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New Imperialism's Role in the Development of the Science Fiction Genre: Race and Gender

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Abstract

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This inquiry examines the development of the science fiction (sf) genre and its relationship to New Imperialism. Using the novels of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Jules Verne, and H. Rider Haggard, this research asserts the inextricable relationship between race and gender in these works. French and British imperial styles are compared, and racial others in Verne's work, particularly Captain Nemo, are depicted to have agency, unlike those in the British works. The sexuality of imperialism is asserted, as a gendered analysis of imperial fiction is conducted, particularly with Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas* and H. Rider Haggard's *She.* The historical and cultural contexts during these novels' writings is reflected in certain imperial features. In addition, the science fiction genre's origins can be traced in these older works, and certain trends and features are still reflected in sf today. Ultimately, this inquiry asks one to question the origins of the science fiction genre and asserts the value of imperial novels, as they help explain common sf features. Such features are, including but not limited to, metaphors of invasion, technological innovation, and xenophobia in figures like aliens.

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This is for my dad, Marc Tawil.

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**Introduction**

Science fiction (sf) is known for its use of advanced technology, futurism, and progressiveness. Individuals think of movies like *Star Wars* when they hear the term science fiction. This famous film series is set in space, incorporates innovative technology, and has captured the attention of many. However, *Star Wars*, like other sf works, is connected to Empire. This inquiry will examine what the connection between Empire and sf means and how significant it is. Twenty-first century sf is assigned attributes associated with progressiveness, but is there science fiction that questions this value? Can science fiction be science fiction if it is not progressive? Tracing the sf genre's development will help answer these questions, and this will be accomplished through the study of four imperial-era novels: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four* and *The Lost World,* Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas*, and H. Rider Haggard's *She.* These works all belong to the era of New Imperialism, which is the scope of this inquiry and encompassed in the years 1870-1920. The novels' imperial value will be used to determine their connection to the sf genre. These novels will therefore reflect the genre's history and development.

This inquiry seeks to amend readers' understanding of sf through a study of its older, imperial works. Chapter One seeks to articulate more of sf's background, purpose, and trends. This chapter connects sf to Empire directly through Istvan Csicsery-Ronay's article, "Science Fiction and Empire." Ronay's argument is closely aligned with this inquiry's, as he asserts that sf's emergence as a genre was based on three factors: technological expansion, the need for literary-cultural mediation, and the model of the technoscientific Empire (Ronay 231). Ronay's position, however, does not emphasize the role of race and never mentions gender's role in imperialism. European imperialism was a masculine, sexual process and racially charged, and

Ronay does not incorporate this into his argument. Chapter One also discusses the work of Darko Suvin and how his theories relate to the four novels studied. This chapter hopes to ensure readers see all four Empire novels as works of sf and realize how certain features of the genre correspond to imperialism.

Chapter Two will examine the literature of British imperialism through Doyle's two novels. *The Sign of Four* (1890), a Sherlock Holmes tale, will investigate the depiction of racial others through the character Tonga and the novel's primary antagonist Jonathan Small. Moreover, this chapter will look at Doyle's later work, *The Lost World* (1912), and examine its fantastical qualities and the ape-men that Professor Challenger and his team encounter. This chapter will study British anxieties like racial degeneration and the role of Darwinian thought in this context. Chapter Three will transition to Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas* (1870) to study an interpretation of French imperialism and gender's role in this political process. This fiction's imperial style will represent an interpretation of French imperialism, which will be compared to Doyle and Haggard's depictions of British imperialism. Seeing the nuances between different kinds of imperialism can help illustrate the different social and cultural contexts in which the novels were written. Furthermore, Chapter Three will use Edward Said's gendered interpretation of colonization to analyze Captain Nemo and the *Nautilus.* To further comprehend gender's relationship to imperialism and race, Chapter Four will study Haggard's *She* (1887). This novel is important because it grants female characters voices, while the other three novels have limited quotations from women. Therefore, *She* is valuable to further studying gender and racial dynamics and elaborates on the racial degenerationist discourse discussed in Chapter Two, in addition to the role white femininity has in imperial conquests. This chapter questions for whom British men embark on colonial missions.

This inquiry hopes to show how the roots of sf have an affinity to uncomfortable literature that does not seem to resemble modern works on the surface. Aliens are a newer concept seen in sf books, yet this inquiry will illustrate how aliens may not necessarily be a recent creation. In fact, they are depicted in a similar manner to racial others during New Imperialism, and this example shows the importance of this research. Studying the older trends and features of sf Empire novels helps provide context for the genre's emergence and also its condition today.

## Chapter 1:

### The Science Fiction Genre

This chapter seeks to establish Doyle's *The Sign of Four* and *The Lost World*, Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas*, and H. Rider Haggard's *She* as works of science fiction and show that they have literary merit, despite being rooted in imperial ideology. The science fiction genre's history is worth outlining, as this context informs readers how the genre came to be so heavily contested in the twentieth century. Marshall B. Tymn outlines the history of the genre, claiming that this form of literature has "a heritage reaching back into ancient times, to a pre-scientific world inhabited by peoples whose myths, legends and superstitions became a way of thinking about and explaining the wonders of the universe" (Tymn 41). While perceived by mainstream audiences to be a completely new type of literature, science fiction has ancient origins and has been relevant throughout history. However, science fiction's relationship with technological advancement must be considered when studying the growth and development of the genre. Tymn articulates how formative the Industrial Revolution was to the genre's growth, and he claims, "it was not until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the 18$^{th}$ century,

with its vision of a future altered by technology, that science fiction could exist as a viable literary form" (Tymn 42). The nineteenth century's interest in progress was imperative, as it corresponded to the eventual growth of science fiction.

In 1979, Darko Suvin, a notable sf scholar, published his seminal work *Metamorphoses of science fiction*, and his book is the origin of the last few decades of science fiction literary scholarship and criticism. In his monograph, Suvin expresses the increasing importance of the genre, stating that sf's popularity, despite short-term fluctuations, has generally risen in the twentieth century (Suvin 3). Suvin's most famous contribution is his theory of cognitive estrangement. Suvin defined the sf genre through cognitive estrangement, stating, "SF is, then, a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment" (Suvin 7-8). Essentially, Suvin is articulating that in sf works, there is a creation of a new environment or reality that defies what is currently, empirically present. This concept is generally important for understanding the genre, as Suvin contends that sf challenges existing ways of thought, pushing for its proponents to think of society in a different manner.

Suvin introduces the idea of the *novum*, which is an important part of understanding sf works, as one major point of contention is simply defining them. In his chapter "SF and the Novum," Suvin claims, "SF is distinguished by the narrative dominance or hegemony of a fictional 'novum' (novelty, innovation) validated by cognitive logic" (Suvin 63). This position directly correlates with the one of extrapolation or innovation being necessary in sf, as will be articulated in the case of Jules Verne and American scholar Arthur B. Evans. Suvin believes that there needs to be a fictional innovation that is validated by logic, for a work to be classified as sf.

In other words, the new, fictional concept must be scientifically sound and adhere to cognitive logic. Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas* strongly adheres to this criterion, as the *Nautilus's* functionality is fictional in its advancement, yet scientifically sound, given the extensive descriptive passages Verne provides regarding the submarine's functioning and their underwater surroundings.

Suvin defines sf through two primary models: the extrapolative and the analogical. He describes the extrapolative model as originating during the French Revolution period, and Suvin claims, "SF written…has come to be considered as starting from certain cognitive hypotheses and ideas incarnated in the fictional framework and nucleus of the tale" (Suvin 27). The extrapolative model is usually concerned with sociological issues—ones positing utopian and anti-utopian contexts through issues like "global catastrophes, cybernetics, [and] dictatorships (Suvin 27). As a result, Suvin sees sf's utility through its predictive qualities, which he describes as foresight in technology and other issues. This deemed secondary function of the genre therefore demands as much scientific accuracy as possible, but Suvin cautions readers to avoid viewing sf's predictive nature as a prophecy, since this feature rests on statistical probability. In addition, Suvin proposes the analogic model, which is instead based on analogy. He sees this model as able to comprehend the extrapolative one, and he provides the example of the lowest form of analogic modeling to justify this relationship. To elaborate, this form of analogic modeling "is that in which an extrapolation backwards is in fact a crude analogy to the past of the Earth, from geological through biological to ethnological and historical" (Suvin 29). While the analogic model is important, this inquiry instead focuses on the extrapolative one and its utility. Extrapolation is prevalent in sf and a marker of its value to readers, ranging from literary critics to the general public. Furthermore, this notion of extrapolation, which is closely related to

sf's innovation, is an issue Evans contests in his monograph that will be cited in Chapter Three. Evans defines Verne as a scientific fiction author, rather than a science fiction one. This debate will be addressed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Tymn cites Jules Verne in his article, effectively asserting Verne's status as a science fiction writer. He claims that Verne was "the almost archetypal expression of the nineteenth century's romantic interest in science and technology" (Tymn 42). Specifically, Tymn articulates how Verne focused on the revolution in transportation, which is applicable to *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas* via the *Nautilus.* The *Nautilus* and all of its scientific marvels help contribute to Jules Verne's reputation as "the nineteenth-century inventor of the popular literary genre called 'Science Fiction,'" according to Arthur B. Evans (Evans 1). While Evans will be mentioned in Chapter Three, it is important to articulate how his scholarship is especially valuable, as he is one of the few American Jules Verne scholars and perhaps the most prominent. Evans acknowledges Verne's reputation as a leading science fiction writer, yet he entertains the possibility of deeming Jules Verne the "father of *scientific* fiction instead." This distinction opens up one of the recurring conflicts scholars have in defining the genre. This issue is whether extrapolative properties are necessary in sf texts, and to what extent. To reiterate, extrapolative properties are textual features that adhere to the extrapolative model Suvin proposes, and these are best understood as cognitive hypotheses manifested through different forms of technology or social phenomena, for example.

Evans articulates, in *Jules Verne Rediscovered*, the debate between science fiction and his understanding of the scientific novel, a style Verne's novels adopt. This label comes from his belief that "Jules Verne might quite justifiably be termed the 'father of scientific fiction'…[because] Verne's novels contain little of what the general reading public sees as

standard SF fare" (Evans 2). More accurately, Evans sees Verne as the force responsible for popularizing science through fiction as a creative medium. This is because "over 90 percent of his fictional plots take place in the recent past" (Evans 2). This inquiry diverges from Evans' opinion, as the label of the scientific novel distracts from Verne's innovation in creating a machine like a *Nautilus. 20,000 Leagues Under the Seas* is a work of sf, as it was written by one of the founders of the genre and depicts advanced technology to readers who may have not had any prior exposure to such a phenomenon. Furthermore, the *Nautilus* has the capability to travel to the South Pole, where Nemo claims he has discovered this territory. This situation suggests that the submarine was capable of traveling extensive distances, as throughout the novel, Nemo and the others went from the Pole, to the Mediterranean, to the other oceans. Such capacities for distance suggest extrapolation and innovation, and Verne's incorporation of scientific and technical language helps animate the novel in a way that makes it feel as though it is accurate but part of the future.

Before classifying the British works as sf, it is important to note the science fiction genre's relationship to the Gothic, as this association does especially influence imperial novels. Science fiction's connection to the Gothic helps better illustrate the origins and boundaries of sf. In Chapter Two, the imperial Gothic's importance will be outlined through Patrick Brantlinger's work, and this literary form is essentially one in which Empire novels have Gothic features. Manifestations of the imperial Gothic, particularly in British Empire novels, occurred when the British feared racial regression, invasions by barbarism, and the loss of adventurous opportunities (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 230). In another work by Brantlinger entitled "The Gothic Origins of Science Fiction," he describes how sf and the Gothic are linked in many ways, beginning with their shared defiance of realism. One of Brantlinger's important arguments is that

"both genres involve the idea that reason taken to extremes 'produces monsters.' In the Gothic romance, extreme reason may take the form of revolutionary or religious fanaticism…In science fiction, extreme reason takes the form of science itself and of its chief manifestation, technology" (Brantlinger, "Science Fiction and Empire" 31). The emphasis on technology is evident again, and this argument leads readers to see sf's extrapolative properties as ones that encourage the resistance to realism evident in the genre. Evans, with his distinction between science fiction and scientific fiction, underscores how important innovation and extrapolation is to the genre, when trying to classify what works constitute it. He saw Verne's novel as too realistic, with its technology being close enough to the time period in question, and this distinguishes sf from other genres, except when it illustrates its strong link to the Gothic. Brian Attebery, another important science fiction scholar, also sees the sf genre as inextricably linked to the Gothic. In *Decoding Gender in Science Fiction*, he explains sf as an offshoot from Gothic fiction (Attebery 12).

Haggard's *She* is classified as science fiction by this inquiry, and this notion is supported by Tymn and Attebery. Tymn articulates how "tales of exotic lands and lost races" are part of the sf canon. He claims that Haggard was the pioneer of these tales of escape, which were prevalent in the early twentieth century. Applying Suvin's notion of cognitive estrangement, it is apparent that Haggard is imagining an alternative environment to the one that is his reality, when he has protagonists Leo and Holly venture off into a lost kingdom in Africa. Tymn's and Suvin's arguments are also applicable to Doyle's *The Lost World*, which is itself a novel of escape. Here, Doyle conceives of an alternative environment in South America, where Professor Challenger and his colleagues discover dinosaurs and the ape-men, both of which were presumed to be extinct. The ape-man, as he was understood to be the missing evolutionary link between man and monkey, is almost a reverse *novum*. While he is a live, physical embodiment of what the public

understood to be a part of Darwinian evolutionary theory, he is also a manifestation of scientific regression, because he is symptomatic of British racial anxieties of degeneration and barbarism.

Doyle's *The Sign of Four* is a work of sf because of its incorporation of scientific rationalism through Sherlock Holmes' science of deduction. In his detection, Holmes employs the science of deduction and his extraordinary observation skills to solve cases. The detective story is arranged in a manner that pushes readers to see the cases as logical to solve, but only after the detective's conclusions are presented. Doyle writes the stories in a manner that makes it impossible for readers to guess the outcome, and this makes the work have extrapolative properties. Furthermore, the entire science of deduction, while it does not seem innovative to readers today, served as a novel concept in the late nineteenth century. The Sherlock Holmes stories are scientifically grounded, as Holmes relies on a unique form of deductive thinking based on observation to accomplish his goals. However, besides the science of deduction, what makes *The Sign of Four* a work of sf is also its overt connection to Empire.

Ronay's article "Science Fiction and Empire" argues that the sf genre and imperialism are strongly correlated, and he outlines three conditions that made the sf genre's emergence possible. They are: "the technological expansion that drove real imperialism, the need felt by national audiences for literary-cultural mediation as their societies were transformed from historical nations into hegemons, and the fantastic model of achieved technoscientific Empire" (Ronay 231). Ronay sees the role of technology as imperative to sf's development as a genre, which corresponds to the position Tymn takes. Furthermore, he views sf's emergence as "an expression of the political-cultural transformation that originated in European imperialism and was inspired by the ideal of a single global technological regime" (Ronay 231). He claims that the nations who have produced the most sf recently are the countries that had colonial projects,

including Britain and France. He uses this fact to launch an investigation into the sf genre as is understood by the general public, not necessarily by literary scholars. Ronay's first condition, which is technology's connection to imperialism, is perhaps his most important one. He articulates how technology encouraged imperialism, leading "to changes of consciousness that facilitated the subjugation of less developed cultures…and [establishing] standards of 'objective measurement' that led inevitably to myths of racial and national supremacy" (Ronay 233). Here, he shows how technology's power in establishing standards led to an imperial understanding of more developed versus less developed societies. This then helped perpetuate beliefs like the colonizer's supremacy over the colonized. Moreover, technology was a fundamental factor that indicated whether imperial projects could even occur or not. Verne's novel would not have incorporated Nemo's colonization of the sea had the *Nautilus* or the mechanical capabilities to travel to the South Pole not existed. Technology helped contribute to a thematic sense of ambitiousness in imperial texts, as Captain Nemo now had the mechanical capability to live underwater and uncover its mysteries. *The Lost World* also strongly subscribes to Ronay's first contention, as Professor Challenger's advanced scientific knowledge and immense curiosity is what makes their trip to South America even occur. Challenger's knowledge of prehistoric creatures and of general anthropological principles of his time permits his trip to even exist, and there is an overt scientific reward at the novel's conclusion. Challenger brings back a live pterodactyl for exhibition, and such a feat would be impossible without advanced technological capabilities. Here, Doyle shows how fantasy and sf can interact to form a compelling, colonial story.

While *The Lost World* and *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas* are perhaps the two most overt examples of sf texts, they help illustrate where Ronay's compelling position is

lacking. “Science Fiction and Empire” is perhaps the piece of scholarship most closely aligned with the position this inquiry is asserting, but it is missing the role of race and gender. In particular, race’s direct interaction with gender helps readers realize how imperialism functions and how it is manifested in various novels. Ronay only once mentions the prevalence of national and racial supremacy in technology’s relationship to sf, and this does not even articulate how gender cannot be removed from race, as colonization is a masculine, sexual process. All three authors explore colonial phenomena that can be mistaken as a purely racially-driven process. The following three chapters analyze further race and gender’s role in Empire novels.

## Chapter 2:

## British Imperialism: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Sign of Four* and *The Lost World*

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Sign of Four*, published in 1890, opens with detective Sherlock Holmes using cocaine. Holmes “thrust the sharp point home, pressed down the tiny piston, and sunk back into the velvet-lined armchair with a long sigh of satisfaction” (Doyle, *Sign of Four* 3). From the novel’s opening page, Doyle captures the first of many features of British imperial culture, setting the novel’s context as one produced in the era of New Imperialism. The British Empire’s economy relied on the drug trade, and Christopher Keep and Don Randall write, “British imperialism of the nineteenth century was invested in and maintained by the global traffic in addictive substances” (Keep and Randall 1). Such substances included opium and cocaine, and through this drug consumption scene, Doyle immediately captures New Imperialism’s culture. This chapter examines two of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s novels, *The Sign of Four* (1890) and *The Lost World* (1912), in an effort to understand how British imperialism shapes the lack of agency that racial others have in science fiction. Studying

the British Empire through a racial lens will allow for a comparison between this country's imperialism and French imperialism in the following chapter. The science fiction genre and imperialism are closely related, and examining different variations of Empire helps capture different racial and gender nuances that may be reflected in the genre and its development.

In Sherlock Holmes' detective stories, readers experience several recurring motifs, ranging from the science of deduction to the defense of the Empire and its honor. The latter is of special importance, as it permeates Doyle's novels. In her article "The Empire Bites Back," Laura Otis argues that Holmes serves as a protector of the British Empire, defending it against foreign intrusions. Here, Otis analyzes Holmes' detective work through the lens of bacteriology, illustrating to readers how Holmes "defends the heart of his Empire against the germs that must inevitably reach it from the foreign lands it seeks to control" (Otis 32). The germs Otis refers to relate to the threat of foreign diseases from colonial conquests, as she draws upon Doyle's experience as a colonial doctor in the Boer War. The defensive nature of the detective novels reflects a greater British imperial trend Patrick Brantlinger articulates in his monograph *Rule of Darkness*. He argues that British imperialist writing after 1880 "treats the Empire as a barricade against a new barbarian invasion" (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 230). Holmes serves as an imperial defender, protecting the British Empire's biggest proponents against foreign, barbaric intrusions. Holmes' usual clients require his sleuthing services and are typically individuals of a high socioeconomic status. Because the entire British economy was connected to colonialism, all wealthy Britons did have colonial ties, whether explicit or implicit. There is a national anxiety reflected in Holmes' detective stories, as the British are generally concerned about "the degeneration of their institutions, their culture, [and] their racial 'stock'" (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 230). In particular, examining the role of race in *The Sign of Four* will provide insight

into the dynamics of British culture from the perspective of colonial supporters at home, like Holmes and Watson. Looking at how these British characters interpret race and incorporate it into their rhetoric informs readers of cultural attitudes and greater concerns the British Empire faced. The social problems and anxieties the British Empire confronted are depicted in this Empire novel, a work of science fiction. Generally, sf thematically works through different social issues, which is the case in Doyle's novel.

*The Sign of Four* is set in 1888, positioned to follow the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Termed "The Mutiny," this rebellion provides context for the militant rejection of racial others in this 1890 work. The story's investigation launches because of client Mary Morstan's concern with her father's disappearance following his return from India. The novel is centered on the search for the Agra treasure, and Mary receives pearls in the mail from this treasure. The investigation advances when Captain Morstan is linked to his friend Major John Sholto. The reader is introduced to a mysterious pact among four different people called the "sign of four." Eventually, Major Sholto's sons Thaddeus and Bartholomew are found and have incomplete knowledge of their father's involvement with this group. Jonathan Small, a member of this pact of convicts, ends up being the primary guilty party in this complex plot and indirectly responsible for the murder of Bartholomew Sholto.

The depiction of racial others in *The Sign of Four* is overtly negative and reflects the fact that Empire-protectors like Watson and Holmes express disgust towards such foreign intrusions. In his narration, Watson is extremely vocal about his disdain towards Tonga, an Indian man of Andaman heritage who serves as a threat to the Empire's security and whiteness at home. Tonga is depicted as a villainous force, despite the fact that Jonathan Small is the primary antagonist. Tonga's role was that of an accomplice, as Jonathan Small had the motive to commit the crime

and initially stole the Agra treasure. Yet, Tonga is more villainized in the text through his physical descriptions and savagery, and he is killed by Holmes and Watson after attempting to murder Holmes with a poisonous dart, a foreign intrusion. By way of comparison, Small, the true villain, is not depicted committing violent acts because he is white.

During Jonathan Small's confession, he makes an overt effort to villainize Tonga. Although Small is a criminal, his opinion against this racial other is valuable, as Small is a white man. Small explains to Holmes and Watson that, "'I give you my word on the Book that I never raised hand against Mr. Bartholomew Sholto. It was that little hell-hound, Tonga, who shot one of his cursed darts into him. I had no part in it, sir. I was grieved as if it had been my blood relation'" (Doyle, *Sign of Four* 112-113). Small's diction in his confession matters, as he depicts imperial sentiments in his explanation. Small invokes Christianity and his status as a fellow white man in his relationship to Mr. Sholto. Their shared race and nationality are interpreted as an almost familial-level bond in its strength, as he positions this commonality against the foreigner Tonga. In addition, Small's invocation of his allegiance to the Bible and the truth is purposeful, as he is articulating that despite his guilt, he is a member of the same group as Holmes and Watson—Christian, British, and white. However, what distinguishes Small from Holmes and Watson is social class, as Small is described as poorly educated and therefore of an inferior class. Furthermore, Small is less white and is even described as a "'brown, monkey-faced chap'" by Mrs. Smith, a woman Holmes interviews (Doyle, *Sign of Four* 79). A hierarchical organization of people's different statuses in British society is measured through understandings of race, as the less white one is, the guiltier, poorer, and darker one is. Small's guilt is mitigated to Holmes and therefore readers, because his culpability is assuaged by the fact that he was wronged by an ignorant, savage-like accomplice. Small is not as white as Holmes

and Watson due to his position in society, but he is still whiter than Tonga and uses this to exonerate himself.

Tonga's character serves as the primary piece of evidence concerning the effeminate, barbaric depiction of racial others. Nearly every mention of Tonga has him labeled as either small or little, with an accompanying description as a devil, hound, or savage. His physical appearance and political status as a colonized person in England are repeatedly linked and consequently seen as inseparable. Prior to the death of the "little hell-hound," Watson describes Tonga in the following manner:

> It straightened itself into a little black man--the smallest I have ever seen--with a great, misshapen head and a shock of tangled, disheveled hair. Holmes had already drawn his revolver, and I whipped out mine at the sight of this savage, distorted creature. He was wrapped in some sort of dark ulster or blanket, which left only his face exposed; but that face was enough to give a man a sleepless night. Never have I seen features so deeply marked with all bestiality and cruelty (Doyle, *Sign of Four* 109-110).

This rich quotation provides insight into Tonga's perception as a racially distorted, effeminate creature with the status of a criminal in Britain. Tonga's size and stature are repeatedly emphasized and consequently become the most important physical marker indicating an absence of masculinity. Doyle, through the characters Watson, Holmes, and Small, shows how white Englishmen interpret Indian men as beings who are not actual men. In fact, John McBratney articulates, in his article "Racial and Criminal Types," how Tonga straightening himself into a black man is a "parody of Darwinian evolution…[showing] a creature who barely escapes his bestial origins" (McBratney 159). Not only is Tonga's masculinity questioned by the Englishmen, but so is his humanity. Tonga's lack of masculinity is evident through the fact that

he is small and distorted, but also due to his thick lips that can be interpreted as both feminine and a phenotypical marker of his status as a racial other. Watson's description of Tonga is one of overt repulsion, a conflation of femininity, non-whiteness, and savagery. Tonga's distortion also suggests a lack of physical capability or anatomical inferiority that is most definitely caused by his race.

Tonga's perception in *The Sign of Four* parallels aliens when one considers the emerging sf genre. Aliens are seen as physically comparable to humans, but different enough to unnerve people through the uncanny valley effect. Tonga is not seen as a human, and his effeminate size and physical appearance disturb the British characters. The imperial origins of the sf genre and its depiction of racial others can be traced in modern portrayals of aliens. Jocelyn Eighan writes about Judith Merill's sf works from the 1950s and 1960s, and Merill's short stories "note the ways in which the female characters become alien 'others' while scrutinized under the xenophobic male gaze" (Eighan 23). The imperial male gaze described, which will be analyzed in Chapter Three, illustrates the pervading influence of imperialism on sf. The aliens of late nineteenth-century sf works were racial others.

Tonga's presence in *The Sign of Four* illustrates his lack of agency from the perspective of an Englishman, the narrator Dr. Watson. Watson narrates how he feels about Tonga, or transcribes quotations from Holmes and Small about the racial other. Not once is there a direct quotation from Tonga, which illustrates how he does not have a voice to the colonizers. Also, there is no indication that Tonga understands or speaks English. McBratney sees Tonga as an example of Indians having no agency in the British imperial context, as Tonga adheres to the notion of the racial type. McBratney explains, "The discourse of racial type exerts a decisive guiding force on much of the Holmes canon" (McBratney 154). McBratney defines racial type

by explaining how the British used both anthropology and the Indian caste system as a way to categorize and produce hierarchies of different races. McBratney centers one section of his analysis on Tonga and the racial type, in an effort to illustrate how important race is to the British Empire. He explains how the racial science and anthropology of the late nineteenth century placed Tonga's racial category—the Andamanese—at the bottom of the racial hierarchy. Deemed a "low type" by contemporary racial science, the Andamanese were placed "at the very bottom of the ladder of races, together with the Bushmen of Africa, the Digger Indians of America, and the Terra del Fuegians" (McBratney 155). Tonga's depiction matches the description of the Andamanese in the gazetteer Holmes reads. This suggests a "link between Doyle's narrative and contemporaneous British physical anthropology" (McBratney 156). Moreover, Tonga is mentioned at one point to have been a spectacle for Small's profit, portraying the black cannibal. According to Small, Tonga would "eat raw meat and dance his war-dance" (Doyle, *Sign of Four* 148). This detail shows not only how Tonga has no voice or agency, but also how he is dehumanized throughout the text. Tonga is powerless, even when he takes the initiative to kill Mr. Sholto. When Tonga kills Bartholomew, it is because of his hopeless savagery. Holmes explains to Watson how "There was no help for it, however; the savage instincts of his companion had broken out, and the poison had done its work" (Doyle, *Sign of Four* 72). Not only does this description illustrate Tonga's ignorance, but also how Doyle is expressing the way racial others are violent, uncivilized, and without agency specifically because of their race—not because of their experiences or independently formed thoughts and opinions. The issue of agency is important when considering science fiction because of the connection between racial others and aliens. The two figures are linked, and agency is relevant because many sf plots see aliens as uncontrollable, lacking agency, and therefore a threat.

Tonga's actions in *The Sign of Four* resemble those of aliens attacking another planet, unaware of the living species they are destroying.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* explains how Tonga, a product of the West's perception of the Orient, illustrates trends prevalent in cultural depictions of imperialism. In a general critique of Western ideology, Said lists some attributes of the Orient, including "its eccentricity, its backwardness, its silent indifference, its feminine penetrability, [and] its supine malleability." He goes on to state how Westerners "saw the Orient as a locale requiring Western attention, reconstruction, [and] even redemption" (Said 206). Regarding *The Sign of Four*, the East is primarily represented as backwards and having feminine penetrability when examining Tonga and his role in the novel. Simultaneously, Tonga's darts are phallic and disturbingly small, threatening to invade the Empire. Doyle articulates a need for Tonga to be civilized, as his savagery has caused him to have the instincts to kill Mr. Sholto with his poisonous dart. Tonga's lack of agency and voice, evident through zero direct quotations from him, corresponds to the silent indifference of the East to which Said refers. Furthermore, it has been shown how Tonga's physical appearance suggests femininity to readers, because shortness is usually attributed to females. The East's femininity is a feature that recurs throughout novels from the New Imperialism era.

*The Sign of Four* centers on Anglo-Indian relations, and the relationship between the English and Indians is focused on race more than any other factor. This racial concentration reflects the civilizing mission, a primary justification for imperialism. The belief in the East's racial inferiority legitimates the opinions of those like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who interpreted their nation's imperialism "as an ideology or political faith, [that] functioned as a partial substitute for the declining or fallen Christianity and for declining faith in Britain's future"

(Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 228). The anxiety concerning Britain's future stems from events like the Indian Rebellion of 1857, by which *The Sign of Four* was influenced. The Empire's health and prosperity were of great personal importance to Doyle's writings, as is evident in his Sherlock Holmes stories and other works. The change in Doyle's opinions and interests, as reflected in a comparison of *The Sign of Four* and *The Lost World*, is based on the progression and status of the British Empire.

In 1912, twenty-two years after the publication of *The Sign of Four*, Doyle released his novel *The Lost World.* This novel deviates from the Sherlock Holmes stories in many ways, and it emerges from a greater reflection on different historical and cultural changes in the British Empire, from the perspective of one of its strong supporters. In the beginning of the novel, news editor McArdle states to narrator Edward Malone, "The big blank spaces in the map are all being filled in, and there's no room for romance anywhere" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 15). This quotation reflects the novel's historical context, as the age of New Imperialism has progressed and is coming to a conclusion in the early twentieth century. It also captures a prevalent sentiment throughout the novel, that Doyle is seeking this romantic notion of adventure through a spiritualist exploration on which Malone and Professor Challenger embark. Brantlinger describes how, "From the 1890s onward, Doyle became increasingly interested in the spiritualist rebuilding of nothing less than world civilization." He goes on to state, "If it seemed evident that adventure was vanishing from the modern world, Doyle for one rebelled against the evidence" (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 250-251). *The Lost World* is an act of insurgency for Doyle, as he is embracing fantasy in South America and writing about dinosaurs and a tribe of ape-men. Doyle employs his imperialistic ideals in a setting that deviates from the scientific rationalism of

Sherlock Holmes in previous decades, as he realizes that the historical moment in which he is writing has changed.

Unlike *The Sign of Four*, *The Lost World* has many fantastical qualities, as it explores the adventures of Professor Challenger and his colleagues in their journey to South America. The novel begins with journalist Edward Malone's desire to prove his worth to the woman he loves, Gladys. He decides to join Challenger in an adventurous, romantic expedition to prove the existence of dinosaurs and therefore demonstrate his worthiness to Gladys. Challenger, Malone, and two other British men—Professor Summerlee and Lord John Roxton—embark on this trip and investigate this lost world. Here, they witness dinosaurs and are caught in a conflict between the native Indians and a race of ape-men. The novel concludes with the defeat of the ape-men, the English cohort returning to London, and Challenger proving the existence of pterodactyls to an English audience. Throughout the novel, there are multiple racial groups characterized and given different purposes in the plot, including Indians, ape-men, black men, and the Englishmen themselves.

A major way in which *The Lost World* deviates from Doyle's earlier Sherlock Holmes works is through its fantasy. While *The Sign of Four* and other Holmes stories are grounded in scientific rationalism, Doyle liberates himself from reality in his writing of *The Lost World,* as he vehemently works to prove the existence of dinosaurs through the eccentric Professor Challenger. Doyle's shift from celebrating to transcending scientific rationalism, based on changing historical circumstances, illustrates to readers the social relevance of sf. The genre explores social issues in its works and is flexible enough to adapt to different time periods. Doyle incorporates extensive, detailed descriptions of the dinosaurs, animating the creatures and augmenting their reality to readers. When the British men arrive in South America, they

encounter these prehistoric creatures, and Malone captures the awe he experiences with their majestic presence. Malone articulates, "There were, as I say, five of them, two being adults and three young ones. In size they were enormous…They had slate-coloured skin, which was scaled like a lizard's and shimmered where the sun shone upon it." He goes on to state, "All five were sitting up, balancing themselves upon their broad, powerful tails and their huge three-toed hind feet, while with their small five-fingered front-feet they pulled down the branches upon which they browsed" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 111). Malone even states, following this vivid description, that he wished to bring the appearance of the dinosaurs home to his readers in England. His desire to vividly report his findings to England reflects how through Malone and the other characters, especially Challenger, Doyle is working to bring fantasy to reality for his readers. Not only are the dinosaurs described in great physical detail, but their actions are recounted. Doyle mentions how they moved, how many fingers and toes they had, and all of these inclusions work to leave nothing to the imagination for readers. Doyle is directly telling his audience that in South America, there is a lost world where prehistoric creatures roam and where scientific discoveries are yet to made. In effect, the romance of adventure is still alive.

In addition to the dinosaurs, another imaginative element pervades *The Lost World*: the race of ape-men. These creatures are described initially through their shadows as, "a crouching form full of savage vigour and menace…[and] no higher than a horse, but the dim outline suggested vast bulk and strength" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 122). Introduced in an eerie, monstrous manner, the ape-men are presented as undesirable beasts that need to be exterminated. In comparison, the dinosaurs do not need to be exterminated, and this difference can be attributed to the uncanny valley. Dinosaurs, as a species, are distant enough from humans and

therefore not uncomfortable. The ape-men's initially mysterious presentation evolves into a more comprehensive understanding of this species. Malone narrates how:

> It was a human face—or at least it was far more human than any monkey's that I have ever seen. It was long, whitish, and blotched with pimples, the nose flattened, and the lower jaw projecting, with a bristle of coarse whiskers round the chin. The eyes, which were under thick and heavy brows, were bestial and ferocious, and as it opened its mouth to snarl what sounded like a curse at me I observed that it had curved, sharp canine teeth (Doyle, *The Lost World* 130).

In this description, Malone expresses how this ape-man is certainly more an animal than a human. The ape-man is given animalistic characters like sharp canine teeth and bestial eyes, and the creature is generally described as threatening and grossly unattractive. With a face plagued with pimples, the ape-man is emphasized to be not only frightening to those who see him, but also repulsive and given characteristically unattractive human features. While some nonhuman primates like rhesus monkeys can get pimples under certain conditions, it is generally unlikely (Abrahamson and Allen 81). The combination of overtly unattractive human features combined with violent, animalistic physical attributes forces readers to conclude that the animalistic features of the ape-man cancel out any humanity he has because his humanity is deeply, irrevocably flawed.

Professor Challenger invokes Darwinian thought to explain the ape-man's existence in South America, claiming this species was the bridge between human and ape. He hypothesizes how, "The question which we have to face is whether [the ape-man] approaches more closely to the ape or the man. In the latter case, he may well approximate to what the vulgar have called the 'missing link.'" Challenger concludes, stating, "The solution of this problem is our immediate

duty" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 134). The solution Challenger refers to here is one of the ape-man's eradication as a whole species. He and his team see it as their duty to exterminate such a vile species, and they interestingly find this discovered evolutionary phenomenon as threatening. The missing link Challenger refers to is the common ancestor that humans and apes share, as Charles Darwin articulates. In his famous work *On the Origin of Species*, Darwin writes, "By the theory of natural selection all living species have been connected with the parent-species of each genus…and these parent-species, now generally extinct, have in their turn been similarly connected with more ancient species; and so on backwards, always converging to the common ancestor of each great class" (Darwin 282). The ape-man is the parent-species that was supposed to have been extinct. In effect, it is an unwanted scientific anomaly that Professor Challenger and his team have discovered, and it unnerves them due not only to its unnatural existence, but also its physical repugnance and uncanniness.

The ape-man's existence resonates with the notion of the racial uncanny, as it is a familiar, yet unfamiliar combination of man and ape. Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud writes in "The Uncanny" about the combination between the familiar and the strange, and how this mixture leads to an intense anxiety for the individual. The subject cannot distinguish usually distinct boundaries, like good and evil, and this uncanniness promotes a confrontation of repressed desires an individual faces. Freud writes, "The uncanny is that species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar" (Freud 124). This sentiment is especially evident when thinking in terms of the racial uncanny and the ape-men in *The Lost World.* The ape-men are manifestations of the racial uncanny, because they are signaling to Challenger and his colleagues the missing link between the human and ape. As the perceived common ancestor of these two accepted, familiar species, the ape-man is

frightening because of his link to the past through extinct species that humans have mentally repressed. This white, British group of explorers have repressed their more primitive ancestry, and the ape-man registers as an unwanted reminder to them of their less evolved origins. Challenger and his colleagues also exhibit instant fear and disdain towards the ape-men because of their violent capabilities. The ape-man, who serves as the missing link between human and ape, is also highly upsetting because it is a physical manifestation of what brings humans and apes together—thereby displaying what racial and species-level regression would look like for humans, particularly white, civilized men. The racial uncanny expresses the discomfort of coexistence, a social issue many sf works explore. Furthermore, the uncanny valley is prevalent in sf works, as creatures that are both familiar and unfamiliar to humans recur, ranging from Frankenstein's creature to humanoid robots. The white British men are unnerved and repulsed by the ape-men, and they take up a form of imperial multicultural coexistence, which Ronay describes in his article "Science Fiction and Empire." He explains how the rise of modernization in the past fifty years has forced a growth of "'multicultural' coexistence of irresolvable, irreduceable, and intractable differences that must never develop into serious challenges to imperial sovereignty" (Ronay 242). In *The Lost World*, imperial authority is challenged and the ape-men are exterminated. The irresolvable differences between the ape-men and the British men became problematic when they interfered with the Indians. There is coexistence with the Indians, but that is because they did not challenge the imperial sovereignty of the British, like the ape-men.

This idea of racial regression infiltrates British Empire novels, particularly those defined as imperial Gothics. This particular type of Gothic novel belongs to the era of New Imperialism in the late nineteenth century, but such works also use characteristically Gothic attributes in their

stories—especially the occult (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 227). Several authors fall under this category, when they explore the supernatural in their works, as is the case with *The Lost World* and H. Rider Haggard's *She.* Brantlinger writes, "The three principal themes of imperial Gothic are individual regression or going native; an invasion of civilization by the forces of barbarism or demonism; and the diminution of opportunities for adventure and heroism in the modern world" (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 230). The imperial Gothic relates to science fiction through the notion of invasion, as this feature is in many sf plots, whether it is through an invasion by outer space or another species. *The Lost World* fulfills all three of the imperial Gothic themes. The novel's opening chapter details how Gladys will not accept Malone's romantic proposition because she sees "heroisms all around us waiting to be done," and believes that a man she loves must take on such a noble, romantic task (Doyle, *The Lost World* 12). In addition, the war between the indigenous Indians and the ape-men fulfills the other two themes of the imperial Gothic, as the ape-men must be exterminated by the closest thing to civilization in South America, or else the British men run the risk of going native. In this situation, Doyle's racial anxiety is reflected by the fact that miscegenation is his greatest fear, as is evident through the ape-man.

*The Lost World* is an anxious, grand exhibition of what would hypothetically occur in the British Empire, should there be racial mixing between the colonized and colonizer—the white British individual and the racial other. This novel is therefore a commentary on the dangers of miscegenation, as the British had a great deal of anxiety about the quality and purity of their racial stock. During the time of Doyle's writing in both *The Sign of Four* and *The Lost World*, the British had difficulty seeing themselves as progressive on racial issues, due to rebellions incited by the colonized people. They instead perceived their colonial projects as progressive.

Following the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the British worried about the degeneration of their culture and racial stock (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 230). The Mutiny threatened the British with the possibility of Indian intelligence and dominance, pushing them to perhaps prefer that they were at the risk of racial degeneration instead. Moreover, Brantlinger articulates, "The Indian Mutiny and the Jamaica Rebellion proved to many Victorians that the 'dark races' were destined to remain forever dark until they perished from the face of the earth" (Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness* 38). The aftermath of these two rebellions illustrates how there was a segregation between the two races—civilized and savage. Some racial purists hoped the "dark races" would remain dark and perish sooner rather than later. Victorians were anxious about the status of this separateness, as the colonial rebellions had invaded that ideal. The British did not worry about societal progress, because they were instead defensively guarding their Empire and therefore their racial stock, as it was being challenged by the colonized. This incited a fundamental fear among British men in particular, as they were the primary colonial actors and concerned about the preservation of British white femininity.

The British need for racial segregation is best exemplified through the faithful Zambo, the only racial other depicted favorably in *The Lost World.* Zambo, a black man, is present throughout the novel, and he is frequently mentioned with a positive adjective preceding his name, like faithful or noble. Zambo abandons his agency throughout the novel, asking the British men what he should do when they are about to venture into the strange land. He asks, "What I do now?…You tell me and I do it" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 104). His constant submission to Professor Challenger and the rest of the British exploration team grants Zambo his likeability, as Malone describes the racial other as "our good old black Zambo" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 156). Zambo is even seen as distinct from the other racial others, including the Indians and the ape-

men. After the major conflict between the Indians and the ape-men near the novel's conclusion, Malone describes: "Once more also we were able to communicate with Zambo, who had been terrified by the spectacle from afar of an avalanche of apes falling from the edge of the cliff" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 175). Zambo is separated from the unfavorable Indians and grotesque ape-men and perceived as a better racial other, because of his obedience to the British racial system, where whites are distinct, civilized, and ought to be separated from racial others. Zambo's acceptance of British understandings of race is significant because it implies that this black man will not threaten the British Empire in any manner.

Both *The Sign of Four* and *The Lost World* include a romantic frame narrative that illustrates a greater British focus on white reproduction and racial separateness during New Imperialism. Throughout the Sherlock Holmes tale, Doyle integrates reminders of John Watson's interest in Mary Morstan, and he concludes the novel with Watson and Morstan's successful engagement. *The Lost World* instead has an unsuccessful romantic union between Gladys and Malone—however, it is important to emphasize how both white, British, sexual situations are important plot factors. Effectively, both stories have a white British man seeking a white British woman. These situations frame the narrative, and indicate how this this is a fundamental concern in the background of these different stories of Empire.

Both of Doyle's texts, as representations of British Empire novels, suggest how the British did not see racial others as having power or control over themselves. Tonga was seen as an evil force; however, his transgressions against the Empire were committed because of his race, as he belonged to an inferior "racial type." He blew a poisonous dart at Bartholomew because of the ignorance that stemmed from his race, and this therefore perversely exonerates him from his actions. Tonga was not seen as a human being because of his race, and this

corresponds to the merciless descriptions Watson and Holmes provide of him. Professor Challenger's expedition produces a similar conclusion, although it incorporates different types of racial others. There is most definitely, however, a lack of agency present for the racial others. This demographic cannot have any capability to make intentional decisions because this grants racial others power over themselves, which can then be used to threaten the British Empire and white race. Any transgressions racial others commit have to be out of ignorance and without intent, because this not only validates the civilizing mission, but also the racial superiority of white British people. In *The Lost World,* the ape-men have to be exterminated for the sake of humanity, as their unacceptable existence serves as a threat to civilization, and this detracts not only from the morsel of humanity they may have had, but most definitely their agency. The only tolerable racial others, to the British, are ones that have accepted the fact that they have no agency and are blindly obedient to the civilized white man, as he knows what is best. This British interpretation of racial others greatly differs from Verne's depiction of France's in the era of New Imperialism. The following chapter will discuss how the French's colonial style differs from Britain's through a study of Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas.* Both the second and third chapters of this inquiry will then be used to demonstrate how these differing modes of imperialism relate to larger developments in the science fiction genre, as these Empire novels most definitely fall under this literary category.

## Chapter 3:

### French Imperialism: Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas*

In 1870, Jules Verne published *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas,* as part of his sequence of novels entitled *Voyages extraordinaires* (Extraordinary Voyages). Verne's *Voyages*

*extraordinaires* incorporate scientific pedagogy that contributed to their popularity, according to Evans in his 1988 monograph *Jules Verne Rediscovered* (Evans 14). Evans is an American Jules Verne scholar, and his scholarship will be frequently drawn upon in this inquiry, since Vernian scholarship from the U.S. is limited. Evans claims, "Verne *used* science and technology to evoke an entirely new perspective on the world and the individual's place in it—a 'de-alienated' perspective where Man and Machine could function as one and together expand the frontiers of their universe" (Evans 14-15). Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires,* particularly *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas*, are works of science fiction, as they incorporate central sf concepts, including technology and exploration. Furthermore, the notion of expanding "the frontiers of their universe" shows how *20,000 Leagues* is an Empire novel, and Captain Nemo's adventures underwater will further illustrate this. Christèle Couleau, in her article, "Tentatives d'évasion?: Jules Verne, des topoï réalistes à la recherche d'un genre nouveau" brings the perspective of current French scholarship to this inquiry. She investigates Verne's relationship to how his *Voyages extraordinaires* are classified, whether it is science fiction or children's literature. She discusses the role of science in legitimizing Verne's work. Couleau writes, "Son inspiration est résolument scientifique. Or, il ne s'agit pas d'une simple translation, mais d'une nouvelle façon de poser la question du réalisme. En effet, chez Verne, la Science est à la fois le lieu de l'exploit et l'instrument de son accréditation" (Couleau 185). Verne's inspiration, his source of credibility, and his site of exploit is science. The extraordinary, in his *Voyages extraordinaires*, is the imagination and innovative journey Verne delivers readers, as with Nemo's *Nautilus.* However, this cannot be accomplished without the novel's scientific foundation, which, to Couleau, provides realism.

In the beautiful, descriptive *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas*, Verne explores a unique, undiscovered territory—the sea. An Empire novel, *20,000 Leagues* details the adventures of the mysterious Captain Nemo through the narrator Professor Pierre Aronnax, a French scientist. Dr. Aronnax and his crew, including Ned Land and Conseil, embark on a mission intended to destroy an enigmatic sea monster, or potential narwhal. They are instead kidnapped and held on board this supposed monster, which turns out to be the strange Captain Nemo's ship, the *Nautilus.* Here, Dr. Aronnax and his companions learn about Nemo's quest to explore the sea, which grants him freedom and the opportunity to avoid terrestrial issues, like humanity's suffering. Through different racial and gendered aspects of this adventure novel, Verne's work will be used to better comprehend French understandings of imperialism and how they differ from their British counterparts.

*20,000 Leagues Under the Seas* is structured so that Captain Nemo and the *Nautilus* are interpreted as a male, imperial being, while the sea is exclusively female. In fact, Captain Nemo and his vessel can be unified into one, coherent being, which contradicts Evans' stance. In Evans' monograph, he argues that in many of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, including *20,000 Leagues*, "the vessel is (as per tradition) often portrayed as a surrogate wife/mother figure, that is, supporter, protector, and lover, or, as Nemo phrased it: 'Yes, Professor,' Captain Nemo answered with true emotion, 'and I love it like the flesh of my flesh!'" (Evans 155). While the *Nautilus* is most definitely emotionally important to Nemo and supports his underwater endeavors, it is not female. The vessel is male and plays a highly sexual role. The *Nautilus* can be better understood as an extension of Captain Nemo, as this machine empowers him to carry out his masculine explorations of the sea. When Dr. Aronnax was initially trying to slay the sea monster that turns out to be the *Nautilus,* he describes it as follows: "a long black body

emerged…Its tail was beating violently and produced a considerable swell in the water. Never had a tail hit the water with such force." He goes on to state, "An enormous wake of dazzling whiteness marked the course of the animal" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 36). This passage is overtly sexual, as Dr. Aronnax articulates how the *Nautilus* is a masculine force, one that has the immense power to beat violently against the water. The *Nautilus* is described in a phallic manner, as it is long and can produce a swell in the seawater strong enough for water to foam. The whiteness that marks the *Nautilus'* power resembles seminal fluid, as the vessel is penetrating the sea with its magnificent presence. The *Nautilus* is reinforced as phallic at other points, including when Verne describes the vessel on the novel's first page as "a long, spindle-shaped object" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 5). This description is repeated, in addition to the *Nautilus* being depicted as cigar-shaped, reinforcing its masculinity.

Captain Nemo and the *Nautilus* are one united being on a mission to colonize the sea. As Nemo and his vessel are strong, male forces, they interact with the highly effeminate sea consistently. The sea is described effeminately, as it is vulnerable to the movements of the *Nautilus.* Furthermore, at some points, the ocean is described as white and milky, suggesting the female capability of lactating. Verne writes, "At seven in the evening, the half-submerged *Nautilus* was sailing through a sea of milk…The whole sky…seemed black, in contrast with the whiteness of the waters" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 186). This whiteness suggests several possibilities. While in the previous passage the whiteness was directly produced by the *Nautilus* and therefore suggested seminal fluid, the white milky sea here is directly produced by the sea and its creatures. Therefore, the sea's milky appearance is due to lactation. The whiteness also symbolizes female purity, which relates to the sea's sexual properties. The sea's whiteness is explained to derive from small glow-worms, which contributes to the novel's scientific

attributes, but it is necessary to draw upon Edward Said's *Orientalism* to better understand the sexual dynamics here.

Said's work helps readers view the sea as the East through its vulnerability and femininity. He writes, "the space of weaker or underdeveloped regions like the Orient was viewed as something inviting French interest, penetration, insemination—in short, colonization" (Said 219). This sentiment of invitation translates to *20,000 Leagues*, as Captain Nemo sees the voiceless sea in need of exploration and therefore penetration via the *Nautilus.* In fact, the term penetrate is used frequently, contributing to the novel's sexuality. The sea is female and weak, as it cannot resist Nemo's exploratory actions. It only has the power to resist Nemo and his crew through the rare case when giant squids attack the men near the novel's conclusion. Despite its grandeur and magnificence, the sea is effectively powerless to Captain Nemo and his intentions. Dr. Aronnax narrates how the sea provoked him and his companions to "contemplate the works of the Creator in the midst of the liquid element, but also to penetrate the most fearful mysteries of the ocean" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 123). To the men, the sea needs colonizing and a civilizing mission to tame its fearful marine creatures and unlock its mysteries to terrestrial beings. Both Doyle and Verne exhibit an enthusiasm for science in their Empire novels. This enthusiasm is evident in Verne's intricate descriptions of the *Nautilus* and its capabilities, in addition to Doyle's depiction of Professor Challenger's interest in dinosaurs and Holmes' science of deduction.

Captain Nemo is an outward critic of imperialism because of his enigmatic background, which is the subject of much speculation for Dr. Aronnax. Nemo's personal history and racial identity remain a mystery throughout the text. He is initially introduced as part of a group of two men, who are perceived as racial others to Aronnax and his companions. The first man, who is

presumably not Nemo, is described as short and diminutive, with "broad shoulders, robust arms and legs, a good head, thick black hair, a vigorous moustache, and alert piercing eyes" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 49). While the man's height correlates with the effeminate depiction of racial others in imperial texts, the remainder of his physical description is not feminine. He has facial hair and appears to be muscular. This already suggests a prominent deviation from the mode of description Doyle adopts concerning racial others, as it is at least realistically human. Furthermore, Nemo's physical description helps grant him the status of a full, complex character in a novel, despite his racial background. Verne writes, "He was tall; he had a wide forehead, straight nose, clearly defined mouth, and magnificent teeth…This man was certainly the most admirable specimen I had ever met" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 50). Here, Verne is affording a racial other not only masculinity through his height, but also physical attractiveness. Captain Nemo is called a fine specimen, despite the fact that Aronnax quickly discovers that Nemo speaks a language that is not recognizable and therefore not European.

Nemo's exercising of his mother tongue leads Dr. Aronnax to conduct an intricate guessing game of what his racial and national identity might be. After the French scientist narrates Nemo's appearance, he expresses that Nemo "conversed with [his companion] in a tongue I could not understand" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 50). He details how the language sounds, and Dr. Aronnax discusses with Ned and Conseil how to communicate with Nemo. In this scene, Dr. Aronnax pays a great deal of attention to pinpointing Nemo's nationality, with his nonwhite race being a more secondary concern. Nemo and his companion of the same background are not identified in colored terms like black or brown. Instead, Dr. Aronnax states: "There is a southern look about them; but their physical type does not allow me to decide whether they are Spaniards, Turks, Arabs, or Indians" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 53). Verne's

inclusion of Nemo possibly being a Spaniard is intentional, as it leaves a slight possibility he could be white, although it is doubtful. Dr. Aronnax concludes this thought, reminding Ned and Conseil of how their tongue was not identifiable. Interestingly, Dr. Aronnax uses the term "southern" to describe Nemo, suggesting that the captain and his assistant are most definitely of a darker phenotypical profile, perhaps part of the Global South. Yet, Verne's novel predates both Doyle novels by a few decades, and *20,000 Leagues* describes racial others as humans and even makes one the main character—Nemo.

Nemo is a racial other, particularly Indian. However, Nemo's Indian origin is not made clear in this novel, but instead its sequel. Dr. Aronnax's racial speculations help narrow his background to one of the four identities described above. Dr. Aronnax does fixate on the mystery behind Nemo's origins, stating at one point, "Would I ever know to what nation this strange man belonged, that boasted of belonging to none?" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 90). The French scientist needs to know Nemo's nation of origin because it helps elucidate his enigmatic background and would determine whether Nemo is white. However, it is confirmed that Captain Nemo is Indian if one considers the novel's sequel: *The Mysterious Island* (1874). Here, Nemo is demystified, as readers learn near the story's conclusion more about his background. Captain Nemo admits he is a lost Indian prince who participated in the Indian Rebellion of 1857—an important historical event for contextualizing not only *20,000 Leagues,* but also Doyle's *The Sign of Four* (Verne, *The Mysterious Island*). This background information regarding Nemo's nationality helps explain a great deal of the Captain's hypocritical attitudes towards imperialism and why he is seen as especially strange to the others on the *Nautilus.*

Nemo's imperial complexity is rich with hypocrisy and perhaps exhibits a unique opportunity in which the colonized becomes the colonizer. The captain of the *Nautilus* embarks

on a colonial mission, despite his background, by applying a different moral code to the land and the sea. He sees the sea as a space for freedom and imperial conquest, yet views terrestrial imperialism as immoral. Underwater, Nemo finds his personal freedom from humanity's troubles, yet he perpetuates the colonial actions he denounces on land when he is exploring underwater. The underwater forest that Dr. Aronnax and Captain Nemo explore is a territory Nemo considers his own, and Aronnax states, "In any case, who was there to dispute his possession of the underwater property?" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 111). Here, the narrator shows how the sea is a unique, unclaimed territory that has the potential to be colonized by Captain Nemo, as he effectively has no competition. Nemo's explorations must be classified as a colonial mission not only because of this moment, but also due to Nemo's mission to claim the South Pole. This location appeals to Nemo because it is entirely unique, having never been reached by other men before, let alone claimed. Nemo exercises his unlimited freedom in taking on this challenge, telling Aronnax that "To the South Pole, to that unknown point where the meridians of the globe meet. You know that I can do what I want with the *Nautilus*" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 296). He tells Aronnax that they will discover the Pole together, using imperialistic diction to justify this exploration. In fact, his rhetoric becomes more obviously colonial as the mission progresses. When Nemo and Aronnax reach the Pole, the Captain exclaims: "On this 21st day of March 1868, I, Captain Nemo, have reached the South Pole and the 90th degree, and I take possession of this part of the globe" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 312). Dr. Arronax responds to Nemo's exclamation, saying, "In whose name, captain?" Nemo responds with, "In my own, monsieur!" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 312). The territory is claimed in Nemo's name, and the captain is a proud colonizer of the seas, borrowing the rhetoric of terrestrial colonial colleagues.

There are no regulations governing Nemo's behavior underwater, which grants him freedom from terrestrial affairs that distress him. Nemo is content underwater, receiving his energy, food, and inspiration from the sea. Placing into consideration his Indian background and participation in the failed Mutiny, Captain Nemo is, in effect, a critic of terrestrial, or mainstream imperialism. Nemo even denounces colonials (presumably the British), as he once tells Aronnax: "It is not new continents that the earth needs, but new men!" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 125). Nemo takes issue with current colonial behavior being conducted on land, as the novel is set in the second half of the 1860s—an era of Empire and the beginnings of New Imperialism. He is most likely speaking in the context of Britain's rule over India, given the information *The Mysterious Island* provides a few years later. The former Indian prince perplexes Aronnax and the remainder of the crew, as he has conflicting, strange outlooks on his surroundings. A formerly colonized individual, Nemo abandons his past and finds his freedom in a new place. The sea liberates the troubled character, as he has the chance to claim the South Pole and avoid land for the rest of his life. Aronnax calls the sea Nemo's realm, claiming that Nemo "did not wish to leave it" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 115). Yet, despite the unlimited freedom Nemo finds underwater, he does make his disapproval for terrestrial imperialism clear to everyone.

Nemo has moments when he voices his opinion on colonial matters, as he conveniently fails to see how his actions underwater are deeply colonial. He even adopts humanitarian rhetoric, justifying his hunt for a treasure. Nemo surprises everyone when he exclaims:

> Do you think that it is for my own benefit that I take the trouble to gather these treasures? Who told you that I do not put them to good use? Do you think I am unaware there are suffering beings and oppressed races on this planet, wretches to be helped and victims to be saved? Don't you understand…? (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 253).

Nemo's impassioned speech shows that he is not as removed from terrestrial affairs as Dr. Aronnax and the others may sense. His stance as a racial other is evident only through the eyes of Aronnax and the other Western characters, but in this rare moment, Nemo makes his racial background not only apparent but also political. He most definitely sees colonized people, like Indians, as oppressed. Yet, Verne's novel is special because of Nemo's power as a racial other and the immense attention he receives as a dynamic character.

Nemo is a racial other granted immense agency, and this starkly contrasts with the depiction of racial others in Doyle's British Empire novels. In Verne's novel, an Indian man receives the opportunity, through his submarine, to explore a new frontier underwater and distance himself from the implications and disadvantages his race causes. Captain Nemo is tall, commanding, and earns the respect of Aronnax, despite the suspicion he arouses. Aronnax respects Nemo partly out of fear, as Nemo has unofficially kidnapped him aboard the *Nautilus*. However, Aronnax initially finds Nemo attractive and reiterates how commanding and cool the Captain remains through most of their time together. Furthermore, and most importantly, Nemo's ability to speak French fluently is important to Dr. Aronnax and his companions Conseil and Ned Land. The first time Aronnax realizes Nemo can speak French well, the scientist states: "He expressed himself with perfect ease, without any accent. His sentences were well phrased, his words well chosen, his fluency remarkable. Nevertheless, I had the impression he was not French" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 61). These remarks are critical, as Aronnax expresses in detail the quality of Nemo's French. At this point, he had already suspected Nemo's status as a racial other due to his speaking presumably Hindi; however, Nemo's French language skills grant him credibility to Aronnax. Nemo's knowledge of French is in accordance with his status as a

colonizer, despite his race. He is speaking a colonial language as well as actual Frenchmen do, and this helps build his imperial profile, despite being an atypical colonial candidate.

Related to the importance of language, Verne shows how he sees more of an emphasis on nationality, as opposed to general racial categories in this historical moment. This is evident not only in the way Dr. Aronnax works to guess Nemo's country of origin throughout the text, but also through the Canadian character Ned Land. Ned shows readers how to the French, identity is suggested to be more about a shared culture and language, as opposed to only a shared race or whiteness. Dr. Aronnax finds Ned highly agreeable, as he thinks "a Canadian is half French" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 58). The narrator registers Ned as a Canadian person before registering him as simply Ned Land, as he is mostly referred to as "the Canadian" in Dr. Aronnax's narration. Only in person is Ned Land referred to by his name. However, Captain Nemo and Conseil are not referred to by their nationalities because Nemo's is a mystery and Conseil's is French and therefore the accepted norm to Dr. Aronnax. Verne's novel expresses the psychological importance that nationality has to French individuals, as even a white individual is distinguished from French white people by his nationality. While it does not perfectly translate to how racial others are perceived, as racism is still evident in French colonialism, it does help distinguish this mental approach from the British imperialism evident in Doyle's works. The differences between British and French imperial styles in the novels do not directly translate to the differences between the two types of colonization, but they can help readers understand different interpretations of this process in literature.

Mohamed Benrabah's article "'Open' and 'closed' languages in the postcolonial era" helps explain the relationship between the French language and French imperialism. Benrabah discusses contemporary colonial associations with the French language that are not as applicable

to English. He argues how there is a correlation between the French language and French nationalism/ethnicity, which is, in effect, culture (Benrabah 256). French is a "closed" language that is highly associated with its culture. In addition, native French speakers are extremely aware of what is proper French, even to the extent that Canadian French can be rejected. As a result, Benrabah draws the distinction between French writers and Francophone writers, stating that the latter label helps perpetuate the refusal to accept the Other, i.e. a colonized subject (Benrabah 261). Francophone, as a term, sounds like French but is still not French, and this reflects the greater trend of differentiating between the two terms. One can be Francophone and speak the language, but this does not grant him or her absolute Frenchness. While Dr. Aronnax perpetuates racial othering in his depiction of Nemo as a strange, not French person, Verne's novel is a special case. Here, Ned is deemed half French because of his Canadian nationality, suggesting an acceptance. Furthermore, Nemo is deemed not French by Aronnax, but his linguistic capabilities purchase him respect that Benrabah's article has not anticipated, as race is deemphasized in this work from 1870. Keisuke Kasuya writes how, "It was believed that French was the language of universal human reason and had the power to civilize people who spoke it" (Kasuya 235). In Nemo's case, he is civilized to Dr. Aronnax—civilized to the extent that he is the most powerful, most imperial figure onboard the *Nautilus*. Captain Nemo distances himself from his status as a racial other, as he is above terrestrial imperialism's rules given his rejection of imperialism. Therefore, while Nemo may have been rejected from being French, he is not treated as such.

What makes *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas* distinctive among Empire novels of the late nineteenth century is its bestowment of power upon Captain Nemo. The former Indian prince's gaze is imperative to examine, as it grants him the status of colonizer. When Dr. Aronnax first encounters Nemo, he describes him as follows:

> When this curious personage was looking intently at something, his eyebrows frowned and his broad eyelids contracted to circumscribe his pupils and thus restrict his visual field—and he *did* look. What a gaze! How he made distant objects larger, and how he penetrated your very soul! How he could pierce the liquid depths, so opaque to our eyes, and how he could read to the bottom of the seas! (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 50).

The cold, mysterious Captain Nemo penetrates the sea via his vessel, but more importantly with his gaze. Dr. Aronnax emphasizes how powerful, intrusive, and penetrating Nemo's gaze is. In fact, it is one that can see through the sea—his colonial object. Dr. Aronnax writes how the water is opaque to his eyes, but clear and readable to Nemo. This emphasizes how it is most definitely Nemo, not a white Frenchman like Aronnax, who has the imperial power in this situation and true status of the colonizer. In *The Sign of Four*, Doyle also relies on the power of observation in Holmes' detective approach. When identifying Tonga's size, Holmes relies on his observation of the perpetrator's footprints and exhibits how integral vision is to his professional success. Holmes can guard the British Empire through his visual identification and deduction of potential threats.

Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturization* (1992) enlightens readers on the meaning of Nemo's gaze. In her monograph, Pratt explores the importance of travel writing and how such works "by Europeans about non-European parts of the world went (and go) about creating the 'domestic subject' of Euroimperialism" (Pratt 4). Here, the domestic subject refers to the European male subject who in this unique case is an Indian: Captain Nemo. Pratt's monograph explores the notion of the "anti-conquest," a term that explains how imperialists exonerate themselves from their colonial projects. The protagonist of the anti-conquest is described by Pratt as a "European male subject of European landscape

discourse—he whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess" (Pratt 7). This seeing-man is a threatening presence, one who helps illustrate the gendered nature of imperialism to which Said alluded in *Orientalism.* Nemo is the seeing-man, who takes possession of the sea, using it for his food source and inspiration. Dr. Aronnax's description of Nemo's gaze and eyes overtly confirms how Nemo is the novel's seeing-man, not an actual European like Aronnax.

Nemo's treatment of the sea classifies the water as a passive, colonized being. Nemo sees the sea through the glass viewing chamber in the *Nautilus*, which is described as "thick crystal windows" when the crew encounters an army of mollusks (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 123). Here, "The sea changed its backdrop and its scenery for our pleasure, and we were called on to contemplate the works of the Creator in the midst of the liquid element, but also to penetrate the most fearful mysteries of the ocean" (Verne, *Twenty Thousand* 123). Nemo and Dr. Aronnax are passively looking at the sea, demystifying it. In addition, Nemo is claiming the sea through his gaze. Pratt writes that while the European presence is unquestioned, "the landscanning European eye seems powerless to act upon or interact with this landscape that offers itself. Unheroic, unparticularized, egoless, the eye seems able to do little but gaze from a periphery of its own creation" (Pratt 60). Pratt powerfully articulates what the imperial male gaze involves. It examines its colonial landscape in the way that Nemo views the sea, which offers herself to Nemo. Moreover, Pratt hints at an involuntariness associated with the imperial gaze, which corresponds to Nemo's situation. Dr. Aronnax describes how Nemo gazes into your soul, looking in a way that may seem intentional. However, when Nemo is looking at the sea in an imperial context, he is doing so in an involuntary way, as the sea is presenting herself to him in a fashion that is unavoidable. The sea surrounds Nemo, and its presence is uncontestable as it is Nemo's surroundings, engulfing him and all his extensions like the *Nautilus.* Furthermore, the *Nautilus*

consistently interacts with the sea, as it only operates by this involuntary contact. The sea is passively present, a female object that Nemo cannot help but gaze upon with the advanced visual capabilities he reportedly has. Nemo's gaze illustrates the power Verne grants him as a colonizer, and this capability differs from the authority racial others have in Doyle's works.

Verne and Doyle's Empire novels suggest one fundamental difference between French and British imperialism evident in late nineteenth-century literature, which is that racial others have agency in the French context, but not the British. In the preceding chapter, this inquiry argued that Doyle's depiction of racial others was done in an effeminate manner that consequently gave this group no voice or opinion. The British were concerned with the degeneration of their racial stock and maintained racial segregation as a means of preserving their whiteness. Their imperialism was racially focused, which does differ from the French approach. While imperialism is itself a racially charged process based on the civilizing mission the West imposed upon the East, the French were more concerned with nationality and did allow for some limited social mobility, as Captain Nemo exemplifies in his achievements as a colonizer. Historian James J. Cooke, in his monograph *New French Imperialism: 1880-1910*, writes, "France's mission was to spread the gospel of French culture, liberalism, and egalitarianism" (Cooke 20). French colonial subjects could aspire to become civilized, even if it did not mean they could be completely French. This partial assimilation suggests that the French imperial system did provide a means of social mobility, if a colonized subject submitted to the French language and other cultural features—as Nemo did. The strange Nemo is rewarded for his command of the French language and granted agency and the most power in the novel, despite his background. As an Indian man, Nemo may have been attracted to French culture and language for the opportunity for social mobility, but also simply because it was not British.

However, despite Nemo's opportunity for social mobility through the French system, it is important to note Verne's repeated description of him as strange through Arronax's narration. The French word for strange is étrange, and the French word for foreigner is étranger. Coming from the same root, these words signal the underlying xenophobia in Nemo's description. As a common theme in sf works, this semantic detail highlights the imperial nature of *20,000 Leagues*, even concerning the uneasy description of Captain Nemo.

Verne's writing deviates from Doyle's for many reasons—including their different nationalities—but also the different time periods in which they wrote. One possible explanation for Verne's nuanced progressiveness in *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas* corresponds to the fact that it was written in 1870, two decades before Doyle's works. The conclusion of the nineteenth century is sometimes referred to by Victorian scholars as the *fin de siècle* period. Although it is arguably an international phenomenon, the Victorians saw this century's conclusion as one filled with anxieties about race, sexuality, and other factors. Consequently, the *fin de siècle* period aligns with Brantlinger's argument presented in this inquiry's second chapter, where he claims that the British were increasingly concerned with their racial stock. This anxiety is reflected and starkly contrasts the concerns Verne has in his novel. Chapter Four's discussion of Haggard will elaborate further on the *fin de siècle* and how it relates to the different novels.

Moreover, Captain Nemo's underwater colonial actions and the general feminization of racial others, as is evident through Doyle's writings, show why it is necessary to consider gender's role in Empire novels. However, *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas* has no female characters besides arguably the sea, and both of Doyle's novels investigated in Chapter Two only have minor female characters. Furthermore, these female characters (Mary Morstan and Gladys) are only included in the novel for symbolic purposes, as they are love interests of the British

imperial characters, Watson and Malone, and present to provide the men motivation. Therefore, it is imperative to examine an Empire novel where female characters are developed and given attention in the text. H. Rider Haggard's *She* fits this criterion, and this novel will be the focal point of this inquiry's final chapter, which explores gender in imperial situations.

## Chapter 4:

## Gender: H. Rider Haggard's *She*

Published in 1887, H. Rider Haggard's *She* has since been an exceptionally popular novel, exploring the romantic adventures of two British men in Africa. Narrator Horace Holly embarks on a journey with his adopted son Leo to a lost African kingdom, per the instructions of Leo's deceased father Vincey. Here, they encounter the native Amahaggers, the People of the Rocks, in addition to the mystical, enigmatic white queen, Ayesha. The novel concludes with Ayesha confusing Leo, an attractive young Englishman with a Grecian profile, for her dead lover Kallikrates. The queen walks into the Spirit of Life to convince Leo to bathe in fire to gain his immortality. Hoping this action will allow the two to remain united forever, Ayesha is mistaken. Her second exposure to the Spirit of Life instead reverses her immortality, provoking her to show her true age of over two thousand years, and she withers away. *She* is filled with fantastical adventure, and it is a rare work of imperial fiction in which female voices are strongly featured. As a result, it is of immense value when trying to study gender's role in Empire novels.

To understand the novel's gender dynamics, it is useful to start with the depiction of the white queen, Ayesha. She is introduced to readers in an enigmatic manner, with an immense buildup of anticipation before she appears. Horace Holly narrates how those that served "She-who-must-be-obeyed" were mute, purposely disabled so they could not articulate to those

outside of her direct servitude how she appeared. Holly, prior to meeting Ayesha, claims how, "I am an Englishman, and why, I asked myself, should I creep into the presence of some savage woman as though I were a monkey in fact as well as in name?" (Haggard 136). Haggard includes Holly's cynicism to contrast it with his eventual infatuation and immense attraction for the queen. Furthermore, it articulates how her respect, as a ruler, was not implicitly granted by a civilized Englishman because of her gender and ties to savagery. Here, Haggard echoes British fears of racial degeneration, as paying homage to an African Queen would strip Holly of his whiteness and even humanity. In *The Lost World,* the ape-men symbolize this anxiety manifested, and Holly is taking preventative measures here to distance himself from Ayesha and avoid such racial degeneration.

When Holly meets Ayesha, he describes her voice and physical appearance in a targeted manner that alludes to her role as a temptress, a Siren with Oriental seductive powers. One of the first things she says to Holly in his recollection is: "'Why art thou so frightened, stranger?' asked the sweet voice again—a voice which, like the strains of softest music, seemed to draw the heart out of me" (Haggard 140). Here, Ayesha's voice appears to have the sweet seduction that a Siren, from Greek mythology, would have. In fact, the Siren myth corresponds not only to Ayesha's beauty, but also her danger, as is manifested through her hyper-emotional volatility. Sirens would sing to sailors the sweetest of songs, only to have them killed. Horace's response to Ayesha questioning his fright is: "It is thy beauty that makes me fear, O Queen" (Haggard 140). This corresponds to her status as a feared Siren, and Horace becomes infatuated, hopelessly sexually attracted to the Queen, even after her demise in the Spirit of Life. It is a sexual attraction that defies reason, as her beauty is not human, but instead supernatural.

When Ayesha begins unveiling herself after speaking to Horace, he describes this sexual scene in a symbolic manner that suggests Ayesha's connection to Eve in the story of Genesis. Horace describes her beauty as follows:

> [M]y eyes travelled up her form, now robed only in a garb of clinging white that did but serve to show its rich and imperial shape, instinct with a life that was more than life, and with a certain serpent-like grace which was more than human...About the waist her white kirtle was fastened by a double-headed snake of solid gold, above which her gracious form swelled up in lines as pure as they were lovely (Haggard 152).

Horace finds her celestial beauty to be one that is pure, but he conflates it with evil, as he depicts Ayesha as a serpent not only in her attire, but also when she frequently hisses in fits of anger. Ayesha's connection to snakes depicts her as having had contact with Satanic forces, which Eve does in the Bible when she defies God's instructions and consumes fruit from the tree of knowledge. This allusion is powerful, as it pushes readers to mistrust her allure in the manner in which Eve is mistrusted. Eve caused humankind to fall into sin and lose its perfection, and her power as an individual was mishandled. Similarly, Horace's description of Ayesha is suggesting that the white queen has the same kind of destructive power Eve had. Eve pushed Adam to sin and to make a mistake, and this reference suggests that Ayesha has comparable powers in corrupting men and pushing back civilization. Eve's actions fated humanity in a negative manner, and Holly, as a British man, feels that this savage queen can do the same. In addition, this description distances Ayesha from being a human female, as Holly sees her as a celestial being who is larger than life and beyond human. Such distancing suggests to readers that perhaps it is forgivable for the white British men to succumb to her seduction, as she is a species above them and still white.

Despite the power Ayesha is granted in her appeal to Holly and Leo, her actual rule is questionable and is seen as illegitimate to the white, male voices, which are the only legitimate opinions in the Victorian context. There are several passages where Ayesha's rule is seen as limited, despite her larger-than-life sexual appeal. For instance, in an initial conversation between Holly and Ayesha, the former mentions how the queen has her people. Her immediate, emotional response is, "'My people! Speak not to me of my people,' she answered hastily; 'these slaves are no people of mine, they are but dogs to do my bidding'" (Haggard 150). Ayesha's tone here is not that of a respected, collected ruler. Instead, she is depicted as dangerously emotional and detached from her people, proving her incompetence as a leader. Furthermore, she is overtly racist against her people, making an effort to distinguish herself from her subjects in a way that shows the negative consequences of racial mixing. Her racism is not the respectable kind for a Victorian, as she is proving herself to be a hysterical queen unworthy of her title, since she does not recognize her subjects. Ayesha's racism is rejected as it is not disguised, or scientifically substantiated, which contrasts with the British Empire's racism. Furthermore, her rule is a greater commentary on how it is unacceptable for an African Queen to rule an African Empire, as her rule is not British-influenced. Such leadership directly defies the principles of imperialism, as the civilized are obligated to rule over the uncivilized.

Ayesha's rule is represented as illegitimate in that her entire empire is questionable and one that readers ought to reject. When Ayesha explains to Holly how she effectively rules her people, she states: "How thinkest though that I rule this people? I have but a regiment of guards to do my bidding, therefore it is not by force. It is by terror. My empire is of the imagination" (Haggard 173). Her rule resembles that of a hysterical dictator, and she admits, on her own will, that her empire is imaginary and therefore not legitimate and perhaps even nonexistent. It is at

least an empire readers are encouraged to reject, as it is one operating on terror, and Ayesha uses this rationale to explain to Holly why those that attacked his white cohort must die. There is no justice system—the law is Ayesha's emotional state, which readers are pushed to see as flawed and uncomfortable, as it deviates from the norm of male, unemotional, and therefore rational, authority. Ayesha further describes her empire, claiming, "No other woman shall dwell in my lord's thoughts; my empire must be all my own" (Haggard 198). In this quotation, the enigmatic queen is expressing that her empire is now her lover's. Its first description was imaginary, based on her emotional whims, and now it is one where her lord reigns as a key component. This all leads readers to conclude that this empire is fallible and not worthy of admiration. Haggard supplements this argument by including several textual moments where Holly is seen giving Ayesha rational advice, in an effort to calm her and push her to act as a logical, proper leader. This perpetuates the notion that female rulers are incompetent, and such inclusions in the text are purposeful and relate to greater themes of Empire in the age of New Imperialism. As Said articulates, the East, as represented by Ayesha and her kingdom, is "passive, seminal, feminine, even silent and supine" (Said 138). Ayesha's effeminate empire is non-Western and therefore inviting colonization. Haggard is encouraging readers to feel that the British should colonize this kingdom, establishing a state based on justice and reason for the sake of Ayesha's people.

*She* uses the perspectives of various females, both racial others and Ayesha, to warn readers of the dangers of female power and agency. Haggard's novel, on the surface, seems progressive in its choice to dominate the novel with quotations from women and their stories, but this tale articulates the various racial and gendered anxieties of white British men at the conclusion of the nineteenth century. In effect, *She* is a slippery slope positing what would happen if both racial others and woman had power. Haggard suggests the following outcome:

chaos. He sees such power as a reversal of society's natural order, and he provides these two categories of people such unique attention to show his audience why this should never occur in real society. *She's* attention focuses mainly on the queen and the racial others, but what the novel is fundamentally *about* is white British masculinity and its corresponding femininity. Furthermore, not one human, white female voice can be heard in *She*, despite the abundance of female presence. Only racial others and a hysterical celestial being are granted voices, and those voices are irrational and ought to be disregarded by the British public.

Rebecca Stott's article, "The Dark Continent: Africa as Female Body in Haggard's Adventure Fiction," incorporates the racial and gender politics this inquiry explores. One of Stott's foci is the role of white women in adventure fiction, which corresponds to science fiction works in the age of Empire, as many novels belonged to both categories. Stott articulates the importance of Darwinian thought in this time period, as evolutionary theory permeated society. Stott writes, "White man was to be highest in the scale of development and black man just above the ape with various intermediary races in between" (Stott 75). She continues, "White woman, by virtue of her smaller brain size would be closer to the evolutionary stages of children and savages" (Stott 75). At the lowest point of the hierarchy is the female racial other, as she is racially and sexually primitive. This evolutionary theory is evident throughout all of the Empire novels studied, particularly the British ones. As Brantlinger articulated, the British feared racial regression, and this explains Doyle's inclusion of the ape-men in *The Lost World* and his dehumanizing description of Tonga in *The Sign of Four*. Haggard's fears are similar, but he executes such anxieties through a more gendered approach, since he focuses more on female racial others. In both novels, Doyle only depicts male racial others and implies the dangers of racial mixing and regression through the ape-men and Tonga's threat to the Empire. Haggard

instead overtly shows how Ustane or other female racial others can threaten British whiteness and masculinity if they gain a voice or any social power.

In *She,* the fear of barbarism and racial regression is evident, as Ustane succeeds in winning over Leo's affections through her persistence. The men have journeyed to Africa, where female racial others like Ustane roam free and can tempt the white Englishmen to revert to their baser instincts and sexually connect with their more primitive roots. This corresponds to the greater imperial goal driving the entire text, which is to penetrate Africa, as Stott articulates. Such penetration parallels the one that Nemo executes upon the sea. However, with Africa, Stott articulates, "the fear expressed in such texts is of barbarism beneath the façade of civilization which could be released at any point…a barbarism identified in evolutionary theory with blackness and specifically with the black female as [a] sexual being" (Stott 75). Ustane provides the best example of this anxiety's manifestation in *She*, as she does pursue Leo with some success.

Ustane's presence in *She* is critical when looking at the importance of race and gender's intersections in Empire novels. Ustane's attraction to Leo initially appears to be unrequited, as she is described by Holly as "Leo's lady friend, Ustane, who, by the way, clung to that young gentleman like his own shadow" (Haggard 91). Holly's diction here suggests that Ustane is the aggressor and the one pursuing Leo, as she not only clings to him, but also eventually tends to him when he is deathly ill with a fever. Her affection is made very clear, and it is symptomatic of the power Amahagger women are given in this social context—something of which Haggard disapproves. The female racial others are described as living in perfect equality with the Amahagger men. Holly expresses how the women "are not held to [the men] by any binding ties…they never pay attention to, or even acknowledge, any man as their father, even when their

male parentage is perfectly well known" (Haggard 81). Not only is female rule deemed irrational and dangerous through Ayesha's example, but so is female sexual assertiveness and equality with men. Haggard argues this by having the Amahagger women's progressiveness directly associated with the society's general backwardness. They are perceived as savages, and they practice cannibalism, which surfaces with Mahomed's death. The Amahagger people are progressive in a manner which defies logic, as they adhere to stereotypes an African native would be assigned in a late nineteenth-century British novel. These stereotypes include lower intelligence and barbaric, violent behavior, and such stereotypes are linked to their perceived savagery as uncivilized people. According to Pratt, savagery in New Imperialism was based on "reductive versions of social Darwinism which did not mourn and sometimes explicitly advocated the elimination of the 'inferior races'" (Pratt 39).

The battle for Leo's affection, between Ayesha and Ustane, is a symbolic one that represents the greater anxiety of white masculinity and femininity. Both Ayesha and Ustane desire Leo, a blond Englishman, and both of their desires are strong enough that Ustane resists Ayesha, and Ayesha murders Ustane. The hyper-emotionality of their desires illustrates how attractive the white man is to both nonwhite women and white women. However, Haggard makes it a point to his readers that the white woman does triumph over the racial other, with Ustane's death. However, Ustane, as a sexual threat, was entirely legitimate, and she did win Leo's affection at one point. Ustane tended to him, and Holly describes how at one point, Ustane "turning to Leo with a look of the most utter tenderness that I ever saw upon the face of a woman, civilised or savage, she took his head between her hands, and kissed him on the forehead as a mother might" (Haggard 93). This textual moment is critical, as it validates the anxiety white British individuals have over the sexual threat racial others present. When journeying to

Africa, it is entirely possible for a white man not only to penetrate Africa, but also its people—ultimately expressing the slippery slope of barbarism and racial degeneration that plagued *fin de siècle* works. Ustane's tender facial expression was indistinguishable from civilization or savagery, and she even adopts a maternal role in her caretaking of the prized Leo. The maternal role supersedes the sexual when thinking of this situation in terms of threatening white femininity. While sexual relations with racial others can be masked and pushed aside for their illicitness, adopting a public, maternal caretaking role affords Ustane legitimacy, as she has infiltrated another personal sphere of a white man's life. Furthermore, Leo accepted her assistance and even fleetingly missed it, as he fought for his affection for Ustane prior to her death.

The sexual appeal of the East, or racial others, is a fear for white British people, as Ustane's presence shows, but also with Gladys in Doyle's *The Lost World.* Interestingly, when Gladys was initially described physically, she was depicted with the sexual appeal of the Orient. Malone claimed, "Gladys was full of every womanly quality. Some judged her to be cold and hard, but such thought was a treason. That delicately-bronzed skin, almost Oriental in its coloring, that raven hair, the large liquid eyes, the full but exquisite lips—all the stigmata of passion were there" (Doyle, *The Lost World* 10). In this quotation, it is evident that Gladys is an acceptable romantic prospect for a white Englishman like Malone, because she is white in her assumed background. To Malone, Gladys' attractiveness is powerful, transcending to the divine realm with her "stigmata of passion." Stigmata suggests that Gladys is being compared to Jesus Christ, as this term normally refers to the crucifixion wounds Christ endured. Her association to Christ suggests that desiring her is allowed, as Christianity is perceived by the British as Western. However, her sexual appeal strongly suggests her having an unofficial Eastern

appearance that Malone desires. Strategically, Doyle states that her skin is bronzed and "almost Oriental in its coloring," suggesting a safe racial distance from the actual Orient, while simultaneously admitting to a sexual appeal that darker skin may have. Furthermore, Gladys has raven hair, full lips, and large eyes, which Malone states are markers of passion; however, it is entirely possible that such phenotypical features can be attributed to a racial other—particularly the black hair and full lips. Gladys' physical appearance is a concession to the Orient's sexual attraction, but also a reminder of how white femininity drives British men to go explore the unexplored frontiers, penetrating such territories with their presence on the noble quest to manhood and worthiness for white women.

The East's sexual appeal relates to the degenerationist discourses prevalent in the late nineteenth century. Because female racial others have been established as a significant sexual threat and interest to British men through *She* and even *The Lost World*, there is immense British anxiety over racial degeneration and a growth in barbarism due to Charles Darwin's work being interpreted in a Social Darwinian manner. Robbie McLaughlan's book chapter entitled "Haggard and Freud" from *Re-imagining the 'Dark Continent' in fin de siècle Literature* approaches Haggard's work from a Freudian angle, and McLaughlan cites Darwin's influence on the time period in which Haggard was writing. McLaughlan writes, "Contemporary archaeological discourse that was influenced by Darwinian evolutionism interpreted humanity's primordial past in terms of a 'childhood' of the human race" (McLaughlan 150). Humanity's past, evident through the primitive race, is found in Africa, and white British men are travelling there in a manner that resembles Freud's theorization of childhood. Worries of barbarism or racial degeneration intersected with what Haggard would have understood as childhood, which "Bivona defines as a dilution or grievous loss of one's 'primitiveness,' 'a rupture with the past

which condemns one to return to the primitive world of the present to recover one's bearings'" (McLaughlan 151). Bivona's definition here resembles what the ape-men represented in *The Lost World,* as Doyle called these monstrous beings the missing links between what connected humans and monkeys—another derivative of Darwinian thought. However, this loss of one's primitiveness functions in a way that threatens the status quo of British society. When men are venturing into new territories like Africa to reconcile with their primitive past, one must question why and for whom. Freud read *She*, and the psychoanalyst plays into Haggard's work because he saw *She* as filled with many hidden meanings, including repressed desires and personal regression. In *She*, Leo personally regresses in his relationship with Ustane, since she is of an inferior, more primitive race. Furthermore, this union could also represent a repressed desire, manifesting itself in Leo's primitiveness resurging. This sexual repression all relates to Freud's theory of the unconscious. *She* is the revelation of the unconscious, which is the barbarism white British society fears will be unleashed.

McLaughlan's chapter emphasizes how Africa has a female sexuality, but he neglects to mention the importance of white femininity in Haggard's adventure romances. This inquiry argues that white femininity is a primary driving force behind imperialism, particularly the British context. McLaughlan sees *She's* Africa, which is blank, as directly parallel to "the mysterious realm of female sexuality" (McLaughlan 155). Leo and Holly embark on their adventure, penetrating the female lands with their traces of whiteness and civilization, ultimately leaving their mark and fulfilling their personal missions. However, McLaughlan's chapter seems to neglect the importance of the white woman at home, and instead focuses on the imperial male subject and his Freudian actions and desires. Reverting to the question, "for whom are the British men venturing into the unknown," the answer is for the white woman at home. Doyle overtly

frames the imperial quest in this manner, with Malone and Gladys' romance. White women are the agents of reproduction—the individuals who will ensure the quality of Britain's racial stock. Even though the men risk "going native" when they embark on their imperial missions, they do so for the sake of those in their home country, particularly the women.

Stott explains where white women ranked in nineteenth-century British society. She details how white women lay in between the extremes of the "dualisms of white/male/civilized and black/female/primitive" (Stott 76). Nineteenth-century anthropology, which influenced the hierarchies of races, focused on classification wherever possible. This pervasive need to rank races, to Stott, may have occurred "in order to reassure itself that white maleness was a good distance from the savage beast, the black man or the ape which lurked beneath the façade of civilization" (Stott 76). Furthermore, this intense projection of everything that is immoral and antagonistic to European values suggests that this "is matched by the projection of these similar fears (barbarism within civilization) onto the figure of the white woman" (Stott 76). Stott sees the white woman as "the weak spot in the veneer of civilization by virtue of her position in evolutionary development" (Stott 76). In other words, because the white woman fluctuates in between the polar ends of civilized and primitive, she is vulnerable to regression, may succumb to barbarism, and thus might cause racial degeneration, since her presence is necessary to preserve the quality of the white British racial stock.

However, this inquiry diverges from Stott's stance on the status of the white woman, as one could alternatively view the white woman's status as not even classifiable—not worthy of figuring in the racial hierarchy. Perhaps, the white woman is beyond such ranking, as she is upheld in a manner that supersedes the human. Ayesha's existence would verify this hypothesis, as this celestial queen's whiteness is consistently emphasized as her most attractive feature.

Furthermore, if the white man is at risk of becoming a savage after his imperial adventures, his racial degeneration would support the notion of the white woman being unable to mate with him. Ultimately, this degeneration would perpetuate a cycle of frustration in the colonial world, as white men would become tainted by their primitive environments and revert to their bestial selves. The frustration lies within the fact that the men could become racially tainted, when their colonial missions were undertaken for the sake of women at home. Furthermore, imperialism, in its nature, is overtly racial—but also, overtly sexual. The colonized, like Africa and the sea, serve as surrogates for females, as they are penetrated by these men. In *She*, Haggard confirms that the colonized has a sexuality that threatens the women at home, through racial others like Ustane.

White British women are revered to the extent that they are inaccessible, and the British men are susceptible to unworthiness after their colonial missions. In *She*, the only white female—"She-who-must-be-obeyed"—despite her emotional volatility, is sexually desired. She is an incompetent queen, hyper-emotional, and even suggested to have ties to Satan and generalized evil, yet she is still desired. Holly desires Ayesha even after seeing her wither away near the novel's conclusion, since he remembers her in her best state. This resembles the way white women are remembered fondly before men embarked on their colonial missions abroad. When the men return, all that is reinforced is the white woman's purity, which starkly contrasts with their failed virtue following interactions with racial others, platonic and sexual. In *The Lost World*, Malone still remembers Gladys after traveling to South America, and he still desires her. However, his mission abroad—despite doing it for her—proved useless. His time away tainted him and was insufficient for seeking Gladys's affection, as she had already found someone else who remained at home. These imperial adventures serve as a sexual commentary related to the masculinity, worthiness, and racial purity of British white colonizers. Furthermore, all four

novels in this inquiry express how gender and race are inextricably related in the context of Empire, and thus these two topics were granted the most attention. Haggard's *She* is well-known to be an adventure romance situated in the imperial context; however, this chapter has shown how the historical context, through the *fin de siècle* phenomenon, influenced this novel and Doyle's to a great extent. This inquiry related the Empire novels studied to the context of the sf genre's development. Such an examination permits readers to see not only how history has influenced literature, but also how important genre development is to literature.

**Conclusion:**

This inquiry examined four different Empire novels with the intention of appreciating the diversity of not only this type of literature, but also different types of imperialism. However, it proved satisfying to see the consistent, inextricable relationship between race and gender. In these four novels by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Jules Verne, and H. Rider Haggard, this inquiry determined that these literary works suggested different imperial features between the British and the French. While one cannot definitively determine that these novels fully reflect the historical differences between the British and French Empire in New Imperialism, these works serve as products of imperial culture and therefore have some value. The biggest divergence between Verne's depiction and the British authors' depiction of racial others is a bestowment of agency. French racial others, particularly Captain Nemo, are granted a voice, power, and control in the colonial context. Nemo, as an Indian man, can colonize the sea and exercise control over his actions. This grants him the freedom to choose what he does, but also personal responsibility. Doyle and Haggard do not grant their racial others agency. Their nonwhite characters are scarcely quoted directly (excluding Haggard's Ayesha) and seen as incapable of thinking for

themselves, which justifies the British's paternalistic civilizing mission. These Empire novels are especially rich sources of analysis because of the intersection between gender and race.

Chapters Three and Four addressed the critical role of gender in colonial situations and illustrated Said's binary of the masculine West versus the feminine East. The sea and Africa were the Eastern, colonial objects penetrated by Nemo, Holly, and Leo. Verne described an atypical colonial situation where the colonized became the colonizer, and this reversal illustrates how science fiction powerfully addresses contemporary social issues. Verne creates a situation where a racial other adopts anti-imperialist rhetoric, yet has readers witness his hypocritical colonization of the passive sea. Readers are provided an opportunity to see familiar power dynamics represented in an unfamiliar setting, and this thought-provoking reversal pushes one to question whether or not imperialism is acceptable and what its consequences are. Chapter Four provides another thought experiment, where readers see how a white African Queen would rule her African Kingdom. Haggard depicts Ayesha as emotionally volatile and incompetent, and this queen is more focused on her dead lover than her people. This problematic depiction of female rule, while sexist, is valuable to this inquiry. *She*, a work that features female voices, illustrates how one cannot separate gender and race in imperial contexts. They are linked, as Haggard shows the negative consequences of female sexual assertion and political rule. Furthermore, Tonga, in Chapter Two, exemplifies how race and gender are related. His effeminate depiction in *The Sign of Four* illustrates colonization to be a masculine enterprise. However, what this inquiry is ultimately concerned with is the Empire novel's relationship to the science fiction genre's development.

This inquiry asserts the value of science fiction, as it can teach readers about current or potential social issues. Suvin discusses extrapolative properties of sf and shows how innovation

is important to sf. This feature provides hypotheses on future issues related to technology or society. This inquiry stresses the significance of extrapolation, as its predictive value can benefit society. Because of this feature, people today generally associate sf with progressiveness. Sf is futuristic because it incorporates hypotheses about future phenomena based on current science. However, this inquiry challenges the notion of sf's progressiveness because this genre did originate from imperialism—a political ideology with a racist foundation. Initially, this inquiry asked whether sf's origins should make readers uncomfortable with the genre or see it as less progressive. After learning of Haggard's depiction of Ayesha or Doyle's representation of racial others, should science fiction's inherent progressiveness be questioned? Its earlier forms should be recognized as appropriate to their time period, but this inquiry has worked to show that older sf works teach many things to readers. Current depictions of aliens have a past—they are described in a xenophobic manner similar to how racial others were in Empire novels. This is important because it illustrates not only the rich history of a valuable literary genre, but also how novels emerge from different historical and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, knowing the origins of sf allows one to better understand current literary trends. Technological innovation was linked to the ambitious demands of imperialism, and the rise in technology corresponded to a growth in sf literature. Currently, there is an abundance of sf literature addressing artificial intelligence (AI) and the ethical dilemmas surrounding a machine and its potential personhood. Humans are tempted to reject the rights of such thinking machines, solely because they are nonliving creatures. However, can sf's imperial past teach lessons to future generations about AI machines, humanoid robots, or even aliens? Is the rejection of aliens and humanoid robots comparable to the rejection of racial others in the nineteenth century? Knowing the past of the science fiction genre allows one to think more critically about present

trends. Instead of viewing aliens or humanoid robots as nonhuman and rejecting their potential rights, are readers being xenophobic and human supremacists? Sf is rich with such ethical dilemmas and concerns for society's welfare, and the genre is even richer when looking at its past works.

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