

Rider Haggard, Classics, and Great Zimbabwe:  
Constructing lost cities in *King Solomon's Mines*, *She*, and *Elissa*

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## **Declaration**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, in the Graduate Programme in Classics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Classics in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

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## Abstract

The British novelist Sir Henry Rider Haggard, who is arguably best known for his swashbuckling African adventure stories, wrote a considerable number of works concerned with the presence of ancient white cities in southern Africa. These narratives appear to have been inspired by nineteenth century theories surrounding the Ruins of Great Zimbabwe which came to the public's attention after their (re)discovery in 1871 by the German explorer Karl Mauch. Reluctant to attribute such accomplishments to local African ingenuity, laymen and archaeologists developed theories that the ruins could have been built only by an ancient white race. This motif appears in two of Haggard's lost city novels, *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She* (1887), and a work of historical fiction, *Elissa; or The Doom of Great Zimbabwe* (1900). In addition to this archaeological influence, a significant amount of Classical material has also contributed to these narratives in various ways.

The aim of this dissertation is to establish the role of Great Zimbabwe and Classics in Haggard's composition of these works. Chapter One provides a discussion of Haggard's background and takes aspects such his education and connection to the Ruins of Great Zimbabwe into account so as to establish his familiarity with the two topics which dominate this study. Chapter Two explores Haggard's initial venture into the lost city genre with *King Solomon's Mines* and demonstrates the parallels between the ruins and his narrative. The second half of the discussion is concerned with the contribution of Classics in his description of landscape, people and events. Chapter Three looks at Haggard's treatment of the lost city genre and his engagement with Classics and ancient civilizations in *She*. The chapter focuses on aspects such the myth of Atlantis, the contribution of Egyptology and the role of Classical females in Haggard's portrayal

of in novel's eponymous character. Chapter Four is concerned with the influence of nineteenth century Zimbabwean archaeology and two ancient accounts of the Carthaginian queen Dido in Haggard's construction of *Elissa's* plot.

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# Introduction

## Theory

It is through the framework and related theories of Reception Studies that this dissertation aims to establish the role and significance of Classics in a selection of two lost city novels and a work of historical fiction by Sir H. Rider Haggard: *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), *She* (1887), and *Elissa; or, The Doom of Great Zimbabwe*. Reception Studies is a comparatively new field when considered against the related stands of *Rezeptiongeschichte*, *Nachleben* and the Classical Tradition, all of which are concerned with the transmission of ancient material and its reception post-antiquity.<sup>1</sup> While still in its early stages, Reception Studies continues to grow and gain prominence, establishing itself alongside these related strands, notably as a discipline with approaches distinct enough to warrant its development as a separate field.

Beneficial to understanding the appropriateness of Reception Studies to this research are the grounds behind its selection over the previously mentioned fields of the Classical Tradition, *Rezeptiongeschichte* and *Nachleben*. In the interests of brevity and relevance, however, I will only review the Classical Tradition: a more familiar field in Anglophone Scholarship and subsequently a more understandable choice than *Rezeptiongeschichte* and *Nachleben*. That is not to say, however, that the latter two have no valuable contribution to make in Anglophone Scholarship, but are rather not necessary to explore given the scope and nature of this study. Thus, it is my intention to illustrate the suitability of Reception Studies by briefly investigating the concerns and aims of the Classical Tradition, and in this way demonstrating how the two are distinguishable and appropriate to respective studies. While the scope of the Classical Tradition

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<sup>1</sup> It should be acknowledged, however, that Reception Studies also engages with dissemination of Classical material during antiquity.

and Reception Studies may not be dissimilar, it is from their approaches and foci that their differences emerge.

The Classical Tradition is concerned with how “literature, art, and social structures of antiquity were handed down to successive generations, to be absorbed by new institutions and cultures” (Kallendorf 2007:1). This may lead to the understanding that the Classical Tradition attempts to study the influence of antiquity on subsequent cultures, albeit from the elevated position of the Classical world. This idea is further explained by Lorna Hardwick, a forerunner in the field of Reception Studies, who suggests that the Classical Tradition “stud[ies] the transmission and dissemination of classical culture through the ages, usually with the emphasis on the influence of the classical writers, artists and thinkers on subsequent intellectual movements and intellectual works. In this context, the language which was used to describe this influence tended to include terms like ‘legacy’” (2003:2). With emphasis placed on the influential role of the ancient source and the material handed down, its superiority is implied and the work of reception may be undermined. This idea is inherent in the word ‘tradition’, as Kallendorf points out: “The idea that classics should be ‘handed down’ derives from the etymology of the word ‘tradition’, which comes from the word *tradere*, meaning ‘hand down, bequeath’” (2007:1).

Again, the idea of ‘handing down’ material from antiquity, as if it were an inheritance, reinforces notions of superiority and authority. Furthermore, it suggests that the work of reception is indebted to the legacy of a nobler tradition. In this way, works of reception may be considered unoriginal, less skilful and may consequently be undervalued. By emphasising the influence of the ancient source over other aspects in a study of reception, the Classical Tradition not only endorses the superiority of that source, but may also simplify the chain of influence by



understating the diversity of the ancient world and by neglecting influences unrelated to it. This idea is expressed by Hardwick when she states that —more recent research has tended to move away from the study of a linear progression of influence” (2003:2). It is in this respect that Reception Studies differs to a large extent from the Classical Tradition. Thus, for scholars concerned with the connotations of the Classical Tradition, the term ‘reception’ is favourable, as Martindale suggests, it —often replaces terms like ‘tradition’, ‘heritage’, ‘influences’ and so forth” (2007:298), which infer meanings that ultimately privilege the ancient sources.

Reception Studies therefore steers away from some of the dated views of the Classical Tradition concerning the dissemination of Classical material. Lorna Hardwick highlights the key features of Reception Studies as follows:

Reception Studies have to be concerned with investigating the routes by which by which a text has moved and the cultural focus which shaped or filtered the ways in which a text was regarded. Reception Studies therefore participate in a continuous dialogue between past and present and also require some lateral dialogue in which crossing boundaries of place or language or genre is as important as crossing those of time. Reception Studies are, therefore, concerned not only with individual texts and their relationship with one another but also with the broader cultural processes which shape and make up those relationships (2003:4-5).

Accordingly, it can be said that Reception Studies does not take for granted the intricate trajectory of Classical material, and thus seeks to understand and track its many paths rather than simplifying or neglecting them. Nor does it seek to understate the diversity of cultures which have received and re-figured Classical material and, in doing so, have created their own meaning depending on their unique societal values and customs: first by the process of initially

understanding the material and then, when refiguring it. This idea is expressed by Gaiser who states that Classical texts:

[A]re not Teflon-coated baseballs hurtling through time and gazed up at uncomprehendingly by natives of various times and places, until they reach *our* enlightenment; rather, they are pliable and sticky artefacts gripped, moulded, and stamped with new meanings by every generation of readers, and they come to us irreversibly altered by their experience (2002:387).

This approach should prove a valuable tool for any study in Classical reception, as it proposes a broader range of perspectives which will allow for a deeper understanding of the many components of the study.

The approach followed by scholars of Reception Studies provides not only discerning methodologies for engaging with works of reception, but also yields new insights into Classical studies. For instance, while Reception Studies acknowledges that Classical material has played significant roles in providing material for creative works during and after antiquity, it also attempts to understand the ways in which receptions might inform these ancient sources. They may, to give an example, incorporate into their refigurations aspects prevalent in contemporary society that might have gone unquestioned or unnoticed in ancient contexts. As a result, new questions may be raised about the ancient world, and in doing so, a mutual exchange may be established. This, at least, is the opinion of Hardwick who maintains that works of reception —focus critical attention back towards the ancient source and sometimes frame new questions or retrieve aspects of the source that which have been marginalised or forgotten” (2003:4). It can then be assumed that, by exploring the possibilities of a two-way relationship between the Classical text and the refigured text, Receptions Studies has the opportunity to shed light on

ancient matters. Thus the aim of Reception Studies is two-fold in that it sets out to understand both the influential role of antiquity as well as the ways in which refigured.

In his introduction to *Classics and the Uses of Reception* Martindale highlights the relevance of Reception Studies when he suggests that many classicists: —æ reasonably happy, if only to keep the discipline alive in some form, to work with an enlarged sense of what classics might be, no longer confined to the study of classical antiquity in itself- so that classics can include writing about *Paradise Lost*, or the mythological poesie of Titian, or the film *Gladiator*” (2006:2). Thus, Reception Studies may have a very important role to play in the posterity of Classics, as not only does it diversify the field, offering new and dynamic material to engage with, but, by making itself more accessible, it may also attract a larger following. This is achieved by accommodating a wide range of subject matter and taking into account previously neglected areas such as pop-culture. Through the facilitation of Reception Studies, individuals have the opportunity to engage with Classical material on more familiar and comfortable terms and Classical Studies need not be such a formidable and rigid territory. Perhaps Reception Studies may also answer questions concerning the prolific use of Classical material across many media in societies post antiquity and to what end this material was used.

Having thus established the role and objectives of Reception Studies, and that which distinguishes it from other related fields in Classics, it would seem appropriate to proceed by highlighting the theoretical approaches used by scholars of Reception Studies. While Reception Studies does not adhere to any unique and unifying theory, it does draw from a variety of others, mostly literary theory, to facilitate research. Particularly useful to Reception Studies is the German strand of literary criticism *Rezeptionsästhetik*, often translated as the æsthetics of reception‘, which emerged as a response to resolve concerns necessary for the advancement of

literary history. Developed by Hans Robert Jauss, *Rezeptionsästhetik* is an —attempt to bridge the gap between literature and history, between historical and aesthetic approaches” (Jauss 1982:18), which he believes had been neglected by Marxists and Formalist literary theories. Jauss states that the former theories —deprive literature of a dimension that inalienably belongs to its aesthetic character as well as to its social function: the dimension of its reception and influence” (*ibid.*). Here Jauss is referring the audience or reader, whose role in the construction of meaning, he feels, has been previously overlooked and thus conceives of the reader as playing a more active role in the construction of meaning.

The aesthetics of reception —define the meaning of a text as a convergence of the structure of the work and the structure of the interpretation which is never to be achieved anew” (Segers, Jauss, and Bahti 1979:84). In other words, meaning is established at the point where text and reader interact, and since a reader’s experience with a text is invariably unique, each individual encounter will yield a different meaning. This interaction between text and reader is illustrated by Jauss’ ‘\_horizon of expectation’, influenced by the concept of Gadamer’s ‘\_fusion of horizons’. Gadamer’s ‘\_fusion of horizons’, originating from his theory of Hermeneutics, works off the assumption that —we are always already historically situated, shaped by our cultures and language, and that context shapes our understanding of everything. In any moment of understanding we bring our own horizon, our own effective history, as a prejudice” (Hitchcock 2008:135). The ‘\_fusion of horizons’ can then be explained as the process by which the reader’s horizon, their cultural and personal assumptions and prejudices, merge with those of the texts, which are located within their own historical and cultural situation. Hitchcock suggests that —in the process of understanding or rather interpretation, the hermeneutic process, the horizons fuse

creating new meaning through dialogical interaction that is not identical to the monologue of the interpreter” (2008:134).

Subsequently, Jauss’ ‘horizon of expectation’, influenced by Gadamer’s ‘fusion of horizons’ can be described as —a concept focused on a horizon of experience of life and thus rooted in the receiver’s mind-set in his or her social and cultural context. This is what can be said to shape expectations and interpretations of texts” (Hardwick 2003:8). Thus, *Rezeptionsästhetik* places significant emphasis on the reader’s role in deriving meaning, which is dependent on one’s own unique effective history. Jauss states that:

[A] literary work, even when it appears to be new, does not present itself as something absolutely new in an information vacuum, but predisposes its audience to a very specific reception by announcements, overt and covert signals, familiar characteristics or implicit allusions. It awakens memories of that which was already read (1982:23).

This suggests that a reader brings to a literary encounter expectations based on prior knowledge from previous experiences with other texts, which may be triggered by elements in the new text. Thus a text can be said to either confirm these expectations or alternatively contradict them, and has the potential to alter previous expectations which results in a —change of Horizons” (Jauss 1982:25). According to the aesthetics of reception: —the distance between the horizon of expectation and the work, between the familiarity of previous aesthetic experience and the ‘horizon of change’ demanded by the reception of the new work, determines the artistic character of a work (*ibid.*). Thus a work which merely fulfils these expectations —comes closer to the sphere of ‘culinary’ or entertainment art [*Unterhaltungskunst*]” (*ibid.*). Conversely, —only works which breach and modify the readers’ expectations can be considered great literature” (Schmitz 2007: 89).

For Reception Studies, however, *Rezeptionsästhetik* allows a critical means by which to engage with Classical texts as well as subsequent works of reception due to the understanding that meaning is always being re-negotiated. This is demonstrated by Steinmeyer who suggests that “the Aesthetics of Reception provide a tool for the methodology in Reception Studies in so far as each scholar or student will read a myth or text differently from everybody else and will therefore approach it from his or her theoretical background on which to base his or her individual analysis of the modern adaptations” (2007:5). Accordingly, the Aesthetics of Reception is valuable to Classics in that it acknowledges the way in which meaning is constructed based on a person’s unique experiences which inform their literary encounters, and the implications that this might have, firstly, on the ways in which myths are used by artists and, secondly, on how studies of these later works are undertaken.

## **Methodology**

In order to identify the role played by both Classics and the theories surrounding the Ruins of Great Zimbabwe in a selection of two of Haggard’s lost city novels and one work of historical-fiction, it was necessary to establish a methodology to facilitate this research. The first step of this study was to limit it to a selection of three texts: *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885), *She* (1887), and *Elissa* (1900). While a multitude of Haggard’s novels, all operating on a similar formulaic premise would comfortably fit the nature of this study, a limited selection was necessary to avoid a superficial treatment of his texts. While a study of the influence of Classics on Haggard’s novels alone would warrant its own study, a focus on the ruins of Great Zimbabwe is helpful in two ways. Firstly, the addition of this theme provided a criterion with which to narrow my focus and, consequently, an overwhelming selection of texts from which to choose. Secondly, it

provided an opportunity to engage with a unique combination of topics, some relevant to my southern African situation.

*King Solomon's Mines* seemed to be a logical choice as it was Haggard's first commercial success and his first novel to deal with the lost city theme. Additionally, *King Solomon's Mines* can be considered as the prototype for Haggard's subsequent lost city Romances. *She* was selected for its suitability as a companion to *King Solomon's Mines*. The two texts were the most celebrated of his works and probably the most remembered. Additionally, while *She* bears many similarities to the plot of *King Solomon's Mines*, it also manages to develop the lost city theme which adds to a more sophisticated narrative. Lastly the Classical allusions made in *She* are richer and more complex than in any other of Haggard's lost city novels. The decision to include *Elissa* was motivated by the fact that this is the only one of Haggard's many novels to name Great Zimbabwe directly as the setting for the story. While *Elissa* does not imitate the same narrative formula of the other two texts, I consider it to be a necessary addition given its unquestionable relationship to the ruins. This study has been arranged into of four main sections, allotting each of these texts their own chapter, and allowing for an introductory background section. The texts have been studied chronologically with the intention to observe Haggard's development of the lost city theme.

In dealing with my primary texts I have apply a hermeneutical approach, achieved by a close reading of the three modern texts and later of the ancient texts from which Haggard borrowed. During this careful reading of Haggard's texts I attempted to identify Classical themes and then looked to the necessary ancient texts to both confirm and strengthen these theories. Some of the main authors and works that are examined are Virgil's *Aeneid*, especially Book *IV* and *VI* respectively, for its depiction of the events concerning Dido and Aeneas, which serves as

a model for *Elissa*, and Aeneas' *katabasis*<sup>2</sup>, which appears to inform scenes in *Kings Solomon's Mines*. Additionally, selections of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are studied in connection with their influence on Haggard's plots and the shaping of his characters. Plato's *Timaeus* and *Critias* were taken into consideration, so as to ascertain the extent to which Haggard utilised these two texts for the ideas they express regarding the lost city of Atlantis, which in part appears to serve as a model for the fallen ancient city of Kôr, found in *She* (1887). Having identified the motifs in these ancient texts that appear in Haggard's narratives, it was then necessary to look at the theoretical frameworks associated with Reception Studies in order to determine the nature of Haggard's reception of each individual work.

After a close reading of both the modern and the ancient texts a reading of secondary material followed. I then looked at secondary sources which fell into this, or an adjacent area of study so as to lend my claims some support as well as to familiarise myself with research that is both relevant and imperative to my area of study. Thus, considering the interdisciplinary nature of this study, scholarship carried out in the field of English Literature was particularly useful in providing this inquiry with a foundational knowledge upon which to advance my own research. An awareness of Haggard's imperial links, for example, and his treatment of the African landscape and peoples were indispensable to this study. In addition to undertaking a close reading of the three modern texts, I have also take into account Haggard's timeframe, attempting to place the novels in their historical 19<sup>th</sup> century context, but not limiting their significance and possible interpretation to this period.

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<sup>2</sup>A *katabasis*, refers to a journey or descent into the underworld. The term comes from the Greek verb *katabainein* from *kata* meaning 'down' and *bainein* meaning 'to go'.



## Literature Review

The aim of this study is to contribute to a small body of knowledge which recognises the Classical influence on H. Rider Haggard's African Romances, and in particular those concerned, either directly or indirectly, with the theories surrounding the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, namely *King Solomon's Mines*, *She* and *Elissa*. Acknowledgement of the influence of Classics on Haggard is supported by John Hilton who suggests that "Classical Greek and Roman texts including Homer, Plato, Euripides and Vergil, and mythological themes are deployed extensively in Haggard's romances and constitute the backbone of many of his plots" (2011:123). Hilton demonstrates Haggard's broad use of Classics in "Andrew Lang, Comparative Anthropology and the Classics in the African Romances of Rider Haggard", discussing the significance of literary friendship between Haggard and Andrew Lang, a prominent Classics scholar. My study, however, seeks to narrow the scope of Hilton's extensive survey, thus focusing only on a few of the existing ideas expressed in his article, albeit in great detail, and introducing new findings.

Additionally, Steve Vinson's "They-Who-Must-Be Obeyed", a reference to the epithet given to Ayesha, the heroine of *She*, by the Amahagger over whom she presides, suggests that "Ayesha owes major aspects of her layered personality to five female characters from two ancient compositions" (289:2008), namely, the *Aithiopika* by Heliodorus and *First Setne*, which Vinson describes as "an Egyptian-Language ghost story from the Ptolemaic period" (*ibid.*). Included in my discussion of *She* will be other possible suggestions for the influence of the multi-faceted Ayesha; references to the lost city of Atlantis, which Haggard appears to look to in his conception of the ruined city of Kôr, home to the seemingly immortal Ayesha; as well as other more subtle traces of the Classics and Ancient Egypt in the novel.

Although prolific research has already been conducted on Haggard's African Romances, this scholarship, for the most part, primarily engages with these works from the perspective of literary criticism. Such scholarship, although not orientated towards Classics, will be invaluable in providing some insights into the literary tradition and socio-political conditions concerning Haggard's African Romances. From amongst the vast body of scholarship available on Haggard, this study will look at works such as Lindy Stiebel's *Imagining Africa: Landscape in H. Rider Haggard's African Romances* (2001a), as it engages with concepts concerning the representation of the African landscape as seen, in part, through an imperial gaze, which will facilitate this study. As stated in her introduction, Stiebel's work —si concerned with the function of landscape in Rider Haggard's African romances of providing [...] both an historical and geographical context and also a mapping space for the wishes, desires and anxieties of the writer" (2001a:xi). In her chapter entitled *Haggard's African Topography*, Stiebel recognises Haggard's knowledge of Classics which is evident in his description of these fictionalised ancient ruins in his novels, left by white civilizations, and suggests that —the desire this stratagem expresses is a validation of the British Presence in Africa" (2001a:96), a noteworthy point with regard to this study. Furthermore, some biographical information on Haggard will certainly facilitate this study, for which his autobiography, *The Days of My Life* (1926), will serve as a good starting point to understand better the author's background as well as his attitude regarding imperialism and his ties to political figures such as Sir Henry Bulwer and Theophilus Shepstone.

An article by Daniel Tangri, entitled Popular Fiction and the Zimbabwe Controversy, will be useful in outlining the role of fiction, namely *King Solomon's Mines*, *She* and *Elissa*, having lent authority to the imperial ambitions of the British in Zimbabwe, by means of popularising and endorsing —aly opinions by cult archaeologists" (1990:293). This article also

affords a good grasp on the numerous theories concerning the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, of which those pertaining to King Solomon's Ophir bear of weight for the purpose of the this study.

## Chapter One: Biographical Background

The literary works of Sir Henry Rider Haggard are best appreciated through an understanding of the biographical and historical backgrounds that informed and influenced the various features of his compositions. This study is chiefly concerned with how Classical material was employed in the construction of three of Haggard's novels: *King Solomon's Mines*, *She* and, *Elissa; or The Doom of Zimbabwe*: texts which have been selected for their relationship with the theories surrounding the discovery of the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, the presence of gold and diamonds in Southern Africa, and also for their imperial subtexts. It would then be both necessary and useful to establish Haggard's relationship with both Classics and the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, and consequently to consider how biographical material might facilitate the reading and experience of these selected narratives. An enquiry into the background of Haggard should reveal valuable clues for recognising the influences of these selected works and other contributing factors that may have influenced additional themes relevant to the focus of this study.

A valuable asset to this study is Haggard's autobiography, *The Days of my Life*, completed in 1912 but published posthumously in 1926. The work, published in two volumes, covers the first 56 years of the authors' life, leaving the years between 1912 and his death in 1925 not as well documented. The text provides useful accounts of his education, his time in South Africa and his literary career, all of which answer questions beneficial to this study. Additional resources such as *The Cloak that I Left* (1951), a biography written by Haggard's daughter, Liliias, and further scholarly research offer information on those later years which were not covered in his autobiography.

While Sir H. Rider Haggard enjoyed a considerably successful literary career and came to be recognised as a distinguished novelist with a fine reputation, he did not display much talent in his youth. Haggard was the eighth child from a family of ten, born in 1856 in Norfolk, England to a country squire. He attended two day schools in London, the second of which was aimed at providing students with “—a sound business education” (Haggard 1926:7). Haggard, highlighting his earlier educational experience, relates how upon hearing the result of a certain examination his father declared that he was “—only fit to be a greengrocer” (5) and Haggard himself admits that he was “—more or less of a dunderhead at lessons” and that “—even [his] letters presented difficulties” (*ibid.*). Following the disappointing examination alluded to previously, Haggard was sent to Garsington Rectory near Oxford, where he was instructed by Rev. Mr. Graham along with a few other boys. Haggard was an imaginative child and explains that “—without doubt I was slow at my lessons, chiefly because I was always thinking of something else” (28).

When Haggard reached the end of his lessons at the Rectory, it was decided that he would attend Ipswich Grammar School in Suffolk, as, after the costly public school education of his older brothers, funds were limited and Haggard did not show much promise. According to Haynes, “—in Victorian Britain the class structure was marked, to a large extent, by knowledge of Greek and Latin among the elites, Latin among gentlemen, and English among the rest” (2006: 44), and it is here at Ipswich, an institution which is still active today, where evidence for a Classical education can be found. From the Middle Ages grammar schools were institutions traditionally associated with the instruction of Latin but, as Tompson illustrates, “—since the sixteenth century it was becoming accepted gradually that the grammar school should be more than a Latin (or Latin and Greek) school” (1971:39) and adds that “—the grammar school was

expected by most founders, by the eighteenth century, to offer a diversified curriculum, in some cases to offer its pupils the option of Latin or English instruction” (*ibid.*).

While Haggard does not go into detail about the curriculum, he does playfully describe an incident where —by some accident [he] wrote a really fine set of Latin verses” (1926:32), a seemingly uncharacteristic feat as he was unfairly accused of having cribbed them. Haggard’s anecdote reveals information consistent with knowledge of Victorian education and more specifically grammar schools, as according to Saunders, —the history of Latin pedagogy shows that by the nineteenth century prose composition had been a standard part of the English grammar school curriculum for many years” (1993:386). Such evidence suggests that Haggard was familiar with Latin, and presumably would have obtained some degree of Classical knowledge from the Latin texts he was exposed to. Although he does not discuss his Classical background in any significant detail, his daughter Lilius remarks on his years at Ipswich and states that —[h]e seems to have stood up to what was, at best, a rough life very well, emerging with a good grounding in classics, and a warm affection for his headmaster, the charming and kindly Dr. Holden whom, in later years, he grew to know intimately” (Haggard 1976:31). Hubert A. Holden had an excellent grounding in Classics and is described by Haggard as —one of the best Greek scholars of the day” (1926:251). It is probably on account of this that Haggard later asked him to supply the Ancient Greek text for an artefact, the Sherd of Amenartas, which features in his novel *She* (Figure Four) and is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four. While Greek was not uncommon in Victorian curricula, no mention of the subject is made by Haggard.

School, however, was not likely the only place where Haggard had the opportunity to engaged with Classics, as Haynes points out: —by the nineteenth century, when Classical literacy was broader than before, more popular literary vehicles – the novel, bestselling poems like

Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* – were on easy terms with Classical learning” (2006:45). Haggard spent between two to three years (1869-72) at Ipswich and, apart from winning a prize for a descriptive essay about an operation in a hospital, indicative of a curriculum not limited to Classical subjects, he confesses that —I did not distinguish myself in any way at Ipswich” (1926:32).

During a school holiday, Haggard recalls that ~~w~~with characteristic suddenness my father made up his mind that I was to leave [Ipswich]” (35), and instead he was sent to a private tutor in London, where he gained a reasonable knowledge of French literature, and later to a crammer in London, both of which were intended to prepare him for a Foreign Office examination. Such a career path would not have been unusual for Haggard as, according to Etherington: ~~t~~he exotic influences of Britain's expanding empire were reinforced by his brothers, one of whom joined the navy, another the army, a third the diplomatic service, and a fourth the Indian civil service” (1984:2). Thus, at the age of eighteen Haggard found lodgings in London in —an excellent situation for a young gentleman about town” (Haggard 1926:36). This phase was exceptionally formative as Haggard was entirely unsupervised and his movements were unrestricted, thus encouraging a lifestyle of autonomy and self-sufficiency.

Having no clear recollection of how it came about, Haggard became acquainted with spiritualism during this period and would frequently attend séances. It is most likely that Haggard acquired his penchant for mysticism and the occult as a result of these experiences, traces of which can be found in many of his works. To give an example, he recalls one of these séances and writes that ~~t~~wo young women of great beauty – or perhaps I should say young spirits – one dark and the other fair, appeared in the lighted room. I conversed with and touched them both, and noted that their flesh seemed to be firm but cold” (38). These apparitions appear

to have influenced the depiction of the rivalling queen sisters in *Allan Quatermain*, the sequel to *King Solomon's Mines*, one being fair in complexion and innately good, and the other darker, and of a more malevolent nature. On another occasion the room went dark and the company became aware of heavy objects moving around the room. Haggard regarded these events with uncertainty but did not necessarily dismiss them as illusions or trickery. Instead, however, he suspected ~~that~~ some existent but unknown force was let loose which produced these phenomena” (41). While this last event was enough to set Haggard on edge, prompting him to give up the activity, his interest in the supernatural endured, but manifested itself in a much gentler and less direct manner, such as his belief in reincarnation, a leitmotif throughout many of his novels, including *She*.

As it turned out Haggard did not write his exam for entrance into Foreign Office, but after one and a half years of private tutoring in London, his father learnt that an old friend of the family, Sir Henry Bulwer, had been appointed as Lieutenant-Governor of the British Colony of Natal, South Africa. Seizing the opportunity, he inquired whether Bulwer would be willing to take Haggard along as a member of his staff to which the Bulwer assented. So, a few weeks later, in 1875, Haggard set out for Africa, eventually arriving in Pietermaritzburg, then the seat of administration of the Natal Colony. Initially there was some uncertainty as to whether Haggard would be appointed private secretary to Sir Henry Bulwer, a position he had anticipated. It was, however, eventually agreed that, at only nineteen, Haggard was too young and inexperienced for the job. Instead he was tasked, for the most part, with the management of Government House<sup>3</sup>, for which he did not receive a salary and was regrettably still dependant on his father. Despite his young age and his shaky beginnings, Haggard writes: ~~M~~entally I was impressionable, quick to

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<sup>3</sup> The Government House still exists today but now forms part of the UNISA campus in Pietermartizburg, KwaZulu-Natal.



observe and learn whatever interested me, and could already hold my own conversation. Also, if necessary, I could make a public speech.” (49). Haggard remained with Bulwer at the Government House in Pietermaritzburg for one and a half years, until, at the end of 1876, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, having been appointed as Special Commissioner to the Transvaal, requested that Haggard join his staff and consequently his mission to Pretoria. Born in England, Shepstone had immigrated to the Cape with his father in 1820 at the age of three and there learnt various indigenous languages at mission stations. This allowed him to form a good rapport with the locals and it may have been due to this advantageous skill that he served as an administrator in Natal and was later appointed as Secretary for Native Affairs, a position which he held for twenty years. At that time the Transvaal, then part of the independent *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, was controlled by the Boers, descendants of Dutch farmers who, in the 1830s, had left the Cape, then a British Colony since 1806, dissatisfied with the restrictive and unfavourable British policies. The protracted tension between the Boers and the British is highlighted by Haggard who describes the Boers as “bred in an atmosphere of hereditary hate of England and its governments” (78). Shepstone’s position as Special Commissioner, according to Haggard, “gave him powers, if he thought fit, to annex the country, in order to secure the peace and safety of our said colonies and our subjects elsewhere” (1926:73).

The mission did in fact result in the annexation of the Transvaal which Haggard believed to have averted an imminent Zulu attack on the Transvaal and, defending the annexation, he states: “no one except Shepstone could have prevented the Zulus from sweeping the Transvaal or, at any rate, from attempting to do so” (104). Haggard himself had a small part to play in the proceedings as he was tasked with issuing copies of the Proclamation to various public offices, and it was also Haggard who, some weeks later, was the first to formally hoist the Union Jack at

Pretoria. As a member of Shepstone's staff, Haggard was attached to several missions concerning the annexation and formed a fair yet subjective grasp of the affairs surrounding the event. This is reflected in his historical work *Cetewayo and His White Neighbours* (1882), described by Etherington as —acarefully researched vindication of British policy in South Africa” (1984:1-2).

Soon after the annexation Haggard was offered the position of Master and Registrar of the High Court, being at the time only twenty-one and without the advantage of any legal training. Haggard had the responsibility of settling litigations that mostly arose due to land disputes amongst the Boers and was also appointed as the —official Guardian of the estates of all the orphans in the Transvaal” (Haggard 1926:109). Tiring of government service in 1879, Haggard and a friend, Arthur Cochrane, decided to move to Natal to farm ostriches in Newcastle, where they had purchased some land. Having left Pretoria, Haggard briefly returned to England where he married, and, in 1880, both he and his wife travelled to South Africa and settled into their home in Newcastle. Haggard's business venture was reasonably successful. However, their life in Africa was short-lived as in 1881, owing to the increasing conflict between the British and the Boers, which resulted in the retrocession of the Transvaal, Haggard thought it wisest to return to England.

Upon his return to England in 1881, Haggard decided to enter himself at Lincolns Inn<sup>4</sup>, intent on a legal career, but learnt that he would have to pass an examination in Latin, English History and possibly Arithmetic. Having forgotten the bulk of his Latin he states that , —[I]with the assistance of a crammer, in a month learned more Latin than I had done all the time I was at school; indeed, at the end of a few weeks I could read Caesar fluently and Virgil not so ill.”

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<sup>4</sup> Lincoln's Inn is one of the four Inns of Court situated in London through which barristers train and practise.

(1926:203-4). Such insight is particularly valuable to this study as Virgil's *Aeneid Book VI* appears to have inspired a scene in *King Solomon's Mines* which bears many similarities to Aeneas' *katabasis*. Additionally, much of the plot in *Elissa* resembles Virgil's *Aeneid Book IV*, and consequently the central characters seem to conform to Virgil's, in both their nature and function within the narrative.

Haggard was admitted to Lincoln's Inn having passed the appropriate examination —at the head of the batch" (204). It was, however, also during this period, in between his studies, that he wrote his first book, *Cetewayo and his White Neighbours* (1882), a work of non-fiction, and —the result of some six years' experience in South Africa in official and non-official capacities" (Haggard 1926 204). This would be the first of many works influenced by his African sojourn. The book was turned down by many publishers, so that in the end Haggard's only option was to pay for its production personally. The book was a complete failure, and the bulk of the copies produced only sold out once Haggard gained recognition from the success of his later novels. Not long afterwards Haggard tried his hand at fiction, a venture which developed after he and his wife noticed —a singularly beautiful and pure-faced lady" (209) at church, who inspired them both to write a novel about a heroine. Haggard's wife, Louisa, soon gave up after a few pages, but Haggard persevered and the novel, *Dawn* (1884) was produced at the expense of a publisher, but like the work before, was not much of a success.

Considering the failure of these early literary attempts, Haggard would have given up this endeavour, had it not been for a review of Robert Stevenson's *Treasure Island* which Haggard considered as —so laudatory that I procured and studied that work, and was impelled by its perusal to try to write a boys' book" (220). Having completed his legal studies, Haggard entered Bargrave Deane's chambers, and spent his evenings writing *King Solomon's Mines*, which he

finished in six weeks. Haggard recalls that the work, published in 1885, “proved an instant success” (233) and shortly sold “500 copies more or less, a large sale for a boys’ book by a practically unknown man” (*ibid.*). *King Solomon’s Mines* received considerable praise, and Andrew Lang, a scholar and literary critic, and later a close friend of Haggard’s, says: “[t]here’s so much invention and imaginative power and knowledge of African character in your book that I almost prefer it to *Treasure Island*” (227).

While writing the novel, Haggard admits that “my recollection of this time is that it was rather lonely, at any rate for me, since my friends were African and Africa was far away” (1926:221). Haggard’s sentiments at the time most likely contributed to his idealistic and romanticised projections of Africa in his novel. As Stiebel explains, “it is important to keep in mind that Haggard wrote when physically *outside* Africa, thus enabling a more exotic landscape of the imagination enhanced by the desire that separation engenders” (2001a:55). Furthermore Haggard left South Africa following the retrocession of the Transvaal, leaving South Africa with a sense of political disillusionment and as Stiebel suggests “the way was already prepared for a vision of a [...] nostalgic African canvas, that persisted throughout his writing career” (2001a:54 original emphasis). Haggard’s work appears to have been shaped not only by his nostalgic visions of southern Africa, but also by captivating stories and rumours he had collected during his stay. It is the opinion of many scholars, including Stiebel (2001a) and Tangri (1990), that *King Solomon’s Mines* was influenced by several discoveries in Southern Africa, including the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, which opened up discussions surrounding array of speculations as to their

origins.<sup>5</sup> It seems likely that Haggard came into contact with some of these ideas concerning the ruins, however, as will be explored in Chapter Two Haggard, he remains vague about this source of inspiration.

Only two years later, in 1887, Haggard wrote and published *She*, which —was written at white heat, almost without rest” (245). The idea, according to Haggard, was —that of an immortal woman inspired by immortal love. All the rest shaped itself around this figure” (245-6). For the novel Haggard and his sister-in-law fashioned an elaborate clay shard, of which a facsimile appears in *She*, upon which an ancient narrative driving the action of the novel is inscribed. Additionally, Haggard employed the services of a scholar of Greek and another of monkish Latin, who provided the text that is presented on the shard. This effort probably serves to enhance the idea of authenticity that Haggard has tried to capture throughout the novel. Along with *King Solomon’s Mines*, *She* was perhaps his greatest and most popular work and Haggard dismisses the idea of repeating the success: —A though a man’s brain could harbour a host of —She’s! Such literary polygamy is not possible” (249).

While Haggard does not reveal much about the influences behind the novel, one incident is worth mentioning. In 1914 Haggard travelled with his family to Africa for the first time after his departure over thirty years before. During this trip Haggard visited Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and there saw, for the first time, the Zimbabwe ruins. Here he had the benefit of meeting R.N. Hall, a great authority and the Curator of the site, who guided him around the area.

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<sup>5</sup> For a discussion which traces the portrayal of Africa (with emphasis on Great Zimbabwe) as a land of mysterious civilizations and legendary wealth through biblical sources and popular literature, such as Haggard’s *King Solomon’s Mines*, see, Hall (1995). Of particular relevance to the topic of Great Zimbabwe is Hall’s overview of archaeological investigations conducted on the ruins from their discovery by Carl Mauch in 1871 to the excavations of Gertrude Caton-Thompson in 1929, who was among the first archaeologists to argue in favour of African origins. An outline concerned with more contemporary archaeological interpretations can be found in Huffman and Vogel (1991).

His daughter, Lilius Haggard, who did not actually accompany him on this leg of the journey, writes:

He was amused to find in the local guide that Zimbabwe Hill provided him with the description of the residence of *She* and the ruins in the valley, the dead city of Kôr. He writes in his diary: 'these and similar legends are quite apocryphal. When I wrote *She*, I had only heard in the vaguest way of the Zimbabwe Ruins and not at all of the famous caves in east Africa which are also reported to be her residence. These early romances were entirely the product of my imagination, stimulated in the case of King Solomon's Mines by vague rumours I heard when I lived in South Africa' (1976:231).

Thus Haggard offers similar and vague explanations regarding the sources behind *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, admitting only reluctantly that he may have been influenced by rumours while he was in South Africa.

While it has been assumed by most scholars and the general public that *King Solomon's Mines and She* were triggered to some extent by the discovery of the Great Zimbabwe ruins, no explicit relationship is suggested by Haggard through references in these narratives or in any biographical material. Concerning *Elissa*, however, Haggard is contrastingly forthcoming. While Haggard does not mention his pseudo-historical novel, *Elissa*, in his autobiography, he does write a few interesting lines concerning his intention in its preface:

Elissa [...] is an attempt, difficult enough owing to the scantiness of material left to us by time, to recreate the life of the ancient Phoenician Zimbabwe, whose ruins still stand in Rhodesia, and, with the addition of a necessary love story, to suggest circumstance which might have brought about or accompanied its fall at the hands of the surrounding savage tribes (Haggard 2008:n.p).

Unlike *King Solomon's Mines and She*, in *Elissa* Haggard openly draws from the theories and speculations that had been surrounding Great Zimbabwe for decades. These theories, which are indicated in the novel's preface, were in keeping with racial ideologies of the time, which held that Africans were fundamentally inferior to Europeans. *Elissa* is then the result of the reluctance of Europeans to attribute accomplishments, such as the ruins at Great Zimbabwe to locals. Thus, either unwilling or unable to contradict the dominant contemporary racial theories, certain Europeans such as Haggard choose to seek out other explanations for the presence of the ruins.

This chapter has set out to demonstrate the value of biographical material in forming a better understanding of those factors which influenced the various themes of three of Haggard's works: *King Solomon's Mines*, *She* and *Elissa*. As the central foci of this study are influences of Classical narratives and theories surrounding the ruins of Great Zimbabwe on these three novels, information regarding Haggard's educational background and his time in Africa have been closely considered. This chapter has revealed that Haggard's education, both at school and while reading for the bar, exposed him to Latin and consequently to a selection of texts, including Virgil's, which would have equipped him with a degree of Classical knowledge. Additional Classical knowledge may also be attributed to the availability and popularity of Classical narratives in Victorian society. Haggard's time in Africa certainly provided him with ample material for his African romances; he, however, remains vague about his prior knowledge of the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, only admitting that he may have heard rumours about the site and the presence of mineral wealth. In the case of *Elissa*, however, he deliberately locates his narrative at Great Zimbabwe with the aim of depicting fabricated circumstances, heavily influenced by trending Eurocentric theories, which may have led to its decline.

## Chapter Two: King Solomon's Mines

Published in 1885, *King Solomon's Mines* was the first of Haggard's novels to tackle the adventure genre and to explore the lost city theme, a feature which came to characterise a vast portion of his works.<sup>6</sup> The novel, along with the many others which followed it, entertains the idea of Africa as home to a lost white civilization, in this case the legendary city of Ophir, from which King Solomon is said to have obtained a great quantity of riches. It seems, however, that the concept for Haggard's original lost city was not inspired purely by imagination, but also, as this chapter will demonstrate, by the discovery and analysis of remarkable ruins in southern Africa, and in particular those of Great Zimbabwe, in the nineteenth-century. Convinced that a local African population would have lacked the necessary technology to produce such masonry, European laymen and archaeologists foisted upon the ruins exotic theories of ancient white imperial endeavours in order to rationalise a phenomenon that contemporary European ideas regarding race otherwise could not explain. These theories, intertwined with features drawn from Haggard's experience and imagination, are subtly expressed in *King Solomon's Mines*, traces of which can be observed for instance in the narrator's descriptions of and hypotheses regarding the ancient ruins. Another interesting feature, which runs throughout the novel, is Haggard's persistent use of Classical details, used in a variety of ways, facilitating, for example, Haggard's descriptions of landscape, people and events, imparting on this city an old-world quality. This chapter then, seeks to explore Haggard's venture into the genre which would later define his literary career, but more so, to understand the role of Classics within the narrative.

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<sup>6</sup> Other novels dealing with lost cities and lost races include: *Allan Quatermain* (1887), *People of the Mist* (1894), *Heart of the World* (1895), *Ayesha* (1905), *Benita* (1906), *The Yellow God* (1908), *Queen Sheba's Ring* (1910), and *The Holy Flower* (1915).



*King Solomon's Mines*, which is tellingly dedicated “to all the big and little boys who read it” (Haggard 1962:4), is on the surface a simple adventure story written in imitation of Robert L. Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* (1883). Haggard initially wrote the novel as part of a wager with his brother, claiming that he could write an adventure story as good as Stevenson’s (Haggard 1976:121-2). The novel proved a great success. So much so that it spawned a series of books which covered the past and subsequent escapades of its protagonist, Allan Quatermain<sup>7</sup>, and set the pace for his later works which featured exotic peoples and lost cities. According to Evans, Haggard “would prove to be the master of this brand of lost-world fiction with his internationally bestselling adventure tales” (2009:16). The theme of lost worlds and lost races existed prior to Haggard in works such as Jules Verne’s *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (1864), which explores the Hollow Earth theory, and *The Coming Race* (1871) by Edward Bulwer-Lytton, in which a traveller discovers an advanced subterranean race called the Vril-ya. Haggard’s lost world or lost city novels are, however, marked by the theme of imperial adventure and are largely characterised by African settings. The works typically follow a party of British explorers into uncharted, central or southern African terrains where they encounter lost white races, or the ruins of lost white civilizations whose degenerate descendants have been absorbed by neighbouring African tribes.<sup>8</sup>

The popularity of *King Solomon's Mines* amongst Victorians can no doubt be attributed in part to the allure of its exotic descriptions of Africa and the attraction of great mineral wealth and riveting hunting yarns. Set in South Africa, the novel follows the adventures of elephant

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<sup>7</sup> These novels include, amongst others, *Allan Quatermain* (1887), *Allan's Wife & Other Tales* (1887), *The Ancient Allan* (1920), and *She and Allan* (1920).

<sup>8</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion of lost white civilizations in imperial romances, including Haggard’s, see, Patteson (1978). For a more detailed exploration of the lost world genre in Victorian children’s fiction see, Hanson (2002).

hunter, Allan Quatermain, who has been recruited by Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Good, to accompany them on a quest to recover Sir Henry's lost brother, who, on the strength of an old yarn, has gone in search of King Solomon's fabled diamond mines which are rumoured to exist in southern Africa. Accompanied by their servant Ignosi and guided by an old map, their expedition takes them into the unknown and physically isolated territory of Kukuanaaland, the site of ancient white ruins and home to a tribe similar to the Zulu but "finer and bigger men even" (Haggard 1962:20), who are ruled by the oppressive and sadistic King Twala. It soon transpires that Ignosi is the true heir to the throne and has returned home to claim his birth right as king, which he later earns, following a decisive battle assisted by the Englishmen and a large band of dissident Kukuana soldiers. Subsequently, the presence of King Solomon's mines in the region is confirmed, and, in return for their loyalty in battle, Ignosi grants them access to its store of riches but vows that henceforth no other strangers shall be permitted into Kukuanaaland in search of riches or bent on imperial endeavours.

While *Treasure Island* may have initiated Haggard's foray into the adventure genre, it was his attachment to Africa that provided him with the appropriate material to create his African adventure. Already reviewed in the author's background chapter was Haggard's time in Africa where he was initially employed as secretary to Sir Henry Bulwer, Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, and later as part of a mission, headed by Theophilus Shepstone, to annex the Transvaal. Such experiences provided him with ample opportunity to explore the land and collect colourful stories along the way, stirring in Haggard a lasting fondness for Africa and its people. Haggard's relationship with Africa, however, became a complicated one. On the one hand, his position as a public servant clearly aligned his interests with Britain's exploitative imperial project, yet, on the other hand, Haggard lets on that he developed an extraordinary relationship with the locals, the

amaZulu in particular, whom he greatly admired, and whose colonial situation he seemed to sympathise with.<sup>9</sup> Haggard's complicated attitude towards imperialism can be seen in *King Solomon's Mines*, where the voice of Haggard's own conscience may have found expression in the words of the newly crowned king of the Kukuana, Ignosi, in an exchange with Haggard's English protagonists:

I will see no traders with their guns and gin. My people shall fight with the spear, and drink water, like their forefathers before them. I will have no praying-men to put a fear of death into men's hearts, to stir them up against the law of their king, and make a path for the white folk who follow to run on [...]. None shall ever seek the shining stones; no not an army, for if they come I will make war on them with all my strength, and they shall not prevail against me (1962:205).

Thus, while it can be said that the protagonists clearly participate in and benefit from Britain's imperial project, characterised by their extraction of mineral wealth, they do appear to appreciate the admonition of the African king and do not object to the protection of his kingdom. This can be observed, when, following his speech, Quatermain relates that, —wewent in silence” (206), conveying a sense of ambiguous acceptance.

Haggard's ambivalent attitudes towards Africa and imperialism play a central part in his novels and it is thus worthwhile to consider how *King Solomon's Mines* was influenced by an idea of Africa that stemmed from imperial attitudes. Stiebel suggests that —to understand how a culture imagines its world, both \_home\_ and \_away, one looks to its literature” (2001a:1), and Haggard's portrayal of Africa in his romances is no exception. Throughout his novels Haggard imposes a perspective on Africa that is consistent with Victorian ideas in which Africa is

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<sup>9</sup> This idea has been explored by Lindy Stiebel who argues that —while promoting a British settler presence in Africa, [Haggard] also worried about the impact this would have on the indigenous peoples on a practical level” (2001a:96).

perceived as an exotic land with the promise of riches and opportunity. For throughout his romances Haggard's depiction of Africa is representative of the expectations and desires of the British public at the height of its imperial project. As mentioned to briefly, however, *King Solomon's Mines* also draws attention to the unfavourable effects of colonialism on the locals and at times highlights disparagingly European greed for Africa's mineral wealth.

*King Solomon's Mines*, in addition to a handful of his later lost city novels, appears to have been influenced by several discoveries in Southern Africa, including the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, which opened up discussions surrounding an array of speculations concerning their origins. Haggard, however, remains vague about the subject but does offer some information which is valuable to this study:

At any rate Rhodesia [Zimbabwe] has been discovered, which is a land full of gems and gold, the same land, I believe, as that whence King Solomon did actually draw his wealth. Also, Queen Sheba's Breasts [two conical hills featured in *King Solomon's Mines*] have been found, or something very like to them, and traces of the great road that I describe. Doubtless I heard faint rumours of these things during my sojourn in Africa, having made it my habit through life to keep my ears open; but at the best they were very faint. The remainder I imagined, and imagination has often proved to be the precursor of truth (1926:242).

Although Haggard is quite elusive about any information that he may have collected and the extent to which it influenced his novel, the similarities between his text and contemporary theories about the ruins appear too great to be mostly coincidental. In addition to the above mentioned quote, it would be beneficial to identify Haggard's likely use of other sources through which he may have become acquainted with the theories about the ruins of Great Zimbabwe and their connection to King Solomon mines.

It has been suggested by scholars such as Stiebel (2001a) and that the work of English map-maker and artist, Thomas Baines, may have contributed to Haggard's appropriation of the biblical legend of Ophir, a fabled region from which King Solomon supposedly obtained great riches. Stiebel speculates that "Haggard's knowledge of the existence of the Zimbabwe Ruins could have come from Thomas Baines's 'Map of the Gold Fields of Southern Africa' (1873), which as a member of Shepstone's staff in the Transvaal, he would have used" (2001a:29). Baines created the map while leading an expedition for the South African Gold Fields Exploration Company and was influenced by the theories he had heard about the ruins. For Baines had travelled to the site of the ruins in 1872 and briefly acknowledges the theories of Carl Mauch who believed that he had found the lost city of Ophir, influenced by both the ruins and surrounding goldfields. Additionally, about the ruins, Baines mentions that he had heard that "[t]he largest of these was traditionally supposed to have been the Queen of Sheba's palace" (1877:2). It was these suggestions that must have influenced the description which Baines provides on his map. For, as Stiebel explains: "on his map, along with all the correct names for rivers and mountain ranges, is written in his fine copperplate hand the legend in an enticingly blank space 'Supposed Realm of the Queen of Sheba' above 'Simbaby [Zimbabwe]: Ruined Cities. C. Mauch 1871'" (2001b:125). While Haggard may not have heard about these rumours suggesting that the ruins were built for the Queen of Sheba, he would likely have been familiar with the biblical descriptions of King Solomon's wealth which refer to riches he had accumulated including those from Ophir and the Queen of Sheba "who provided [Solomon] with very much gold and precious stones" (*1 Kings* 10:2). Thus, if Haggard had used this map and saw this caption, he may have been inspired by ideas of ruined cities and their riches – treasures such as that presented to King Solomon by the Queen of Sheba. Furthermore, Haggard's decision

to identify two hill formations near the lost city as Sheba's Breasts, in both a passage of the novel and on an accompanying map suggests that he may have been well-acquainted with the *I Kings* in which the Queen of Sheba and the land of Ophir are all mentioned in connection to King Solomon's wealth.

Additionally, *The Ruined Cities of Zululand* (1869), a novel by Hugh Mulleneux Walmsley, may have also been responsible for some of the ideas concerning Haggard's depiction of Ophir in *King Solomon's Mines*. Walmsley's narrative placed Ophir and mining activities in southern Africa more than a decade before Haggard's treatment of the legend which only appeared in 1885. Additionally, Walmsley's novel was written before Mauch's discovery of Great Zimbabwe in 1871 and, according to Tangri, was influenced by an article written by the German missionary Merensky, who was fascinated with the Zimbabwe Ruins and the Ophir theory: —Walmsley's book was inspired by one of Merensky's articles. He accepted the Ophir theory and incorporated it into his book" (Tangri 1990:294). Earlier suggestions for placing Ophir in a southern African context predate Mauch's claims by several centuries before Mauch's own discovery by Portuguese sailors. Furthermore, Monsman claims that —*The Ruined Cities of Zululand* (1869), provided the thematic background for adventure into the unknown African interior. It contained details of a stalactite cave, a sorcerer's dance, a sinister chieftain [...], and even at the chief's kraal a sorcerer prototype for Gagool<sup>10</sup>" (2006:74). These details all feature prominently in *King Solomon's Mines* and certainly seem to suggest that Haggard had a prior knowledge of Walmsley's work and, as a result, the Ophir theory of southern Africa.

Having considered several likely influences for Haggard's appropriation of the biblical account of Ophir, the following discussion will attempt to demonstrate the extent to which the

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<sup>10</sup> Gagool is a maleficent witch-doctoress in *King Solomon's Mines* and one of the novel's main antagonists.

underlying concept of the novel paralleled contemporary views, such as those of Mauch, regarding Great Zimbabwe. It is in the early chapters of *King Solomon's Mines* that suggestions of a lost city first appear. The first reference to Ophir is made by Quatermain, who recounts to his companions, Good and Curtis, a rumour he had heard of an ancient civilization in southern Africa with a possible connection to King Solomon's Ophir: —hæwent on to tell me how he had found in the far interior a ruined city, which he believed to be the Ophir of the Bible” (1962:20). The literary source for the legend of Ophir appears in the Old Testament in *1 Kings* where it is mentioned that King Solomon received from the Hiram, king of Tyre, a great quantity of gold and later —ahung trees, and precious stones” (*1 Kings* 10:11, *King James Version*). Quatermain continues his account and emphasizes that the location he has just described —si where Solomon really had his mines, his diamond mines” (1861:20). Thus, Haggard appropriates this legend, tailoring it to suit his narrative. He chooses to focus solely on the precious stones, which he has imagined as diamonds, in order to place his Ophir in southern Africa where diamond mining was abundant. Contemporary diamond mining in South Africa was almost certainly on Haggard's mind when he wrote the novel since mining activity in the famous South African town of Kimberley is alluded to a few times. When, for example, the companions are led to the ancient mines of Ophir, Quatermain makes the following remark to his companions, who are confused by the appearance of an enormous pit in the ground: Then it is clear that you have never seen the diamond diggings in Kimberley. You may depend on it that this is Solomon's Diamond Mine” (1962:192).

As is clear from Quatermain's earlier exchange with his companions, Haggard's first treatment of the lost city theme explicitly links his ancient ruins to a specific and generally well-known biblical account. His subsequent lost city novels, however, are reluctant to attach the

mysterious ruins to a specific civilization and remain more ambiguous as will be seen later in Chapter Three. Notably, what is common throughout Haggard's lost cities, is the attribution of these ruins to foreign, and possibly imperial, agents. This theme often includes the idea that through some or other means the civilization fell and reverted to a primitive state. This is also expressed by Quatermain who, recounting his tale about the ruins of Ophir, adds: "[t]his story of an ancient civilization and of the treasures which those old Jewish or Phoenician adventurers used to extract from a country long since lapsed into the darkest barbarism took a great hold on my imagination" (1962:20). This statement offers two valuable clues which may tie Haggard's fictional portrayal of a lost city to the speculations that were developing around Great Zimbabwe. Firstly, as had been suggested of Great Zimbabwe, Haggard's ruins are the remains of a lost civilization with foreign origins, who abandoning their city allowed it to fall to ruins and took with them their skills that indigenous inhabitants could not imitate. Secondly he directly refers to "old Jewish or Phoenician adventurers" (ibid.) which corresponds to interpretations of the Zimbabwe Ruins arguing for Phoenician roots.

The Ophir of *King Solomon's Mines* is located in Kukuanaaland, home to "—branch of the Zulus [...] but bigger and finer men" (19). Quatermain had heard from a fellow hunter that "—here lived among [the Kukuana] great wizards, who learnt their art from white men when \_all the world was dark' and who had the secret of a wonderful mine of \_bright stones'" (ibid.). This report contains that idea of ancient white races bringing civilization and erudition to Africa, an idea connected to Great Zimbabwe. When the trio meet the Kukuana they enquire about the remains left by the ancient foreigners. While the locals seem to have very little information about the old creators of the ruins, including a great road, they are informed by Gagool, a sinister and unnaturally old witch-doctress, that these structures were produced by "[t]he White Ones, the



Terrible Ones, the skilled in magic and all learning” (Haggard 1962:112). Here, Gagool’s account reveals that the structures were made by whites who possessed great skills. What is more, Gagool’s words also seem to convey a sense of reverence for the ancient residents.

While there is no mention of any interaction between the Kukuana and the ancient builders of Ophir, or whether their occupancy of the region overlapped, this must be the case based on Quatermain’s retelling of the hunter’s story which mentioned how wizards living amongst the Kukuana acquired knowledge from white people. What the companions are told, however, by the Kukuana is that the great road “was made [...] of old time, none know how or when” (Haggard 1962:83) and that “we are not old enough to remember its making” (*ibid*). Thus, it can be understood that so much time has passed since the era of these builders that all knowledge of the civilization has been forgotten. Additionally, it is interesting to note that the companions are told that no one knows how this road was constructed, implying perhaps that this knowledge was lost with the ancient white race. This then emphasises the idea that departure of this nation caused a return to a more atavistic culture, as was assumed to be the situation following the fall of Great Zimbabwe.

What is also alluded to in the novel, is the idea that the Kukuana are different from other Africans in several fundamental ways. Among these differences is the idea that the Kukuana are more sophisticated. This can be seen when the companions are hosted at a kraal<sup>11</sup> in Kukuanaland, and it is pointed out that the huts are shaped similarly to Zulu ones but that “they have doorways through which men can walk” (Haggard 1962:97) and “are much larger, and surrounded by a verandah about six-feet wide” (*ibid.*). This architecture, while stylistically Zulu, seems to conform more to western conventions and ideas of comfort. Additionally Quatermain

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<sup>11</sup> The name given to traditional African settlements in the centre of which livestock are usually kept. The term may also be translated as enclosure.

when describing the settlement known as Loo, comments that —for a native town it is an enormous place” (101). In his autobiography Haggard refers to a settlement he visited while in Africa, which may very well have served as a model for the homes of the Kukuana. Haggard states:

Our hut was very superior to that built by the Zulus. It stood in a reed-hedged courtyard which was floored with limestone concrete. Also it had a verandah round it. The interior walls were painted with red ochre in lines and spirals something after the old Greek fashion. Indeed, these Basutos gave me the idea that they were sprung from some race with a considerable knowledge of civilisation and its arts. In other ways, however, they had quite relapsed into barbarism (1926:86).

From this statement clear parallels can be drawn between this African settlement and its fictional counterpart. It is, however, not only the physical description that is similar, but also the vague suggestion of a now extinct foreign presence which had left traces of its influence.

Much more attention, however, is paid to the physical appearance of the Kukuana, and consequently Haggard’s obsession with this detail may shed light on European conceptions of race. Firstly, this can be observed early on in the novel when Quatermain describes the company’s supposedly Zulu servant, Ignosi (operating then under the alias Umbopa). At their first meeting he is immediately set apart from other African men and is described as a —very light-coloured for a Zulu” (Haggard 1962:37) and having skin which was —scarcely more than dark” (1962:39). This is also seen with the Kukuana women whose features and manners seem to Quatermain more European than African. This is observed, for example, when he explains that, —their hair, though short, is rather curly than woolly (98) and that —[w]hat struck us most was their exceedingly quiet and dignified air. They were as well-bred in their way as the *habituées* of

a fashionable drawing-room, and in this respect they differ from Zulu women” (*ibid.*). This theme of the physical appearance amongst African tribes connected to lost cities is continued and developed in Haggard’s other novels, as will be seen later in *She*. Furthermore, the semi-European characterisation of their appearances almost seems to indicate that there had been a degree of inter-racial mixing amongst the ancient foreigners and the locals.

Haggard’s description of the Kukuana as different from other Africans also seems to correspond quite well to observations made by Thomas J. Lucas regarding the amaZulu, whom Haggard held in high regard, and notes:

Their colour is seldom black; it is most commonly a dark brown [...]. Their eyes are black and brilliant; the hair is not so woolly as the negro's, and the features, though varying in different individuals, are of an Eastern type. Some writers have suggested that these people are descendants of ancient Ethiopians, who came up the valley of the Nile, crossed the equatorial region, and overspread the shores of the great lakes, and the banks of the Zambesi.” (1879:19).

Generally, in Haggard’s work, there is the insinuation that the less a group appears to be physically African the more developed they are, as it demonstrated by Etherington who discusses the contrasting influences of miscegenation in Haggard’s works. People in Haggard’s fiction are often racially colour-coded in order to highlight various aspects of their character, whether on a collective or an individual level. Etherington thus argues that “[i]n someone who is considered basically African, partially white ancestry and appearance are advantageous. But in someone who is considered basically white, any hint of a dark ancestry is bad” (1984:102) and the Kukuana, for the most part, appear to conform to the first category. Thus, as is the case with the Kukuana’s architecture, it would seem that this ancient and foreign ‘white’ group had left a

positive trace on the Kukuana in terms of social development not only in technology but also in the tribe's nature.

While a lengthy discussion has been dedicated to establishing the connection between the Kukuana and the ancient white civilization that had lived in the region, this will prove important later in the study for the sake of comparison with Haggard's other novels *She* and *Elissa*. In these two works the interaction between the white civilizations and the indigenous populations is highlighted along with their degenerative descent following the collapse of foreign occupation. This theme also provides meaningful insight into Victorian race perceptions which were linked to theories of social and intellectual development as demonstrated by Tangri in relation to the ruins of Great Zimbabwe. This idea of racial development is particularly interesting for understanding why Great Zimbabwe was not believed by Europeans to be the work of Africans as, concerning their late nineteenth and early twentieth century explorers, Tangri suggest the following: "Their arguments were based on prevalent systems of classifying humanity. It was generally believed that races were tied to discrete levels of culture by their average intelligence and their blood. Consequently, races could be characterised in terms of a set number of items of culture" (1990:293). It is then quite likely that Haggard held the same beliefs about race as those who were theorising about the ruins of Great Zimbabwe. So, just as Victorian racial perceptions found their way into theories about the Zimbabwe ruins, so too did Haggard's own racial biases<sup>12</sup> express themselves in his lost city novels, though his attribution of ancient ruins to non-African groups. This sort of prejudice can be observed by his reaction to later theories that suggested that the ruins were built by Africans. For, in a diary entry Haggard states that "it was to my mind so

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<sup>12</sup> Etherington points out that Haggard "accept[ed] unquestioningly that whites stood higher on the ladder of civilization than blacks" (1984:101) and that, "it was natural for the light skinned peoples to govern and be served by the dark skinned ones" (*ibid.*)

very absurd, that this gigantic fortress and the other ruins were built by kaffirs<sup>13</sup> in the middle ages” (2000:31). Thus, Haggard’s racial perceptions found their way into his literature, firstly with *King Solomon’s Mines* and then later with his other narratives, culminating, as will be explored later, in the ideas expressed explicitly in *Elissa*.

So far this chapter has aimed to provide evidence for Haggard’s familiarity with the theories surrounding the ruins of Great Zimbabwe and his subsequent appropriation of these speculations in the construction of his narrative. *King Solomon’s Mines* shares many of the same ideas that characterised the public’s initial views about the ruins of Great Zimbabwe following their discovery by Carl Mauch. These include the attribution of his ruins to foreign and mostly Phoenician agents, their connection to Ophir and also the pejorative assessment of local ingenuity. While the ruins and the surrounding theories of Great Zimbabwe can be said to have played a fundamental role in the narrative, the presence of a wide spectrum of Classical material employed variously throughout the narrative also deserves some attention. It can be argued that Haggard’s use of Classical imagery serves a similar function to the ruins in Haggard’s narrative. For, much like Haggard’s use of the Ophir legend which was inspired by the contemporary attribution of the ruins to Phoenician agents, in which non-African ruins and details are placed in Africa, so too does he impose Classical and European imagery and ideas into an African context in a sometimes incongruous fashion.

According to Patteson, Haggard’s evocation of lost cities and ancient white ruins functions within the structure of the narrative as —proof positive that even in the distant past, something approximating a colonial condition prevailed” (1978:112), a notion that would have appealed to Haggard’s audience and helped to morally justify a British colonial presence in

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<sup>13</sup> Despite its derogatory connotations, the term has been retained in an effort to remain faithful to the text and does not reflect the attitude of the student.

Africa. However, on a more psychological level, these ruins may facilitate what Margaret Atwood describes as a “journey into the unknown regions of the self, the unconscious, and the confrontation with whatever dangers and splendours lurk there” (1972:113). The Englishmen’s journey into Kukuanaland, embellished with Classical details and the vestiges of a lost “white” civilization, allows them, and consequently the reader, to connect with an aspect of their “lost” history and consequently their own unexplored and more primitive ancient selves. Thus, according to Etherington, this ancient aspect “uncovered in Kukuanaland is identified with previous ‘stages’ in the development of European Civilization” (1984:43) which is underscored by the presence of ancient white ruins, including a very impressive turnpike road and three great colossi at the entrance to the mines. Additionally, however, Haggard’s many Classical allusions may also serve an aesthetic function, allowing him to render a distant but familiar atmosphere which would have been appreciated by a Classically educated Victorian audience. The rest of the chapter will focus on Haggard’s transplantation of Classical imagery in developing his lost city, exploring the presence of Classics in descriptions of landscape, people, and events.

The first of Haggard’s many Classical references which may be indebted to an ancient model is his portrayal of the two iconic hill formations, known as Sheba’s Breasts, between which the explorers must journey in the order to reach the seemingly inaccessible Kukuanaland. This pair of conical hills is described by Quatermain as “pillars of a gigantic gateway, [...] shaped after the fashion of a woman’s breasts” (1962:66) and, while the name is derived from the exotic biblical figure, the Queen of Sheba, who is linked to King Solomon, these two hills are quite reminiscent of the tall peaks, Crophi and Mophi, described by Herodotus in *Histories* 2.28, by an Egyptian scribe who states: “Between the city of Syene in the Thebaid and Elephantine there are two hills with sharp peaks, the one called Crophi and the other Mophi. The springs of

the Nile, which are bottomless, rise between these hills” (tr.Godley:2.28).<sup>14</sup> While neither Herodotus nor the scribe refer to the hills using imagery as evocative as Haggard’s, the image of the living-giving Nile, situated between two great peaks does perhaps carry the sense that these formations perform a figurative mammary function. What is more, both Sheba’s Breasts and Herodotus’ peaks represent landmarks, points of exploration, beyond which lie Ancient African mysteries: respectively the location of a fictitious lost civilization and the unfathomable source of the Nile which have intrigued explorers for centuries.

Haggard’s familiarity with Herodotus is hinted at through the device of the mock editor of *King Solomon’s Mines*’ sequel, *Allan Quatermain* (1887), who, according to Stiebel, —interrupts the narrative in the tone of a Victorian gentleman-amateur scientist” (2001a:56). Like *King Solomon’s Mines*, *Allan Quatermain* is written from the perspective of the eponymous first person narrator, in the style of a published travel account. A corrective footnote, made by the pseudo-editor, refers the reader to Herodotus 2.42 for further information on the practises of animal sacrifice and worship amongst Africans, a phenomenon that Allan Quatermain seems not to understand (Haggard 1994:148). Therefore, such a source of inspiration is not entirely unlikely, since Haggard was at least familiar with some sections of Herodotus if, through the device of the editor, he was comfortable with making references to the ancient author.

When the travellers do eventually make it past these seemingly impassable peaks, their efforts are rewarded with a welcomed sight as —windig away towards the plain, was what appeared to be a wide turnpike road” (Haggard 1962:81). From a distance, this road winding along a mountainous terrain in the African hinterland is compared to the road along St. Gotthard

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<sup>14</sup> [νύηγο] εἶλαη δύν ὄξεα ἐο ὁμῶ ἤο θνξπθᾶο ἀπεγκέλα, κηαμῶ Σπήλεο ἡε πόηηγο θείκελα ἡῆο Θεβαῖδνο θαὶ Ἴεεθα ληῖλεο, νύλόκαηα δὲ εἶλαη ἡνῖζη ὄξεζη ἡῶ κέλ Κξῖῶθη ἡῶ δὲ Μῶθη: ἤο ὦλ δὴ πεγᾶο ἡνῶ Νεῖ νπ ἐνύζαο ἀβύζζνπο ἐθ ἡνῶ κέζ νπ ἡῶλ ὄξέσλ ἡνύησλ ῥέειν” (2.28).

in Switzerland, a remarkable feat of engineering, constructed with great difficulty between the years 1871 and 1881. This structure, the first indication of civilization they have seen in days, is met with some curiosity, but not much surprise, as Quatermain admits that —somehow it did not seem particularly unnatural that we should find a sort of Roman road in this strange land” (*ibid.*). The road, however, is not Roman, but it is theorised that it was in fact built by the Egyptians or the Phoenicians long before Solomon, further evoking contemporary archaeological theories about Great Zimbabwe and allowing Haggard to indulge in a life-long passion for Egyptology. Quatermain explains: —It is very well to call this Solomon’s Road, but my humble opinion is that the Egyptians had been here before Solomon’s people ever set foot on it. If this isn’t Egyptian or Phoenician handiwork, I must say that it is very like it” (83). Therefore, although Quatermain’s remark with reference to the road is merely a comparison and not an attribution, Haggard’s decision to provide the reader with a quintessentially Roman image in a southern African context is quite peculiar. Since one of Rome’s significant accomplishments was its roads, perhaps Haggard intended that the achievements and ingenuity of this lost ancient civilization be realised through such a laudatory comparison. Since many Victorians would have received an education steeped in Classics, this was surely a reference with connotations that his readers would be able to relate to. Thus, while the roads were probably Egyptian or Phoenician, their Roman likeness not only would have appealed to Haggard’s British audience, who may have appreciated the subtext of the reference, but it may have also assisted in their imaginative construction of Haggard’s unfamiliar African landscape.

Haggard’s use of Classical imagery also extends to his description of the Kukuana people who, while clearly African, are often portrayed as having Greek or Roman traits. It is particularly telling that one of the first inhabitants of Kukuana land whom Quatermain describes during their



first and hostile encounter is characterised as —a youth of about seventeen, his hand still raised and his body bent forward in the attitude of a Grecian statue of a spear thrower” (1962:85). Here Haggard is most likely using this image to comment on the bodily excellence of the youth and may have had a particular image in mind such as the well-known Doryphoros statue (Figure One). Haggard’s representation of the youth corresponds well with earlier British depictions of the amaZulu which has been observed by Anderson, who suggests that:

British images of Zulus from the 1830s and 1840s typically present them as ethnographic curiosities, not dangerous enemies. For instance, George French Angas's lithographs *in The Kafirs Illustrated*, published in 1849 [Figure Two], depict native South Africans in graceful poses borrowed from Greco-Roman sculpture [...]. Echoing the Classical contrapposto of well-known statues such as Polykleitos's Doryphoros [...] their static postures mitigate any threat they might pose to the viewer (2008:11).

Furthermore, other older members accompanying the youth —wore great plumes of black feathers and short cloaks of leopard skin” (Haggard 1962:85), features also discernable in the illustration referenced by Anderson. Haggard thus appears to be hybridising the Kukuana whose appearances are described in terms of Zulu and Classical characteristics. Haggard’s decision to use imagery that is decidedly un-African in his opening description of the Kukuana people may serve a significant function. Not only does this help to establish old-world feel about this mysterious and secluded civilization, but perhaps his portrayal of the Kukuana youth, who is characterised physically in terms of an Ancient Greek aesthetic ideal, highlights his wish to impart on this community qualities that would have distanced them to a large extent, as discussed earlier in this chapter, from the popular opinions of other Africans held by Victorians as well as to orientate his readers by means of proving an image that was instantly recognisable.

Haggard's descriptions also include an array of Roman and particularly gladiatorial imagery which is used more than once. A mass witch-hunt, for example, is referred to as —a gladiatorial show” (120). Once again, Haggard facilitates his readers' experience of the scene by supplying a recognisable comparison. Lastly, before a decisive battle, Quatermain expresses the loyalty of the rightful king's warriors by stating that —no Roman emperor ever had such a salutation from gladiators —about to die” (164). One possibility concerning Haggard's habit of providing Roman equivalents in his description of the Kukuana may be related to his view that the amaZulu, to whom Haggard's fictitious Kukuana are distantly related, were to his mind —the Romans of Africa” (Pocock 1993:21). In addition to distinctly Greek and Roman imagery Haggard may also be indebted to Herodotus once again for his portrayal of the Kukuana, who are as a whole described as even —taller and bigger men” (Haggard 1962:20) than the amaZulu. Haggard's characterisation of the Kukuana men, especially leaders such as Ignosi and Twala, the pretender to the throne, are comparable to Herodotus' writings about the Ethiopians who are supposed to be —the tallest and best-looking people in the world” (tr. Godley:2.21)<sup>15</sup>, whose king is chosen by virtue of his superior stature. Such physical brilliance is certainly seen in Ignosi who is described as —about six foot three” [and] broad in proportion” (1962:39), while Twala is said to be a —gigantic figure” (Haggard 1962:106).

Haggard's use of ancient Greek and Roman models may also extend to his account of the great battle scene between the factions of Ignosi, the rightful king of the Kukuana, and Twala, his father's murderer and usurper. Haggard's presentation of both the warriors and the battle itself can be described at times as a montage, providing a range of explicit references which are, for example, African and sometimes Nordic in nature. Some examples include —the moocha of

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<sup>15</sup> —[ἰ Αἰζίνπειο] ἰ ἐγγληση ἄλακηέγηζηνη θαὶ θαυηζηνη ἀλζξξώποσλ πάληησλ” (3.20).

white ox-tails” (150) worn by the Sir Henry who is also armed with a battle axe, and is said to shout “O-hoy! O hoy! like his berserker forefathers” (169), revealing the ease with which Haggard employs such culturally contrasting imagery. In one passage, Haggard draws on Livy when he describes how a unit of veterans resist a much larger group of assailants like “the three Romans once held the bridge against the ranks of Tusculum” (165). This passage, taken from Livy’s *History of Rome* 2.10, describes how a man named Horatius tried to prevent an enemy horde from gaining access to Rome across a bridge, by firstly ordering the bridge’s destruction and then engaging the assailants in combat with only two other citizens for support. The same story is also told by Thomas Macauley in his *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842), a very popular book in its time and probably well known amongst Haggard’s readers, who would have been able to identify the significance of Haggard’s comparison in which he is no doubt commenting on the selflessness of the Kukuana warriors who realise that their actions will likely bring about their deaths.

Additionally, although no direct references are made to Homer, Haggard’s battle scenes do have a Homeric quality about them, a point which is acknowledged by Hilton who argues: “Haggard’s African battles do not shy away from graphic descriptions of cruel death and bloodshed. The battles in *King Solomon’s Mines*, and indeed in Haggard generally, are in this regard truly Homeric in their gruesome depictions of violence” (Hilton 2011:108). This can be seen in a number of scenes, particularly those involving Twala, Ignosi and Sir Henry, characters who, while not necessarily modelled off specific Greek heroes, do seem to conform to ancient Greek heroic ideals and whose combat is described quite vividly. For example, Sir Henry’s deathly blows are said to go “crashing through shield and spear, through headdress, hair, and skull” (1962:159) and Quatermain looks onto a scene in which battalions “came on time after

time over the barriers of the dead... to receive our spear thrusts, only to leave their own corpses to swell the rising piles” (*ibid.*). Such scenes are just as grisly and vivid as those found in the *Iliad*, where, for example, the great hero Achilles is described attacking an opponent: —he stabbed his temple and cleft his helmet's cheekpiece./ None of the bronze plate could hold it— boring through/ the metal and skull the bronze spearpoint pounded,/ Demoleon's brains splattered all inside his casque (tr. Fagles:20.451-4)<sup>16</sup>. Lastly, Haggard rounds off the battle scene fittingly with the description of a Paeon produced by the victorious Ignosi. Quatermain is greatly moved by this performance, and compares its effect as equal to that of a poet he had heard reciting Homer, —uttered as it was in a language as beautiful and sonorous as the old Greek” (1962:177). Concerning Haggard’s use of Homeric models, Monsman perhaps grasps the significance of such allusions, when he suggests that —it was precisely that mythic dimension [...] that fed the imaginations of [...] his generation and made *King Solomon’s Mines* a profound work of literature” (2002:15).

So far, this discussion attempted to demonstrate Haggard’s broad and extensive use of Classical details in *King Solomon’s Mines* which appear in an assortment of situations and may contribute to the tone of the narrative. For the most part, these details seem to produce an old-world quality about the kingdom, reinforcing the idea that the Kukuana are in some way connected to a bygone era, and thus highlighting their isolation from the contemporary world. The novel’s references to Classical material are not, however, limited to these more fleeting and, at times, cosmetic descriptions but may also be seen in Haggard’s more extended use of the *katabatic* motif. The *katabasis* is a recurring feature in Classical (Greek and Roman) narratives, which traditionally describes the descent of a hero into the underworld and still

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<sup>16</sup> [ὁ] λύμε θαῖνὰ θξόηαθνλ, θπλέεο δὴν ρα θνπαξήνπ./ νὸδ’ ἄξα ραθείε θόξπο ἔζρεζελ, αὶ ἂ δὴ ἀνηῖο/αἰρικὴ ἰεκέλε ρῆμι’ ὄζηένλ, ἐγθέθα ι νο δὲ/ ἔλδνλ ἄπαιο πεπῶια κτο” (20.397-400).

occurs quite frequently in a variety of more contemporary genres and narratives from film to literature. Katabatic features in Haggard seem to be influenced mostly by Aeneas' trip to the underworld in Virgil's *Aeneid Book VI*, which in turn borrows elements the *nekylia* in Homer's *Odyssey XI*, where Odysseus consults the shades of the underworld. The katabatic motif, while not necessarily applied to the narrative in a literal sense, employs many of the themes characteristic to the traditional descent, such as the general atmosphere, topographical demarcations signifying the threshold of another realm and an approximation of the overall objective of the quest. *King Solomon's Mines* contains two katabatic episodes where the heroes move through unknown and dangerous terrains, which include the initial trek into Kukuluanaland through a desert and over a mountain range, and the more elaborate passage into King Solomon's mines which appears towards the end of the narrative. While superficially different, both scenes contain key features suggestive of katabatic experiences and can be seen to mirror one another at certain points. Additionally, Holtsmark states that the usual objective of a katabatic journey —"to obtain spiritual or material wealth [...] or to rescue a friend" (2001:26). This is very much the case *King Solomon's Mines* as the primary motives for the men's journey into Kukuluanaland is to locate the mines and also to recover Sir Henry's missing brother.

Depending on the narrative requirements, Holtsmark suggests that the "entrance to the underworld may manifest itself associatively in any given narrative as claustrophobic defiles or narrowing passes" (*ibid.*) and that "the underlying motif of the demarcating body of water may appear inversely as a scorching desert" (*ibid.*). Thus, while in ancient narratives caves usually serve as entrances to the underworld and rivers such as the Styx or Acheron may represent thresholds to supernatural or strange realms, in the first katabatic episode, Haggard's heroes are observed moving through a hellish desert and, on account of the blistering heat, travel only by

night, which according to Holtsmark (2001:23) is a typical feature of the katabatic journey.<sup>17</sup> Travelling at night is a prominent aspect of the *katabasis* in Virgil's *Aeneid Book VI*. The hero, Aeneas, begins his descent into the underworld after having performed necessary sacrifices during which he —arises altars into the dark *night/* and over their fires lays whole carcasses of bulls” (tr. Fagles:290-1 own emphasis)<sup>18</sup>. Finally the companions ascend one of Sheba's snow-capped breasts where they contend with the bitter cold on account of the high altitude, and suffer the loss of a servant named Ventvögel since, according to Quatermain, —ike most Hottentots, he cannot stand the cold” (Haggard 1962:72) and eventually succumbs to the elements. While the remaining companions make it into Kukuanaaland unscathed, Ventvögel, an example of the expendability of Africans in Haggard's fiction, acts as what Holtsmark refers to as the Elpenor figure: —he sacrificial victim who pays with his life for the hero's journey to the beyond” (2001:35).

Elpenor is mentioned in the *Odyssey* as one of Odysseus' companions who experiences an unheroic death after drunkenly falling off a roof while they are stopped at the island of the sorceress Circe. This episode occurs as the companions are travelling to the land of the dead where Odysseus will consult, among others, the shade of the seer Tiresias. It then seems that Holtsmark sees Elpenor's death as necessary for the success of Odysseus' upcoming *nekyia*. Elpenor appears to be a forerunner to the *Aeneid's* Palinurus, a companion of Aeneas and the ship's helmsman, who drowns when he is overcome by sleep and falls overboard. This occurs just before the hero makes his *katabasis* thereby fulfilling Neptune's promise to Venus that —[j]ust as you wish,/ [Aeneas] will arrive at Avernus' haven safe and sound./ Only one will be

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<sup>17</sup> Interestingly, the heroes' trek across the desert and into Kukuanaaland bares many similarities to elements in the Western genre which, according to Holtsmark, makes the genre suitable for the katabatic motif. These elements include: —unbroken deserts and delimiting mountain ranges stretching ceaselessly westward and filled with hostile Indians, or greedy outlaws bent on rape, pillage, and murder”(2001:27).

<sup>18</sup> —~~um~~ Stygio regi nocturnas incohat aras/ et solida imponit taurorum viscera flammis”(6.252-3)

lost, one you'll seek at sea./ One life, for the lives of many men" (tr Fagles:5.904-7).<sup>19</sup> Hardie suggests that "sacrifice operates through substitution and exchange; the victim is offered in exchange for benefits" (1993:32) and that Palinurus "is the price exacted in return for the safe arrival in Italy of the rest of the Trojans" (*ibid.*) but perhaps also for Aeneas' successful *katabasis*. Furthermore, the death of a companion during a dangerous journey, whether Elpenor, Palinurus, or Ventvögel, makes sense on a narrative level as it is a realistic outcome and, moreover, highlights the magnitude of the journey. Although this journey clearly conforms to the rough pattern of the ancient *katabasis*, there is little explicit reference to well-known subterranean journeys from ancient narratives. It is, however, in the subsequent katabatic episode that Haggard's most blatant and extended use of Classical material can be seen.

The second katabatic motif appearing in *King Solomon's Mines* plays out in 'The Place of Death', a chapter named after the cavernous diamond mines and their related chambers which have been dug into the mountainside and repurposed more recently as a catacomb for past Kukuana kings. Here, the expedition of the treasure-seekers at times mirrors the famous *katabasis* of the Trojan hero, Aeneas, in Virgil's *Aeneid Book VI* as they enter the eerie mines in search of their plunder together with the witch-doctress, Gagool and Foulata, a loyal Kukuana maiden who is romantically connected to Captain Good. Haggard's portrayal of the men's passage into these chthonic mines is comparable to Aeneas' *katabasis* in at least two major ways. First amongst these parallels is Haggard's use of a female guide, Gagool, who, like Aeneas' Sibyl, appears to be clairvoyant and possesses almost preternatural abilities. Secondly, Haggard's depiction of these mines also manages to capture a similar atmosphere to Aeneas' underworld,

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<sup>19</sup> —Tuts, quos optas, portus accedet Averni./ Unus erit tantum, amissum quem gurgite quaeres;/ unum pro multis dabitur caput" (5.814-6).

given its gloomy and morbid representation and consistent katabatic typology, and, while not being a true underworld, these mines do have several strong associations with death.

The first and most conspicuous parallel to the *Aeneid Book VI* is Haggard's use of a female guide, the malevolent witch-doctor Gagool, who reluctantly assists the men in their navigation of the mines. Haggard draws upon the Cumaean Sibyl<sup>20</sup> extensively in both his characterisation of Gagool and her function in sections of the novel, most likely borrowing ideas from sources such as Virgil and Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*. Hints regarding their connection are offered much earlier in the book when, for example, Quatermain explains how Gagool possessed —a countenance so fearful indeed that it caused a shiver of fear to pass through us” (Haggard 1962:111). Similarly in *Aeneid Book VI*, —[a] icy shudder runs through the Trojan's sturdy spines” (tr. Fagles:6.68)<sup>21</sup>, when, during a prophetic trance Aeneas' Sibyl, who is described as earlier as \_horrendae' or \_deserving of fear' (6.10), alarms Aeneas' companions as a result of her divinely altered appearance. Additionally there is the warning uttered by Gagool before the men enter the mines, demanding that they —make strong their hearts to bear what ye shall see” (Haggard 1962:195), while the Sibyl demanding courage of Aeneas states: —[n]ow for courage, now the steady heart!” (tr. Fagles:6.299-300)<sup>22</sup>.

It is important to point out, however, that while the two guides share a similar function and many notable features Gagool can rather be described as the Sibyl's diabolical double, acting, as it were, like a photo-negative counterpart who ultimately betrays the trio. Moreover, it

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<sup>20</sup> The term Sibyl refers to a number of female figures appearing throughout the ancient Mediterranean world, who were renowned for their oracular abilities. Interestingly, this psychopompic role attributed to the Sibyl by Virgil is an anomaly which does not appear in earlier traditions concerning the Sibyls. According to Ustinova, Virgil —patterned this ability of the Cumaean Sibyl, which distinguishes her from other Sibyls, on Hermes and other psychopomps, as part of his strategy to conflate multiple traditions in creating poetic images” (2009:164).

<sup>21</sup> —gelidus Teucris per dura cucurrit/ ossa tremor” (6.54-5).

<sup>22</sup> —nunc animis opus, Aeneas, nunc pectore firmo” (6.261).



has been suggested by Laing and Frost that Gagool also functions as a threshold guardian<sup>23</sup>, —who might need to be cajoled, bribed or even tricked into helping the hero” (2012:12). Similarly, however, it is solely through the jurisdiction and assistance of their guides that the heroes may undertake their respective journeys. The singular authority and competence of the Sibyl and Gagool can be identified in the relevant texts. The Sibyl’s aptitude and influence is pointed out by Aeneas who, while imploring the Sibyl to guide him through the underworld, states: —All power is yours. Hecate held back nothing, put you in charge of Avernus’ groves” (tr. Fagles:139-140)<sup>24</sup>, and it is only through Gagool that the men may gain access to the mines and the hidden treasure chamber which is —secretd all save the king and Gagool” (1962:187).

Apart from their obvious roles as guides, the most recognisable similarity between Gagool and the Sibyl is their shared gift of prophecy. It is known from the *Aeneid VI* that it is Apollo who inspires the Sibyl into whom he —breathes his mighty will, his soul inspiring her to lay the future bare” (tr. Fagles:6.13-4).<sup>25</sup> Comparably, Gagool is described as a —wisewoman” (Haggard 1962:92), and is observed predicting the advent of a great battle interpreted through a series of bloody images. What is more, this shared trait manifests in a fairly similar way as their prophetic episodes are both marked by frenzied states. While inspired by Apollo, the Sibyl is described as follows: —suddenlly all her features, all/ her colour changes, her braided hair flies loose/ and her breast heaves, her heart bursts with frenzy,/ she seems to rise in height, the ring of her voice no longer/ human” (tr. Fagles:6.58-13).<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Gagool also experiences a violent reaction albeit after having received her vision. Quatermain explains that —the features of this

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<sup>23</sup> Well known examples of Chthonic guardians from Virgil’s *Aeneid VI* include the ferryman, Charon, the three-headed watchdog, Cerberus, and even the Sibyl herself.

<sup>24</sup> —ptes namque omnia, nec te/ nequiquam lucis Hecate praefecit Avernus” (6.117-8).

<sup>25</sup> —magnum cui mentem animumque/ Delius inspirat vates, aperitque future” (6.11-2).

<sup>26</sup> —subito non vultus, non color unus,/ non comptae mansere comae; sed pectus anhelum,/ et rabie fera corda tument, maiorque videre/ nec mortale sonans (6.47-50).

extraordinary creature became convulsed, and she fell to the ground foaming in an epileptic fit” (1962:113). Both episodes appear physically taxing and markedly violent, to such an extent that their features become altered. The Sibyl, however, has been inspired, or rather possessed, by Apollo, whereas it is unclear from where Gagool derives her inspiration.

One of the most striking resemblances between these women is their unnaturally old age. Here, Haggard’s characterisation of Gagool was more likely inspired by an account of the Cumaen Sibyl in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses Book XIV*. The Sibyl reveals to Aeneas that Apollo offered her prolonged life should she give up her virginity. She recalls having pointed to a mound of sand and —~~made~~ the foolish prayer that I might have as many years of life as there are grains of sand in the pile” (tr. Miller:14.137-8).<sup>27</sup> However, she ultimately refuses Apollo’s advances and soon realises that her gift is corrupted<sup>28</sup> since she ~~forgot~~ to ask that those years might be perpetually young” (tr. Miller:14.139).<sup>29</sup> The ancient Sibyl, having already lived for seven-hundred years, now sadly contemplates her lot and the remaining 300 years, acknowledging that ~~the~~ time will come when length of days will shrivel me from my full form to but a tiny thing, and my limbs consumed by age, will shrink to a feather’s weight” (tr. Miller:14.147-9).<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Gagool is described as ~~the~~ wise and terrible woman, who does not die” (Haggard 1962:93). Gagool has been alive for as long as anyone can remember, and the Englishmen are told by an elderly man amongst the Kukuana that when he was young —~~she~~ was even as she is now and as she was in the days of my great grandfather before me; old and dried”

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<sup>27</sup> —~~quod~~ haberet corpora pulvis, tot mihi natales contingere vana rogavi” (14.137-8).

<sup>28</sup> A similar punishment is dealt out to the Trojan princess Cassandra to whom Apollo granted the gift of prophecy. For when she spurns the god’s advances he does not retract his gift, but causes her visions to be disbelieved by everyone.

<sup>29</sup> —~~excidit~~, ut peterem iuvenes quoque protinus annos” (14.139)

<sup>30</sup> —~~tempus~~ erit, cum de tanto me corpore parvam/longa dies faciet, consumptaque membra senecta/ad minimum redigentur onus (14.147-9)

(1962:227). What is even more extraordinary is Quatermain's physical description of Gagool which is reminiscent of the form that the Sibyl expects to take in the future as Gagool is presented as —awoman of great age so shrunken that in size it seemed little larger than the face of a year-old child, but made up of countless deep and yellow wrinkles [...] with a visage [that] might have been taken for a sundried corpse (111). Gagool's impossible age, however, remains a mystery like many other features of Kukanaland, which was perhaps a deliberate move on Haggard's part, ensuring that parts of his fiction would stay elusive and consequently enhance the reader's fascination with this sometimes cryptic text.

According to Foley, —when a hero travels into the wider world beyond his community on a journey or a quest, female figures play a major role as dangerous sexual predators and blockers, but also as necessary helpers, prophets, workers of magic and forces of civilization” (2005:105). Thus, while as a guide Gagool clearly shares many similarities with the Cumaean Sibyl of Virgil and later Ovid, it is, however, worthwhile to acknowledge that the Sibyl herself appears to belong to a larger tradition of female guides in epic literature who provide fundamental assistance to heroes on their quests and often those which take place in the underworld. In her comprehensive study which investigates the similarities between an array of female guides from epic, such as Siduri from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Circe from Homer's *Odyssey* and the Cumaean Sibyl, Nagy acknowledges that in each narrative this female guide is —crucial to the success of the hero as without them, his *katabasis* would probably not be possible” (2009:2). Some of the features which all of these women share can also be extended to Gagool. This includes their portrayal as wise women, their divine origins or links to the supernatural, their initial reluctance to assist the hero and especially the unusually strong roles that they occupy as women. According to Nagy, in each of these narratives the female guide —is a variance that seems to exist

on the outside of cultural hegemony, both of ancient societies in general and those societies that are contemporary to each respective epic” (2009:1). This is certainly true of Gagool who occupies an unusually powerful and peripheral position within her society, and is depicted in sharp contrast to the nurturing and submissive Foulata.

While an attempt is being made to establish clear parallels between the guides, who have been shown to demonstrate great foresight and to be afflicted with unnaturally old age, it is also worthwhile to acknowledge the likely contribution of an African source for Haggard’s depiction of Gagool. Perhaps Haggard was stirred by an aged *Isanusi*<sup>31</sup>, who appearing —withered, and bent nearly double by age” (Haggard 1877:101), he encountered as a young man in South Africa addressing a crowd of warriors before a Zulu war-dance. This reference is illuminating with regards to the depiction of Gagool who refers to herself as an *Isanusi* (1962:122) and later orchestrates a witch-hunt which is also referred to as a —smeller out of wizard” (1962:92). Haggard, who recorded this event in an article published in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, notes that the *Isanusi* referred to herself as —the witch-hunter [and] the seer of strange sights” (*ibid.*) and describing the spectacle recalls that —the genuineness of her frantic excitement was evident by the quivering flesh and working face, and the wild spasmodic words she spoke” (*ibid.*), which is not far removed for Haggard’s depictions of Gagool. While this source alone may seem to account for many of the features given to Gagool by Haggard, this is not to say that the influencing role of the Sibyl should be underplayed given the many clear similarities between the figures together with the presence of various other katabatic elements in the novel. It may even be likely that the *Isanusi*’s display was reminiscent of concepts that Haggard had formed of

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<sup>31</sup> According to the *Dictionary of Southern African English*, the isiZulu term, *isanusi*, is related to the word *nukisa* which means ‘divine’ or ‘smell out’ and refers to a traditional healer or diviner, often an aged practitioner who has developed his or her psychic gifts, and whose clairvoyant powers enable him or her to ‘smell out’ evil” (—Isanusi, n.” 2014).

ancient seers, through his interaction with texts such as Virgil's, who were noted for their ecstatic prophecies, subsequently inspiring his representation of the character Gagool who may possess a hybrid identity, being at once Classical and African.

While the mines are not an actual underworld in the spiritual sense, they do at least function as a literal place of death in various ways. Facilitating his depiction of these mines and allowing them which to take on an eerie and underworldly atmosphere, Haggard seems to evoke images of a Virgilian underworld. Like Dis, these mines are dark and dreary which is understood by Quatermain's comparison of a section of the cave to "the hall of the vastest cathedral, windowless indeed, but dimly lighted from above" (1962:196) and then a later reference to another room which he describes as a "gloomy apartment" (199). This is not dissimilar to Virgil's representation of Aeneas' passage through the underworld when Virgil describes how "[on] they went, those dim travellers under the lonely night,/ through doom and gloom and the empty halls of Death's ghostly realm,/ like those who walk through the woods by a grudging moon's/ deceptive light" (6.307-10).<sup>32</sup> While this may seem a tenuous link, Haggard's portrayal of the mines as a quasi-underworld is confirmed by his placement of a subterranean river: "in the bowels of the earth", which is referred to as an "African Styx" (1962:198) and is discovered by the trio while trying to escape the mines in which they have been trapped. This is not the only scenario in which Haggard evokes this Stygian theme, for in *Allan Quatermain*, the novel's sequel, when the reunited heroes travel down a treacherous subterranean river, Quatermain narrates how they were "borne on the bosom of a Stygian river, something after the fashion of souls being ferried by Charon" (1994:114). Here Haggard makes explicit references to the Styx, one of the traditional underworld rivers of the Classical world mentioned in the *Aeneid* (6.438-9).

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<sup>32</sup> Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram/ perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna:/ quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna/ est iter in silvis, (6.268-71).

Haggard also refers to the chthonic figure, Charon, who features in Virgil's underworld providing passage to souls across the river Acheron (6.384-410). These various descriptions help Haggard to set the stage for his presentation of the mines as a 'Place of Death', a name which not only suggests its contemporary function but also foreshadows the events which will take place later in the narrative.

While the mines are not a true underworld, and the men do not encounter any spirits or chthonic deities, they do begin to act as a proxy for the netherworld due to their constant reminder of death. The most morbid and disturbing evidence for this is Haggard's placement of a resting place within the mines for the dead Kukuana kings who have been preserved in a bizarre manner. When Quatermain enters an ante-cave, also called the 'Hall of the Dead' (Haggard 1962:200) he distinguishes a large stone table around which are seated "life-size white figures" (199), and at its head he makes out "Death himself, shaped in the form of a colossal skeleton" (*ibid.*). While this statue, carved out of a single stalactite, was the work of a foreign and ancient craftsman several thousand years before, the smaller white figures are identified as the bodies of the Kukuana kings. These bodies are undergoing a natural process of preservation caused by a siliceous fluid that drips from the roof, which is essentially turning these men into stalactites, thus accounting for their spectral presence.

Although the 'Hall of the Dead' is probably the most obvious proxy for an underworld given its morbid purpose, additional associations include the actual events within the mines such as the death of Foulata. Foulata functions as another Elpenor figure, like Ventvögel, who is later stabbed by the vindictive Gagool, moments before she too meets her own demise as she is crushed beneath a trap door. In contrast to Ventvögel, who like several African men die in serving their white masters loyally, Haggard has presumably killed Foulata off to avoid an

awkward and socially deviant relationship developing between the her and Good – a white man. This incident reveals Haggard’s critical attitude towards miscegenation, an issue which is tackled more in depth in Chapter Four. While entering the mines was a simple enough task, the real challenge lies in their escape, recalling the Sibyl’s warning to Aeneas: —Thedescent to the underworld is easy./ Night and day the gates of shadowy Death stand open wide,/ but to retrace your steps, to climb back to the upper air-/ there the struggle, there the labour lies” (6.149-2).<sup>33</sup> Following the death of the Foulata, the men themselves barely make it out of the mines alive, having been locked in the treasure chamber by the double-crossing Gagool, —ct&off”, according to Quatermain, —fromevery echo of the world [...] as men already in the grave” (214). When the men do eventually resurface in a sort of *anabasis*, emerging from a subterranean passage through a jackal-hole, they are met with disbelief by their friend, Ignosi, who proclaims, —mylords, it is indeed you come back from the dead!” (224). Ignosi’s exclamation highlights the men’s figurative encounter with death and the function of the mines as an underworld, and, with the men finally out of harm’s way, brings the eventful katabatic narrative to a close. Importantly, the men do not leave the mines or Kukuaneland empty-handed but depart with —niety-three large stones [diamonds] ranging from over two-hundred to seventy carats in weight” (227) and are serendipitously reunited with Curtis’ brother whom they find in nearby oasis with a broken leg, thereby satisfying both katabatic episodes by obtaining what they set out for.

*King Solomon’s Mines*, considered as a pioneering text of the lost world genre, paved the way for a host of Haggard’s later novels which make use of a very similar formula. His use of lost civilizations, likely influenced by some awareness of the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, adds a sense of mystery and allure to his work, which, together with his riveting hunting yarns and

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<sup>33</sup> facilis descensus Averno:/ noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis;/ sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,/ hoc opus, hic labor est (6.124-7).

descriptions of the African wilderness, explain to some extent its popularity amongst Victorians – boys (girls) and grown-ups alike. Haggard's constant use of Classical references and details offer the tale an additional dimension, imparting on the novel a distant and old world quality which heightens the readers encounter with this lost city and its extraordinary inhabitants. This has been explored in Chapter Two with reference to Haggard's depiction of landscape, people, and events. Furthermore, Haggard's appropriation of the katabatic structure in two mirroring episodes contributes to the novel's sense of mystery, risk, and danger- elements which naturally accompany journeys into the unknown, whether literal or figurative underworlds. Aimed at a young audience, *King Solomon's Mines* is comparatively speaking neither a particularly lengthy nor complicated story. As already mentioned, this work provided Haggard with a framework for future novels, including its sequel, *Allan Quatermain*, and the subject of the third chapter *She*. While many of the old elements are present in these two subsequent novels, the ideas also become more developed and complex. This can be seen not just with regard to plot but also with regard to lost cities and their people, whose history, customs and architecture Haggard describes in great detail. The following chapter focuses on *She*, published not long after *King Solomon's Mines*, and similarly identifies and comments on Haggard's use of lost civilizations (real and mythical) as well as his application of Classical motifs, while also tracking the evolution of the lost city genre.



### Chapter Three: *She*

Appearing serially in 1886 and then in book form in 1887, Rider Haggard's *She* followed shortly after *King Solomon's Mines*, and once more picks up on the lost city theme, revealing traces of this earlier text as well as its sequel *Allan Quatermain* (1887). Each of these three novels, which are amongst Haggard's most celebrated and enduring works, follows a small party of Englishmen into a mysterious and remote southern African territory in search of a lost city, whose foundation is attributed to an advanced and ancient (possibly) white civilization. As with *King Solomon's Mines*, this premise seems to reflect the ideas that were circulating around Great Zimbabwe, in which the achievements of a local African civilization were eclipsed by theories that promoted the view that the ruins were the vestiges of a lost white civilization. In contrast to *King Solomon's Mines*, *She* further develops the lost city theme, offers a more complex story line and deals with a wider and more mature range of themes that venture beyond the scope of a boy's adventure story. Additionally, the many elements that contribute to the overall story of *She* offer a glimpse into the numerous subjects that captivated Haggard, such as archaeology, Egyptology and mythology, and reveals his preoccupation with *fin de siècle* anxieties regarding issues such as degeneration and the New Woman. What is more, as was demonstrated in Chapter Two with *King Solomon's Mines*, *She* is also packed, perhaps more so, with many Classical allusions and details, which serve a variety of functions. Haggard's use of Classical material, which constitutes the focus of this chapter, can, for example, be identified in his evocation of the myth of Atlantis in establishing the backstory of his lost city and his use of numerous Classical females in his representation of the leading character, Ayesha, who is also known by the eponymous appellation of She. Furthermore, this chapter will also take into consideration, albeit more briefly, the influence of another civilization, that of Ancient Egypt, given Haggard's

extensive use of Egyptian material which he applies throughout the novel, both explicitly and implicitly, with reference to its architecture, customs and even its literature.

The novel follows the adventures of a Cambridge scholar, Horace Holly, and his ward, Leo Vincey, who, on his twenty-fifth birthday receives a parcel that was left to him by his late father and includes a both a letter and an ancient sherd (Figure Three). Upon this sherd is inscribed the strange history of his ancestor Kallikrates, a Greek priest of Isis, recorded by his wife Amenartas, an Egyptian princess. These documents reveal that, two thousand years ago, Kallikrates had broken his vow of celibacy and fled with his pregnant wife south from Egypt and into a ruined city inhabited by a wild race ruled by an ostensibly immortal and enchanting white sorceress, named Ayesha. Later in the novel, it is revealed that these inhabitants, the Amahagger, are the descendants of a long-vanished and highly advanced civilization who were absorbed by neighbouring tribes when the city fell due to a plague. Ayesha, on the other hand, is of Arabian descent but the circumstances surrounding her arrival in the city and her instatement as queen remain unclear. Ayesha falls in love with her guest Kallikrates but later kills him in a violent rage when he does not reciprocate her affections. A record of the events has survived with Amenartas who managed to preserve the episode in writing upon the sherd which has been passed down to her son, Tisisthenes<sup>34</sup>, through many generations, finally arriving in the possession of Leo Vincey who decides to investigate the matter with his legal guardian, Holly, and their servant Job.

After a perilous journey down the east coast of Africa, the men travel inland and are confronted by Ayesha's subjects who, acting under the instructions of Ayesha who is still alive

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<sup>34</sup> Tisisthenes is translated in the novel as “~~He~~ might avenger” (1958:53), presumably because it is expected that he will avenge his father's death by killing Ayesha, a task which he never succeeds in doing.

two-thousand years later, lead the men into the ruined kingdom of Kôr. The men are eventually brought before Ayesha, who lives beneath an extinct volcano within a system of ancient manmade caves, and they learn from her that Kôr was once the centre of a highly advanced and mighty empire that flourished long before the Egyptians. It was, however, overcome by a devastating plague which caused many of them to flee north and possibly to found ancient Egypt. With time, Ayesha eventually reveals that after bathing in a mysterious flame two-thousand years before, that in addition to acquiring supernatural powers, she also succeeded in prolonging her lifespan while retaining her youthful and impossibly beautiful countenance. She also confirms the story recorded by Amenartas, reveals Leo to be the reincarnation of her Kallikrates in body and soul. She soon confesses that she has been patiently awaiting his return for two-thousand years, overcome by the guilt of his murder. Meanwhile Leo has fallen in love with the charming Ayesha, who leads him to bathe in this mysterious flame so that they might rule Kôr together and eventually the whole world. Leo is initially hesitant and in order to reassure him, Ayesha steps into the flame again, but this time it has the opposite effect, causing her to physically age by two-thousand years until she dies and resembles a shrivelled and lifeless heap. Horrified by what they have seen Leo and Holly return to England but vow to find her again as while dying she promised to return.<sup>35</sup>

From its first appearance to today, readers and scholars have speculated over the many factors that may have contributed to Haggard's conception of *She*, looking to other works of literature and Haggard's own personal experiences. In his autobiography, however, Haggard merely reveals that when he began to work on the novel: —The only clear notion that I had in my head was that of an immortal woman inspired by an immortal love. All the rest shaped itself

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<sup>35</sup> In *Ayesha: The Return of She* (1905), the men find Ayesha, reincarnated in the Far East, having been inspired by a dream.

around this figure” (1926:245-6). Charges of plagiarism, issued shortly after *She*’s publication in 1887, mark the beginning of these various speculations and are in nature certainly amongst the most aggressive. The first attack against Haggard appeared in *The Pall Mall Gazette* on 11 March 1887, and accused him of plagiarising sections of *The Epicurean* (1827) by Thomas Moore. The article entitled —Who Is ‘\_She,’ and Where Did ‘\_She’ Come From”, draws several parallels between the two texts and argues that —some of his most striking pictures are only highly-coloured copies of those drawn by Moore” (*Pall Mall Gazette* 1887:1). Haggard was inconveniently abroad at the time, and was unable to address the awkward situation straightaway, but friends and family came to his rescue in an effort to disprove these unpleasant allegations. Haggard’s reputation took quite a knock but over time the situation was diffused with the support of friends such as the literary critic, Andrew Lang, and the worst of these accusations were more or less resolved through their efforts in proving Haggard’s innocence in the media.

Other noteworthy and more innocuous suggestions made by the public and various scholars have shown that the ruins of Great Zimbabwe likely served as a model for the fallen city of Kôr, while the intriguing figure of Modjadji, a southern African rain queen, has often been cited as a source of inspiration for Haggard’s *She*. When Haggard visited the ruins of Great Zimbabwe in 1914, many years after the publication of *She*, his daughter Liliás writes: —howas amused to find in the local guide that Zimbabwe Hill provided him with the description of the residence of She and the ruins in the valley, the dead city of Kôr” (1976:231). Haggard, however, refuted these claims admitting only, as in the case of *King Solomon’s Mines*, to have heard rumours of the site and insists: —Kôrwas the land where the ruins were built by the fairies of my imagination” (*ibid.*). Evidence from the novel, however, suggests otherwise as, for example, the

word Amahagger, which uses an isiZulu prefix and an Arabic base, translates to “people of the rocks” (Haggard 1958:99) and could be an indirect reference to the stone structures associated with Great Zimbabwe<sup>36</sup>. An additional hint is offered by an Amahagger woman named Ustane who informs the Englishmen that “[n]o one, however, dared go near these great ruins, because they were haunted: they only looked on them from a distance” (109). Similarly, writing about the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, the politician and historian James Bryce reported that locals “regard the ruins with a certain awe, and fear to approach them at twilight” (1899:82). Later in life Haggard expressed knowledge of this superstition for when he visited the ruins he mentioned: “[t]his place has a very strange atmosphere, almost uncanny indeed. I do not wonder that all the Kaffirs flee when once the sun is down” (1976:233).

Concerning Modjadji, she has often been listed as an influence for *She*, even by some comparatively recent sources such as a passage in Penny Miller’s *Myths and Legends of Southern Africa* which states that it was through an awareness of Modjadji that “[t]he imagination of the writer Rider Haggard was fired to conceive the fantasy of *She*” (1979:204). Modjadji, “ruler of the day” (*ibid.*), is a title given to the rain making queen of the Balobedu tribe, from South Africa’s Limpopo province, which is traditionally passed down from mother to daughter. According to record, there have been six Rain Queens, the last one having passed away in 2005, and it is likely that Haggard may have been aware of the second Rain Queen, Masalanabo Modjadji. Like Haggard’s Ayesha, she is associated with magic and, living in seclusion, is rarely seen. According to Miller, the original Modjadji “neither aged nor lost her beauty but lived untouched by time” (1979:204), attributes which certainly apply to Ayesha too. Regarding Ayesha, the Amahagger’s own speculations about Ayesha’s ostensible immortality

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<sup>36</sup> According to Hall and Steffoff, the word Zimbabwe “comes from the Shona phrase *dzimba woye*, meaning ‘honored houses,’ or *dzimba dza mabwe*, ‘houses of stone’” (2006:17).

mirrors their own matriarchal customs as the Amahagger not only have a female ruler, but also live according to an unusual matriarchal system whereby it is the women who are responsible for initiating relationships by choosing their husbands whom they may easily abandon for a rival.

Additionally, —[d]escent is traced only through the line of the mother” (Haggard 1958:101), and men are never formally acknowledged as parents. While women do appear to command a lot of - if not the most- authority, each tribe or ‘\_Household’ is run by a man who is given the title of ‘\_Father’. Furthermore, the Englishmen are told by one of the Fathers that about every second generation, when they —get unbearable [...] we rise, and kill the old ones as an example to the young ones, and to show them that we are the strongest” (132). This theory held amongst the Amahagger, which acts as a challenge to Ayesha’s immortality, seems to have something in common with the matrilineal traditions observed by the Balobedu who still exist today. Similar links were also being made in Haggard’s day as demonstrated by an article from *The New York Times* whose heading reads: —Queen Majajie, or Great She captured” (*The New York Times* 1897). The article which reports the queen’s capture by the Boers, due to a land disagreement with the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, goes on to insinuate that she is linked to Haggard’s She, and makes similar claims concerning her nature, reporting that —her own tribe have never seen her” (*ibid.*). Thus, while a later section of this chapter is dedicated to a discussion on Classical models for the figure of Ayesha, it is worthwhile to note from this example how easily Haggard manages to blend aspects from different sources, namely African and Classical.

Despite discussions that brought into question the originality of *She*, the novel received considerable praise, owing in part to a broad scope that would have appealed to a range of readers. This point is perhaps best highlighted by a joint letter written to Haggard from Budapest

by three employees of the Electric-Technical Factory of Messrs. Ganz and Co., who expressed their appreciation for the novel's ability to satisfy their respective interests:

It appears that each of us found in it a something which appealed to his sympathies; to one the ethnographical and topographical descriptions may have given satisfaction; to another the frequently occurring remembrances of athletic sports; in a third, perhaps, sweet memories of bygone classical studies have been awakened (1926:253) .

Haggard also received a lot of positive praise from critics who recognized the ingenuity of his work as one reviewer suggests: —Mr Haggard has made for himself a new field of fiction” (*The Literary World*, 1897). The work also attracted the attention of personalities like Freud and Jung, for example, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), Freud recounts how he recommended the novel to a friend claiming that *She* was —A strange book, but full of hidden meaning [...]; the eternal feminine, the immortality of our emotions” (1997:305 original emphasis). According to Stiebel, Jung, on the other hand, —saw Ayesha as a clear example of the anima, representing the ideal of women which can never be achieved in reality, but after which men pine” (2009:157). *She*'s popularity is also demonstrated through an anecdote told by Haggard's daughter, Lilius, who recalls that while travelling *en route* to Egypt at the beginning of 1887, her father —cheered to find nearly one on board reading either *King Solomon's Mines* or *She*” (1976:131). Additionally, the novel has been adapted for cinema several times between the years 1899 and 2001, attesting to its popularity and timeless appeal.

In his depiction of the lost city of Kôr, Haggard appropriates features of both real and fictional civilizations of the ancient world such Ancient Egypt and the legendary Atlantis. Drawing from a wide range of ancient and contemporary sources, Haggard appears to have used these civilizations as models for the construction of Kôr in terms of its history, practises and physical nature, as will be explored later. Unlike his enthusiasm for Ancient Egypt, there appears

to be no explicit evidence to suggest that Haggard had any interest in Atlantis apart from his much later work, *When the World Shook* (1919), which Hilton refers to as an “an explicit account of an Atlantis, which he located in the Pacific” (2011:123). Furthermore, concerning the Atlantis theme in *She*, Hilton notes: Although Haggard takes care not to invoke Atlantis directly [...] there is no doubt that his model was Plato’s mythical city” (2011:122). Haggard’s use of the Atlantis motif in *She* an interesting one, as not only do many aspects of Kôr clearly resemble Plato’s Atlantis, but others seem to derive from receptions of the myth in Haggard’s own day. These other receptions, especially those theories proposed by personalities like the American congressman and writer Ignatius Donnelly, while linked somewhat tenuously to Plato’s Atlantis, contribute novel details to Haggard’s Kôr.

Apart from the observation made by Hilton, the link between *She* and Atlantis appears to have been unexplored previously. To begin with the ancient source, the myth appears, probably for the first time<sup>37</sup>, in two of Plato’s connected philosophical dialogues, the *Timaeus* (20c-26e) and the *Critias* (118d-121c). The myth, whose function and interpretation has regularly been a source of debate and speculation amongst both scholars and laymen, is related in both dialogues by the speaker, Critias. In these accounts he relates the events surrounding a war in the very distant past between Atlantis and a historically unfamiliar and remote Athens, and provides elaborate descriptions of the former city. Many of these details are almost certainly taken up by Haggard in his conceptualisation of Kôr and, thus, many of Atlantis’ most defining traits, albeit with some changes, can be recognized in *She*’s lost city. In establishing the extent to which Plato’s Atlantis contributed to the making of Kôr, this discussion will consider the following comparable features: the representation of Atlantis and Kôr as both empires and nations; their

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<sup>37</sup>According to Ashe: “[i]f there was a broader tradition we would expect to find other Greeks mentioning it and accepting Plato’s story as factual (1992:19).



age and historical context; their landscape (both city-planning and topography); and, importantly, their sudden and dramatic downfall.

Shortly after their first encounter, Ayesha takes on the role of tour guide and leads Holly through the cavernous and ancient passages of her royal headquarters which are situated below the crater of an extinct volcano. These vast networks of tunnels, also found in other locations, were the works of the technologically advanced and ancient inhabitants of Kôr. What is more, judging by the endless presence of beautifully preserved corpses, they seem to have served primarily as catacombs, which have now been appropriated as quarters for the living who have no qualms about this macabre arrangement. On the tour, the narrator, Holly, who also happens to be a Cambridge scholar, provides the readers with a running commentary appropriate to his profession, and it is from his keen academic observations and Ayesha's own explanations, that Kôr's history begins to take shape. Holly is led to a section of the cave where Ayesha indicates an inscription which she proceeds to translate. She explains that she is able to do this, since some time ago she "found the key thereto" (Haggard 1958:192) - perhaps some type of Rosetta Stone - and has managed to interpret some of the writings left by the ancient race. Ayesha reads this inscription, recorded by a priest, which narrates the circumstances that led to the Fall of Kôr, and also sheds light on many aspects of the lost civilization.

Holly learns from this record, which narrates the Fall of Kôr, that the city was once an indomitable imperial power and possessed a great navy.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Ayesha informs Holly that Kôr "conquered until none were left to conquer" (195). This ancient super-power is reminiscent of Plato's formidable Atlantis, as depicted in the accounts offered by the speaker Critias, who claims to have heard the story from the ancient lawgiver Solon, who in turn learnt the story from

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<sup>38</sup> Part of the priest's record may suggest that the navy may have had a military and commercial function: "and more shall she rule the world, and her navies go out to commerce with the world" (1958:194).

an unnamed Egyptian priest<sup>39</sup>. In a section taken from the *Timaeus*, this priest, referring to Atlantis, speaks about “a mighty host, which starting from a distant point in the Atlantic Ocean, was insolently advancing to attack the whole of Europe and Asia” (tr. Bury:24e).<sup>40</sup> The exchange continues with a description of the many lands already subjected to Atlantis’ rule which, for example, is said to include “Libya as far as Egypt, and over Europe as far as Tuscany” (tr. Bury:25b).<sup>41</sup> What is more, both cities are revealed to be much older than any other previously known civilization. The caves in which Holly and Ayesha are standing were completed, according to an inscription, four thousand two hundred and fifty-nine years after its founding, and when Ayesha arrived two thousand years ago, the city had already fallen. While it is unclear how much time had passed between Ayesha’s arrival and the abandonment of Kôr, it can be said that the city was established well over six thousand years ago, especially since Ayesha states: “This people was an old people, before the Egyptians were” (Haggard 1958:192).<sup>42</sup> Similarly in the *Critias*, the priest, referring to the war between Atlantis and a remote Athens, informs Solon that “9000 is the sum of years since the war occurred, as is recorded” (tr. Bury:108e).<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the link between the two literary cities is strengthened by other extensive details, to which the discussion will now turn.

In terms of its physical description, both natural and manmade, the great city of Kôr possesses a likeness to several features that characterise the Island of Atlantis. This point will be illustrated by comparing three distinct and memorable features of Atlantis to corresponding ones

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<sup>39</sup> The trajectory of both accounts is interesting as they are to some extent similar. Both are transmitted by priests, one orally (Solon) and other in writing (Ayesha), the stories are then related to others (Critias and Holly) who also pass down the knowledge: Critias to Socrates in Plato’s *Timaeus* and Critias and Holly to the implied reader in *She*, which reads as a his legitimate travel account.

<sup>40</sup> ἔγειν γὰρ ἡ γειγξακκέλα ὄζει ἡ πότιο ὑκῶλ ἔπαπζέλ πνηε δύλακιῆ ὕβξεηπνξεπνκέλελ ἄκα ἐπὶ πᾶζαλ Εὐζώπελ θαὶ Ἀζίαλ, ἔμοσζελ ὄζεκεζε ἰζαλ ἐθ ἡνὺ Αἠιαληθῶ πειά γνπο (24e).

<sup>41</sup> —Ληβύεωλ ἡζρνλ κέρζηπξῶο Αἰγπτινλ, ἡῆο δὲ Εὐζώπεο κέρζη Πιξζε λίας” (25b).

<sup>42</sup> The Egyptian civilization is believed to have begun ca. 3000 BCE with the beginning of the First Dynasty of Pharonic Egypt (Bard 2015:38).

<sup>43</sup> —ἥη ἡ θεθαὶ αἠῶλ ἦλ ἐλαθηζρίτηα ἔηε, ἀθ’ νῶ γεγνλῶο ἐκελύζε πὸί εκνο (108e).

in Kôr: this includes a series of impressively engineered canals, a central mountain abode, and a fertile plain. In *King Solomon's Mines*, the first marker of civilization and human habitation identified by the heroes is Solomon's Great Road. Similarly, in *She*, travelling inland via a river from the east coast of Africa, the heroes discern traces of another type of gateway before even encountering any inhabitants. In this case, however, it is an ancient wharf and later a very wide canal that once would have facilitated busy coastal trade. This wharf, flanked by marsh and river, is initially considered to be a strip of land, but after some scrutiny, the men identify it as stonework, and the presence of a great stone ring, used to tether vessels to the land, confirms its function as a wharf. Sailing further inland, the men reach a junction at which their river splits into two streams both fifty feet (about 15 meters) wide. As with the wharf, the men soon discover that this was once an ancient manmade canal which is now more or less stagnant. Already, this mysterious territory is beginning to exhibit the signs of a highly advanced and ancient civilization which, as will be shown, bears similarities to Plato's Atlantis.

Further on in the novel, the men encounter another even more impressive canal while journeying across a plain towards Ayesha's volcanic residence. This canal is first assumed to be a banked roadway, but their Amahagger guide confirms that it was once a canal, which originating at the foot of the mountain served to drain a lake that had formed in its crater. It is, however, unclear whether the earlier canal was ever connected to the later one. No reference is made to its use as a thoroughfare, and it is supposed to have created a nearby swamp where it may possibly end. Turning to Plato, several canals are also described in his *Critias*, which follows the descriptions in the *Timaeus* and offers more elaborate details of the city of Atlantis. The ancient metropolis of Atlantis was surrounded by concentric bands of alternating strips of land and sea, supposedly arranged by Poseidon himself, and can be accessed from the sea by a

remarkable canal built by the inhabitants themselves. This, along with many other remarkable feats, is explained in the Critias, where it states:

Beginning at the sea, they bored a channel right through to the innermost circle, which was three plethra [about three hundred feet] in breadth, one hundred feet in depth, and fifty stades [about thirty thousand feet] in length; and thus they made an entrance to it from the sea like that from a harbour by opening out a mouth large enough for the greatest ship to sail through” (tr. Bury:115d)<sup>44</sup>.

Haggard’s placement of these canals in Kôr serves a twofold function, which also appears to correspond to their narrative function in Plato. On the one hand the canals of Atlantis and Kôr ostensibly offer a functional purpose, allowing vessels passage into the cities and presenting each city as a thriving centre of trade. On the other hand, however, they also allow the authors to express the accomplishments and technological sophistication of these respective empires.

Two additional topographical features present in both narratives are a central mountain, serving in both cases as royal headquarters, and, lastly, a fertile plain. Already mentioned in passing was the volcanic mountain, whose crater was drained of its lake via the manmade canal. Once emptied, the ancient inhabitants of Kôr settled within this crater which served as a natural fortification. The area is speculated by Holly to cover at least —fiftysquare miles [roughly 80 square kilometres] of ground” (Haggard 1958:142) and is certainly large to contain a decently sized city. Furthermore, Holly hints at its contemporary function when he suggests that it gives the impression of a —great natural castle” (*ibid.*). In addition to Ayesha’s cavernous royal residence located within the mountain, the actual crater also holds the ruins of ancient Kôr, which Holly speculates must have been the empire’s capital. The importance of the settlement is

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<sup>44</sup> —θαλάσπρα κελ γὰξ ἐθ ἡῖο ζαία ἡῖο ἀξρόκελνη ἡξίπεξζηνλ ἡὸ πιά ἡνο, ἐθαῖρὸλ δὲ πνδῶλ βάζνο, κῆθνο δὲ πεληήθλῆα ζηαδίσλ, ἐπὶ ἡὸλ ἐμσηάῖσ ἡξνρὸλ ζπλέῆξεζα λ, θαὶ ἡὸλ ἀλάπινπλ ἐθ ἡῖο ζαία ἡῖο ἡῖο πξῶο ἐθεῖλνλ ὦο εἰο ιηέλα ἐπνηήζαλῆν, δηαὸλῆο ζηόκα λαπζίλ ἡῖο κενίζηῆοίθαλὸλ εἰζπε ἴλ” (115d).

revealed by Holly whose descriptions of the ancient ruins portray it as a centre of much activity. He discerns for example the remnants of —columns, temples, shrines and the palaces of kings” (267) as well as —[what had been parks and gardens” (*ibid.*). Comparatively, in the centre of Atlantis, surrounded by the alternating rings of land and sea, Critias describes a hill which served as a palace, first for Cleito, a mortal with whom Poseidon fathered five sets of twins, princes of Atlantis, and then their royal descendants. According to the *Critias*, Atlantis also boasts several other buildings near the palace which match those in Kôr. These include palaces and a temple to Poseidon (116c-117a), and, within the royal city, several sophisticated civic buildings such as private baths, a race-course, several gymnasia, and gardens (117a-d), highlighting its status an important city.

Lastly, both narratives go into some detail about what can be found in the plains that border these centres which are both flanked on the other side by a mountainous terrain. Journeying with his companions down towards the great plain below the mountain, Holly surveys the scene and offers the following description: —Beneath us was a rich stretch of country, verdant with grass and lovely with foliage and flowers” (Haggard 1958:142). He then proceeds to go into much detail describing the open landscape, citing by name many varieties of flora and fauna, including a generous scattering of game, which provides the explorers with a fine opportunity for some hunting- a recurring feature in Haggard’s imperial romances. While the plain of Kôr serves as an ideal terrain, well-suited to the spontaneous recreational activities of the Englishmen, on the contrary, the great plain of Atlantis serves an organized agricultural function. The plain’s productiveness is implied in the *Critias* by the eponymous speaker who reports that —bordering on the sea and extending through the centre of the whole island there was a plain,

which is said to have been the fairest of all the plains and highly fertile” (113c).<sup>45</sup> Additionally, it is also mentioned that the plain produces —fruit of the earth” all year round due to natural and artificial irrigation. While the abundance of both plains and their physical description may serve as reasonable points of comparison, the nature of their usefulness is, however, quite contrasted. Concerning the social structure of the two cities, two brief points are worth mentioning. Both the people of Atlantis and the Amahagger (but not the ancient inhabitants) are divided into ten sections, what Haggard refers to as ‘Households’ and Plato, in the *Critias*, as —δέθᾶέρη” (113e)<sup>46</sup>. Additionally each of groups is led by a king [βαζιγέπο] (114a) and a ‘Father’, respectively, who seem to possess complete authority over their designated sections, and may condemn individuals to death. In *She* it is mentioned that —[i]f any man offended against custom, he was put to death by order of the father of the Household” (Haggard 1958:109-10). Similarly, in the *Critias*, the kings exercise the same authority.<sup>47</sup>

Having already established several similarities between the two cities, the discussion will now turn to Haggard’s depiction of the fall of Kôr and attempt to establish the extent to which Plato’s Atlantis may have served as a model for this lost city. Taking Holly around the caves, Ayesha leads him to the edge of a great pit which holds countless desiccated corpses filling an area —about the size of the space beneath the dome of St. Paul’s” (196). An explanation for this alarming spectacle is provided earlier when, reading from the priest’s inscription, Ayesha sheds light on the events which led to the fall of Kôr. According to the narrative of the priest Junis:

<sup>45</sup> —πῶο ζαία ηηᾶο κέλ, θαηᾶ δέ κέζνλ πάζεο πεδίνλ ἦλ, ὁ δὴ πάλησλ πεδίσλ θάιηζη νλ ἄξεηῆ ηε ἰθαλόλ γελέζζα ηε ἰέγεηα ηε πζόο ηῶ πεδίω δέ αὐθ θαηᾶ κέζνλ ζηαδίνπο ὦο πεληῆθνλ ηα ἄθεζ ἦο ἦλ ὄζνο βξαρὺ πάληη” (113c).

<sup>46</sup> —Tetraparts” (own translation)

<sup>47</sup> —Each of the ten kings ruled over the men and most of laws in his own particular portion and throughout his own city, punishing and putting to death whomsoever he willed” (119c).  
—ἄλ δέθα βαζιγέσλ εἶο ἔθαζ ηνο ἐλ κέλ ηῶ θαζ’ αὐηὸλ κέξεη θαηᾶ ηῆλ αὐηνῶ πόηηλ ηῶλ ἀλδξῶλ θαὶ ηῶλ πτείζη σλ λόκο λ ἦξρελ, θνι ἄδοσλ θαὶ ἀπνθηεηλδο ὄληῆ’ εἰζεῆζε ηᾶ” (119c).

Twenty and five moons ago did a cloud settle upon Kôr, and the hundred cities of Kôr, and out of the cloud came a pestilence that slew her people, old and young, one with another, and spared not. One with another they turned black and died- the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the man and the woman, the prince and the slave (194).

Thus, due to the unmanageable rate at which people were dying, the citizens of Kôr resorted to dumping the dead within the great pit, unable to provide a proper burial. A point worth adding about the priest's account is that it seems to evoke the biblical plagues of Egypt mentioned in *Exodus*, especially the seventh plague of thunder and hail (9.13-24) on account of its aesthetic effects. The scene (Figure Four) was depicted in an oil painting produced by the English artist, John Martin (1789-1854) and, while there seems to be no evidence to suggest that Haggard was aware of the painting, the scene of Kôr which he depicted in writing bears many similarities to Martin's representation on canvas. This can be seen by the manner in which both men showcase the scale and grandeur of their respective cities, Kôr and Egypt, while capturing a sense of apocalyptic doom, represented in both cases by a mighty plague bringing cloud. The circumstances surrounding the destruction of Atlantis while only hinted at in the *Critias* are sketched out in the *Timaeus*: —[T]here occurred portentous earthquakes and floods, and one grievous night befell them, when the whole body of your warriors was swallowed up by the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner was swallowed up by the sea and vanished” (tr. Bury:25c-d).<sup>48</sup> While both disasters utterly destroyed these two powerful empires, eradicating them for the most part from history, the nature of the events is quite different.

Although the pestilence connected to Kôr may have appeared suddenly, it does not wipe out the cities instantaneously, like the disasters linked to Atlantis, but rather over a period of

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<sup>48</sup> ζεηζκῶλ ἐμσηζίσλ θαὶ θαηαθηπζκ ῶλ γελνκέλσλ, κηῖο ἡκέξωο θαὶ λπθηὸ ραιεπ ἦο ἐπειζνύζεο, ἦο ἡε παξ' ὑκίλ κάρηκλ πᾶλ ἀζξόνλ ἔδπ θαηᾶ γῆο, ἦ ἡε Ἀηιαληιο λῆζνο ὠζα ὑησο θαηᾶ ἦο ζαὶά ηηω δῶζα ἠθαλίσθη” (25c-d).

twenty-five months. Another important difference is highlighted by a point made by Holly, that —[i] connection with the extraordinary state of preservation of these ruins after so vast a lapse of time- at least six thousand years- it must be remembered that Kôr was not burned or destroyed by an enemy or an earthquake, but deserted (267)”. Atlantis was destroyed in punishment of the citizen’s moral decline which is described in the *Critias*: —[Zus] marked how this righteous race was in evil plight, and desired to inflict punishment upon them” (tr. Bury: 121b-c).<sup>49</sup> Concerning the citizens of Kôr, there is no indication that their pestilence occurred as punishment for their behaviour. Such contrasting details need not necessarily compromise the connection between Haggard’s Kôr and Atlantis, since it is quite clear that his intention was not to refer directly to the destruction of Atlantis but rather to use general motifs of the myth as a basis for his aspects of the narrative. Fundamentally, both narratives depict a similar event: namely the utter destruction of mighty empires by forces of nature. Such a theme may have been prompted by Haggard’s own anxieties for the eventual fall of his own British empire a point which is demonstrated by Stiebel who suggests that “the ancient ‘white’ ruins in Haggard's [...] could act as a demonstration of the inevitable transience of empires, including Britain's own” (2001a:97). Worth mentioning too is a comment made by Ayesha who vaguely refers to the fall of other great civilizations, stating: —Time eats up the works of man, unless, indeed, he digs in caves like the people of Kôr, and then mayhap the sea swallows them, or the earthquake shakes them in” (Haggard 1958:195). This statement almost certainly hints at Atlantis, and may also have been added to alert more astute readers to the connection between the cities.

Before concluding the discussion about Atlantis, a last source needs brief mentioning. In 1882, Ignatius Donnelly mentioned earlier in this chapter, published *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*, a pseudo-scientific work which posited that Atlantis was not a mere fable but that

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<sup>49</sup> —ἐλληνίχα ο γέλινο ἐπιγεθο ἄζι ἰσο δηαηζάκελνλ, δίθελ αὐηνῖο ἐπηζᾶλαηβνπιεζείο ” (121b-c).



—[a]most every part of Plato's story can be paralleled by descriptions of the people of Egypt and Peru" (Donnelly 1882:22). His theory was dependant on the idea that Atlantis had been a large island in the Atlantic Ocean whose reach had extended to the Americas, Africa and Europe. Donnelly's work was guided by Diffusionist beliefs which, according to Phyllis Young Forsyth, hold that "cultural innovations had but one centre of origin from which they gradually spread, diffusing to other peoples" (1980:4). Thus, for Donnelly the idea that technologies, like the wheel for instance, could develop independently amongst unconnected peoples was inconceivable. Instead, however, he suggested that his theory could "explain remarkable resemblances which exist between the ancient civilizations found upon the opposite shores of the Atlantic Ocean" (1882:3). Two good examples of these resemblances include the practise of mummification by the Egyptians and the Peruvians, and the presence of pyramids in Egypt and Mexico.

The purpose of Donnelly's work is laid out in thirteen points, three of which seem to correlate, to some extent, with ideas present in Haggard's *She*. Point three on Donnelly's list is that: "Atlatis was the region where man first rose from a state of barbarism to civilization" (1882:3). This does not seem too different from Kôr, which certainly seems to have been technologically ahead of other contemporary civilizations and perhaps a cradle from which others either emanated or at least advanced through contact. This may be the idea behind the message conveyed by the priest's inscription which refers to Kôr as the "the light of the whole world" (Haggard 1958:194). Additionally, point eight suggests that Egypt was probably the oldest colony of Atlantis, "whose civilization was a reproduction of that of the Atlantic island" (1882:2). Occurring throughout the novel, *She*, are suggestions that the civilizations of Egypt and Kôr were somehow connected. This is demonstrated by observations that reveal a similarity in

various practises and achievement, such as the art of mummification as well as architectural motifs which will be dealt with in more detail later. Lastly, with point thirteen, Donnelly claims that the survivors of Atlantis escaped “in ships and on rafts, and, carried to the nations east and west the tidings of the appalling catastrophe” (Haggard 1882:3). Here Haggard seems to conflate elements of Donnelly’s theory about Atlantean colonisation and their above mentioned escape, which may be interpreted by two respective statements by the priest of Kôr who states that: “a remnant of this the great people [...] went down to the coast and took ship and sailed northwards” (Haggard 1958:194), and Ayesha who suggests to Holly that, “that those men who sailed north may have been the fathers of the first Egyptians” (195). This suggestion could be one way to account for their cultural similarities. Another valuable observation is that Donnelly’s work provides a translation of the sections of Plato’s *Timaeus* and *Critias* that pertain to Atlantis. If Haggard did read Donnelly’s work, which the evidence above seems to suggest, he would also have been familiar with all the details of Plato’s Atlantis.

In addition to the legendary Atlantean island, the ancient world provided Haggard with another, albeit historical, model from which to draw ideas for his novel. By the time Haggard began to write *She*, a great deal was already known about the civilization of Ancient Egypt. In 1798, Napoleon led a military expedition to Egypt and took along with him a group of 167 French *savants*, or experts (scholars, scientists and artists), who conducted research on various aspects of both ancient and modern Egypt. This resulted in a twenty-four volume work entitled *Description de l’Egypte*, which was published between the years 1809 and 1828, and did much to generate both scholarly and public interest in Ancient Egypt. According to Freedman and Ray, this “was the first work to do justice to the magnificence of the ruins of Ancient Egypt” (2000:168). Further development in the field was made with the discovery of the Rosetta Stone

by French soldiers, which proved an invaluable tool in the eventual decipherment of hieroglyphics by Jean-François Champollion, who published his findings in the work *Précis du système hiéroglyphique* (1824). Champollion's breakthrough paved the way for future research, and, according to Bard:

[A]fter the hieroglyphic script had been deciphered, and texts were translated and the structure of the language became better known from around 1850 onward, much more information about the civilization also became available (2015:8).

The vestiges of Ancient Egypt were soon more accessible to the public on many levels. Collectors of artefacts, such as Henry Salt, working with agents like Giovanni Belzoni, plundered Egypt, and carried off many valuable items which found new homes in European museums such as the Louvre, the British Museum, and the Museo Egizio in Turin. Later in the century, however, more intrepid enthusiasts could appreciate the wonders of Egypt first hand, as tours to Egypt, offering both safety and comfort, were made possible by the enterprising efforts of Thomas Cook, who “led the first guided trip to Egypt in 1869” (Freeman and Ray, 2000: 186). Egypt's hold on the public's imagination may be observed by its influence in entertainment and lifestyle, for example, both the set and story of Verdi's opera, *Aida* (1871), were heavily influenced by Ancient Egyptian motifs as a result of the guiding hand of French Egyptologist, Auguste Mariette, who provided the storyline and was involved in various design aspects of the production.

Haggard was not immune to the growing charms of Egyptomania, and maintained a lifelong interest in the subject which had already developed in his youth. In his autobiography he recalls that “[f]rom a boy ancient Egypt had fascinated me, and I had read everything concerning it on which I could lay my hands” (1926:254). Additionally, Haggard felt a strong affinity for the Ancient Egyptians and admitted that “with the old Norse and the old Egyptians I am at home”

(1926:255). While only a layman, Haggard could boast a broad knowledge of Ancient Egyptian scholarship upon which he capitalises in many of his works including *She*.<sup>50</sup> Throughout his lifetime Haggard made several trips to Egypt, first in 1887 just after the publication of *She*, —seeking knowledge and a holiday” (1926:256), as it was his intention to write a novel based on Cleopatra which was later published in 1889. On his numerous visits to Egypt Haggard had the good fortune of meeting several notable personalities in Egyptology including the archaeologist Howard Carter, in 1904, still some time before the famous discovery of Tutankhamen’s tomb, and, in 1912, the esteemed Gaston Maspero, Director of the Egyptian Museum and Antiquities Service in Cairo.

While Haggard’s tours of Egypt followed only after he had written *She*, he most likely had access to various sources that would have guided his impressions of Ancient Egypt and fed his imagination. Haggard’s must have been familiar with visual representations of Ancient Egypt as is indicated by Holly’s comparison of Kôr’s ruins to old structures of the Egyptians. For example, he explains how the façade of the Temple of Truth in Kôr —si almost as large as that of El-Karnac, at Thebes” (1958:269), and proceeds to offer a detailed description of its enormous columns with the perceptiveness of an archaeologist. Such familiarity suggests that Haggard had more than likely been exposed to illustrations of these ruins such as an illustration by David Roberts, appearing in one of three volumes of lithographs entitled *Egypt and Nubia* (published between 1846 and 1849) which foregrounds the temple’s majestic columns (Figure Five). What is more, like the organically inspired columns of Karnak, Haggard’s ones are also inspired by the natural environment. Holly explains that the columns, which taper in the middle, supposedly like

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<sup>50</sup> Many of Haggard’s works are influenced by his fascination with this ancient civilization, which, for the most part, make use of Egypt as a setting. These include: *Cleopatra* (1889), *The World’s Desire* (1890), *The Way of the Spirit* (1906), *Morning Star* (1910), *The Wanderer’s Necklace* (1914), *Smith and the Pharaohs* (1920), *Queen of the Dawn* (1925), and *Belshazzar* (1930).

the female figure, borrow their form from palms growing nearby: —I now have no doubt but that the first designer of these columns drew his inspiration from the graceful bends of those very palms” (*ibid.*).<sup>51</sup> The following discussion will, however, focus on two other aspects of Haggard’s reception of Ancient Egyptian motifs in *She* which includes the appropriation of practices such as mummification and lastly his use of Ancient Egyptian literature.

About halfway through the novel, Ayesha suggests to Holly that when the civilization of Kôr fell, a few survivors escaped and probably founded the Egyptian civilization (1958:195). While this is the first statement in the novel that explicitly establishes a link between the two civilizations, the reader has already been provided with several pieces of evidence that hint at their connection. This arrangement allows Haggard to indulge in his penchant for Egyptology, mostly through Holly’s commentaries, and to create an atmosphere rich with archaeological and scholarly details. The first clue is found quite early on in the story when, during his earlier tour of Kôr’s caverns, Holly is offered his first glimpse at the burial practices of the prehistoric inhabitants of Kôr which, like Ancient Egyptian mummification, aimed to prevent the corpse from the decaying. The process and the results are, however, markedly different from their Ancient Egyptian counterparts, as is inferred by Holly’s observations of a preserved foot: —For the rest it was not shrunk or shrivelled, or even black and unsightly, like the flesh of Egyptian mummies, but plump and fair [...] perfect as on the day of death- a very triumph of embalming” (1958:130).

The expertly preserved foot is indicative of the sort of accomplishments achieved by the great civilization of Kôr, which suggests, through this illustration, that their wisdom surpassed even that of the Egyptians. The method of embalming practised in Kôr is later described to the

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<sup>51</sup> According to Etherington, “[m]any columns in ancient Egyptian buildings had capitals resembling palms fronds. Among them were the very ornate columns of the great court in the Karnak complex” (1991:235).

Englishmen, and is revealed to be not only more advanced, but also more effective and a lot less involved than the one observed by the Egyptians. Instead of the laborious process associated with of the latter culture, Holly relays that —whereas the Egyptians disembowelled and drew the brain, the people of Kôr injected fluid into the veins, and thus reached every part” (1958:196). The reader is also told that this fluid derived from the root of a particular plant that was once threatened with extinction as a result of its over-utilization, demonstrating the popularity of the practise amongst the people of Kôr, as in contrast to Ancient Egypt, both the wealthy and the poorer classes had access to this facility.

While the actual art of preservation differs amongst the two groups, in both method and quality, a glimpse of the religious beliefs of the citizens of Kôr may suggest that the ultimate objectives of the burial practices were possibly similar. Both cultures were preoccupied with death as is suggested by Ayesha: “[L]ike the Egyptians, they [the inhabitants of Kôr] thought more of the dead than of the living” (192).<sup>52</sup> An explanation for this may stem from their mutual belief in the afterlife, which, in the case of the people of Kôr, is suggested by an inscription that speaks about a —day of awakening” (1958:193) after death, which the (fictional) editor of Holly’s account interprets as —belief in a future state” (*ibid.*). For the Egyptians, both mummification and burial, especially amongst more affluent members of society, were essential preparations for the afterlife as they —were designed to preserve the integrity of the individual” (Freeman and Ray 2000:90). Thus, while it is unclear to what ends the citizens of Kôr perfected the art of preservation, it is possible that, like the Egyptians, it was fundamental to their belief in the afterlife – or rather their resurrection. This explanation is even more likely if Ayesha’s earlier suggestion, that Ancient Egypt was founded by survivors of Kôr, has any merit.

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<sup>52</sup> This point comes across clearly enough even without Ayesha’s observation as the descriptions of the endless hollowed-out caves, which served singularly to hold the dead, demonstrate the efforts employed in the service of the dead.

Apart from presenting to the reader the unparalleled achievements of Kôr and affording Haggard an opportunity to engage with Egyptology, the appearance of the mummies in *She* also seems to serve a more romantic function. While Ayesha guides Holly through the ancient and cavernous catacombs more is revealed about the citizens of Kôr such as their race, when, for example, Holly describes the perfectly embalmed body of woman as having an “ivory face” (Haggard 1958:197) and, while imagining the life of another mummy in a dream-like sequence, he presents the image of a woman with streaming “yellow hair” (199) and a “bosom, which was whiter than her robes” (*ibid.*). Such depictions make it plain that the inhabitants of Kôr were certainly not black Africans, but rather white and not merely fair-skinned like the Kukuana of *King Solomon’s Mines*, whose features are described as different to those of other Africans but are by no means white. These sketches seem to parallel the fanciful ideas that had been emerging from Great Zimbabwe which endorsed a white-built civilization. Furthermore, owing to the excellent condition of the corpses, the reader is encouraged through Holly’s observations and sentiments to view the bodies not as mere curiosities and relics of long forgotten civilization, but to appreciate them from a more empathetic and human standpoint. To Holly, these human remains are not cultural artefacts but are deeply relatable individuals as is observed when, gazing upon the bodies of a mother and child, he remarks that they are “white memories of a forgotten human history speaking more eloquently to the heart than could any written record of their lives” (198).

The attitudes expressed in these scenes with the dead appear to be aligned with Haggard’s own sympathetic views concerning mummies. When visiting Egypt in 1887, Haggard was shown the mummies of two pharaohs, Seti and Ramses, and he describes having looked upon them with

eneration (1926:256). Additionally Haggard embarks on a tirade in which he questions the ethics behind the showcasing of the ancient dead:

Poor kings! who dreamed not of the glass cases of the Cairo Museum, and the gibes of tourists who find the awful majesty of their withered brows a matter for jest and smiles. Often I wonder how we dare to meddle with these hallowed relics, especially now in my age (1926:257).

Haggard clearly objects to the unfeeling treatment of these mummies as spectacles and, expressing a great deal of empathy towards them, is cognisant of their human past. At the same time, however, he also appreciates their historical value by acknowledging the integral role that the mummies and their tombs have played in reconstructing the history and background of the Ancient Egyptians.<sup>53</sup>

Continuing with Haggard's use of the mummy motif, two last themes will be explored: namely Ayesha's resemblance to a mummy, and the idea of mummies as the site of fetishism. The first motif may also be applied to Ayesha, as she herself is quite reminiscent of a mummy, being covered head to foot in gauzy wrappings which serve to conceal her peerless and spellbinding beauty. The power of Ayesha's beauty is illustrated when she tells Leo t—"[t]hou couldst not even endure to look upon me for too long a time lest thine eyes should ache, and thy senses swim" (Haggard 1958:258). Ayesha's resemblance to a mummy is made explicit by Holly who is initially quite spooked by Ayesha's phantasmic appearance, and describes her as a "swarted mummy-like form" (159) and then later, when she unveils, he relates how her "corpse-

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<sup>53</sup> In his autobiography Haggard points out the following: "Still it must be remembered that it is from Egyptian tombs that we have dug the history of Egypt, which now is better and more certainly known than that of the Middle Ages. Were it not for the burial customs of the old inhabitants of Khem. [...] we should be almost ignorant of the lives of that great people [...]. For my part I should like to see the bodies of the Pharaohs, after they had been reproduced in wax, reverently laid in the chambers and passages of the Great Pyramids and there sealed up forever" (1926:258)



like wrappings fell from her to the ground” (171)<sup>54</sup>. Like the mummies, Ayesha, who is also very ancient, has discovered a means by which to preserve her good looks and youthful countenance through the ages. Ayesha’s good looks, unspoilt by her great age, have something in common with a hastily preserved corpse, described by Holly, which caves in under some pressure, and reveals —that the figure was but a pile of dust” (198). This is seen when Ayesha’s second exposure to the pillar of life counteracts the effects of first and, stripping her of her own well-preserved façade, physically displays her true age: —[T]he delicate hand was nothing but a claw now, a human talon resembling that of a badly preserved Egyptian mummy” (299). Thus, Ayesha is very much like the mummy whose great age was disguised by a fragile exterior.

A final theme connected to Haggard’s use of mummies in *She* is explored at length by Brantlinger (2009), who suggests that Haggard’s treatment of mummies in two novels, *She* and *Smith and the Pharaohs* (1920), was consistent with many other novels of the same era that exploited the mummy phenomenon, and sometimes contained hints of necrophilia.<sup>55</sup> In connection to this, two incidents in *She* are worth mentioning. The first involves Billali, a senior figure amongst the Amahagger, who discloses to Holly that in his youth he became infatuated with an attractive corpse whom he would regularly visit. His fascination with the corpse suggests the idea of necrophilia, but probably voyeurism as well. Billali recounts: —I would creep up to her and kiss her cold face, and wonder how many men had lived and died since she was, and who had loved her and embraced her in the days that long have passed” (Haggard 1958:129). Secondly, Ayesha herself is in love with the two thousand year old preserved corpse of

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<sup>54</sup> Haggard picks up the same imagery in the novel’s sequel, *Ayesha* (1905), where the eponymous character first appears to the men incognito twenty years later in the Far East. Here she is described similarly as a —corpse-like guide” (1986:129) who is covered in white wrappings. Conversely, however, the wrappings now serve to disguise Ayesha’s the hideous body she has been reborn into.

<sup>55</sup> Brantlinger lists Théophile Gautier’s *Le Roman de la momie* (1863); Charles Mackay’s *The Twin Soul: The Strange Experiences of Dr. Rameses* (1887); and Edgar Lee’s *Pharaoh’s Daughter* (1889).

Kallikrates which she regularly visits. This is testified by the worn down stone steps which lead to his resting place: —for two-thousand years and more have I passed hither day by day, and see, my sandals have eaten out the solid stone” (245). Brantlinger suggests that Haggard’s exploration of necrophilia in *She* agrees with idea that —most necrophiliacs long for sexual relations uncomplicated by resistance or rejection, [while] many are motivated by the desire to be reunited with a lost lover or a potential lover” (2009:56).<sup>56</sup> What is more, the inspiration behind Ayesha’s enduring passion for Kallikrates probably stems from Haggard’s own unrequited and lasting love for Lilly Jackson, a woman who jilted him in his youth and whom, in his later years, according to his daughter Lilius, —he still loved, with an affection that transcends all earthly passion and stretches out the hands beyond the grave” (Haggard 1976:202).

Having explored Haggard’s use of the mummy motif within the context of nineteenth century Egyptomania, particularly within the scope of literature, it is worthwhile to point out that the second half of my discussion presents an ancient literary model by looking at the influence of a mummy (or ghost) story from an ancient Egyptian narrative known as —The Adventure of Satni-Khamoïs with the Mummies” or more simply as the —Fist Setne”. The composition is a Demotic romance from the Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC) and while the tale is fictitious, the protagonist is loosely based on the historical figure of Prince Khaemuas (Setne), a son of Ramesses II who served as a High Priest (Setem) of the god Ptah and was supposedly the world’s first Egyptologist (Ritner 2003:453). This relationship has been explored quite extensively by Vinson (2008) who notes that Haggard was familiar with the text at the latest by 1909 as a reference to the work appears in preface to his novel *Morning Star* (1910) which is set in Ancient Egypt. It is possible that he knew the story before he wrote *She*, since he refers to the version of the story in Gaston Maspero’s anthology, *Les contes populaires de l’Egypte*

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<sup>56</sup> For this argument Brantlinger draws on the research conducted by Franklin Klaf and William Brown (1958).

*ancienne*<sup>57</sup>, which was first published in 1882<sup>58</sup> and thus several years before *She* was written in 1886. The story is concerned with events that surround Setne's attempts to retrieve the magic book of Thoth from the tomb of Prince Naneferkaptah in the royal necropolis of Memphis. Here he encounters the mummy of the Naneferkaptah and the ghosts (or *ka*) of the prince's wife, Ihweret, and their child. Ihweret explains how the book brought about their deaths, after her husband had undertaken a mission to retrieve the book, and warns Setne to leave it in the tomb. Setne does not heed her advice but leaves the tomb taking the book with him. Shortly afterwards Setne meets a beautiful and seductive woman named Tabubue who, through her allure, convinces Setne to hand over his possessions and to agree to the murder of his children, as he is led to believe that this will secure a sexual encounter between the two. Setne is ultimately frustrated as she vanishes before they can go through with the arrangement. When it is later revealed that whole episode with Tabubue was an illusion which Setne connects to the magical book and Naneferkaptah, he decides to return the book to the tomb.

This ancient composition, as Vinson demonstrates, seems to serve as the basis for several superficial but vivid details present in *She*, and, what is more, Haggard's characterisation of Ayesha bears several strong resemblances to the two female characters, Ihweret and Tabubue, whose distinguishing features in turn are reminiscent of those of the goddess Isis. According to Vinson: —“*Ἐποὶ* linked to Isis in antiquity - magic, power, immortality, love, sex, loyalty, knowledge, truth, and the claim of the past upon the present - are all central to *She*” (2008: 290). In addition to the *First Setne*, Vinson also suggests that three women – Charikleia, Rhadopis, and Arsake from the Heliodorus' Greek novel the *Aithiopia* have also contributed elements to

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<sup>57</sup> An English edition of the work, *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*, first appeared in 1915 and was translated by C. H. W. Johns.

<sup>58</sup> In his autobiography Haggard alludes on several occasions to his knowledge of French, and so it is quite likely that he would have been able to read Maspero's edition in French.

Ayesha's character.<sup>59</sup> Like others, he has noted that Ayesha's unusual personality presents an extreme duality<sup>60</sup>, and suggests that it could have been informed by the contrasting female figures in these two works. Rhadopis, Arsake, and Tabubue are *femmes fatales* who doom the men who come into their power" (*ibid.*), whereas Charikleia and Iheret "represent loyalty, constancy, and the triumph of love" (*ibid.*). While these similarities may not seem to be too great a coincidence, the appearance of more unusual but superficial and aesthetic details in both works strengthen the claim, of which two will be discussed presently.

The first comparable feature in the Egyptian tale is the presence of a series of boxes, working on the same principles as the Chinese boxes or a matryoshka doll, from which the book of Thoth is first retrieved by Naneferkaptah. The book is found in the midst of these compartments which working from the inside and out comprise of the following materials: bronze, cinnamon wood, ivory and ebony, silver, and lastly gold.<sup>61</sup> This is remarkably similar to the arrangement of containers in which Leo and Holly discover the Sherd of Amenartas (see again Figure Three), an artefact which also serves as a catalyst, as inside the first unassuming box (which, to add another layer, came from a safe) is another of ebony, then one of silver which is decorated with sphinxes - perhaps a clue to its ancient precursor - and lastly the sherd is to be found in some cloth. The last point of comparison worth mentioning is the scenes in which Tabubue and Ayesha receive their guests, Setne and Holly, respectively. Firstly, both settings are

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<sup>59</sup> Vinson's (2008) treatment on the influence of female characters from Heliodorus' *Aithiopika* on She is already very extensive and, for this reason, a summary of his points is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, the following discussion endeavours to demonstrate Haggard's use of other Classical female figures, an area which to which more original ideas can be contributed.

<sup>60</sup> Trying to account for Ayesha's complex personality, Etherington points out that Ayesha's "ability to reveal genuine tenderness as well as implacable passion have no close equivalents either in African legends or English literature" (1884:87).

<sup>61</sup> "The book in question is in the midst of the sea of Coptos in an iron coffer. The iron coffer is in a bronze coffer; the bronze coffer is in a coffer of cinnamon wood; the coffer of cinnamon wood is in a coffer of ivory and ebony; the coffer of ivory and ebony is in a coffer of silver; the coffer of silver is in a coffer of gold, and the book is in that" (Maspero 2002:103).

very similar, as Vinson notes: —many of the same elements [in *She*] - couches, tables food, beverages, vases, perfume - appear in the description of Tabubue's living quarters" (2008:195) and thus share an analogous atmosphere. Also, both women are dressed in similar seductively translucent garments. Tabubue is described as changing into a —robe of fine linen and Satni beheld all her limbs through it" (Maspero 2002:113) and Ayesha, having discarded her wrappings was —robed only in a garb of clinging white that did but serve to show its rich and imperial shape" (Haggard 1958:171). The occurrence of these rather quaint details certainly seems to suggest that Haggard was familiar with the work and is thus instrumental in lending credibility to Vinson's argument. To add to Vinson's observations, however, the scene between Tabubue and Setne is also quite reminiscent of the events which shape the outcome of the relationship between Ayesha and Leo. As a result of Ayesha's supernatural nature, she warns Leo that they may not enjoy a sexual relationship until he too is changed by flames of the spirit of life: —the very brightness of my being would burn thee up, and perchance destroy thee" (258). Moments before stepping into the flames for the second time, in order to reassure Leo, Ayesha hints at their approaching physical union: —for the I loose my virgin zone" (291) – but like Setne on the verge on sexual gratification, Leo is ultimately unfulfilled as Ayesha perishes in the flames.

Having discussed the influences of the women of the "First Setne" on Ayesha's character, it is appropriate now to move on to the final discussion of this chapter which takes into consideration the role of Classical female figures in Haggard's shaping of Ayesha. In his characterisation of Ayesha, he explicitly associates her with other female figures from the Classical worlds of ancient Greece and Rome. While references to these female characters are mostly transparent and ostensibly straightforward and unelaborate, a close reading reveals that

Ayesha has more in common with these figures than is immediately obvious. In facilitating his portrayal of Ayesha, Haggard, through Holly's narrative, enlists the aid of several outstanding Classical females in order to make clear certain superficial details about Ayesha. Concerning her beauty, Ayesha boasts that her "loveliness is more than the loveliness of Helen" (166); she is compared to "Venus Victrix" (172) and later to her Greek counterpart, as "Aphrodite triumphing" (1958:202); cautioning Holly, who wishes to look upon her face, she likens him to Actaeon "who perished miserably because he looked on too much beauty" (172); and finally unwrapping her layers she is equated to "Venus from the wave, or Galatea from her marble" (239). In an article, Haggard, acknowledging Ayesha's resemblance to Classical females, offers the following: "The romance sprang from my own brain, although it has occurred to me since that she has something (in common) with other characters in ancient fiction" (*African Review*, 1896:639), citing the Odyssean nymph, Calypso, as an example. The following discussion will focus on the relationship between Ayesha and three Classical females- Calypso, Circe, and the Sibyl- and attempt to demonstrate how each figure contributes to Ayesha's depiction, respectively.

Unlike the pageant of ancient females whom Haggard employs explicitly in his portrayal of Ayesha, the figure of Calypso is not once evoked directly, although many parallels can be drawn between her and Ayesha. Aware of the many similarities between Ayesha and other literary females, and perhaps still quite defensive over his earlier charges of plagiarism, in the aforementioned article, Haggard insists that "[t]he stock of human ideas is absolutely limited [and] [n]ovelty is only possible in the form of the combination of those elementary ideas" (*ibid.*). Regarding Calypso, he describes how like Ayesha, she too is "an immortal woman who also lived in a cave and made herself attractive to the traveller" (*ibid.*). However, the similarities

between the two women seem to go a lot deeper than Haggard may care to admit. While the vapid Leo is certainly no Odysseus, he does enter Ayesha's kingdom under similar circumstances. Recounting his wanderings to the king and queen of the Phaiakians, in the *Odyssey VII*, Odysseus describes how he came to Calypso's island, Ogygia, after his ship was destroyed and his companions killed in storm roused by Zeus.<sup>62</sup> Comparably, before reaching Ayesha's kingdom, the dhow carrying Leo, Holly, and Job down the east coast of Africa is destroyed in a squall that drowns all their crew save one. The Englishmen, however, are saved moments before by climbing into their whale-boat which is tethered to the dhow and sail down the mouth of a river leading westwards towards Kôr.

Like Calypso, Ayesha offers the travellers hospitality and falls in love with Leo, whom she believes to be the reincarnation of her lost love Kallikrates. Detaining him on her Island for seven years, Calypso's love for Odysseus is markedly obsessive – —[a]nd she received me/ and loved me excessively and cared for me" (tr. Lattimore:7.255-6)<sup>63</sup> – as is Ayesha's love for Leo/ Kallikrates. Ayesha has hoarded the preserved corpse of Kallikrates for over two thousand years, and resorts to cold-blooded murder when she kills her rival, the Amahagger maiden, with whom Leo has established a relationship. Additionally both Calypso and Ayesha are more or less immortal – Ayesha does not enjoy full immortality but rather astonishing longevity – a gift which they offer to their love interests. In the case of Odysseus, he rejects the gift and is eventually allowed to leave the island, whereas Leo chooses not to enter the pillar of fire after it had destroyed Ayesha. Further similarities include their habitats as they are both depicted as

<sup>62</sup> —It was unhappy I alone whom my destiny brought here/ to her hearth, when Zeus with a gathered cast of the shining lightning/ shattered my fast ship midway on the wine-blue water./ There all the rest of my excellent companions perished./but I clutching in my arms the keel of the oarswept vessel./ was carried for nine days, and on the tenth in black night/ the gods brought me to the island Ogygia"(tr. R. Lattimore: 7.248-54).

αὐτὸς ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ δούρειῳ ἔθροισι καὶ ἡγάγετο δαίμονας/ νῆας, ἐπεὶ κεν ἤλθῃς ζῆλον ἀξιοῦσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ Ζεῦς οὐδέ τίς ἐστιν ἄλλος ἐλπίσσειν ἄλλοις/ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς ἐν τῷ δούρειῳ ἔθροισι καὶ ἡγάγετο δαίμονας/ νῆας, ἐπεὶ κεν ἤλθῃς ζῆλον ἀξιοῦσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ Ζεῦς οὐδέ τίς ἐστιν ἄλλος ἐλπίσσειν ἄλλοις" (7.248-254).

<sup>63</sup> —ἦ καὶ ἰαβὼν ὕψα/ ἐλδοπῆσοσ ἐθίειν ἦε θάϊ ἐξῆσφεν" (7.255-6).

living in caves, and also their dress sense, since Calypso and Ayesha are both described as wearing white garments with gold belts and wear veils. Calypso is said to have —mantled herself in a gleaming white robe/fine-woven and delightful, and around her waist she fastened a handsome belt of gold, and on her head was a wimple” (tr. Lattimore:5.230-2)<sup>64</sup>, and, describing Ayesha, Holly states that —about the waist her white kirtle was fastened by a double-beaded snake of solid gold” (Haggard 1958:171). Lastly, Calypso’s name which comes from the Greek word *κάλυπτον*, meaning ‘to cover’ or ‘to hide’, recalls Ayesha’s habit of concealing her form behind her many gauzy layers.

Calypso is not the only character from the *Odyssey* who appears to have informed Haggard’s portrayal of Ayesha, as she also has much in common with the sorceress, Circe. Haggard makes explicit mention of her, when Holly refers to Ayesha as a —modern Circe” (175) who has completely seduced him through her supernatural charms. Ayesha is also referred to on numerous occasions as a sorceress<sup>65</sup>, and is known to be a skilled chemist whose concoction restores the feverish and dying Leo (211). This is also an attribute associated with Circe, for through her knowledge of potions she transforms Odysseus’ men into swine. Interestingly, Job, the servant of Leo and Holly, is given the epithet of pig by both the Amahagger and later Ayesha which may be an allusion to the latter’s Circean nature. Additionally, Leo (whose name means lion in Latin) also earns the title of Lion from the Amahagger, another creature associated with Circe, and an appellation which Ayesha too picks up with an affectionate tone. Circe’s link to lions and other beasts can be seen in a description of her house in the *Odyssey*: —and all about it

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<sup>64</sup> —ἄρη δ’ ἀξγύθεν λ θᾶξνο κέγα ἔλλπην λύκθε, / ιεπηὸλ θαὶ ραξίελ, πεξὶ δὲ δόλελ βάιην ἰμπ/θαὶ ἦλ ρξπζεἰελ, θεθαὶ ἦ δ’ ἐθὺπεξζε θαὺπηξε λ” (5.230-2).

<sup>65</sup> She is referred to by Holly as a —white sorceress living in the heart of an African swamp” (1958:68); Holly later admits that he is —hopelessl in love with this white sorceress” (1958:175); and Leo refers to her as —that awful sorceress” (1958:250).



there were lions, and wolves of the mountains” (tr. Lattimore:10.212).<sup>66</sup> Additionally, many similarities exist between Circe and Calypso, a point which is emphasised by West who mentions that “it is often supposed that Calypso is no more than a doublet of Circe, created for the *Odyssey*” (2014:127), since “the seven years that Odysseus spends with her appear to be an addition of the tale” (*ibid.*).<sup>67</sup> Some of the similarities that are present among the women are: their divine nature; their detainment of Odysseus - whom they are both in love with; and lastly, the descriptions of their matching garments<sup>68</sup> which are described verbatim, with the exception of a single word, using the same formulaic phrase. Furthermore, all three of these features correspond to aspects of Ayesha.

The last figure with whom Ayesha shares a few features is the Sibyl of Virgil’s *Aeneid VI*, who was discussed in the previous chapter with reference to the character Gagool from *King Solomon’s Mines*. The associations between Ayesha and the Sibyl, while not quite as extensive as those that exist between the latter and Gagool, are far more explicit in reference. They are applied to a very similar scenario which then lends credit to the argument made in Chapter Two by showing that Haggard was familiar with Aeneas’ journey to the underworld. When Ayesha reveals the body of Kallikrates to the three men, and the living Leo confronts his ancient and dead doppelgänger, Holly observes that she “resembled an inspired Sibyl rather than a woman” (193). Perhaps this has something to do with Virgil’s representation of the Sibyl as figure who facilitates contact between the living and the dead, which mirrors the function that Ayesha is

<sup>66</sup> “ἄκθῃ δὲ κηλι ὑθνηῖζαλ ὀξέζηεξνηῖδὲ ἰέ οντες,”(10.212).

<sup>67</sup> In his chapter “The Poem in the Making” from *The Making of the Odyssey* (2014), West suggests that the *Odyssey* was composed by someone other than Homer, and that “it is the product of a sustained effort to create a major epic, approaching the *Iliad* in length, stabilised in written form as the *Iliad* had been” (2014:92). It is further argued that the Calypso episode, amongst several others, appears to be an addition to the “first embryonic *Odyssey*, from which, over perhaps a few decades, one or more poets [...] developed their own variant *Odysseys*” (*ibid.*).

<sup>68</sup> Circe is described as wearing “a gleaming white robe fine-woven and delightful, and around her waist she fastened a handsome belt of gold, and on her head was a wimple (10.543-5).

“ἄτη δ’ ἀξγύθενλ θᾶξνο κέγα [ἔλλπην λύκθε] ,/ιεη ἠὸλ θαὶ ραξίελ, πεξὶ δὲ δώλελ βάιηη ἰμπ/θαὶ ἠλ ρξπξείε λ, θεθαὶ ἠ δ’ ἐπέζεθ ε θαύπηξε λ” (10.543-5)

performing. Like Gagool in *King Solomon's Mines*, Ayesha also leads the men on a journey, packed with katabatic associations, to the pillar of fire where she intends for Leo to bathe in the life-giving flames and acquire quasi-immortality.

The descriptions of the topography and the general atmosphere that accompany the journey have all the trappings of a *katabasis*, and it is Ayesha who fearlessly guides the men towards their destination. In order to reach the flames, located within a volcano, the men must climb through a cave mouth on the side of the mountain and contend with gale-force winds while bridging a chasm with unsteady plank. Haggard evokes images of the Classical underworld transparently in order to provide the scene with an air of nightmarish terror. The darkness is highlighted by Holly's reference to "Stygian Gloom" (280), the men are compared to "lost-souls in the depths of Hades" (292), and the acoustics likened to the "wild storm-voices of that Tartarus" (308). Like the characters of Foulata and Gagool, both Ayesha and Job, who has died of fright, perish, and are thus suggestive of the sacrificial figures discussed in Chapter Two, that accompany a successful *katabasis*. The ghostly and gloomy mood of the journey may initially seem to contradict the idea of the group's journey into the mountain in search of the life giving properties of the pillar of flames, however, its macabre ambiance and perilous topography effectively establishes a sense of danger and prefigures its unhappy outcome.

In addition to the group's descent into the mountain, their movement into Kôr can also be seen as katabatic as, when the men are first lead into Kôr, they are described as "passing through a rocky defile of a lava formation with precipitous sides" (99). This journey seems to correspond quite well with the passage of the men in *King Solomon's Mines* through Sheba's Breasts and into Kukuaneland – a site of alterity and spectacular events. This is further emphasised by Etherington who suggests that: "[t]he rocky defile is often used by Haggard to mark where

fantastic things happen [and in] *King Solomon's Mines* it is a mountain pass that opens the way to Kukuanaaland" (1991:218). The katabatic aspect of the men's journey into Kôr is further underscored by the realm's chthonic nature. The whole atmosphere of Kôr is strongly linked to the idea of death as Monsman notes: —a cold, ghostly, passionless wasteland" (2009:3). Kôr is more or less a ghost-town whose ancient inhabitants perished millennia ago, and the presence of the countless corpses underscores its connection to death, presenting the city as a necropolis. What is more, the men reach Kôr travelling in a westerly direction, and according to Holtmark: —[s]ince antiquity the underworld has been almost always located toward the west" (2001:35), owing perhaps to the setting sun and its consequent association with death and darkness.

In concluding the discussion, this chapter has set out to demonstrate how Haggard drew from an extensive range of sources in his treatment of the lost city theme in *She*. These include two African sources such as the mysterious figure of Modjadji, a rain queen of the Balobedu tribe and the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, whose influence Haggard was reluctant to disclose. Their many parallels to Haggard's novel, as highlighted in this chapter, have hopefully shown the likelihood of their link to *She*. Furthermore, this chapter explored the influence of two civilizations on the novel: the legendary city of Atlantis and the historical civilization of Ancient Egypt. Haggard's use of the Atlantis motive not only showed parallels to two ancient texts from Plato, the *Timaeus* and the *Critias*, but also illustrated several similarities between Haggard's portrayal of ancient Kôr and Ignatius Donnelly's theories of Atlantis in the late nineteenth century. Haggard's use of Ancient Egyptian motifs was shown in his depiction of the architecture and the practises of the ancient citizens of Kôr, such as his description of a temple and presence of mummies, respectively. Lastly, Haggard's use of ancient literature was explored in relation to the similarities in plot between *She* and an Egyptian ghost-story – the "First Setne".

Additionally, the role of ancient epic was suggested as influence for the character of Ayesha, whose likeness to figures such as Calypso and Circe, from Homer's *Odyssey*, and the Sibyl, from Virgil's *Aeneid*, was established on various levels.

## Chapter Four: *Elissa*

While not strictly a lost city novel in the same sense as *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, *Elissa* (1898) also tackles the theme of ancient and fallen southern African kingdoms, albeit from a different temporal perspective. Available serially in *The Long Bow* in 1898 and later, as a whole, in collections such as *Black Heart and White Heart, and Other Stories* (1900), *Elissa* is a fictitious and vastly speculative attempt by Haggard to depict the fall of Great Zimbabwe. Thus, in *Elissa*, the exploration of the lost city theme diverges from the approach taken in both *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* in two fundamentally different ways. Firstly, this work of historical-fiction relates the city's demise from the position of its ancient inhabitants. This differs from *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* in which a lost and ancient ruined city is discovered respectively by a party of intrepid English explorers, who attempt to reconstruct its history from available archaeological evidence and oral accounts by the contemporary inhabitants who now occupy the area. Secondly, in *Elissa*, Haggard explicitly identifies the city, Zimboe, with Great Zimbabwe, unlike the previous two works, whose relationship to the ancient stonewalled kingdom is more vague yet still traceable. Drawing on archaeological research available to Haggard, part of this chapter will attempt to establish the extent to which the ruins informed his novel. Continuing with this theme, the discussion will then consider *Elissa's* position within the debates around the ruins and show how the theory of a white-built Great Zimbabwe not only helped to explain the presence of these remarkable ruins in sub-Saharan Africa, but also lent a hand in validating a British presence in the area. The larger part of the chapter will explore in what way *Elissa*, like *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, also draws material from Classical sources, but where it differs, however, is with regard to the nature of its reception.

Unlike the other two novels, *Elissa*'s use of Classical sources can be characterised not so much as a patchwork of Classical material but rather as a transplantation of an ancient narrative, two in this case, a type of reception which, as Hardwick suggests, means: "to take a text or image into another context and allow it to develop" (2003:10). In the case of *Elissa*, this chapter will argue that a sizeable chunk of the novel is modelled on the romance between the Carthaginian Queen, Dido, and the Trojan hero, Aeneas, as it appears in Virgil's *Aeneid Book IV*, a narrative which Haggard transplants from its ancient epic context into a Victorian narrative set in a Phoenician occupied Great Zimbabwe. Additionally, the chapter will also suggest that the novel bares traces of an account by the ancient historian Justin in the *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus*. In this account Justin offers information of the historical figure of Dido which differs quite substantially from Virgil's work and appears to contribute additional aspects to Haggard's portrayal of events in *Elissa*. This chapter will thus demonstrate that Virgil and Justin both appear to have played a fundamental role in Haggard's speculative portrayal of the events that caused the fall of Great Zimbabwe.

In contrast to *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, arguably two of Haggard's most enduring and popular works, *Elissa* did not enjoy the same fortune, which is illustrated by Patricia Murphy who refers to the work as "an almost unknown Haggard text" (1999:748). Information regarding the work and its public reception are quite scarce and no mention of it appears in his autobiography. A review of the book in an Australian newspaper does, however, offer a mixed response, stating that: "[t]he story is interesting" (*The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 1900:2) but notes that: "there is a modernity in Mr. Haggard's style, which tends to destroy the illusion that we are reading of the days of three thousand years ago" (*ibid.*). In the introductory section of the work, Haggard informs the reader that *Elissa* is:

an attempt difficult enough owing to the scantiness of material left to us by time, to recreate the life of the ancient Phoenician Zimbabwe, whose ruins still stand in Rhodesia, and, with the addition of a necessary love story, to suggest circumstances such as might have brought about or accompanied its fall at the hands of the surrounding savage tribes. (2008:n.p.).<sup>69</sup>

To offer a brief overview of the plot, this “necessary love story” (*ibid.*) refers to the romance between Prince Aziel, a grandchild of King Solomon, and Elissa, a priestess of the goddess Baaltis and the daughter of the governor of Phoenician Zimboe (Zimbabwe) which is once referred to as the land of Ophir. Here Haggard picks up on the same legend used in *King Solomon’s Mines*, concerning “the treasures which those old Jewish or Phoenician adventurers used to extract from a country long since lapsed into the darkest barbarism” (1962:20), when he makes brief references to the biblical monarch, Solomon, and the commercial interests of Hiram<sup>70</sup>, King of Tyre in *Elissa*. The connection of these two men to each other and to Ophir can be observed in a passage from *1 Kings* 9:27-28, which relates that together these men sent out merchants to gather gold from Ophir which Haggard places in Zimboe (Zimbabwe).

Aziel, a new visitor in Zimboe, meets Elissa when he rescues her from “black giant” (2008:8), seeking to “take [her] away to be his slave” (12). Aziel and Elissa form an instant connection, but, from the outset their romance is fraught with challenges, initially as the result of religious differences since Aziel is a Hebrew and strongly opposes Elissa’s Phoenician deities and her religious rites. Additionally, Elissa has already attracted the attention of Ithobal, a local king of both Phoenician and indigenous heritage, who serves unambiguously as the novel’s

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<sup>69</sup> The edition of *Elissa* referenced in this chapter does not provide page numbers for its front matter which includes three pages of introductory notes by Haggard.

<sup>70</sup> A character named Metem is said to be “Phoenician merchant, much trusted by Hiram, the King of Tyre, who had made him captain of the merchandise of this expedition” (2008:3).

antagonist. Peace and diplomacy between the Phoenician settlers and the local inhabitants depend entirely on Ithobal's discretion, an arrangement which is compromised by Elissa's persistent rejection of the king. The addition of a rival, Aziel, exacerbates Ithobal's anger and impatience, and he now threatens to attack the settlement since it is clear that nothing will convince Elissa to accept his proposal. Since this chapter deals for the most part with Haggard's appropriation of Virgil's *Aeneid Book IV* and Justin's historical account of Dido, further aspects of the plot will be revealed accordingly.

In establishing the novel's environment, Haggard draws many details from archaeological research available at the time. This is particularly noticeable in his decision to portray the city as a Phoenician settlement, a leading theory at the time, and can also be observed in his many references to iconic landmarks as well as his description of Zimbabwe's residents and their religious practices. While Haggard only visited Great Zimbabwe in 1914, his familiarity with the archaeological development in the area is well attested to in the preface he supplied for Alexander Wilmot's *Monomotapa<sup>71</sup>, Its Monuments, and its History from the most Ancient Times to the Present Century* (1896). Here Haggard highlights some of the leading observations concerning the ruins when he refers to notable figures and their contributions, such as Karl Mauch who — discovered the fortress-temple of Zimbabwe, that now, as in the time of the early Portuguese, was said to be nothing less than the site of one of the ancient Ophirs” (1896:xiv) and Theodore Bent<sup>72</sup> who — proved to the satisfaction of most archaeologists that they [the ruins] are undoubtedly of Phoenician origin” (1896:xv). These points which Haggard outlines, among others, in Wilmot's preface correspond to several features present in *Elissa* and, as a result, are

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<sup>71</sup> Monomotapa was a Kingdom in the region now associated with Zimbabwe.

<sup>72</sup> James Theodore Bent explored the ruins along with his wife in 1891 and published his findings in *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* (1892).



useful in that they point to a few of the likely sources from which he derived some of the material for his work. Bent's work, *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* (1892), features many detailed illustrations and ground plans of the various ruins, which may have facilitated Haggard's depiction of the city and its structures. The following discussion does not claim to be an exhaustive attempt to demonstrate Haggard's use of archaeological material in his novel, as to do so would be both irrelevant and beyond the scope of this study. Instead, however, it will flag several of the many features found in *Elissa* which demonstrate the extent to which Haggard utilized archaeological evidence in his depiction of Zimbabwe.

To begin with, Haggard demonstrates his awareness of one of the earliest theories surrounding Great Zimbabwe in a passage which describes a convoy of weary travellers who, approaching Zimbabwe, discern "the walls of their city of rest, of the golden Ophir of the bible" (2008:1). Reference to the legendary biblical city, as demonstrated in Chapter Two, was a major component in *King Solomon's Mines*, but only receives a single mention in *Elissa*. The emphasis is rather placed on Zimbabwe's Phoenician character and its involvement in extensive trade and gold-mining which corroborates well with previously mentioned account of Ophir found in *1 Kings* 10. In *Elissa*, these two activities are fundamental to Zimbabwe's wealth and existence which is demonstrated by Ithobal when he demands of the Phoenician governor, Sakon, that: "the tribute which you pay to me for the use of the mines of gold shall henceforth be doubled [...] and that you cease to enslave the natives of the land to labour in your service" (24). Additionally, gold features extensively throughout the novel appearing regularly as currency and often in form of extravagant jewelry. Haggard was certainly aware of this association with Great Zimbabwe as, in the aforementioned preface, he glosses over material evidence at the site such as crucibles and gold "showing traces of the skill and cunning of civilized jewelers" (Wilmot 1896:xvi). In

addition to highlighting and perhaps embellishing Great Zimbabwe's association with gold, Haggard makes many references to its unusual architecture, a feature which convinced many archaeologists and researchers of its now refuted connection to Phoenicia.

Observing the city, Aziel describes its layout quite extensively, noting: ~~“the~~ “the mighty battlements of the temple” (Haggard 2008:29) and how ~~“at~~ “at intervals on its flat-topped walls stood towers of observation, alternating with pointed monoliths of granite and soapstone columns supporting vultures, rudely carved emblems of Baaltis” (*ibid.*). This description corresponds neatly with an account of the ruins supplied by Haggard in Wilmot's preface, where he notes that: ~~“there~~ “there are massive and familiar Phoenician walls, [and] there the sacred birds, figured, however, not as the dove of Cyprus but as the vulture of her Sidonian representative, Astarte” (1896:xvi). Concerning Aziel's description, Haggard has likely drawn inspiration from the circular ruins, or rather the Great Enclosure (Figure Six and Seven) situated on a plain, but conflates this description with the discovery of the soapstone birds on walls at the nearby Zimbabwe Hill (Figure Eight). Early archaeologists like Bent associated these birds with the vulture of the deity Astarte that Haggard identifies with ~~“the~~ “the goddess of the Phoenicians, who in different countries passed by the various names of Astarte, or Ashtoreth, or Baaltis [...] who was at once the personification of the moon and the emblem of fertility”. (2008:7). These famous soapstone birds have now been identified as the eagles or raptors, which Thomas Huffman speculates: ~~“were~~ “were a metaphor for the spiritual duties of sacred leadership: the intercessory role of royal ancestors” (1996:136).

The temple observed by Aziel features again more prominently in the novel when he is invited to attend a ceremony within the building. This account offers many telltale signs of Haggard's debt to archaeological findings as several recognizable features are mentioned which

correspond to descriptions of the Great Enclosure offered by Bent. Aziel and his companions are said to move “[i]n single file, for the passages were too narrow to allow of any other means of progression” (Haggard 2008:35) and to “[thru] the torturous and mazy paths of the great building, passing between huge walls built of granite blocks laid without mortar, till at length they reached a large open space” (*ibid.*). A close counterpart to this arrangement can be found in Bent’s description of the Great Enclosure in which he refers to the “[labyrinthine character of the interior” (1969:110) and “[a long narrow passage leading...to the sacred enclosure, so narrow in parts, that two people cannot walk abreast” (*ibid.*). Haggard’s passage, as is consistent with Bent’s, leads to Great Zimbabwe’s iconic towers (Figure Nine): “[t]he larger of which measured thirty feet in height” (2008:35) and “[i]n front of them was a platform surmounted by a stone altar” (*ibid.*). Bent offers a similar description of these structures which are represented by points D, E, and F in the plan (Figure Eight) he supplies in his work. Many other architectural features described in the archaeological findings mentioned in works like Bent’s can also be found in *Elissa*, such as a reference to the walls on Zimbabwe Hill, however, the aforementioned examples have hopefully demonstrated sufficiently the Haggard’s meticulous attention to archaeological detail.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the idea that Africans had been responsible for the impressive structures at Great Zimbabwe posed a fundamental problem for Europeans like Haggard who considered Africans as intellectually inferior to whites. Theories such as those endorsed by figures like Bent appealed to the racist attitudes of Europeans as they could provide ostensibly more rational explanations for the appearance of such ruins in southern Africa. According to Duesterberg, texts like *Elissa* “[s]how how the white imperialists dealt with this unsettling realization by negating an indigenous history for Great Zimbabwe and constructing a

white history by spinning their own story around the ruins” (2015:158). In addition to providing comfort to the shaken beliefs of Europeans, the theory that the ruins had been built by Mediterranean colonizing powers, such as the Phoenicians, helped to establish an ancient precedent for Britain’s colonial endeavors. Tangri suggests that the “[c]olonization of Rhodesia, and subjugation of the Bantu, could be justified on the grounds that the British were repatriating former ‘white’ territory and re-establishing civilization there” (1990:295) and further argues that it was “[p]ossibly with this aim in mind, [that] Rhodes’ British South Africa Company sponsored a number of people to excavate Rhodesian ruins and to report on their results” (*ibid.*).<sup>73</sup> Both Bent and Wilmot had been commissioned by Rhodes to conduct research on the ruins and believed, like many, that they had found conclusive evidence to support these theories.

Bent believed that the evidence he had unearthed proved —that the authors of these ruins were a northern race coming from Arabia, a race which spread more extensively over the world than we have at present any conception of, a race closely akin to the Phoenician and the Egyptian, strongly commercial, and eventually developing into the more civilised races of the ancient world” (1969:xvii-xviii). Bent’s archaeological work, as demonstrated earlier, had a great influence on *Elissa*, which in turn played a role, according to Tangri, in popularising the myth of Great Zimbabwe (1990:296). Although Haggard was reluctant to connect his earlier two lost city narratives, *King Solomon’s Mines* and *She*, to the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, his contemporary readership was keen to establish a link. This can be seen when, during his visit to the site in 1914, the archaeologist Richard Hall pointed out to Haggard that two nearby hills —had been named Sheba’s Breasts, and the native path connecting a chain of ancient forts called Allan

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<sup>73</sup> Here Tangri refers to controversial figure of Cecil Rhodes, a shrewd and ambitious businessman whose establishment of the British South Africa Company was responsible for the colonisation of Zimbabwe and securing access to mineral wealth in the interests of Britain.

Quatermain's road" (1976:231), both being references to *King Solomon's Mines*. Amusingly, Haggard had the opinion that Hall —wasmuch aggrieved with me because he said I was responsible for various false ideas about Zimbabwe" (*ibid.*). While this is not necessarily the case with *Elissa*, the anecdote does demonstrate the influence which Haggard's imaginative works had in shaping the public's ideas about Zimbabwe.

As demonstrated above, the erroneous realisation that Great Zimbabwe had once been a Phoenician colony provided an impetus for British colonisers to embark on a similar venture of colonisation and mineral exploitation. The positive implications of this were felt by Haggard who expressed a desire to see Britain reinstate the enterprising legacy of Phoenicians in the area, stating that —tis legitimate to hope, it seems probable even, that in centuries to come a town will once more nestle beneath these grey and ancient ruins" (Wilmot 1896:311). While identifying with the creators of the ruins could produce feelings of optimism, as demonstrated by Haggard's cheerful visions for the future, this connection also had the potential to foreshadow a more startling scenario. This view is demonstrated by Duesterberg who suggests that: —rather than having the desired comforting effect on the colonisers, however, this identification with the —other' in the form of the ruins culminated in an over-identification with them and all they represented, eventually culminating in fears of degeneration and doom" (2015:158-9). This is not just true of *Elissa*, but his pessimism can also be discerned in works like *King Solomon's Mines* and in *She*, where, as noted in Chapter Three, Ayesha remarks that even the greatest civilizations like Kôr cannot endure forever. Thus, while identification with the ruins and their ancient inhabitants provided a great incentive for British colonial objectives, their analogous positions also demonstrated that Britain's empire might someday be subject to the same fate.

To refer again to Wilmot's preface, Haggard may reveal an incentive for writing *Elissa* when he notes —the crumbling temple of Zimbabwe, the scene of so much forgotten history and of so many unwritten tragedies” (1896:xxiii). This remark seems to foreshadow his attempts, in a highly speculative way, to establish a plausible history for Great Zimbabwe and to imagine a tragedy befitting the mysterious and romantic mood of the ruins. To tell his story Haggard appears to have turned to Virgil's *Aeneid IV*, which narrates the tragic events surrounding the romance between the Trojan hero Aeneas and Dido, the Carthaginian Queen, and her subsequent suicide following his departure. The meeting of the characters is recounted earlier in the *Aeneid I*, which narrates Aeneas' arrival in Carthage and explains how Dido came to found the city. In an exchange with his mother Venus, Aeneas is told that Dido had fled the Phoenician city of Tyre after her husband, Sychaeus, was murdered by her brother, Pygmalion, the King of Tyre, who desired his riches. Dido eventually reached the coast of Libya with a group of followers and, through her cunning, was able to purchase a large piece of land where she established a thriving city (1.343-68).

As noted in Chapter One, Haggard, possessing a decent knowledge of Latin, admitted to reading —Virgil's so ill” (Haggard 1926:204) and could very well have read *Aeneid IV* in the original Latin. To date, Hilton appears to be the only scholar to have made a connection between Virgil's narrative and *Elissa*, which he does briefly, noting that —the narrative clearly follows the main lines of the Dido and Aeneas story in Vergil's *Aeneid* (Aziel = Aeneas, Elissa = Dido, Ithobal = Iarbas)” (2011:120). That Hilton seems to be the only scholar to have observed the connection between Haggard's *Elissa* and Virgil's, attests to the lack of attention that Haggard has received within Classical scholarship and Reception Studies in particular. This is especially noteworthy given that it is quite well known amongst classicists that *Elissa* is an alternate name

for Dido. In addition to Virgil's two narratives, Haggard's novel contains a few parallels to the account of the foundation of Carthage by Dido provided by Justin in Book 18.3-6 of his *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus*. Justin's description of events corresponds to a large extent with Virgil's poem concerning Dido's flight from Tyre and the foundation story of Carthage. The two accounts differ in that Justin's version contains no reference to Aeneas and part of his account is concerned with Dido's conflict with a neighbouring King, the formidable Hiabas (Iarbas), only a secondary figure in the *Aeneid IV*, who promises to attack her city unless she agrees to marry him. Thus, while the romance between Aziel and Elissa appears to be informed by Virgil's *Aeneid IV*, the tension between Elissa and King Ithobal may have its roots in Justin's account. The following discussion will thus attempt to elaborate on these observations and illustrate the extent to which Haggard appears to use these Classical narratives as a model. Aspects such as plot and characterisation will be considered while also taking into account how Haggard adjusts the original plot to suits its new narrative environment.

The first explicit indication of a link between the two texts is Haggard's decision to name his eponymous heroine 'Elissa', the Phoenician name given to Dido. Apart from their names, however, the two women share a deeper connection in terms of their heritage, since they both can be linked to important Phoenician cities but are residents in African territories. Dido is said to have come from Tyre, which she later flees to escape her villainous brother, Pygmalion, while Elissa claims ties to Sidon, a city just north of Tyre, when she states that she "is of the blood of the Sidonians" (Haggard 2008:12). Furthermore they both hold high-ranking positions within their society as Dido is Carthage's queen and Elissa is the daughter of Zimboe's governor. Elissa's position in society is further elevated when, having served a priestess to a Phoenician goddess, she later earns the position of lady Baaltis, whom the citizens of Zimboe "revere as the

incarnation of that goddess upon earth” (21). As will be illustrated further along, Phoenician religion plays a large role in the novel, and Elissa’s new position as lady Baaltis is an important aspect of the narrative. Although Aziel’s link to Aeneas is not quite as strong as the one between the two women, several similarities can be observed. Aziel is said to be a “—grandson of Solomon, and born of a royal mother, a princess of Egypt” (2), while Aeneas also boasts a proud lineage as the son of a Dardanian prince, Anchises, and Aphrodite. Both men are also travellers in a foreign land yet their objectives are entirely different. Aeneas, leaving the fallen city of Troy, has been directed by the gods to found a new city in Italy, but following a violent storm he lands in Carthage where he remains for some time. Aziel on the other hand has left his home under the instructions of his uncle as a result of his involvement in an awkward love affair. Ithobal completes the love triangle in Haggard’s historical fiction and has a counterpart in Virgil’s Iarbas and, to a larger extent, in Justin’s Hiarbus. Like Virgil’s Iarbas, Ithobal is a powerful African king who bitterly resents Elissa’s disinterest in his marriage proposal and later her attachment to the stranger, Aziel. Furthermore Ithobal’s vindictive threat to attack Zimboe resembles Justin’s account of Hiarbas, who is a far more aggressive character than Virgil’s rendition of the African king.

While the plot of *Elissa* does roughly follow the same outline as the *Aeneid IV*, the relationship between Aziel and Elissa is characterised quite differently. The romance between Aeneas and Dido appears to involve emotional and physical aspects, which is evident from Dido’s reference to “the bed they knew by heart” (4.805 tr. Fagles)<sup>74</sup>. In contrast, the relationship described by Haggard is far more innocent and avoids physical intimacy altogether. Elissa and Aziel’s attachment is portrayed in highly sentimental terms and seems to transcend any earthly

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<sup>74</sup> —atque cubile/ conspexit” (4.648-9).



passions. This is shown by Aziel's understanding of his attraction to Elissa as the reader is told that: —[s]omething beyond the flesh and its works and attributes drew him towards this woman, something that he could neither understand nor define” (Haggard 2008:62). Sadly, however, as in the case of Aeneas and Dido, their relationship is frustrated by many internal and external problems, such as Aziel's disdain for Elissa's —abominable creed” (31). Aziel, a Hebrew, is a monotheist and worships the Judaic god Jehovah. His devotion to his religion is a defining characteristic and complicates his feelings towards Elissa as to establish any relationship with her would be morally compromising. Aziel's ambivalent feelings for Elissa are swayed by the religious zealot, Issachar, who is concerned for Aziel's soul and acts as a major antagonist to their relationship, much like the gods in *Aeneid IV* who breakup the relationship between Dido and Aeneas by demanding that he fulfils his duty and leaves Carthage, thereby forsaking Dido.

Aziel expresses his discomfort with Elissa's religion when they first meet in the sacred grove in which Elissa was accosted while performing prayers to Baaltis. According to George Rawlinson's *History of Phoenicia* (1889), a text which appeared not long before *Elissa*, Baaltis (or Beltis) seems to have been associated with Ashtoreth (also Astarte), a —great nature-goddess, the Magna Mater, regent of the stars, queen of heaven, giver of life, and source of woman's fecundity” (1889:327), who —hada lunar aspect, being pictured with horns upon her head representative of the lunar crescent” (*ibid.*).<sup>75</sup> While there is no concrete evidence to suggest that Haggard was familiar with this text, as in the case of Bent's work on Zimbabwe, the research does correspond well to Haggard's understanding of Baaltis and may serve as an example of

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<sup>75</sup> Haggard also makes a reference to Astarte in *King Solomon's Mines* when describing the female figure who appears as one of the three colossi, \_the Silent Ones', at the entrance to the mines. Sir Henry, who had —aken a high degree in classics at college” (1962:194), speculates on her origins noting that: —Ashtoreth of the Hebrews was the Astarte of the Phoenicians, who were the great traders of Solomon's time. Astarte, who afterwards became the Aphrodite of the Greeks, was represented with horns like the half-moon, and there on the brow of the figure are distinct horns (*ibid.*).

what was known about Phoenician religion at the time. Haggard certainly places great emphasis on Baaltis' lunar aspect, a motif which appears regularly throughout the novel as, for example the priestesses, including Elissa, are in one scene described as wearing —upon their heads a gauze-like veil that fell to the knees, and was held in place by a golden fillet surmounted with the symbol of a *crescent moon*” (2008:30, own emphasis). Aziel demonstrates his inner-conflict regarding Elissa when he admits to her that he was moved by her prayers but states that: “I grieve that it should have been offered to one whom I hold to be demon” (12). Aziel's hostile feelings towards Elissa's religious practices escalate when he attends a ceremony at which she is attending as a priestess. To his great dismay, it revealed that an infant is about to be sacrificed to promote the recovery of the Lady Baaltis, whom Elissa later replaces.

The contested practise of child sacrifice associated with Carthage may have informed Haggard's portrayal of the religious rites performed by the citizens of Zimboe. In Wilmot's preface, Haggard refers to the temple in Great Zimbabwe where he speculated that its inhabitants —[celebrated] their cruel and licentious rights” (1896:xv). In *Elissa*, this sinister aspect of religion is characterised by the appearance of many allusions to child sacrifice which is a readily accepted part of religion by the citizens of Zimboe and Aziel's companion, Metem, a Phoenician trader. Metem justifies the practise to Aziel in the following exchange: —[d] I not in bygone years pass the first son of my manhood through the fire to Baal-Sidon? Nay, shrink not from me; it cost me dear, but my fortune was at stake [...]. Know you not, Prince, that the gods must have the gifts of the best, gifts of blood and virtue, or they will curse us and torment us?” (Haggard 2008:4). Several ancient authors have commented on this phenomenon such as Diodorus Siculus (90-30 BCE), who mentions that: —in former times they had been accustomed to sacrifice to this god the noblest of their sons, but more recently, secretly buying and nurturing children, they had

sent these to the sacrifice” (tr. Geer 20.14.4).<sup>76</sup> Plutarch (45-130 CE) provides a similar account in his *Moralia*, and comments that: —wht full knowledge and understanding [the Carthaginians] themselves offered up their own children, and those who had no children would buy little ones from poor people and cut their throats as if they were so many lambs or young birds; meanwhile the mother stood by without a tear or moan” (tr. Babbitt:13).<sup>77</sup> Like the depictions of the Carthaginian sacrifices provided by Plutarch, the citizens of Zimboe react to the custom similarly. Haggard, however, takes matters a step further when he portrays the disappointment of the congregation after Elissa intervenes and stops the ritual, explaining that —the Phoenicians loved these horrible spectacles, which were not, however, commonly celebrated by daylight, and in the presence of people” (2008:41).

Elissa’s ties to Phoenician religion become deeply problematic for Aziel, who openly rejects her after the spectacle and accuses her of being —a murderess of children”, on account of her ostensible complicity in the events, an assumption which Elissa later tries to refute to no avail. Following this event Elissa starts to question her faith and demonstrates its ambiguous and conflicting aspects, as —nely invocations to the goddess beneath the light of the moon appealed to her [...] but the outward ceremonies of her faith, or the more secret and darker of them, of which in practice she knew little, were already an abomination in her eyes” (43). Furthermore Aziel’s faith begins to attract Elissa, especially the idea of a god who does not demand cruel rites and human sacrifice. While Elissa and Aziel are eventually reconciled, her election as lady Baaltis puts further strain on their romance as her husband would automatically assume the title of Shadid, a religious office that places him as the high-priest of El, Baaltis’

<sup>76</sup> —θαῖ ὄζνλ ἐλ ηῖο ἐκπζνζ ζελ ρξόλνηοζύνληεο ηνύηω ηῶ ζεῶ ηῶλ πῖῶλ ηνῦο θξαηῖζηνπο ὕζηεζνλ ὠλνῦκελνηη ἰάζζα παῖδαο θαὶ ζξέξα ληρο ἔπεκπνλ ἐπὶ ηῆλ ζπζῖαλ: θαὶ δεηῖζεσο γελνκέεο εὐξέζε ζάλ ηηρο ηῶλ θαζηεζπζγεκέλολ ὕπνβνι ηκαῖνηγεγνλότεζ” (Diod.Sic. 20.14.4).

<sup>77</sup> —ἔη ἰεῖδῶεο θαὶ γηγλώζθληεο αὐηνὶ ηὰ αὐηῶλ ηέθλα θαζηεξέζπνλ, νὶ δ’ ἄηεθλνηη παζὰ ηῶλ πελήηολ ὠλνῦκελνηη παηδῖα θαπζῖθ αδνλ θαζάπεξ ἄξλαο ἠ λενζζ νῦο, Δπαζεηηζῖηθε δ ἠ κῖηεξ ἄηεγθην θα ἄζηέλαθην (117 c-d).

male counterpart. This arrangement was orchestrated by external forces who hoped to prevent Elissa's suitor, the jealous king Ithobal, from attacking the city by discouraging a more serious relationship developing between Elissa and Aziel, as he would need to "announce his own religion – a thing which no Jew would do" (73).

Contrary to the expectations of those involved in the plot, Aziel does later accept the office and "abjure his faith at the price of his own soul" (110) in order to save Elissa, who, as lady Baaltis, had violated her religious code when she was seen consorting with Aziel, a man who was not her husband.<sup>78</sup> Had Aziel refused the religious office Elissa would have been found guilty of illicitly consorting with a man to whom she was not married and thrown off a cliff to atone for her actions. On account of these actions, Aziel stands in sharp contrast to Aeneas whose sense of duty towards the gods and his city surpassed his own romantic interests and devotion to Dido. Aziel, however, selflessly offers his soul in payment for Elissa's life, a price he has previously most unwilling to pay. Aziel's earlier reluctance to compromise his soul can be seen in an encounter where he informs Elissa earlier that: "I will give all I have, even to my life, to protect you from the vile fate you dread—yes, all I have—except my soul." (22). This statement reveals just how great a sacrifice Aziel is willing to make for Elissa. In his representation of the "eternal and predestined loves of Aziel and Elissa" (144), Haggard may have been informed by his own unrealistic and highly sentimental view of love and his enduring passion, mentioned in Chapter Three, for the woman who jilted him in his youth. According to Stiebel, this disappointing experience may have contributed to Haggard's portrayal of love in his

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<sup>78</sup> An explanation for this custom is offered in two places in the novel. Firstly, "[a]ccording to religious law, for the lady Baaltis of the day to be found alone with any man meant death to him and her" (2008:105). Secondly, it is mentioned that "[t]he reason of this severity was that she was supposed to represent the goddess and her husband, the Shadid, a god, so that any questionable behaviour on her part became an insult to the most powerful divinities of Heaven, which could only be atoned by the death of their unworthy incarnations" (2008:73).

novels as: “[t]he theme of thwarted, eternal love was repeated by Haggard’s fiction, bearing testimony to his frustrated and idealised love” (2001a:24).

In addition to their religious differences, a challenge to their relationship which is eventually overcome, is the figure of Ithobal who acts as a far greater hurdle to their happiness. Ithobal, a local King, is the “the son of a native African queen, or chieftainess, and a noble Phoenician” (Haggard 2008:16), and serves as the novel’s clear-cut villain who is given no morally redeeming qualities. Ithobal’s relentless pursuit of Elissa poses not only a threat to her romance with Aziel but, more seriously, comprises the safety of the entire city since the king has promised to attack if his demands are not met. Ithobal finds his counterpart in Virgil’s African king, Iarbas, Dido’s suitor and a son of —an African nymph whom Jove [Hammon] had raped” (tr. Fagles:4.248)<sup>79</sup>. Iarbas has expressed his eagerness to marry Dido and, like Ithobal, feels almost entitled to this union since Dido’s city lies in his land: —w~~e~~ tossed her some beach to plow – on my terms – and then she spurned our offer of marriage” (tr. Fagles:4.266-7).<sup>80</sup> Although Iarbas is certainly portrayed as hostile, he is arguably not a villain of the same mould as Ithobal. While his rage is not necessarily justifiable, it is at best understandable. Although the *Aeneid IV* does suggest that Carthage, like Zimboe, is in a dangerous position as a result of aggressive neighbouring tribes<sup>81</sup>, Iarbas does not threaten war as a result of the affair between Dido and Aeneas. Iarbas, is however, responsible somewhat indirectly for their separation. This occurs when news reaches Iarbas about the ardent love-affair between Dido and Aeneas (4.172-197),

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<sup>79</sup> —Hi~~l~~Hammon~~e~~ satus, rapta Garamantide Nympha” (4.198).

<sup>80</sup> —Ferina, quae nostris errans in finibus urbem/ exiguum pretio posuit, cui litus arandum/ cuique loci leges dedimus, conubia nostra/ reppulit” (4.211-5).

<sup>81</sup> Dido’s sister, Anna, suggests that marriage to the Trojan warrior, Aeneas, would be a wise move since Dido has scorned the marriage proposals of neighbouring African lords. She further reminds Dido of the hostile men who surround her city: —On~~e~~ side the Gaetullian cities, fighters matchless in battle, unbridled Numidians – Syrtis, the treacherous Sandbanks. On the other side an endless desert, parched earth where the wild Barcan marauders range at will.”(tr. Fagles:4.51-3).

and, in his anger, he complains to Jupiter and turns his attention to Aeneas who is neglecting his divine mission to found a new Troy in Italy. Mercury is then sent to remind Aeneas of his responsibilities to his people, causing him to leave Carthage in spite of Dido's pleas. Heartbroken at Aeneas' planned departure, but also concerned for her reputation and safety, since her dalliance with Aeneas has incited the anger of her citizens and neighbouring suitors, Dido eventually resorts to suicide (4.663-5).

The same contrast between the characters of Iarbas and Aeneas can also be observed between Ithobal and Aziel. Iarbas holds Aeneas and his appearance with great disdain, as Austin notes, —Iarbas shows all the age-old distrust, jealousy, and inward fear felt by the rough and primitive for a softer and more sophisticated people, while his scorn for Aeneas' dress shows all that suspicion of 'foreign fashions' that an untraveled, insular person might feel" (1979:78). A similar tension is noticeable between Ithobal and Aziel whose contrasting natures are often highlighted. Unlike *Aeneid VI*, in which there is no suggestion that Aeneas and Iarbas ever met one another, Aziel and Ithobal meet on several occasions. Ithobal and Aziel take an instant dislike to one another, initially as a result of a personality clash, but later on account of their common interest in Elissa. Each encounter between the men is marked by tension, quarrelling and mutual derision. Ithobal often mocks Aziel's lineage, perhaps out of his own insecurity, and refers to him as —one of fifty princelets of [Solomon's] line" (Haggard 2008:19). Inverting Iarbas' contempt for Aeneas' sophistication, Haggard underscores the dichotomy between perceived civilization and savagery through Aziel's taunting remarks to Ithobal when for example he states that: —it is the black blood in your veins that causes you to forget courtesy" (2008:27).

Haggard places much emphasis on the theme of race within the novel with a particular stress on the ills of miscegenation. This idea corroborates well Haggard's introductory note to the novel which explains that Zimbabwe (Zimboe) —became weakened by luxury and the mixture of races" (2008:n.p.). Through his characterization of Ithobal, Haggard reveals not so much contempt for Africans but rather his dismissive attitude towards miscegenation. This is also demonstrated by Etherington who points out that: —the deepest dyed villains in his romances are half-castes" (1984:102) and —are portrayed as worse than either of the races that which contributed to their parentage" (*ibid.*). Haggard has no difficulty representing noble and excellent black men such as Ignosi from *King Solomon's Mines*, who is portrayed as Sir Henry's equal. On the other hand, Haggard's representation of the Amahagger, —the bastard brood of the mighty sons of Kôr" (1958:195), quite clearly suggest that their descent was due to their intermingling with local African tribes.

A final point which deserves attention is the striking resemblance between Dido's and Elissa's ultimate fate. As briefly mentioned earlier, according to Virgil's narrative, it is as a result of Aeneas' departure from Carthage that a heartbroken Dido ends her own life by climbing upon a funeral pyre and falling onto a sword (4.642-65).<sup>82</sup> Haggard's heroine Elissa is also given a tragic end after she commits suicide to save Aziel's life and escape marriage to Ithobal who has already destroyed the city of Zimboe. When Elissa hears rumors that, to prevent Ithobal from attacking the city, the citizens of Zimboe are planning to give her up to Ithobal, she resorts to locking herself within the tomb of the former lady Baaltis. Additionally, she has hidden amongst her garments poison and a dagger, and announces her intention to kill herself should anyone

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<sup>82</sup> Lisa Hopkins draws a parallel between Dido and Ayesha of Haggard's *She* and shows that Ayesha too is an African queen who perished in flames for the sake of her lover, stating —lurking behind that story we may well see the shadow of that other narrative of love and adventure in Africa, Virgil's *Aeneid*, in which a traveller from another country, Aeneas, meets Queen Dido. Who first offers him her love, and then when he rejects it and abandons her, burns herself to death" (2004:143)

attempt to seize her. Meanwhile, Ithobal has attacked the city and is holding Aziel and other citizens prisoner, threatening to kill them unless Elissa hands herself over. Elissa agrees to Ithobal's terms, but once Aziel has been released she plunges off a cliff and dies, thus avoiding marriage to Ithobal and buying Aziel's freedom with her own life. Aziel immediately avenges her death by killing Ithobal – the catalyst behind all the misfortune. Elissa's deed can in some ways also be seen to mirror Aziel's earlier sacrifice of his soul for her life, when she was about to be hurled from a cliff. It is thus interesting that the fate from which Aziel saved Elissa was the method of suicide she chose in order to save him. In addition to escaping marriage to Ithobal, Murphy suggests another narrative purpose for Elissa's death, noting that: —Elissa leads the God-fearing male protagonist to “the unpardonable sin of his apostasy” (1999:748), and points out that Aziel's spiritual transgression is later —expiated through her death (*ibid.*). The circumstances which lead Haggard's and Virgil's heroines to suicide are markedly different, however, and an account of Dido recorded by the Justin reveals more similarities between the two women's situations.

Justin's account narrates the background of the historical figure of Dido, whom he calls Elissa, and describes how she left Tyre to found the city of Carthage. For the most part, Justin's version agrees with Virgil's treatment but, as briefly mentioned earlier, he does not make any reference to Aeneas, and is rather concerned with the difficulty between Dido and her determined suitor, Hiarbas. In the work it is mentioned that an African king of the Maxitani, Hiarbas (Iarbas), in a meeting with her deputies, —demanded Elissa in marriage, denouncing war in case of a refusal” (tr. Watson:18.6).<sup>83</sup> Dido realizes that she has very little choice in the matter since she had previously been willing to send one her people to Hiarbas, in compliance with his

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<sup>83</sup> —Elissae nuptias sub belli denuntiatione petit” (18.6).



request —forsome person to teach him and his Africans a more civilized way of life” (tr. Watson:18.6)<sup>84</sup>, a false report invented by her deputies, too nervous to reveal Hiarbas’ real intentions. To refuse him, Dido would be seen to have double standards, thus she cannot expect one of her people to live amongst Hiarbas’s citizens, when she herself is unwilling to do the same thing. The dynamics between Dido and Hiarbas seem to correspond more to Haggard’s portrayal of the events in *Elissa* than those depicted in Virgil’s *Aeneid*. Furthermore, according to Justin, Dido, who is still loyal to her late husband, chooses to avoid this marriage to Hiarbas, declaring that: —shewould go to her husband as they had desired her”, and like Virgil’s ill-fated heroine, climbs a pyre and stabs herself. Ithobal can then be seen to have more in common with Justin’s Hiarbas, who acts as a clear antagonist and is portrayed as aggressive and threatening. Additionally, like Elissa, Justin’s Dido receives a great deal of pressure from her citizens to agree to Hiarbas’ proposal. This motif can be seen in *Elissa*, when some of the citizens of Zimboe conspire to hand the eponymous heroine over to Ithobal, but also earlier, when her father manipulatively reminds her that —shold [the city] fall it will be because of you” (Haggard 2008:44). Thus, Haggard’s portrayal of events appear to borrow important elements from both Virgil’s and Justin’s account of Dido.

This chapter has demonstrated the presence of two spheres of influence in Haggard’s novel: namely late nineteenth century archaeological research conducted at Great Zimbabwe and two Classical Latin-language sources concerning the Carthaginian Queen, Dido. As this chapter has shown, Haggard’s application of the archaeological details associated with Great Zimbabwe, can be seen in his presentation of Zimboe as a Phoenician settlement, which agrees with the findings and speculations of men like Theodore Bent and Alexander Wilmot. Additionally,

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<sup>84</sup> —āquem poscere, qui cultiores victus eum Afrosque perdoceat” (18.6).

Haggard's description of layout of Zimbabwe corresponds quite accurately to the appearance of Great Zimbabwe's ruins, showing the author's keen eye for detail and the full extent of his engagement with the ruins in his work of historical fiction. Furthermore, through fiction Haggard participates in the same process as imperialists who, to refer once again to Duysterberg, in denying the ruins African origin, were —constructing a white history by spinning their own story around the ruins" (2015:158). In fabricating his —white history" (*ibid.*), the second half of this discussion demonstrated that Haggard most likely turned to two accounts which are concerned with Carthaginian Queen Dido, by Virgil and Justin, both of which appear to have contributed unique elements to the events and relationships depicted in *Elissa*.

## Conclusion

This dissertation set out to establish the extent to which Classics and the ruins of Great Zimbabwe informed a selection of three novels by Rider Haggard, each of which are concerned with the presence of white civilizations in southern Africa: namely, *King Solomon's Mines*, *She*, and *Elissa; or The Doom of Great Zimbabwe*. Each chapter has demonstrated that, despite his undistinguished educational background, Haggard's work reveals an impressive knowledge of both Classics and archaeology. Proceeding in a chronological fashion, so as to track the development of his ideas, Chapter Two was concerned with Haggard's initial pursuit into the adventure and lost city genre with *King Solomon's Mines*. The discussion suggested that, on account of the similarities between the theories surrounding Great Zimbabwe, particularly their mutual link to Ophir, the ruins appear to have contributed significantly to the narrative, and thus provided an impetus for Haggard's future exploitation of the theme of lost white civilizations in Africa. Additionally Haggard's use of Classics in his descriptions of landscape, people and events, was shown to be both extensive and wide-ranging, and helped to impart an old-world quality on Kukuani and its inhabitants, creating a sense of difference between the inhabitants, and not just the heroes, but known society as a whole. Haggard's use of the *katabasis* motif, borrowed from ancient narratives like Virgil's *Aeneid Book VI*, lent force to the idea that the heroes were moving into a space of danger and the unknown. An interesting point can be made with the witch-doctor Gagool, who was shown to be a blend of the southern African *Isanusi*, and the ancient Mediterranean Sibyl, demonstrating Haggard's fondness for creating African and European hybrids.

Chapter Three sought to identify the role of the same themes in *She*, while acknowledging the extent to which the lost city genre had developed from a comparatively

simple boys' adventure story into a more complex narrative. Haggard's lost city of Kôr continued and developed the theme of ancient white-civilizations situated in Africa and was also shown to possess subtle links to Great Zimbabwe. Additionally, an extensive use of Classical Greek, Roman, and Ancient Egyptian material was observed throughout the narrative. The influence of Plato's two dialogues, the *Timaeus* and the *Critias*, was explored on account of their treatment of Atlantis, to which Haggard's city of Kôr possess many parallels. These narratives were shown to contribute to Haggard's portrayal of the city, its citizens, and its destruction. Nineteenth century enthusiasm for Egyptology was often seen to be reflected in Haggard's work in an assortment of areas such as architecture, his interesting applications of the mummy-motif and his use of an ancient Egyptian ghost-story. Furthermore, Haggard's portrayal of his leading-lady, Ayesha, appears to have been influenced by three powerful women from Classical epic: Calypso and Circe from Homer's *Odyssey VII* and *X*, and the Sibyl from Virgil's *Aeneid VI*. Yet, like Gagool, Ayesha resemblance to the southern African rain-queen, Modjadji, shows that she may also owe part of her origins to an African source.

Chapter Four dealt with Haggard's historical fiction *Elissa*, which was shown to tackle the same motifs from a different perspective. Unlike the previous two works, Haggard was transparent about his use of the ruins at Great Zimbabwe and their related archaeological findings. On account of this, Haggard's engagement with the ruins was a lot more extensive and transparent, which the first half of the chapter demonstrated by pointing out the resemblance between his physical city and the layout of the actual ruins. Additionally, evidence of archaeological findings and theories could be seen in his portrayal of the city of Zimboe (Great Zimbabwe) as a Phoenician settlement. More so than the previous two works, Haggard's appropriation of Classical material complemented his use of the ruins worked together more

closely and clearly to create *Elissa*. Unlike his scattered reception of Classical material in the two previous novels, Haggard made use of a single ancient story concerning the Carthaginian queen, Dido, told by two authors, Virgil and Justin, with several variations. Both narratives were shown to contribute different elements to Haggard's novel which facilitated his speculative portrayal of the fall of Great Zimbabwe. As a final point, *Elissa* is an excellent example of Haggard's simultaneous use of Classics and Zimbabwean archaeology, and can be seen as a culmination of ideas that started many years before with *King Solomon's Mines*.

Before bringing this study to a close and offering a few concluding remarks, it would be fitting, in the spirit of Reception Studies, to point out the lasting influence of Rider Haggard's lost city novels which can be found in various forms of media and over many decades. To begin with, *King Solomon's Mines* was adapted for screen in 1937, 1950, 1985 and 2004, featuring well-known names such as Deborah Kerr (1950), Sharon Stone (1985), and Patrick Swayze (2004). While many of the central motifs, for the most part, remain quite similar, several changes have been made – presumably to appeal to a larger audience. This shift is perhaps best evident in the inclusion of a European female protagonist in each of the versions, who serves as a love interest to Quatermain and, in the 1931 version, to his companion, Curtis. From this perspective Haggard's portrayal of the ill-fated romances between white men and African women was perhaps in some ways more daring than those of his successors. Apart from the film adaptations of *King Solomon's Mines*, *Allan Quatermain* has also appeared in the comic-book series created by Alan Moore, *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, which is set in Victorian England and features a number of famous literary characters, who are recruited by British Intelligence to carry out various missions.

Additionally, *She* has been made into several films which includes a 1925 silent film, starring Betty Blythe and Haggard himself is credited with providing the intertitles. In contrast to this early screen adaptation, which remains faithful to the text, two later versions, appearing in 1935 and in 1965, make substantial changes to the original plot. This is noticeable in the 1935 version which casts Ayesha as the film's clear-cut villain, provides another love-interest for Leo, and relocates the setting from southern Africa to Siberia. The 1965 film is also substantially altered, barring several prominent elements such as the reincarnation theme, the romance between Leo and Ayesha, and the presence of the pillar of fire. Kôr, however, is replaced with Kuma, a lost city in North-East Africa, and the dark-haired Arabian beauty is transformed into a blonde-bombshell, played by Ursula Andress, who was made famous after her appearance in *Dr. No* (1962). In light of these three contrasting interpretations of *She*, an independent study could be warranted on account of the deviating depictions of Ayesha, both aesthetically and in terms of her character.<sup>85</sup>

In addition to the enduring popularity of *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* in popular culture, these texts set the pace for later novels concerned with similar topics. Haggard's pioneering efforts can be appreciated in a statement made by John Reider who, referring to these works, argues that: "the paradigm for lost-race fiction [was] set by Haggard's novels" (2009:28). Later works that picked on the same themes of lost races and lost worlds include works by Edgar Rice Burroughs such as *The Land that Time Forgot* (1924) and *Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar* (1916); *The Lost World* (1912) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; and *Lost Horizon* by James Hilton (1933). Furthermore, Haggard's portrayal of swashbuckling heroes, together with his use of archaeology, remote terrains, and treasure-hunting, still endures in the entertainment industry in

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<sup>85</sup> Of particular interest to the South African film industry is *The Virgin Goddess* (1973), a rather loose adaptation of Haggard's *She*, directed by Dirk De Villiers.

the form of films and computer games. An excellent example of this is the *Indiana Jones* film franchise created by George Lucas, which made its first appearance in 1981 with *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Lucas appears to have been inspired by Haggard's rugged hunter, Allan Quatermain and according to Baxter he, —adired MGM's 1950 film of H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, starring a suave Stewart Granger as white hunter” (1999:173). Indiana Jones, more affectionately known as ‘Indy’, is an intrepid archaeology professor with a penchant for hunting legendary relics in his spare time, including the Ark of the Covenant and the Holy Grail. This dangerous pastime lures him to exotic locations such as Egypt, India, the Middle-East and Peru, where, like Quatermain, Indy encounters ancient ruins, hostile inhabitants and an assortment of booby traps.

Traces of Haggard's lost cities, ancient ruins, and daring heroes can also be found in the more contemporary world of computer gaming, such as the gutsy female protagonist, Lara Croft, of the Tomb Raider franchise.<sup>86</sup> Amusingly, Lara's developers originally intended for her to be male, but upon realising the character's undeniable resemblance to the already famous Indiana Jones they opted for a female protagonist instead (Stella's Tomb Raider Site, 2012), who proved to be a tremendous hit. Lara Croft is a globe-trotting, artefact-hunting archaeologist who, according to British author Kate Mosse: —without a doubt follows in Allan Quatermain's adventuring footsteps” (2013). Like Haggard's novels, *Tomb Raider* makes extensive use of archaeology, Egyptology, and Classics, demonstrating that these fields are not just reserved for scholarly domains, but can be both accessible and stimulating for a wider audience. The 2013 computer game *Deadfall Adventures* centres on the figure of James Lee Quatermain, who is credited as being the great-grandson of the famous Allan Quatermain. James has been hired to

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<sup>86</sup> The Tomb Raider franchise has produced two films, *Tomb Raider* and *Tomb Raider*, starring Angelina Jolie as Lara Croft.

assist in the retrieval of a stone referred to as the “Heart of Atlantis”, which is rumoured to possess powerful properties, and his pursuit of this relic takes him across the world and to a number of ancient temple complexes, conforming to the usual tropes of archaeological adventure narratives. Finally, the theme of colonial African adventure, exemplified by Haggard’s British male explorers in novels like *King Solomon’s Mines* and *She*, has also found its way into the realm of contemporary musical subcultures. This can be seen in the genre of Chap-Hop<sup>87</sup> with the alter-ego of British artist Paul Alborough, Professor Elemental, who is described as “[c]lad in Victorian-explorer garb, complete with [a] pith helmet” (Robinson, 2014). In a song called “The Quest for the Golden Frog”, he raps about his adventures in Africa, where he encounters hostile tribes and perilous terrains, in search of the eponymous relic (OldMarinerVintage, 2013), tropes which all appear in Haggard’s lost city novels. Thus, over a hundred years later, the spirit of Haggard’s work is still very much alive in the public consciousness, albeit in a myriad of guises, and featuring the same themes of adventure in remote terrains, lost cities, archaeology and treasures, which are constantly being reworked and adapted for new platforms and a rapidly evolving society.

In conclusion, a few points concerning future research possibilities can be made. Haggard’s use of Classics can be seen in several other works which, given the scope of this study, were impossible to include. An area which deserves attention is Haggard’s receptions of Classics in *Cleopatra* (1889) and *The World’s Desire* (1890), which was co-written with the scholar Andrew Lang, who possessed a strong Classical background. *Cleopatra* is a reimagining of the famous Egyptian queen and gives Haggard an opportunity to indulge in his interests in ancient Egypt. *The World’s Desire*, is concerned with an invented romance between the

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<sup>87</sup> Chap-Hop is described by Robinson as that “fusing the American urban musical genre with the imagined lifestyle of the British upper classes” (2011).



legendary beauty, Helen, and the Greek hero Odysseus, who find themselves together in Egypt after Odysseus returns home from a second adventure to discover that his family has been killed by a plague that has devastated Ithaca. On account of the central role afforded to the remarkable women in Haggard's novels, like Ayesha, Elissa, Cleopatra and Helen, a possible focus could be placed on his portrayal of these women with a particular emphasis on the role of Classics. Another interesting avenue which has come to light during the course of this study is the presence of Classics and archaeology in the entertainment industry, as shown earlier in this chapter with the mention of franchises like Indiana Jones and Tomb Raider. A study on their roles in promoting Classics and archaeology to a lay audience could offer a thought-provoking and more contemporarily relevant contribution to the expanding field of Reception Studies. On a final note, this dissertation has hopefully demonstrated both the relevance of Classics in southern Africa and indicated its applicability to contemporary society and debates, areas which have potential for further scholarly investigations.





Figure Two: George French Angas, 'Zulu Soldiers of King Panda's Army'  
From *The Kafirs Illustrated* (London, 1849).

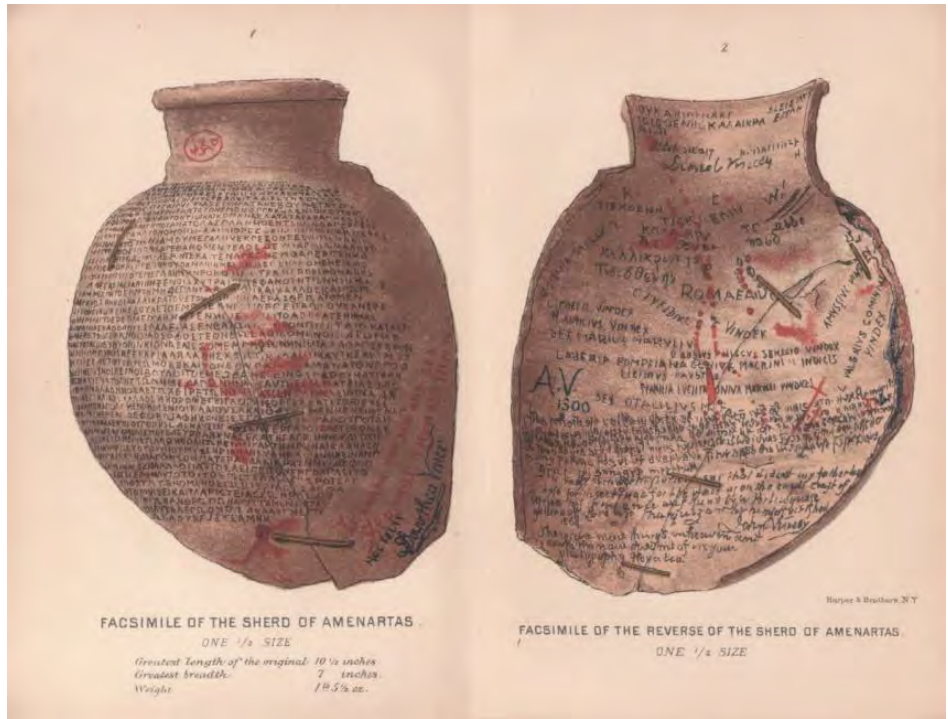


Figure Three: The Sherd of Amenartas

From <http://www.visualhaggard.org/illustrations/531>





Figure Five: Part of the Great Hall of Columns by David Roberts (1838).

From [http://www.allposters.com/-sp/Hall-of-Columns-Karnak-from-Egypt-and-Nubia-Vol-1-Posters\\_i4054722\\_.htm](http://www.allposters.com/-sp/Hall-of-Columns-Karnak-from-Egypt-and-Nubia-Vol-1-Posters_i4054722_.htm)

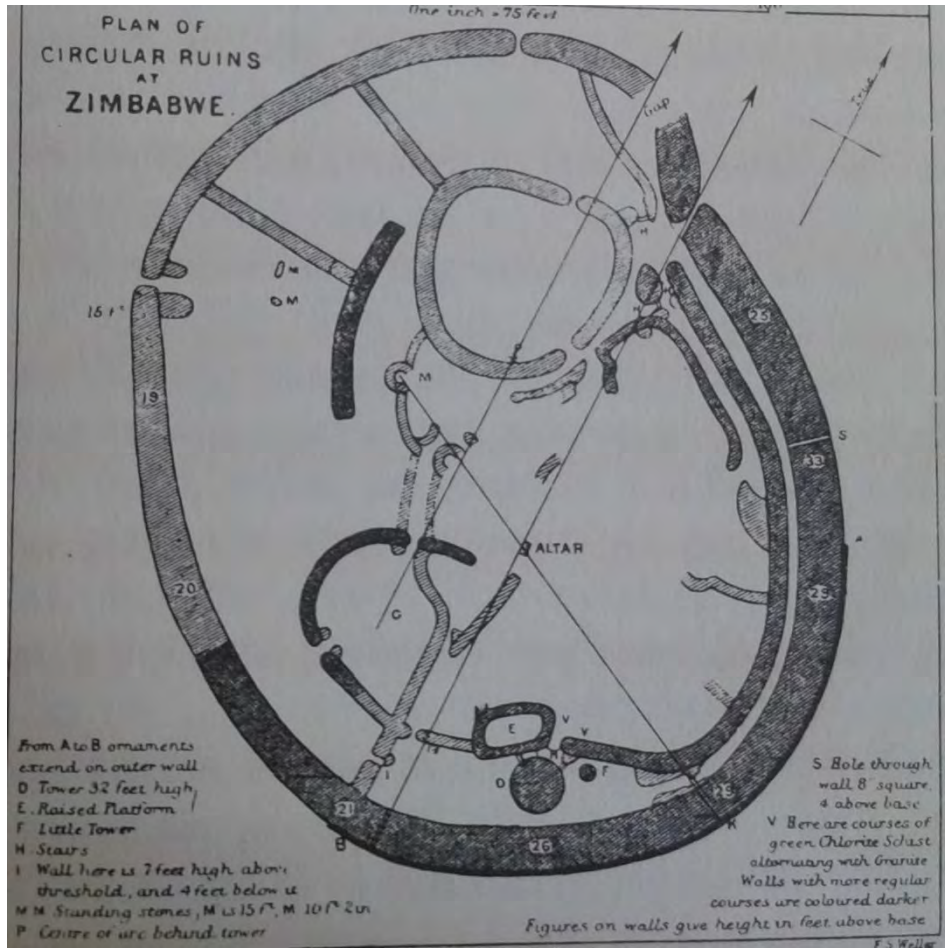


Figure Six: The Great Enclosure

From *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* by J.T. Bent



Figure Seven: The Great Enclosure as seen from Zimbabwe Hill.

Authors own.



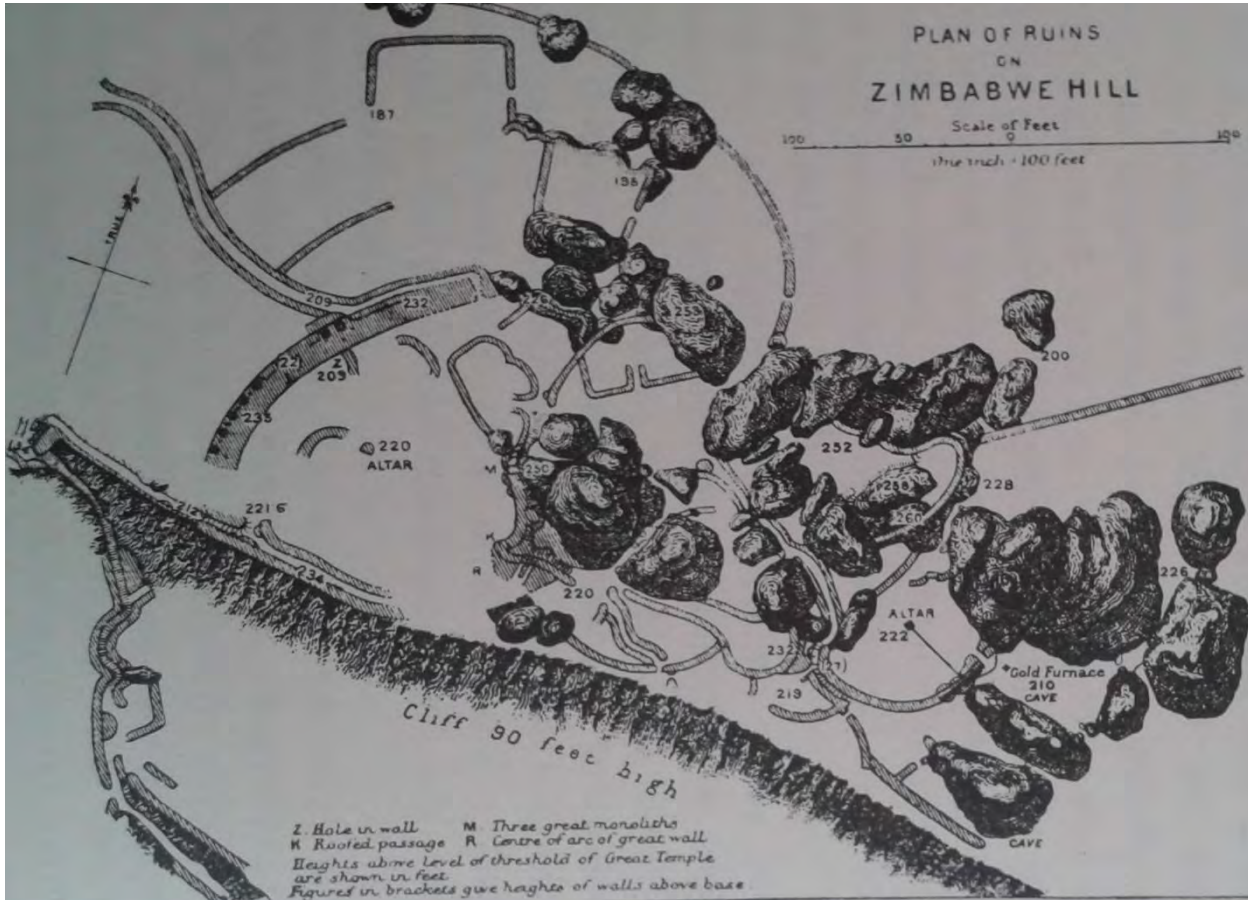


Figure Eight: Zimbabwe Hill

From *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* by J.T. Bent



LARGE ROUND TOWER IN CIRCULAR RUIN. ZIMBABWE

Figure Nine: The Large Round Tower in the Circular Ruin

From *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* by J.T. Bent

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