

KIM

RUDYARD KIPLING



EDITED BY ZOHREH T. SULLIVAN

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

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Rudyard Kipling
KIM



AUTHORITATIVE TEXT
BACKGROUNDS
CRITICISM

Edited by

ZOHREH T. SULLIVAN

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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Preface

Published in 1901, *Kim* was Kipling's delayed reward for seven years of political and personal crises: the aging of England's imperial enterprise; the bombast of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (which he refused to celebrate with an ode); the deaths of his closest uncle, Edward Burne-Jones (in 1898), and of his daughter Josephine (in 1899); the deterioration of his sister's mind; and his own depressions. But, for Kipling, the 1890s were also professionally productive years that saw the publication of both *Jungle Books* (1895, 1896), *The Seven Seas* (1896), *Captains Courageous* (1897), *The Day's Work* (1898), *Stalky and Co.*, and *From Sea to Sea* (both 1899). His letters, diary, and unfinished autobiography, *Something of Myself*, record stages in the conception of the story of *Kim*. His autobiography chooses to place its birth in 1897: "I had a vague notion of an Irish boy, born in India and mixed up with native life. I went as far as to make him the son of a private in an Irish Battalion, and christened him 'Kim of the 'Rishti'—short, that is, for Irish."¹ But an 1892 letter to Mary Mapes Dodge suggests that he had started thinking of the project earlier.

For those who believe "Mother Maturin"—Kipling's projected novel about a half-caste Irish keeper of an opium den in Lahore—to be the source of *Kim*, his work on the novel started even earlier. His diary of March 7, 1885, records its birth: "The idea of 'Mother Maturin' dawned on me today." An 1885 letter to his aunt, Edith Macdonald, announces that he has "really embarked to the tune of 237 foolscap pages on my novel Mother Maturin—an Anglo-Indian episode. Like Topsy 'it growd' while I wrote. . . . It's not one bit nice or proper but it carries a grim sort of a moral with it and tries to deal with the unutterable horrors of lower class Eurasian and native life as they exist outside reports and reports and reports. I haven't got the Pater's verdict on what I've done. He comes up in a couple of Days and will then sit in judgement. Trixie says it's awfully horrid; Mother says its [*sic*] nasty but powerful and I know it to be in large measure true."² Truth, however, was not

1. *Something of Myself and Other Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 81.

2. Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Work* (London: Macmillan, 1986) 103.

an excuse for writing about taboo topics. The journalist-narrator of Kipling's eerie story "A Matter of Fact" concludes with the observation: "Truth is a naked lady, and if by accident she is drawn up from the bottom of the sea, it behoves a gentleman either to give her a print petticoat or to turn his face to the wall, and vow that he did not see."

Both Kipling's letters and his biographers show that his sympathies were passionately entangled with India, that the "magic" readers find in *Kim* is the effect of the range of pleasure in the spiritual, emotional, and visual experiences of India, and that he often felt an outsider in cold England. In a letter to E. K. Robinson in 1886, Kipling writes:

I am deeply interested in the queer ways and works of the people of the land. I hunt and rummage among 'em; knowing Lahore City—that wonderful, dirty, mysterious ant hill—blind fold and wandering through it like Haroun Al-Raschid in search of strange things. "Section 420. I.P.C." (originally called "In the House of Suddhoo") is the outcome of some of these researches but the bulk of my notes and references goes to enrich a bruised tin tea box where lies—350 f.c.p. pages thick—my "Mother Maturin." The novel that is always being written and yet gets no furrarder.

The novel was never published. Biographers such as Angus Wilson and Charles Carrington speculate that Kipling abandoned it because of paternal disapproval. Or perhaps he decided its "truth" was better committed to silence. The unfinished novel returns with a special poignancy in "To Be Filed for Reference," in which the opium addict and Oxford scholar McIntosh Jellaludin calls the narrator to his deathbed to receive his unreadable and unredeemable lifework—"an account of the life and sins and death of Mother Maturin. . . . My only baby! . . . It is a great work and I have paid for it in seven years' damnation" (see p. 257). Similarly, in his autobiography, Kipling describes *Kim* as one of his works inspired by a "daemon."

Parts of the lost novel were retrieved in *Kim*; and Mother Maturin appears as a character in a 1922 "Photo-dramatization" (film script) of his first story, "The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows." This manuscript describes Mother Maturin as a "native woman who becomes MacIntosh's companion. . . . Matronly but attractive and with tragic power."

The original handwritten draft of *Kim*, titled *Kim O' the 'Rishti*, is ms. 44840 in the British Library. Margaret Feeley has written about the differences between that first draft and revised versions that compress scenes, complicate and enrich the characters of the lama

and Mahbub Ali, and satirize the British clergy.³ *Kim* first appeared in *McClure's Magazine*, a New York monthly, from December 1900 to October 1901, and in *Cassell's Magazine* from January to November 1901. After further revision, the first English edition was published October 1, 1901; the first U.S. edition was published October 23, 1901. The text of this Norton Critical Edition of *Kim* comes from the revised English edition of October 1901 (Macmillan) with John Lockwood Kipling's relief illustrations, although I have referred to later editions to resolve minor inconsistencies.

Backgrounds and Criticism

I have divided the extratextual material in this edition into two sections: (1) backgrounds, which include a minute selection of Kipling's poems, letters, and two early short stories that intersect with *Kim* (space would not allow room for the Strickland stories that students interested in the unorthodox strategies of this ethnographer-policeman-detective should read); a biographical selection that focuses on his writing of *Kim*; early reviews; two historical readings of *Kim* in context; and (2) criticism, including a range of essays from 1960 to the present. Although I have added many new footnotes, for some of the information in my notes I am indebted, as are all other editors, to the invaluable work of R. E. Harbord, Roger Lancelyn Green, Alec Mason, eds., *The Reader's Guide to Rudyard Kipling's Work*, 8 vols. (Canterbury: Gibbs & Sons; Bournemouth: Boscombe Printers, 1961-72).

Because space is limited, I have not included extracts from Edmund Wilson's "The Kipling That Nobody Read" (1942), the first major essay that, by drawing attention to Kipling's dark psychological complexity, jarred readers into another approach to texts they had written off as the product of an imperial age from whose politics they wished to disassociate themselves; or from J. M. S. Tompkins's elegant *The Art of Rudyard Kipling* (1959), which, by declaring itself as a reading of his "permanent human and moral themes" rather than his "political relations,"⁴ established critical precedent for splitting Kipling the "artist" from Kipling the "imperialist"; or from Nirad C. Chaudhuri, who called *Kim* "the finest story about India in English."

Critical responses to *Kim* have ranged from adulation to condemnation, from celebration of its "thorough knowledge" of India, its charms as an exotic adventure tale and visionary epic, or its usefulness as a parable of displacement, homelessness, and rootless

3. Margaret Peller Feeley, "The *Kim* That Nobody Reads," *Studies in the Novel* 13.3 (Fall 1981): 266-81.

4. J. M. S. Tompkins, *The Art of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Methuen, 1959) xi.

modernity to condemnation of its "barbaric" imperial vision. More recently, criticism has focused on the window Kipling opens onto colonial cultural, personal, and gender identities, and onto the constellation of contradictory political values at the heart of the imperial and national enterprise.

The complexity of critical assessment on Kipling moved in the 1960s from Randall Jarrell's paean to Kipling as "a great genius and a great neurotic; and a great professional, one of the most skilled writers who have ever existed," to those who insisted that Kipling be read as a sociologist, as a cultural critic who saw a society that "politically, nervously, physically, and spiritually quivered on the edge of a precipice."⁵ Early uncritical celebration of his "knowledge" of India too has shifted along with the critiques of representation that continue to inform anthropology, history, and literary studies. Particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, since the work of John McClure and Edward Said, criticism has struggled to understand how Kipling's aesthetic intersects not only with his psychic wounds but also with the history, politics, and ideology of his age. The selected bibliography directs readers to articles and books that include discussions of *Kim* or that provide the necessary cultural and historical contexts for understanding Kipling's work.

Finally, it gives me pleasure to express my gratitude to the generous responses of my students in English 247 and of my colleagues Robert Parker, Suvir Kaul, and Ania Loomba. But most important, I wish to thank a few people whose sharp eyes and editorial skills saved me from myself: Yvette Koepke-Nelson, who took time from her medical studies and dissertation to assist with questions of matter and form, and my friend and colleague Jim Hurt, who took time away from his own editions and anthologies to offer all manner of help, advice, and criticism. At Norton, I wish to thank my copy editor, Kate Lovelady, for her expert eye, and my editor, Carol Bemis, for her patience, intelligent guidance, and superb editorial expertise.

5. Noel Annan, "Kipling's Place in the History of Ideas," *Victorian Studies* 3 (1959-60): 323-48.

The Editor

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The Text of KIM



Chapter 1

O ye who tread the Narrow Way
By Tophet-flare to Judgment Day,
Be gentle when 'the heathen' pray
To Buddha at Kamakura!
*Buddha at Kamakura.*¹

He sat, in defiance of municipal orders, astride the gun Zam-Zammah² on her brick platform opposite the old Ajaib-Gher—the Wonder House, as the natives call the Lahore Museum.³ Who hold Zam-Zammah, that 'fire-breathing dragon', hold the Punjab,⁴ for the great green-bronze piece is always first of the conqueror's loot.

There was some justification for Kim—he had kicked Lala Dinanath's boy off the trunnions—since the English held the Punjab and Kim was English. Though he was burned black as any native; though he spoke the vernacular⁵ by preference, and his mother-tongue in a clipped uncertain sing-song; though he consorted on terms of perfect equality with the small boys of the bazar; Kim was white—a poor white of the very poorest. The half-caste⁶ woman who looked after him (she smoked opium, and pretended to keep a second-hand furniture shop by the square where the cheap cabs wait) told the missionaries that she was Kim's mother's sister; but his mother had been nurse-maid in a Colonel's family and had married Kimball O'Hara, a young colour-sergeant of the Mavericks,⁷ an Irish regiment. He afterwards took a post on the Sind, Punjab, and Delhi Railway, and his Regiment went home without him. The

1. An independent Kipling poem. Kamakura is a center of Buddhist worship in Japan marked by a giant statue of Buddha. Lord Buddha was the title given to Siddhartha Gautama (563–483 B.C.E.), founder of Buddhism, which teaches that suffering is central to life but that one can, through practice of the Four Noble Truths, transcend it and reach enlightenment, knowledge, and nirvana. Kipling's epigraph invites readers to leave the "narrow way" of their conventional religious backgrounds marked by the "Tophet-flare" of ancient punishment and judgment to enter a gentler world of Buddhist spirituality.
2. A huge iron cannon built in Lahore in 1757, used in many battles in the eighteenth century, and later placed where it still stands in Lahore (now in Pakistan).
3. A museum of Indian culture in Lahore. Kipling's father, the artist and illustrator John Lockwood Kipling, was curator there from 1875 to 1894.
4. A province in western India. The word means literally "five waters," the five rivers (the Indus and its four tributaries) that flow south from the Himalayas into the Arabian Sea.
5. Hindustani, a spoken vernacular made up of Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Punjabi, and other dialects.
6. In the nineteenth century, the term referred to the offspring of a Hindu and a European. The caste system refers to the ancient Vedic hierarchical groupings based on privilege and vocation such as priests and scholars (Brahmins), warriors and rulers (Kshatriyas), farmers and merchants (Vaishyas), and the lowest-caste servants (Sudras). Kim's later confusion on seeing the lama reveals that he knows little of Buddhism.
7. A colour-sergeant's duties involved the flag or regimental "colour." The Mavericks were a fictional Irish regiment in the British army. The name derives from Samuel A. Maverick, an American pioneer and rancher who did not brand his cattle. A maverick is thus an undisciplined nonconformist. Kipling probably learned the word during his stay in America. No actual British regiment had the Maverick's crest of a red bull on a green field.

wife died of cholera in Ferozepore,⁸ and O'Hara fell to drink and loafing up and down the line with the keen-eyed three-year-old baby. Societies and chaplains, anxious for the child, tried to catch him, but O'Hara drifted away, till he came across the woman who took opium and learned the taste from her, and died as poor whites die in India. His estate at death consisted of three papers—one he called his '*ne varietur*'⁹ because those words were written below his signature thereon, and another his 'clearance-certificate'.¹ The third was Kim's birth-certificate. Those things, he was used to say, in his glorious opium-hours, would yet make little Kimball a man. On no account was Kim to part with them, for they belonged to a great piece of magic—such magic as men practised over yonder behind the Museum, in the big blue-and-white Jadoo-Gher—the Magic House, as we name the Masonic Lodge.² It would, he said, all come right some day, and Kim's horn would be exalted between pillars—monstrous pillars—of beauty and strength.³ The Colonel himself, riding on a horse, at the head of the finest Regiment in the world, would attend to Kim—little Kim that should have been better off than his father. Nine hundred first-class devils, whose God was a Red Bull on a green field, would attend to Kim, if they had not forgotten O'Hara—poor O'Hara that was gang-foreman on the Ferozepore line. Then he would weep bitterly in the broken rush chair on the veranda. So it came about after his death that the woman sewed parchment, paper, and birth-certificate into a leather amulet-case⁴ which she strung round Kim's neck.

'And some day,' she said, confusedly remembering O'Hara's prophecies, 'there will come for you a great Red Bull on a green field, and the Colonel riding on his tall horse, yes, and'—dropping into English—'nine hundred devils.'

'Ah,' said Kim, 'I shall remember. A Red Bull and a Colonel on a horse will come, but first, my father said, will come the two men making ready the ground for these matters. That is how my father said they always did; and it is always so when men work magic.'

8. A town in the Punjab fifty miles south of Lahore.

9. Appearing at the end of the certificate of membership in a Freemason's lodge, these Latin words mean that the signature "may not vary." The Freemasons are an ancient secret fraternal organization that espouses political and religious tolerance, equality, and liberalism, and whose origins have been traced to the Old Testament and to the medieval guild of stone masons. (Kipling's story "The Man Who Would Be King" connects the organization to Alexander the Great.) For a celebration of the inclusiveness of the lodge to all creeds, colors, and castes, see his poem "The Mother-Lodge."

1. A receipt from a Masonic lodge given to a member before he transfers to another lodge.

2. The model for this lodge was apparently an actual lodge named "Hope and Perseverance, No. 782 E.C.," to which Kipling was admitted at the age of nineteen. "Jadoo-Gher," literally "house of magic," refers to the rituals performed by the Freemasons.

3. The horn is a traditional symbol of power. Pillars are a Masonic symbol deriving from the biblical description of King Solomon's temple.

4. A container traditionally used to hold sacred prayers or charms against evil.

If the woman had sent Kim up to the local Jadoo-Gher with those papers, he would, of course, have been taken over by the Provincial Lodge,⁵ and sent to the Masonic Orphanage in the Hills; but what she had heard of magic she distrusted. Kim, too, held views of his own. As he reached the years of indiscretion, he learned to avoid missionaries and white men of serious aspect who asked who he was, and what he did. For Kim did nothing with an immense success. True, he knew the wonderful walled city of Lahore from the Delhi Gate to the outer Fort Ditch; was hand in glove with men who led lives stranger than anything Haroun al Raschid⁶ dreamed of; and he lived in a life wild as that of the Arabian Nights, but missionaries and secretaries of charitable societies could not see the beauty of it. His nickname through the wards was 'Little Friend of all the World'; and very often, being lithe and inconspicuous, he executed commissions by night on the crowded housetops for sleek and shiny young men of fashion. It was intrigue, of course—he knew that much, as he had known all evil since he could speak,—but what he loved was the game for its own sake—the stealthy prowl through the dark gullies⁷ and lanes, the crawl up a water-pipe, the sights and sounds of the women's world⁸ on the flat roofs, and the headlong flight from housetop to housetop under cover of the hot dark. Then there were holy men, ash-smeared *faqirs*⁹ by their brick shrines under the trees at the riverside, with whom he was quite familiar—greeting them as they returned from begging-tours, and, when no one was by, eating from the same dish. The woman who looked after him insisted with tears that he should wear European clothes—trousers, a shirt, and a battered hat. Kim found it easier to slip into Hindu or Mohammedan garb when engaged on certain businesses. One of the young men of fashion—he who was found dead at the bottom of a well on the night of the earthquake—had once given him a complete suit of Hindu kit, the costume of a low-caste street boy, and Kim stored it in a secret place under some baulks in Nila Ram's timber-yard, beyond the Punjab High Court, where the fragrant deodar¹ logs lie seasoning after they have driven down the Ravi.² When there was business or frolic afoot, Kim would use his properties,³ returning at dawn to the veranda, all tired out from

5. The Provincial Lodge was superior to and wealthier than the local Masonic lodges.

6. Featured in *The Arabian Nights*, the caliph who ruled over Baghdad in the eighth century.

7. Alleys.

8. Excluded from the public sphere, women lived in a private area of the house referred to as the *zenana*, or woman's space, from which they exerted what influence they could on the world of men.

9. Beggars.

1. Indian cedar.

2. One of the major rivers in the Punjab, a tributary of the Indus River.

3. Kim is a master of "props," or disguises.

shouting at the heels of a marriage procession, or yelling at a Hindu festival. Sometimes there was food in the house, more often there was not, and then Kim went out again to eat with his native friends.

As he drummed his heels against Zam-Zammah he turned now and again from his king-of-the-castle game with little Chota Lal and Abdullah the sweetmeat-seller's son, to make a rude remark to the native policeman on guard over rows of shoes at the Museum door.⁴ The big Punjabi grinned tolerantly: he knew Kim of old. So did the water-carrier, sluicing water on the dry road from his goat-skin bag. So did Jawahir Singh, the Museum carpenter, bent over new packing-cases. So did everybody in sight except the peasants from the country, hurrying up to the Wonder House to view the things that men made in their own province and elsewhere. The Museum was given up to Indian arts and manufactures, and anybody who sought wisdom could ask the Curator to explain.

'Off! Off! Let me up!' cried Abdullah, climbing up Zam-Zammah's wheel.

'Thy father was a pastry-cook, Thy mother stole the *ghi*,'⁵ sang Kim. 'All Mussalmans fell off Zam-Zammah long ago!'

'Let *me* up!' shrilled little Chota Lal in his gilt-embroidered cap. His father was worth perhaps half a million sterling, but India is the only democratic land in the world.

'The Hindus fell off Zam-Zammah too. The Mussalmans pushed them off. Thy father was a pastry-cook—'

He stopped; for there shuffled round the corner, from the roaring Motee Bazar,⁶ such a man as Kim, who thought he knew all castes, had never seen. He was nearly six feet high, dressed in fold upon fold of dingy stuff like horse-blanketing, and not one fold of it could Kim refer to any known trade or profession. At his belt hung a long open-work iron pencase and a wooden rosary such as holy men wear. On his head was a gigantic sort of tam-o'-shanter.⁷ His face was yellow and wrinkled, like that of Fook Shing, the Chinese boot-maker in the bazar. His eyes turned up at the corners and looked like little slits of onyx.

'Who is that?' said Kim to his companions.

'Perhaps it is a man,' said Abdullah, finger in mouth, staring.

'Without doubt,' returned Kim; 'but he is no man of India that I have ever seen.'

'A priest, perhaps,' said Chota Lal, spying the rosary. 'See! He goes into the Wonder House!'

4. Left by Indians who remove them as a sign of respect.

5. Butter clarified by boiling.

6. Pearl bazaar, the jewelry market.

7. A wide, circular woolen Scottish cap with a fitted headband.