

It has been plausibly argued that the story . . . is an allegory of imperialism. The exploits of [DD and PC], who train tribesmen to defeat their enemies and then unite them all in a Pax Dravotica, are a replication on a small scale of the feats of the British in India . . . ; and their fall, provoked by Davot's decision to take a native woman as his queen, may be seen as a warning that empires can be overthrown when the customs of subject peoples are too greatly violated.

David Gilmore, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling*.

One reason for Kipling's power is that he was an artist of enormous gifts; what he did in his art was to elaborate ideas that would have had far less permanence, for all their vulgarity, without art. But he was also supported by (and therefore could use) the authorized monuments of nineteenth-century European culture, and the inferiority of non-white races, the necessity that they be ruled by a superior race, and their absolute unchanging essence as a more or less unquestioned axiom of modern life.

Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*