

FROM THE GRAND TOUR TO AFRICAN ADVENTURE: HAGGARD-INSPIRED LITERARY TOURISM*

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Van die ‘Grand Tour’ na Afrika-avontuur: Haggard-geïnspireerde literêre toerisme

Hierdie artikel ondersoek die invloed van literatuur op toerismeneigings wat tot stand gebring is voor die middel-negentiende eeu en hoe hierdie gewoontes hulleself in besonder in daaropvolgende reise na Afrika en Suider-Afrika geopenbaar het. Literêre toerisme, ’n vorm van kultuurreis gebaseer op skrywers en literêre werke, sal in aanmerking geneem word as ’n vanselfsprekende uitdrukking van die literatuurtoerisme-verhouding. Met verwysing na verwickelinge voortspruitend uit die Romantiek en Industriële Rewolusie, sal die kulturele proses om Afrika as ’n nuwe toerismedestemming te vestig, ondersoek word. Soos in die geval van vele ander Europees-gekoloniseerde streke, is die persepsies wat ontwikkel het tydens die era van die ‘Grand Tour’ omgeset na Afrika om te kulmineer in uitbeeldings en indrukke soos die ‘donker kontinent’, ‘edel barbaar’, ‘jagtersparadys’ en dies meer. Groot Zimbabwe, ’n gebied in Suider-Afrika wat vermoedelik as die agtergrond en inspirasie vir ’n aantal van H. Rider Haggard se verhale gedien het, sal gebruik word om te illustreer hoe hierdie historiese, literêre en toerisme-ontwikkelinge ineengeloop het om die indruk van ’n aanloklike toerismedestemming te skep.

Sleutelwoorde: Goties, ‘Grand Tour’, Groot Zimbabwe, H. Rider Haggard, imperiale avontuurfiksie, kultuurtoerisme, literêre toerisme, Romantiek, subliem, Suider-Afrika

This article explores the influence of literature on tourism trends cultivated prior to the mid-nineteenth century, and how these habits came to manifest themselves in subsequent travel to Africa and Southern Africa in particular. Literary tourism, as a form of cultural travel based on writers and literary works, will be considered as a

* This article is derived from an MA dissertation in Heritage and Cultural Tourism concerning literary tourism as a developing genre and its potential within South Africa, which the author completed as a postgraduate student in the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies.

patent expression of the literature-tourism relationship. With reference to developments stemming from the Romantic Movement and Industrial Revolution, the cultural process of establishing Africa as a new tourism destination will be investigated. As was the case in many other European-colonised regions, the perceptions that had evolved from the era of the Grand Tour were transposed to Africa, culminating in the portrayals and impressions of the ‘dark continent’, ‘noble savage’, ‘hunter’s paradise’ and the like. Great Zimbabwe, a Southern African site believed to serve as the setting and inspiration for a number of H. Rider Haggard’s literary works, will be used to illustrate how these historical, literary and tourism developments converged to form the impression of an alluring tourism destination.

Keywords: cultural tourism, Gothic, Grand Tour, Great Zimbabwe, H. Rider Haggard, imperial adventure fiction, literary tourism, Romanticism, Southern Africa, sublime

Introduction

Literature and tourism have, for many centuries, shared a mutually stimulating relationship. Imaginative literature, travel narratives and tourism promotional literature direct the reader-tourist in terms of where to go, how to view places, and, in many instances, what to feel during the travel experience. Travel, on the other hand, has served as the central feature in many fictional works in the form of the journey. Travel opens up new territories for literary presentation, providing the subject matter or setting for literature. This then cycles back to presentation through literature, and any writer sensitive to their audience and seeking the widest possible appeal would utilise a vocabulary, imagery and aesthetics already familiar to and popular amongst readers. This runs the risk of reinforcing prevalent cultural stereotypes and preconceptions of peoples and places, but, by appealing to such gratifying cultural ideals, can nonetheless inspire readers to travel to destinations portrayed in popular literature.

This article will investigate this literature-tourism relationship, particularly the influence of literature on tourism trends cultivated prior to the mid-nineteenth century, and how these latent habits came to manifest themselves in subsequent travel to Africa and Southern Africa. The genre of literary tourism, a practical expression of this relationship, will be briefly discussed. As a foundational phenomenon in the historical evolution of modern tourism, the Grand Tour will be examined with a particular focus on its literary dimensions. The impact of Romanticism on cultural thought, literature and the Grand Tour will also be considered. The ensuing transposition of these Romantic ideals, literary themes and travel habits to Africa will then be traced. Finally, Great Zimbabwe and the popular works by H. Rider Haggard will be used as

a case study to illustrate how these developments lead to tourism of a literary nature to Southern Africa.

The genre of literary tourism

Literary tourism can be defined as a form of cultural tourism that involves travel to places and events associated with writers, writers' works, literary depictions and the writing of creative literature.¹ Its two basic elements, literature and tourism, are both facets of culture. The World Tourism Organisation's definition of tourism is: "the activities of persons during their travel and stay in a place outside their usual place of residence, for a continuous period of less than one year, for leisure, business or other purposes".² Although straightforward, the temporal specificity of this widely accepted definition is not historically applicable, since travellers in the past usually ventured away from home for several consecutive years, as in the case of Grand Tourists of the sixteenth to eighteenth century. Nor does it address tourism's role within the cultural domain. On the one hand, there is the way tourism functions as public culture: "the fashions by which governments and interested parties capture national capitals, towns... ancient temples, monuments, festivals...in order to project the celebrated narratives and/or the ordinary vistas of a given people, its places, and its pasts."³ On the other hand, at an individual level, there is the way tourism is encouraged as a socially accepted form of deviance from normal routines, posited as a search for authenticity apparently absent from our everyday lives.⁴ This explanation indicates the intertwined nature of culture and tourism.

Literature holds a dualistic function in cultural terms as it is both an object or product of culture as well as a process of creative activity and development that produces such a product.⁵ The term 'literature' here refers to creative or imaginative works – short prose narratives, novels, drama and poetry – which, in literary tourism, usually instils the desire to see and experience those places associated with the literary work or its author. Throughout history, particular works have become esteemed as

¹ It appears that no formal definition of literary tourism exists as yet, but rather general descriptions that mainly relate to literary tourism sites.

² G. Richards, The scope and significance of cultural tourism, in G. Richards (ed.), *Cultural tourism in Europe* (Wallingford, 1996), p. 20.

³ K. Hollinshead, Tourism as public culture: Horne's ideological commentary on the legerdemain of tourism, *International Journal of Tourism Research* 1, 1999, p. 267.

⁴ D. MacCannel, Staged authenticity: arrangements of social space in tourist settings, *American Journal of Sociology* 79(3), 1973, pp. 589-590; J. Urry, *The tourist gaze: Leisure and travel in contemporary societies* (London, 1990), p. 2.

⁵ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, Reading between the lines: literature and the creation of touristic spaces, in M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen (eds), *Literature and tourism: Essays in the reading and writing of tourism* (London, 2002), p. 12.

‘great’ or ‘classic’ pieces of literature, their authors hailed as literary geniuses, and can come to be regarded as representative of a country’s national literary canon. But in literary tourism, it is not only such critically acclaimed works and authors that are pursued and celebrated. Usually, those that prove popular among readers are the sources of travel motivation,⁶ as will be shown with the historically discredited but popular genres of Gothic romance and adventure stories.

Literary tourism focuses on various products associated with writers and literature. These include places and events centred on books; literary festivals; creative writing holidays; literary theme parks; sites connected to the life of a writer; and literary landscapes. Each of these products constitute a legitimate line of enquiry in literary tourism studies, but in the context of literary tourism to Africa and Southern Africa during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the latter two key features are of greater relevance.⁷

As verification and celebration of writers’ lives and literary production, biographical sites (houses, birthplaces, haunts, graves, and monuments) are among the attractions most commonly associated with the literary tourism industry. Readers who “feel the need to go beyond their intellectual exchanges with texts and long for some kind of material contact with the author of those texts or the places where these originate”⁸ are attracted to writers’ houses. They offer this kind of physical interaction – a tangible connection “between the created and the creator, allowing tourists to engage in a variety of emotional experiences and activities.”⁹

Writers’ birthplaces are somewhat curious among tourist attractions as they do not really celebrate a writer’s works or career success, that which interested the reader in the first place, but rather their time before literary accomplishment, that of ‘genius in the making’. The narrative of such a site is “necessarily biographical and... spatialised, and it tells the story of the childhood origins of literary genius in a specific place,”¹⁰ Visiting a literary birthplace can provide the literary tourist new insight into the life and work of a writer as they get a sense of the domestic and environmental stimuli that helped shape him or her.

But the places in which writers *chose* to live as an adult could be far more illuminating, as not only can these be regarded as “a reflection or extension of their

⁶ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, *Reading between the lines* (2002), p. 28.

⁷ For a more detailed review of contemporary literary tourism products, see Robinson & Andersen (eds), *Literature and tourism* (2002), pp. i-79.

⁸ H. Hendrix, Writers’ houses as media of expression and remembrance, in H. Hendrix (ed.), *Writers’ houses and the making of Memory* (London, 2008), p. 1.

⁹ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, *Reading between the lines* (2002), p. 15.

¹⁰ N.J. Watson, *The literary tourist: Readers and places in romantic and Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke, 2006), p. 58.

character,”¹¹ but may also “be read as alternative autobiographies or self-portraits”.¹² Numerous writers have, unsurprisingly, applied a very active hand in the designing, building and/or decoration of their homes. As a medium of expression, the house enables individuals “to link this particular space to what they consider their inner self, their emotions, memories and psychological disposition.”¹³ Keeping in mind the fact that these houses are first mediated by the writers themselves and subsequently the site guardians, visiting a writer’s house allows the literary tourist to discern something of the former literary inhabitant’s personality and frame of mind. Other writers’ houses are designed as parallel expressions to their literary worlds, granting the tourist access to “the author’s world of imagination...fixed in matter.”¹⁴

In terms of presentation, writers’ homes have gradually discarded the conventional museum approach and its characteristic arrangement of objects in formal displays in favour of more realistic, ‘lived-in’ surroundings.¹⁵ This may well be a strategy to satisfy the literary tourist’s sense of authenticity by generating an atmosphere of domesticity and presenting the ‘real’ life of the author beyond the solitary process of writing. Ordinary household objects are not only fundamental to creating this ‘homely’ setting, but are “conferred with hyper-significance and reverence”¹⁶ as these are pivotal to the tourist’s connectivity and emotional engagement with the author. Pens, desks and typewriters, evidentiary markers of the writing process, are naturally particularly significant among these sacralised objects, as is the space where the literary works came into being, often the study or library. These writing spaces could disclose how they physically and mentally approached the protracted, pensive and private activity that ultimately produced the poetry or narrative which drew the tourist there. “[T]o the outsider the work and the spaces of that work are imbued with mystique.”¹⁷

Of course, not all writers go to the same lengths in fashioning their private spaces. Aside from their evident documentary worth, such places also have meaning for their literature, especially in cases where places known to be familiar to the writer can be connected to the description or suggestion of places in his or her literary works.¹⁸ As literary historian Harald Hendrix notes, author’s houses may

¹¹ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, *Reading between the lines* (2002), p. 16.

¹² H. Hendrix, *Writers’ houses as media of expression and remembrance* (2008), p. 4.

¹³ H. Hendrix, *Writers’ houses as media of expression and remembrance* (2008), p. 4.

¹⁴ H. Hendrix, *Writers’ houses as media of expression and remembrance* (2008), p. 3.

¹⁵ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, *Reading between the lines* (2002), p. 17.

¹⁶ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, *Reading between the lines* (2002), p. 17.

¹⁷ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, *Reading between the lines* (2002), p. 16.

¹⁸ H. Hendrix, *Writers’ houses as media of expression and remembrance* (2008), p. 4.

... be a source of inspiration in its own right, or a material frame necessary for the production of literature... Factual spaces in various ways condition the author's mental map, and thus return, be it directly or metaphorically, on the pages of his poetry or narrative.¹⁹

This may well also be true of places that writers visited or frequented during their lives, called writers' haunts. For example, numerous hotels, inns, resorts, pubs and restaurants that have played host to famous literary figures, promote themselves through this literary association, or are promoted through it in travel guides. But these literary haunts may also be described or suggested at in the works of authors that visited them, therefore making them of literary significance as well. This was the case with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1862 visit to an inn in Sudbury, Massachusetts, who later used it as the backdrop to his book of poems *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863) – the establishment was subsequently named Longfellow's Wayside Inn.

The graves of writers range among the first tangible literary attractions pursued by reader-tourists. American author Washington Irving, recounting his visit to Westminster Abbey in his *Sketch-Book of Geoffrey Crayon* (1820), identifies the intrinsic appeal of literary graves, and in effect all author-related sites. He observes that visitors linger longest among the writers' graves in Poets' Corner as if they were friends or companions because "the intercourse between the author and his fellow-men is ever new, active, and immediate."²⁰ In other words, the literary tourist experiences a sensation of personal intimacy with a writer, an intimacy made possible by reading.²¹ The connection between the reader and author has thus already been established through his or her literature, and what the reader-tourist feels has less to do with the author as a person, but more with the person as originator of the literary work/s. The emotions they experience at such biographical literary sites therefore largely stem from the personal significance of the literary work/s to the tourist; the inspiration, insight, meaning and/or pleasure they derived from it.

Literary landscapes, the geographies that serve as or inspire the settings of literary works, enable the literary tourist to explore fictional worlds imaginatively superimposed on real topographies. The presentation of real places in literature varies between near-accurate portrayals, for instance London in many of Charles Dickens's works, and re-invented portrayals, as in William Faulkner's reinvention of Lafayette County, Mississippi. Adapting French historian Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* (sites or structures that validate the collective memory), cultural heritage scholar Stijn Reijnders argues that the places and objects that make up these literary

¹⁹ H. Hendrix, *Writers' houses as media of expression and remembrance* (2008), p. 4.

²⁰ Quoted in N.J. Watson, *The literary tourist* (2006), p. 37.

²¹ N.J. Watson, *The literary tourist* (2006), pp. 36-37.

landscapes are *lieux d'imagination* – “physical locations which serve as a symbolic anchor for a society’s collective imagination.”²² As places and objects that memorialise fictional events, these are not necessarily objectively or historically authentic. This is the case with Kronborg Castle in Elsinore, Denmark, associated with the home of William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, and Bran Castle in Transylvania, Romania, visited by tourists as the home of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). In both cases neither of the historical figures that inspired the eponymous fictional characters ever resided in these respective edifices.²³ Bran Castle, moreover, does resemble Stoker’s description of Dracula’s castle in the novel, although he situates it in the north of Transylvania, whereas Bran Castle is located several hundred kilometres to the south.²⁴ This indicates that such symbolic anchors need not be entirely in accordance with the descriptions and geographical placement of settings in a given literary work, as will be illustrated in the case of Great Zimbabwe and Haggard’s novels later on. Nonetheless, such places have been conferred a second reality through literature by readers who, as tourists, seek them out as tangible references to events that reside in their imaginational memory.

The scholarly study of literary tourism is still relatively new in the academic sphere. The historical study of the phenomenon appears to be one of the most dominant approaches, but as it is an inherently cross-disciplinary field, even these historical studies are approached from various perspectives, such as: anthropology, sociology, architecture, geography, and heritage and cultural studies. According to literary tourism scholar Nicola Watson, “the epicentre of the desire to make and preserve writers’ houses [is located] within the nineteenth century.”²⁵ However, this high point in the preservation of writers’ houses as well as the ‘conversion’ of certain geographies into literary landscapes can be more specifically located within British and European nineteenth century culture, a culture heavily influenced by Romanticism. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of studies on the history of literary tourism focus, wholly or in part, on phenomena that evolved in these regions between the second half of the eighteenth century and the turn of the twentieth century.²⁶ Subject

²² S. Reijnders, Stalking the count: Dracula, fandom and tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(1), 2011, p. 234.

²³ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, Introduction, in M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen (eds), *Literature and tourism* (2002), p. xv; A. Muresan & K.A. Smith, Dracula’s Castle in Transylvania: conflicting heritage marketing strategies, *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 4(2), 1998, p. 78.

²⁴ S. Reijnders, *Stalking the count* (2011), p. 232.

²⁵ N.J. Watson, Introduction, in N.J. Watson (ed.), *Literary tourism and Nineteenth-Century culture* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 8.

²⁶ See for example: J. Glendening, *The high road: Romantic tourism, Scotland, and literature, 1720-1820* (Basingstoke, 1997); H. Hendrix (ed.), *Writers’ houses and the making of memory* (London, 2008); S. Matthews, *Poetical remains: Poets’ graves, bodies, and books in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 2004); I. Ousby, *The Englishman’s England: Taste, travel and the rise of tourism* (Cambridge, 1990); S. Squire, Wordsworth and Lake district tourism: Romantic reshaping of landscape, *The Canadian*

to similar cultural and literary influences, America also adopted this tourism mode in the early nineteenth century, therefore a number of studies have appeared that highlight American literary tourism developments during the 1800s.²⁷ Some developments in literary tourism did occur before the mid-eighteenth century, and a few studies have focused on those related to specific writers, such as John Milton and Francis Petrarch,²⁸ and on literary tourism as a component of the Grand Tour.²⁹ However, the scholarly study of the history of literary tourism within Africa and Southern Africa appears not to have been addressed as yet, and this article will seek to illuminate some aspects of the tourism history of this geographical area.

The rise of Romantic literary tourism

Overtly secular modes of tourism were first methodically practiced by European elites during the early sixteenth century, a practice that came to be known as the ‘Grand Tour’.³⁰ This phenomenon lasted through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, remaining extant in varying forms into the first half of the nineteenth century, and has received much scholarly attention.³¹ Up to the mid-eighteenth century, the Grand Tour was practiced as an educational experience, as scholar-courtiers would travel to study at universities in Europe, or as a means to gathering information in service of “the great project of humanist learning.”³²

Geographer 32(3), 1988, pp. 237-47; N.J. Watson, *The literary tourist: Readers and places in romantic and Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke, 2006); N.J. Watson (ed.), *Literary tourism and Nineteenth-Century culture* (2009); P. Westover, *Necromanticism: Travelling to meet the dead, 1750-1860* (Basingstoke, 2012).

²⁷ D. DeLyser, Ramona memories: fiction, tourist practices, and placing the past in Southern California, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93(4), 2003, pp. 886-908; E.W. Stevens, Helen Hunt Jackson’s “Ramona”: social problem novel as tourist guide, *California History* 77(3), 1998, pp. 158-167; P. Westover, How America ‘inherited’ literary tourism, in N.J. Watson (ed.), *Literary tourism and Nineteenth-Century culture* (2009), pp. 184-195.

²⁸ H. Hendrix, From early modern to Romantic literary tourism, in N.J. Watson, (ed.), *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture* (2009), pp. 13-24; A. Santesso, The birth of the birthplace: Bread Street and literary tourism before Stratford, *ELH* 71, 2004, pp. 377-403.

²⁹ J. Adler, Origins of sightseeing, *Annals of tourism research* 16, 1989, pp. 7-29; J. Buzard, *The beaten track: European tourism, literature and the ways to ‘Culture’* (Oxford: 1993); J. Towner, Literature, tourism and the Grand Tour, in M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen (eds), *Literature and tourism* (2002), pp. 226-238.

³⁰ J. Adler, *Origins of sightseeing* (1989), p. 9.

³¹ See for example: J. Black, *Italy and the Grand Tour* (New Haven, 2003); C. Hibbert, *The Grand Tour* (London, 1987); J. Towner, The Grand Tour: a key phase in the history of tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research* 12, 1985, pp. 297-333.

³² H. Berghoff & B. Korte, Britain and the making of modern tourism, in H. Berghoff, B. Korte & R. Schneider (eds), *The making of modern tourism: Cultural history of the British experience, 1600-2000* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 1-20. See also J. Adler, *Origins of sightseeing* (1989), pp. 11-21.

Reading was one of the *most* important facets of travel preparations.³³ Due to the prevalence of neo-classicism in cultural taste at this time, the literature which had the most dominant bearing upon the Grand Tour were the ancient classics of Greece and Rome such as the writings of Caesar, Livy, Virgil, Polybius, Horace and Tacitus – these “helped shape their choice of destinations as well as the sentiments expressed when viewing people or places.”³⁴ Not only did references to classical literature permeate travel accounts, but its influence was also reflected in the Grand Tour’s spatial patterns, which remained by and large constant throughout its existence.³⁵ Apart from the cultural centres in France and Germany en route, it included the cities of northern Italy, like Milan, Turin and Venice, and “Florence, Rome and Naples formed the climax of the tour.”³⁶ In fact, Aaron Santesso asserts that the route of the Grand Tour was formed partially to accommodate sojourns to destinations with “familiar literary connections.”³⁷ This classical literary influence never completely vanished throughout the Tour’s existence, for travelling scholars, writers and Grand Tourists of the eighteenth and nineteenth century eagerly absorbed the topographical settings of Homer’s epic poem *The Iliad* and the journeys from Troy to Ithaca that are borne out in *The Odyssey*.³⁸

As tourism is a cultural practice, it was, and still is, necessarily influenced by more pervasive socio-cultural tendencies and technological developments. In the history of literary tourism, perhaps the most influential of these were the Romantic Movement as well as the Industrial Revolution, the latter relating not only to innovations in transport, but especially advancements in the print and publishing industry. Although Romantic propensities in especially art and literature gradually increased from the mid-eighteenth century, the beginning of the Romantic era is traditionally traced to the 1780s and came to dominate European cultural life during the initial half of the nineteenth century.³⁹ A “historically unwieldy and contested abstraction,”⁴⁰ it is regarded as a reaction against the excessive rationalism of the Enlightenment. Whereas the latter’s proponents viewed feelings as an interference with clear thought, the Romantics emphasised the primacy of the imagination and viewed unrestricted, spontaneous emotions as the road to grasping the intricacies of human nature.⁴¹ Cultural and literary historian John Glendening points out:

³³ J. Adler, *Origins of sightseeing* (1989), p. 9.

³⁴ J. Towner, *Literature, tourism and the Grand Tour* (2002), p. 232.

³⁵ J. Towner, *The Grand Tour* (1985), pp. 314-15; J. Towner, *Literature, tourism and the Grand Tour* (2002), p. 232.

³⁶ J. Towner, *The Grand Tour* (1985), p. 301.

³⁷ A. Santesso, *The birth of the birthplace* (2004), p. 380.

³⁸ M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, *Reading between the lines* (2002), pp. 12-13.

³⁹ M. Perry, *Western civilization: A brief history, 4th Edition* (New York, 2001), p. 368; J. Glendening, *The high road* (1997), pp. 6-7.

⁴⁰ J. Glendening, *The high road* (1997), p. 6.

⁴¹ M. Perry, *Western civilization* (2001), p. 369.

*Although the romantic sensibility asserts itself in opposition to the modern world, it is the direct outgrowth of that world: romanticism expresses a binary opposition, an epistemology of desire, necessarily produced by the socio-economic disruptions of modernity as intensified by its need for continual expansion and change.*⁴²

This continual expansion and change was undoubtedly magnified by the Industrial Revolution starting in Britain from the 1760s and influenced culture in various ways. Capital accumulation through expanded trade allowed for the growth of an industrialised manufacturing sector, enabling individuals of common birth engaging in such capitalist enterprises to grow both affluent and influential, thereby creating the middle classes or bourgeoisie.⁴³ Book production became highly mechanised, facilitating the publication of an immense number of books at relatively little expense. The reading public, especially from within the middle classes and female readers in particular, grew due to far greater access to and the affordability of texts, as well as the advent of circulating libraries.⁴⁴ This, in turn, aided in the wider and faster dissemination of the ideals of Romanticism, whose leading figures included such writers as Percy Bysshe Shelley, William Wordsworth, Lord Byron, Victor Hugo, Francois Chateaubriand, Johan Wolfgang von Goethe, and Friedrich Schiller. Incidentally, each of these writers came to be integrated in the literary tourism domain.

Romantic writing differed fundamentally from the other predominant contemporaneous forms of literature – the novel of manners and neoclassical poetry. The latter, being more social in its concern, led readers to consider “the exterior actions of life,” whereas Romantic writing and its offshoot (or dark twin) Gothic writing were more concerned with the individual, often leading readers to contemplate “internal mental processes and reactions.”⁴⁵

Similar transformations were brought to bear on the Grand Tour in its tourist designation and spacio-temporal patterns. From the 1760s more professional people often travelling with their families now made the tour’s circuit rather than landed aristocrats, while the average duration of the tour changed from four years to four months.⁴⁶ Locations with sublime and picturesque scenery were now included due to the influence of Romanticism, also resulting in a revitalised interest in medieval history and related sites.⁴⁷ Romantic grand tourists were more concerned with “the

⁴² J. Glendening, *The high road* (1997), p. 7.

⁴³ M. Perry, *Western civilization* (2001), p. 355.

⁴⁴ F. Botting, *Gothic* (London, 1996), p. 46.

⁴⁵ R. Hume, Gothic versus Romantic: a reevaluation of the Gothic novel, *PMLA* 84(2), 1969, p. 288.

⁴⁶ J. Towner, *The Grand Tour* (1985), p. 316.

⁴⁷ J. Towner, *The Grand Tour* (1985), p. 314.

emotional effect of scenes on their own feelings”⁴⁸ and “[t]he more overwhelming and emotionally colored the experience, the more travel could fulfil its new function of affording escape from sensory immersion in degraded realities.”⁴⁹ Tourism and Romanticism therefore proved to be naturally compatible. As Glendening argues, they reinforce one another in their escapist overtones since “tourism promotes that which can be perceived as fundamentally different from the everyday world” and Romanticism celebrates “whatever seems to stand in absolute opposition to the mundane, disruptive and ultimately unsatisfying tenor of modern society.”⁵⁰ Previously, travel was legitimised as a serious pursuit for information or education, but by the closing decades of the eighteenth century it had generally become a private, subjective, emotionally charged, recreational form of escape.

These overall changes in tourist sensibilities naturally led to concurrent changes in literary tourists’ practices and sentiments. The 1780s witnessed a surge of interest in the graves of writers, especially on the part of British tourists. Various scholars point to the popularity of Grey’s poem ‘Elegy written in a country churchyard’ (1751) to show the significance and general cultural reception of meditation upon tombs by the mid-eighteenth century.⁵¹ This particular interest in writers’ graves has been conventionally explained as part of the over-all increase in the practice of visiting graves and graveyards (also called ‘necro-tourism’) during the mid-1700s, and by using the argument that literary pilgrimage emulates religious pilgrimage.⁵² However, Watson posits two additional reasons. First, it was the emergence of writers’ biographies “that began to connect authorial body and text more intimately,”⁵³ in effect earlier in the century, but prototypical by the 1780s. Second, occurring at precisely the same time of general anxiety surrounding print-culture, Watson maintains that this anxiety has heretofore been largely examined by way of the romantic author’s anxiety over the alienation of their mass-audience, but she argues that it also “by contagion, infected the romantic reader, who similarly became anxious over the alienation of the author, and the promiscuity of the text.”⁵⁴

Due to the multiplicity and portability of the published book, grave-visiting therefore became regarded as a way of achieving a more personal connection with the deceased author.⁵⁵ But the closely packed writers’ graves and memorials in Westminster

⁴⁸ J. Towner, *The Grand Tour* (1985), p. 314.

⁴⁹ J. Adler, *Origins of sightseeing* (1989), p. 23.

⁵⁰ J. Glendening, *The high road* (1997), p. 7.

⁵¹ I. Ousby, *The Englishmen’s England* (1990), p. 26; N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), p. 35; P. Westover, *Necromanticism* (2012), p. 6.

⁵² See for example: I. Ousby, *The Englishmen’s England* (1990), p. 22-23.

⁵³ N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), p. 33.

⁵⁴ N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), p. 37-38.

⁵⁵ N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), p. 38.

Abbey's Poet's Corner, a site of national significance and longstanding touristic popularity, could not adequately provide this new desire for personal, sentimental writer-tourist connectivity. A tourism model marked by a growing desire to "locate the author within a place or places conceived of as organically connected both to the physical person and to the literary corpus"⁵⁶ therefore emerged. The touristic interest in the grave of Thomas Gray in Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, towards the end of the eighteenth century, even though there was a memorial dedicated to him in Poets' Corner, is evidence of this new tourism model. During the Romantic era there was thus a general outward movement in both cultural thought and physical travel to sites regarded as more natural and authentic to a writer and his or her work. The latter sentiment or perception may also be said to govern the motivations behind the creation and visitation of other sites related to authors, such as birthplaces, houses and haunts.

Tourism's aesthetic transformation: the sublime, picturesque and Gothic

Romanticism, in especially its glorification of unspoiled nature and the medieval past, refashioned tourism forever. Simply put, it changed what people perceived as beautiful or admirable, thereby altering and enlarging the range of sights people pursued through travel.⁵⁷ This cultural reconstruction of nature and perceptions of the past were manifested in different aesthetic approaches, such as the sublime, picturesque and Gothic. The sublime was associated with grandeur, magnificence, vastness and obscurity.⁵⁸ Under its auspices, natural wonders or curiosities like caves, forests, rushing waters, raging storms and mountainous landscapes were no longer merely displeasing or frightening but also impressive,⁵⁹ supplying "delightful versions of terror."⁶⁰ The Alpine mountains provide one of the foremost examples of this process of cultural (re)construction from a landscape of dread to a sublime experience. Literary theorist Fred Botting asserts that mountainous landscapes, especially the Alps, "stimulated powerful emotions of terror and wonder in the viewer. Their immense scale offered a glimpse of infinity and awful power, intimations of a metaphysical force beyond rational knowledge and human comprehension."⁶¹ Numerous late eighteenth century Grand Tourists opted to incorporate the Alps into their itineraries. This included writers who advanced this sublimated image of the

⁵⁶ N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), p. 31.

⁵⁷ I. Ousby, *The Englishmen's England* (1990), p. 99.

⁵⁸ F. Botting, *Gothic* (1996), pp. 3-4.

⁵⁹ I. Ousby, *The Englishmen's England* (1990), p. 131.

⁶⁰ G. Stilz, Heroic travellers – Romantic landscapes, in H. Berghoff, B. Korte & R. Schneider (eds), *The making of modern tourism* (2002), p. 86.

⁶¹ F. Botting, *Gothic* (1996), pp. 3-4.

Alps, like Shelley with his praise poem ‘Mont Blanc’ (1817) and Byron with *Childe Harold’s pilgrimage* (1812). Nineteenth century tourists took these poets’ texts along on their travels, some of whom “expressly followed the routes which the poets had taken or recited poems on reaching a summit.”⁶²

The picturesque aesthetic, perhaps easier to grasp but more difficult to explain, approached nature in a more critical “spirit of painterly appraisal.”⁶³ William Gilpin, the great advocate of the picturesque, simply defined it as “that kind of beauty which *would look well in a picture.*”⁶⁴ It was rather concerned with the subtler effects of nature, and focused on such elements in a scene as the interplay of light and shade, subtle colour gradations, and harmony between its different elements.⁶⁵

These aesthetic approaches manifested themselves in tourist practices in the form of ‘stations’, a precise spot which affords the viewer with the most picturesque or sublime prospect of a landscape. This sightseeing paradigm further gave rise to “sentimental landscape tourism”⁶⁶ through which the narrative and fictional characters of a literary work are pursued with a focus on particular sites that make up a literary landscape. Emerging near the end of the eighteenth century, Jean Jacques Rousseau’s *Julie: ou, La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) was likely the first novel to be engaged in this manner, as Watson states that it was Rousseau’s writings and his readers “that invented this new way of looking at landscape through literature...which delineated the shape of sentimental landscape tourism.”⁶⁷ Set in Switzerland at Lac Léman, the narrative of this tragic love story continually re-emphasises specific sites around the lake, reinvesting them with emotion and sentiment. Emulating the practices of sublime and picturesque landscape tourists, “so too the Rousseau tourist sought out the best ‘stations’ around the lake so as to get the classic Rousseauistic sentimental experience,” and read aloud from the novel passages relevant to particular places.⁶⁸ Romanticism therefore spawned tourism centred primarily on the setting of a novel, the literary landscape, with which the tourist engages both imaginatively and emotionally.

The Gothic, a literary genre that emphasises mystery, horror, and the supernatural, first emerged in 1764 with Horace Walpole’s novel *The Castle of Otranto*, to become highly popular during the 1790s in Europe, Britain and the USA. The major influences on and characteristics of late-eighteenth century Gothic literature were:

⁶² H. Berghoff & B. Britain and the making of modern tourism (2002), p. 5.

⁶³ I. Ousby, *The Englishmen’s England* (1990), p. 154.

⁶⁴ Quoted in I. Ousby, *The Englishmen’s England* (1990), p. 154.

⁶⁵ I. Ousby, *The Englishmen’s England* (1990), p. 152.

⁶⁶ N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), p. 132.

⁶⁷ N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), p. 133.

⁶⁸ N.J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist* (2006), pp. 137, 140.

*The marvellous incidents and chivalric customs of [medieval] romances, the descriptions of wild and elemental natural settings, the gloom of the graveyard and ruin, the scale and permanence of [Gothic] architecture, the terror and wonder of the sublime.*⁶⁹

Castles, cathedrals and monasteries – medieval edifices that were models for evocations of sublimity – commonly served as settings for Gothic novels. Literary theorist Fred Botting’s assertion that “*literary works* provided the impulse for the new taste”⁷⁰ [my emphasis] in Gothic architecture, leading to the Gothic Revival, suggests that by extension these works also awakened touristic interest in intact and ruined original Gothic structures, especially since castles with dungeons became common tourist targets.⁷¹ Night time visits to ruins, both medieval and classical, also became a popular tourist practice, as at Tintern Abbey, Wales, and the Roman Colosseum.⁷² This combination of darkness and ruins seems to have held a particular allure, for as Botting testifies: “[n]ight gave free reign to imagination’s unnatural and marvellous creatures, while ruins testified to a temporality that exceeded rational understanding and human finitude.”⁷³ Partial obscurity, for example a site that is partially obscured due to nocturnal darkness, inaccessible areas, or too vast to view in its entirety, is an important feature of the sublime and Gothic because it allows the “fictionalizing imagination to rise to and transcend the material occasion.”⁷⁴

Transposed to Africa: quests in literature and the continent

The African continent was also thus partially obscured, as by 1831 there were a few remaining uncharted areas on the world map with the largest still in Africa.⁷⁵ Even as a cartographic image, incomplete and obscured by the unknown, the vast ‘dark’ African continent appears to have been an ideal subject for the sublime, its ‘blanks’ allowing for the cultivation of various myths, fantasies and imaginative conceptions. European interest in the African interior gained momentum toward the end of the eighteenth century due to a combination of motivating factors: the search for new commodities to trade, interest in scientific geography and a fascination with exploration.

⁶⁹ F. Botting, *Gothic* (1996), p. 24.

⁷⁰ F. Botting, *Gothic* (1996), p. 32.

⁷¹ T. Seaton, Thanatourism and its discontents, in T. Jamal & M. Robinson (eds), *The Sage handbook of tourism studies* (London, 2009), p. 532.

⁷² G.G. Dekker, *The fictions of Romantic Tourism: Radcliffe, Scott and Mary Shelley* (Stanford, 2005), p. 230; I. Ousby, *The Englishman’s England* (1990), p. 125.

⁷³ F. Botting, *Gothic* (1996), p. 32.

⁷⁴ G.G. Dekker, *The fictions of Romantic Tourism* (1990), p. 50.

⁷⁵ P. Brantlinger, *Rule of darkness: British literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (London, 1988), p. 25.

Nineteenth century writing on Africa generally took the form of exploration narratives, missionary narratives and adventure fiction. Cultural theorist Patrick Brantlinger explains that the books written by the explorers “took the Victorian reading public by storm” and cites several examples, particularly David Livingstone’s *Missionary travels and researches in South Africa* (1857), which sold seventy thousand copies in its initial months after publication, making him not only wealthy but so famous “that he was mobbed by admirers.”⁷⁶ The aesthetic approaches of the picturesque, sublime, and Gothic were by this time wholly familiar to European and British culture through imaginative literature and travel writing. These approaches also “informed colonial travellers overseas with the perceptions and discursive strategies of coping with alien realities. And... play a formative role for the touristic appreciation and appropriation of the ‘new worlds.’”⁷⁷

Literary scholar Amber Vogel, in her essay on an ‘African sublime’, makes a compelling argument for the transference to and formation of an alternate form of the Grand Tour in Africa.⁷⁸ Her ‘African sublime’ consists of the following common elements: “solitude and wilderness, travel and ruin, regret and desire, memory and lament...that form rhetorical patterns put to use by African travellers, commentators and literary artists presenting Africa to a growing, evolving audience.”⁷⁹ Drawing on such travel narratives as that of Richard Lander, John Speke and Henry Morton Stanley, and other documentation on Africa’s exploration, Vogel points out several corresponding elements between the Grand Tour and nineteenth century travel in Africa. However, only three key points will be briefly noted here. First, the way these travel-writers, however different their outlooks and motives, applied the vocabulary and aesthetic of the picturesque, sublime and Gothic on the landscapes they traversed.⁸⁰ African landscapes were often compared to standards of picturesque beauty (like the paintings of Claude Lorraine or Nicholas Poussin); or portrayed through such common sublime terminology as vast, dark, solitary, oppressive, majestic and romantic; and particular features, like rock outcroppings and forest interiors, were often described as resembling ruined Gothic structures. The latter intimates the second important parallel – the almost obsessive search after ruins, especially those of lost or extinct civilisations. This indicates the extent to which travellers and readers had assimilated the conventions of the Grand Tour and Gothic aesthetic, coming to “hunger after...the glamour and terror of lost civilisations and their artefacts... [which] memorialized the

⁷⁶ P. Brantlinger, *Rule of darkness* (1988), p. 180.

⁷⁷ G. Stilz, *Heroic travellers – Romantic landscapes* (2002), p. 85

⁷⁸ A. Vogel, African sublime: the dark continent joins the Grand Tour, in M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen (eds), *Literature and tourism*: (2002), pp. 226-38.

⁷⁹ A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), p. 281.

⁸⁰ A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), pp. 282-89.

poignancy of human effort that had come to nothing.”⁸¹ Third, the way the records of the African Association “serve as a remarkable travel brochure for the would-be explorer,” proposing a new location for the Grand Tour and formulating a new motive for it.⁸² These new travel motivations included: economic profit; natural resources; indigenes’ spiritual conversion; the discovery of ruins; and, on a more personal level, fame, glory and social advancement. The following extract from the records of the African Association explicitly posits this transference of the Grand Tour from Europe to Africa:

*To the British traveller, a desire of changing the usual excursion from Calais to Naples, for a tour more extended and important, and of passing from scenes with which all are acquainted, to researches in which every object is new, and each step is discovery, may recommend the kingdom of Fezzan.*⁸³

The question then is why readers of African travel narratives found them so appealing and whether these inspired readers to emulate their traveller-authors and come to Africa. These accounts “are almost overburdened by descriptions of the varied and awe-inspiring landscapes, the incredible rivers, the rich vegetation, and the many strange animals.”⁸⁴ Added to this are descriptions of the local inhabitants they encountered, their dress, appearance, arts and customs – all quite different from that of the reader. To the audience first encountering Africa through these texts, it could be argued that the sheer ‘otherworldliness’ of the content must have read much like fiction. Phillips notes how even geographers and historians have come to reinterpret exploration narratives as “quest narratives, in which heroes encounter the unknown – adventure” and “illustrate the possibility of reading... geographical narratives as adventure narratives.”⁸⁵ Likewise, the observations of literary commentators on these texts could be construed as portrayals of a host of fantastical adventure novels. They are described as “nonfictional quest romances in which the hero-authors struggle through enchanted, bedevilled lands towards an ostensible goal,”⁸⁶ and “the heroes of their own narratives...every incident appeared as a life-or-death event and genuine courage and fortitude took on an operatic bravura.”⁸⁷

Such heroism and bravery, such adventure and novelty – along with the attendant promises of social advancement, glory, fame and riches to be had – might

⁸¹ A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), p. 288.

⁸² A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), p. 285.

⁸³ Quoted in A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), p. 286.

⁸⁴ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (Prospect Heights, 1992), p. 61.

⁸⁵ R. Phillips, *Mapping men and Empire: A geography of adventure* (London, 1997), p. 8.

⁸⁶ P. Brantlinger, *Rule of darkness* (1988), pp. 180-81.

⁸⁷ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 56.

well have seemed very appealing to the potential African traveller, whether as explorer, missionary or tourist. Furthermore, African travellers certainly seem to have read the works of those who had come before them. For example, George Thompson writes: “[A]t daybreak [I] found myself near a place called Pampoen-kraal [Cape Colony], being the identical spot where the celebrated Vaillant pitched his tent, and penned his romantic descriptions of this part of the colony.”⁸⁸ Like literary tourists, many travellers to Africa brought other travellers’ accounts with them, such as Elizabeth Melville who took a number of books with her to Sierra Leone in the 1840s, and specifically mentions F. Harrison Rankin’s book *The White man’s grave: A visit to Sierra Leone, in 1834*.⁸⁹ It appears that a number of African explorers were inspired by the works of their predecessors to travel to Africa. René Caillié, for example, was encouraged to become a traveller as a youth by Daniel Defoe’s adventure novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), and after reading the work of explorer Mungo Park determined that he would seek out the city of Timbuktu.⁹⁰ In a similar vein to the way literary tourists seek writers’ biographical sites to form a more personal connection and verify their existence and deeds, so too were some explorers subjected to the same treatment. When Richard Lander and his brother John set out in 1830 to explore the Niger River, part of their mission was the recovery of the relics of Mungo Park who had died at Bussa, Nigeria, in 1806. On an earlier expedition “Richard Lander had already found traces of lost explorers to be African landmarks as important as anything native to the region.”⁹¹ David Livingstone also seems to have inspired a particular devotion, as Hedley Chilvers notes almost fifty years after his death: “To judge by the number of those who have since made the pilgrimage to Chitambo [Northern Rhodesia]...the spot where his heart lies buried, the world is not disposed to forget the man.”⁹²

The practices of these African travellers – reading their predecessors’ books, travelling to and through the places portrayed in their pages, seeking out physical traces of the traveller-author – correspond with the elementary characteristics of literary tourist practices and could therefore be regarded as a kind of rudimentary, less focused form of literary tourism. There are also distinct similarities between this stage of travel in Africa and the Grand Tour, as evidenced by the promotional literature, the pursuit of similar attractions, and the application of aesthetic genres conventionalised through tourism and creative literature. By the 1870s, Vogel concludes, “the familiar Grand Tourist had been wholly transformed into the exotic African explorer: a contemplative,

⁸⁸ G. Thompson, *Travel and adventures in Southern Africa I* (London, 1827), p. 8.

⁸⁹ A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), p. 284.

⁹⁰ R. Caillié, *Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo I* (London, 1968 [1830]), p. 5; J.S. Keltie & S.C. Gilmour, *Adventures of exploration, Book IV, Africa* (London, n.d.), p. 51.

⁹¹ A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), p. 290.

⁹² H. Chilvers, *The Seven Wonders of Southern Africa* (Johannesburg, 1929), p. 341.

essentially solitary figure set down in a beautiful but alien landscape cluttered with... artefacts signifying danger, dissolution and darkness.”⁹³

Haggard and the mystery of Great Zimbabwe

Great Zimbabwe, towards the end of the nineteenth century, was such an artefact or ruin that embodied the allure of an ancient lost civilisation. The first tangible evidence of the existence of the ruins, located in what is today Zimbabwe, was provided in 1871 by German explorer Carl Mauch. Its architecture was erroneously considered as too sophisticated to be the work of any indigenous peoples, and was immediately linked to the longstanding, popular myth that this was the Biblical, gold-bearing land of “King Solomon’s Ophir, built for the Queen of Sheba, with a Phoenician substratum”.⁹⁴ A number of scholars have investigated how H. Rider Haggard contributed to and reinforced this myth in the popular imagination that Great Zimbabwe was built by an ancient white civilisation through his novels, especially *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885) and *She* (1886).⁹⁵ His African adventure novels were of course highly successful: the two afore-mentioned novels sold over six hundred and fifty thousand and one million copies respectively before his death in 1925; both have been filmed numerous times; and *King Solomon’s Mines* became “standard reading in schools in Britain and in English-speaking Africa.”⁹⁶ After their publication, it came to be believed that Great Zimbabwe served both as the setting for *She* (even though the book’s geography indicates an East African setting) and the inspiration for *King Solomon’s Mines*.⁹⁷

The areas then known as Mashonaland and Matabeleland were colonised between 1890 and 1895 by the British South Africa Company and named Rhodesia.⁹⁸ One of a number of Southern African territories colonised during the 1880s and 1890s,

⁹³ A. Vogel, *African sublime* (2002), p. 293.

⁹⁴ L. Stiebel, Creating a landscape of Africa: Baines, Haggard and Great Zimbabwe, *English in Africa* 28(2), 2001, p.128.

⁹⁵ M. Hall, The legend of the lost city; or, the man with the golden balls, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 21(2), 1995, pp. 179-199; L. Stiebel, *Creating a landscape of Africa* (2001), pp. 123-33; D. Tangri, Popular fiction and the Zimbabwe controversy, *History in Africa* 17, 1990, pp. 293-304.

⁹⁶ W. Minter, *King Solomon’s mines revisited: Western interests and the burdened history of Southern Africa* (New York, 1986), p.3.

⁹⁷ In terms of real-life inspirations for Haggard’s fictions, the titular character of *She*, Ayesha or ‘She-who-must-be-obeyed,’ has also been linked to Queen Modjadji, otherwise known as the Rain Queen. The monarch of the baLovedu tribe resident in the South African province of Mpumalanga, she, like Ayesha, was believed to be immortal and to possess various supernatural abilities. See M. Cohen, *Rider Haggard: his life and works* (London, 1960), p. 109.

⁹⁸ S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Mapping cultural and colonial encounters, 1880s - 1930s, in B. Raftopoulos & A. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe: A history from the pre-colonial period to 2008* (Johannesburg, 2009), pp. 47,49, 58.

these developments would come to affect both travel and literature, revealing their close cultural connection:

From the 1880's through the first decades of the twentieth century more Britons than ever before came to Africa...Interest in the new possessions stimulated the first wave of African tourism, and many came just to observe and report on their observations. The floodgates were raised for a tidal wave of literary production...everybody wrote: the "men on the spot", their wives, the tourists, the self-appointed experts, biographers, and novelists.⁹⁹

Fictional writing on Africa also started gaining momentum from the 1880s, to become the dominant form of popular literature about the continent by the end of the century.¹⁰⁰ These fictional works imitated the thrilling narratives of the African explorers and tended toward discredited literary genres: Gothic romance and the adventure story.¹⁰¹ Although discredited and "often marketed as boys' stories, [the adventure genre] attracted readers of both sexes, and (almost) all ages and classes."¹⁰² Brantlinger asserts that these fiction writers "produc[ed] quest romances with Gothic overtones in which the heroic white penetration of the Dark Continent is the central theme...[and] H. Rider Haggard's stories fit this pattern."¹⁰³

Haggard is counted among the most significant and influential figures in the tradition of British literature on Africa. This is because he assimilated into his writing most of the literary themes predominant during the late nineteenth century and the "Haggard stamp appeared on almost every one of the hundreds of exotic adventure tales that were written after *King Solomon's Mines*."¹⁰⁴ Literary historians Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow, in their investigation of Africa's depiction through primarily British literature from its initial exploration to the 1950s, identify these prevailing late nineteenth century themes. As previously mentioned, a common and oft-debated theme was the metaphor of Africa as the 'Dark Continent.' Reflecting not only geographical ignorance, this theme presents Africa as a vast place of danger and death, and bespeaks the exotic allure of the continent, harking back to the oxymoronic notions, such as 'horrid beauty' and 'delightful terror', of the sublime. Another common but contrasting theme, originating in writings on South Africa since the early 1800s, is that of the 'land in amber'. This Africa is a beautiful, sun-

⁹⁹ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 76.

¹⁰⁰ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 10.

¹⁰¹ P. Brantlinger, *Rule of darkness* (1988), p. 189; D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 101.

¹⁰² R. Phillips, *Mapping men and Empire* (1997), p. 11.

¹⁰³ P. Brantlinger, *Rule of darkness* (1988), p. 189.

¹⁰⁴ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 102.

drenched, golden land with fertile, open spaces and a temperate climate that preserves older and simpler ways of life.¹⁰⁵ This image of Africa was a nostalgic fantasy that, much like certain aspects of the Romantic sensibility, was “born of a distaste for the present ... [and] glorifies the past.”¹⁰⁶ An extension of the ‘land in amber’ theme is the presentation of Africa as a place of freedom and independence: “the call of Africa is the pull toward action and adventure. The envisioned freedom of Africa provides the excitement of challenge, the thrill of a brush with danger and even death.”¹⁰⁷ Hunting, believed to demonstrate character and the virtues of bravery and action, provided ideal opportunities for such excitement and danger. The theme of ‘Hunter’s Paradise’ was so ubiquitous that Africa and big-game hunting became almost synonymous with one another.¹⁰⁸ Hunting, as narrative episodes and contextual omnipresence, certainly features frequently in Haggard’s works, for his protagonist in *King Solomon’s Mines* and over ten other novels is Allan Quatermain, the great white hunter.

As in the explorers’ journals, the African environment was still sufficiently ‘exotic’ to warrant exhaustive descriptions of the fauna, flora and scenic wonders. As for the native populace during this period, they were unfortunately either completely ignored or egregiously stereotyped as ‘uncivilised savages.’¹⁰⁹ Some characters, like Haggard’s Zulu warrior Umbopa in *King Solomon’s Mines*, were cast into the romantic ideal of the ‘noble savage.’ Determined by European attitudes toward nobility, the virtues of the ‘noble savage’, courage, intelligence and physical beauty for example, were often matched with an aristocratic lineage, like Umbopa who turns out to be the rightful king of Kukuanaaland. Lastly, the most ubiquitous theme of all is that of travel or journeying. Practically all the books on Africa, including *She* and *King Solomon’s mines*, were either wholly centred upon a journey or include it as an integral part,¹¹⁰ indicating that through literature Africa also became synonymous with travel. Another noteworthy feature of Haggard’s works is “the littering of his African topography with ruins,”¹¹¹ indicating the durable impact of Romanticism’s fascination with lost civilisations.

Many of these themes are admittedly racist, ethnocentric and idealistic. However, it could be argued that these themes and images, forming part of a shared

¹⁰⁵ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), pp. 108, 157.

¹⁰⁶ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 157; P.D. Curtin, *The image of Africa: British ideas and action, 1780-1850* (London, 1965), p. 59.

¹⁰⁷ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 158

¹⁰⁸ J.C. Gruesser, *White on black contemporary literature about Africa* (Chicago, 1992), pp. 1, 5; D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), pp. 46-47.

¹⁰⁹ P.D. Curtin, *The image of Africa* (1965), p. 227; D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), pp. 25-27.

¹¹⁰ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 77.

¹¹¹ L. Stiebel, *Creating a landscape of Africa* (2001), p. 129.

cultural background of aesthetic conventions and inculcated through the highly popular exploration narratives, produced an image of Africa that was familiar, accepted and appealing to readers, and was therefore successfully deployed in imperial adventure fiction. It was, so to speak, a tried and tested formula. The literature, furthermore, appears to have depicted Southern Africa in particular as an inviting destination – a scenic land of sunshine, good weather, ideal for travel, freedom, independence, and danger if one were so inclined – that would attract any travel-hungry reader.

Numerous travel accounts from the 1890s onward show that travellers went to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), often via South Africa, to visit what was likely their two most well-known attractions, Victoria Falls and the Zimbabwe Ruins.¹¹² Thomas Cook, the reputed originator of the modern packaged tour, ran several tours through Southern Africa between the 1890s and the 1920s, one of which included Great Zimbabwe.¹¹³ As early as 1902, twelve years after colonisation, the British South Africa Company instructed Richard Hall, an amateur archaeologist, to undertake preservation efforts at Great Zimbabwe “in order to make the ruins more attractive to tourists.”¹¹⁴ A local guidebook on the ruins had been published by 1914,¹¹⁵ and visitor accommodation was available to tourists in the form of a simple hotel from at least 1924.¹¹⁶

The rhetoric many of these early twentieth century visitors used to describe their experience of the ruins was in keeping with the nature of the themes and images of nineteenth century adventure fiction with its Gothic overtones. Italian scientist Attilio Gatti depicts his experience in the early 1930s thus:

*To-day the naked ruins expose themselves to our eyes in a grey, monotonous, sinister procession...over all a desolate heavy silence broods...the sphinx-like mystery with which the ruins preserve the secret of their identity, and the hard, cruel aspect they present, affects one strangely.*¹¹⁷

¹¹² See for example: F.A. Donnithorne, *Wonderful Africa: Being the 7,000 miles travel in South and South Central Africa* (London, 1924); A. Gatti, *Hidden Africa* (London, 1933); H.L. Tangye, *In New South Africa: Travels in the Transvaal and Rhodesia* (London: 1896).

¹¹³ P. Merrington, A staggered orientalism: the Cape-to-Cairo imaginary, in L. de Kock, L. Bethlehem & S. Laden (eds), *South Africa in the global imaginary* (Pretoria, 2004), p. 79.

¹¹⁴ H. Kuklick, Contested monuments: the politics of archeology in Southern Africa, in G.W. Stocking (ed.), *Colonial situations: Essays on the contextualisation of ethnographic knowledge* (Madison, 1991), p. 143.

¹¹⁵ L. Stiebel, *Creating a landscape of Africa* (2001), p. 127.

¹¹⁶ F.A. Donnithorne, *Wonderful Africa* (1924), p. 166.

¹¹⁷ A. Gatti, *Hidden Africa* (1933), p. 109.



Figure 1: Southern Rhodesia Publicity Bureau poster by A.W. Baylis, 1938.

(From: <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/posters-signage-advertising/aw-baylis-zimbabwe-the-riddle-of-rhodesia-5491048-details.aspx>.)

In spite of archaeological evidence to the contrary, the so-called ‘ancient-exotic theory’ of Great Zimbabwe’s origins remained popular, and served as an effective advertising tool to the Southern Rhodesian Publicity Bureau¹¹⁸ (**Figure 1**), which also linked the site to Haggard’s works in its promotional literature. He himself found, during his visit to Great Zimbabwe in 1914, that “the local guidebook claimed that he used these ruins as the setting for ancient Kôr in *She*.”¹¹⁹ Haggard denied this, admitting only to having heard vague rumours regarding the ruins, which did however stimulate his imagination in the case of *King Solomon’s Mines*.¹²⁰ Haggard’s repudiation evidently

¹¹⁸ H. Kuklick, *Contested monuments* (1991), pp. 149, 156.

¹¹⁹ L. Stiebel, *Creating a landscape of Africa* (2001), p. 127.

¹²⁰ L. Stiebel, *Creating a landscape of Africa* (2001), p. 127.

did not stop writers or readers from continuing to make this writer-place connection. Hedley Chilvers still makes this connection fifteen years later, stating in reference to Great Zimbabwe's Hill Ruin or Acropolis:

Behind the walls of this towering rock-pile lived Rider Haggard's vivid creation, "She-who-must-be-obeyed," the heroine of the romance which that master of fiction wrote in the white heat of an inspiration born of the mystery enveloping the Acropolis.¹²¹

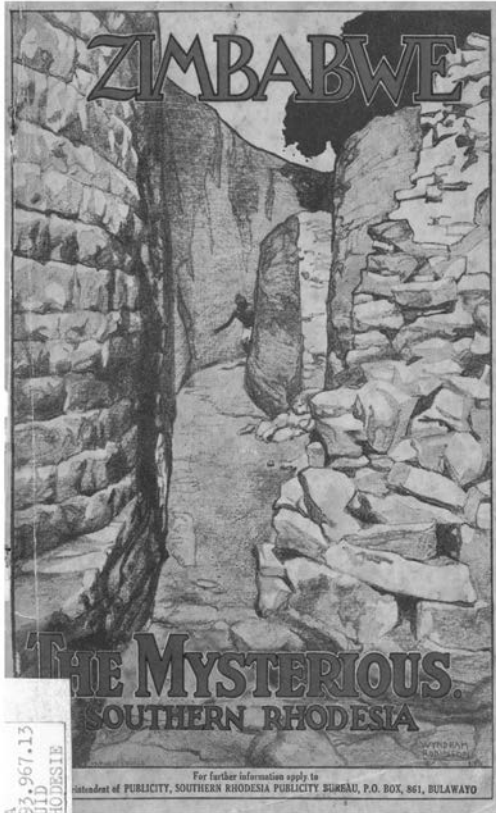


Figure 2: Front cover of a guidebook to Great Zimbabwe.
From: Southern Rhodesia Publicity Bureau, *The Great Zimbabwe Ruins*
(Bulawayo, 1930)

¹²¹ H. Chilvers, *The Seven Wonders of Southern Africa* (1929), p. 318

Earlier in the same book, Chilvers's caption under a photograph of Haggard at the ruins taken in 1914 reads: "Rider Haggard, whose famous novel "She" is based on Zimbabwe, and who derived the atmosphere of "King Solomon's Mines" from other relics of a bygone Rhodesia."¹²² Another guidebook on the ruins published by the Publicity Bureau in 1930 (**Figure 2**) makes similar statements regarding Haggard and his African romances.¹²³ It emphasises the 'mysterious' origin of the ruins and describes the scenery of Great Zimbabwe in terms such as "savage beauty" and "absolutely ideal and romantic that the heart is stirred and the imagination given full rein."¹²⁴ Thereby, such publications "reinforc[ed] the popular link between Haggard, the ruins and his early fiction,"¹²⁵ as well as sublime conceptions of Africa as a beautiful but wild and dangerous place, heightening its tourist attractiveness. Haggard's audience was evidently confident that they could physically visit his African settings, as Hammond and Jablow state:

*Readers were often convinced that what they were reading in King Solomon's Mines was a true story told by a real person, a white hunter named Allan Quatermain, and the places he told of could be pointed to on the map of Africa.*¹²⁶

With the established connection between Haggard's African romances and Great Zimbabwe, a real, locatable place, the promotion of this link in contemporaneous literature, and evidence of tourists visiting the site since the 1890s, it appears likely that Haggard's novels inspired reader-tourists to visit Southern Africa. For, by the 1960s, the national park around Great Zimbabwe contained almost every kind of tourist facility and the ruins received approximately one hundred thousand visitors every year.¹²⁷ That not a single one of these many tourists were drawn by Haggard's works is unlikely, since Haggard-biographer Morton Cohen notes: "For many Englishmen, Africa became the Africa of *King Solomon's Mines*."¹²⁸ For British audiences in particular, linking tracts of land to literary works and converting them into the recognised entity of the literary landscape, like 'Shakespeare's Stratford', 'Hardy's Wessex', 'Doone-land' and 'Brontë Country', was nothing new by this time. Haggard had clearly left a lasting impression on the popular imagination, and to visit Southern Africa was to visit Haggard's Africa.

¹²² H. Chilvers, *The Seven Wonders of Southern Africa* (1929), p. 316.

¹²³ Southern Rhodesian Publicity Bureau, *The Great Zimbabwe Ruins* (Bulawayo, 1930), pp. 17, 49.

¹²⁴ Southern Rhodesian Publicity Bureau, *The Great Zimbabwe Ruins* (1930), pp. 10, 14.

¹²⁵ L. Stiebel, *Creating a landscape of Africa* (2001), p. 131.

¹²⁶ D. Hammond & A. Jablow, *The Africa that never was* (1992), p. 10 8.

¹²⁷ H. Kuklick, *Contested monuments* (1991), p. 158.

¹²⁸ M. Cohen, *Rider Haggard* (1960), p. 94.

Conclusion

With the rise of the Romantic sensibility permeating cultural thought in Europe and Britain from the second half of the eighteenth century, the popular forms of literature and the nature of tourism changed, becoming practices of deep emotional and imaginative involvement. The untamed natural world and medieval structures were culturally reconstructed as beautiful, dangerous and thrilling, translating into new sites for the tourist gaze. Romantic aesthetic approaches, especially the sublime and Gothic, propagated through imaginative literature and travel narratives, were transposed to Africa during the nineteenth century, functioning as familiar cultural devices or strategies through which travellers coped with and made sense of this unfamiliar and very different new world. These approaches were subsequently crystallised in common literary themes and images of Africa, such as the 'dark continent', 'noble savage', the 'land in amber' and the ubiquitous quest. In this way a perception of an Africa both romantic and exotic emerged through the widely read nineteenth century quest narratives and romances, among which Haggard's works are counted as highly influential. Great Zimbabwe, in particular, appealed to tourists as a site from an ancient, lost culture and a literary landscape linked to two of Haggard's most successful works. It became a popular literary tourist attraction, largely shaped by British and European aesthetics through imperial adventure fiction as a site that embodied the perceived savage beauty, thrilling danger, and mystique of Africa. In turn this perception of Africa in popular consciousness attracted tourists to the greater Southern African region and, one might argue, continues to do so.