In 1877 Cecil Rhodes, who had just begun to make his fortune in the Kimberley diamond fields of South Africa, drafted a ‘confession of faith’ that expressed his messianic imperial vision, which held that it was right and proper for the ‘Anglo-Saxon race’ to expand at the expense of inferior peoples.

I contend that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race. Just fancy those parts that are at present inhabited by the most despicable specimens of human beings what an alternation there would be if they were brought under Anglo-Saxon influence, look again at the extra employment a new country added to our dominions gives [sic]. I contend that every acre added to our territory means in the future birth to some more of the English race who otherwise would not be brought into existence. ... Africa is still lying ready for us it is our duty to take it. It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory and we should keep this one idea steadily before our eyes that more territory simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race more of the best the most human, most honourable race the world possesses [sic].


The late-Victorian social theorist Benjamin Kidd sought to explain the expansion of the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ across the globe in terms of Darwinian science, to which he attributed a natural law of progress that overrode humanitarian concerns for the fate of ‘weaker races’.

We watch the Anglo-Saxon overflowing his boundaries, going forth to take possession of new territories, and establishing himself like his ancestors in many lands. A peculiar interest attaches to the sight. He has been deeply affected, more deeply than many others, by the altruistic influences of the ethical system upon which our Western Civilisation is founded. He had seen races like the ancient Peruvians, the Aztecs, and the Caribs, in large part exterminated by others, ruthlessly driven out of existence by the more vigorous invader, and he has at least the wish to do better. ... Yet neither wish nor intention has power apparently to arrest a destiny which works
itself out irresistibly. The Anglo-Saxon has exterminated the less developed peoples with which he has come into competition even more effectively than other races have done in like case; not necessarily indeed by fierce and cruel wars of extermination, but through the operation of laws not less deadly and even more certain in their result. The weaker races disappear before the stronger through the effects of mere contact. ... No motives appear to be able to stay the progress of such movements, humanize them how we may. We often in a self-accusing spirit attribute the gradual disappearance of aboriginal peoples to the effects of our vices upon them; but the truth is that what may be called the virtues of our civilisation are scarcely less fatal than its vices. ... Wherever a superior race comes into close contact and competition with an inferior race, the result seems to be much the same, whether it is arrived at by the rude method of wars of conquest, or by the silent process which we see at work in Australia, New Zealand, and the North American Continent. ...


**DOCUMENT 5  SOCIAL INVESTIGATION AS IMPERIAL EXPLORATION**

The urban poor came to be seen by many social reformers as the domestic counterparts to the primitive peoples that Stanley and other explorers reported encountering in Africa. The Salvation Army’s General Booth makes explicit and sustained use of this analogy in his call for action against poverty in Britain.

As there is a darkest Africa is there not also a darkest England? Civilisation, which can breed its own barbarians, does it not also breed its own pygmies? May we not find a parallel at our own doors, and discover within a stone’s throw of our cathedrals and palaces similar horrors to those which Stanley has found existing in the great Equatorial forest? The more the mind dwells upon the subject, the closer the analogy appears. The ivory raiders who brutally traffic in the unfortunate denizens of the forest glades, what are they but the publicans who flourish on the weakness of our poor? The two tribes of savages, the human baboon and the handsome dwarf ... may be accepted as the two varieties who are continually present with us – the vicious, lazy lout, and the toiling slave. ... And just as Mr. Stanley’s Zanzibaris lost faith, and could only be induced to plod on in brooding sullenness of dull despair, so the most of our social reformers ... soon become depressed and despairing. ... Who can hope to make headway against the innumerable adverse conditions which doom the dweller in Darkest England to eternal and immutable misery?... The stony streets of
London, if they could but speak, would tell of tragedies as awful, of ruin as complete, of ravishments as horrible, as if we were in Central Africa; only the ghastly devastation is covered, corpse-like, with the artificialities and hypocrisies of modern civilisation.


**DOCUMENT 11  JINGOISM**

The term ‘jingoism’ entered the vocabulary of political debate in the late nineteenth century to describe popular enthusiasm for colonial wars and other aggressive assertions of national power. Liberal critics like J. A. Hobson believed the music halls and the press manipulated the patriotic emotions of the public and corrupted the democratic process.

The quick ebullition of national hate termed Jingoism is a particular form of this primitive passion, modified and intensified by certain conditions of modern civilisation. ... Among large sections of the middle and labouring classes, the music-hall, and the recreative public-house into which it shades off by imperceptible degrees, are a more potent educator than the church, the school, the political meeting, or even than the press. Into this ‘lighter self’ of the city populace the artiste conveys by song and recitation crude notions upon morals and politics, appealing by coarse humour or exaggerated pathos to the animal lusts of an audience stimulated by alcohol into appreciative hilarity. In ordinary times politics plays no important part in these feasts of sensationalism, but the glorification of brute force and an ignorant contempt for foreigners are ever-present factors which at great political crises make the music-hall a very serviceable engine for generating military passion.


**DOCUMENT 12  WAR PROPAGANDA AND INDIAN LOYALITIES**

The British were well aware of German efforts to encourage an Indian uprising during the war. Sir Mancherjee Bhownageree, a Parsi from Bombay who had moved to England and won election as a Conservative member of Parliament before the war, responds in this propaganda pamphlet, defending Britain against charges of colonial oppression and insisting that Indians are united in their loyalty to the British cause.

One of the methods by which Germany has indulged her hatred of the
British nation is by roundly accusing it of having grossly misgoverned India. To justify that accusation, propagandist literature has been widely distributed in all quarters of the globe by German official writers during the last two years. The people of India have laughed to scorn this grotesque attempt. ... [H]ow ridiculous seem the efforts of the German official propagandists to accuse the British of having misgoverned them, in the hope of alienating their allegiance. It ill becomes a nation whose agents have massacred in cold blood and extirpated the tribe of Herrerillos ... to talk of the oppression and failure of British rule. ... The people of India have seen through and through the motives of the diabolical propaganda, and they scout the foul charges, the proof or disproof of which must depend on their own verdict. That Verdict is that the destinies of their country have been directed in the paths of progress and prosperity by the government which British genius and British statesmanship have established in India, that they are proud of being British citizens, and that it is only by the right and title of that citizenship that they hope to revive the ancient glory of their mother-land, taking their proper place in the Comity of Nations side by side with the other children of the British Empire.