

The man who would be king



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Literary Review The Man Who Would be King written by Rudyard Kipling and first published in 1888 is one of the first audacious works of the The main themes of the story are British Empire colonial system and exploitation of physical nature which is followed while establishing this system in India, as well as aspiration for profit and enrichment which is inherent for the British colonial army.

The story tells about two former soldiers (Dravot and Carnehan) of the British colonial army who decided to become kings of one of an unknown tribe in the mountains of Kafiristan (in Afghanistan). They persuaded the natives to believe that they were gods, mustered the army and kept the native village under their control. But when one of the men decided to marry a native girl, their deceit became disclosed: the girl became known that Dravot was not a god, he was just an ordinary man. After that the natives "dropped Dravot to his death and crucified Carnehan between two pine trees" (The Man Who Would Be King). Carnehan survived, was revised, but soon he died of exposure to the mid-day sun. Nothing of his personal belongings was found with him.

Rudyard Kipling's The Man Who Would be King has two clear themes: British colonialism and exploitation of physical nature. These themes are directly connected to each other. Dravot and Carnehan used the politic situation in colonial India for achieving their personal mercenary goals. They wanted to use naivety and primitiveness of native tribes and untended to become their kings and gods. British soldiers, as Dravot and Carnehan, used weapons and other achievements of Western civilization, so they supposed the native tribes to consider them as kings.

The main characters of the story, as the representatives of British Empire,

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had faith in themselves, and they wanted to spread their will on the natives. They decided to establish their own law which should be more progressive than that of the natives. Rudyard Kipling's *The Man Who Would be King* is a skilful metaphor of the British colonial style of governing over nations conquered by Britain. The British colonial Empire was built by such men as the characters of the story, and British authorities used the same methods as Carnehan and Dravot did. They were sure that they brought civilization and culture; Dravot said about the natives that " These men aren't niggers; they're English! They're the Lost Tribes, or something like it, and they've grown to be English" (ReadBookOnline. net).

But why did Dravot lose his crown and his authority He wanted to marry a native girl, so he intended to be closer to the natives (as often colonizers are closed to those who are colonized by them), but he failed to take into account their traditions: they couldn't admit the god to marry an ordinary girl. As a result, the natives saw that Carnehan and Dravot were not gods; they are men who didn't differ from the natives. So, they revenged, and Dravot was murdered. Carnahan showed Dravot's head, still with his crown on it, as the evidence of his story. So, the end of Kipling's story is tragic: the men who intended to be kings and gods of the natives failed, as well as the policy of colonialism and exploitation.

Sources

The Man Who Would Be King. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Man_Who_Would_Be_King)

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