel describes Britain's driving force behind the aftermath of 1857 as "revenge pure and simple," (326) a type of revenge that superseded moral law (Herbert 101). Although the "punitive impulse" shaped and defined the Victorian personality, it remained a "conflicted, self-divided, self-denying one" since the idea of retribution simultaneously "coexisted" with the ideologies of mercy and compassion (Herbert 109). As one of the most frequently cited words in "Mutiny" newspaper coverage, "*retribution*" itself became the primary principle of Victorian morality, and the "Mutiny" only served to further vindicate "[Britain's] retributive view of the world" (Herbert 101). Even well into the 1890s, British writers continued to focus on the theme of revenge in their fictional "Mutiny" narratives since the event "condemned" Victorians to live with the knowledge that they had inherited a culture defined by "the sanctification of revenge," a culture that was painfully aware that their response to the Indian uprising was the result of the "morally distorted dehumanizing logic of imperialism itself" (Herbert 6, 133). In what

could be fittingly described as the Peter Pan condition, members within the empire, particularly men, were “able to indulge without inhibitions their hereditary compulsion to find enemies upon whom to take revenge” (109). The fact that Kipling claimed Steel’s novel to be “*the mutiny novel for which we have waited so long*” (Kipling, *Letters* 2:270) indicates that he was intimately familiar with the expanding genre. Kipling may have pointedly refused to write his own “Mutiny” novel, but his clear impatience over having to wait to read one that lived up to his own standard of what that novel *should* be, speaks to his lengthy preoccupation with the event and his unconscious internalization of its haunting and traumatic aftermath.

Although Steel’s novel was published after Kipling’s *The Jungle Books*, the central tenet of Jungle Law in the Mowgli stories is definitively “the right to revenge” (Shengold 184). Scholars identify revenge as a prominent and unavoidable theme in Kipling’s works, labelling it the “first principle of Kipling’s world” though one that he consistently explores in varied and complex ways (Wilson 173; Scragg 28).<sup>39</sup> More recently, Andrew Scragg observes the pattern of “displaced revenge” within Kipling’s fiction: while Kipling certainly sympathized with those who desired “personal revenge outside of the law,” he simultaneously cautioned against such unchecked acts due to the possibility of self-inflicted psychological damage and the fact that “such acts could lower the Empire in the eyes of its rivals, which to Kipling would be an unacceptable price” (35-36). Kipling’s “under-current of revenge fantasy” (D. Simmons 81) notably plays out in *The Jungle Books* in the Shere Khan-Mowgli plot and in Mowgli’s unforgiving

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<sup>39</sup> Scholars who explore Kipling’s theme of revenge include Edmund Wilson (1941), Randall Jarrell (1962), J.M.S. Tompkins (1965), Bonamy Dobrée (1967), Philip Mason (1975), Terry Caesar (1986), Dianne Simmons (2007), Jan Montefiore (2007, 2013), Leonard Shengold (2013), Lizzy Welby (2015), and Andrew Scragg (2017).

destruction of the Indian village. As a “virtuous” and merciful boy-hero who remains obedient to Jungle Law and avoids taking the life of any animal or human (unless, like Shere Khan, they give him no choice), Mowgli functions, at first, as the moral centre of the narrative: he repeatedly checks the violent behaviour of his wolf brethren (e.g., he prevents them from murdering Buldeo even though the hunter means to murder Mowgli); and he does not counter the villager’s prejudice and violence against him and his adoptive human mother with bodily violence. But after he discovers how the villagers have beaten Messua because she sheltered Mowgli, the man-cub’s desire for revenge is so transformative that, with the help of Hathi and his sons, he razes the entire human village to the ground. Indeed, after witnessing how Messua is bound, gagged, and bloodied because she had cared for him, Mowgli’s rage begins to consume him and he comes to hate the villagers: “They are idle, senseless, and cruel; they play with their mouths, and they do not kill the weaker for food, but for sport. When they are full-fed they would throw their own breed into the Red Flower. This I have seen. It is not well that they should live here anymore. I hate them!” (Kipling, “Letting in the Jungle” 226). Mowgli’s excitement builds as he imagines driving the people from the village and taking up residence in their abandoned homes and insists that they cannot remain there wishing to overpower the smell of Messua’s blood, which “burns” his mouth, with natural smells of the jungle. When Hathi agrees to Mowgli’s plan, he declares, “Thy war shall be our war”; at this point, Mowgli is so out of breath and “shaking all over with rage and hate” that even Bagheera gazes at the man-cub “with terror” (228). Mowgli’s reaction echoes the desired vengeance of nineteenth-century British society upon learning of the deaths of innocent women and children during the “Mutiny”. He declares that there is “a price to



pay” and exhibits signs of emotional turmoil at seeing an innocent woman in pain: he trembles “all over” when Messua pulls him into her arms, and he grits his teeth uncomfortably when he sees Messua’s blood (“Letting in the Jungle” 217). According to Randall, Mowgli’s destruction of the village is a post-“Mutiny” allegory, one that illustrates “British excesses” against Indian rebels for their supposed crimes against white women (*Imperial Boy* 83). Like Bathurst, then, Mowgli heroically arrives in time to save Messua who is “half wild with pain and fear (she had been beaten and stoned all the morning)” (“Letting in the Jungle” 216) unlike the captured British women who met violent deaths during the “Mutiny”.

In Randall’s reading, Mowgli’s actions represent a successful restaging of the “Mutiny” in that British reprisals are seen as justified and the hero succeeds instead of fails to protect an innocent woman. Randall’s reading, at first, is sound in that Kipling names Hathi’s original destruction of the villages as “The Sack of the Fields of Bhurtpore”, the same location in which a “Mutiny” outbreak took place on May 31, 1857. However, this historical event involved the Indian *rebels* turning their guns on Englishmen, chasing them off, setting their tents and bungalows on fire, and plundering their abandoned property – it was *not* the site of British reprisals (Kaye 242). Kipling reinforces this alternative reading through his description of the villagers witnessing the jungle “swallowing” their home: “the villagers, dumb with horror, ... fled, houseless and foodless, down the valley, as their village, shredded and tossed and trampled, melted behind them” (232). Kipling’s framing of the story “Letting in the Jungle” requires a more careful reading for Mowgli deliberately *avoids* murdering the villagers (“I do not wish even their bones to lie on our clean earth”), desiring instead to reclaim the land for

the jungle, the land's natural "owner" (227). Not wishing to be associated with the forthcoming destruction of the village ("The Man-Pack shall not know what share I have in the sport"), Mowgli seeks out Hathi, the Master of the Jungle, having learned from Buldeo's "tales" that Hathi and his sons previously razed several villages ("The Sack of the Fields of Bhurtpore") many "Rains" ago (222-226). Unlike this previous attack on a human village that involved bloodshed (Hathi's trunks were "red" with the blood of men), neither Mowgli nor Hathi wishes to smell the scent of blood again; they only wish to "let the jungle in" and drive men *from* the jungle (227). Kipling deliberately distinguishes Mowgli from other boy-heroes with his aversion to bloodshed, positioning him instead as the bridge between two otherwise disparate worlds. As an arbiter of justice, Mowgli recognizes the follies of all those intent on abusing their power and colonizing land that is not their own, particularly observing the inherent weaknesses of both the English and Indians in their mutual misunderstanding of one another. According to the villagers, the English "were a perfectly mad people", and Mowgli, who overhears Buldeo's plan to burn Messua and her husband to death for being parent to a "Devil-child", declares that men "are all mad together" (213). Ascribing the characteristic of "madness" to the English and villagers suggests the *Jungle Books* connection to 1857 for Kipling observed that the "Mutiny", an event often described by the British in connection with madness, "was caused by a lack of understanding of the local culture and society" (Aikant 149). Although possessing an imperial authority in his dealings with the jungle and villagers, Mowgli has far more in common with the Indian soldiers who rebel against colonial rule and seek to drive out the British from India.

Mowgli is indeed a rebel: his mere presence in the jungle upsets its laws, challenges its hierarchies, and triggers its descent into discord. As a human infant in the jungle, Mowgli destabilizes the natural order by evoking the intense protectiveness of his wolf family to the point where Raksha, Mowgli's Wolf Mother, even confesses to Mowgli upon his first exile from the jungle, "child of man, I loved thee more than ever I loved my cubs" ("Mowgli's Brothers" 53). Mowgli's wolf family's decision to raise him as their own ultimately places a target on not just their individual wolf den but the entire Wolf Pack. When Mowgli is brought to Council Rock for the first time, Shere Khan interferes with the "looking over" – a ritual that accepts newly born wolves into the Pack – and demands that the man-cub be handed over to him. Although the "Free People" (the Wolf Pack) question what they have to do with a man's cub, they agree to accept Mowgli into the Pack (after Bagheera offers up a freshly killed bull as payment), inciting Shere Khan's anger and triggering his decision to infiltrate the Wolf Pack. Shere Khan is then correct when he declares that Mowgli "has troubled the jungle for ten seasons" for the tiger spends this time flattering the young wolves, convincing them that "a man-cub has no place with the Pack", and turning them against their natural leader, Akela (45, 50). The Wolf Pack's undoing, then, is because of Mowgli: his presence sows discord among the wolves and divides the pack in two (10 wolves side with Shere Khan and the remaining 10 take Mowgli's "part") (52). Defending Akela from Shere Khan and his disciples further demonstrates that Mowgli challenges Jungle Law, as the law dictates that once the Wolf Pack leader misses his kill (as Akela does) he becomes the "Dead Wolf", and any wolf may challenge him to the death (49). Mowgli's actions are Promethean for he uses fire, a "man-made" weapon, to drive out Shere Khan and his

disciples from the Pack: “I, the man, have brought here a little of the Red Flower which ye, dogs, fear” and rebelliously decrees that “Akela goes free to live as he pleases. Ye will *not* kill him, because that is not my will” (52). Having saved Akela’s life, Mowgli forever alters the Wolf Pack’s inherent hierarchy through imposing his own will on the pack, condemning them to remain without a leader for their betrayal. In several flashback stories, readers are reminded of Mowgli’s arrogant defiance of the jungle’s natural order: he does not fear Shere Khan, he can stare down and communicate with any animal, and he is a human boy, loved best, in his wolf family. Mowgli may diligently follow the Law of the Jungle, but his very existence among the jungle inhabitants emphasizes his subversive powers and rebel-like role in the *Jungle Books* narrative.

Mowgli’s time in the village further demonstrates his narrative role as a rebel given his dismissal of its practices, disrespect for its authority, and disinterest in following its status quo. At first, Mowgli takes careful pains to adjust to the village’s customs: he wears clothing, uses money, learns ploughing, and attempts playing, yet these experiences annoy, confuse, and anger him (“Tiger-Tiger!” 83). Mowgli cannot help but cause continuous discord within the village due to his challenging their everyday way of living. First, because he “had no notion of what fear was,” Mowgli causes a “scandal” when he threatens to fight with the villagers’ temple god, forcing his adoptive human parents to “hush” up the incident with money (83). Because Mowgli does not recognize “the difference that caste makes between man and man,” he helps a “low-caste” man after his donkey slips in the clay pit, provoking the shock of the village and earning the ire of the priest who scolds him, whereupon Mowgli, in turn, threatens to place the priest on the donkey (84). Mowgli’s disrespect for the village’s customs is made

clear when he openly laughs at Buldeo's stories about their beliefs and collective knowledge, and challenges the validity of these stories in front of the village elders: "Are all these tales such cobwebs and moon-talk?" (85). As punishment for all these defiant acts, Mowgli is sent to herd cattle, yet does not take the work seriously; he accepts this order only so that he can communicate with Gray Brother about Shere Khan's whereabouts and plan his destruction of the tiger. Whereas the village's chief hunter, Buldeo, has hunted Shere Khan with a Tower musket for many years and failed to catch or kill him, Mowgli hunts the tiger at the age of 10 and without a weapon. When he successfully kills Shere Khan, the man-cub skins the "ten-foot tiger alone," a feat not even a "boy trained among men" would have been able to accomplish (91). Although Buldeo offers Mowgli some of the reward if he hands over Shere Khan's hide, Mowgli refuses and Buldeo threatens to give him "a very big beating" for disobeying him (92). In response, Mowgli sets Akela on Buldeo and nonchalantly continues to skin the hide "as though he were alone in all India" (92). Mowgli's defiance of Buldeo (who lies to the villagers) results in the village turning on the man-cub. Ignoring the bullets that fly past his head upon his return from skinning Shere Khan, Mowgli sets the herd upon the village, threatening them in return: "Fare you well, children of men, and thank Messua that I do not come in with my wolves and hunt you up and down your street" (94). Like the Wolf Pack that betrayed him, Mowgli punishes the villagers for their rejection of him and reduces the village to a similar state of chaos. Mowgli's reaction to the jungle inhabitants and villagers is not just defiant, but mutinous.

Although the man-cub does obey Jungle Law and attempts to adapt to human practices, he regularly defies the will of others when it flies in the face of his own

understanding of morality and justice. From his dismissal of Bagheera's warnings regarding Shere Khan to his blatant refusal to accept his own differences as an outsider (a man among wolves and a wolf among men), Mowgli rebels against any would-be authority he deems unworthy. Certainly, Mowgli appears to initially represent British interests in India through his imperial education and his destined war with Shere Khan, yet Mowgli also distinctively embodies a counter to corrupt imperial governance through his desire for acceptance, justice, and brotherhood. As Hagiioannu observes, Mowgli champions the revolutionary tenets of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" and subverts and disrupts the "natural" order of the jungle and village (111). The sacred hunting rule by which Mowgli alone must abide reveals the man-cub's explicit connection to the Indian uprising: he is told that he may kill anything he is strong enough to kill, but "he must never touch cattle" for it was a bull's life that secured Mowgli's place in the Wolf Pack ("Mowgli's Brothers" 44). Bagheera drills this rule into Mowgli as soon as he is "old enough to understand things", declaring it to be the "Law of the Jungle", a fact which Mowgli obeys "faithfully" (44). As an Indian boy, Mowgli is likely of Hindu origin and therefore his killing and consumption of cattle, because of their sacredness (as Kipling knew perfectly well) would be sacrilegious, a reading reinforced by Mowgli's "faithful" obedience to this law. Kipling's emphasis on this religious Hindu rule signifies the connection to the 1857 uprising: the infamous cartridges that the British were rumoured to have greased with beef and pork fat. Although never proven, the rumour sewed further discontent among the Indian soldiers and contributed to their belief that the British lacked "cultural awareness" of Indian culture and took them for granted (Bender 5-6). Mowgli's racial identity reinforces his connection to the rebels whose aim was to throw off imperial

rule: he is thus positioned as more of a rebel than an enforcer of imperialism. Mowgli therefore embodies the *outcome* of the “Mutiny” (*not* its suppression): an India that never could quite be regained and an Empire that never quite recovered from that blow.

The symbolic war between Mowgli’s two selves reveals Kipling’s mixed feelings towards the British Empire: a conflict between an endless thirst for revenge and the desire to transcend and overcome such base instincts that Kipling believed to be, as Scragg argues, psychologically damaging. Having internalized the split between Britain and India because of the “Mutiny”, the man-cub feels himself torn in two when he reaches adulthood, his alter ego becoming a ghostly presence that haunts his footsteps. Kipling anticipates this embodied presence in the Mowgli story “Red Dog”, which takes place a few years after “Letting in the Jungle”; it is the first story not to trigger Mowgli’s narrative unmaning because the man-cub has irrevocably crossed into manhood at this point. Despite the peace since the departure of the villagers, Mowgli and the Wolf Pack face a new threat: the Red Dogs (Dhole), large packs of wild hunting dogs of India that attack and even kill tigers. Although more canine than tiger, these animals embody a degenerative lawlessness: their vengeful thirst for blood echoes Shere Khan’s and leaves Mowgli no choice but to risk his life, yet again, to protect the pack from imminent destruction. Despite the pack’s victory, Mowgli feels painful heartbreak. His wolf parents are both dead, Baloo has grown “very old and stiff”, Bagheera is slower at the kill, and Akela, who Mowgli considers a mother *and* father, is now dying (299, 304). Despite Mowgli’s protests, Akela advises Mowgli to return to his own people for Mowgli is “all” a man and if he were not, the Pack would have perished against the Dhole (320). Mowgli refuses, again petulantly threatening as he once did that he would remain and hunt

“alone” in the Jungle, demanding to know who will be the one to “drive” him out again (320). Akela declares that “Mowgli will drive Mowgli”: Mowgli will drive *himself* from the jungle due to inexplicable forces *within* him that he cannot control. These forces are more than Mowgli’s mere transition to manhood; they become a literal embodied presence representative of the haunting cultural memory of the outcome of the “Mutiny”.

Mowgli’s profound loss, anger, and desire for revenge does not just symbolically fracture him, paralleling the split of the Victorian psyche after the “Mutiny”; it evokes in him a *felt*, ever-present alter-ego that he cannot shake and cannot pacify. In fact, Mowgli’s racial identity and inability to reconcile his two selves evokes the haunting, revenge-obsessed alter ego of most Victorian gothic fiction, particularly “Mutiny Gothic” (Herbert 111; Druce 21). According to Herbert, the “Mutiny” crisis evoked the “two contradictory phases” of retribution and clemency, and the battle between them often played out in the nineteenth-century gothic fable that included such works as Hogg’s *Private Memoirs* (1824), Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847), and Stevenson’s *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) (111). Herbert asserts that this “uncanny” gothic alter ego “inhabits its host self” and appears as the “cruel, depraved, malicious other side of virtue” (111). As a series of “embedded stories within stories” involving the looming threat of beasts and the “sense of horror” derived from Mowgli’s transgressive therianthropic-like identity, *The Jungle Books* could be considered a “Gothic text” (Nagai, *Imperial* 78). Having written several Gothic tales, Kipling is at home among Victorian writers who were inspired by the Gothic genre to explore their self-reflective, ambivalent, and unstable relationship with the imperial project (Generani 20). Kipling’s early gothic tales, written not long before *The Jungle Books*, showcase an “otherness” that claims a “mysterious secret, an



inaccessible, supernatural, and menacing power that is wielded against British supremacy,” depriving the British of their “omnipotence” and framing the imperialist project (the so-called “civilizing mission”) “as another form of barbarism” (Generani 21). Although these fictions, on the one hand, serve to “justify imperialism” and champion British superiority, Kipling reveals “the tragic consequences of British ignorance regarding Indian culture” and his criticism of Empire suggests a “dialogical, destabilising, and deconstructive” power to disrupt imperial history (Generani 43). *The Jungle Books* may demonstrate an initial restaging of imperial history through the “Mutiny” boy-hero, Mowgli, and his eradication of Shere Khan (and all future Shere Khans), yet the counterinsurgency narrative that disrupts this history is neither reaffirmed nor reconciled in any “ideal” form given that Mowgli continues to be driven out.

Despite professing his desire to remain in the jungle, Mowgli finds himself driven towards humankind once more, a feeling of grief and fear which personifies itself inside him, tearing him in two. In “The Spring Running”, the “last” of the Mowgli stories as Kipling declares at the story’s conclusion, Mowgli is now 17 years old and feared by all in the jungle for his *strength* (no longer just his “wits”): “the whisper of his coming cleared the wood paths” (323). Mowgli may believe himself to be “Master of the Jungle”, but he is miserable: his power is called into question through his failure to persuade Bagheera, Hathi, and his Four Brothers to come at his call during the “Time of New Talk” (when his jungle brethren are overcome by their animalistic springtime urges); in his anger, he feels compelled to repeatedly (and petulantly) remind Bagheera that he is “Master”, and even wonders aloud to himself: “am I the Master of the Jungle or am I not?” (324-325, 329). For the first time in his life, Mowgli cannot participate in the

pleasures and rituals of spring: “the words choked between his teeth, and a feeling came over him that began at his toes and ended in his hair - a feeling of pure unhappiness” (327). Mowgli cannot shake the feeling, which only seems to worsen as time wears on: he simultaneously experiences hot and cold flashes while also feeling numb, and he is “angry with that which [he] cannot see” (328). He assumes he has eaten poison because his “strength is gone” and believes that he will soon die for “the feeling of unhappiness he had never known before covered him as water covers a log” (330). The feeling drives Mowgli desperately through the jungle in his effort to throw off the mood, yet it returns “ten times worse than before” and he experiences fear for the first time in his life (331). Mowgli then personifies his illness: “‘It is also here!’ ... ‘It has followed me,’ and he looked over his shoulder to see whether the It were not standing behind him” (331). This inexplicable personified force drives him back to humans, specifically his human mother Messua and her newborn son; to her, while holding her newborn, Mowgli laments, “O mother, mother, my heart is heavy in me” (336). Realizing that the time has come for his “return” to man, Mowgli gathers the last of his family at Council Rock to confess his inconsolable heartbreak:

Why was I not torn in two by Red Dog? ... My strength is gone from me, and it is not the poison. By night and by day I hear a double step upon my trail. When I turn my head it is as though one had hidden himself from me that instant. I go to look behind the trees and he is not there. I call and none cry again, but it is as though one listened and kept back the answer. I lie down, but I do not rest. I run the spring-running, but I am not made still. I bathe, but I am not made cool. The

kill sickens me, but I have no heart to fight except I kill. The Red Flower is in my body, my bones are water – and – I know not what I know. (340)

Mowgli's "heavy-hearted" realization suggests more than a transition out of Edenic childhood to the harsh reality of manhood. Like Kipling, Mowgli, as a child of two worlds, experiences the profound loss of the carefree days of idyllic India to accept his imperial birthright, a calling that lives in him as an inescapable (and heart breaking) force that drives him back to man "at the last" (339). The "last of the Mowgli stories", as Kipling deems "The Spring Running", does not end in Mowgli's heroic return to humans, but with his heart-breaking, uncontrollable sobbing as he clings to Baloo just as he clung to the body of Akela upon his death (342). In "The Outsong" that closes the *Jungle Books*, Kaa, Bagheera, Baloo, and Mowgli's wolf brothers sing to Mowgli as he returns to Messua, his wolf brothers reinforcing the inescapable and traumatizing force of British imperialism: "To the toil thou canst not break, / Heartsick for the Jungle's sake" (344). Kipling may have molded Mowgli with Britain's boy-hero in mind, yet as a man-cub "of" India, Mowgli represents the residual grief-stricken, unsettling trauma of a post-"Mutiny" British-India.

Given that *Jungle Book* scholars continue to "switch their symbols around" when deconstructing Mowgli's British and/or Indian identity, it is therefore unhelpful to definitively claim that the village and jungle represent Britain or India (or vice versa) for, as Lisa Lewis observes, such readings of "Mutiny" parallels should not be taken too far at the risk of their undoing (138). Instead, reading *The Jungle Books* through the lens of "Mutiny" history suggests that Kipling's allegorical symbols are unavoidably compromised due to his own conflicting feelings regarding imperialism and Britain's

treatment of India. His anger at both Britain and India is clear enough, yet his assignment of blame, according to Moss, is less so (112). If some scholars do insist on reading the jungle as representative of India in *The Jungle Books*' restaging of imperial history, then the first and second "uprising" against the villagers (the former by Hathi and his three sons, and the latter by Mowgli with Hathi's help) more poignantly parallel India's history of *rebellling* against British rule—the 1806 Vellore Uprising, which was "cast as a harbinger, if not as a precursor" to the 1857 First War of Independence (Frey, "Sepoy" 1)—than Britain's retaliation against India for committing "mutiny".<sup>40</sup> If Mowgli does represent British interests in India, his revenge fixation and the existence of his "alter ego" certainly do suggest that he embodies the vengeful spirit of 1857 that plagued the British cultural imaginary throughout the nineteenth century. Even Mowgli's efforts to distance himself from his revenge and his refusal to kill unless given no choice suggest Kipling's explicit perpetuation of the British "Mutiny" writing trope of the "idealized" colonial administrator that Herbert describes, one who does not reflect "imperial reality," but British "wish-fulfillment fantasies" (282). However, Mowgli's racial identity functions as an alternative expression of Kipling's feelings towards the historical event he wished to avoid. On the one hand, the destabilization of British rule was painful for Kipling to contemplate, and his displaced rage and feelings of betrayal are mapped onto Mowgli. On the other hand, Kipling believed Britain deserved what it got due to its failure to understand India and subsequently all imperial subjects outside the imperial epicentre of Empire, and that the internalization of such failures in the young men sent to

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<sup>40</sup> See James W. Frey's "The Sepoy Speaks: Discerning the Significance of the Vellore Mutiny" in *Mutiny at the Margins: Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857, Volume IV* (2013) for a detailed parallel between the 1806 and 1857 events.

govern resulted in their perpetual liminality, feelings of loss, and incurable trauma. Whereas Bathurst overcomes his physiological condition because of the opportunity the “Mutiny” presents him, Mowgli is irrevocably fractured by it, the already widening division between his worlds made permanent.

### 3.6 Britain’s Mythical “Mutiny”: Shere Khan and Destabilized Imperial Masculinity

Do not forget me! Tell them in the jungle never to forget me!

— Mowgli, “Mowgli’s Brothers”, *The Jungle Book* (1894)

Given his preoccupation with the “Mutiny” literary genre as he anxiously awaited the publication of *the* “Mutiny” novel, Kipling was familiar with how historians and novelists mythologized the event. According to Herbert, the “Mutiny” was no longer a “linear narrative” due to the nation’s internalized trauma, but a fractured, repeated one involving the “collapse” of fact and fantasy (152). By reframing the “Mutiny” as a children’s fable and Mowgli as its traumatized hero, Kipling’s Shere Khan and his connection to the narrative’s theme of revenge evokes the “Mutiny” figure of Nana Sahib, more infamously known as the “Tiger of Cawnpore”. Believed to be nineteenth-century Britain’s “most widely reviled foreign enemy”, Nana Sahib’s capture or death was viewed as the “key to suppressing the Mutiny” (Wallace 590). Because of his prevalence in Victorian Britain’s public consciousness, he gradually became “something of a story-book monster” (592). By perpetuating “Mutiny” mythology through the symbolic elimination of the “Tiger of Cawnpore” in *The Jungle Books*, Kipling attempts to therapeutically reconcile the event with his imperialist views. However, Mowgli’s repeated trauma, made evident through the violated chronology of the stories, reveals

how the internalized, racially fraught remembrances of the “Mutiny” triggered the destabilizing of white imperial masculinity in the late nineteenth century.

Reinforcing the repressed trauma of the Mowgli stories, Kipling narratively unmans Mowgli while simultaneously creating, through these narrative returns to the past, future possibilities for the man-cub to hunt and kill Shere Khan. In doing so, Kipling unconsciously forces Mowgli to always carry the memory of the “Mutiny” with him. In every Mowgli story, the narrative evokes Shere Khan most often in connection to Mowgli’s duality and the trauma that he carries with him. In Kipling’s first return to the past in “Mowgli’s Brothers”, Shere Khan is ever-present and shadowing Mowgli’s movements: “Shere Khan was always crossing his path in the jungle” and thus an inescapable reminder of his imperial destiny (44). After Mowgli’s expulsion from the jungle in “Mowgli’s Brothers” at the age of 10, Kipling rewinds several years, “some time before Mowgli was turned out of the Seeonee wolf-pack, or revenged himself on Shere Khan the tiger,” pointedly reminding readers of Mowgli’s connection to the “Mutiny” by defining narrative time by Mowgli’s slaying of Shere Khan (“Kaa’s Hunting” 55). Mowgli also expresses in another flashback story his longing for the jungle to provide him with “a new and strong Shere Khan to kill once a moon”, but once faced with the White Cobra who desires to murder the man-cub for sport, Mowgli refuses to kill the snake, declaring that he will never kill again (referring to Shere Khan) except for food—a declaration that complicates his position as an ideal tiger hunter of “Mutiny” narratives (“The King’s Ankus” 258; 265). Despite his death, Shere Khan continues as Mowgli’s frame of reference: he thinks of the tiger when he destroys the village, when the red dholes attack the Wolf Pack, and when he chooses, in the end, to return to man.

Kipling may repeatedly remind readers that Mowgli successfully hunted and killed Shere Khan, but Mowgli's struggle with his transition to manhood suggest an unhealed trauma because of British actions that led to the events of 1857. Unlike the ideal "Mutiny" hero who unquestionably reasserts British authority, Mowgli represents a traumatized colonial subject who internalizes the conflict and seeks to punish violent instigators (i.e., Shere Khan and the villagers) and thus relives his trauma again and again.

In Kipling's non-chronological narration of Mowgli's life in *The Jungle Books*, Shere Khan continues to haunt the text even after his narrative (chronological) "death", and Mowgli, despite bringing about Shere Khan's end, does not escape from the memory of the "Mutiny" or its traumatic aftermath.<sup>41</sup> In Kipling's first written (last in chronology) *Jungle Book* Mowgli story, "In the Rukh," the "ghost" of Shere Khan appears as a "rogue" man-eating tiger that triggers Mowgli's entrance into the imperial service as a Forest Ranger. Kipling may position the adult Mowgli to be subsumed into the work of imperialism as a type of colonial administrator involving the hunting of tigers, but the fact that Mowgli continues to live (and raise his family) in the jungle suggests the continued resistance to that inevitability. Mowgli informs Gisborne, the white colonial administrator who relies heavily on Mowgli's assistance, that the jungle is his "home" and that he would not harm it for any "gift" (*Many* 229). Mowgli also informs Gisborne that he "hates" all tigers to explain his extensive knowledge of them, which suggests Mowgli has spent several years honing his ability to hunt and kill tigers. Although Shere Khan may go unmentioned in this adult story, Mowgli's quiet whisper of "A dog's death

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<sup>41</sup> "In the Rukh" was first published in 1893 in *Many Inventions*, a collection of Kipling short stories, but was not included in the 1895 edition of *The Second Jungle Book*. It was eventually included in the 1897 edition (Mudiganti 234).

for a dog” (230) upon Gisborne’s shooting of a tiger reveals that he must be thinking of his mortal enemy, for “dog” is what Mowgli calls Shere Khan when he strikes at him with fire (triggering the man-cub’s first expulsion from the jungle) and also uses this expression (“dog’s death”) to describe how he killed Shere Khan (Kipling, “Mowgli’s Brothers” 52; “Tiger-Tiger!” 91). Immediately after Mowgli’s initial exile from the jungle, the reader also learns that the lame tiger stalking the village is responsible for the disappearance of the biological son of Mowgli’s adoptive human mother, Messua, who develops a strong attachment to Mowgli due to her belief that he is the reincarnation of her lost son, Nathoo (Kipling, “Tiger-Tiger!” 81). In addition to murdering Shere Khan in the same story, Mowgli humiliates his enemy still further by skinning and displaying his coat on Council Rock, the tiger’s death, according to Crane and Fletcher, reminiscent of the retributive actions of the British during the “Mutiny” (382). Although Mowgli’s tiger hunting again suggests his connection to imperial boy-heroes, these tigers are metaphorical stand-ins for Shere Khan, and ultimately the villainous Nana Sahib, and therefore evidence of Britain’s repressed trauma from 1857. Mowgli does not experience any satisfaction in ridding the jungle of yet another tiger and is condemned to repeat this “historic performance” not as a heroic restaging of the “Mutiny”, but as a curse-like punishment for the initial event.

Nana Sahib’s name may have carried different significance to those at home and abroad, but British “failure to capture the rebel created an absence that became an echo chamber in which history, myth, memory, and culture collided and combined” (Wallace 592). Depictions of Nana Sahib were ubiquitous in British culture throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century not just in fictional form, such as plays and literature, but



through full scale efforts to track him down, “his lingering presence in India cast[ing] doubt on the imperial mission” (602). With bated breath, the British public awaited the capture of Nana Sahib, each arrest triggering “troubling memories of the atavistic fury the Mutiny had aroused in Britain” (Wallace 602) and ultimately reinforcing the fact that Britain primarily defined itself by its ability to wield and enforce imperial rule. Britain could not secure India’s future, according to Brantlinger, without the successful defeat of Nana Sahib (204). The Empire continued their hunt of the Nana for several decades until 1894, when “the last suspect considered a credible candidate to be the original Nana was arrested” (602) only to be released the following year around the same time as the publication of Kipling’s *Jungle Books* and its sequel. An Anglo-Indian painfully familiar with British and Indian history, Kipling was clearly influenced by the cultural imaginary of Nana Sahib, an influence made evident by his publication of *The Naulahka: A Story of West and East* (1892): the title evokes the famous “Naulakha” necklace, which was the “principal jewel of the Peshwas” that Nana Sahib was rumoured to have taken with him upon his escape from British capture. More tellingly, Naulahka is the name Kipling christened his house in Brattleboro, Vermont, where he lived from 1892-1896 while writing *The Jungle Book* stories (P. Gupta 175; Keskar). Kipling’s conflicting feelings as an Anglo-Indian would place him among the late nineteenth-century Victorians who, though still imperialists, experienced “profound discomfort at the bloody deeds their parents and grandparents had committed, condoned, and even relished” (Wallace 612). Kipling’s decision to transform the “Mutiny” into a children’s fable represents his attempt to reconcile these troubled feelings with his imperialist views. Mowgli may “put down” Shere Khan as if he were snuffing out a mutiny, but the narrative return of Shere

Khan echoes Britain's never-ending (and failed) quest to capture Nana Sahib. As Brian Wallace asserts, British India continued to be "haunted" by Nana Sahib's memory while "Britain itself only heard ghost stories" (612). By infusing his children's fable with the haunted memory and ghost stories of the "Mutiny", Kipling narrates an internalized trauma, one produced by pointed avoidance, yet clear fixation with the problematic outcome of 1857. Feared by jungle animal and villager alike, Shere Khan features prominently in the jungle and village's oral archives, which serve as myth-like re-imaginings of British imperialism in India and the "Mutiny" that followed.

To the jungle animals, the tiger has many names: the Big One, Lane Tiger, Lungri [the Lane One], cattle-butcher, and man-hunter, yet he is primarily known as Shere Khan, which is loosely translated in some Indian dialects to chief of the tigers, as "Khan" is a title or distinction based on Kipling's notes on the text (Karlin 349n). Although Randall is correct that Shere Khan "shares his name with a sixteenth-century Afghan chieftain" who essentially founded the Mughal empire (*Imperial Boy* 77), as a post-"Mutiny" allegory, *The Jungle Books*' fixation with Shere Khan, and the tiger's own fixation with revenge, more strongly positions him as the "Mutiny" figure of the notorious Nana Sahib. Like Shere Khan's multiple names in *The Jungle Books*, Nana Sahib had several variations of his name: born Nana Govind Dhondu Pant, he grew up to become Nana Sahib, the Rajah of Bithoor, but during and post-1857, he lived on as the "Butcher" and "Tiger" of Cawnpore in the British cultural imaginary. In "How Fear Came", Kipling transforms the corrupt rulership of the Indian Peshwa line and the British invasion of India that led to the 1857 uprising into a fable, associating the man-cub and tiger's rivalry with the jungle's history, which explains how a tiger's fall from grace led

to mankind's introduction to the jungle. After Mowgli stares defiantly at Shere Khan, Bagheera observes that the tiger has tracked blood into their drinking water, and the animals realize that the tiger has killed man by "choice" as it was his "right" and "Night" to do so (180). In front of the jungle inhabitants, Mowgli boldly asks Hathi about Shere Khan's "right" and learns that it has to do with an ancient law originating from the First of the Tigers who brought fear into the jungle by wielding death. As the First of the Tigers, Shere Khan's ancestor was granted the position of "judge" of the jungle because Tha, the First of the Elephants, could not be everywhere at once (182). Readers then understand that Shere Khan's name, chief of tigers, recalls the honoured position Shere Khan's ancestor once held like that of the ancient Peshwa line, a royal line also acknowledged by the British East India Company. Before the First of the Tigers betrays his jungle "subjects", Hathi emphasizes several times in his narrative that, in the beginning, the jungle animals "walked together" and were "one people"; he also explains how no animal had ever known death nor fear (181-182). Upon the First Tiger's killing of a buck, the animals fall into discord, each tribe (type of animal) now keeping to itself instead of living as one people in harmony (184). The tiger's first kill therefore results in the jungle's "fall" from its Edenic state and suggests Kipling's knowledge of India's troubled history due in great part to its corrupt rulers. It is therefore interesting that Kipling chooses "Fear" to be represented by the jungle's first man, who the First of the Tigers strikes down without mercy, not realizing that he has doomed himself and the entire jungle (186). Hathi's description of mankind's introduction to the jungle pointedly invokes British imperialism's impact on India: "ye know what harm that has since done to all our peoples – through the noose, and the pitfall, and the hidden trap, and the flying

stick, and the stinging fly that comes out of white smoke (Hathi meant the rifle), and the Red Flower that drives us into the open” (187). The ancestral “right” of Shere Khan, his freedom to kill Man, represents the centuries-long spirit of the “Mutiny” and India’s vengeful desire to drive the British out. Kipling’s decision to narratively return Mowgli to the telling of this fable immediately after he has killed Shere Khan further reinforces “How Fear Came” can be read as a “Mutiny” fable. By emphasizing that Hathi’s tale “touches” Mowgli because he is of man, Kipling reinforces Mowgli’s connection to British imperialism and suggests he is complicit by-proxy in its crimes. Destined to hunt the “Tiger of Cawnpore”, Mowgli forever carries with him the haunting trauma of 1857.

Endlessly featured (to the point of predictability) in late nineteenth-century “Mutiny” novels, Nana Sahib again captured the public imagination, serving “as an origin myth legitimizing and popularizing the new vision of Britain’s overseas mission” (Wallace 606). As the symbolic representation of Nana Sahib, Shere Khan serves a similar function in *The Jungle Books* as the villagers’ frame of reference for the jungle being “always at their door” is the tiger’s stalking and murderous presence (84). Listening to the town elders during their nightly “village club” gathering, Mowgli learns that the village’s myth-like “tales of gods and men and ghosts” often include how a “ghost-tiger”, as Buldeo labels Shere Khan, “now and again ... carried off a man at twilight” (84). Mowgli finds Buldeo’s tale amusing because he knows that Shere Khan is no ghost, yet the villagers are convinced that the tiger’s body “was inhabited by the ghost of a wicked, old money-lender, who had died some years ago” (84). Buldeo asserts that the tiger must possess the soul of Purun Dass, the old money-lender, because the tiger limps just as the man did having suffered a “blow that he got in a riot when his account-

books were burned” (85). Mowgli pokes holes in their ghost story by informing the elders that Shere Khan was simply born lame, and to describe him as anything more than a “beast that never had the courage of a jackal is child’s talk” (85). Kipling’s insistence on positioning the tiger as “larger than life” (in this case, otherworldly) in the villagers’ minds, and offering up conflicting descriptions of the tiger’s origin echo the same debates in the British cultural imaginings of the historical figure of Nana Sahib. In addition to being unable to capture the “Tiger of Cawnpore”, Victorian Britain failed to “convince the population that he was the villain they perceived him to be” (Wallace 602). Kipling’s insistence on Shere Khan’s treachery (he infiltrates the Wolf Pack for his own ends), incompetence (he burns himself when failing to kill Mowgli’s parents and gorges himself before facing down Mowgli), and cowardice (he attacks men from behind and steals their children in the night) also parallels how Britain regularly depicted Nana Sahib: “He’s like the Tiger of his own jungle, prowling fierce and cowardly, waiting but your weak and unguarded hour to spring upon you” (Creswick & Shepherd qtd in Wallace 596).<sup>42</sup> Like Nana Sahib’s anger against the British for denying him his birthright pension, Shere Khan is also single-mindedly driven by his want of Mowgli, the tiger’s “meat from the first” and one whom he hates “from the marrow of [his] bones” (Kipling 50). It is solely the ripple effect from Shere Khan’s all-consuming desire for revenge against Mowgli that triggers the Wolf Pack’s disintegration, the village’s destruction, and Mowgli’s despair.

If Shere Khan is Nana Sahib, and Mowgli kills Shere Khan, then Mowgli  
internalizes the legacy of the “Mutiny”, including its revenge and trauma, and his

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<sup>42</sup> Written in October 1857 by the “actor-manager duo” William Creswick and Richard Shepherd, *India in 1857* (retitled *The sacrifice, or, love unto death*), where this line about Nana Sahib is quoted from, was first performed at the London Surrey Theatre on November 9, 1857 (Wallace 595).

perpetual heartbreak becomes evidence of Kipling's struggle with an event that irrevocably denied reconciliation to the countries of his birth and his Queen. Although Mowgli lives out his imperial destiny by killing Shere Khan, he remains haunted by this act: "I have killed Shere Khan, and his hide rots on the Council Rock; but—but I do not know whither Shere Khan is gone, and my stomach is still empty" ("Letting in the Jungle" 227). Mowgli's hesitation in this moment signifies his questioning of his imperial role, his empty stomach signifying that the imperial mission is wholly unsatisfying, even destabilizing, in its endlessness given the uncertainty that it brings. As Kaa observes to the man-cub at the close of the last of the Mowgli stories, casting off one's "skin"—Mowgli's wolf identity and Kipling's connection to India—is indeed difficult and ultimately reveals the inescapable trauma of British India's racially fraught history. The jungle may have offered a heroic universe to avoid British India's uncomfortable past, yet Mowgli's traumatic heartbreak reaffirms that the "Mutiny" and the knowledge of India's desire to overthrow British rule, for Kipling, could not be repressed.

### 3.7 Conclusion

[I]f a large part of imperialism's positive mythology is articulated in Kipling's writings, his narrative stance also sometimes reveals an emotional disenchantment with the moral and humanitarian discrepancies underlying many aspects of imperial process.

—Madhu Grover, "On the edge: The conundrum of Kipling's ambivalent fictions" (2021)

Despite Kipling's eventual return to India as a young man, the India of his youth was forever lost to him, and the memory of such profound loss was, for Kipling, akin to a "never-healing wound" (Paranjape, Foreword xiii). Kipling's writing is strewn with characters who suffer from "mental disorders" likely because he, as forensic psychiatrist Ruth Mcallister hypothesizes, was aware of the developments in the field of "psychopathology, such as repression and the splitting of psychic functions" (14, 25).

Given his apt ability for “implication, abstention, and obliquity,” through his unconscious references to his “immediate contexts” that push the boundaries of his imperialist framework (Gilbert 117; Sergeant 4), Kipling appears torn between his need to confront the “Mutiny” and his desire to forget it altogether. Sharing similarities with the Victorian “Mutiny” novels that envision and wish for a regenerated, spiritually healed India, Kipling’s *Kim*, a novel where Kipling seemingly refuses to acknowledge there was conflict between the East and West, has the same “self-deluding” quality as these novels and even fails to conceal “the mood of discouragement and the thematization of trauma” following the events and aftermath of 1857 (Herbert 288). As scholars have shown, Kipling repeatedly worked trauma into his Indian fiction, a theme which often went unresolved, as is the case with Mowgli’s exile in *The Jungle Books*, a fact which places it among other Victorian “Mutiny” texts for its allegorical restaging of 1857. Interestingly, as Narayanan observes, modern adaptations of the Mowgli tales heavily favour a “theatre” of adventure, like the genre in which Kipling was indoctrinated, rather than the “residual sadness” and grief that haunts the texts, a loss which she argues bears “great similarity to colonialism itself” because it involves “a splitting of the complex emotions of power and loss” (“Missing” 199). Kipling’s failure to reconcile Mowgli’s grief with the heroic adventure narrative therefore suggests an unhealed trauma, a trauma that even modern adaptations perpetuate by refusing to address or even acknowledge. Mowgli’s racial identity and soul-dividing anguish as a child of two worlds suggest that the man-cub is the symbolic site of, in Herbert’s words, Victorian Britain’s “internal splitting” during and after the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 (273). Although the *Jungle Books* offered Kipling a means through which to reconcile his fears regarding future rebellions against

imperial rule, the Mowgli saga's emphasis on the man-cub's fractured identity and the irrevocable heartbreak associated with his *unheroic* departure from the jungle suggest the Mutiny's power to unman its imperial agents. Such unmanning forever extinguished the hope for reconciliation and a return to pre-1857 British-Indian relations.



## Chapter 4

### “The Seam of an Old Wound” in Joseph Conrad’s *Lord Jim* (1899-1900): Shattered Imperial Masculinity and the Unspeakable Indian “Mutiny” of 1857

#### 4.1 Introduction

Joseph Conrad (Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski) (1857-1924) descends from a long line of British adventure fiction writers, inheriting a tradition of those who “half-shut” their eyes to the less palatable issues of imperialism (Dryden, *Imperial* 35). Familiar with Henty’s and Kipling’s works due to the general popularity of the adventure fiction genre throughout the nineteenth century, Conrad was hailed as the “Kipling of the Seas” (Parry 1). Conrad’s participation in the “on-going imperial conversation” of British adventure fiction writers greatly contributed to his knowledge of, and pride in, the Empire (White 3). Although proud of his “choice” to be a British citizen, Conrad’s early writing, like Kipling’s, does not unequivocally fuel “the energizing myth of English imperialism”; instead, it highlights antithetical views on “empire-building” and “challenges notions of confident Empire” (White 6, 4, 8).<sup>43</sup> In his attempt to distance himself from the adventure genre, Conrad’s work in fact reflects how the late nineteenth century was “fraught with unease and doubt” despite its “enslaving” influence on his writing (Dryden, *Imperial* 8, 15; Conrad, *Notes* 46). Like Henty’s and Kipling’s imperialist works, Conrad’s cover a broad geographic range—Poland, Russia, Britain, France, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and Congo—though none are primarily set in India, “the jewel in the crown of his adoptive homeland” (Hay 127). Despite Conrad’s time in India in the spring of 1884,

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<sup>43</sup> Conrad wrote to David Bone that he was British “by choice”: “I am more British than you are. You are only British because you could not help it” (Bone 165).

and between November 1885 and January 1886, only Hans van Marle, Pierre Lefranc, and Eloise Knapp Hay have considered Conrad's connection to India. Offhandedly trying to imagine what Conrad thought of India during his time there in the 1880s, Hay wonders "why it was that Conrad never once wrote about India" (127), whereas van Marle and Lefranc argue that Conrad's thoughts appear to be directed towards India while writing *Lord Jim* (1898-1900); they identify in his writing a "perturbed" imagination that draws on "emotions and reveries from a more or less distant past" (112, 129). Conrad *did* spend very little time in India, and his fictional works are more explicitly concerned with the Malay Archipelago as well as Singapore, Sydney, Bangkok, Africa, and London. However, some of Conrad's works, including "The Black Mate" (1908), *The N[—] of the "Narcissus": A Tale of the Sea* (1896), and *Lord Jim* (1900) describe the sailing voyages from Bombay to London as well as London to Calcutta.<sup>44</sup> After arriving in India in the spring of 1884, Conrad, while waiting to join the crew of the *Narcissus*, remained one month in Bombay, the mysterious unnamed "Eastern port" of Conrad's *Lord Jim*.<sup>45</sup>

Prior to van Marle and Lefranc's article "Ashore and Afloat" (1988), scholars accepted Norman Sherry's assertion that the location of the unnamed "Eastern port" where Jim's trial scene in Conrad's *Lord Jim* takes place is Singapore, and that the Patna incident was ultimately based on the infamous *Jeddah* case, a historical incident involving, like the Patna incident, Muslims travelling to Mecca who were rescued by a French steamer (41–42). However, van Marle and Lefranc argue that "neither Conrad's newspaper reading on the *Jeddah* case [...] nor his own experiences in the *Palestine*"

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<sup>44</sup> Conrad wrote "The Black Mate" in 1886 for a Competition for Sailors in George Newness's pioneering magazine *Tit-Bits* but the story was not actually published until 1908 in *The London Magazine* (Stape 161).

<sup>45</sup> I cite more than one edition of *Lord Jim* in this chapter. I use Thomas C. Moser's Norton Critical Edition (second edition) for my close reading of the text.

could have informed his writing of *Lord Jim* (112). Instead, van Marle and Lefranc conclude the unnamed “Eastern port” to be Bombay, India (111).<sup>46</sup> Since the key events of the novel take place roughly around 1886,<sup>47</sup> the fraught political landscape of India becomes recognizable in *Lord Jim* through the novel’s allusions to the introduction, enactment, and aftermath of the 1884 Ilbert Bill. At the time, Anglo-Indians believed the Bill would trigger a “White Mutiny” because it granted senior Indian officials the authority to try and convict “European British subjects” and dictated that “at least half” the jury of an Englishman’s trial would be Indian (Hirschmann 37, 76; Sinha 33). By setting Jim’s trial for his abandonment of the Patna in India, Conrad evokes the crisis of the historical moment of the Ilbert Bill and its aftermath, a crisis of moral authority the British imperial nation had not faced since 1857. Such an evocation should not be a surprise given that Conrad’s early writing career coincided with the rise of the “Mutiny” novel: roughly 10 fictional and non-fictional accounts of the “Mutiny” appeared on the market in 1896, with *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*—Conrad’s “first and only Love!” (*Letters* 2:368)—publishing half a dozen articles explicitly recalling the “Mutiny”. These articles included Hilda Gregg’s “The Indian Mutiny in Fiction”, which appeared in *Blackwood’s* the same year as Conrad’s “Karain: A Memory” (1897); “Youth” (1898), *Heart of Darkness* (1899), and *Lord Jim* (1899-1900) soon followed.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> van Marle and Lefranc observe that Conrad’s references to technology, style of dress, local landmarks, people, and local currency, in addition to the fact that Jim drifts between various cities, including Bombay and Calcutta, to support their conclusion that Jim’s inquiry was set in Bombay, India (110-111, 113).

<sup>47</sup> Watts argued the novel takes place between 1874 and 1891 (33) but details in the novel allow for more precise calculation. From Marlow, we learn that Stein is 22 when he fought in the 1848 Revolution. Later in the narrative, Marlow declares that Stein is “threescore”. If Stein was born in 1826, that would mean the events of the novel take place around 1886 (Purdy 385).

<sup>48</sup> Even before Edward Garnett was said to have encouraged Conrad to submit “Karain: A Memory” to *Blackwood’s* in 1897, the magazine’s Office Manager “urged William Blackwood to consider Conrad’s work as a potentially lucrative textual commodity” in May 1896 (Finkelstein 32). This short story was the first to anticipate Conrad’s creation of his frame narrator, Charles Marlow.

Having loyally read every issue of the magazine in which his works appeared (and earlier issues as far back as 1883), Conrad would have been familiar with the “Mutiny” themes of heroism and unspeakable horror and its rhetoric of crisis.<sup>49</sup> Conrad could not have avoided reading about 1857 given its prevalence in popular literary culture and the number of explicit references to the event in his beloved *Blackwood’s Magazine*.<sup>50</sup>

Although considerable scholarship addresses Conrad’s imperialism and masculinity,<sup>51</sup> no one has considered *Lord Jim* in the context of Conrad’s possible contribution to the watershed of late nineteenth-century “Mutiny” writing, or the significance of Conrad’s choice of linking his first explicitly traumatized hero with the historical events of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.<sup>52</sup> Working with van Marle and Lefranc’s observation of Conrad’s “perturbed imagination . . . [which draws on] emotions and reveries from a more or less distant past” (129), I offer a new reading of *Lord Jim* that examines how Conrad’s use of the unspeakable “Mutiny”, representative of the

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<sup>49</sup> Helen Chambers asserts Conrad likely began reading *Blackwood’s* as early as 1883 due to its availability in the public reading rooms in the seaports of Singapore, Australia, and India (*Conrad’s Reading* 86). Conrad referred to the magazine in his letters on 94 separate occasions, and diligently read, at least in the early stages of his career, every publication in which his own work appeared (Chambers “‘A Sort’” 2013).

<sup>50</sup> In the same edition as Gregg’s article, *Blackwood’s* published a review of Field-Marshal Lord Roberts of Khandahar’s *Forty-one Years in India* in which the author describes the 1857 “Mutiny” as an event “which, however many centuries [England’s] rule may endure, must always be regarded as the great crisis of its history” (297). The reviewer asserts that no event “would give rise to more thrilling scenes of strife, to greater deeds of heroism, or to more conspicuous triumphs of audacity, endurance, and skill” (297). In the May 1897 edition, an article entitled “‘Tis Sixty Years Since” declares how no other war had ever “moved a people so completely, who were themselves out of reach of its atrocities” and how the event remained one of “which very few can speak with any authority” (612).

<sup>51</sup> For in-depth studies on the imperial hero, masculinity, and the adventure tradition in Conrad’s works, see White’s *Joseph Conrad and the Adventure Tradition* (1993), Dryden’s *Joseph Conrad and the Imperial Romance* (1999), Andrew Michael Roberts’ *Conrad and Masculinity* (2000), and Kester’s *Masculinities in British Adventure Fiction, 1880-1915* (2010).

<sup>52</sup> Robert Hampson observes that “in *Lord Jim*, we see the beginning of Conrad’s fictional engagement with trauma” (*Secrets* 152). Both Jim’s jump and the shot he receives at the novel’s end demonstrate “evidence of trauma” and “suggests the operation of traumatic memory” (155), but Hampson does not connect this trauma to 1857. Greg Mogenson, a registered psychotherapist, affirms Hampson’s reading of *Lord Jim* having published *Dereliction of Duty and the Rise of Psychology: As Reflected in the “Case” of Conrad’s Lord Jim* (2017).

traumatic “break” in the Victorian world (Herbert 18), reveals traces of the late Victorian crisis of masculinity and white masculine trauma within and on his hero Jim as a “*Mutiny*” hero. For Lefranc, many men in the seafaring profession “lived in illusion or sham; the code, though a necessity, was upheld by fallible men; even death was no certain criterion of duty performed” (389). To read *Lord Jim* in the context of 1857 is to see how its hero fears his own fallibility and discernibly represents the site of Britain’s “fallibility” due to his trauma over duty failed: Britain’s trauma from the “Mutiny” is mapped onto Jim’s body and produces his crisis of masculinity. I explore the significance of how *Lord Jim* challenges the nineteenth-century conception of the imperial hero through Jim, an aspiring adventurer who has internalized the unrealistic and seemingly fatal expectations of Empire, an incorporation of the imperialist ideal that results in his exile and eventual death. Developing a type of post-traumatic stress disorder, Jim remains haunted by the memory of his jump from the *Patna*. Unable to make sense of the Patna incident, Jim’s history becomes a “history of trauma” precisely because, as Caruth might argue, “it is not fully perceived as it occurs” and thus is “a history . . . grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence” (Introduction 8). I argue that Jim’s “alternative” heroism signifies how the psychologically damaging internalization of the unspeakable Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 unsettled even Conrad, who seemingly “never” explicitly wrote about India. This unsettling may account for the veiled “India” in *Lord Jim*, but this chapter unveils how *Lord Jim* is Conrad’s “India” novel through examining Conrad’s evocation of key “Mutiny” references: the 1884 Ilbert Bill’s post-1857 hysteria; the infamous Nana Sahib as Gentleman Brown (the spectre of the Mutiny’s revenge); and the controversial Koh-i-Noor diamond, which signified India’s submission to Britain post-

“Mutiny”, in the figure of Jim’s lover, Jewel, the proverbial “jewel” in Britain’s crown. Conrad’s unsettling is readable through the narrative’s signs of an imagination “perturbed” (van Marle & Lefranc 129) by the “Mutiny”: this narrative perturbation, and Jim’s own perturbation in testifying on trial in the aftermath of the Ilbert Bill *and* Marlow’s subsequent accounting for it in writing, make *Lord Jim* Conrad’s “India” novel and Jim a “Mutiny” hero. Conrad and Jim shatter what had been an illusion or “sham” as Lefranc might argue (389) of ideal white masculinity all along.

## 4.2 Writing Back to the Empire: Conrad’s “Nervous” Masculinity

[T]he Conradian psyche verges on inarticulateness, issuing cryptic words . . . stammering broken phrases. Conrad is a master of fragmented utterance. He had doubtless suffered . . .  
—Philip M. Weinstein, “‘Nothing Can Touch Me’: *Lord Jim*” (1984)

Given his love of geography and exploration as well as his parents’ involvement in the Polish national movement, “imperial domination” and “colonization shaped Conrad’s early life” (Hampson, *Joseph* 15, 18). Conrad achieved personal and literary success much later in life than his contemporaries, and his early childhood was marked by trauma due to the imprisonment of his Polish nationalist father, the temporary exile of his family, and the death of his parents before he reached adolescence (A. Roberts 3). Like Henty, Conrad suffered from “persistent ill health” as a child: kidney troubles, seizures, epilepsy, migraines, and nervous fits—symptoms that at the time were associated, as Conrad would have known, with insanity and degeneracy (Najder 30; Hampson, *Secrets* 13). Just as Henty and Kipling reported suffering from physical and emotional breakdowns, Conrad’s time in the Congo resulted in his own breakdown, a word often associated with “the pattern of Conrad’s writing life” (Hampson, *Secrets* 14). According to Martin Bock, Conrad’s writing is strewn with “hesitation, stuttering, ellipses, and silence” and his

rhetoric and narrative style mirror neurasthenia—a disorder of “nervous force followed by nervous weakness”—a term made popular by American neurologist Dr. George Beard between the 1860s and 1880s, legitimated by D. Hack Tuke’s *A Dictionary of Psychological Medicine* in the 1890s, and diagnosed in Conrad by his personal physicians in the same decade (Bock 78, xix). Characterized by mental exhaustion and overwork, disappointment, unsatisfied ambition, illness, and sexual excesses, neurasthenia often resulted in “a direct wearing out of the nervous system” (xix). Throughout the nineteenth century, nervousness was often described in terms of “dynamos, overloaded electrical circuits, and overdrawn bank accounts” (17) and was popularly considered “an upscale, even fashionable affliction,” yet many nineteenth-century physicians took the disorder seriously, for an individual’s mental health was tied with the health of the nation such that mental illness became characteristic of a “national calamity” (17, 74). Although the nation’s mental health was not characterized in medical terms until the late nineteenth century, Victorian writers during and after the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 predicted the empire’s collapse due to “the deep moral and political failings of the imperial system itself” (Herbert 65). Occurring the same year as the “Mutiny”, Conrad’s birth coincided with “the crisis of Empire” and the beginning of the end of British Imperialism when it became clear that “the greatest empire the world had ever seen might not be invincible after all” (Collits 12). Although many considered the era of New Imperialism the “highest point of Europe’s imperial success,” this time was also thought to be Europe’s lowest point regarding its moral authority (13). The uncertainty or loss of Britain’s moral authority was frequently explored in late nineteenth-century adventure novels, literature which did its best to smooth over the

“cracks in the edifice of imperial ideology” but still exposed “a breakdown of faith in both nineteenth-century literary realism and its humanist underpinnings” (13). Given the connection between imperialism and masculinity, when the Empire began to weaken so too did British men: their loss of faith in the Empire was necessarily also loss of faith in themselves.

Even during the earlier Romantic period, the lack of quality British men arose as a serious concern. Writers such as Lord Byron and William Hazlitt felt that Britain was without “native heroes” and believed that the “age of chivalry had passed” (Fulford 163). In his attempt to correct this idea, Captain Frederick Marryat made a point to romanticize naval life by fictionalizing the “idealized portraits of officers”, showing them to be “better gentleman and fitter to govern than the landed classes, who currently held (and abused) power and privilege” (163). Like his contemporaries, Conrad grew up reading Marryat’s romanticized accounts and definitively labels him an “enslaver of youth” (Conrad, *Notes* 46). Conrad’s reading of Marryat’s seafaring fiction greatly influenced his own psychological enslavement to these imperialist narratives and, in turn, the enslavement of his boy-heroes, many of whom suffer from nervous afflictions similar to those that plagued Conrad all his life. Indeed, “Conrad was much concerned with men – what made them, what sustained them, corrupted, and broke them” (Shires 190). Inheriting a tradition deeply infused with this concern, Conrad’s works explore masculinity and put it to the test, so to speak. Like Kipling’s broken-down men in his early Indian fiction, Conrad’s heroes suffer from bouts of ill-health, a theme first observed in 1960 when Adam Gillon placed Conrad’s fictional characters into five categories: “violently killed”, “commit suicide or sacrifice themselves”, “die of disease or



loneliness”, “go through severe emotional crisis”, or “turn insane” (qtd. in Bock x). Modern scholars remain fascinated with the psychological disorders of Conrad’s characters because when they are not suffering from some physical or mental malady, they are engaging in masochistic, self-destructive, and even suicidal behaviour.<sup>53</sup> Bock illustrates how Conrad’s ailments came into direct “conflict with English nineteenth-century gender constructions” in that he constantly felt his masculinity was being overrun by his “nervous exhaustion” (15, 60). For several years, as a Polish expatriate Conrad felt himself a marginal figure, a feeling that influenced his “highly problematic sense of masculinity as fractured, insecure and repeatedly failing in its attempt to master the world” (A. Roberts 3). According to Andrew Michael Roberts, Conrad lived by the nineteenth-century ideology of manhood, which dictated that one needed “both to be a man and to become one, to be in assured possession of a masculinity which is always at risk because it constantly needs proving and could at any time be lost” (26). Roberts argues that due to this perpetual need to reassert one’s manliness, Conrad “reproduces and re-enacts oppressive aspects of the masculinity of his time” (6). Yet twenty-first-century scholarship rejects previous assertions that Conrad was a “misogynist”, arguing instead that his writing offers an open-ended, blank slate of possibility to move “beyond”

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<sup>53</sup> Scholars including C. Bernard Meyer (1967), C.B. Cox (1974), Jeffrey Berman (1977), Ian Watt (*Conrad* 1979), Todd G. Willy (1982), and Paul Wake comment on the pervasiveness of suicide in Conrad’s works. In *Writing as Rescue*, Berman goes so far as to claim that there is no other novelist writing in English whose work possesses “a higher suicide rate” than Conrad’s novels (24). See Martin Bock’s *Joseph Conrad and Psychological Medicine* (2002), John Kucich’s *Imperial Masochism: British Fiction, Fantasy, and Social Class* (2007), and Robert Hampson’s *Conrad’s Secrets* (2012) for extensive commentary on Conrad’s theme of suicide.

gender. This view reinforces the argument that Conrad's "alternative" heroes do not conform to the imperial standard of unshakeable and unwavering masculinity.<sup>54</sup>

Conrad's interest in nineteenth-century constructions of masculinity is evident through his extensive engagement with the genre of adventure fiction, a genre that Kestner argues is integral to the "imprinting" and "interrogation" of "masculine codes" (1). Although Conrad certainly affirms the pull of these "codes" and "ideals" within his versions of the adventure genre, a genre primarily interested in bolstering the imperialist doctrine, he simultaneously criticizes the genre, questions the "rightness" of the imperial project, and concludes that much in the genre is "found wanting" (Green 313; Mongia, "Narrative" 182; Dryden, *Imperial* 8, 9, 15). Although Dryden points out that Conrad's preoccupation with his notion of the "shadowy ideal of conduct" (416) reveals his dissatisfaction with the definition of "gentleman" as something far "too insubstantial to sustain genuine lives when faced with the uncertainty and moral crises of the *fin de siècle*," (*Imperial* 19) she stops short of commenting on something far more sinister behind his meaning, what Conrad's Stein in *Lord Jim* refers to as "the destructive element" (129). Conrad's works may depict the "disquieting histories of deeply flawed human beings," and even resist and undermine "the very genre to which they initially appear to conform," (Dryden, *Imperial* 9) but they also reveal an unspoken criticism of an imperially defined masculinity. Indeed, Conrad's works indicate that masculine trauma is a *result* not only of Britain's unrealistic expectations on its young men, but also of its violent forms of nationalism. Although his writing process was often hindered by his

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<sup>54</sup> See Carola M. Kaplan, "Beyond Gender: Deconstructions of Masculinity and Femininity from 'Karain' to 'Under Western Eyes' in *Conrad in the Twenty-First Century: Contemporary Approaches and Perspectives* (2005).

neurasthenia and nervous exhaustion, which perhaps explains the extent of affliction his fictional characters experience, Conrad appears troubled by something beyond his own medical condition.

In 1896, the watershed year for “Mutiny” writing, Conrad’s nervous writing took new form when he moved from *The Rescue* to *Lord Jim*; instead of struggling to write at all, Conrad now could not stop writing, an affliction that Marlow too struggles with while writing to his colleagues on behalf of Jim.<sup>55</sup> To explain the unanticipated length of *Lord Jim* to William Blackwood, Conrad described the connection between morality and his own writing, declaring that “one is answerable only to one’s conscience” (Conrad, *Letters* 2:193-194). Conrad’s wish to switch to the writing of *Lord Jim* originates in the timing of his receipt of his first issue of *Blackwood’s* in September 1897 and his thorough reading of every issue that published his work: these issues contained explicit references to the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 and laid the groundwork for Conrad’s conception of Jim’s story. The September 1897 issue contains Major-General W. Tweedie’s “The British Soldier as a Plague Commissioner,” an essay which compares European and Indian masculinity and boyhood. Tweedie’s assessment of British and Indian childhood reveals an explicit cultural divide based on misinformation. It also hints that this divide could be addressed through a re-writing of these juvenile stories. As an Empire that bred its young men on these stories, England’s prevailing perception of India was that it was “a land of exaggeration, of romance, and of imagination,” and a land that continued to possess the seeds of “sedition” (413, 415)—a sedition which stemmed, according to Tweedie, from the “Mutiny” of 1857, a time involving “every wave and impulse, whether of incipient

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<sup>55</sup> Initially intending the novel to only be 20,000 words in roughly four or five installments in *Blackwood’s*, *Lord Jim* was completed in fourteen installments, totaling 45 chapters.

panic or of heroism” (409). Such language anticipates Conrad’s description of Jim’s moments before his jump from the *Patna*, in a plot which mirrors a “Mutiny” story retold in the November 1897 issue of *Blackwood’s*—the same issue containing Conrad’s first publication, “Karain: A Memory”, with the magazine. In this issue, an article entitled “Disobedience in Action”, describes a soldier who, by obeying orders, loses a “golden opportunity” to achieve victory during the battle at Lahore Gate. This “Mutiny” story parallels Jim’s experience onboard the *Patna*, when he is encouraged to abandon ship and later laments his missed chance to act heroically: “‘Ah! what a chance missed! My God! what a chance missed!’ the ring of the last ‘missed’ resembl[ing] a cry wrung out by pain” (Conrad 53). Jim fails in his attempt to act in a heroic manner because the reality of heroism is not glamorous, but terrifying. Confronted with the realization that there are only seven lifeboats and 800 passengers on board, Jim’s romantic illusions are shattered, and in their place form “all the horrors of panic, the trampling rush, the pitiful screams, boats swamped—all the appalling incidents of a disaster at sea he had ever heard of” (56). Echoing Tweedie’s description of the “Mutiny” as evoking either “incipient panic” or “heroism”, Jim’s reaction demonstrates that the very imagination that makes his idea of heroism possible ultimately prevents him from acting heroically. The result is masculine trauma and eventual undoing. In his creation of Jim, Conrad was in search of “better men” (Deane 3), an ideal that he felt could not be realized in the pages of adventure fiction as typically written, given the extent to which his masculine heroes are afflicted with nervous uncertainty, madness, and moral insanity.

From his early Malay fiction, readers understand that Conrad feared, above everything, that English people and culture were in decline, a fear wholly justified by the

public's growing understanding of degeneration as well as its "precursor", moral insanity, a disease that afflicts most of Conrad's fictional characters, including Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*, and in some respects, Jim in *Lord Jim* (Bock 14, 16). Although *Lord Jim* begins as a stereotypical adventure novel, frames Jim as its unequivocal boy-hero, and echoes the romance of Marryat's sea-tales, the novel abruptly moves from romance to gothic horror. This shift can be understood in relation to Darwin's anthropological theories and the "denationalization" of Britain (12), which are prevalent characteristics of most "Mutiny" writing, including William Henry Russell's *My Diary in India, in the Year 1858-9* (1960). Herbert asserts that Russell's *Diary* is a text that *prefigures* Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* because the novel represents a "post-Victorian literary mode keyed to severe disenchantment and an overriding sense of 'horror'" (65). Both Russell's *Diary* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and here I argue *Lord Jim* as well, reveal the cultural "disenchantment" with imperialism and the realization that the darkness existed within the "heart" of the Empire itself. The revelation of a dark Empire in Conrad's early works coincides with the rise in "Mutiny" novels in the 1890s, novels which depict scenes of horror, as well as the continuous repetition of these horrors. In *War of No Pity*, Herbert asserts that the link between representations of historical and literary discourses on the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857 is "the idea of horror" itself and labels Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* a "fable" that depicts "the mutation of the idealism of nineteenth-century colonialism into megalomaniacal cruelty" (25). Just as Marlow witnesses Kurtz cry out "the horror, the horror!" in response to "some image, at some vision," Marlow notes a similar reaction in Jim: after the infamous trial scene, Jim lets out a chilling, bitter laugh and stares past Marlow with a look that "seemed to probe the heart of some awful vision"

(Conrad 63). Like Kurtz who recognizes the shattering of nineteenth-century imperial ideals, Jim gains momentary insight into the incompatibility between the Empire's constructions of imperial masculinity, immorality on the ground, and unrealistic acts of heroism. Beaten down by this realization, Jim becomes traumatized by the Patna incident, an incident that evokes 1857 through its inescapable haunting aftermath and the fact that the Patna trial is held in Bombay during the historical moment of the 1884 Ilbert Bill.<sup>56</sup>

### 4.3 Psychologically Damaging Trauma: The “Unspeakable” Indian “Mutiny” of 1857

‘An awful thing has happened,’ [Jim] wrote before he flung the pen down for the first time; . . . After a while he had tried again, scrawling heavily, as if with a hand of lead, another line. ‘I must now at once...’ The pen had spluttered, and that time he gave it up. There’s nothing more; . . . He was overwhelmed by the inexplicable...

—Jim’s attempted written narrative Marlow provides the privileged reader, *Lord Jim* (1899-1900)

In his first chapter of *A War of No Pity*, Herbert summarizes writers’ views on the

Mutiny’s overwhelming scale of the “unspeakable”, claiming that the “Mutiny” of 1857:

*defied narration* in being dispersed over scores of local sites and over hundreds of individual dramas, each gripping in itself but ultimately monotonous in ways that *rendered narration insidiously self-defeating*; that it was pervaded by crucial unknowns and gaps in the historical record that doomed all attempted explanations to *incoherence*; that it was so fraught with national, political, racial, and religious passions and *so infested with myth as to make objective description impossible*. (20; my emphasis)

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<sup>56</sup> The Bill provoked memories of 1857 in two ways: the backlash against English courts for “insulting” Indian religion (which Anglo-Indian newspapers repeatedly compared to the British handling of the 1857 greased cartridges incident) (Kaul 420) and the British (unfounded) fixation with protecting white women from being sexually assaulted by native men (Sinha 46-47, 53), a common trope in historical and literary “Mutiny” narratives.

Despite never explicitly declaring it a “Mutiny” novel, Herbert categorizes *Lord Jim*, along with other Victorian novels such as William Makepeace Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair* (1847), Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House* (1852), and Thomas Hardy’s *Jude the Obscure* (1895), in the genre of the Victorian moral fable: the “cautionary tale of the well-meaning, amiable young man fatally crippled by lack of moral fibre”—the same category in which Herbert places Henry Seton Merriman’s *Flotsam: The Study of a Life* (1896), a well-known “Mutiny” novel that emphasizes the self-destructive and sinister potential of British masculinity (128-129). Although Herbert dismisses Conrad’s Jim as another “feckless hero” (128) unworthy of critical attention, Jim ultimately embodies the fatal connection between imperialism and masculinity. His internalization of what Conrad deemed a “destructive” imperialist narrative brings about his crisis of masculinity and psychological trauma. As Nalin Jayasena observes about *Lord Jim*, English masculinity and imperial male authority are ultimately dismantled by white men themselves (22). Due to the impossibility of objective narration, Herbert asserts that the “Mutiny” narrative was split between two contrary principles: factuality and storytelling, and at their “nexus” was the unspeakable, “the cardinal trope of Mutiny discourse in all its genres” (139). Given that “horror” is symptomatic of the “inexpressible,” made evident by “the breakdown that it provokes in language,” Herbert attributes it and the unspeakable to the distinct narrative of “Mutiny” literature (21). The only possibility for some pieces of “Mutiny” historical narration, then, appeared “in the form of breaks in the text”; these “breaks” included “textual signals” and “tics of style that seem like inarticulateness” that indicate, to Herbert, “the heavy burden of representational difficulty born by writers about the rebellion” (21). Conrad’s *Lord Jim* shares these difficulties with language, articulation,

and narration (as multiple scholars have already pointed out), particularly through Marlow's struggle between transmitting the "superficial how" ("facts") and the "fundamental why" ("state of a man's soul") of Jim's story (Conrad 81).<sup>57</sup> Observing the confusion arising from the text's multiple perspectives, Padmini Mongia argues that the novel emphasizes the limitations of facts and language, and the narrative's subsequent need for an alternative epistemological framework, one which will uncover "the true horror behind the appalling face of things" ("Narrative" 175; Conrad 23). For Elizabeth Isobel Baxter, Marlow's narrative "shies away at times" from actual narration, resulting in the reader's belief that Marlow "doesn't want to tell Jim's story at all" (*Swan* 34), and Sarah Dauncey distinguishes Jim and Marlow in their approach to language, asserting that Jim, by the time of the inquiry, accepts the failure of language itself in conveying truth, whereas Marlow "persists on 'misusing'" language due to his desire to "capture the meaning of Jim's 'affair'" (26). Except for Mongia, most scholars frame Conrad's dealings with the "unspeakable" as a narratological, ontological, epistemological, or metaphysical problem, and do not address the trope's larger cultural, political, and historical implications that I explore here. In line with Herbert's argument regarding how 1857 "*could not be written*"—that it "defied narration," involved multiple incoherencies, and an "unspeakable horror" (18, 20), I argue that Jim's incoherence at his trial, Marlow's narrative undoing due to his relationship with Jim, and Captain Brierly's suicide are characteristic of the "unspeakable" that Herbert defines as the "cardinal trope" of "Mutiny" literature (139). Just as 1857 "defied narration" and depicted "unspeakable

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<sup>57</sup> See Edward Said (*World* 1983), Charles Reeves (1985), Padmini Mongia "Narrative" (1992), Allan Simmons (2000), Michael Greaney (2002), Daniel Hannah (2008), Elizabeth Isobel Baxter (*Swan* 2010), Sarah Dauncey (2013), and Brian Richardson (2014).



horror,” Marlow’s fractured and haunted narrative, as well as the disillusionment and trauma Jim experiences in his quest to live up to the Empire’s imperial expectations, reveal both the undoing of nineteenth-century white masculinity and Conrad’s struggle to account for the British Empire’s actions. The same “traumatic disconnection” (Herbert 21) experienced by the British Empire in imagining its questionable future in relation to its once supposedly glorious past appears in Conrad’s *Lord Jim*; literally through what “most readers have felt as a tangible ‘break’ in the narrative itself” (Jameson 206) and metaphorically through the text’s failed utterances, incoherency, and narrative fracturing, characteristic of nineteenth-century “Mutiny” literature.

*Lord Jim* shifts abruptly from the Patna’s collision (to be discussed in the next section) to Jim’s trial a month later—an official inquiry that occurs in an unnamed “Eastern port,” which, after van Marle and Lefranc’s work, we now know to be Bombay. Conrad’s decision to set the trial in India in the year 1883 pointedly evokes the memory of the Ilbert Bill controversy, which was formally introduced by Lord Ripon, Viceroy of India (1880-1884) on February 9, 1883 and came into effect on May 1, 1884.<sup>58</sup> Conrad’s arrival during India’s “turbulent times” (Ambrosini, “Tragic” 59) corresponds with the historical moment of the Bill, which received heated and lengthy newspaper coverage in Britain and India because it sought to grant senior Indian judges and magistrates “criminal jurisdiction over resident Europeans” (Hirschmann 3).<sup>59</sup> Although a compromise was reached so that if an Englishman “was charged before an Indian District

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<sup>58</sup> In 1883, Kipling was working in Lahore as a journalist for the *Civil and Military Gazette*.

<sup>59</sup> Beyond Richard Ambrosini (2013), I am the only other scholar to comment on the historical significance of the enactment of the Ilbert Bill in connection to Conrad’s *Lord Jim*. Ambrosini devotes only one paragraph to the subject, however, and it is framed more as a side note than a central component to his argument about *Lord Jim*, an observation that Conrad was in Bombay “when the bill came into force” (“Tragic” 59).

Magistrate [he] would have a right to require that he should be tried by a jury of which not less than half the number should be Europeans or Americans,” (Roy 97) the Englishman would avoidably be judged by their so-called Indian “subjects” since they would make up the other half of the jury. British sentiment at the time of the Bill’s proposal was mostly unanimous: “however a skilled a lawyer, or pure a Judge, a Native may be, it is obviously absurd to say that he is as competent as an Englishman to form a correct opinion concerning an Englishman’s conduct” (*The Times* qtd. in Hirschmann 42).<sup>60</sup> As a result of English outrage in Britain and India, the Bill sparked violent protests throughout India and culminated in the creation of the Indian National Congress, which was founded one month after Conrad’s arrival in Calcutta in 1885. While staying in Calcutta, Conrad wrote three letters (his first in English) to his friend, Joseph Spiridion Kliszczewski, expressing his frustration regarding the election of British Prime Minister William Gladstone, a man who denounced what he deemed Britain’s “prevailing earth-hunger” that had resulted in Disraeli’s push for British expansion in the late 1870s (Matthew 334). It was Lord Ripon, Gladstone’s appointed viceroy, who provided Gladstone insights on how to better govern and reform “post-Mutiny India”, insights that flew in the face of popular Tory opinion (Faught 556). Throughout the 1880s, Gladstone charged the Tories with the same destructive imperialistic fervor that took hold of Britain in the late 1850s, fervor which resulted in the “Mutiny” that destabilized British rule in India and forever altered the British public’s glorious image of its Empire. Gladstone’s political presence in England at this time evoked uneasy memories of the “Mutiny” and

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<sup>60</sup> For a detailed history of the Ilbert Bill, see Edwin Hirschmann’s *‘White Mutiny’: the Ilbert Bill Crisis in India and Genesis of the Indian National Congress* (1980). For a discussion of gender and racial politics in relation to the Bill, see Sinha’s *Colonial Masculinity* (1995).

served as a reminder that Britain, in its continuous quest for territorial control, could not afford to face such a crisis ever again (Faught 576). Conrad's Calcutta letters reveal an awareness of Britain's complicated history with India, as Conrad, like other imperialist Tories, "feared England's vulnerability to Russian subversion" (Hay 128). While Conrad would have hardly "leant his pen" to those protesting British rule in India (128), the fact that he was soon to obtain his official British citizenship indicates his awareness of the Gladstone-Disraeli conflict and the nation's unease regarding political reform in India. By setting Jim's trial in India, Conrad evokes not just the historical moment of the enactment of the Ilbert Bill, but what the Bill ultimately provoked: an anti-Indian hysteria so overwhelming that it rivaled, according to Kipling and several British and Indian newspapers, the racial animosity of the Indian "Mutiny" of 1857.

Although Kieran Dolin (1999) and Hilton Staniland (2013) provide substantial evidence that the official inquiry in which Jim takes part is a maritime "Court of Inquiry"—an actual, and still active court established in 1876—the dramatic magnitude that Marlow infuses into the Patna trial scene evokes the same heightened racial tensions in India when the Ilbert Bill was first introduced. Commenting on the scene (chapter five) where Jim appears before "the police court" (Conrad 21), Dolin observes that Jim "is not convicted of a crime in the technical sense" (148-149). However, Conrad's hyperbolic and emotionally charged description of the inquiry signals otherwise. Jim stands in the "witness-box" as "many eyes ... look ... at him out of dark faces, out of white faces, out of red faces, out of faces attentive, spellbound, as if all these people sitting in orderly rows upon narrow benches had been enslaved by the fascination of his voice" (21). Given Conrad's description, Jim is being accused by more than just his fellow white male sea

officers. If Jim's trial *is* set immediately after the enactment of the Ilbert Bill, "the dark-faced natives" (Conrad 21) in the courtroom would not just be present in the audience but would automatically make up half of his jury according to the parameters set by the newly enacted Bill.<sup>61</sup> The audience's "enslaved fascination" with Jim's voice suggests that he is both recounting and accounting for something far more severe than his abandonment of the *Patna*. This is made clear by Jim's struggle to respond to the assessor's "terribly distinct questions"; his answers "shape themselves in anguish and pain within his breast ... poignant and silent like the terrible questioning of one's conscience" (21). Jim's difficulty in responding to these questions is unsurprising given that, according to Staniland, had the assessor asked the question, "Did the master conduct a proper abandonment of the *Patna*?' ... no finding could have been made against Jim, [and] his certificate would have been safe from cancellation" (301). Staniland explains further that "Conrad would have known from his understanding of the law, another Court would most probably not have cancelled, but suspended, Jim's certificate" (309). Instead of recognizing the "irregularity" of the court's proceedings (310), Jim experiences a burning "shame" as a result of the "attentive eyes whose glance stabbed" at him (Conrad 21). As a proxy for the Empire that bred him, Jim represents the British Empire's "conscience" that is on display for the world to see, and Jim's "burning shame" speaks to the realization of guilt derived from the failure to live up to an imperially defined masculinity and the failure of an *Empire* to take responsibility for its actions against its own subjects. Jim's trial, therefore, serves as a microcosm for British

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<sup>61</sup> Three officials preside over Jim's case: the magistrate (described as clean-shaven, impassible, and deadly pale) and two red-faced nautical assessors" (those with professional knowledge to assist the magistrate) (Conrad 21). The magistrate's race is not necessarily white as his paleness could easily be attributed to the seriousness of the situation and his personal feelings about Jim's actions.

authority on trial at the time of the Bill's enactment, a heated debate that featured heavily in the Anglo-Indian (British) and Indian newspapers during Conrad's stay in India. While Indian newspapers framed "the English in India as 'cowards'" for their fears and hypocrisy over the Bill, Anglo-Indian newspapers insisted that Indians were not yet equipped with the same "confidence which Englishmen feel in the sturdy manliness . . . in their own countrymen" (*Pioneer* qtd. in Hirschmann 58-59). In having Jim's manliness tried and found wanting, Conrad gives credence to the fears of the English in India at the time of the Bill made evident through Jim's difficulties with coherent speech and thought when trying to defend his "cowardly" actions. Jim fails to verbalize his experience because everyone at the trial wants "facts"—"as if facts could explain anything!" (22), the narrator exclaims, as though speaking Jim's thoughts. But Jim does not just fail to convey what happened. He struggles with language itself: he speaks hesitantly and loses track of his own thoughts; his words become "irrelevant" (23). Language eludes Jim in his attempt to speak the sheer magnitude of the unspeakable horror witnessed on the night the Patna almost sank. The trial reflects the same uneasiness of British and Anglo-Indian men because of the Bill: any "inch subtracted from the stature of the Englishman in India was an inch subtracted from the power of the English to hold India" (Hirschmann 135). The Patna incident certainly traumatizes Jim and defines his life, but it also psychologically disturbs other men of Empire like Marlow, Chester, Brierly, and Stein, all of whom become invested in and are subsequently unnerved by Jim's case.

Like Jim, Marlow experiences pained difficulty with language, oral and written, as a result of his close relationship with Jim and Jim's repeated "confession" about what happened the night of the Patna incident. Conrad underscores the narrative connection

between Jim and Marlow for when the two lock eyes at the close of the trial scene, the story immediately transitions from Conrad's omniscient narrator to Marlow, who begins Jim's story "as though his spirit had winged its way back into the lapse of time and were speaking through his lips from the past" (24). With English masculinity tried and found wanting, Conrad parallels the Ilbert Bill crisis with Jim's own crisis of masculinity. Clearly on the defense because of the Patna trial, Jim, as Marlow observes, speaks as if he is in "crisis", struggles to form coherent language ("incapable of pronouncing a word"), and sounds "like a man imperfectly stunned by a blow on the head. It was pitiful" (48-49). Jim's struggle to account for himself affects Marlow for he too stammers and mumbles "idiotically" before managing to invite Jim to dinner (49). Neither Jim nor Marlow can get away from the topic of the Patna incident, it being either explicitly discussed or unconsciously evoked in their conversations. As Marlow narrates Jim's confession of what happened leading up to his jump from the Patna, his narrative tone sounds like Marlow too is in crisis. Although hell-bent on convincing his audience that Jim is indeed "one of us"—that he unquestionably belongs to a well-established network of imperial agents and therefore should not be carelessly found "wanting"—Marlow confesses to his audience that he feels a "creepy sensation all down [his] backbone" when Jim admits to having "half throttled" one of the Muslim pilgrims thinking he was trying to alert the rest of the passengers about the Patna sinking when he merely wanted water for his sick child (57). Marlow's declaration that Jim is "one of us" is thus problematic in that Jim's racialized violence must lie in the hearts of *all* British men. Seemingly compromised, Jim's knee-jerk reaction evokes British hypocrisy in decrying the Bill: "the British position was certainly awkward, preaching principles of liberty, justice, equal

opportunity, and fair play for all while practicing autocratic foreign rule” (Hirschmann 117). Jim’s violent response to the Muslim passenger and Marlow’s unsettled reaction suggest both the sinister potential of British masculinity found within most “Mutiny” novels and what Herbert poignantly identifies as the “shock of horrified self-recognition” when the events of 1857 revealed to the nineteenth-century Victorian public “the true British character” (Herbert 102; Ball qtd. in Herbert 51). Internalizing Jim’s trauma and unable to ignore his complicity in imperial crimes by declaring Jim “one of us”, Marlow’s narrative unravels at the seams.

Compelled to “correct” the imperial romance of Jim’s life by helping him achieve his heroic destiny, Marlow is desperate to find a place for Jim so that they can put the Patna business behind them. However, the memory remains stubbornly “irrepressible”, like that of the “Mutiny” for the nineteenth-century British public. Marlow asserts that the persistent memory of the Patna incident is the “reason” he can never be “done with Jim for good” (93). As the story’s preserver and upholder of the imperial narrative, Marlow is anxious to “cover up” Jim’s disgrace, his anxiety appearing in the form of narrative hesitations, stutterings, interruptions, and jumps. Jim’s psychological turmoil over his failed attempt at heroism becomes Marlow’s own: he is overwhelmed by the tension between his moral obligation to Jim and his imperial duty to the Empire. Marlow’s distress and anxiety are represented through his writing: “I bent over my writing-desk like a medieval scribe.... I wrote and wrote . . . and then went on writing to people who had no reason whatever to expect from me a gossipy letter about nothing at all” (104). Marlow cannot desist from writing, for when he pauses, he experiences a “profound disturbance and confusion of thought . . . that mingled anxiety, distress, and

irritation with a sort of craven feeling creeping in” (105). Marlow’s tension derives from his simultaneous desire to “bury” and save Jim: Marlow feels Jim should be placed “out of sight” because of his error yet he refuses to consign Jim to an outcast’s fate (105). To edify Jim and reconcile his story with the imperialist narrative, Marlow resolutely writes against the “law” which “had done with him” and thus becomes, like Jim, “an individual trying to save from the fire his idea of what his moral identity should be” (52). However, he remains trapped within a constrictive imperialist conception of heroism that demands Jim’s departure from their world. The opportunity to “bury” Jim appears in the form of Chester, a man who also “had been looking after Jim”; however, Chester is a man with no moral code, it seems, because he only “wants” Jim for a shady scheme that involves Jim overseeing the soul-crushing labour of 40 potential stolen “coolies” on Chester’s deserted island (101-102). As though Chester had asked for Marlow’s help to “murder somebody”, Marlow refuses to agree to convince Jim to accept Chester’s offer and declares he would not wish such a fate on his own “worst enemy” (102). Angry at Marlow’s refusal, Chester, an Australian, dismissively groups Marlow with Jim and other British imperialist dreamers: “you are like the rest of them. Too much in the clouds” (102). For Chester, a person should “never take anything to heart” and since Jim *does* take the Patna incident to heart, Chester concludes that Jim is “no good” and has “no earthly good for anything” (98). Despite his protectiveness over Jim, Marlow feels that Chester “was, perhaps, the man to deal effectively with such a disaster” as Jim’s case; so unsettled is he by the affair, Marlow confesses to wishing Jim “to the devil” (104). To fuse imperialist ideas of masculinity with his own idea of an alternative boy-hero, Conrad emphasizes Marlow’s fixation with the literal re-writing of Jim’s fate.



Less concerned with the Muslim pilgrims that Jim abandoned aboard the *Patna*, Marlow fixates on restoring Jim to his place in the imperialist narrative since Jim's "adventurous fancy was suffering all the pangs of starvation. . . . It was distressing to see him at it" (92). He makes excuses for Jim's "guilt" and "selfishness" by asserting that they have a "higher origin, a more lofty aim" (93). Marlow's excuses echo that of the British Empire's: Victorian Britain was convinced of its own righteousness in colonizing India and paid no heed to its destructive impact on those it colonized. Echoing the mentality of the British and Anglo-Indians at the time of the Ilbert Bill, that Englishmen "belonged to a 'conquering race' [and] told [themselves] so, again, and again" (Hirschmann 289), Marlow reassures himself and his audience repeatedly that Jim is "one of us" and is therefore above suspicion. As the "voice" of the British Empire, Marlow avoids accountability: he reassures his audience that *his* morality is not in question through his defense of Jim; he remains "the irreproachable man" (Conrad 93) which only makes his narrative more suspect. Marlow's description of himself as a "medieval scribe" points to a conscious interrogation of the imperial context generating his narrative by invoking the idea of medieval chivalry, an integral component to the construct of the English gentleman in Victorian Britain and a clear gesture to a time before the "fall" of Empire. Marlow's fixation with reassuring readers of Jim's status as an English Gentleman represents, in Marta Puxan-Oliva's words, Conrad's "ambivalent stand with regards to late Victorian imperialism that reflects the intense crisis of legitimacy the British Empire went through at the turn of the twentieth century" (339). Marlow's narrative undoing is a result of this crisis of legitimacy, which is why he cannot desist from writing, for when he pauses, he experiences a "profound disturbance and confusion

of thought ... that mingled anxiety, distress, and irritation . . .” (105). Marlow’s struggle not only represents Conrad’s efforts to challenge the imperial narrative, but also the Mutiny’s psychological power to unman British men and interrogate the accepted model of nineteenth-century imperial masculinity. The tension between Marlow’s desire to “bury” and champion Jim demonstrates Conrad’s efforts to deconstruct and subvert imperial adventure narratives and reveals Jim’s position as a subject both traumatized and betrayed by the Empire.<sup>62</sup>

Marlow receives the idea to “bury” Jim from Captain Brierly—a man who has never made any mistakes, had any accidents, or mishaps—who dies by suicide by jumping overboard at sea, “barely a week after” attending Jim’s trial (Conrad 39). On top of being one of Bristow’s “Empire Boys” who successfully lived out and up to all of the Empire’s expectations of imperial masculinity and heroism, Brierly appears to be descended from legendary “Mutiny” British heroes such as John Nicholson (“Hero of Delhi”) and Sir Henry Havelock (“Hero of Lucknow”) as Marlow suggests to his listeners (and subsequently readers) in saying, “Some of you must have heard of Big Brierly” (38), implying his long-standing heroic reputation and status. As early as 1861, British historians had declared that, on top of British imperial rule resulting in “almost genocidal catastrophe”, British “Mutiny” heroes were, in fact, “pathological mass murderers” (Herbert 15). Although not a literal mass murderer, Brierly’s declaration that he does not “care a snap for all the pilgrims that ever came out of Asia” (Conrad 44) gestures towards the jingoistic language of British responses to events in India in 1857 and backlash against the Ilbert Bill when British and Anglo-Indians fought to secure their

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<sup>62</sup> To his audience, Marlow exclaims, “Everything had betrayed him!” about Jim’s situation (Conrad 60).

racial “exclusivity” and “privilege” (Sinha 38, 44). Despite his achievements, Brierly personifies the imperial subject’s psychological break with Empire through his inability to come to terms with Jim’s existence and fate. Brierly embodies the pervasiveness of British ideology and the damaging, destructive effects of its doctrine. Moreover, Brierly’s reaction to Jim’s case emphasizes his irrevocable trauma—what Herbert would label the blow from discovering what had been a perpetual “self-deluding and morally corrupting” fantasy of putting faith in a “national idealism” (Herbert 17). Recognizing that the Empire abandoned Jim, Brierly appears to fall to pieces in front of Marlow—visibly and verbally. He grasps Marlow’s lapel in a moment of desperation and exclaims, “Why are we tormenting that young chap? ... Nothing can save him. He’s done for” (Conrad 43). Marlow expresses concern over Brierly’s reaction, observing that his contempt for Jim must arise from his “silent inquiry into his own case” (that “at bottom poor Brierly must be thinking of himself”) (39, 44). Brierly’s extreme devotion to the gentlemanly code is challenged by Jim’s refusal to disappear from the world. On the one hand, Brierly’s “gentleman” morality cannot withstand the force of Jim’s unwillingness to accept his own failed heroism; on the other hand, Brierly recognizes a more malevolent force at work. He realizes that there is an utter lack of “decency” (44) within the Empire embodied by its dismissal of *real* men and *true* heroes in exchange for the questionable morality of imperial masculinity. What ultimately remains after the glory and glamour of heroism fades is the overwhelming uncertainty of this morality. Brierly may be an ideal of the Empire’s “Boy-Hero” but he simultaneously represents its underlying baseness. Like Chester, the German captain of the Patna exposes the hypocrisy of British imperial ideology and its rampant racism: “You Englishmen are all rogues ... . You no better than

other people . . . . ‘That’s what you English always make—make a tam’ fuss—for any little thing, because I was not born in your ‘tam country’” (Conrad 29). Having caught “a glimpse of the real Brierly” Marlow concludes that Brierly’s suicide was “his reality and his sham together to the keeping of the sea” (45). Conrad’s explicit connection between Brierly’s suicide and the Patna trial mirrors the zealous reaction of British and Anglo-Indians to the Ilbert Bill and their amplified fears over the possibility that an Englishman, and thus the Empire itself, could be tried by the same race of people Britain had spent centuries subjugating. Brierly’s heartless dismissal of the plight of other races due to his terror over the exposure of the “sham” of British superiority speaks to the same self-deluding, racist imperialist doctrine evoked during the Ilbert Bill. Britain told the lie of its racial superiority so often “they deceived themselves into believing it” (Hirschmann 288). Brierly’s inner struggle in reaction to Jim is therefore symptomatic of, in Herbert’s words, the “break between a once-upon-a-time state of supposed concord between historical subjects and discourse and a new phase of traumatic disconnection” (21). Brierly’s “traumatic disconnection” marks Conrad’s irrevocable break with the British Empire due to his inability to reconcile his illusion of its greatness with the actuality of its culpability, the same “bluff” of the “self-serving mythology” that cost the British Empire its hold over India which left “lasting scars” on British and Anglo-Indians alike (Hirschmann 290, 3). The “reality” of Brierly’s suicide, then, represents the incompatibility of a heroic code with a morally bankrupt imperially constructed masculinity because of Britain’s crimes against humanity and the fatal recognition of the boy-hero’s implicit culpability for these crimes.

#### 4.4 Conrad's "Haunted" Jim: Mapping "Post-Traumatic Stress" on the "Mutiny" Boy-Hero

He gave no sign of having heard at first, but after a while with a stare that, missing me altogether, seemed to probe the heart of some awful vision. . . . And after that you would have thought from his appearance he would never make a sound again. But—no fear! He could no more stop telling now than he could have stopped living by the mere exertion of his will.

—Marlow describing Jim's behaviour as he narrates the Patna incident, *Lord Jim* (1899-1900)

Jim and Marlow fixate on the narrative's primary "break" (i.e., Jim's failure on the Patna) in the imperial romance narrative, just as British subjects remained haunted by the "Mutiny" and its narratives. Herbert's analysis of "Mutiny" novels employs trauma theory for exactly that purpose, focusing specifically on Caruth's "powerful formula, in 'the peculiar and sometimes uncanny way in which catastrophic events seem to repeat themselves for those who have passed through them'" (*Unclaimed* 1). For Herbert, repetition is the "fundamental trope of narrative" in "Mutiny" novels, but it is also undeniably the central motif and premise of the "sea-life" literary tradition, particularly in Conrad's *Lord Jim*. According to Caruth, trauma acts as a "contagion" which can traumatize the one who listens (Introduction 10) which suggests that Marlow, by integrating Jim's narrative into his own, absorbs Jim's trauma and the haunting aftermath of the "Mutiny" representative of Jim's jump from and abandonment of the *Patna*. As "an elaborate psychological study" (Clifford 851), *Lord Jim* explores the consequences of conforming to imperialist doctrine to subvert that doctrine: Jim never fully recovers from his failure to live up to the British Empire's expectations of its boy-heroes. As the "most illuminating analysis of the late Victorian anxiety about shame," (Deane 101) *Lord Jim* demonstrates how Jim's quest to achieve the imperial ideal of masculinity is fatal to him, in that his overwhelming shame regarding his failure results in his post-traumatic stress, masculine trauma, and violent death. Jim's fixation with his experience aboard the *Patna*

can be read as a type of post-traumatic stress disorder which, along with shell shock, can be a response, according to Caruth, to “combat stress, delayed stress syndrome, [and] traumatic neurosis” (Introduction 3). Jim’s behaviour when thinking or speaking about the Patna incident reinforces the likelihood of his post-traumatic stress disorder given that its characteristics may take the form of “repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviours stemming from the event, ... and possibly also increased arousal to (and avoidance of) stimuli recalling the event” (4). As a boy-hero who carries the weighted expectations of Empire, Jim fails to act due to being overwhelmed at the prospect of 800 dead pilgrims, a failure which both defines and haunts him until his death. Like the “phantasmagoric quality” of the recurring “obscurely guilt-laden nightmare” of the Indian “Mutiny” (Herbert 85), Jim’s sudden vision of the consequences of heroic illusions prevents him from acting and results in his overwhelming guilt over his abandonment of the Patna. Jim struggles to make sense of his own narrative after he is expelled from the very genre that he weighs himself against, a genre which has enslaved him all his life.

As it did for Conrad, imperialist seafaring literature shapes Jim’s identity: readers learn early on that he longs for “a stirring life in the world of adventure” and imagines himself forever the “example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book” (Conrad 8-9). Jim’s avid consumption of imperial romances leads him to embrace fantastical stories of the sea without seeing the darker reality of adventure. As an imperial subject captivated by the fictionalized glories of Empire, for Jim “there is nothing more enticing, disenchanting, and enslaving than the life at sea” (11). Jim’s fixation with the sea represents his unwavering devotion to the Empire, but his enslavement to Empire is

also self-destructive. When Jim finally catches a glimpse of “the anger of the sea” and realizes that there are “many shades in the danger of adventures,” he recognizes the sea’s underlying “sinister violence of intention” (11). Bock asserts that water, particularly the sea, is an important emotional and psychological trope in Conrad’s literary works (146-149). For Conrad, the sea simultaneously offered peace, romance, ideals, and inspiration along with “the opportunity to make a fool of yourself—exactly as in the pursuit of literature” (*Personal* 99). Given how the Empire bred its young men on adventure stories (Green 3), the link between literature and the sea in Conrad’s work suggests that the sea offered young men the opportunity to explore the network of Empire and the chance to live out and up to the Empire’s imperial expectations. As an embodiment of both the British Empire and imperialism, the sea offers young men grand opportunities for adventure, but not without costs; Jim’s discovery of the multiple “shades” of adventure point to his gradual descent into darkness.

Jim’s journey across the Eastern waters represents his transition towards awareness of the true “unbridled cruelty” of the Empire itself, a cruelty often depicted in nineteenth-century “Mutiny” writings. Through Jim’s journey aboard and jump from the Patna, Conrad evokes memories of the “Mutiny” in association with Jim’s failed heroism and masculine trauma. Conrad condenses historical remembrances of the “Mutiny” using the Patna, the foundation of Jim’s post-traumatic stress disorder, as the site of his masculine trauma and the memory from which he cannot escape. Sharing a name with a city, district, and division of eastern India, the Patna—Jim’s ship—journeys across the Strait of Malacca, crosses the Bay of Bengal, and moves through the “One-degree” passage (a seaway of the Indian Ocean) before making its way to the Red Sea (Conrad

13-14; Moser *LJ* n2). Transporting roughly 800 Muslim men and women pilgrims, the Patna and its non-British demographic signify the long arm of Britain's imperialist endeavors and its journey is symbolic of the most likely imperial outcome: genocide. As the Patna crosses the Eastern seas, the narrator remarks on the passage of days "disappearing one by one into the past, as if falling into an abyss" and describes the ship in its "smouldering . . . luminous immensity, as if scorched by a flame flicked at her from a heaven *without pity*" (Conrad 14-15; my emphasis). Despite the ship's appearance of being "part of the scheme of a safe universe," and Jim's feelings of "unbounded safety and peace," the narrator remarks on "the shadow of the coming event" (16):

[The Patna] held on straight for the Red Sea under a serene sky, under a sky scorching and unclouded, enveloped in a fulgor of sunshine that killed all thought, oppressed the heart, withered all impulses of strength and energy. And under the sinister splendour of that sky the sea, blue and profound, remained still, without a stir, without a ripple, without a wrinkle – vicious, stagnant, dead. The *Patna*, with a slight hiss, passed over that plain, luminous and smooth, unrolled a black ribbon of smoke across the sky, left behind her on the water a white ribbon of foam that vanished at once, like the phantom of a track drawn upon a lifeless sea by the phantom of a steamer. (14-15)

While the alliterative description emphasizes an excess of strained calmness, the exaggerated stillness of the sea "without a stir, without a ripple, without a wrinkle" speaks to a heightened tension in the water, as well as in the narrative itself. The natural world unravels through gradual atrophy revealing a slow yet imminent apocalypse. The sea's lifelessness foreshadows the 800 dead bodies of Muslim pilgrims Jim imagines



floating adrift in the water had the ship sunk, the repetition of the word phantom and the “track” left on the water reinforcing that the deaths of these pilgrims will leave a mark on and haunt the Empire, just as the “Mutiny”, and its violently retributive actions, continued to grip the British imagination decades afterwards.

Conrad’s description of the Patna’s journey foreshadows the ship’s potential wreckage and channels the ongoing depiction of horrors derived from historical connections to, and first-hand accounts of, the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. In his analysis of three “Mutiny” accounts (referred to as “parables of violence”), Herbert chooses to conclude with Lieutenant Vivian Dering Majendie’s *Up Among the Pandies: or, A Year’s Service in India* (1859) since it “bears witness to a moral trauma so violent and so disillusioning as to throw readers’ interpretive compasses out of magnetic alignment” (87). Herbert compares the book’s opening to that of Henry Russell’s *My Diary in India* and Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, as it begins with a trip from England to India, “then by stages upriver to the scene of action” and towards a detailed account of a “ghastly sight” of 20 to 30 sepoy skeletons, like the skeletons of the black men Marlow himself discovers (87, 89). Declaring the “Mutiny” to possess “all the horrible features of a war of extermination, *a war in which pity was unknown*” (196, my emphasis), Majendie provides his first-hand account of a sepoy prisoner being burned alive, describing the incident as “almost like a dream” (188). Herbert asserts that the driving motive behind Majendie’s narrative was to position 1857 “as the result somehow of the catastrophic collapse of the spirit of pity, dreamlike phantasmagoria and exciting realism horrifically coincide” (93). Herbert’s assessment of Majendie’s narrative characterizes Jim’s experience on board the Patna: Jim’s heroic fantasies are shattered by the paralyzing and

horrific reality of the ship's inexplicable collision seemingly the result of a haunted past connected with the events of 1857.

While Conrad was familiar with a ship of the same name, having encountered it in May 1884 during his time in Bombay (van Marle & Lefranc 114), the Patna district in eastern India was known for three significant British-Indian atrocities that occurred there: the Patna Massacre of 1763, the Patna “crisis” in 1857, and the Phantom Wahhabi trials (1864-1871).<sup>63</sup> The Patna Massacre of 1763 involved a group of Indian agents led by Mir Qasim (the “Nawab”, or governor, of Bengal) who captured, imprisoned, and killed British officers in Patna, the site upon which a memorial was built (R. Brown 91). By 1880 however, the memorial had become more associated with the events of 1857 than 1763 because the memorial was updated to include the names of the butchered men whose remains were thrown into a well, foreshadowing the events of the Well of Cawnpore massacre almost 100 years later (105).<sup>64</sup> Merely days after the Cawnpore massacre in July of 1857, Patna again became a site of British-Indian atrocities when British soldiers attempted to disarm three sepoy regiments at Dinapur—the military cantonment of Patna—despite having told the sepoys earlier in May, when the “Mutiny” first broke out, that they could retain their weapons. As the “Mutiny” inched closer, Anglo-Indians abandoned their posts and regrouped in Patna which sparked William Tayler, Patna's colonial administrator, to summon Captain Rattray and his Sikh battalion to Patna to disarm the sepoy regiments because he was convinced that the Dinapur

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<sup>63</sup> The Patna Massacre began as a quarrel between the Patna governor, Nawab Mir Qasim, and the East Indian Company English authorities. During this conflict, 60 British military officers were taken prisoner and then killed months later, whereupon their bodies were thrown into a well (R. Brown 91).

<sup>64</sup> According to Rebecca M. Brown, the Patna massacre “gave substance to the mythology of the vulnerability of the British colonial presence in the subcontinent and anchored that myth to both a place and a historical event” (92).

regiments “were bent on mutiny” (42). Tayler was convinced there was a Wahabi Muslim plot to overthrow the British government, exterminate the Christian race, and re-establish Muslim rule, a subject he writes about extensively in his book *The Patna Crisis* (1858). After implementing “coercive measures” to secure Patna, measures of which were later deemed akin to a reign of terror, Tayler felt that Patna was now “in a state of profound tranquility” before this too was shattered by violent rioters for 15 days straight before dozens of them were captured and subsequently hanged (66). Tayler’s reign of terror laid the groundwork for “The Indian Conspiracy of 1864”, a series of events that picked up where the “Mutiny” left off. Instigated by a group of Hindus and Muslims, “[d]ie-hard remnants of rebel forces from 1857”, the Conspiracy led to a revolt against a large British military force that resulted in nearly 850 casualties (Stephens 30). To gather evidence of a potential Muslim conspiracy, the British government conducted a parliamentary inquiry into the 1863 battle which led to the Great Wahhabi Case (“Phantom Wahhabi” trials) (1864 and 1871)—the first and last of these trials taking place in Patna at the government’s insistence (Stephens 24, 37).<sup>65</sup> Apart from proving the extent of Britain’s fear of Muslim fanaticism, the Great Wahhabi Case evoked painful memories of 1857 and “brought into focus conflicting tendencies within British colonial ideology and projected these debates onto an empire-wide stage” (34, 37). As a location ripe with “Mutiny” history, Patna represents the event’s legacy of colonial tensions that continued to surface for years to come. Due to Patna’s troubled history, Conrad’s decision to name

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<sup>65</sup> In response to the government’s “ominous references to fanatics” who wished to eradicate Britain’s rule in India, Thomas Anstey, legal counsel for the Khan brothers, called on the memory of the “Mutiny” to “turn ... the government’s argument on its head” by declaring that “barbaric legal measures involved in the wake of the Rebellion were far more of a threat to the empire than supposed fanaticism” (Stephens 33).

the ship the Patna appears informed by more than his encounter with the real-life ship of the same name.

In *Lord Jim*, the Patna's journey across the sea embodies the extent of the Empire's destructive capabilities by evoking the retributive actions of the "Mutiny". According to Herbert, the inseparable link between the Victorian "cult of strong masculine character" and the "ideology of punishment" is a clear mark of the "terrible break" that the "Mutiny" inflicted on the Victorian psyche (128). One notable "Mutiny" journalist, Henry Mead, denounced Britain's rule in India as cruel, oppressive, "wholly destructive", and responsible for "the perpetual suffering of millions" (iv, 335, iii), which suggests that the British Empire possessed a destructive compulsion against its colonized as well as its own subjects. Despite the "marvellous stillness that pervaded the world" while on board the Patna, the silence is jarringly interrupted by the workers below the ship: "short metallic clangs [burst] out suddenly in the depths of the ship, the harsh scrape of the shovel, the violent slam of a furnace-door, exploded brutally, as if the men handling the mysterious things below had their breasts full of fierce anger..." (16). The fiery actions beneath the Patna—like the lurking of what Marlow deems the "Irrational"—connote a violent bloodlust, one that does not call for revenge on the sleeping Muslim pilgrims, but for mutiny against the British Empire. On the deck of the Patna, "surrendered to the wisdom of white men and to their courage, trusting the power of their unbelief and the iron shell of their fire-ship," the sleeping brown pilgrims are at the mercy of imperial white men. Ironically, these supposed white protectors knowingly abandon their charges to their deaths and therefore evoke the same failure of British soldiers in India who perpetuated injustices against the Hindu and Muslim Indian soldiers

whose religion, culture, and livelihoods were under attack. Just as the white men aboard the *Patna* bear responsibility for the pilgrims, the British Empire believed themselves to be “civilizing” India despite their often-excessive use of violent force (Herbert 29).

Conrad’s challenging of the adventure genre, a genre which was meant to reinforce imperialism, suggests its sinister reality and the implicit culpability of white men. As Marlow says,

When your ship fails you, your whole world seems to fail you; the world that made you, restrained you, taken care of you. It is as if the souls of men floating on an abyss and in touch with immensity had been set free for any excess of heroism, absurdity, or abomination. Of course, . . . there are as many shipwrecks as there are men . . . Trust a boat on the high seas to bring out the Irrational that lurks at the bottom of every thought, sentiment, sensation, emotion. (75)

For Conrad, the *Patna* serves as a metaphor for the British Empire, and indeed a “microcosm of masculine society” (McCracken 19), the “Irrational” lurking beneath the surface of every British subject representative of the Empire’s inherent darkness. Given the *Patna*’s connection to the “Mutiny”, Marlow’s description of a failed sea voyage signals the eventual undoing of British imperialism due to the Empire’s betrayal of its colonized subjects during and after 1857.

Conrad reinforces the betrayal and failure of the Empire’s so-called “white protectors” by linking masculine fixation with heroism to destruction. Although the men below the ship appear ready for mutiny, the skipper and engineer are drunk, and Jim is eager to get away from them because they “did not belong to the world of heroic adventure” and are, in Jim’s mind, beneath him in that they “could not touch him” (19).

At this point, Jim is desperate to prove himself having already missed one heroic opportunity on an officer training ship two years prior to the Patna incident. While he is in the middle of imaging himself as a heroic adventurer, the training ship comes under peril by a hurricane, and when faced with the chaos of the scene, Jim is so “confounded” he remains frozen in place as the other “boys” whirl around him to protect the ship (9). Just as he comes back to himself, looking as though he were “on the point of leaping overboard ... with the pain of conscious defeat in his eyes,” the ship’s captain places a hand on Jim’s shoulder and remarks, “Too late, youngster.... Better luck next time. This will teach you to be smart” (10). Despite his previous failed attempt to act heroically, Jim is again preoccupied by “the success of his imaginary achievements,” his soul “drunk with the divine philtre of an unbounded confidence in itself” (17). As Jim privately indulges in his heroic fantasies, the other men on deck, including the German skipper, openly boast about their own valour to each other, claiming to be unaware of the definition of fear as they challenge each other’s bravery and manhood. In his previous failure, Jim observes the “pitiful display of vanity” for such boasts and believes himself the possessor of a “many-sided courage” for having witnessed how to overcome such scrapes without having to have actually “done the work” (10-11). Yet it is *Jim’s* vanity that becomes externally represented in the “big talk” of the captain and engineer, his feeling of repulsion in fact an unconscious recognition of his own unchecked egoism. As the masculine war of bravado builds to a climax, and the engineer spreads his arms to demonstrate “the shape and extent of his valor,” all three men are suddenly jerked as though hit from behind as if to punish their discourse (20). As they gaze at the “undisturbed level of the sea,” the men question, “What had happened?” since the

engines did not make any sound upon impact. They are immediately unsettled: “Had the earth been checked in her course? They could not understand; and suddenly the calm sea, the sky without a cloud, appeared formidably insecure in their immobility, as if poised on the brow of yawning destruction” (20-21). There is no physical evidence of the ship having hit anything, yet somehow the men experience an inexplicable and unnameable violent force jolt the ship. The mood on deck now shattered by the formidability of their situation, the sea appears insecure and immobile as do the men. Now on the edge of a “yawning destruction,” the ship has crossed over a cataclysmic chasm and thunder sounds from deep within the water, and in response, the ship quivers, but then quickly ceases “all at once, as though the ship had steamed across a narrow belt of vibrating water and of humming air” (21). The narrow belt suggests the collision itself, which creates a “big hole below the water-line” allowing the forepeak to become filled with water and causing the ship to begin sinking (22). But this narrow belt is also a figurative space of liminality—a crossing over from heroic fantasy to horror-inducing realism. This is the same “break” in narrative that Conrad himself acknowledges, and the transition from the imperial romance to the unsettling, unspeakable nightmare of “Mutiny” narratives in response to the destructive potency of the morally bankrupt British masculinity associated with imperialist doctrine. The break signals the Empire’s inability to sustain the weight of its self-destructive imperial burden and of the subsequent crisis of masculinity because of this revelation.

In British “Mutiny” literature, such a crisis in masculinity occurred most prominently in the fictional retelling of the Well of Cawnpore, an event that, according to Brantlinger, acted as a “reductive synecdoche” for the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 involving

the failure of British soldiers to prevent the brutal massacre of women and children (*Rule* 203). Conrad associates this haunting 1857 memory with Jim's failure to act to protect the Muslim pilgrims aboard the *Patna*. Although the narrative of Conrad's *Lord Jim* does not converge at the site of an actual well, it does repeatedly evoke Jim's "jump" from the *Patna*, an act that Jim initially describes as something he could not go back on, "as if [he] had jumped into a well—into an everlasting deep hole..." (70, my emphasis).<sup>66</sup> In his description of the passage of days "disappearing one by one into the past, as if falling into an abyss," Conrad suggests that the *Patna*, and Jim's eventual jump, belong to an older and darker past, and that the ship itself is being transported into that past from which, for Jim and the British Empire, there is no escape. Although there were several atrocities committed in 1857, no other "crime of unspeakable, blasphemous enormity" was more horrific to those in Britain and India than the Well at Cawnpore massacre (Hibbert 210). According to Brantlinger, Cawnpore served "as the most vivid feature" in most "Mutiny" historical accounts (*Rule* 201). Commenting on Sir George Trevelyan's lengthy description of the "well of evil fame," Brantlinger asserts that "the reader is meant to understand the absolute villainy of the Mutineers and the heroic purity of their victims" by looking down into the depths of the well (*Rule* 228-229; 203). The image of the well permeates Victorian fiction, particularly in Mary Elizabeth Braddon in *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), a "Mutiny" text according to Herbert due to its elements of sensation, gothic, and the feminine. Braddon "domesticates" the image of the well by relocating it to England (Nayder 38). Given that Braddon forces her readers to repeatedly return to the image of the well, the Audley Court well becomes "the spot on which Braddon's

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<sup>66</sup> Sherry describes Jim's abandonment of the *Patna* as a "leap into moral darkness" ("Introduction" xi).



narrative persistently converges” and thus “evokes [the well’s] imperial counterpart” (Nayder 38-39). Whereas Braddon conflates “the threat of native insurrection with that of feminist revolt” (Nayder 39), Conrad *inverts* the Cawnpore tale by framing the “well” as both the site of a crisis in imperial masculinity and a site of Britain’s atrocities committed against its colonial subjects both during and after 1857.

Although Marlow *physically* helps Jim distance himself from his failure aboard the Patna (and thus his connection to “Mutiny” memory) by sending him to Stein in Patusan, the narrative’s perpetual return to this initial “break” with the imperialist tradition reinforces the novel’s preoccupation with Jim’s masculine trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of his internalization of “Mutiny” memory. For Jim, recounting his story becomes more than merely trying to defend himself to Marlow; it is his desperate attempt to live on through the adventure narrative itself by re-writing the Patna incident. As Marlow asserts, Jim “could no more stop telling now than he could have stopped living by the mere exertion of his will” (63). According to Dori Laub, survivors of trauma “not only needed to survive so that they could tell their stories; they also needed to tell their stories *in order to survive*” (78). Jim must therefore find a way, through narrative, to reconcile his actions with an accepted imperial masculinity that leaves no room for failure or second chance, his “initial failure display[ing] the fragility in imperial manhood” (Taylor 207). Like a subject of trauma, Jim, as Laub might argue, “never [has] enough words or the right words” nor does he ever have “enough listening or the right listening to articulate the story that cannot be fully captured in *thought*, *memory*, and *speech*. The pressure thus continues unremittingly, and if words are not trustworthy or adequate, the life that is chosen can become the vehicle by which the

struggle to tell continues” (63). The life that Jim “chooses” translates into starting over in Patusan where Jim struggles to *re-write* his story. However, Jim’s life after the Patna incident is merely a repetition of his prior attempt at heroism; in trying to weigh himself against an imperially defined masculinity *outside* of the Empire, Jim sets himself up for yet another failure: his fatal encounter with the vengeful Gentleman Brown.

#### 4.5 “Unmanned” Subject of Empire: The “Psychic Wound” of the Mutiny’s Revenge

I perceived also the seam of an old wound, beginning a little below the temple and going out of sight under the short grey hair at the side of his head—the graze of a spear or the cut of a sabre.

—Marlow describing the Frenchman’s wound, *Lord Jim* (1899-1900)

Fraught with nervous uncertainty over the Empire’s growing moral bankruptcy, *Lord Jim* features characteristics affiliated with the “Mutiny” novel, reinforced by the fact that it is Conrad’s first “fictional engagement with trauma” (Hampson, *Secrets* 152). Marlow’s obsessive retelling of Jim’s story and desperate attempts to prove Jim’s imperial masculinity indicates that the novel is built around a framework of, in Hampson’s words, “traumatic memory” (*Secrets* 155). As a “victim” of imperialist adventure fiction who suffers from “severe psychological woundings” (White 65; Martin 231), Jim—like Mowgli and Bathurst—carries the haunting memory of the “Mutiny” with him. Just as Jim feels compelled to repeatedly recall the most traumatic moment of his life, those who witnessed, read about, and re-told the story of the “Mutiny” throughout the mid-to-late nineteenth century were driven by an endless need to “relive the Indian war again and again” (Herbert 134). The surge in “Mutiny” retellings in the 1890s was indeed a response to the energized wave of New Imperialism, but it also revealed, as Herbert argues, *not* the heroic preservation of the nation’s character, “but ... an unhealed wound rife with ‘the old agony’ lying at an incurably deep level in the national psyche” (251).

Conrad figures the cultural wound of 1857 in connection with a literal wound involving Marlow's encounter with the Frenchman, one of the Patna "survivors". Marlow's preoccupation with the Frenchman's wound represents a physical reminder of Jim's failure in addition to his metaphorical wounding as a result of the Patna incident. Upon narrating his meeting with the Frenchman, Marlow describes the aftermath of the Patna affair to his audience as possessing the "extraordinary power of defying the shortness of memories and the length of time: it seemed to live, with a sort of uncanny vitality, in the minds of men, on the tips of their tongues" (Conrad 84). Marlow's description of the event's "uncanny vitality" parallels that of the Mutiny's effect on the British Victorian imagination given that "Marlow, and many other people in the Eastern seas, have not stopped thinking and talking about Jim" (Watt, *Conrad* 301). Marlow's fixation with a "seam of an old wound" (Conrad 86) just below the Frenchman's temple evokes both Jim's psychological wounding in failing to stick with the ship and the broader history of Britain's more haunting and traumatizing wound of 1857. The scene powerfully recalls the memory of the Mutiny's "wound" on the British cultural imaginary and its relation to the homosocial narratives that are meant to reinforce constructions of imperial masculinity, not undo them. Instead of bolstering his position as an imperial boy-hero, these narrative retellings of the Patna incident reinforce Jim's masculine trauma.

In their accounts of the "Mutiny", nineteenth-century historians often framed the event as one that pitted the Indians against the British, consequently constructing the myth of 1857 as a "war between Darkness and Light" (Herbert 13). The "break" in *Lord Jim* between the so-called righteousness of the imperialist tradition giving way to its moral darkness echoes the fatalistic war between Jim, who functions as the narrative's

“Mutiny” hero, and Gentleman Brown, who personifies the infamous “Mutiny” figure, Nana Sahib, due to his all-consuming desire for revenge, his merciless destruction of Patusan, and his betrayal of Jim in the same manner as Nana Sahib betrayed General Wheeler in 1857. Although the Victorian public considered Nana Sahib to be the most recognized villain of the British Empire, by the late nineteenth century, the line between villain and victim blurred as literary depictions of the “Mutiny” began to include criticism of British rule, which, in turn, altered fictional depictions of Nana Sahib (Brantlinger, *Rule* 218-219). In Nisbet’s *The Queen’s Desire* (1893), Merriman’s *Flotsam* (1896), and Steel’s *On the Face of the Waters* (1896), the British become “their own worst enemies,” their presence in India sometimes depicted as one of contradiction and incomprehensibility (219). In these novels, according to Herbert, Britain’s male heroes take on a “sinister violence of intention” (that Conrad’s *Lord Jim* also identifies) and confirm that previous constructions of heroic British masculinity “have disastrously lost their efficacy” and become replaced by “sheer mass butchery” (129-130). Based on Brantlinger’s and Herbert’s readings of “Mutiny” novels, Brown represents Jim’s diabolical doppelganger, or in Gustav Morf’s words, his “second self”: Jim cannot resist Brown because the evil that Brown embodies is already *within* Jim (158). Since Patusan offers Jim a second chance for realizing his dream of heroic adventure, Gentleman Brown’s introduction to the narrative “is like the intrusion of another genre” (Baxter, *Swan* 34). As Jim’s diabolical double, then, Brown reinforces *Lord Jim*’s transition from the heroic adventure genre to the gothic. Morf’s observation is particularly striking given that the primary element of the gothic fable is the protagonist’s discovery of an alter ego or secret sharer hell-bent on revenge—an individual not separate from the hero, but a

“fantastic projection of a potential ingrained within [the hero]” (Herbert 111). Echoing the gothic double of Kipling’s Mowgli, Gentleman Brown embodies, in Marlow’s words, a “blind accomplice of the Dark Powers,” a haunting reminder of Jim’s traumatic past and the darker, more violent side to imperialism. Gentleman Brown therefore functions as the *inverted* representation of Nana Sahib; not the “bloodthirsty” colonial *other*, but the morally bankrupt white imperial adventurer. As two sides of the same “imperialist coin” (Ash 70), Jim and Brown embody the irrevocable connection between imperial white masculinity and the Mutiny’s retributive impulse.

Just as British “Mutiny” writers used Nana Sahib as an example of Britain becoming its own worst enemy, French writers positioned Nana Sahib as a foil to the “civilized” European, one who hid “his innate Indian ‘savagery’ beneath the disguise of an ‘English gentleman’” (Frith, “Rebel” 372). As “the son of a baronet” and a “latter-day buccaneer,” “Gentleman” Brown’s actions reveal the Empire’s true “complex intention” (Conrad 209): beneath its disguise as a benevolent protector, the Empire seeks to impose its will over its colonies while plundering them for their resources—“neither more nor less,” in Stevenson’s Jim Hawkins’ words, “than a common pirate” would (103). Marlow distinguishes Brown from other “celebrated prototypes” (adventurers and pirates) by framing Brown’s “complex intention” as one motivated by revenge and not greed. On top of possessing a “vehement scorn” for all humanity, particularly his victims, Brown expresses himself with “an undisguised ruthlessness of purpose, a strange vengeful attitude towards his own past, and a blind belief in the righteousness of his will against all mankind”—a “feeling which could induce a leader of a horde of wandering cutthroats to call himself proudly the Scourge of God” (Conrad 209, 219-220). Most scholars tend to

ignore the larger implication of Brown's intention and the sheer magnitude of his desire for revenge. Deane argues that Brown appears to be motivated by a "play ethic" of imperial boyhood in which Jim also participates, though a darker version than Jim's own, one driven entirely by vengeance (108). It is Jim's desperate wish to see himself in Brown that results in his failure to recognize Brown's motive—not a second chance, as Jim desires, but revenge (109). Deane asserts that Brown's vengeance derives from having been defied by Jim and anyone "whom he regards as having dishonored him" (108). Taking Deane's explanation further, the sheer magnitude of Brown's destructive actions evokes British actions against India in 1857: what Marlow is careful to describe as "not a vulgar and treacherous massacre" but "a lesson, a retribution" (Conrad 363). Beth Sharon Ash attributes Brown's "lesson" to the Jekyll/Hyde effect (170): Jim, as the morally righteous champion of heroic masculinity, and Brown, as the embodiment of the "Irrational" that lurks beneath the surface of every imperialist.

Jim's role in Patusan reflects the traditional "Mutiny" narrative, since Jim, as the white figure of "enlightened imperialism," must first defeat the antagonistic native forces that already reside there. Rajah Allang, one of Jim's initial adversaries, belongs more to the fiction of Henty or Haggard, a stereotype of the bloodthirsty native villains of the romance tradition (Dryden, *Imperial* 167). Before Jim's arrival in Patusan, the Rajah reigns cruelly and rapaciously over Doramin's people: he burns multiple villages, tosses the literal "heads" of households over cliffs, and tortures and kills any man who dares to infringe upon his own trade (Conrad 154-155). When Jim arrives in Patusan, he is welcomed "into the heart of the community" by Doramin and his Bugis allies (155). Having "survived the assault of the dark powers," as Marlow remarks (148), Jim

becomes a kind of supernatural hero for the Bugis. In time, he imposes a “new order” over Patusan: one that establishes a colonizer/colonized relationship between himself and the Bugis, transforming them “into a military force in order to drive his Arab competitors from the region” (Henthorne 206, 210). Like the British who imposed their rule over India, Jim believes that “he rules the indigenous peoples for their own good” (212). As Henthorne asserts, Brown’s arrival reiterates Conrad’s point in *Heart of Darkness*: “rather than bring ‘light’, Europeans bring darkness, destruction, and death” (213). Despite his noble intentions, Jim remains an inverted reflection of Brown, and therefore equally guilty, as Isobel Baxter suggests, of Brown’s massacre of the Patusan’s chief’s son, Dain Warris, and his men (*Swan* 35). Unable to prevent Patusan’s destruction, just as he fails to save the Muslim pilgrims, Jim is condemned to relive and confront his past, symbolic of Britain’s haunted memory and unshakeable guilt over 1857.

The backlash against 1857 was “a revelation and a militant assertion of the Old Testament spirit of vengeance that coursed within the British mentality,” and ultimately became “the rock upon which the character of the nineteenth-century Englishman was founded” (Herbert 106; Stokes xii). Although the idea of razing a city to the ground was once “mythological imagination,” the “Mutiny” provided an opportunity for the British public to enact it as one of “national policy” (Herbert 112). Brown’s destruction of Patusan, like the Patna’s journey across the sea, signifies the extent of the Empire’s destructiveness. Merely the result of his desire to claim Jim’s power for his own and believing he will be met with little resistance, Brown is caught off guard by Patusan’s full-frontal attack, and violently retaliates by burning Patusan to the ground. Echoing what transpired on the night of the Patna incident, Brown is first met by “profound

silence” when he sets sight on the land; the silence is then broken by Patusan’s gun fire, war-cries, gongs, and drums (Conrad 212). The sighting of Brown’s ship ignites a violent bloodlust in the people of Patusan reminiscent of the mutinous anger of those below the Patna deck: Brown witnesses “thousands of angry men” rise to defy his invasion (214). Echoing the events of the “Mutiny” outbreak, Patusan is set aflame because of Brown’s attack: the grass blazes, the forest smoulders, the earth blackens, and “big fires” illuminate the entire extent of Patusan’s borders (214). Evoking the Patna’s phantom-like passage across a lifeless sea, Brown and his men’s position on board their ship is “still, dark, silent ... as if they had been dead already” (214). Jim’s post-traumatic stress and masculine trauma unavoidably worsens given the distinct parallel between the Patna incident and Patusan’s destruction, reinforced by the fact that Jim is the reason for Brown’s journey there. As the figure of retribution, Brown functions as the genocidal spectre of the “Mutiny,” one that haunted the British imagination well into the late nineteenth century.

The conclusion of Marlow’s narrative to the privileged reader recounts Jim’s showdown with Brown, describing their interaction as “the deadliest kind of duel” (Conrad 228). Marlow asserts that Brown “hated Jim at first sight”: Jim had all the advantages of youth, assurance, possession, security, power, and fearlessness on his side (225). Yet it is Jim’s *physical* appearance that evokes the strongest hatred in Brown: “something in the very neatness of Jim’s clothes, from the white helmet to the canvass leggings and the pipe-clayed shoes, which in Brown’s sombre irritated eyes seemed to belong to things he had in the very shaping of his life contemned and flouted” (380). For Brown, Jim embodies the principles of duty, faithfulness, and “obscure courage on which



the British empire was built” (J. Hillis Miller 27), principles which Brown scorns and has ultimately rejected. Yet Brown can only survive within Jim’s imperial “play ethic” (and the situation itself, as he is outnumbered “two hundred to one”) by evoking the politics of imperialism. He uses the rhetoric of violence, courage, and duty to convince Jim of his white masculine authority (Strychacz 145-146). However, Brown’s ability to manipulate Jim is not the result of his deliberate use of imperial rhetoric; it is the unintentional repeated references to Jim’s abandonment of the Patna and thus reopening the old wound of Jim’s failed attempt at heroism. According to Marlow, Brown possesses a “satanic gift” for discovering his adversary’s weak spot “as if a demon had been whispering advice in his ear” (Conrad 229). The significance of the location of Jim’s encounter with Brown itself is also not lost on Marlow, for it is the very same spot “where Jim took the second desperate leap of his life—the leap that landed him into the life of Patusan” (225). The deliberate association between Jim’s jump from the Patna and his removal to Patusan reinforce the fact that Jim has not made steps to move on from his initial “jump”; his “desperate leap” to Patusan merely repeats that same failure and is symbolic of his condemned state of being. Brown endeavors to shatter the persona Jim has constructed in Patusan by forcing the memory of the Patna to the surface. Almost immediately upon meeting face to face, Brown asks Jim for his reason in coming to Patusan; Jim starts at the question and becomes red in the face, clearly uncomfortable at the memory of what drove him to Patusan (226). Brown also reminds Jim of his imperial heritage (“You have been white once”), a heritage that Jim had no choice but to virtually relinquish due to the shame over the cancellation of his certificate. Brown also demands that Jim not be a “coward” and needles him to admit that something must have “scared [Jim] into this

infernally hole” (227). Brown’s reference to Patusan as a “hole” signals a narrative “return” to the moment of Jim’s jump from the Patna and the 1857 haunting image of the infamous Well of Cawnpore. Most significantly, Brown declares his need to protect the men aboard his own ship, swearing that he was “not the sort to jump out of trouble and leave them in a d-----d lurch” (227). The word “jump” alone would be enough to undo Jim, but Brown adds further fuel to the fire by asking Jim whether he understood that when it came to ““saving one’s life in the dark, one didn’t care who else went—three, thirty, three hundred people”” (229). With this final question, Brown shatters the last of Jim’s heroic persona: Jim visibly winces, appears “as black as thunder,” and stares at the ground (229). Although Jim views himself as Patusan’s true and sole “white protector,” Brown’s suggestion of their common “blood,” “experience,” “guilt,” and “secret knowledge” reveals more than merely a “bond of their minds and of their hearts” (Conrad 406); it reveals their shared culpability in much older, deadlier crimes. Reinforcing this idea of the war between light and darkness, or in this case the internal dark forces that exist within Jim himself, Brown manipulates Jim’s desperate wish to atone for the Patna incident resulting in Jim’s repeated failure as the “white protector” and his (unwilling) participation in the Empire’s genocidal actions against its colonial subjects.

Brown tricks Jim into allowing him and his men a clear “road” out of Patusan, a trick that echoes the events of Nana Sahib’s betrayed promise to General Wheeler in 1857 for safe passage down the River Ganges. After three weeks of non-stop warfare and imminent starvation, General Wheeler had little choice but to accept Nana Sahib’s promise of safe passage to Allahabad for the 450 remaining British survivors before they were soon betrayed: Nana Sahib’s men attacked them with fire, arrows, guns, and swords

(D. Richards 58-60). Brown's agreement with Jim inversely echoes Nana Sahib's broken promise to his white prisoners since it is Brown, as representative of the Empire's destructive powers, who betrays Jim and massacres the Patusan rebels. Jim feels compelled to negotiate with Brown since Jim is trapped within the white imperial code of adventure fiction. Jim boyishly asks Brown: "Will you promise to leave the coast?" and Brown appears to respond in the affirmative until Jim adds, "And surrender your arms?" which evokes a violent reaction in Brown and vehement refusal to agree to these terms (Conrad 230). Although Brown does not immediately strike out against Jim, Brown's reaction to the potential loss of his arms mirrors the sepoy knee-jerk reaction to the rumour that the British intended to take their weapons from them in May of 1857. Yet by allowing Brown and his men to keep their arms and freely pass through Patusan, Jim betrays the trust of the Patusan people who he has sworn to protect. Through letting Brown go, Jim "fails to recognise that heroism comes from loyalty not bound by ethnicity" (Baxter, *Swan* 46). Unable to separate his own experience from Brown's, Jim defends Brown's presence in Patusan to Jewel: "Men act badly sometimes without being much worse than others" (Conrad 234). In exchange for Brown's agreement not to harm anyone, Jim promises Brown and his men safe passage: "You shall have a clear road or else a clear fight" (Conrad 230). After Jim returns to his people to inform them of the arrangement, Brown boasts to Cornelius that he means to do "better" than merely kill Jim (230); he intends to destroy Jim and all Patusan for defying him. Just as the British prisoners attempted to escape from Nana Sahib's volley of flaming arrows, Tamb Itam and his men jump into the river to avoid Brown's violent and merciless attack. Brown's destruction evokes the bloody aftermath on the River Ganges, historical survivors of the

attack describing their fellow survivors as “emaciated” and “ghostly” (Thomson 161; Horne qtd. in Fremont-Barnes 75). Employing the language of Thomson and Horne, Brown describes their journey out of Patusan as “haunted by an almost imperceptible suspicion of sighing, muttering ghosts” (Conrad 237). It is at this point where Marlow declares Brown’s actions “a lesson, a retribution—a demonstration of some obscure and awful attribute of our nature which ... is not so very far under the surface as we like to think” (363). Marlow’s conclusion about the darkness within human nature thus reveals Conrad’s initial motive for altering his depiction of Brown from an allegorical representation of evil to “a recognizably human form of evil” (E. Sullivan 316). Inheriting the British cultural mentality of 1857, Conrad positions Brown not as a figure of all-encompassing evil but one of “horrified self-recognition” (Herbert 13). Figured as “one of us” through his connection with Jim, Brown’s characterization reveals that moral darkness is at the heart of the Empire itself, embodied as the dark reflection of the white imperial boy-hero. Although certainly not a figure of retribution, Jim’s lover, Jewel, also serves as a haunting echo of the “Mutiny” aftermath, her recognition of Jim’s “falseness” representative of India’s irrevocable “break” with Empire.

#### 4.6 Britain’s Gothic “Mutiny”: Jewel and Shattered Imperial Masculinity

“You are false!” [Jewel] screamed out after [Jim].

“Forgive me,” he cried.

“Never! Never!” she called back.

—Jim’s betrayal of his promise to Jewel, *Lord Jim* (1899-1900)

As a novel preoccupied with the connection between constructions of gender and colonized spaces, *Lord Jim* is at “home” among other *fin de siècle* novels that express “anxiety about the waning of opportunities for heroic adventure” (Mongia, “Ghosts” 1;

Brantlinger, *Rule* 239). Although the first half of *Lord Jim* explicitly belongs to the nineteenth-century adventure genre, some scholars argue that the novel's second half draws heavily from the gothic due to its emphasis on doubling, violence, and spectral hauntings.<sup>67</sup> Like the "Mutiny" that was not so much a reality as "a movement into the fantastic, into hallucination, or into a terrible nightmare" (Herbert 21-22), *Lord Jim* transitions from "light holiday literature" (Conrad 39) to what Herbert might label a "terror romance" (25) or what Tickell might call "Mutiny romance" (*Terrorism* 118). According to Mark Allan Williams, *Lord Jim* is a "liminoid Gothic novel" and Conrad's gothic imagery indicates Jim's liminality as well as the "irreparable, inescapable nature" of his "breach" with the maritime community (2, 10). Carrying Williams' argument further, I read Conrad's gothic elements in *Lord Jim* in connection with the historico-political context of late Victorian Britain's fixation with 1857 and its aftermath. The second half of *Lord Jim* is a reimagined "Mutiny romance"; *not* a salve to the nostalgic longing for the world of the imperial romance but a horror-inducing revelation of beholding an empire whose, in Marlow's words, "glamour" was "off" (*HD* 108). For Mongia, the island of Patusan functions as an otherworldly "haunted and haunting" region, a notion strongly reinforced by Marlow's vision of the island as "one grave" ("Ghosts" 6; Conrad 191). Indeed, Patusan is haunted ground: its landscape, particularly the grave of Jewel's mother, invokes the 1857 Bibighar Massacre and the infamous Cawnpore well, the site upon which nineteenth-century "Mutiny" memory converges.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Mongia asserts that the Gothic has been the "least studied" genre in Conrad studies ("Ghosts" 2). Patrick Brantlinger (1988), Frederick R. Karl (1958), Elsa Nettels (1974) and Anne Luyat (1986) explore Conrad's use of the grotesque (though they did not use *Lord Jim* as their focus). Joanne Gass (1995) and Mark Alan Williams (2011), along with Mongia, explore Conrad's use of gothic in *Lord Jim*.

<sup>68</sup> After 1857, the Bibighar "House of Ladies" came to be known as "The Slaughter House" (Blunt 426; Sherer 78).

Divided into two distinct parts, the novel's division produced, in Conrad's words, a visceral "effect" on the reader (Conrad, *Letters* 2:302): the novel's transition from imperial to "Mutiny romance" represents the opposite of what the adventure genre was meant to provide: not an empowering opportunity to realize the ideals of Empire, but a traumatizing recognition of the Empire's darkness. Echoed in Patusan's unsettling history of white male violence against colonial women (i.e., Jewel's mother) is Marlow's colonization of Jewel through narrative: his violent re-making and suppression of her Eastern "darkness" into the so-called light of imperialism. Although Mongia dismisses Jewel as an "empty signifier" ("Ghosts" 11), Catherine A. Civello claims that "when Conrad 'writes' Jewel, he creates a character who holds the key to unlocking the author himself" (46). Applying Civello's argument to my reading of *Lord Jim* as Conrad's "India" novel, I argue that Jewel physically and symbolically embodies the infamous Koh-i-Noor<sup>69</sup> ("Mountain of Light") diamond given to Queen Victoria, a diamond whose "curse" was attributed by nineteenth-century historians to the "Mutiny". For Conrad, Jewel *is* India, the "jewel" in Britain's crown: she is "made over", like the Koh-i-Noor diamond she represents, through her connection to Jim, the imperial proxy, and signifies both Britain's betrayal of India and the historic moment of Queen Victoria's ascension to Empress of India. Jewel's declaration of Jim's "falseness" invokes India's violent rejection of the Empire's right to rule as well as its moral bankruptcy. Jewel's revelation ("You are false!") is implicitly Conrad's own: that the Empire's bolstering of its imperial

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<sup>69</sup> Today, there is a four-way claim for the diamond between Britain, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (Boissoneault). As of April 2019, India's Supreme Court dismissed the petition to re-examine its 2017 verdict that it cannot pass an order to reclaim the diamond from Britain (Khan). For the diamond's full history, see William Dalrymple and Anita Anand's *Koh-i-Noor: The History of the World's Most Infamous Diamond* (2017).

masculinity was no more than an illusion, and that its “shadowy ideal of conduct” was simply that—“under a cloud” (Conrad 165)—because of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.

Introducing the subject of Patusan for his audience, Marlow recalls his past conversation with Stein regarding Jim’s predicament, when Stein first proposes the island as the ideal location to “bury” Jim; in the same breath, he makes an “incomprehensible” and seemingly unconnected remark: “And the woman is dead now” (Conrad 133).<sup>70</sup> Stein refers to Jewel’s mother, “an educated and very good-looking Dutch-Malay girl, with a tragic or perhaps only a pitiful history” (133). Marlow is unfamiliar with Jewel’s mother’s “story” but associates her death with a crime of great significance that occurred on the island: “once before Patusan had been used as a grave for some sin, transgression, or misfortune” (133). Marlow’s framing of Patusan as “one grave” (Conrad 191) and the scene of an unspeakable crime makes the island a haunted space, its inhabitants likened to the “Un-Dead” (Williams 2) especially given Marlow’s frequent allusions to burials and corpses.<sup>71</sup> Although Jim was not in Patusan when Jewel’s mother was killed, Conrad connects Jim to Jewel’s mother’s death through Marlow, who happens upon Jewel’s mother’s grave during an “early morning stroll” in Patusan (165). At the time, he is contemplating “the unanswerable why of Jim’s fate” and how this “brings [him] to the story of [Jim’s] love” (165). Marlow’s invocation of the supernatural to describe the grave of Jewel’s mother indicates its significance in Jim’s heroic narrative. Marlow

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<sup>70</sup> Raval suggests that in sending Jim to Patusan—the site of Stein’s “former triumph and eventual failure” (395)—Conrad reveals the false promise of the adventure narrative. Waddington suggests that by sending Jim to Stein, “who never misses a chance to do business, no matter what the cost in human suffering,” Marlow unknowingly implicates all three of them in the “unsavoury” practices of imperialism (99).

<sup>71</sup> Long before Jim meets with death, he is eerily described by a Patusanis as corpse-like, appearing “like the body of one departed” (Conrad 145). Marlow repeats the expired Brierly’s wish for Jim to “creep twenty feet underground” (132), and the island of Patusan, both Stein and Marlow agree, is the “practical remedy” to see this burial carried out (130).

emphasizes the grave's unearthly qualities: its "interlaced blossoms took on shapes foreign to one's memory and colours indefinable to the eye, as though they had been special flowers gathered by no man, grown not in this world, and destined for the use of the dead alone" (191); the flowers give off a powerful scent of thick and heavy incense; the "lumps of white coral" surrounding the grave appear as "a chaplet of bleached skulls" (191); and everything around him "was so quiet that when [he] stood still all sound and all movement in the world seemed to come to an end" (191). The grave's "split saplings" enclosure and the fact that it is "perpetually garlanded with flowers" emphasize both its garden and memorial-like qualities, but its otherworldliness not only haunts Marlow: the grave haunts Jim. Lurking in the background of Jim's love story, thinks Marlow, is the ghost of Jewel's mother: "the melancholy figure of a woman, the shadow of a cruel wisdom buried in a lonely grave, looking on wistfully, helplessly, with sealed lips" (165). Although Marlow remains uncertain whether the "shadow" is only his imagination, he is confident that the "significant fact of [Jewel's mother's] unforgotten grave" holds ominous sway over Jim and Jewel (165). The ominous "shadow" that clings to the perpetually visited and haunted grave is an inescapable reminder of a guilt-ridden past.

At the site of Jewel's mother's grave, Marlow discovers the history that carries the guilt of a serious crime: how Jewel's white father's and half-caste stepfather's abandonment and gross mistreatment of Jewel's mother precipitated her death. Jewel's mother's grave bears particular relevance to the "Mutiny romance" narrative, then, for the flowers "woven about the heads of [her grave's] slender posts" represent the perpetual threat of white male violence, particularly in their control over and entrapment of colonial women. Although it is not explicit who regularly replaces the grave's "fresh" flowers,



Marlow names *Jim* as the grave's *designer*: "Jim with his own hands had worked at the [grave's] rustic fence" (165). Marlow reinforces not just Jim's devotion to Jewel (as dutiful "son" and lover), but Jim's inescapable connection to the initial need for the grave. Marlow's motive becomes clear when he abruptly transitions from Jim's "individual side of the story" to the "unspeakable" Cornelius and Jewel's grandfather while visiting Jewel's mother's grave: he desires to assert Jim's innocence in connection with Jewel's mother's "tragic" end, but instead reveals a degree of guilt by association. Soon after his mention of Cornelius and Jewel's grandfather, Marlow remarks, "Our common fate . . . fastens upon the women with a peculiar cruelty. It does not punish like a master, but inflicts lingering torment, as if to gratify a secret, unappeasable spite" (166). The "common fate" of white men is their deliberate harm to colonial women or failed protection of white women, a "peculiar cruelty" that speaks to the inherited retributive actions of the Empire and the failure of British men to protect their women. Echoing Britain's fixation with the site of the Cawnpore well and its gendered narrative, Marlow's preoccupation with Jewel's mother, whose "ghost . . . will not be laid to rest" (Mongia, "Ghosts" 1), so clearly connected with Jim's relationship with Jewel, functions as the central haunting of the island of Patusan.

Reportedly the most often visited European tourist site in India during the last third of the nineteenth century, the Cawnpore memorial well remained fixed in the cultural imaginary as "*the* iconic site" of one the blackest points in British history (Heathorn; Ward 551). To bolster the imperial agenda and champion heroic British masculinity, the Cawnpore massacre received overwhelming newspaper coverage that deliberately positioned British women as "displaced and dishonoured" victims,

particularly in connection with the Bibighar Massacre, which involved the imprisonment and eventual slaughter of British women and children (Blunt 408). Transforming the site into “both a shrine and a museum,” the memorialization of Bibighar began almost immediately after British soldiers arrived in Cawnpore after the massacre (414). Upon seeing the devastation, the men were seemingly “robbed” of their masculinity, one witness even observing that the men were “perfectly unmanned, utterly unable to repress their emotions” (Tickell, *Terrorism* 70). Instead of excavating the bodies from the well, General Havelock and Brigadier-General James Neill spread lime over the entire site “and consecrated it as a *single grave*” (my emphasis) and the memorial’s sculpture, the “Angel of Resurrection”, took the form of a marble statue of an angel, with a wrought-iron gate encircling the enclosure bearing the inscription: “Our bones are scattered at the grave’s mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth” (Heathorn; Butler 310). Due to the “excessive solemnity” of its visitors, the garden soon “took on the atmosphere of a hallowed shrine to the dead” (Heathorn).<sup>72</sup> The “Mutiny” narrative that permeated the British cultural imagery resulted in the need for visitors to return to the well, not only due to it being the site of the initial trauma but also on account of its reminder of “the failure of the British-Indian manhood to fulfill its most basic duty—the protection of women from the ‘treachery’ of its colonial subjects—so as to ensure it never happened again” (Heathorn). To justify its retribution against India, the Empire relied on the “gendered narrative” surrounding the Cawnpore massacre, a narrative that framed the event as “a heroic struggle...of honour and manliness” (Heathorn). Through the emphasis

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<sup>72</sup> During the 1870s and 1880s, British visitors remarked on the sad feeling that permeated the garden, many breaking down in tears before the erected monument at its center (Heathorn). American photographer, James Ricalton, famously wrote in 1889: “If I were asked to name the saddest spot and most pathetic spot in the entire world, I would say that over which the pure and brooding angel stands” (122).

on the supernatural and shrine-like qualities of Jewel's mother's grave, Marlow entwines "Mutiny" history with Jim's "story": he represents the British soldiers who were "unmanned" upon their arrival at the Cawnpore well, a site which, as previously shown, Conrad reimagines as Jim's "jump" from the Patna.

Conrad reinforces the association of Jewel's mother's grave with the Cawnpore memorial's "Angel of Resurrection" statue and the Bibighar Massacre through his conflation of Jewel and her mother as spectral, interchangeable doubles. To Marlow, the women shared "an awful sameness" (166), including similar histories (their relationships with white men). Marlow's emphasis on Jewel's statuesque figure while she narrates the story of her mother's death reinforces the association of Jewel and her mother with the Cawnpore memorial. Marlow likens Jewel to an angelic statue three times<sup>73</sup> in addition to the likeness below:

there is no word that on my lips could render the effect of . . . the appealing movement of the *white arms* extended swiftly. They fell; the *ghostly figure* swayed like a slender tree in the wind, the *pale* oval of the face dropped; . . . two wide sleeves uprose in the dark like *unfolding wings*, and she stood silent, holding her head in her hands. (183; my emphasis)

Jewel is overcome with emotion: her narration of her mother's story prompts her demand for Marlow to provide her with "an assurance, a statement, a promise, an explanation" regarding Jim and his oath to remain by her side (182). Because Jewel and her mother are bound together through shared experiences with white men, they form, in Marlow's

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<sup>73</sup> While standing with Jewel by her mother's grave, Marlow describes Jewel "as still as a marble statue in the night" (Conrad 184), refers to "the white statuesque immobility of her person" (186), asserts that she "breathe[s] out, hard and still, as a statue might whisper" (189) during his conversation with her about her mother's death.

words, “confidences . . . of innermost feeling, —regrets—fears—warnings . . . warnings that the younger did not fully understand till the elder was dead—and Jim came along” (166). Marlow does not name what Jewel understands, referring to it only as “the fear” (166). Although Marlow references Jewel’s ignorance of the world beyond Patusan, he acknowledges that because of Jim’s arrival, Jewel must now possess an intuitive understanding of the world’s dangers, particularly the threat of white men and their inevitable betrayal. Jewel distinctly aligns herself with her half-caste mother and grandmother, remarking on the past broken promises of white men: “Other men had sworn the same thing [to never leave]. . . . My father did. . . . Her father too” (187). Jewel’s mother, like Jewel, is the daughter of a non-white woman and a white man—a “high official” who ends his career, like Jim, “under a cloud” (165). Unable to disassociate her mother’s death from the betrayal of white men, Jewel confesses to Marlow that she does not wish “to die weeping” like her mother (186). Eerily recalling the events at Bibighar, Jewel and her dying mother are trapped in her mother’s room as Jewel exerts all her “strength against the door, in order to keep [her white stepfather] out” (186). It is Jewel alone who protects her mother from Cornelius, despite his repeated hammering on the door “with both fists, only desisting now and again to shout huskily, ‘Let me in! Let me in! Let me in!’” (186). Even as she lays dying on the floor, Jewel’s mother exerts her last efforts to deny her body to Cornelius: “the moribund woman, already speechless and unable to lift her arm, rolled her head over, and with a feeble movement of her hand seemed to command— ‘No! No!’” (186). Her knowledge of the destructive power of white men fuels Jewel’s jealous distrust of Jim’s promise to her, a distrust reaffirmed by the “sad wisdom from the grave” of her mother regarding the

unavoidable truth regarding white men: “They always leave us,” Jewel concludes to Marlow (165). Richard Ruppel reads Jewel’s “They” and “us” as white men and non-white women (50): as the colonized woman, Jewel has no other role but to be abandoned by “the colonizing white man,” a plot which often plays out in most of Kipling’s works involving Englishmen and Indian women (Mongia, “Ghosts” 10; Ruppel 51). As a spectral double of her mother, Jewel’s fate is sealed due to Jim’s enslavement to unrealistic ideals regarding imperial masculinity. Unable to separate himself from this damning narrative, Jim will ultimately betray Jewel as her father and grandfather before him betrayed Jewel’s mother. Clearly, Jewel’s mother’s “unforgotten grave” and Jim’s betrayal of Jewel evoke the historic moment of the Bibighar Massacre and reveals the false promise of imperialism.

In addition to the striking image (cited above) of the violent male intruder wishing to penetrate a distinctly feminine space, Jewel’s description of her mother’s bitter weeping before her death provokes the unsettling of Marlow’s narrative and the deliberate metaphoric return to the site of the Cawnpore well. Faced with the truth of imperialism’s bankruptcy, Marlow feels himself “losing [his] footing in the midst of waters, a sudden dread, and the dread of the unknown depths” and experiences an “irremediable horror of the scene” (186). Marlow’s reaction culminates in his description of Jewel herself when she first approaches him with her demand for the validation of Jim’s assurances: “all I could see were . . . the big sombre orbits of her eyes, where there seemed to be a faint stir, such as you may fancy you can detect *when you plunge your gaze to the bottom of an immensely deep well* (183; my emphasis). The evocation of Jim’s perilous jump from the Patna through Marlow’s description of Jewel’s eyes

reinforces the Mutiny's gendered narrative of failed imperial masculinity as well as the crisis of this masculinity because of that failure. As Jewel becomes "another spectre, half alive ... [in a] virtual live burial" (Mongia, "Ghosts" 7), her narrative and the "unforgotten grave" strongly evoke the British public's fixation with the Cawnpore memorial throughout the nineteenth century and its failure to come to grips with its role during the events of 1857. Although reflective of the common trope in late nineteenth-century colonist fiction of the "instability of white/non-white romances" (Ruppel 51), *Lord Jim*'s participation in the Gothic tradition clearly gestures towards an "anxiety generated both by changing roles in Britain and by the epistemological uncertainties generated by the New Imperialism" (Mongia, "Gothic" 15). Marlow's narrative is riddled with these anxieties due to his fixation with securing Jim's heroic status, a status initially achieved through his successful "colonization" of Jewel: transformed from an untamed dark force associated with the East, she becomes the shining (though still mutinous) "Jewel" of India in Britain's crown.

As a representative of the ghosts of Britain's dark past, Jewel becomes a literal "white man's jewel" perpetually "pressed to [Jim's] side" (Conrad 168), a prized and intensely guarded possession in the spoils of colonization used to sustain the fantasy of Jim's imperial masculinity and to reinforce the powerful myth surrounding his status as "Tuan" Jim. Named after "a word that means precious, in the sense of a precious gem," Jewel plays an essential role in the "amazing Jim-myth" for, "concealed upon her bosom", she carries a stone that, according to Marlow, appealed more to the "Eastern imagination than any other precious stone" (Conrad 166-167; Mongia, "Ghosts" 3). Although Marlow associates the stone with the stone of the Sultan of Succadana (Conrad

167), Conrad's decision to cast the mythic stone as an emerald and not a diamond signals a deliberate deviation from the allusion to the Succadana diamond towards another, more "infamous" stone—one with a much darker and weighted history. In British-Indian history, the largest (until the end of the nineteenth century), most famous and controversial stone is the 105-carat (originally 186) Koh-i-Noor diamond that Maharajah Duleep Singh, an 11-year-old orphaned-king, surrendered to Queen Victoria to mark the 250th anniversary of the East India Company's founding and to "memorialize and enshrine the downfall of India and its conclusive assimilation into the British Empire" (Reed 287; Shah 33).<sup>74</sup> Swept up in the excitement over Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897, when the Queen publicly wore the Koh-i-Noor in brooch form, Conrad wrote and published "Karain: A Memory", his first *Blackwood's Magazine* short story, that same year.<sup>75</sup> Although a time of celebration for the British Empire, Conrad's "Karain" reveals his disillusionment with imperialism and offers "a provocative warning that even the spirit of the nation cannot save one from the ghosts of the past" (D. Adams 742). More significantly, the short story centers on an 1887 Jubilee gilded (falsified) sixpence coin engraved with an image of Queen Victoria, a coin that would have been, by 1893, redesigned to include Victoria's other title: "Empress of India" (IND.IM for *Indiæ Imperatrix*) (qtd. in D. Adams 733). Having become part of both the British crown jewels and the Great Exhibition of 1851—in addition to its being the central focus of Wilkie Collins' "Mutiny" novel, *The Moonstone* (1868), which depicts the *return* of the diamond

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<sup>74</sup> Although there were larger and more beautiful pieces that he could have chosen (e.g., the Draya-i-Noor, "Sea of Light" Diamond or the Taimur's Ruby), Lord Dalhousie chose the Koh-i-Noor because it possessed "the most lore" (Kinsey 395-396). In his diary, Dalhousie wrote that the diamond, since its discovery, was "the symbol of conquest" and intended its "final and fitting resting place [to be] in the crown in Britain" (qtd. in Shah 32).

<sup>75</sup> Gregg's *Blackwood's* article appears in the February issue, the same month Conrad began writing "Karain".

to India—the Koh-i-Noor fueled the popular British imagination particularly for its supposed “curse” associated with the events of 1857. What began as a mere rumour in Indian and British mid-nineteenth-century newspapers soon gave way to historical documentation: C.W. King’s *The Natural History, Ancient and Modern, of Precious Stones and Gems, and of the Precious Metals* (1865) (which Collins was documented to have read) linked the diamond’s “malignant influence” with the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857 (Kinsey 401). In what appeared to be an effort to reinforce British nationalism and reaffirm Britain’s rule over India, British newspapers soon declared that being a legitimate female ruler exempted Queen Victoria from the effects of the curse since, up until that point, only ““Oriental male despots”” had ever possessed the diamond (Kinsey 401). Invoking the Koh-i-Noor diamond, the mythic jewel in Conrad’s *Lord Jim* carries with it great misfortune. Marlow learns that the stone is considered “unlucky,” describing its similarity to the Succadana stone, “which in the old times had brought wars and untold calamities upon that country” (Conrad 167-168). Unlike the Succadana stone, however, the stone Marlow describes shares the same “counter-effects” of the Koh-i-Noor diamond’s curse in that the stone is “best preserved by being concealed about the person of a woman” (168). On his way into Patusan, Marlow learns of the “astonishing rumour” pertaining to Jim and Jewel: the “tall girl” who “wore the white man’s jewel concealed upon her bosom” (168). Becoming interchangeable with the jewel, Jewel not only loses her name to it but also her history, reinforced by the fact that neither Marlow nor the reader ever see the jewel first-hand. Marlow’s gradual whitening of Jewel strongly mirrors Britain’s colonization of the Koh-i-Noor diamond.



Despite the initial excitement over the diamond's display in the Great Exhibition, Prince Albert's decision to significantly cut the stone "in a European style and standard" was in response to the British's public reaction to the diamond's disappointing brilliancy (Bradburd 145). Satirized in *Punch* magazine, the diamond soon earned the mocking nickname "Mountain of Darkness" ("Front Row" 11). According to Danielle C. Kinsey, Prince Albert's refashioning of the diamond "was an attempt to reconstitute the stone as a gemological component of Britain's civilizing mission"; its cutting, therefore, signified Albert's attempt to "colonize" and "correct" the stone, as Britain had done to India (Kinsey 392). Echoing the dichotomous language attributed to the Koh-i-Noor, Conrad's *Lord Jim* outlines a haunting contrast between light and darkness, one that represents British masculinity (culture) and the East's femininity (nature). Jim's arrival in Patusan is thus symbolic of the colonizer's penetration of the new world, reinforced through Conrad's metaphor of the "Eastern bride" (147)—a long-established trope within imperialist literature (J. Hillis Miller 37; McClintock 1-4; Mongia, *Empire* 121; Parry 5; Panagopoulos 72). According to Adam Parkes, Conrad's black and white imagery explores "the complexities of sexual and racial difference" and goes so far as to assert that, because of its aesthetic, moral, and political implications, this language functions "as a site of potential crisis" (19-20). In *Lord Jim*, readers are reminded of the racial differences between Jim and Jewel, and the crisis this difference eventually evokes. Jim's whiteness and "overdone" masculinity is made explicit from the onset of the novel,<sup>76</sup> whereas Jewel, and more broadly the "maternal feminine[,] is allied with the dark of

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<sup>76</sup> In *Lord Jim*'s opening paragraph, the narrator describes Jim's appearance as "immaculate white from shoes to hat" (7) and Marlow repeats a similar phrase ("he was white from head to foot") the last time he sees Jim (199).

night and of skin colour” and tied explicitly to the “feminized” Patusan landscape (De Koven 149; Melas 70; Mongia, “Ghosts” 1; Freedman 76; Berman 80). The white and black imagery used to describe Jewel reinforces Mongia’s reading of Jewel as a “careful combination of native and white, dark mistress and fair wife” (Mongia, “Empire” 128) and Ruppel’s argument that “on the Indian sub-continent, [the paramours of the whites in colonist stories] are not dark, but . . . have white features. The fact that Jewel is beautiful and light-skinned is therefore to be expected, though the fact that she is a so-called ‘half-caste’ makes her unusual” (57). As an “unusual” case, Jewel resembles the fictional women from the “Indian sub-continent” described in colonialist stories (57), but more significantly, I argue, she resembles Kurtz’s Intended in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, particularly due to Marlow’s contrast between Jewel’s outward whiteness and her ability to exude an inexplicable darkness.<sup>77</sup> Reinforcing the reader’s understanding of the Intended and “The horror!” being one and the same, Marlow prompts a similar reading of Jewel, identifying the “faint stir” within her “unfathomable” well-like depths of her eyes as a “blind monster or only a lost gleam from the universe” and describing the experience of his conversation with her as “irremediable horror” and a “spectre of fear” (Conrad 183; 192). Marlow’s observation of the “flash of [Jewel’s] teeth” and the “faint stir” within her eyes suggest that she possesses “a power that terrifies Marlow” due to her animalistic characteristics and her “demon”-like capabilities (Jewel can “glide without touching the earth”) which further aligns her with the supernatural and the island’s darkness (Berman 78; Conrad 180, 183-184). Despite repeatedly emphasizing Jewel’s undeniable

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<sup>77</sup> According to Bruce R. Stark’s reading, the Intended in *Heart of Darkness* is racially white but becomes a “reverse beacon” (consumes all the light in the room, intensifying the darkness) (545-546). Marlow also describes her dark and glittering eyes as demonic and serpent-like (546).

connection to the dark natural world, Marlow simultaneously whitens Jewel for his audience through his references to her “pale” face (Conrad 182, 183), the whiteness of her teeth (182), her white arms (183), as well as her white figure and clothes (166, 176, 180, 188). As an inverse figure of the white, yet dark Intended, Jewel embodies what Marlow conceives as the island’s darkness, yet his laboured effort to whiten her calls into question his narrative authority on imperialism and reveals his anxiety over the darkness at the heart of colonization.

By using light and dark imagery to frame the trajectory of Jewel and Jim’s relationship, Conrad reinforces the violence of British colonization (Jewel’s “whitening”) and the fatal recognition of the Empire’s moral bankruptcy (Jim’s descent into darkness). In Conrad’s re-imagined “Mutiny romance”, Jewel and Jim switch places: Jewel becomes Patusan’s hero while Jim falls victim to the Empire’s darkness in his pursuit of the false promise of imperialism. According to Marlow, Jewel’s prolonged exposure to Jim prompts her transformation: she “lived so completely in [Jim’s] contemplation that she acquired something of his outward aspect, something that recalled him in her movements, in the way she stretched her arm, turned her head, directed her glances” (Conrad 169). Having also learned “a good bit of English from Jim,” Jewel imitates Jim’s “clipping, boyish intonation” (169). Although it is *Jim* who forever aspires to be “an example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book,” (40) Jewel more successfully embodies these characteristics of imperial masculinity through her “unselfish” decision to put Jim’s safety before her own (185), her ability to protect her mother from Cornelius (186), as well as her “very efficient” and “extraordinary martial ardour” in her leadership of the Patusani people (215). Jim even jokingly remarks that Jewel was “the best man of

them all” (234). Given that Jewel is half-caste, she embodies, in part, Homi Bhabha’s concept of cultural mimicry. According to Bhabha, colonial mimicry “is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*” and is “at once resemblance and menace” (122-123). Conrad’s engagement with Bhabha’s cultural mimicry appears through Marlow’s attention to Jewel’s ‘not-quite-sameness’; intertwined with her “amusing” imitation of Jim is a perpetual “look of silent, repressed anxiety, as if put to flight by the recollection of some abiding danger” (Conrad 169). Jewel senses an unnamed danger that Jim “remembers” and that he and Marlow “all go back to it” (188). She is desperate to understand: “You tell me! What is this thing? Is it alive? —Is it dead? I hate it. It is cruel. Has it got a face and a voice—this calamity? . . . Ah! I shall never forgive him. My mother had forgiven—but I, never! Will it be a sign—a call?” (188). In Marlow’s refusal to name what haunts Jim, the proof of his failed heroism, its “unspeakability” becomes a powerful force that takes on a life of its own. Jewel’s hyperbolic fixation with defining this force—what Melas terms as Jewel’s “version of the imperial nation” (67)—goes far beyond Jim’s *individual* breaking with the imperialist adventure code; it is the haunting spiritual wound of Britain’s inherited trauma from the Indian “Mutiny of 1857, an event that lived on in the British cultural imagery as a “war between Darkness and Light” (Herbert 13). Drawing on Bhabha, the “menace” of Jewel’s mimicry, then, is both her ability to challenge the colonial authority of white men through her refusal to trust their word, “and thus to uncover the colonial lie” (Puxan-Oliva 358), as well as her ability to undermine Marlow’s narrative authority by evoking in him explicit doubt: “[Jewel] did not believe him . . . For my part, I cannot say what I believed—indeed I don’t know to this day, and never shall probably. . . Did we [he and

Jim] both speak the truth—or one of us did—or neither?” (190). Marlow’s last sight of Jim upon his departure from Patusan encapsulates Jim’s descent into darkness: “he himself appeared no bigger than a child—then only a speck, a tiny white speck, that seemed to catch all the light left in a darkened world . . . And, suddenly, I lost him . . . (199). It is now Jim and not Jewel whom Marlow figures as the “reverse beacon” that consumes the world’s remaining light. As the imperial proxy, Jim bears responsibility for bringing darkness to Patusan, a darkness he inherits from the Empire that convinces him “to celebrate his pitiless wedding with a *shadowy* ideal of conduct” (Conrad 246; my emphasis). Even at the palpable recognition of the shattering of imperial masculinity (“You are false!”), the pull towards the Empire’s “shadowy” ideal commands Jim’s ritual suicide. Although Jim acknowledges his transgression to Jewel (“Forgive me!”), he betrays his promise to her, answering only to the illusion and altogether morally bankrupt imperial masculinity. Jewel’s defiant anger is not only in reaction to Jim’s betrayal; she stands violently opposed to the very code against which he and Marlow define their worth. Thus, Jewel, in Natalie Melas’ words, “shakes the ground of the narrative to its foundations” and “bring[s] the narrative’s house down on Marlow’s head” (63, 65). Jewel’s revelation of Jim’s “falseness” resembles Britain’s abandonment of its imperial ideals and India’s “mutinous” rejection of imperial rule.

Conrad’s relocation of Jewel to Stein’s gothic imperial museum at narrative’s end mirrors the fate of the Koh-i-Noor diamond and invokes the historic moment of India’s fate post-1857: its “conclusive assimilation into the British Empire” (Shah 33). Upon Jim’s betrayal, Jewel’s seemingly dark, untamed powers of the natural world fade, and she is transformed into yet another frozen specimen in Stein’s imperial museum, like the

infamous Koh-i-Noor diamond housed in the Great Exhibition. Displayed under a glass dome behind a gilded cage, the diamond was given its own exhibition space separate from the “fairyland of the India court” in the Crystal Palace as a sharp reminder to visitors of Britain’s domination of India (Shah 37). Although *Lord Jim* takes place several decades after the dismantling of Britain’s 1851 Crystal Palace, Stein’s ties to European entomologists, his obsessive cataloguing, and his extensive property and gardens dimly echo the structure and contents of the Crystal Palace and play into the cultural imaginary of a 60-year “mania” of British Exhibitions—spectacles that sought to celebrate British imperialism, provide anthropological catalogues of the Empire’s exploits, and “Europeanize” the colonies. In the same year Conrad began publishing *Lord Jim*, London hosted the 1899 Greater Britain Exhibition (which included an exhibit from the Government Entomologist)—an exhibition named after the original 1851 Great Exhibition, which both enthralled and haunted future exhibition organizers in their attempts to recreate and reproduce the same “religious aura” effect on Victorian Britain’s popular imaginary (Hoffenberg 5). Marlow experiences this same feeling when viewing Stein’s “famous gardens” with flora and fauna which remind Marlow of the English landscape of his home (Conrad 208). Although readers frequently discern Marlow’s sentiment for *Jim* throughout the novel, it is only in *Stein’s* gardens—setting of the last narrative sighting of Jewel—where readers are struck by Marlow’s emotional nostalgia for Britain and reminded of Britain’s powerful hold on its imperial and colonial subjects. Stein’s efforts to catalogue and collect materials and control their meaning reveal the violent military and economic actions carried out in the pursuit of Empire building. Stein’s “collectography”—Laura Franey’s word for writing about collecting (113)—

reveals a type of violence through his preference for the superficial over interiority; his collection only exists for him “behind glass cases, locked in a frozen imperishable world” (Berman 400). In their attempt to “take back” Jim’s story, Marlow and Stein enact this same imperial violence against Jewel; they seek to silence her rejection of Jim’s heroism and force her submission to the imperialist narrative just as Britain imposed its total rule over India post-1857. It falls to Marlow, as the preserver of Jim’s story, to change Jewel’s mind: “Talk to her,” Stein urges, “We can’t leave it like this. Tell her to forgive him” (Conrad 206). Like the Koh-i-Noor, Jewel is the “crown” piece in Stein’s collection for she sits alone, defeated, under glass:

I saw the girl sitting at the end of a big mahogany table, on which she rested her head, the face hidden in her arms. The waxed floor reflected her dimly as though it had been a *sheet of frozen water*. . . . *Her white figure seemed shaped in snow; the pendent crystals of a great chandelier clicked above her head like glittering icicles*. She looked up and watched my approach. I was chilled as if these vast apartments had been *the cold abode of despair*. (206; my emphasis)

Bearing more resemblance to a mausoleum than a domestic space, Stein’s home channels the gothic in its crypt-like embalmment of Jewel, who appears frozen like his dead beetles and butterflies, a living monument to Britain’s greatest imperial conquest. Like the “Mountain of Light” that appeared “unimpressive under the formidable confines of the British crown” (Shah 38), Jewel capitulates under the weight of the destructive imperial narrative.

Marlow’s interaction with Jewel in fact bears an unsettling *inverse* resemblance to his final encounter with Kurtz’s Intended in *Heart of Darkness*. Like Jewel, the Intended

is in mourning for her lost love, and because of this mourning, Marlow touches each of their hands out of respect and consolation and listens to their assessment of the true characters of the “heroic” men they have lost. Yet Jewel is “shaped in snow” while the Intended is “all in black” (*HD* 183); Marlow may take Jewel’s hand, but “it does not respond, and when [Marlow drops] it, it [hangs] down to the floor” (*LJ* 206) whereas the Intended *moves forward to take* both Marlow’s hands in hers. Jewel mercilessly condemns Jim’s actions, while the Intended only has praise for Kurtz. Jewel turns inwards, an action “more awful than tears, cries, and reproaches” (*LJ* 206), while the Intended projects outwards, crying out in both “inconceivable triumph and unspeakable pain” (*HD* 186). Finally, Marlow *deliberately* lies about Kurtz to the Intended to pacify her sorrow, yet in *Lord Jim*, the “lie” (his emphatic, yet uncertain defense of Jim to Jewel) is unconscious as Marlow simultaneously believes his lie yet unknowingly confesses to it: “She said we lied. Poor soul! . . . I had only succeeded in adding to her anguish the hint of some *mysterious collusion, of an inexplicable and incomprehensible conspiracy* to keep her for ever in the dark. And it had come easily, naturally, unavoidably, by his act, by her own act!” (190; my emphasis). On the one hand, Marlow’s declaration that “it” had come easily suggests that he means Jewel’s relationship with Jim is why it is “easy” for her to believe there is a larger conspiracy at work—that it is ultimately her own fault. On the other hand, Marlow’s description of mysterious, inexplicable, and incomprehensible collusion, and his desperate eagerness to lay the blame elsewhere, reveals his own culpability and exposes, like Captain Brierly, “his reality and his sham together” (45). Unconscious or not, Marlow’s lies are in defense of the British Empire and its destructive motives. By inverting these encounters, then,



Conrad establishes, once more, that the “true” heart of *Lord Jim*’s moral darkness lies within the British Empire—and by association—within Marlow himself. As the only one to openly recognize an inherent darkness in imperial white men, Jewel remains unconvinced until the last. She declares that all white men, who “always leave . . . for [their] own ends” are “hard, treacherous, without truth, without compassion”, “wicked,” “mad”, and “blind and deaf *without pity*” (Conrad 206-207; my emphasis). Appearing to have internalized Jim’s trauma, Jewel is overwrought, and Marlow feels as though there is no way to reach her through her “benumbing pain” (206). Jewel’s declaration that Jim’s cruelty and madness was “within him” all along reinforces the fact that Jim did not just betray her but all Patusan. Not only was Jim not fit to lead Patusan to begin with, his presence and leadership only brought about disaster for her people. In this moment of her verbal recognition of Jim’s inherent failure and falsehood, the room is filled with gusts of wind, causing the crystals above Jewel’s head to threateningly “click” in response to her disobedience to Jim, to the imperial narrative in which he was produced and governed, and to the British Empire itself. As Marlow has repeatedly positioned Jim as both the product and representative of the British Empire—its idealism, its values, its benevolence—the charges Jewel lays at white men’s feet, I argue, speak less to the primarily feminist readings found in the scholarship on Jewel,<sup>78</sup> than to the late nineteenth-century tensions between Britain and its colonial subjects and their ever-

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<sup>78</sup> Most scholars read Jewel through a kind of feminist lens. Berman associates Jewel with the feminine and sexualized nature of Patusan (80); Mongia explores the relationship between “ghostly women and the colonized spaces they represent” (“Ghosts” 1); Ruppel argues that Jewel is a “fitting symbol of the way most women are represented in turn-of-the-century adventure fiction” (57); Knight observes how imperialism’s practices impact “the lives of women” (87); Francis closely reads Jewel’s genealogy and European-indigenous relationships in the context of colonization (48); Civello argues that Jim’s failure to respect Jewel results in his “ironic downfall” (53, 46); and Melas positions Jewel as a potentially subversive figure with both voice and agency through her ability to question Marlow’s “master” narrative (62-63), an argument I apply to my reading of Jewel’s connection to the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.

growing desire to throw off the yoke of imperial rule. As an object on display to the world as *Jim's* jewel—owned and subjugated (“holding her arm under his”), as well as shaped and fashioned by him (“pressed to his side”)—Jewel *is* India, not the proverbial “jewel in the crown”, but the “Koh-i-Noor of the British Crown”, the accurate phrasing of the famous 1849 quotation by John Forbes Royle regarding Britain’s acquisition of India (qtd. in Shah 43).

The “Mutiny romance” resurrected in the 1880s and 1890s that fueled the late nineteenth-century “new imperialism” revealed, as with the case of Jim in Patusan, that the “exporting of supposedly universal, divinely sanctioned British ideals to India had only led to disaster” (Herbert 56). Given that no event in nineteenth-century British history destabilized British imperialism or sparked dissension within British colonial subjects more than the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, Jewel’s defiance and rejection of the imperial narrative signal that the revolutionary spirit of the event was not soon forgotten and that uncertainty over British authority and idealism flourished despite the “aggressive spirit associated with ‘the new imperialism’ in the late nineteenth century” (Herbert 206). Jewel’s recognition of Jim’s inherent cruelty and madness, then, speaks to the same realization that the “Mutiny” (to quote Herbert paraphrasing the words of Benjamin Disraeli) had not *evoked* a “crisis” in the British nation’s value system but “exposed one that ha[d] been latent all along” (Herbert 105; *Letters* 7:78). Marlow’s failure to convince Jewel, his readers—and himself—of Jim’s success (or, in other words, his inherent right to rule) does not merely signify ambiguous tension in constructions of imperial masculinity and nineteenth-century “dreams” of adventure, but also the moral failure of the British Empire in denying the subjectivity of their colonial subjects and the

suppression of their voices. Through Jewel's refusal to accept Marlow's interpretation of Jim's story, she is no longer "the ground figure upon which colonial ideology is inscribed," but in fact "momentarily emerges in discourse as a speaking subject attempting to graft meaning onto the colonial Homeland for which Marlow, the master narrator, is a mere figure" (Melas 63). With Jim, Jewel walked by his side; with Stein, Jewel's stature and power are ultimately diminished: "[Jewel's] little hand rested on [Stein's] forearm, and under the broad, flat rim of his Panama hat he bent over her, grey-haired, paternal, with compassionate and chivalrous deference" (207). Conrad challenges the "Mutiny romance" through his permanent separation of Jim and Jewel; instead of countering "the colonial melancholy post-1857" (Tickell, *Terrorism* 118), he overindulges in this haunting melancholy to reinforce his disillusionment with the Empire's actions in a post-"Mutiny" world. In his final encounters with Jewel, Marlow becomes "a mere figure" in that he is left awestruck by Jewel's words, unable to speak. The shock created from Marlow's narrative break suggests not only the weight of Marlow's failure to convince Jewel to "hear [him] out," but also the possible truth behind her accusation (190). The fact that Jewel, a non-white woman, is the one to speak the conclusion of Jim's story clearly unsettles Marlow and disrupts and destabilizes his narrative authority on Jim:

"You must forgive him," I concluded, and my own voice seemed to me muffled, lost in an irresponsive deaf immensity. "We all want to be forgiven," I added after a while.

"What have I done?" she asked with her lips only.

"You always mistrusted him," I said.

“He was like the others,” she pronounced slowly.

“Not like the others,” I protested, but she continued evenly, without any feeling—

“He was false.” And suddenly Stein broke in. “No! no! no! My poor child! ...”

He patted her hand lying passively on his sleeve. “No! no! Not false! True! True!

True!” He tried to look into her stony face. “You don’t understand. Ach! Why you do not understand? ... Terrible,” he said to me. “Some day she *shall* understand.”

“Will you explain?” I asked, looking hard at him. (Conrad 208)

Marlow cares nothing for Jewel’s suffering; he only wishes to secure her forgiveness not just for Jim but for the crimes committed by other white British men in the name of Empire. Although Marlow concludes that “there seemed to be no forgiveness for such a transgression” (Jim’s abandonment), he continues to make excuses for British imperialism: “is not mankind itself, pushing on its blind way, driven by a dream of its greatness and its power upon the dark paths of excessive cruelty and of excessive devotion? And what is the pursuit of truth after all?” (207). Marlow and Stein’s desperation to convince Jewel of Jim’s “truth”—the moral justification of the Empire’s place in the world—is a reverberation of the same desperation felt by the British public after 1857 when Britain’s “cherished principles of ‘ancient honour’” (Herbert 90) were questioned in the context of the nation’s moral crisis.

Despite the widely circulated “atrocious tales” of India’s violence against British women and children, the Mutiny’s most prominent historians—Leckey, Russell, Martin, Majendie, Ball, and Trevelyan—“unequivocally” declared these stories to be “fraudulent” (190). The insistence on the truth of these “barbaric romance” stories was

essential for emphasizing the “unmistakably” Victorian virtues of the Mutiny’s imperial heroes and for allowing the British public to position themselves “not as India’s oppressors but as its gallant and benign victims” (Goyle 801; Baucom 112). In *Lord Jim*, Jim is cast as both “false” and victim; the former by Jewel and the latter by Marlow who frames Jim’s sacrifice as an act of virtue and valour that secures his myth-like status as one of Britain’s imperial heroes. By insisting on Jim’s excessive romanticism and extraordinary success (Conrad 246), Marlow and Stein represent the same “supporters of imperial enterprise” who celebrated the “Mutiny” as an event that glorified the Empire “in order to avoid deeper introspections” (Goyle 802). It is Jewel’s ability to subvert Marlow’s narrative and Jim’s mythic status that reveals “the revolting deeds lurking under imperialism’s noble intentions” (Melas 56). Marlow and Stein’s need to convince Jewel of their good intentions and receive her forgiveness demonstrates a crisis of conscience and the questioning of British imperialism’s moral authority. Although Marlow’s narrative may end with Jewel “leading a sort of soundless, inert life [buried alive] in Stein’s house” (Conrad 246; Mongia, “Ghosts” 10), Jewel’s unyielding refusal to forgive Jim—to forgive any of them—weighs heavily on Marlow (Jim remains “inscrutable” to him) and Stein (having “aged greatly of late”) (Conrad 246). Seemingly responsible for “poisoning Stein’s final years” (Ruppel 56), Jewel’s defiance to the end wears Stein down: “He feels it himself, and says often that he is ‘preparing to leave all this; preparing to leave, ...’ while he waves his hand sadly at his butterflies” (Conrad 246). Just as the British Empire was dealt a great blow when it nearly lost the “brightest jewel in the imperial crown” (Hobsbawm 69) after the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857, Marlow and Stein’s failure to indoctrinate Jewel violently shatters the illusion of imperial

masculinity and is indicative of the “shock given to [nineteenth century Britons’] moral universe by [imperialism’s] failure” (Herbert 217). Jewel’s transferred association from darkness to light, then, is symbolic of her placement in an ordered, imperial universe at the cost of an Empire whose glamour was not just “off” but perhaps never there at all.

## 4.7 Conclusion

Conrad could appreciate various aspects of imperialism (the audacity, the heroism and the sometimes-genuine idealism), [but] he also distrusted it. . . . he took the view that though British imperialism was the best sort, the world would be better off without any imperialism at all.

—Cedric Watts paraphrasing Conrad’s “Autocracy and War” in his edition of *Lord Jim* (2001)

Conrad’s time in India immediately before and after the enactment of the 1884 Ilbert Bill, his evocation of key “Mutiny” figures and events, such as Nana Sahib and the Bibighar Massacre, and his framing of Jewel as Britain’s colonized Koh-i-Noor diamond, provide possible motive for why Conrad’s thoughts were “so clearly [turned] towards India” (van Marle & Lefranc 112) as he wrote *Lord Jim*: Conrad re-imagines the events of the novel in the context of the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. Since van Marle and Lefranc first offered their conclusive evidence for Conrad’s thinking of India while writing *Lord Jim*, only one other scholar, the previously mentioned Eloise Knapp Hay, has yet to consider Conrad’s connection with India. Although Hay poses her question in an article on Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, her assertion that “the people of Africa *will* eventually strike back” (205) also applies to the same revolutionary characters found in *Lord Jim*. According to Henthorne, Conrad’s *Lord Jim* “not only [imagines] an end to imperialism but the formation of a national consciousness on the part of the Patusanis” (206). Like the powerful uprising that occurred in India after the events of 1857, the people of Patusan do not just refuse to accept the corrupt rule of Gentleman Brown, but even reject “Tuan” Jim as their natural leader when they demand Jim pay for Doramin’s life.

Scholars overwhelmingly agree that while Conrad's ideas "stand trial ... in a court of imperial crimes against humanity," the majority of Conrad scholarship "favours [the] contradictory and implausible finding that for some reason, despite his patriotic approval of the British Empire, Conrad condemned the evil of imperial exploitation" (Donovan 32, 56). Therefore, Conrad's endeavour to fuse imperialist ideas of masculinity with his own idea of an alternative boy-hero not only suggests Conrad's effort to write back to the Empire, but also reveals the aftermath of the Mutiny's power to unman its male subjects. For Conrad, Jim's final self-sacrifice does not represent his failure as a *man*, but the failure of the genre in which he was created; it also represents the Empire's failure to live up to its *citizens'* expectations and not the other way around. The psychological tension between Marlow's "burying" Jim and helping him does not speak to Conrad's morality but signals his exaggerated criticism of the heroic narrative, as well as Britain's imperialist doctrine and genocidal past. Jim remains, like Conrad, fatally governed by the imperialist narrative, embodied as "an invisible personality, an antagonistic and inseparable partner of his existence—another possessor of [their] soul[s]" (Conrad 111). However, Conrad's *Lord Jim* embodies an explicit desire to recreate the function of the boy-hero: *not* to perpetuate the glories of Empire, but to champion a kind of masculinity that went beyond, in Conrad's words, "the morality of an ethical progress" (308). According to Herbert, since Victorian Britain was particularly preoccupied with evolutionary theory, 1857 came to represent "a key site for the realization of the British ideal of progress, improvement, and civilization" (29). Herbert asserts that James Mill's *History of British India* (1818) imposed on India "the psychoideological structure that came to be recognizable as the distinctive Victorian type

of (male) humanity—the puritanical, dogmatic, cold, forceful ideal of masculinity often mythologized in British novels of the second half of the nineteenth century” (29). As Conrad wrote against this “personality type,” his work celebrates and accepts, as Bristow argues, the change and difference of all heroic men (226). At the same time, Conrad ultimately fails to offer a sustainable alternative to an imperialist narrative that demonstrates a psychologically damaging crisis of masculinity. Just as 1857 “was so infested with myth as to make objective description impossible” (Herbert 20), Marlow employs “evasive narrative tactics” (Baxter “Character” 106), suspending the narrative’s “final meaning ... indefinitely” (A. Simmons 31) in a desperate attempt to preserve Jim’s “untouchable” mythic status. Asked by Jim, “What would you have done?”, Marlow does not respond in fear of incriminating himself (Conrad 58-59). The “unspeakability” and narrative wounding at the heart of *Lord Jim* ultimately signifies the inherited and shared culpability of past crimes committed in the name of the British Empire.<sup>79</sup> Just as the “Mutiny” lived on in the British cultural imaginary for a century to come, Marlow remains “an evoked ghost” within his Ancient Mariner-like yarn, perpetually doomed to unravel and reopen the “old wound” of Jim’s narrative for an audience that cannot seem to turn away. Although he would have Jim as “one of us,” Marlow never fully convinces his audience, or himself, of this essential truth because heroism, for any man who was bred on adventure stories, was something only ever to be achieved, as Bristow rightly declares, in the pages of fiction (226)—the same fiction that simultaneously championed and condemned Britain’s role in the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857.

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<sup>79</sup> Matthew G. Condon suggests that Marlow’s narrative itself is wounded since Marlow and Jim’s death “force one to ask if narrative can truly heal?” (143).



## Conclusion

### Echoes of 1857: Adventure Fiction's "Destructive Element" and the Crisis of Masculinity

All children, except imperialists, grow up.

—Bradley Deane, *Masculinity and the New Imperialism* (2014)

Since the publication of J.A. Hobson's *Imperialism: A Study* (1902), scholars of empire and imperialism have offered extensive readings on the politics and economics of colonial expansion in the colonies but have only recently begun delving into the imperial project's impact on Britain's own people, particularly women's role in the empire and their instilling and championing of confident imperialist ideology in British men. While empire was widely considered to be an integral part of everyday life, it was also "seen as a projection of masculinity" and "synonymous with adventure" (Tosh, *Manliness* 193, 199).<sup>80</sup> In the words of Joanna de Groot, "manliness and empire confirmed one another, guaranteed one another, enhanced one another, whether in the practical disciplines of commerce and government or in the escape zones of writing, travel and art" (122). Pervasive and enthralling "escape zones" included the boys' story papers which allowed Britain's young men to indulge in their heroic fantasies by reading about fictional heroes successfully living *out* the glories—and *up* to the expectations—of the Empire. Although scholars writing on the connection between imperialism and masculinity agree that men were "methodologically 'manufactured' by means of a cultural 'conveyor-belt' set up eventually throughout the empire" (Mangan 9), Tosh argues that the majority of research

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<sup>80</sup> Tosh summarizes two main arguments about gender and imperialism: the first or "weak" argument, he claims, "is that a heightened awareness of opportunities and threats overseas induced a harsher definition of masculinity at home" which resulted in a "sense of crisis overseas" and, in turn, left the Empire no choice but to recast "the approved attributes of manliness" (*Manliness* 194). The second or "strong" argument involves the reversal of "the relationship between imperialism and masculinity by locating the primary sense of crisis not in the empire, but in the pattern of gender relations within Britain itself" (194).

on the link between imperialist propaganda and empire stops at this point, “as if the attraction of empire were self-evident” (Tosh, *Manliness* 198).<sup>81</sup> Overall, “empire was a man’s business”: it depended on the vitality and violence of its men and sought to attract such men through the “popular imagination” of its imperialist literature (193). If, as Tosh asserts, the empire was a “test of the nation’s virility” (193), then the sustained perpetuation and consumption of its ideologies within adventure fiction over the course of two centuries surely meant that the British virility passed with flying colours—red, white, and blue—but with troubling consequences.

Given that British masculinity in the late nineteenth century was placed under serious pressure, my project takes the position that it seems highly unlikely that not only the “men’s *support* for imperialism [went] unaffected” (Tosh, *Manliness* 193; my emphasis), but also *the men themselves*. While Tosh is mainly interested in testing this proposition against the recorded experience of men who emigrated to the colonies or of those who pursued their careers there (193), my project, instead, seeks to understand the impact of imperialism on the fictional lives of boy-heroes in relation to their non-fictional authorial counterparts. Using adventure fiction narratives, and their fictional characters, as “living archives” (LaCapra 92), I reconstruct the history of a voiceless group of individuals—boys who disagreed with, and even challenged imperialist endeavors—who were otherwise dismissed or elided in the dominant discourse of nineteenth century hegemonic masculinity and its place in the archive of imperial adventure fiction.

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<sup>81</sup> Although J.A. Mangan offers further research on the same topic five years after Tosh’s publication, *‘Manufactured’ Masculinity: Making Imperial Manliness, Morality, and Militarism* (2012) repeats much of the same argument from earlier critics (it even fails to acknowledge Tosh), does not engage closely with nineteenth century literature, nor does it offer insight into how the “conveyor belt” construction of masculinity impacted the lives of British men.

Given that adventure fiction was full of stories that “England told itself as it went to sleep at night” (Green 3) and that Victorian manhood was “not an essence but a plot, a condition whose achievement and whose maintenance forms a narrative over time” (Sussman 13), I demonstrate that the most useful way to gain insight into the minds of nineteenth-century British men is to analyze the literature they often weighed their worth against. By examining where and how the narratives of key texts by key imperial authors come “undone” in connection to masculine trauma, my project contributes to the expanding critical work on British nineteenth-century masculinity and highlights the importance of trauma and testimony theory for assessing the impact on British men from the Empire’s destabilizing historical events, such as the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857. As humanity continues to confront genocide and human rights issues across the globe, trauma itself “may provide the very link between cultures: not as a simple understanding of the pasts of others but rather, within the traumas of contemporary history” (Caruth, Introduction 11). Within the framework of Caruth’s conception of contemporary history, I suggest that my project may also contribute to the understanding of how Britain and its colonies view themselves today in relation to their troubling past and the overall legacy of colonialism. As imperialism did not disappear with the fall of British and other European empires, “resistance to imperialism is as important and as urgent as it ever was” (R. Phillips 168). However, to resist imperialism in “the same conceptual space where imperialism was constructed”—as it was in the works of British adventure fiction and subsequent postcolonial writers—“is to resist reactively rather than actively” (R. Phillips 169). Such an observation can be extended to my argument about the imperial project: imperialism did not foster healthy British masculinity and selfhood; instead, it

enslaved and subsequently damaged British men. Although the emergence of trauma theory “is about cultural attitudes to responsibility and accountability” (Matus 19) my project is less interested in assigning blame and more intent on probing how what Herbert identifies as an inherited “psychological and spiritual wound” (18) contributed to the unmaking and unmaning of nineteenth-century British men. By exploring the connection between imperial masculinity and trauma, I offer insight into how British men who were themselves, like Peter Pan, colonized by the Empire’s expectations of them sought to recover from the scars inflicted by imperialism and carve a space for themselves separate from an otherwise oppressive and psychologically damaging imperial masculinity. As an event that forever altered the course of British imperialism and how Britons saw themselves, the Indian “Mutiny” of 1857/India’s First War of Independence is a productive space from which to study how a generation of boy-heroes conceived by key authors at century’s end showed not only the damage to heroes of the “Mutiny” in its own moment, but also the ongoing trauma visited on such key imperialist authors such as Henty, Kipling, and Conrad decades later—an ongoing trauma so telling that their imperialism was compromised and imperialist heroism obliquely condemned.

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# Curriculum Vitae

**MADISON BETTLE**

## **EDUCATION**

2011-2021 PhD English, The University of Western Ontario (UWO)  
 2010-2011 MA English, The University of Western Ontario (UWO)  
 2006-2010 BA (Honours) English; BA Sociology, Queen's University

## **AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS**

2010-2015 Western University Graduate Research Scholarship  
 2013-2015 Nominated for Western University Graduate Student Teaching Award  
 2011-2012 Western University English Research Chair Scholarship  
 2008-2010 Queen's Dean's List  
 2006-2007 Queen's University Entrance Scholarship  
 2006-2007 Ontario Scholar  
 2006-2007 Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top Scholarship

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2018-Present Part-Time Professor, School of Liberal Studies, Fanshawe College  
 2016-2018 Partial Load Professor, School of Liberal Studies, Conestoga College  
 2010-2015 Teaching Assistant, English Literature, Western University  
 2010-2013 Private ESL Tutor, Reading Town, London Ontario

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

May 29-June 1, 2021 ACCUTE, Western University, London, CA  
 November 3-6, 2016 NAVSA, Arizona State University, Phoenix, US  
 July 9-12, 2015 NAVSA, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, US  
 May 20-June 2, 2015 ACCUTE, Ottawa University, Ottawa, CA  
 April 30-May 3, 2015 NeMLA, Ryerson University, Toronto, CA  
 October 17-19, 2013 CSECS, Western University, London, CA  
 June 1-3, 2013 CACLALS, University of Victoria, Victoria, CA  
 March 21-24, 2013 NeMLA, Tufts University, Boston, US  
 March 15-17, 2012 NeMLA, Rochester University, New York, US  
 May 28-31, 2011 ACCUTE, Saint Thomas University, Fredericton CA

## **SUMMARY OF RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE**

2015-2020 VP Student Services; VP Finance, Society of Graduate Students  
 2013-2015 Handbook Editor, Society of Graduate Students  
 2013, 2016-2017 Research Assistantship

## **SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE AND SERVICE WORK**

2015-2020 Mental Health & Wellness Advisory Committee, Western University  
 2013-2015 Graduate English Society Co-Chair, Western University  
 2016-2018 Graduate Student Life Advisory Group Chair, Western University  
 2013-2016 Conference Chair and Social Media Coordinator, Western University