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**“GOING NATIVE” IN THE  
BRITISH EMPIRE:  
DAVID LIVINGSTONE AND T.E. LAWRENCE  
REVISITED**

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THESIS SEMINAR  
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## INTRODUCTION

David Livingstone (1813-1873), the missionary-explorer and T.E. Lawrence (1888-1935), the Arab Bureau's most famous liaison officer, were two of the British Empire's most celebrated heroes. Popular writers continue to be seduced by the myths that surround and obscure both men. Scholarship on Livingstone and Lawrence, past and present, places them alongside traditional topics like the civilizing mission, orientalism and gender studies specifically surrounding questions of manliness and empire. This thesis seeks to focus on the ambivalence toward European modernity that Livingstone and Lawrence exhibited as a result of their time with Africans and Arabs. Doing so requires placing Livingstone and Lawrence alongside the cultural trope of "going native," a topic often generalized in post-colonial studies. While Livingstone and Lawrence's view of British civilization as being superior did not completely dissipate, their certainty in the validity of the civilizing mission waned. Going native may have partly been an escape, but it allowed them to develop a sympathetic understanding of the native societies in which they chose to immerse themselves.

Long a staple of the Western imagination, the going native myth forms the basis of novels like Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim* and films like *Dances with Wolves* and, most recently, *Avatar*. Images of white men rejecting Western social mores and rising within the ranks of "primitive" native society continue to prove popular even in the post-industrial world. The solitary Livingstone trekking through uncharted African jungle with a ragged party of loyal African natives following and the flamboyant Lawrence leading Bedouins into battle and then disappearing into the desert night fit such romantic imagery.

A working definition of going native is essential in getting beyond the romance and understanding the experiences of Livingstone and Lawrence. As defined by the *Post-Colonial Studies* guide, going native is “the colonizer’s fear of contamination by absorption into native life and customs.” Contamination, in this sense, suggests sexual undertones and interracial sexual relationships between Europeans and natives, more specifically European men and native women, were believed to have debilitating effects on European men, causing them to degenerate into savagery. Both Livingstone and Lawrence, according to their own journals and writings, never engaged in sexual relationships with native women.

The second definition of going native, a “lapse in European behavior,” pertains to the cases of Livingstone and Lawrence because it occurred for both men during their time among native African and Arab societies.<sup>1</sup> This does not suggest that Livingstone and Lawrence were completely devoid of such negative connotations. Livingstone believed that the British civilizing mission needed to first introduce the Africans of the interior to Christianity, which would enable them to enter modernity.<sup>2</sup> They two were, however, critical towards aspects of native life. Livingstone openly criticized African beliefs in polygamy, and Lawrence disdained Bedouin blood feuds, describing them as “childish.”<sup>3</sup> Despite this criticism both men did not exhibit fearful behavior in contact with native societies in the late nineteenth century.

Initially both men came to these societies as representatives of English culture. Livingstone arrived in Africa as a missionary and sought to convert the African interior to Christianity believing it would allow civilization, specifically modeled after Britain, to flourish there. While attached to an army of Bedouin fighters in the Arab Revolt of 1916-1918, a sub-

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<sup>1</sup> Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2000), 115-120.

<sup>2</sup> Tim Jeal, *Livingstone* (New York: NY Putnam, 1973), 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (Garden City: NY Doubleday, 1935), 28.

conflict of the First World War, Lawrence looked to advance British policy in Ottoman territory.

A change in their missions soon happened. As Livingstone spent more time among the natives of the African interior, he grew to appreciate their culture and subsequently retracted his mission to spread civilization and Christianity, instead looking to continue his search for the source of the Nile. His final seven years were spent in virtual isolation from the Western world, and he died in Africa after contracting malaria.<sup>4</sup> Lawrence was transformed into a guerilla warrior fighting alongside Bedouins in their struggle for independence and later urged them to form a Western style government.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of these changes in attitude and perception, both men eventually came to view modernity as corrupting of native societies. Urban and educated Arabs as well as African elites were examples of corrupted societies.<sup>6</sup> The irony is apparent. Both Livingstone and Lawrence went into these native societies with the intention of reforming them. Yet, they also wanted to keep certain elements found in native society intact.<sup>7</sup> Their celebration of native behavior and immersion into native society contrasts itself against their calls for modernization. It is this ambivalence that needs to be addressed in more detail. Much of the scholarship on Livingstone and Lawrence is one sided. During the first half of twentieth century, which coincided with the height of the British Empire, Livingstone and Lawrence were held in high regard as everything that was right with Britain and the colonial mission.<sup>8</sup> As the twentieth century progressed and decolonization accelerated, the views of

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<sup>4</sup> Oliver Ransford, *David Livingstone: the Dark Interior* (London: J. Murray, 1978), 8.

<sup>5</sup> Jeremy Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia: The Authorized Biography of T.E. Lawrence* (New York: Atheneum, 1989), 5-7.

<sup>6</sup> David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa: From 1865 to His Death* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1875), 15.

<sup>7</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 654.

<sup>8</sup> David Livingstone, *The Life and Explorations of Dr. David Livingstone* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2002), 18.

Livingstone and Lawrence as heroes waned.<sup>9</sup> The rise of postcolonial and cultural studies during the 1980s and 1990s also furthered damaged the reputations of Livingstone and Lawrence, and they were now relabeled as oppressors. Both extremes do a great disservice when studying these complicated individuals, especially when bringing up issues of rejection of European modernity and immersion into native culture. Simple labels of “racist” or “hero” do not answer any questions. The ambivalence expressed by Livingstone and Lawrence rather raises more questions that warrant appropriate answers.

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<sup>9</sup> Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (London: UK Oxford University Press, 1998), 37.

## CHAPTER 1: GOING NATIVE: INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS

A further understanding of the context surrounding going native offers a good place to start. In Britain, going native came into usage as term in the 1890s and reflected the growing concerns of miscegenation and disintegration of the empire. British sociologist Benjamin Kidd's 1898 study, *Control of the Tropics*, expressed reservations over permanent white settlement in areas with a warm climate. According to Kidd, the natives of these areas were to be "firmly controlled" and shown the "moral, ethical, political and physical conditions" that were found in European races, specifically of Anglo-Saxon stock. Contact over a long period time between Europeans and natives, however, eventually resulted in "going bush, fantee, or troppo," alternative terms for going native.<sup>10</sup> Late Victorians who read Kidd incorporated his theory into their fears and paranoia over the disintegration of the British Empire and decline of the white race.<sup>11</sup>

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, published in installments in 1899, addressed the fears and concerns associated with going native and were embodied in the character of Kurtz. As described to Marlow by the brick-maker of the Central Station, Kurtz bore the qualities of "a prodigy" and "an emissary of pity, science, and progress, and devils know what else." Set up as the noble European taking up the task of civilizing the native tribes of the Congo by the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs, Kurtz mysteriously and suddenly severed all contact with the outside world, fueling speculation that he was dead. Marlow, who is among the members of the relief expedition for Kurtz, comes into contact with the Russian, who proceeded to tell Marlow how the wilderness "found"

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<sup>10</sup>Benjamin Kidd, *Control of the Tropics* (New York: Macmillan, 1898), 50.

<sup>11</sup> P.J. Cain, *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction 1914-1990* (New York: Longman, 1993), 23.

Kurtz first and “whispered things to him, things about himself which he did not know.”<sup>12</sup>

The responsibility of Kurtz’s corruption and devolution, as Kidd might have argued, came from his time among the natives.

Uneasiness over the prospect of going native came about the same time as “imperialism” entered frequent use in the English language. British economist J.A. Hobson’s landmark work, *Imperialism*, served as a response to Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain’s zeal for empire building and the Boer War (1899-1902). Hobson characterized the British imperial dream as a “natural overflow of nationality and its test being the power of colonists to transplant the civilization they represent to the new natural and social environment in which they find themselves.”<sup>13</sup> Although Hobson’s definition of imperialism concerned itself with the economic implications, he helped establish a basic understanding of the “new imperialism” (1870-1930).<sup>14</sup> Hobson’s observations identified a term to describe the growing expansion and domination of European culture and economic policies over Africa, Asia and Latin America.<sup>15</sup>

The new imperialism came in the form of a two-pronged mission. First, the exploitation of natural resources and expansion of new markets in colonies accelerated. Second, the push to introduce European civilization to non-Western civilizations increased drastically.<sup>16</sup> Rudyard Kipling’s “The White Man’s Burden” solidified the nature of what Europeans believed to be the heavy task of civilizing natives in native societies as they were perceived as “half-devil, half child.” As Kipling believed, the task of child rearing and dealing with natives differed slightly, and despite their endearing qualities, when compared to

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<sup>12</sup>Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, ed. Ross C. Murfin (New York: Bedford St. Martin’s, 1996), 40-74.

<sup>13</sup>J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1902), 7.

<sup>14</sup>Alice L. Conklin and Ian Christopher Fletcher eds. *European Imperialism 1830-1930*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 11-13.

<sup>15</sup>A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 488.

<sup>16</sup>Victor Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind* (London: Serif, 1969), 136.

children, natives were still not to be trusted. Their way of life conflicted with Western civilization and ultimately needed to be reformed.<sup>17</sup> Livingstone and Lawrence fit into the second prong of the new imperialism, because they desperately wanted to reshape the native societies they visited by introducing Western beliefs of Christianity and democracy.

Because many Western Europeans in the late nineteenth century believed their civilization to be superior, reservations over establishing European standards of civilization inside Africa, Asia and Latin America were few. This is evident at the very beginning of *Heart of Darkness* (1899), as Marlow describes his passion for exploring the unknown:

Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia, and lose myself in all that glories of exploration. At the time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, "When I grow up I will go there."<sup>18</sup>

The supposed "blank spaces" of the earth, according to Marlow, not only waited to be discovered, but they also invited him to do so. European powers like Britain, France, Germany and Belgium certainly believed this, and during the partition of Africa in 1885, the blank spaces in Africa were given an identity. They were transformed into European colonies and protectorates.<sup>19</sup>

Kurtz reinvented himself from the emissary of everything European to a native chieftain with immense local power over the natives. The Russian boasted of Kurtz's hold over the natives, "[t]hey would not stir till Mr. Kurtz gave the word. His ascendancy was extraordinary. The camps of these people surrounded the place, and the chiefs came every day to see him. They would crawl..." The image of the natives crawling before Kurtz revealed his domination and almost god-like power he held over them. This explained why Kurtz, despite poor health, had to be dragged away by the relief expedition, "I had immense

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<sup>17</sup> Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden," in *European Imperialism 1830-1930*, ed. Alice L. Conklin and Ian Christopher Fletcher (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 58-59.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, ed. Ross C. Murfin (New York: Bedford St. Martin's, 1996), 74.

<sup>19</sup> T.O. Lloyd, *The British Empire 1558-1995* (New York: NY Oxford University Press, 1996), 205-207.

plans. I was on the threshold of great things.” In European society, Kurtz would have to share power but in the Congo, he could be the supreme leader of all local tribes. Since Kurtz assumed the role as tribal chieftain, a right, he claimed given to him by the natives, he did not have to follow the laws and social conduct expected in Western civilization.<sup>20</sup>

Conrad resurrected the idea of reinvention in *Lord Jim* (1901). Marlow again returned and this time met Jim, a young and naïve sailor who dreamt of being a hero, outside of a naval inquiry in London. Jim’s crime involved jumping off the *Patna*, a ship carrying Muslim pilgrims heading to Mecca to make the Hajj, during a storm that threatened to sink the ship. Stripped of his sailor’s license afterward, Jim left the courtroom devastated and ashamed.<sup>21</sup> Looking into his tortured eyes, Marlow offered to help Jim leave England and find work again as a sailor. Eventually Jim arrived in Patsuan, a fictional island said to be located in the Dutch East Indies. After defeating the fanatical Sherif Ali, a Muslim bandit, the natives accepted Jim and dubbed him *Tuan Jim* or Lord Jim. In Patsuan, Jim reinvented himself as the hero he always dreamed of being.<sup>22</sup> Rejected by British society, Jim became a hero in a another native one. Only in a remote corner of the world could Jim be accepted.

Conrad lifted the plot of *Lord Jim* from the accounts of Sir James Brooke (1803-1868). During the 1830s, Brooke lived in India and worked for the East India Company. The business he invested in there failed and he soon went into debt. When his father died, Brooke took his inheritance money and bought a boat. He sailed to the island of Sarawak in 1838 and volunteered his services to the Sultan. During this time, a revolt against the

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<sup>20</sup> Cedric Watts “Heart of Darkness,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Joseph Conrad*, ed. J.H. Stape et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 48-51.

<sup>21</sup> Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim* (New York: Penguin, 1989),

<sup>22</sup> J.H. Stape “Lord Jim,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Joseph Conrad*, ed. J.H. Stape et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 63-68.

Sultan's rule broke out, and Brooke aided in brokering a peaceful solution to the revolt. As a reward, the Sultan made Brooke a Rajah with authority over a piece of Sarawak. Brooke dedicated his nearly thirty-year reign in suppressing piracy and establishing trade deals with other Western nations. Brooke came to be accepted by the natives as a legitimate ruler despite him being British. After Brooke's death his dynasty continued on with his nephew Charles and later Charles's son, Vyner, and lasted until 1946.<sup>23</sup>

Kurtz and Jim are literary examples of Europeans who immersed themselves in the native way of life, but despite this immersion they retained their perceived natural superiority over native peoples. Kurtz and Jim were both revered as god-like by the natives, but how they used their power differed. Kurtz abused his power and used the tribes as his personal army. Together they trekked for days through the jungle looking for other tribes in order to steal their ivory.<sup>24</sup> A power dynamic soon grows between Jim and the natives. The natives serve as a device and metaphor for Jim's personal struggles. The natives of Patsuan make Jim feel like a hero and give him a sense of purpose he could not find in England or as a sailor. Both Kurtz and Jim's power fade as they fail in their missions. The natives are further corrupted by Kurtz and turn increasingly violent. Jim fails to save the life of the chief's son against pirates.<sup>25</sup> Their failures inherently show the follies of imperialism. Kurtz came in with what he believed to be good intentions. His degeneration during his time in the Congo only made him worse, lowering himself as well the natives. Jim lured the natives into a false sense of security after defeating the Muslim invaders and made them dependent upon him.

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<sup>23</sup> Stape, "Lord Jim," 63-68.

<sup>24</sup> Watts, "Heart of Darkness," 49-53.

<sup>25</sup> Stape, "Lord Jim," 65.

Conrad's point was that the experience that came from imperialism benefited neither the Europeans nor the natives.<sup>26</sup>

Livingstone and Lawrence's real-life cultural immersions in native societies make them important figures for exploring the cultural trope of going native. Reinvention is a central theme found in both their stories. Through Africa, Livingstone was viewed as an emissary of Western civilization, like Kurtz. Lawrence's exploits in the Near East gave him a chance to become a popular icon. In the beginning of *Lord Jim*, Marlow hauntingly refers to Jim as "one of us."<sup>27</sup> Although Marlow was referring to the nature of solitary life at sea, this term I believe captures the ambivalent nature shared by Livingstone and Lawrence in their going native.

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<sup>26</sup>Andrea White, "Conrad and Imperialism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Joseph Conrad*, ed. J.H. Stape et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 180-183.

<sup>27</sup> Conrad, *Lord Jim*,

## CHAPTER 2: BEGINNINGS

Brief biographies of Livingstone and Lawrence are essential in understanding the cultural trope of going native. Their background explains why they felt the need to leave their own societies and enter non-European societies. Their life stories resemble each other in several respects and are good figures to compare.

### DAVID LIVINGSTONE

Henry Morton Stanley arrived to the Arab trading post of Ujiji, located in present day Tanzania, on November 10, 1871. The caravan of men dressed in long, flowing robes, a native African carrying the American flag and Stanley attracted the attention of the town center. Stanley continued to push through the gathering townspeople, looking while scanning the crowd for the person he was sent to find.<sup>28</sup> Moments later, he spotted him:

I saw an elderly man dressed in cloth cap, red blouse, and grey tweed pants. His frame was large, but shrunken, as the unspeakable miseries of African travel might well reduce it...It was sad and grave from long distress of body and mind, pinched and meager through lack of nourishment...a mere ruckle of bones.<sup>29</sup>

Stanley immediately removed his helmet and said “Dr. Livingstone I presume?”<sup>30</sup>

When Stanley “found” the good doctor, Livingstone had not been seen for five years by an Englishman. With the exception of a single letter that made it back to Zanzibar, Livingstone seemingly vanished and was presumed dead by the Western world. The makings of a sensational story were established. Fully aware of this, James Gordon Bennett, owner and editor of the *New York Herald*, sent young journalist Stanley in 1869 with the mission of

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<sup>28</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 334-335.

<sup>29</sup> Henry M. Stanley, “The Meeting with Livingstone,” in *Empire Writing: an Anthology of Colonial Literature 1870-1918*, ed. Elleke Boehmer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 49.

<sup>30</sup> Henry M. Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 460.

finding Livingstone, dead or alive.<sup>31</sup> Livingstone's expeditions, both successful and failed, were of no interest to Bennett or Stanley. Livingstone became a curiosity, a man who had "gone native."

Stanley's meeting with Livingstone renewed interest in Livingstone, splashing his image across the British papers. His life story became a model for Victorian virtues. Born in Blantyre, Scotland, on March 19, 1813, Livingstone endured extreme poverty that did not allow him a real childhood. His job as "piecer" in a textile mill made sure of this. Many children were often given the responsibility of being a piecer because they could crawl under the machines and spin the threads that were about to break. Because of the extremely dangerous nature of the job, accidents occurred frequently. This miserable experience did not stop Livingstone from going to school at night and learning reading, writing, arithmetic and Latin. Most children in Livingstone's position dropped out of school. Livingstone's textbooks, however, had to literally be pulled away from him by his mother before bedtime. This testament to learn revealed his perseverance.<sup>32</sup>

Religion also shaped Livingstone's early life instilling a deep and devout faith in Christianity. Livingstone's father brought up his children in a strict Calvinist environment and often frowned upon young Livingstone's interest in science, calling it "blasphemy."<sup>33</sup> The clash of religion and science disturbed young Livingstone because he truly believed in God, but he could not deny his thirst for knowledge. Eventually the Livingstone's family converted to a more liberal Protestant faith thus relieving his pressure. During the 1830's, a feeling of optimism swept Britain; many Protestants believed that the abolition of slavery in 1833 and the Reform Bill of 1832 were partially attributed to their lobbying. Livingstone

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<sup>31</sup> Ransford, *Dark Interior*, 38-39.

<sup>32</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 8-13.

<sup>33</sup> Meriel Buxton, *David Livingstone*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 50.

carried with him this spirit of optimism which fueled his evangelism in Africa. His devout faith remained with him through his final years.<sup>34</sup>

Livingstone's name stirred different reactions within the British public throughout the mid-Victorian era. In 1856, his name was equated with Victorian values and progress. Fresh from his sixteen year journey through the African interior as both missionary and explorer, Livingstone returned to Britain to public acclaim. As a champion of the three "C's," Christianity, commerce and civilization, the name Livingstone meant a savior and friend of the African.<sup>35</sup> He stirred the interest of the British public toward further exploration and colonization of Africa. In 1864, the name Livingstone became associated with failure as he became the victim of his own celebrity. His second trip, the ambitious quest to settle the wild Zambesi river valley and transform it into an "African Mississippi" led to the deaths of many people in his party, including his own wife. After the failure of Zambesi, Livingstone traveled for a final time to Africa in 1866 and vowed never to return to Britain until he found the source of the Nile and helped squash the slave trade once and for all.<sup>36</sup>

#### T.E. LAWRENCE

The pursuit of an identity formed the central theme in T.E. Lawrence's life. This issue stemmed from his birth on August 16, 1888. As the second child of an affair between an Anglo-Irish gentleman landowner, Thomas Chapman, and his Anglo-Scotch governess, Sarah Lawrence, Lawrence suspected that he and his brothers, were illegitimate. The

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<sup>34</sup> A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians*, 488.

<sup>35</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 147.

<sup>36</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 177-184.

surname, Lawrence, was adopted by the family after his birth.<sup>37</sup> Lawrence's stature at 5'5" further contributed to his "outsider" status (The upper classes in Britain were often taller.) Because Lawrence came from an aristocratic background in Ireland, his short stature when compared to the British upper class filled him with a need to constantly test his physical endurance. This need was also fueled by his attempts to mimic the behavior of the heroes found in Greek myths and medieval ballads that he read in his youth.<sup>38</sup> The first ambition of T.E. Lawrence was to achieve a heroic status and, as told to his biographer Basil Liddell Hart, to "save people."<sup>39</sup>

Lawrence's interest in classical and medieval literature was not only reflected in his burgeoning stoic personality but also in his education. Lawrence attended Jesus College, Oxford University from the years 1907-1910 and studied modern history.<sup>40</sup> Although his concentration was on modern history, Lawrence never lost interest in the medieval period and during his summer vacations he made several cycling tours in France studying castles. In 1909 Lawrence visited the Middle East for the very first time and made a walking tour of crusader castles in Palestine and Syria. This trip provide material for his thesis, *The influence of the Crusades on European Military Architecture - to the end of the XIIIth century*.<sup>41</sup> On the strength of his paper, Lawrence received first class honors in his Oxford BA degree and won postgraduate fellowship to study crusader castles further with British archaeologist D.G. Hogarth. Lawrence returned to Syria in 1911 and participated in the excavations at Carchemish, an ancient Hittite city located on the Syrian-Turkish border. During this time Lawrence became fascinated further by Arab culture and sought to perfect his Arabic.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> John Mack, *Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T.E. Lawrence* (Boston: MA Little Brown, 1976), 96-97.

<sup>38</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 76-82.

<sup>39</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *T.E. Lawrence to his Biographer Liddell Hart* (New York: Doubleday, 1938), 50.

<sup>40</sup> Brown, *T.E. Lawrence*, 30-31.

<sup>41</sup> Phillip Knightley, *The Secret Lives of Lawrence of Arabia* (New York: McGraw-Hall, 1969), 45.

<sup>42</sup> Mack, *Prince*, 176-180.

The outbreak of the First World War put a halt to Lawrence's archaeological career. Wanting to be a part of the war effort, Lawrence attempted to enlist in the British army only to be rejected because of his height. Not to be discouraged, Lawrence joined the Geographical Section of the General Staff and worked on making maps of the Middle East. Soon after, because of his knowledge in Arabic, the British military transferred Lawrence to the Intelligence Department in Cairo.<sup>43</sup> During this time, the British government took advantage of the growing unrest among the Bedouins in Ottoman territory and urged them to revolt. In June of 1916, Sherif Hussein of Mecca, a key figure in the amorphous Arab nationalist movement, began the Arab Revolt. Lawrence's knowledge of Arabic led him to be retransferred to the Arab Bureau and attached as British liaison officer to Prince Feisal, one of Hussein's three sons.<sup>44</sup> During the next two years, Lawrence helped Feisal lead raids against the Ottomans and in late 1917, linked up with General Edmund Allenby's British army. During his time as a liaison officer, Lawrence became sympathetic to the cause of Arab self-determination and after the capture of Damascus on October 1, 1918, he helped to set up an Arab government. This failed almost immediately, and he resigned from the British army three days later and returned to England.<sup>45</sup>

Although Lawrence had not been the only British liaison officer to participate in the Arab Revolt, he became the most famous. After the war, the myth of "Lawrence of Arabia" came from American journalist Lowell Thomas's lecture tours consisting of dramatic footage showing Lawrence, in Arab dress, leading his "loyal" Arabs in daring raids against the Turks. At the suggestion of Feisal, Lawrence had begun to wear Arab robes in order to blend in

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<sup>43</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 570-576.

<sup>44</sup> Mack, *Prince*, 181-188.

<sup>45</sup> Brown, *T.E. Lawrence*, 48.

with the Bedouin tribesmen and not be spotted as a Westerner by the Turks.<sup>46</sup> The image of Lawrence in Arab dress is the image forever captured in popular culture. Lawrence personally had no quarrel with Thomas's portrayal of him as long as it helped the Arab cause, although Lawrence did, to some extent, enjoy the coverage he received. It is also worth noting that Lawrence's fame rose in 1919, a year after the First World War's close. Contrasted against the lack of heroes and grim realities of trench warfare on the Western Front, "Lawrence of Arabia" proved to be the type of romantic hero that Thomas wanted to portray to audiences.<sup>47</sup>

Attempting to use his fame in order to promote Arab self-determination, Lawrence, along with Feisal, participated as in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. The Sykes-Picot Treaty of 1916, which divided Ottoman territories among the British and French, and Balfour Agreement of 1917, guaranteeing a Jewish state in Palestine, complicated the cause of Arab self-determination greatly. As a result, Lawrence's pleas failed. During the years 1921-22, Lawrence's services were requested by a newly appointed Colonial Office head Winston Churchill in an effort to quell an Arab rebellion against the British. With an agreement that gave Arabs a greater degree of autonomy while remaining in the British Empire, Lawrence resigned in 1922. For the remainder of the 1920s and 1930s Lawrence sought obscurity among the ranks of the RAF.<sup>48</sup> His desire for privacy, however, contradicted itself with his sensationalist accounts of his adventures in his book, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, and its abridged version, *Revolt in the Desert*. After his retirement in March 1935, Lawrence returned to England to his cottage, Cloud Hills, in Dorset. Two months later, on

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<sup>46</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert* (New York: Tess Press, 2004), 38-52.

<sup>47</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 299-383.

<sup>48</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 673-780.

May 13, Lawrence seriously injured himself in a motorcycle accident. After laying in a coma for several days, he died on May 19.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Mack, *Prince*, 410.

## CHAPTER 3: ESCAPING CIVILIZATION

Search for identities are found in both the life stories of Livingstone and Lawrence. They did not experience a complete acceptance in their own societies so their need for escape grew. In going native, the lapse in European customs suggested a rejection of European modernity as the highest form of civilization. A desire to escape civilization existed for Livingstone and Lawrence. By idealizing the native societies they visited, they believed that they had in fact escaped civilization.

Scotland in the early nineteenth century changed radically with the advent of the Industrial Revolution. The streets of Blantyre flooded with recently evicted tenant farmers searching for work in the factories and mills.<sup>50</sup> What sort of existence did this mean for young Livingstone? It meant sharing a room with six other siblings, sweating in 90 degree temperatures inside the mill, risking serious injury working as a factory boy, and struggling to receive a basic education after work hours.<sup>51</sup> On Sundays, Livingstone chose to spend his time in the outskirts of Blantyre and roam the countryside in an effort to forget the bleak realities of industrial life, which for Livingstone, “starved its inhabitants.”<sup>52</sup> Livingstone even begged for his parents to immigrate to America in order to escape the miseries that came from the consequences of the early Industrial Revolution.<sup>53</sup> It became easy to see how Livingstone found neither peace nor happiness in such a society.

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<sup>50</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 7.

<sup>51</sup> Wilson, *The Victorians*, 418.

<sup>52</sup> Buxton, *David Livingstone*,

<sup>53</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 3-13.

In the Edwardian era, the problem had been the opposite for Lawrence. The upper classes spent their time pursuing recreation during their leisure time.<sup>54</sup> Although Lawrence's father tarnished his aristocratic image after marrying Lawrence's mother, he still retained his upper class values, and after the birth of his children, encouraged them to pursue activities such as cycling, walking, yachting and organized games. Lawrence certainly benefited from this leisure time. He read voraciously in his spare time. Medieval epics sparked his imagination. Lawrence admired Roland, King Arthur, Galahad and other heroes in the medieval romances, because in their society, heroism remained a top value. The idleness of the upper classes soon dissatisfied Lawrence. The organized games he played in school were, as he put it, "too tame" for his tastes.<sup>55</sup>

Escape from their social status served as a source of both men's dissatisfaction. Livingstone's working class roots caused him to seek out higher education. When Livingstone attended a Latin class, every one in the class gradually dropped out while he remained.<sup>56</sup> The other factory children often teased Livingstone for his bookish demeanor and tried to discourage his ambition by telling him he would always remain in Blantyre working in the mills:

When I was a piecer, the fellows used to try and turn me off from the path I had chosen and always began "I think you out etc.," till I snapped them up with a mild "You think!" I can think and act for myself; don't need anybody to think for me.<sup>57</sup>

The incident revealed Livingstone's daily dissatisfaction with his surroundings and his refusal to be absorbed forever by industrial life. He held bigger ambitions. The formal training in Latin greatly aided Livingstone's medical studies. After completing his medical training in 1840, he decided to become a missionary. Joining the London Missionary Society that same

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<sup>54</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 41-52.

<sup>55</sup> Lawrence, *To His Biographer Liddell Hart*, 31.

<sup>56</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 10.

<sup>57</sup> David Livingstone, *Family Letters 1841-1856*, ed. Isaac Schapera (London: Chatto and Windus, 1959),

year, Livingstone was to set sail to China but the Opium War created an unsafe environment for missionaries. The Society opted against risking the lives of their missionaries there. Instead, Livingstone set sail for Cape Town in South Africa. There he began a thirty-year career devoted to the African continent and only there could he truly escape factory life forever.<sup>58</sup>

Lawrence came of age during the declining fortunes of the aristocracy and the anxieties over class were with always with him. Although Lawrence's father came from an Irish aristocratic background, the shame of running off with the family governess, Lawrence's mother, in their Irish estate forced Lawrence's father to conceal his identity and live off his money in exile. This bothered Lawrence and caused him to resent his father. Lawrence once quipped that for a man with a strong distaste for land, he was a "fine snipe and pheasant shooter and yachtsman." Lawrence believed his father's behavior to be false and contrary to his true social status. Chapman, as he referred to his father, should have embraced the "large scale, tolerant, experienced, skilled to speak, and natural lord-like" that he chose to hide.<sup>59</sup> Lawrence later liked to brag that on his father's side he was related to Sir Walter Raleigh. This foreshadowed his desire for a heroic past and a mythic connection with the aristocracy.<sup>60</sup>

Ambivalence, however, also described Lawrence's desire to be a part of the aristocracy. Lawrence began attending Oxford University in 1907. During his time there Lawrence felt alienated and made very few friends. Instead of living on campus, he chose to remain at home.<sup>61</sup> Lawrence thought he would enjoy belonging to what he believed were an elite group of scholars but became disappointed when he learned that the majority of his

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<sup>58</sup> Ransford, *Dark Interior*,

<sup>59</sup> Lawrence, *Lawrence to his Biographer Liddell Hart*, 55.

<sup>60</sup> Mack, *Prince of Our Disorder*, 4.

<sup>61</sup> Brown, *T.E. Lawrence*, 29-32.

fellow peers, who were extremely wealthy, did not believe in putting full time towards their studies.<sup>62</sup> The attitude towards school from his peers bothered Lawrence and made him also resent the aristocracy.

If both men were looking to escape their civilizations, where then were they looking to run to? As Livingstone began to travel extensively in Africa, he determined that Africa was a paradise and later wrote, “The state in which the inhabitants of Africa live is one of glorious ease...Food abounds and very little effort is needed for its cultivation; the soil is rich.”<sup>63</sup> When comparing the African countryside to industrialized Scotland, the African lifestyle appeared to be a more appealing civilization of the two. While participating in the excavation at Carchemish, Lawrence wrote home to his mother, ““I will have such difficulty in becoming English again, here I am Arab in habits and slip in talking from English to French and Arabic unnoticed.”<sup>64</sup> Years after his participation in the Arab Revolt, Lawrence would describe of his time at Carchemish, “those days were the best.”<sup>65</sup> Lawrence referred to his days at the archaeological dig rather than his participation in the Arab Revolt, which was more of a mental burden. The seemingly carefree days in Syria were what Lawrence looked back on nostalgically. Nonetheless, both Livingstone and Lawrence believed that the native societies they immersed themselves were ideal because native societies were free from the problems of European modernity, problems deemed as artificial. Native societies offered a chance to live in a society that evoked nostalgia for a “simpler” place and time.

The praise for the natives and their supposed value of simplicity emerged from the “noble savage” trope most often credited to Rousseau and found in his *Discourse on Inequality* which presented Native Americans, Africans and Arabs living freely in humanity’s “natural

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<sup>62</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 80.

<sup>63</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 9-25.

<sup>64</sup> Brown, *T.E. Lawrence*, 32.

<sup>65</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 76-80.

state.<sup>66</sup> Again, the nostalgia for a “simple, pure, idyllic state” as opposed to the rising industrialism and complexities of European modernity were popular in Europe during this time. Rousseau painted a grim picture of European society and idealized native societies because, when humans were devoid of civilization, at least the European conception of it, they were ultimately good and were able to live naturally.

The beliefs shared by Livingstone and Lawrence of the natives resembled those found in the Enlightenment. “The African cares not at all for the utterly inane speculations. The pleasures of animal life are ever present to his mind as the supreme good”<sup>67</sup> wrote Livingstone of the Africans. He characterized them as being “wiser than their white neighbors.” He concluded, “[e]ach tribe has considerable consciousness of goodness or following its own interests in the best ways.”<sup>68</sup> In his *Seven Pillars*, Lawrence described the Arabs as:

a limited, narrow-minded people, whose inert intellects lay fallow in incurious resignation. Their imaginations were vivid, but not creative. There was so little Arab art in Asia that they could almost be said to have had no art...they had no organizations of mind or body. They invented no systems of philosophy, no complex mythologies...<sup>69</sup>

For the Bedouin, the “ultimate truth,” what Lawrence perhaps meant to be the meaning of life, could be found in the desert. From this observation, Lawrence determined that the sand and night sky formed the only world of the Bedouin. Lawrence wrote this of the Arabs not with criticism in mind, but with praise. Livingstone stated this as well when characterizing the black African. The “pleasures of animal life” for the black African was all they needed to know. Because they were simple, they were noble.

The attraction to native life and aversion towards European civilization demonstrated the fascination with the natives and the environment by which they were

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<sup>66</sup> Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Studies*, 210.

<sup>67</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 92-94.

<sup>68</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 92-94.

<sup>69</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1935), 38-40.

surrounded. In particular, the landscapes of Africa and the Near East inspired both men. On his final journey to Africa, Livingstone wrote that the trip cured him of his failures and expressed his joy in returning, “The effect of travel on a man whose heart is in the right place is that the mind is made more self-reliant: it becomes more confident of its own resources- there is greater presence of mind. Africa is a most wonderful country for appetite.”<sup>70</sup> Lawrence described the desert as “clean” and took great pleasure in capturing the vastness of the desert with his camera. Quite often, many of the shots he took were simply of sand dunes. Lawrence constantly showed wonder and amazement towards his surroundings. The desert inspired him, and he would seek to write a travel narrative inspired by Charles M. Doughty’s *Arabia Deserta*. Much of *Seven Pillars*, according to Lawrence, was conceived of during times of simply taking in the surroundings.<sup>71</sup>

Immersion into the native culture followed. At the height of his zeal for the civilizing mission, Livingstone told his audience at Cambridge, “I resolved to acquire an accurate knowledge of the native tongues...the result is that I am not now very fluent in my own.”<sup>72</sup> Originally, Livingstone came to Africa with a tolerant attitude concerning tribalism. He wrote to his sister Agnes, “I would never build on another man’s foundation,”<sup>73</sup> and when other missionaries criticized the African customs, Livingstone replied, “Jesus came not to judge.”<sup>74</sup> Livingstone attempted to fuse native practices with Christian beliefs but his attempts failed. Although Livingstone eventually condemned African “tribal” religion during the late 1850s and early 1860s, on his final journey, he again abandoned most of his judgment. If Africans were to be “shown the light,” Livingstone wrote, “Whether exchanging, the customary civilities, or arriving at a village, accepting a nights lodging,

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<sup>70</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journal*, 27.

<sup>71</sup> Brown, *T.E. Lawrence*, 74.

<sup>72</sup> David Livingstone, *Dr. Livingstone’s Cambridge Lectures* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1858),

<sup>73</sup> David Livingstone, *Family Letters 1841-1856*, ed. I. Schapera (London: 1959), 31.

<sup>74</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 22-24.

purchasing food for the party...we begin to spread a knowledge of that people whose agency their land will yet become enlightened and freed from the slave-trade.”<sup>75</sup> The allure of escape did not last long and both men “returned” to civilization while remaining among the native societies. Despite praising the natives for their “natural” and “simple” outlook on life, an implied critique from Livingstone and Lawrence aimed at reforming the black Africans and Arabs. Upon returning to Britain, Livingstone, in his Cambridge lectures, revealed his criticisms of the native black Africans, “Yet to endure the dancing, roaring and singing, the jesting, anecdotes, grumbling, quarrelling and murdering of these children of nature, seemed more like a severe penance than anything I had before met with in the course of my missionary duties.”<sup>76</sup> Livingstone’s frustrations were evident.

Lawrence too lashed out against the Bedouin, “I was tired to death of these Arabs; petty incarnate Semites...and for two years I had profitably shammed to be their companion!”<sup>77</sup> The innocence of the African that Livingstone admired and the pettiness of Auda that Lawrence praised earlier lost their charm. The reform drive revealed an ambivalent relationship that Livingstone and Lawrence would have with the Africans and Arabs. The very things that both men praised the natives for were the very same things they would condemn and seek to change, even eradicate.

Livingstone made it perfectly clear during his Cambridge lectures, made two years after his return from Africa in 1856, his future intentions in the African interior: “My desire is to pen a path to this district that civilization, commerce, and Christianity might find their way there.”<sup>78</sup> Livingstone believed that the British had a “power to bestow upon the

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<sup>75</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journal*, 26.

<sup>76</sup> Livingstone, *Cambridge Lectures*, 126.

<sup>77</sup> Lawrence, *Seven Pillars*, 586.

<sup>78</sup> Livingstone, *Cambridge Lectures*, 127-129.

unenlightened African, by giving him the light of Christianity.”<sup>79</sup> With Christianity, commerce and civilization could thrive in the believed backwardness of Africa. It would be a chain reaction that Livingstone believed would not only benefit the Africans, but the British colonists as well.

As the war in the Near East drew to a close in 1918, Lawrence believed that the Arabs needed to band together and organize a Western style government in order to wield bargaining power with Britain and France as the impending peace conferences grew nearer. “My object with the Arabs: to make them stand on their own two feet,”<sup>80</sup> stated Lawrence believing himself to be a Promethean figure. After supposedly giving the gift of fire to the Arabs, he assumed that he would be able to step back and see the fruition of his labors. A few years after his death, Arnold Lawrence, Lawrence’s brother, affirmed this goal, “His conscience was satisfied by the creation of autonomous Arab states with provision for their ultimate independence in connection with the British Empire; he wished this connection endure, envisaging Egypt and Iraq as virtual Dominions.<sup>81</sup> The Arabs were to be autonomous, but never far from the watchful eye of Britain. They were to remain “connected.”

“Connection” is an important word and concept. Livingstone and Lawrence, in their desire to escape from European modernity, failed to do so. They could never fully accept letting the natives just be. There had to be reform. Modernity, as shown by Livingstone and Lawrence, was not about introducing Africans and Arabs to the “here and now,” modernity was an attitude, a belief in progress with Livingstone and Lawrence being products of the

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<sup>79</sup> Livingstone, *Cambridge Lectures*, 130.

<sup>80</sup> Liddell Hart, T.E. Lawrence, 413.

<sup>81</sup> T.E. Lawrence to the Editor of *The Times* [London], 11 September 1919, *Evolution of a Revolt: Early Postwar Writings of T.E. Lawrence*, ed. Stanley and Rodelle Weintraub (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968), 63-65.

European modernity they were at odds with. Try as they might to “escape,” they returned to these beliefs.

The literary critic Paul de Man once characterized modernity as “a desire to wipe out whatever came earlier in the hope of reaching at last a point that could be called a true present, a point that marks a new departure.”<sup>82</sup> The “new departure” for the Africans deep in the “darkness” of the interior would be an industrialized and open society, absorbing the Victorian values of “work, punctuality, thrift, monogamous marriage and personal ambition.”<sup>83</sup> For the Near East, the “timelessness” of the region ended and the Arabs put aside their native prejudices and enter modernity. Their escape became a return because Livingstone and Lawrence decided that the native societies needed restructuring. Both Livingstone and Lawrence brought it upon themselves to be the catalyst to create an idealized present, their present in Africa and the Near East’s past.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Rey Chow, “Where Have All the Natives Gone?,” in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Padmini Mongia (New York: Arnold, 1996), 132.

<sup>83</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 50.

<sup>84</sup> Kiernan, *Lords*,

## CHAPTER 4: PUBLIC SELVES, PRIVATE SELVES

An internal struggle between maintaining a public and private self emerged for Livingstone and Lawrence became another conflict. Ambivalence again played a significant part for both men. The image of the colonizer “going native” suggested a conscious decision to lapse from European modernity and withdraw from civilization altogether. Yet, in the cases of Livingstone and Lawrence, their escape became what made them famous. Although his five year disappearance received fewer than a couple of lines, Livingstone being “found” in the African interior by Stanley immediately landed him back on the front page of the British papers. If Lowell Thomas had never run a major story on Lawrence, it would be highly doubtful that Lawrence would ever receive beyond a footnote regarding his participation in the Arab Revolt.

David Livingstone, the saint, and “Lawrence of Arabia, the uncrowned Prince of Mecca,” were the creations of journalists. The images of Livingstone wandering the African interior with a small band of black Africans and Arab traders, for five years with practically no contact with the outside world and Lawrence leading a band of Arab guerillas into battle and then disappearing back into the desert stirred the public imagination. Both Stanley and Thomas were very well aware of this factor. The stories of Livingstone and Lawrence first sold papers. Soon they transformed into popular lecture tours. Years later, their stories became subject for serious academic study and were the subject of many books. Lawrence got the Hollywood treatment in David Lean’s 1962 *Lawrence of Arabia*. Because of Stanley and Thomas, Livingstone and Lawrence found an audience.

While returning from covering the civil strife in Spain in 1869, Stanley arrived in his Paris hotel room to find an urgent telegram waiting for him. James Gordon Bennett

requested a meeting with his rising star reporter. “Do you suppose Livingstone is alive or dead?” asked Bennett while meeting with Stanley. With that question, Stanley realized what he had just been asked to do. Bennett continued, and according to Stanley, told him that money should be no object in retrieving Livingstone, “Draw a thousand pounds now; and when you have gone through that, draw another thousand, and when that is spent draw another thousand, and when you have finished that draw another thousand, and so on; but, FIND LIVINGSTONE.”<sup>85</sup> Stanley most likely romanticized this account between him and Bennett, but, in doing so, it established the mystery surrounding Livingstone as well as the curiosity.

After a two year delay for reasons unclear, Stanley finally set out to find Livingstone and arrived in Zanzibar on January 6, 1871, nearly five years after Livingstone set out from the city on his own quest.<sup>86</sup> The acting British Consul to Zanzibar during that time, John Kirk, a former missionary himself who had also worked with Livingstone in the past, dismissed Stanley’s mission of finding Livingstone and told him that Livingstone would “dash off” as soon as he realized he was being “found.”<sup>87</sup> According to Kirk, Livingstone despised publicity. Stanley ignored Kirk and continued on his way, blazing through the harsh conditions of the African interior and spending 4000 pounds on six tons of equipment and traveling with 192 personnel, including a little slave boy named Kalulu who became his personal butler. Stanley during this entire venture never doubted that he would find Livingstone.<sup>88</sup> The silver goblets and two bottles of expensive champagne he carried in his caravan were proof of this.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone*, xxi-xviii.

<sup>86</sup> Ransford, *David Livingstone: the Dark Interior* (London: J. Murray, 1978), 277.

<sup>87</sup> Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone*, 45-46.

<sup>88</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 334-348.

<sup>89</sup> Ransford, *David Livingstone*, 279.

During the journey through the African interior, Stanley wrote of the “alarming blackness” of the continent, “Africa possessed no theatres, newspapers, agreeable society,” he wrote critically. Stanley came “face to face with the semi-naked blacks,” and he wrote of the “horrors” that “flashed upon” him “like a revelation.”<sup>90</sup> He soon began to wonder what the attraction for Livingstone was to “lose himself” in a place like Africa. Stanley’s relationship with his African porters was harsh, “the selfish and wooded-headed world requires mastering, as well as loving charity.”<sup>91</sup> As he traveled further, Stanley viewed his journey as a quest and desperately wanted to find out how Livingstone, the living embodiment of civilization, now looked like, and more importantly, if he been corrupted by the “blackness” Stanley loathed in Africa.

The shock of finding Livingstone alive after five years made him believe he was looking at a dead man alive, as Stanley wrote, “within the casket was an undaunted soul.”<sup>92</sup> Suddenly the story became even more interesting. The “champion of civilization” survived the brutalities of “darkest Africa,” proving for Stanley that civilization could indeed triumph. Stanley viewed Livingstone a saint and a “Christian gentleman.” He later told Livingstone, “In the qualities which go to make the man and the gentleman, I find you possess more than other that I remember.” Stanley wrote of his time with Livingstone as being spent “in an Elysian field.”<sup>93</sup>

Lowell Thomas’s 1924 book *With Lawrence in Arabia*, introduced T.E. Lawrence in a dramatic manner. Thomas, years later, admitted that he had not been sure if Storrs had been the one to deem Lawrence as the “Uncrowned King of Arabia,” though the exact encounter

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<sup>90</sup> Stanley, “The Meeting With Livingstone,” 42.

<sup>91</sup> Henry M. Stanley, *The Autobiography of Sir Henry Morton Stanley*, ed. D. Stanley (London: 1909), 295.

<sup>92</sup> Stanley, “The Meeting With Livingstone,” 49.

<sup>93</sup> Ransford, *David Livingstone*, 283.

happened more or less as it had been told.<sup>94</sup> Nonetheless, on a balcony in the house of British governor in Jerusalem on January 1918, H. Chase, Lowell Thomas's photographer, snapped the first image of the man the world would come to know as "Lawrence of Arabia."<sup>95</sup> During two visits with Lawrence, Thomas and Chase shot dramatic footage of Lawrence leading his "loyal" Arabs into victory against their Turkish "oppressors." At least, that is what the viewing public of Thomas's lecture tour on Lawrence were led to believe. In "Lawrence of Arabia," Thomas found his hero.

Livingstone too benefited from publicity. Stanley's saintly description of Livingstone as modest and reluctant to attend public gatherings were imitated by other British papers and backed up the claim.<sup>96</sup> During his 1919 lecture tours, Lowell Thomas made sure to emphasize Lawrence's supposed modesty his participation in the Arab Revolt.<sup>97</sup> Lawrence's resignation from the British Army and decline of the Order of Bath and D.S.O. from King George V also ruled in Lawrence's favor with regard to the claim of modesty.<sup>98</sup>

The claims of modesty were exactly that, claims. Whenever Livingstone felt wearied by his trip, he would pull out an old newspaper clipping which read, "By common consent, Dr. Livingstone has come to be regarded as one of the most remarkable travelers of his own or any age."<sup>99</sup> After reflecting upon his former glory, Livingstone wrote, "this is the only thing that has any beneficial effect"<sup>100</sup> Upon seeing Stanley before him, Livingstone, moved to tears, told Stanley, "You have given me new life."<sup>101</sup> Livingstone found himself close to death and desperately needed food and supplies, and Stanley's story would become a final

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<sup>94</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 430.

<sup>95</sup> Thomas, *With Lawrence*, 384.

<sup>96</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 338-344.

<sup>97</sup> Lowell Thomas, *With Lawrence in Arabia* (New York: Century Co, 1924), 394.

<sup>98</sup> Malcolm Brown, *T.E. Lawrence* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 65.

<sup>99</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 330.

<sup>100</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 331-334.

<sup>101</sup> Knightley, *Secret Lives*,

outlet for him to repair his tarnished reputation. When Livingstone told Stanley he had given him new life, he meant it.

As for Lawrence, he knew very well when the cameras were flashing and posed willingly for Chase's pictures. Lawrence's hopes to step out from the "sideshow within a sideshow, his description of the war in the Near East, and enter center stage, were realized. Winston Churchill would later quip that Lawrence had a habit of "backing into the limelight."<sup>102</sup> In a 1933 cartoon featured in *The Literary Digest*, Hanna Swaffer, depicted Lawrence, well after his exploits in the desert, dressed in his RAF uniform but holding in his hand an actor's mask. Under the image was a damning caption that read "Lawrence Unmasked: his modesty has become a form of blatancy."<sup>103</sup>

David Lean chose to begin *Lawrence of Arabia* with Lawrence's fatal motorcycle accident. In the scene, a reporter makes his way to Jackson Bentley, a caricature of Thomas, and asks him if he knew Lawrence. Smiling for the reporter, Bentley replies "Yes, it was my privilege to know him and to make him known to the world. He was a poet, a scholar, and a mighty warrior." After the reporter writes down Bentley's comment and leaves, Bentley turns to the man he is with and says, "He was also the most shameless exhibitionist since Barnum and Bailey." Laughs are exchanged between both men but, are soon cut short by an irritated mourner who finds the joke highly offensive. "Did you know him?" asks Bentley to the mourner who, in turn, replies, "No, not personally, but, I had the pleasure of shaking his hand once in Damascus."<sup>104</sup>

The scene in Lean's film reveals all the perceptions of Lawrence's contrasting public image. To his admirers, Lawrence was a brilliant scholar, talented writer, restless adventurer

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<sup>103</sup> Knightley, *Secret Lives*,

<sup>104</sup> David Lean, *Lawrence of Arabia*, Columbia/Tri-Star Pictures, 1962.

and one of England's greatest military heroes fighting for a romantic cause in a rather unromantic war. To his detractors, Lawrence was a gifted liar and flamboyant Orientalist who went "native" to satisfy his own quest for fame. Indeed, Lawrence is a rather enigmatic figure. Although he liked to think of himself as a Renaissance man, Lawrence will always be remembered as "Lawrence of Arabia." Despite adding to his own fame by writing *Seven Pillars* and the abridged version, *Revolt in the Desert*, Lawrence retreated to the RAF in the 1920s and 1930s with hopes of (achieving obscurity.) Such actions illustrate a man who cherished privacy yet clearly had a taste for theatrics, in his own words, "play-acting."<sup>105</sup>

The metaphor of actor is useful in understanding Lawrence. In becoming an Arab, Lawrence caught the imagination of the Western world during a catastrophic time, the First World War. Lowell Thomas's decision to "cast" Major T.E. Lawrence as Lawrence of Arabia created a romantic figure in the exciting images he shot of Lawrence leading his "loyal Arab followers" into battle against the Turks. Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* became a huge blockbuster in the winter of 1963 and won an academy award for best picture a few months later. Furthering his pop culture image, Lawrence appears, as well as David Livingstone, on the sleeve of the Beatles *Sgt Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band*. In 2003, the American Film Institute list of cinema's 100 greatest heroes ranked T.E. Lawrence in the top ten. Lawrence of Arabia, however, was a fictional character. In playing such a convincing role to the masses, Lawrence created his own myth.

During the time he wrote *Seven Pillars*, Lawrence wrote to an old friend, Vyvan Richards, and lamented over the quality of historical narratives, "I'll admit that modern history has seldom been 'composed' in the artistic sense...But modern history tries to be a

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<sup>105</sup> Lawrence, *Revolt*, 96.

science, not an art.”<sup>106</sup> In his introduction to *Seven Pillars* Lawrence wrote, “I had a craving all my life for the power of self-expression in some imaginative form. At last accident...casting me as a man of action had given me place in the Arab Revolt, a theme ready and epic to a direct eye and hand, thus offering me an outlet in literature.”<sup>107</sup> E.M. Forster, after being given the manuscript by Lawrence, wrote of *Seven Pillars*, “under this tent-pole of a military chronicle, T.E. has hung an unexpected fabric of portraits, descriptions, philosophies, emotions, adventures, dreams.” To George Bernard Shaw, Lawrence wrote, “To my astonishment, after peace came I found I was myself the sole person who knew what happened in Arabia...and the only literate person in the Arab army. So it became a professional duty to record what happened.”<sup>108</sup> Lawrence was hardly the “only literate person” in the Arab Army and Shaw’s statement certainly ignores the competency of the Arab Bureau and other trained orientalisists like Getrude Bell and Lawrence’s French rival, Louis Massignon. Lawrence, surprisingly took a far more objective view acknowledging, “In the pages the history is not of the Arab Revolt, but of me in it.”<sup>109</sup> In *Seven Pillars*, Lawrence chose not to re-create history, but rather a legacy.

Lawrence was very much involved in the creation of his own myth, but this did not mean he never felt troubled by his role. Lowell Thomas would later admit, “In the course of these consultations I frequently asked him whether certain anecdotes I had gathered were true, anecdotes concerning his experiences before the War. He would laugh with glee and reply, ‘History isn’t made up of truth anyhow, so why worry?’”<sup>110</sup> Why worry? Contrast this

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<sup>106</sup> Lawrence, *Lawrence of Arabia: Strange Man of Letters*, 265.

<sup>107</sup> Lawrence, *Seven Pillars*,

<sup>108</sup> Charles M. Stang, “Does Not Care: Lawrence, Herodotus, and Nietzsche on History,” in *The Waking Dream of T.E. Lawrence: Essays on his Life, Literature and Legacy*, ed. Charles M. Stang (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 10-41.

<sup>109</sup> James Geluca, “T.E. Lawrence and Historical Representation,” in *The Waking Dream of T.E. Lawrence: Essays on his Life, Literature and Legacy*, ed. Charles M. Stang (New York: NY Palgrave, 2002), 52.

<sup>110</sup> T.E. Lawrence, “The Evolution of a Revolt,” *Army Quarterly*, I (October, 1920), , *Evolution of a Revolt: Early Postwar Writings of T.E. Lawrence*, ed. Stanley and Rodelle Weintraub (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968), 63-65.

Lawrence, however, with the Lawrence who left King George V standing, with, as the King stated, “the award in my hand.”<sup>111</sup> Arab scholar and Lawrence critic Suleiman Mousa refuted the claim that Lawrence denied all his awards and went into hiding because of the British betrayal of the Arabs. Rather, he believed that Lawrence, being a student of history himself, feared the future verdict on his legacy.<sup>112</sup> Several accounts in *Seven Pillars*, such as being captured by Turkish soldiers and later raped by Turkish guards (a scene dramatized in Lean’s *Lawrence*), Lawrence going undercover behind enemy lines dressed as a gypsy woman, and a claim that Lawrence was invited to Mecca by King Hussein, as Mousa contends, probably never occurred. On his thirtieth birthday, August 16, 1918, Lawrence described what he deemed his own Napoleonic complex, “It came to me queerly how four years ago, I had meant to be a general and knighted, when thirty.” Lawrence ended in his journal, “all good reputations were founded, like mine, on fraud.”<sup>113</sup>

Lawrence became famous not *during* his time with the Bedouins but rather *after*. This relates as well to Livingstone. The legends of Livingstone and Lawrence were partially created by journalists. Livingstone’s survival among “savages,” as written by Stanley, and his death two years after sparked a growing interest to explore and colonize Africa. Lawrence’s fame after the First World War gave the Western world a traditional hero, one that was not marred by the sudden complexities brought on by trench warfare. The legacies of Livingstone and Lawrence came only after their deaths, and because of this, they were reclaimed by their own society, the one they chose to escape.

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<sup>111</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *Evolution of a Revolt: Early Postwar Writings of T.E. Lawrence*, ed. Stanley and Rodelle Weintraub (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968), 67.

<sup>112</sup> Suleiman Mousa, *T.E. Lawrence: an Arab View*. Translated by Albert Butros. London: UK Oxford University Press, 1966, 218.

<sup>113</sup> Lawrence, *Seven Pillars*, 562-563.

## CHAPTER V: RETURNING TO EMPIRE

In their escape from Britain, Livingstone and Lawrence brought with them the image of European conquerors. The presence of white men among Africans and Arabs offered reactions from the natives which ranged from awe to distrust. The latter served as a reminder for both Livingstone and Lawrence as to what separated them from the natives. The few African tribes that showed a level of distrust and animosity towards Livingstone viewed him as a representation of the white man's plot to destroy their society.<sup>114</sup> Lawrence too was viewed with skepticism from some Arabs, both urban and Bedouin.<sup>115</sup> The Africans and Arabs, although willing to accept both men, would never forget that Livingstone and Lawrence were white men.

If there were levels of distrust among certain African and Arab tribes towards Livingstone and Lawrence, they were right to harbor the sentiment. Although the imperial ambitions of Livingstone and Lawrence were well-intended, they spelled unintended consequences for Africans and Arabs. Livingstone's fears of exploitation by the British settlers in the African interior were realized during the 1890s two decades after his death. The postwar Arab governments set up by the British soon became protectorates under the British Empire.<sup>116</sup> As Winston Churchill reminded Lawrence, "there is a level of trust between the British and Arabs, but there is also our right."<sup>117</sup> The British Empire meant transformation of the way of life of Africans and Arabs.

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<sup>114</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 52

<sup>115</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 409.

<sup>116</sup> Lloyd, *British Empire*, 282.

<sup>117</sup> William Manchester, *The Last Lion Winston Spencer Churchill: Visions of Glory 1874-1932*, (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1983), 698-701.

On his first return to Britain in 1856, Livingstone set out to sway the British government towards a policy of interventionist expansion in Africa.<sup>118</sup> The task was not easy as the British government favored indirect rule.<sup>119</sup> Palmerston's "gunboat" approach to foreign policy reflected the views of the British public. Intervention and investment abroad from the British government only occurred when it served British interests, otherwise the government showed no interest.<sup>120</sup> Livingstone had to find a way to sell swatting *tsetse* flies and surviving malaria to the uninterested government. Livingstone remained optimistic, however, and took full advantage of his newfound fame to push for further exploration and eventual colonization of the African interior. His *Missionary Travels*, published in 1857, purposely downplayed his many bouts with fever, the hostility he encountered from certain tribes, and dangers of the *tsetse* fly in order to market the African interior as an ideal place for colonization.<sup>121</sup> The "Mid-Victorian stability" pushed by Palmerston remained an obstacle.<sup>122</sup>

It would be at Cambridge where Livingstone would give the most clear reasoning behind his passionate urging of British colonization of the Zambesi River Valley during a series of lectures at Cambridge University, "My desire is to open a path to this district, that civilization, commerce and Christianity might find their way there."<sup>123</sup> The three "C's" would form the backbone of the civilizing mission during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and although Livingstone would fail in his ambitions for the remainder of his life, these ideas would return in the 1890s nearly forty years after Livingstone first proposed them.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 163.

<sup>119</sup> Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher and Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians: The Climax of Imperialism in the Dark Continent*, (New York: NY St. Martin's Press, 1961) 35.

<sup>120</sup> Lloyd, *The British Empire*, 184.

<sup>121</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 175.

<sup>122</sup> Buxton, *David Livingstone*, 67.

<sup>123</sup> David Livingstone, *Dr. Livingstone's Cambridge Lectures*, (London: UK Bell and Daldy, 1858), 126.

<sup>124</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 68.

Livingstone wisely ended his Cambridge lectures with a question, “do you carry out the work which I have begun?” He then answered, “I leave it with you!”<sup>125</sup> Livingstone wanted to not only try to persuade the British government of the desire/need for colonization, but, more importantly, the British people. They would be the ones following Livingstone’s lead and settling the “virgin land,”<sup>126</sup> as Livingstone referred to the African interior. The intention of the lectures were not only to give a clear mission, but to directly involve as well as inspire future missionaries, traders and colonists just as he had been by the abolitionists and missionary societies of his youth in the 1830s.<sup>127</sup>

Lawrence’s approach to empire bore similarities to the Dominion status given to Canada, South Africa and Australia. According to Lawrence, if the Arabs of Palestine were given this status then India and Egypt, serving as a precursor to an Arab dominion, would want to remain voluntarily in the British Empire.<sup>128</sup> “I shall be told that the idea of Brown dominions in the British Empire is grotesque,” wrote Lawrence in an article to *The Times*. Shrugging off these concerns, Lawrence pledged, “I believe the Arabs in these conditions would be as loyal as anyone in the Empire.”<sup>129</sup> The idea of voluntary admission into the empire would direct Lawrence’s imperial ambitions.

The criticisms of post-war British policy in the Near East coming from Lawrence attempted to maintain the fragile trust between British and Arab that already began to show signs of damage. In another article to *The Times*, Lawrence took several paragraphs to describe in full detail the backroom dealings of the British, French and Arab leaders. The Hussein-McMahon Pledge of 1915 and Sykes-Picot Treat of 1916 were brought to full light for the British public to see. At the end of the article, Lawrence answered what he felt “the

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<sup>125</sup> Livingstone, *Cambridge Lectures*, 128

<sup>126</sup> David Livingstone, *African Journal 1853-1856* ed. Ian Schapera, vol. 1, 243.

<sup>127</sup> Jeal, *Livingstone*, 18.

<sup>128</sup> Mack, *Prince*, 190.

<sup>129</sup> Lawrence, *Revolt*, 80.

fuss” had been concerning the British, French and Arabs by stating that “the agreement of 1916 is unworkable, and in particular no longer suits the British and French Governments.”<sup>130</sup> Now that Lawrence exposed what he deemed to be the dishonest motivations behind British foreign policy, a new imperial policy based on cooperation between the Arabs and British could be established.

Lawrence did not want to completely separate himself from British imperial ambitions because, like Livingstone, he feared exploitation of the natives. In the previous article to *The Times*, Lawrence referred to what he believed to be the main concern of British policy in the Near East: oil. “The Arabs seem willing to shed their blood for freedom; how much for their oil!” wrote Lawrence toward the end of his article.<sup>131</sup> Lawrence also chose to remind the British government that they had been responsible for the “creation” of the Arab.<sup>132</sup> They were the third interest in the negotiations between Britain and France and deserved to be treated as such.<sup>133</sup> Lawrence emphasized the role of the Arabs in determining their own political autonomy within the British Empire. As Lawrence hoped, it would be one free from exploitation.

In addition to imperial ambitions establishing a relationship of colonizer and colonized between Livingstone and Lawrence and the natives, the language both men chose to use in their description of the Africans and Arabs separated them. Use of the term “benighted” appeared several times in Livingstone’s Cambridge lectures.<sup>134</sup> In using a word like “benighted” Livingstone set up the relationship between colonizer and colonized and gave the image of the black African as uncivilized and helpless. In his words, Livingstone

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<sup>130</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *Evolution of a Revolt: Early Postwar Writings of T.E. Lawrence*, ed. Stanley and Rodelle Weintraub, “To the Editor of ‘The Times’” Sept. 11, 1919, (University Park: PA The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968), 65.

<sup>131</sup> Lawrence, *Evolution*, 80

<sup>132</sup> Lawrence, *Evolution*, 65.

<sup>133</sup> Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 602.

<sup>134</sup> Livingstone, *Cambridge Lectures*, 42.

summed up what he believed to be the image of the African tribesmen, that of “Nature’s outcast child” where “in those romantic resides men grow wild.”<sup>135</sup> The image of the African reveling in ignorant bliss and idleness would be a dominant view of Europeans for the remainder of the nineteenth century.<sup>136</sup>

The parent/child imagery found in colonial discourse prevailed in both Livingstone and Lawrence’s characterization of the Africans and Arabs. Caring for the Africans, as Livingstone stated in his Cambridge lectures, and the result being too much for him, gave the image of a father finding difficulty in controlling his children. This frustration, however, did not stop Livingstone from justifying British intervention in the African interior as Britain would believe itself the adult needed to discipline its child, Africa. A British cartoon dated April 21, 1894 in *Punch* magazine has John Bull, the British symbolic equivalent to Uncle Sam, looking at a little black baby in a basket with a small paper saying Uganda attached to it left on his doorstep. Upon seeing the child, Bull says “What, another!!- Well, I suppose I must take it in!”<sup>137</sup> The drive for establishing protectorates in Africa during the 1890s partially grounded itself in the belief that Africans were children and needed to be disciplined so that they could grow to be “prosperous and civil” people.

Livingstone’s coinage of the three “C’s” mission is imperial in its language in that it sets up a dividing line between European and African. To suggest that the Africans needed a civilizing mission meant that their civilization accounted for very little if anything at all. Livingstone’s escape from European modernity contradicted with his desire to give the Africans such Victorian values as commerce and Christianity. It revealed an imperial belief, even if it was meant to be beneficial and Livingstone’s dismissal of native society as

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<sup>135</sup> Livingstone, *Cambridge Lectures*, 37.

<sup>136</sup> Robinson, *Africa and the Victorians*, 14-25.

<sup>137</sup> Barbara Harlow and Mia Carter, *Imperialism and Orientalism: A Documentary Sourcebook*, (New York: Blackwell Publications, 1999), 258.

adaptable to Christianity. The three “C’s” rejected any values that African native societies offered and upheld the belief in European modernity, separating Europeans as “civilized” and Africans as “primitive.”

The introduction to Charles Doughty’s *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, as mentioned earlier in this paper, gave the description of Arabs as “limited” and “narrow minded” people.<sup>138</sup> Lawrence’s view of the Arabs living splendidly and “unmarked” from civilization was that of a condescending nature. The description of the Arabs here resembled “picturesque”<sup>139</sup> figures in a museum rather than the brothers in arms Lawrence depicted in his early newspaper articles to *The Times* or in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Although the intentions were earnest, Lawrence’s view of the Arabs as an “escape” revealed imperial language that separated him from the Arabs.

The view of the Arab as childlike also appeared in Lawrence’s descriptions. An episode between Lawrence and an Arab named Kurr revealed his condescension, “We gently teased him with notions of liberty; with the freedom of the Arab countries for the Arabs however, he would not understand, but strike himself proudly on the chest crying, “I am Kurr!”<sup>140</sup> A word like “teased,” at least from its modern usage, offers the image of an adult playing a game with a child. It also established a power dynamic in the favor of the colonizer and in Lawrence’s case, the British. Arab desires for freedom were admirable, but, ultimately, it would be up to the British to make such realities happen. At least, this was how Lawrence and other politicians after the war saw the situation, another example of Britain helping “her children.”

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<sup>138</sup> T.E. Lawrence, “The Arab Epic,” *The Times* [London], 28 November 1918, 5.

<sup>139</sup> Rey Chow, *Contemporary Post Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Padmini Mongia, “Where Have All the Natives Gone?”, (New York: NY, Arnold, 1996), 3-4.

<sup>140</sup> Lawrence, *Revolt*, 82.

Even a term like “play acting” from the very beginning established the relationship of colonizer and colonized, civilized and savage, between Lawrence and the Bedouin. It also challenged any deeper connection that Lawrence had with the Arabs and even the belief that they could become, “one.” “I was a foreigner,” wrote Lawrence and he deemed it “impossible” to “simultaneously receive the privileges of both societies.”<sup>141</sup> Such language seemed to suggest that Lawrence existed as a fraud and established the inevitable betrayal of the British of the Arabs.

It should be noted that when Livingstone and Lawrence argued for intervention in these regions, they did not envision other European powers playing a role. In fact, both Livingstone and Lawrence held strong Anglo-centric beliefs and had only contempt for other European nations. For Livingstone, the Portuguese were the primary villains because he believed them to be a corrupting influence over Africans because of their continuing practice of slave trading. But Livingstone also had criticisms of the French and their version of the civilizing mission which he characterized as “bullying,” and ended, “indeed the French system of dealing with the natives is well expressed by that word.”<sup>142</sup> French policy also bothered Lawrence and a year before Lawrence set out to meet Feisal in 1916, he wrote in a letter to his family, “So far as Syria is concerned it is France and not Turkey that is the enemy.”<sup>143</sup> At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, Lawrence criticized how the French, “tore apart and disperse” the “full independence” for the Arabs.<sup>144</sup> The Portuguese in Africa and the French in Syria, according to Livingstone and Lawrence, were negative influences on the region and their beliefs went against those of the British mainstream.

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<sup>141</sup> Lawrence, *Revolt*, 96.

<sup>142</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 21.

<sup>143</sup> Lawrence, *Home Letters*, 303

<sup>144</sup> Mack, *Prince of Our Disorder*, 254.

Anglo-centrism extended beyond criticism of continental Europeans. Livingstone had worse words for the Arabs, “The Arabs here are a wretched lot physically- thin, washed-out creatures. Many with bleared eyes.”<sup>145</sup> Although Livingstone traveled regularly with Arabs in his final voyage, he still did not trust them completely, “in words they are polite, but truthfulness seems very little regarded.”<sup>146</sup> When matters of religion were brought up, Livingstone would be extremely critical, “Mohammedans make no attempt to proselytize the Africans. Africans do not imitate the Arab “dumbshow.”<sup>147</sup> Livingstone concluded that the Arabs had no mission and were simply there to exploit. Lawrence too would be critical of Arabs, but, he blamed the Ottoman Turks and other “mongrel Levantines” and the urban Arab elite whom he deemed as “effete town dwellers” as the source of corruption.<sup>148</sup>

Although Livingstone and Lawrence sympathized with native society, their intentions still were to the service of the British Empire. The missionary impulse of Livingstone and Lawrence’s desire for self-determination of the Arabs still had the native societies attached to the British Empire. These native societies were children to be looked after and as Livingstone inferred, to be let go one day. This nonetheless presented a very ambivalent attitude that tried to both serve the interests of the Empire and of the natives’ sovereignty.

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<sup>145</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journal*, 27.

<sup>146</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journal*, 85.

<sup>147</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, 224.

<sup>148</sup> Geluca, “T.E. Lawrence and Historical Representation,” 59.

## CONCLUSIONS

To reach a conclusion, I would like to return to my original source: Joseph Conrad. Marlow, Kurtz, and Jim were all partially modeled by Conrad as disenfranchised members of European society. More specifically, Marlow and Jim were Englishmen, and “all of Europe” was said to have been involved in the making of Kurtz, yet the three did not fit in within their own societies and explains why they became sailors. Herman Melville alluded once that in landlessness only freedom could be found.<sup>149</sup> But I believe this concept of “landlessness” relates to the cultural trope of going native. Marlow, Kurtz, and Jim stem from European modernity. Marlow is always skeptical of the perceived supremacy of European civilization, but he is also always an observer and never an actor. Kurtz is an exporter of European modernity. but when he realizes the power he holds over people he labels as savages, he too becomes savage. But, because he is European, he still commands respect. Jim is neither an actor nor an exporter; he is an imitator. He is also a failure. He fails at being a sailor and imitating the heroic behavior he associates with a life at sea. Even though he saves the people of Patsuan from Muslim invaders, he eventually fails at saving the life of the Chief. These characters all hold a common trait of alienation that eventually becomes transformed into cynicism.

Perhaps Marlow, Kurtz and Jim were all victims of the modern condition. Freud in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, outlined the struggle between individual freedom and conformity demanded by society.<sup>150</sup> Humanity’s drive for civilization, as Freud believed, caused the individual to feel unfulfilled. Marlow continues roaming the world looking for

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<sup>149</sup> Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: a Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 45.

<sup>150</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, ed. James Stacey (New York: W.W. Norton & Company 1989), 11-17.

something he can never seem and probably never will find. Kurtz, not content with his own rising power in Europe, chooses to expand his power for his own personal gain in a foreign society. Jim's anxieties over his need for respect and heroism are complicated by his cowardice aboard the *Patna*. Marlow, Kurtz and Jim are all discontents. Jim and Kurtz attempt to escape the anxieties of modern civilization by immersing themselves in a society where the problems of modernity are not apparent. Yet, in their escape, Kurtz and Jim cannot completely abandon modernity. In the case of Jim, arriving on an exotic and unknown island and becoming a god-like figure is a powerful metaphor for escaping the problems and anxieties of modern society. However, even the supposed "blank spaces" of the world cannot hide them from long as they inadvertently return to modernity.

This suggests then that Kurtz and Jim never went native. Clifford Geertz came to the conclusion that he could never truly go native during his life among the Balinese people. He was always an outsider.<sup>151</sup> It is true that these men adopted the customs and culture of the native tribes they were among but they were immediately singled out. First, for their appearance, secondly because Kurtz and Jim attempted to reorganize native societies modeled after European societies. Even in their escapes, they brought back with them Europe. They then were always outsiders looking in. For Jim, he was an outsider both in Britain and eventually in Patsuan.

Melville's concept of landlessness suggests freedom, but is this an easy freedom? What was gained or lost in this cultural exchange? In his 1968 landmark study, *The Ritual Process: Structure & Anti-Structure*, Victor Turner described the "liminal period" as a stage where a person, or "passenger" was transformed by their immersion during a cultural experience. Livingstone and Lawrence were such passengers forever changed by their

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<sup>151</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1973), 412-413.

immersion into native societies. They came in with preconceptions and left these societies changed in a state neither “betwixt or between.”<sup>152</sup>

I return now to the theme of “one of us.” Livingstone and Lawrence both claimed Britain and the native societies they visited as home. This is a bold statement but consider Livingstone’s death in Africa and Lawrence’s fond nostalgia for his early experiences in the Near East. Livingstone refused to return to Britain until he found the source of the Nile. He could have returned with Stanley but he adamantly refused. Partly because of pride, Livingstone wrote that he no longer believed he was welcome in England and did not consider it his home anymore. Although he held ambivalent of Africans, as he put it, “they would not judge” him. Only in Africa could he find the freedom from the unrealistic goals placed both by British society and himself. Lawrence never returned to the Near East after his brief position in the Colonial Office. Several detractors dispute the conflict Lawrence felt over his loyalty to the Bedouins and to England. Lawrence, however, did not choose to return to England and live fulltime until the very end of his life. He made his home in India for a while working for the RAF and then the Tank Corps. He had no desire to return to either England or the Near East.

His experience in the Arab Revolt left him unfilled. Once the storybook images of the Near East faded and were complicated by the end of the First World War, he felt there was nothing left for him there. However, his letters to his family have him making several references of “those days being the best.”<sup>153</sup> I interpret this as Lawrence falling in love with idea of the Near East but once being immersed in the culture for so long, he shook off the romantic images. This did not mean he did not enjoy his time there, it just meant that the

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<sup>152</sup> Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968), 94-96.

<sup>153</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *The Diary Kept by T.E. Lawrence while Traveling in Arabia During 1911* (Reading, UK: Garnet 1993), 15.

luster had faded. For Livingstone, his adamant faith in the civilizing mission also faded, and he seemingly turned his back on Britain and modernity. Instead, he went along with the native way of life, even if he did not fully support it. Still, it was more welcoming for him than his own society.

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