

*Empire of the Senses or a Sense
of Empire? The Imaginary and the
Symbolic in Kipling's "Kim"*

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To our dear dark foster mothers,
To the heathen songs they sung—
To the heathen speech we babbled,
Ere we' came to the white man's tongue.

RUDYARD KIPLING, *The Native Born*

"KIM" WAS BORN out of Rudyard Kipling's nostalgia for his infancy and early childhood in India, so that the book adopts an unusual mellow tone towards the East. The Kipling at work here has relented for a time in his strident anathematizing and tries instead to reconcile the irreconcilable. This raises at once the question of a conflict in Kipling (debated since the 1941 essay by Edmund Wilson¹), which I approach here by way of Jacques Lacan's concepts of the Imaginary and of the Symbolic. Critics have offered a few tentative remarks in that direction but so far have not dealt extensively with the concepts.² No doubt Lacan's theories are meant to apply to real people not to characters in fiction nor, through them, to an implied or even real author. Yet his analysis of the Imaginary contributes to our understanding of regressive, infantile tendencies that may be found at any phase of life, while the Symbolic can encompass broadly the fundamental social prohibitions supported by authoritarian, coercive attitudes. Thus Madan Sarup writes: "The Imaginary . . . extends far into the adult individual's experience of others and of the external world. Wherever a false identification is to be found—within the subject or between one subject and another or between subject and thing—there the Imaginary holds sway" (101-02).

According to Lacan, the small child enters the Imaginary through the mirror stage that confers upon him a sense (albeit fictive) of his identity, after which he looks at the gaze of the other to have that sense confirmed. It can therefore be argued easily that India functions as Kim's mirror and bolsters his sense of self by casting a benign eye on him—hence the numerous incantatory formulae such as “the great good-tempered world” (82), the “kindly land” (83), “the kindly East” (260)—so that he feels allowed to conclude that “[d]ecidedly he was a favourite of the stars” (88). In this narcissistic world of plenitude, Kim feels entirely at one with surroundings that send back to him a pleasing image of himself. As a result, India brings him “pure delight” (193), an echo of the “jubilant assumption” experienced by the Lacanian child.³ Indeed, there seems to hover around him a general benevolence that he knows how to play on as, for instance, when he drops “into his most caressing and confidential tone the one, he well knew, that few could resist” (117).

In particular, the world of women appears well disposed towards him, and his first experiments in begging are so many acts of seduction (62-62, 76-78). Being “son to half Hind” (121), he lives in symbiosis with mother India, “*in the middle*” of it (51), “*in a life wild as that of the Arabian Nights,*” diving “*into the happy Asiatic disorder*” (112; emphasis added). Known as “Little Friend of all the World” (51), he has the exhilarating impression of being the wonder child to mother India. In addition, Kim's mother tongue is Hindustani, a language he thinks and dreams in,⁴ whereas he speaks English “in a clipped uncertain sing-song” (49).⁵

Madan Sarup considers the whole Imaginary order as “a kind of pre-verbal register whose logic is essentially visual” (110), and indeed the novel offers a kaleidoscope of the country where colours and movements predominate. “New sights at every stride” (109) are what Kim delights in, “new sights at every turn of the approving eye” (121). This, of course, corresponds to a partial view of India, in both senses of the word; the omnipresent phrase “all India” refers in fact to the north-western corner, and the unpleasant features of “heat and dust,” emphasized in all Kipling's writings about the country, have miraculously disap-

peared from the novel (only Benares, lying far south, is called "a particularly filthy city" 234).⁶

Lacan, it should be stressed, insists that the mirror stage rests on "mis-recognition," that the child's ideal image of self in the world is artificially upheld, being based on "the orthopaedic vision of its totality."⁷ Thus the disguises that give Kim an illusory sense of being totally at home with the world around are a perfect counterpart to the "armour" (*Ecrit I* 4),⁸ with which the child clothes itself in Lacanian theory.

The blissful dyadic union with mother India can be all the more easily achieved for from the outset Kim's numerous substitute fathers present no threat to the boy. His biological father died in a most convenient manner before the opening of the story, while the curator of the Lahore museum represents a world of learning Kim admires from a safe distance through "a crack in the heat-split cedar door"; indeed, as "most of the talk [is] altogether above his head" (55), he soon falls asleep (57).⁹ The lama, for his part, has an essentially nonrepressive nature, and casts upon him the same feminine appreciative look as mother India, talking of "the beauty and wisdom of a certain mysterious *chela* [disciple] . . . the one *chela* appointed to bring the event to a happy issue" (213). In characteristic fashion, Kim, at their first meeting, "purposed to take possession" (60). Mahbub Ali appears as a more authoritative figure, but initially the boy experiences only added excitement meeting him, unaware of the Pathan's real role. The messages that Kim carries for him work wonders: regiments are sent marching as if by magic, which fits in well with the quasi-enchanted world of the Imaginary. Even the old soldier, a decorated veteran of the Mutiny who has two sons in the army, is not meant to dampen his illusory sense of omnipotence and addresses him "as though Kim were an equal" (95).

The Symbolic corresponds to the full advent of the child into language, where in fact the child pre-existed, having been the object of the parents' discourse and expectations previous to its birth. The child's life now passes under the sway of the name-of-the-father—the fundamental signifier of culture, representing filiation as well as the basic prohibitions.¹⁰ Thus, from the second

page of the novel, Kim's entry into the Symbolic is heralded by the birth certificate tied round his neck, together with various papers referring to his father, Kimball O'Hara, and the whole is accompanied by a prophecy about his future (50).¹¹ Kim's Irish descent (his "mother had been Irish too" [60]) may explain his ebullience and versatility but, on the other hand, his low, marginal status among whites predisposes him to an intermediary role, facilitating dealings with and surveillance of the Indian population. Actually the Symbolic had been there all the time, lying in wait in the form of "white men of serious aspect," "societies and chaplains" who "tried to catch him"—the representatives of a society that cannot allow a child to revel too long in the Imaginary, especially "a poor white of the very poorest" (49-51).¹²

But significantly here, the name-of-the-father appears in the guise of several father substitutes. Kim (who, in addition to "Little Friend of all the World" was also known as "Kim of the Rishti" [134]) becomes the lama's *chela* and regains his name O'Hara when the religious father seals his fate by sending him to St. Xavier's (157). Indeed, most societies generally resort to schooling in order to discipline a child, to complete his or her accession to the Symbolic order, and the novel emphasizes the unpleasantness of the occasion by the harsh metallic echo: "The Gates of Learning' shut with a clang" (171). In other words, free access to mother India has been barred by a league of Kim's substitute fathers: lama, army chaplains, Creighton (whose "interest in Kim was directly paternal," as one of the schoolfellows hints [224]), and even Mahbub Ali. The latter, who up to then had been a mere purveyor of fun and adventure, upholds schooling much to Kim's disappointment, and only wrenches from Creighton a spell of freedom back into the Imaginary during the holidays (in fact, these holidays serve as an excellent preparation for the secret service).

The school episode brings to light the ambivalence of the novel. It seems to support the principle of reality but actually undermines it, as when the narrative voice peremptorily declares, "you would scarcely be interested" (171), only briefly mentioning mathematics, map-making, and surveying (212). The novel instead devotes all its attention to the principle of

pleasure, to the extended interludes in the Imaginary. The only important discovery Kim makes at school is the Eurasians' ability to overcome hardships because these boys are entirely at one with their surroundings: "The mere story of their adventures, which to them were no adventures . . . would have crisped a Western boy's hair. . . . Kim watched, listened, and approved" (172).

In reality, the school and the attendant holidays merely develop potentialities that have been present in Kim from the start. He is endowed with the right imperial kind of eye, a panoptical eye privileging a position "a little above the country, along a stately corridor, seeing all India spread out to left and right" (111).¹³ Kim's "approving eye" (121) never remains passive, as when the boy "marked down . . . a family bullock-cart," (113) and ended as a pampered favourite of the Sahiba. His talent for disguise and his power of memorizing vision, developed during the sessions with Lurgan, are meant to enable the future British spy to master fully Indian diversity, without himself being noticed. Similarly, Creighton, the most impressive figure of authority in the novel, the embodiment of Foucault's power and knowledge, considers invisibility as one of the main characteristics of the secret service. Indeed he prefers to pass for "a very foolish Sahib," provided his real function remains unknown (164). Kipling himself was very doubtful about the pomp and circumstance of the British presence in India, complete with viceroy and jubilee (see the surprisingly gloomy *Recessional* poem). Thus *Kim* can be read as a hymn to the unobtrusive secret service which "runs like a shuttle throughout all Hind" (273). Kipling drew from historical data, such as the creation of the so-called "secret service Pundits," who, disguised as lamas, began to survey Tibet from 1863 with the help of specially devised equipment. As the 1911 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* explains:

a number of native Indian explorers . . . were specially trained at Dehra Dun in the work of surveying, and entered Tibet with a strong wooden box with a specially concealed secret drawer for holding observing instruments, a prayer wheel with rolls of blank paper instead of prayers in the barrel on which observations might be noted, and lamaic rosaries by the beads of which each hundred paces might be counted. ("Tibet")¹⁴

The Symbolic order in *Kim* corresponds even more closely to the world of fathers as they are bachelors,¹⁵ women being kept in the background, often listed or metaphorically associated with animals.¹⁶ Anxiety towards women reaches such heights that they are not even considered to be desirable sexual partners, especially Indian women, as the encounter with Lispeth clearly evidences. Indeed “the Woman of Shamlegh” is a particularly dangerous specimen as she belongs to the region “where women made the love” (304). When she gives Kim the half-shells of a walnut, he pretends not to see the sexual suggestion and uses them to conceal a letter (305); the only “reward” (305) he offers at the end is a kiss on the cheek, accompanied by the distancing salutation in the language of the Symbolic, which is here English: “Thank you verree much, my dear” (315). The allusion to “that girl at Akrola of the Ford . . . the scullion’s wife behind the dovecot—not counting the others” is not a boastful listing of his conquests, as it comes in a context when Kim feels “so always pestered by women” (306).

It could be objected that the spatio-temporal dimension contradicts the predominance of the Symbolic, as the Buddhist Wheel of Life (260) is the presiding metaphor. Time in the novel goes by at a very leisurely pace, in keeping with natural rhythms (261-62), and travel follows a more or less circuitous course, apparently chosen on the spur of the moment. But, at bottom, the world of the fathers remains linear; a goal has to be achieved, namely, the unrelenting defence of the British Empire even to the farthest Himalayan hills. Moreover, the temporal scheme of the book is projected into the future since Mahbub Ali has precise plans to render Kim’s holidays profitable (“I must have him with me beyond Balkh in six months!” [334]), after which the boy will pass under the authority of Creighton. As G. K. Chesterton wrote about Kipling’s works in general, “There is no perfectly epicurean corner; there is no perfectly irresponsible place” (74).

For all Kim’s early delight in the Imaginary, one may well wonder at what point he became aware of being a piece in the Great Game, an active and willing component of the Symbolic. A cursory interpretation might suggest that he has merely been

trapped by his love of adventure. Yet, the opening “king-of-the-castle game” was already far from innocent since he boastfully declared: “All Mussalmans fell off Zam-Zammah long ago!” (52). At school, listening to the anonymous voice of authority, he clearly realizes all the implications of his status: “One must never forget that one is a Sahib, and that some day, when examinations are passed, one will command natives. Kim made a note of this, for he began to understand where examinations led” (173). He adds later: “I see my road all clear before me to a good service. I will stay in the *madrissah* [school] till I am ripe” (183).

Later, his highest wish is to be granted a personal code number in the secret service (209). But, being part of Kipling’s world of wishful thinking, Kim develops the same deliberate blindness as his creator; the narrative voice invites the reader to believe that the boy does everything for fun, that “silver (is) the least part of the game” (84). Similarly Mowgli, in *The Jungle Book*, at first is exclusively concerned with establishing his dominion over the animal kingdom. However, there are a number of hints which already point to a different future. His human mother and father are introduced, and his real name, Nathoo, disclosed (Lacan’s filiation again [7: 59]). As we are warned that Mowgli is “of the jungle and *not* of the jungle” (64) and that “Man goes to Man at the last” (61), we are not surprised to find in a story belonging to a different collection that he collaborates with an English civil servant, marries, and achieves a measure of integration into the world of men (“In the Rukh”). But since the second story was written for adults, there was no need to disguise the necessary victory of the Symbolic.

However, Kipling does not praise the law of the Empire in *Kim* as bluntly as he does in the Indian short stories; in the novel, he allows marginal places to exist, where snatches of counter-discourse can be heard. For instance, even the chief figures of the Great Game are not unidimensional, exclusively preoccupied with its success. Creighton harbours the same secret ambition as Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, that is, to become a fellow of the prestigious Royal Society—an ironical feature that often passes unnoticed (222-23).¹⁷ Lurgan’s possible homosexual attraction to the young Hindu boy renders even more opaque the

man's already puzzling personality. Lispeth, for her part, voices some deeply felt grievances against the faithlessness and hypocrisy of the white people (313). As for Hurree, he cannot be reduced to the stock character of the educated Bengali. He does possess all the attributes of the ridiculous stereotype, but many more besides of quite a different order. He proves a most efficient spy, very exacting as regards time keeping (330), able to take the initiative, and does not shrink from physical hardships: "his days' marches . . . would astonish folk who mock at his race" (317). Indeed Kim, the "hero," admires his achievements not without a twinge of jealousy (330-31). Hurree is usually defined and remembered by his comical way of expressing himself, but his lengthy and florid speeches do not prevent him from noticing a technical discrepancy in Kim's behaviour: "Goodbye, my dear fellow, and next time you are under thee [sic] emotions please do not use Mohammedan term with the Tibetan dress" (330). In addition, Hurree is the only character in the book to speak a dozen languages; and he can quote Shakespeare ironically and to the point, mentioning "treason most base" (328) or underlining that he has "done the State some service" (317). Far from being passively entangled in the English language, he concocts word plays or odd-sounding phrases ("Cataleptic, if not also epileptic" [328]), which grants him distance from and mastery over a foreign language. In other words, this character perfectly illustrates the analyses of hybridity by Homi Bhabha, for whom the "specific space of cultural colonial discourse" is marked by "enigmatic, inappropriate signifiers—stereotypes, jokes, multiple and contradictory belief . . . at once a mode of appropriation and of resistance" (162). The hybrid is the same, but not quite; he repeats, but differently. This displacement, reinforced by the inscription of the fragmentary signs of the absent culture, creates subversion and reveals anxiety at the heart of colonial discourse.¹⁸ One of the two spies gives utterance to this anxiety when Kipling makes him denounce the "monstrous hybridism of East and West" (288). Yet the spies are entirely taken in when Hurree pretends to be drunk and criticizes the British government (270-71), an attitude Bhabha would call "sly civility" (163) or a process of "camouflage" (162). There is no doubt that the

character remains loyal to the Empire, and the dissenting speech only comes from the margins, from a far-off valley in the Himalayan hills. But feigned or not, criticism has been voiced.

The short-lived mental crises Kim suffers from are a perfect illustration of the way ambiguities are deftly overcome in the novel. It should be recalled here that, according to Lacan, psychosis results from a total silence about or absence of the name-of-the-father, a bankruptcy of the paternal metaphor which he calls foreclosure ("foreclusion"). Kim's crises may be due to a cause Lacan never envisaged: not a foreclosure of the name-of-the-father, but rather a proliferation of father figures. The last and most acute crisis is exemplary of the final victory of the Symbolic (330-32). Kim fails to understand the behaviour of the lama, looks around at all the feminine symbols of India (fields, huts, crops), but feels no thrill or encouragement. His soul remains "out of gear," "an idle cog-wheel," and only retrieves its function when connected to the nicely oiled machinery of the Great Game: "with an almost audible click he felt the wheels of his being lock up anew on the world without" (331). The supposedly "manly" conception of life, expressed through technical metaphors, has won the day by assigning Kim a definitively active role in the Symbolic order where free-wheeling "nomadism"—as understood by Deleuze and Guattari—is not really tolerated: "Roads were meant to be walked upon, houses to be lived in, cattle to be driven, fields to be tilled, and men and women to be talked to" (331).¹⁹

Should we then make light of the lama's presence and spiritual world? Is he a mere fool, stupid enough to pay for Kim's fees so as to render him fit for the secret service, naive enough to allow himself to be used as a cover for Kim's expedition against the spies in the Himalayan hills? If most critics consider the lama an admirable figure, many are annoyed at the way the text deals with him, beginning with Kim's repeated assertion that he is "mad" (67-68). Thus, it is not uncommon to come across such judgments as "a stick figure," "ineffectual" (Sullivan 160), "something less than a full and responsible adult" (Kinkead-Weekes 219), "frail and senile, a creature of the decisions made by others" (Ann Parry 193). No doubt this is not exactly the impres-

sion Kipling intended to convey, since he felt he had a debt towards the East—as he acknowledged in the epigraph to chapter eight, calling himself a “two-sided Man”:

Something I owe to the soil that grew—
 More to the life that fed—
 But most to Allah Who gave me two
 Separate sides to my head.
 I would go without shirts or shoes,
 Friends, tobacco or bread
 Sooner than for an instant lose
 Either side of my head.

(23: 147)²⁰

Obviously, one “side” of Kipling’s head unreservedly approved of Kim’s choice, which he saw as necessary for the defence of the British Empire. But the other “side” knew that it entailed severance from a world of gratifying fantasy, deliberate blindness to spiritual values. Himself a precocious child, cut off at six from his family and forced into active life at a very early age, Kipling was well aware of the price to pay when repudiating the Imaginary too early. A clear symptom at the end of the novel is when Kim, firmly ensconced in the Symbolic and in spite of his genuine concern for the lama’s health, utters such matter-of-fact platitudes as “Wast thou very wet?” in response to the priest’s lofty considerations (338). In the same way, the talk between the lama and an active player of the game like Mahbub Ali ends with no real communication—Mahbub muttering half the time in Pushtu, a language the lama does not understand (332-35).

The last two pages are almost entirely devoted to the lama, who appears serenely convinced that he has reached his goal. In what is practically a monologue, he relates to Kim that his soul loosed itself from his silly body, went free, and reached the Great Soul. But at that moment he grew suddenly anxious for his disciple, and, in agony, his soul wrenched itself from the Great Soul and came back to earth. According to the Mahayana conception of Buddhism, the lama has become a Bodhisattva, “a person who, achieving total enlightenment (*bodhi*), can abandon worldly rebirth to enter Nirvana, but who decides to remain in this suffering world to guide others towards the goal he has reached” (Gordon 98).²¹ He is rewarded for his generous impulse by the

sudden appearance of the river at his feet, which renders him “free of sin” and confident that he has earned sufficient merit to save his *chela* as well:

Certain is our deliverance. Come!

He crossed his hands on his lap and smiled, as a man may who has won salvation for himself and his beloved. (338)

These are the concluding words of the book, so that the last chapter as a whole presents two incompatible convictions and ends on two distinct planes of experience. But in a sense, there is no conflict because Kipling would like to have his cake and eat it too, and because in nostalgic reference to his idealized symbiotic childhood, he has written a novel where the Imaginary co-exists with the Symbolic.²² Knowing at bottom that the two orders are irreconcilable, he devised a novel, a “fiction,” precisely to allow them to cohabit and give the impression of communicating. This is presumably what most readers feel when they read the last chapter, which they do not experience as being unduly heterogeneous. Such a response may be due in part to Kipling’s powers of persuasion, to the force of his projected wishful thinking, but it would not be sufficient if it were not backed by the novelist’s narrative skill. Kim, the hero after his own heart, the promising young recruit for the secret service, the doer who has routed the foreign spies, is, at this juncture, adroitly kept in the background. This tactical invisibility allows the author to focus attention and respect on the dreamer, who is eulogized in the epigraph to the last chapter as “the Lord of us all—The Dreamer whose dream came true!” (316) But, at the same time, no one could deny that Kim’s concrete dream of consolidating the British Empire has come true as well, and that it is only on this condition that the lama’s dream can exist at all.

NOTES

- 1 “The fiction of Kipling, then, does not dramatize any fundamental conflict because Kipling would never face one” (32).
- 2 John McClure writes about Kipling: “He is a man projecting fantasies of omnipotence into a world that bears less and less resemblance to his dream” (81). Benita Parry notes that “India is characterized as the lost object of desire that must be relinquished for entry into the patriarchal law” (56). Zoreh Sullivan devotes

about twenty stimulating lines to the point: "Kim-all-alone . . . is a consequence of his 'fall' into what Lacan calls 'The-name-of-the-Father,' the discovery of his colonial identity . . . although the question of Kim's aloneness is raised on the Symbolic level of the text, its resolution will be found on the wishfulfilling (or Imaginary) level of action" (174-75). Sullivan calls the journey to the hills with the lama "the last consolation before he must truly part from the lama and enter as an alienated adult into the bitter heritage of his dead father the British Secret Service" (175). See also his earlier remark: "[Kim's] entry into the 'Gates of Learning' is also an entry into language and into an understanding of the rules of culture that he must master through language" (161-62); Abdul JanMohamed makes use of the two categories when classifying *Kim* among colonial novels (85), but does not refer directly to the categories when discussing the novel (97-100).

- ³ *Ecrits. A Selection (I)*; the phrase literally translates Lacan's "l'assomption jubilatoire," in *Ecrits Vol. 1* (90).
- ⁴ See, for instance, 86, 198, 241, 273.
- ⁵ This duplicates Kipling's version of himself: "My first impression is of daybreak, light and colour and golden and purple fruits at the level of my shoulder. This would be the memory of early morning walks to the Bombay fruit market with my *ayah* [his Portuguese nurse] and later with my sister in her perambulator. . . . In the afternoon heat before we took our sleep, she [his nurse] or Meeta [his 'Hindu bearer'] would tell us stories and Indian nursery' songs all unforgotten, and we were sent into the dining-room after we had been dressed, with the caution 'Speak English now to Papa and Mama.' So one spoke 'English,' haltingly translated out of the vernacular idiom that one thought and dreamed in" (*Something of Myself* 3-4).
- ⁶ There is also a fleeting mention of cholera and hot nights (171). In contrast, see how Kipling mentioned typhoid and heat in *Something of Myself* (25, 33, 38-39), or described Lahore in 1885: "it seemed as if, at any moment, the tide of unclean humanity might burst through its dam of rotten brickwork and filth-smeared wood, blockading the passages below . . . by unclean corners of walls; on each step of ruinous staircases, on the roofs of low out-houses, by window, and housetop, or stretched amid garbage unutterable, this section of Lahore was awaking to another day's life" ("Typhoid at Home"; qtd. by Leonee Ormond 55).
- ⁷ "The mirror-stage is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation and which manufactures for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopaedic" (*Ecrits: A Selection* 4).
- ⁸ Cf. "armure" (*Ecrit I* 94).
- ⁹ The curator, "a white-bearded Englishman" (55), is a discreet homage paid to Kipling's own father who had held the same position and who collaborated in the conception of the novel (*Something of Myself* 82-84).
- ¹⁰ "For without kinship nominations, no power is capable of instituting the order of preferences and taboos that bind and weave the yarn of lineage through succeeding generations. And it is indeed the confusion of generations which, in the Bible as in all traditional laws, is accused of being the abomination of the Word (verbe) and the desolation of the sinner" (Lacan 66).
- ¹¹ On the image of the Irish in the nineteenth century, see Robert Young's chapter on Matthew Arnold and culture (55-89).
- ¹² Embarrassment about poor whites is clearly illustrated in David Arnold's article on "European Orphans and Vagrants in India in the Nineteenth Century."

- 13 William Cowper's oft-quoted lines are a perfect echo here: "I am monarch of all I survey, / My right there is none to dispute" (311).
- 14 In his turn, Kipling influenced Baden-Powell, whose scouts were so many clones of Kim transplanted to South African conditions after the near disaster of British visibility in the Anglo-Boer War (Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* was published in 1908).
- 15 At one moment, a woman's voice is heard calling Creighton: "Will! Will, dear! . . . You ought to be in the drawing-room. They'll be here in a minute" (84). It might be a wife, but also a mother or a sister.
- 16 See, for instance, 110, 225, 228, 260.
- 17 The irony stems from the fact that Creighton, entirely devoted to the secret service, is expected to harbour no personal ambition; yet he "had bombarded [the society] for years with monographs on strange Asiatic cults and unknown customs" (223). It is reinforced by the slightly ridiculous way the members of the Royal Society are presented: "silver-haired, bald-headed gentlemen who know nothing of the Army" but are fascinated by various "playthings" (223), such as an "apparatus for slicing into fractional millimetres the left eye of the female mosquito" (223). It is further compounded when one remembers that, in the late 1870s, the most famous secret service pundit "received the gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica* 26: 924).
- 18 "To the extent to which discourse is a form of defensive warfare, mimicry marks those moments of civil disobedience within the discipline of civility: signs of spectacular resistance" (Bhabha 162). For his part, Hurree is ironically conscious of the role he plays: "I am only Babu showing off my English to you. All we Babus talk English to show off" (231).
- 19 A whole article could be devoted to Deleuze and Guattari's puzzling concept of "nomadism" as applied to *Kim*. For a general discussion of the concept, see Young 167-72.
- 20 One can also recall E. M. Forster's verdict on Kipling: "The boy who never grew up" *Daily Herald* (9 June 1927) (qtd. in Benita Parry [62]).
- 21 Bodhisat is one of the titles of the Buddha mentioned in the Wonder House (54, 336); according to T. R. V. Murti, "[t]he Bodhisattva makes the salvation of all his own good. He shuns retiring into the final state of Nirvana, though fully entitled to it, preferring, by his own free choice, to toil for even the lowest of beings for ages" (263).
- 22 Arguing from different premisses, Edward Said reaches similar conclusions: "for Kipling *there was no conflict* . . . there *might have been a conflict* had Kipling considered India as unhappily subservient to imperialism . . . for him it was India's best destiny to be ruled by England" (23).

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