

Summary

Apart from the **Introduction** and the **Conclusion** my thesis is divided into six chapters. In the **Introduction** I have tried to show Kipling's problematic imperial worldview which finds suitable occasions both to acclaim and criticize the activities of the White colonizers in the imperial era. In the same vein the author's treatment of the colonized subjects is not free from variation. The author's travel through the expanse of the Empire in Asia and Africa and also to the former Portuguese colony Brazil made him acquainted with the diverse colonial realities across the globe.

In the first chapter, **Contextualizing Kipling: A Racial Perspective**, I briefly sketch the issues of race and raciality and attempt to show how Kipling was influenced by these issues at the heyday of the Victorian Empire. However, Kipling's first-hand acquaintance with the British Empire at Home and the colonies, primarily India, stopped him from being swayed away by any preconceived notion or prejudice. With the experience of staying in Indian metropolises like Bombay, Allahabad and Lahore for journalistic career, Kipling had the opportunity to observe the different classes of Indian society and their different socio-economic and political interactions with the Empire.

Entitled **Imperial Dream Checked: The Select Novels of Kipling**, the second chapter discusses four novels — *The Light That Failed* (1891), *The Naulahka: A Story of West and East* (1892), *Stalky & Co.* (1899) and *Kim* (1901) — all set against different racial background. The author scrupulously observes and evaluates the activities of the Empire builders in the colonies and Europe, revealing in the process the different ways in which they further the cause of the 'White Man's Burden' or sacrifice their career and life in doing it. All these fiction lead up to the assumption that to become an empire builder in a colony one requires every sort of physical and psychological efficiency attainable under the sun. But at the same time one must always be prepared for any eventuality in the colonies.

In the third chapter, named **Resistance to and Subversion of Imperial Ideology: Kipling's Short Stories 1**, I discuss a group of short stories that show precarious situation of the White colonizers when confronted by the natives in the land of the latter. The stories analyzed in this chapter serve as an eye-opener to any

newly arrived European administrator in the non-White colonies. The colonizer, as I have already stated in the previous paragraph dealing with the second chapter, is required to attain all the efficiencies — a strong personality to dominate over his non-White subjects, a thorough knowledge about the subjugated people and last but not the least, be loved and respected by the subjects as their lord. Naturally an average colonizer commits flaws and is subsequently doomed by the stern judgement of the author.

The fourth chapter, **Retreat of the Myth of the Empire: Kipling's Short Stories 2**, shows a more mature and pensive mood of the author. The central characters of these stories either become disillusioned with the imperial enterprise or attempt to create a bridge between the apparently unbridgeable ruler and the ruled. A spontaneous critique of the Empire, a sympathetic inclination towards the native population, some stories of successful interracial love with a few ones painting betrayal of native women by their White spouses, the futility of war — all these are depicted in this chapter. The stories of *Jungle Books* (1894-1895) together depict the journey of the native protagonist from the state of being a colonized person to the status of a future administrator and the stories of *Puck of Pook's Hills* (1906) emphasizes the mixed racial ancestry of the English people.

The fifth chapter, **Vision of Tiresias: A Review of Kipling's Poetry**, sheds light on the poetical works of Rudyard Kipling. The poems discussed in this chapter are of various nature — some depict the personal mishap of the White protagonist in colonies, some draw the readers' attention towards the political and military faux pas of the Empire, some simply warn the Empire about its troublesome future ahead and forecasting a distinct possibility about its eventual dissolution. Many of these poems, similar in theme and content to those of shorter works of fiction, assume a more prophetic undertone.

The sixth and last chapter, **Mapping the Colonial Space: Kipling as a Travel Writer**, probes into the travel narratives of the author in four places — Rajputana, France, Brazil and Japan. The account of his travel to Rajputana, documented in *Letters of Marque* (1891), provides us with a fascinating study of the legendary and historical feats of the medieval Rajput rulers. In the process the

travelogue also unfolds a spectacle of the apparent insignificance of a Westerner's presence there. The account of his travel to France, taking place several times since 1878, is recorded in *Souvenirs of France* (1933). This book scrupulously narrates several similarities and dissimilarities between the French and the British imperial experiences in Europe and the colonies. The visit to Brazil, so beautifully narrated in *Brazilian Sketches* (1927), is an admission of the dissolution of the barriers of 'colour', 'caste' and 'creed' after the demise of the imperial regime. Likewise his experience in Japan also commands recognition and admiration for the efficiency of the people of the land of the rising sun.

The **Conclusion** sums up the argument in the earlier chapters and seeks to explore the scope for further research on issues like 'race' and 'empire' with the incorporation of the literary output of Kipling's contemporaries like George Alfred Henty (1832-1902) and Henry Rider Haggard (1856-1925).