

Cultural Assimilation: A Post Colonial Perspective in Kim

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ABSTRACT

Rudyard Kipling's Kim is mostly considered as a novel of advocacy for making colonizers stronger to rule the natives. It deals the native with a stereotypical perception of the oriental, particularly, of Indian people. This paper has used Edward Said's postcolonial perspective of orientalism to analyze Kim. Emphasis is given on identifying the situations and expressions that are directed to cultural assimilation, trying to indicate that Kipling advocates for the English cultural supremacy and colonial significance in Indian territory. This research is based on primary as well as secondary data analysis with qualitative research approach. Finding shows that Kipling, with a pretext of standing in-between the East and the West, visualizes varying ranges of stereotype of India and its peoples. Even if cultural assimilation seems to be liberally responded at different occasions this study tells that English community is in understanding and application of cultural supremacy as a determinate factor to establish their rule upon the native and inspire the latter to assimilate to former's culture. Detailed analysis of assimilation through post-colonial cultural hegemony perceptive would be further relevant study on this novel.

Keywords: *Ambivalence, assimilation, hegemony, hybridity, mimicry, oriental*

INTRODUCTION

Kim is a novel of colonial mission. It is set with the background of colonial control of English people in India. Written by Rudyard Kipling, one of the most popular British writers of 20th century, the novel is about India and the English colonial rule in India. The way colonizers intend to rule the native is mainly revealed through the relation of an English boy of Irish descent- born and grown up in India- with various native Indians and English rulers in India. In his early childhood, he becomes orphan and gets care from a native woman at Lahore Street in Panjab, now in Pakistan. Consequently, he grows up rather independently and becomes more playful and energetic because he has to adjust himself with people from

diverse ethnic, social, cultural and religious background of India. Kipling here presents both English and Indian characters who have direct and indirect influence on the life of Kim and present Kim as a central figure for the need of colonial rule in India. Though he is an English boy, the son of Irish Kimble O' Hara in blood, yet he grows up as an Indian native in words, action and appearance. Kipling present Kim as a boy of assimilation in native culture. He is presented in need of acquiring ability to blend himself among people of Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist religions. When he meets Teshoo, a wandering pilgrim Lama from Tibet in the visit of four sacred Buddhist pilgrims and a sacred river in India, Kim gets influenced by the Lama's personality and becomes his follower. He accompanies the Lama to many places and provides him necessary help he could. While travelling with the Lama, he also works as a spy for the British Secrets Service in India. He gets utilized by some secret service members like Muhub, a Muslim, and colonel Creighton, one of the major role players of British Intelligence Service in India. His tanned skin, skill and ability to speak Indian language as a native speaker do contribute his role of a spy successfully. Kim's travels with the Lama at different parts of India provided him opportunities to learn the diverse socio-culture aspects and know people in multiple ethnic backgrounds. As a result, major parts of the novel are covered by the vivid account of the social, cultural and geographical diversity of India. Kim's interest on travelling and ability to blending into different socio-cultural situations helps sharpen his spying talent for the British army. His respect, devotion and accompaniment to the elderly lama also contributes him much in acquiring information and maturity in critically understanding the native people. Kim's adjustment with the native and his ability to penetrate the social cultural, geographical, geopolitical as well as other contextually demanded situations in the novel indicate Kipling's intention of conveying the message of English ability in influencing native people to assimilate to the English social-cultural values and ways of life.

The Lama's devotion to Buddhism, his disinterested contribution to Kim and other people on the way to his quest of Holy River and socio-cultural and geo-political themes of the novels make the novel very impressive in general appearance and understanding, yet the way Kipling has presented the colonial rulers and the way they use the native as well as the protagonist in secretly serving the colonial rulers generate the condition Kipling is deliberately shaping the novel to influence the native to perceive the message that assimilation to English cultural and social values is essential for their prosperity. Anyway, Kipling's *Kim*, Alisha Walters (2018) writes, "*Kim* reveals the under-examined links between early twentieth-century ideas of white British identity and descriptions of imperial miscegenation (p.331). After the

1980's it has also been considered a rich and persistence novel because post-colonial theorists have found it a work that subtly but intentionally glorifies British Imperialism.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

This paper is an endeavor to interpret *Kim* as an imperial voice from post-colonial perspective. Though Kipling depicts Indian people, culture, tradition and faith in *Kim*, it can be interpreted as an advocating for significance of British rule in India. The relationship between Britain and India sounds amicable in the novel. The relation seems to have been established within the British and the Indian- the White and the non-white, is established at different places with different images, that seems to patronize the peoples and places the British have conquered. English cultural supremacy and racial hegemony in rules is reflected at places in the novel. However, the situations have not been closely studied and interpreted from the cultural assimilation perspective and this paper is going to point out some situations in which the natives are dominated and hegemonically inspired to assimilation to English culture and those representative contexts in which the native is in assimilation spirit. To explore how the situation and contexts are generated in the text is the main statement of the problem of this research. According to Williams and Laura (1994). the situations are juxtaposed with the world of realities and that of imagination which give us the impression of “reality effect through its accumulation of detail, particularly of Indian “ (p.488). The presentation, however, is not so direct but through stereotypical perspectives the English people show in their behaviors and attitudes for inspiring native for assimilation and the same contexts and situation indirectly become counter cultural resistance of the native to the Anglo rulers in India.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

As the problem is about the need of revelation of cultural assimilation contexts and discourse for the native people to the colonial culture, the focus in the study has been on the endeavor to address the queries like how and what kinds of contexts and discourse the novelist has generated to persuade the native peoples to kindle the desire of assimilating to English culture. Based on these curiosities the research objectives of this paper are to explore situations and contexts in which the natives are expected and persuaded to cultural assimilation and how the what discourse is generated and how that it proceeds in the novel. The analysis has focused on showing values in the novel that refer different attitudes of the Indian as well as the English to cultural assimilation at different occasions. Therefore, analysis of assimilation through post-colonial cultural hegemony perceptible has been the objective of the study about the novel in this article.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following few paragraphs present some research texts about *Kim*, and tries to find out relevancy and justifiability about this research. The studies presented below are to some extent related to the topic of this article in analytical approach but they have not focused on assimilation analysis. Therefore, this research goes ahead for further study. First, let's see a thesis. Klara Sumberova (2003) in his thesis "British Imperial Experience reflected as on different identities in Kipling's Novel *Kim*" analysed the novel as ideological influence to enforce major characters to identify themselves as English and pursue ideals based on English culture and race, focusing on 19th century society of England. This thesis has focused on concept of hybridity, British society on cultural attitude, problems of double identities of the protagonist of the novel and the characterisation of the lama from Buddhist perspective.

Baker (2009) in his article "Identity Crisis: Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* – A Postcolonial Perspective" views *Kim* as controversial novel with anti-Indian and pro-Indian provocation. He goes on enlisting some of the critics who stand on either side. Then he explains *Kim* as a novel with juxtaposed cultural contexts in which the protagonist gets in dilemma like of Shakespeare's Hamlet due to his cultural indecisiveness of belonging.

Klass (2010) in his article "The Imperial Message in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*", is of the opinion that Kipling's novels and short stories are remarkable examples of writings of a pro-imperialist writer. Klass thinks that cultural domination upon the natives and colonial intention of hybridizing and suppressing the native culture is not envisioned in this article. David has learnt that Kipling in *Kim* has endeavored to show people from different cultural and social backgrounds to live in harmony and peace in exchange of cultural understanding and tolerance but he has ultimately failed to do so because he himself has to learnt to liberalize his attitude to Indians. Though he touched the cultural analysis he has not analyzed culture.

In his dissertation Daniel Scott Parker (2012) under the title "Phenomenology of space and time in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*: Understanding Identity in the Chronotope" makes research on how Kipling depicts the influence of geopolitical narrative to shape the identity of the characters. Parker here applies postcolonial and modernist readings of *Kim* and the geo-culturalism approach in text evaluation. *Kim*'s identity in this approach has been multifaceted and that is investigated through different *chronotopes* which according the researcher is a new term to refer to for coexisting framework of time and space that helps characters get identified and realized one's own identity.

Matthew Fellion (2013) in his article Knowing "Kim, knowing in *Kim*" makes studies

on how Kipling in *Kim* presents his protagonist, a teenage boy, able to grasp both ethnographic and social cultural including linguistic knowledge and skills in claiming the authenticity of information and faces challenges in difficult situations. The paper tries to explore how Kim, the hero becomes able to distinguish between categories of knowledge and source of information for the claims he has made to the elderly people who are in expectation of his responses.

Shaikh Mushtaq (2015) in his article “Personal is Political’ in Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*”, observes that Kipling’s *Kim* is a powerful advocacy of the colonial ideology and politics of English race. Mushtaq here analyses characters like the lama, Lurgan Sahib, Huree Babu and Mahbub Ali and through their characterisation and performance in the hands of the colonial rulers conclude that colonialism is a large beast which engulfs the forces of natives from their political and cultural resistance.

Roisin McCloskey in his article “The charismatic Adolescent in Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*” (2015) writes that *Kim*’s protagonist has been made much energetic and radical in action even though he by age is too young and less matured though education and experience. This article uses Max Weber’s model of charismatic authority to analyse the role of Kim and argues that Kim’s adolescence as a ‘routinization’ in Weber’s attitude has nevertheless been a power source of information and regulation of the colonial power in British India. This article also doesn’t give its research view on cultural resistance thus leaves a research gap in this field.

Sarah Alileche and Meriem Herda in their dissertation entitled “From Colonial Mimicry to Post colonial Hybridity” (2016) makes a study between Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim* and Mohammed Did’s *L’infante Maure* compare them in the postcolonial theoretical perspectives, particularly taking the concept of Homi.K. Bhabha as expressed in *the Location of Culture*. They focus on how British Empires use weapon of cultural mimicry to control over the natives and intend to prolong their rules in India, but they don’t go to interpret how resistance in the novel is prevailed.

In “Hybrid Mysticism: the Journey to enlightenment in the Works of Sir Richard Burton and Rudyard Kipling” (2016) a dissertation by Sheba Aniqua Rahim explains that Kipling in *Kim* seem to a person with esoteric faith include various information and to some extend attention on such elements. He finds Kipling dealing with mystic themes of unity and universality and just see things, indiscriminate of colonizer and colonized, as one. Aniqua here does not go into the cultural resistance analysis but how culture or people with similar faith believe see thing and events in similar fashion and try to reveal things and events in similar faith-colour.

The Gale Group's publication *A Study Guide for Rudyard Kipling's Kim* (2017) narrates Rudyard Kipling from his childhood to literary age when he became popular and got novel prize in literature. With much emphasis on his Indian life and how he learnt knowledge of Indian culture and geography, the book explains that Kipling's elaborate narration of the Indian life and topography is the result of his extensive travelling in India when he was young. His experience during his stay in India and visit to different places in India enriched his ability to realistically depict the characters in *Kim* and other stories.

The researchers mentioned above have used postcolonial theory to explore and explain how Kipling has made the message of the novel as a means of expanding imperial ideology to those places where the imperialist had been and intended to be. To materialize such intention Kipling is seen as an imperialist mouthpiece through the novel because he is found exercising his writing skill in directing to the purpose and conveying the colonial message that English rules, culture and presence in India is still necessary in order to enable the native of India to rule the country themselves. These researches have ignored how cultural domination of the imperial rulers motivated and compelled the natives to assimilate and resist the colonial rulers respectively. This is the gap for the search study and this article has been directed to this area. And it is found relevant to this novel.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

This paper interprets *Kim* as an imperial voice from post-colonial perspective and contexts generated for cultural assimilation of the native to the English colonial culture in India. To make the analysis more authentic through theoretical perspectives, Orientalism - a discourse propounded by Edward Said, has been used and applied. Orientalism explains Western perception and attitude about Oriental world and its people in his books *Orientalism* (1979) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1994). Orientalism is an extended view from Michael Foucault's theory of discourse based on power. In Said's opinion, Orientalism is a "style of thought based on ontological and epistemological distinction made between the orient and the occident" (Said, p.2). The distinction is not purely based on simply giving identities, but on showing remarkable differences that place the Orientals inferior and therefore, subjected to be ruled and expected to be culturally assimilated to the English culture and values. It is, according to Said, a power generation; a network of discourse that represents western knowledge about the Orientals and the power to define them. Said claims that Orient was "Orientalized" by Westerners not only because it was found to be Oriental, but also because it

could be made Oriental through the discourse of western people generated about the Orientals from their experience, understanding, misunderstanding, misrepresentation and exaggeration. Cultural assimilation is associated with concept of hybridity discussed in the work of Homi K. Bhabha (1994), whose analysis of relation between colonizer and colonized stresses their interdependence and the mutual construction of their subjectivities, which Bhabha generally refers through words 'mimicry and ambivalence'. Further he associates that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space he calls the 'Third Space of enunciation' (p. 37). Cultural identity of the colonizers, and particularly of the colonized gets emerged ambivalently in this space, and the recognition of this ambivalent space of cultural identity do gradually narrows the space of recognition because of gradually growing hybridity. And this movement stirs "conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity. (Bhabha, p. 38). This concept is used to interpret cultural assimilation in *Kim*.

Therefore, orientalism from Said's perspective is western style for dominating the colonized, reconstructing ideology, influencing the culture and having authority over the orient. To Said colonialism is a process of Othering. And othering the Orientals is a Eurocentric assumption and will. And writing back to reject such a view and approach about the orient is essential, because within the contexts also people have the feeling of resistance and colonial power exercise in the colonized land directly and indirectly generate conditions of resistance, yet the focus here is on assimilation.

DATA AND METHODS

This article applies the qualitative approach to research. Qualitative approach appropriate in constructing conclusive views of people on their interpretation of experience. Sharan Merriam (2009) thinks that qualitative research approach enables researchers to understand people's perception of meaning through interpretations of events and opinions of people in their daily life (p.5). Therefore, research is heavily dependent on close reading of primary as well as secondary texts from post-colonial oriental view in cultural assimilation perspectives. This approach demanded extensive library visits and study on previous books written about the cultural and colonial aspects of the novels. Said's theory of orientalism has been the grounded theory for data analysis. Approaches applied here are not simply based on inductive reasoning, retrospective and introspective approaches in analysis are also applied in the interpretation while unveiling the concepts and drawing conclusion from the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the superficial observation it can be easily traced that imperialism in Kipling's concept is not an exploitation, territory occupation and subjugation of the native people. It is rather beneficial movement for economic and educational upliftment of the native peoples. For him, British Empire represented glory and wealth, and it would improve economic condition of the nation it has ruled. But from post-colonial perspectives, Kipling endeavors to establish British rule as a racial and cultural supremacy and he has generated so many contradictions of situation in which benevolence for Indian people is questionable on the one hand and continuous efforts of English characters to rule the people around, and their resistance to being themselves contextually Indianized and assimilated in real sense is persistent on the other.

The endeavors start from the beginning where Kim, the protagonist of the novel, the orphan child of Irish origin, appears to be a confidential ruler around him. The imperial and identity spirit of the orphan is reflected in the first paragraph which describes, "He sat, in defiance of municipal of municipal orders, astride the gun Zam Zammah on her brick platform opposite the old Ajaib Ghar, the wonder house, as the natives called the Lahore Museum who hold Zam-Zmmah, that 'fire-breathing dragon' hold the Punjab, for the great green bronze piece is always first to 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'" (Kipling, p. 1) In the beginning of the novel the juxtaposed status of the English and Indian, former being the superior and powerful to rule and the latter being the ruled- has been the dominant spirit of the novel. Kim's defying of the municipal law by sitting 'stride' on the gun. Zam- Zammah and kicking of the local boy has proven that Kipling established superiority of English people over the Indians.

Similarly, the writer has presented the native context of India as a stereotypical place where the English people experience mystery. English people's calling "The wonder house", for the local museum in Lahor presents an attitude of different or mysterious place for them. The differences in view indicates, in the very beginning that there are two world concepts in English people in the novel: the first is of the English world, which, in their perception, is more familiar and the second one is the Indian or oriental world that is more mysterious and stranger for the English. Similarly, the book has got much about the concept of assimilation along with the struggle of resistance from both English character and Indian ones. Kim's position is in the centre; his physical appearance of an English boy and skin complexion getting somehow darker to resemble to native Indians and his tone of spoken language more

inclined to vernacular one, have placed Kim 'in between' of the two cultural identities.

Kim in broad spectrum presents clear pictures of two realities in India. The first is the socio-mental reality that India and Indians are ruled by British people for years and the second is the problems of increasing native resistance to the colonial rule. The readers find the division between the white and non-white - the English and the Indian. Kipling has presented the white as colonial possessors, but with indication of growing tension in the changing relationship between the ruler and the ruled, the latter being more conscious on the territorial and political independence from the former. In this reference Clara Claiborne Park in "Artist and Empire: Kipling and Kim" (Park, 2003), presents a comprehensive critical history of Kipling in general and Kim in particular. She analyses that Kipling's perception of India is vague and indeterminate, the common places have been strange and *Kim* from the common places and peoples develops the characteristics of both English and Indian values. So Kipling uses his own experience and knowledge to define and justify the ways of colonial power to continue the English sovereignty in India from the insider's perspective. However, Edward Said (1997) views Kipling somehow differently and talks about Kipling's impression on readers that gets changed with the changeability of time and social perspective. "In *Kim*," writes Said, "you have the impression that time is on your side because the geography is yours to move about in more or less freely, although just the opposite may be true as well, that Kipling has rendered a control of space through a freedom of movement in time" (p.159). From this post-colonial perspective of Said, Kipling is more engrossed in modifying the Western perspective and Indian realities from his own imperial view.

So, the Anglo-Indian relationship in *Kim* seems in a new dimension. The 'Great Game'-the British Intelligence activities in India can be taken as a realization of British rulers on the need of complying effects the imperial strategies to continue the control over the territory and people as far as possible. So, the authority reflected through Mr Bennett and colonel Creighton in employing and engaging both the natives like Hurree Babu, Mohamadian and English boy Kim exemplify British imperial effort for continuation of its rule and its domination. Along with this the growing relationship particularly between the Tibetan Lama and Kim is growing concern of cultural assimilation psychology. Even in this reflection Kipling presents imperial attitude of British cultural superiority. This is subtly and symbolically exposed through elderly British museum curators offering of his spectacle to the Lama at Lahore.

The cultural superiority of the British people is also prevalent throughout the novel. The Lama's realization of Kim's intelligence and bold action, assistance to him and Kim's

accompany, Kim success of saving Lama from the Russian spy to Lama in search of the Holy River is an example of British guidance and wits. This is what Kipling endeavors to establish English identity in Indian or colonized territory. When Lurgan Sahib, tempts Kim, in order to taste his resolution in the 'Great Game', Kim resists in, with a firm affirmation that he is a Kim, a sahib. Creighton recognizes immediately in Kim's ability for disguise and discretion the potential for the boy's role in the Great Game. The lama, initially uncertain and indeterminate in having chance of being accompanied with his "Little Friend of All the World" one of the affectionate sobriquets the natives have given Kim, one which was given to Kipling himself (Ricketts, p.13) - understands that Kim does not hide and hate "English" heritage. Therefore, the Lama decides to help the boy by donating money for the boy's formal education in Saint Xavier High School, which was mainly meant for the English children. This new development of the scenario about the life of Kim gradually helps Kim become more practical and be more responsible for ascertained duty.

Of course, Kim in his childhood maintains a Sahib's status in the streets. In the same spirit plays the Great Game on later stage well. Thus, Kipling never forgets that Kim, though born and brought up in India from British blood and shows great sympathy and assimilation spirit in oriental cultural identities, acts an inseparable agent of British India. Colonel Creighton, Mahbub, Hurree Babu stand as a part of the British colonialism, the representative figures and working agents of British empire. In comment of these two worlds in Kim- the world of imperial rulers and the colonized subjects Edmund Wilson (1964) says:

Now what the reader tends to expect is that Kim will come eventually to realize that he is delivering into bondage to British invaders, those whom he has always considered his own people and that a struggle between allegiances will result. Kipling has established for the reader and established with considerable effect- the contrast between the East, with its mysticism and sensuality, its extremes of saintliness and roguery, and the English, with their superior organization, their confidence in modern method, and their instinct to brush away like cobwebs in native beliefs. We have been shown tow entirely different worlds existing side by side, with neither really understanding the other and we have watched the oscillation of Kim, as he passes to and from between them. (p. 65)

Kipling description of India gets divided into two forms: the first, identity of India is reflected through ambivalent feeling that Kim shows. The ambivalence is in the perception of India. Many Britishers who visit India first time recognize India's immediate reality; the apparent characteristics of people, its culture and other topographical features. Likewise, they show

deep desire to know India, being not fully satisfied with what they have known so far is a kind of ambivalent feeling some post-colonial discourse makers like Bhabha (1994) talks about (p.86). Rudyard Kipling is mostly described as a “the bard of the Indian Empire (Hobsbawm, 1989, p. 82) but he has often presented ambivalent attitude; for he could not always and absolutely appreciated the English approach of changing ‘other worlds’, and presented India in his narration as a best place” (Sullivan, 1993, p.3). The concept of English superiority in the initial pages of the novel soon gets changed. Kipling presents Kim as a boy who wants to seek his identity not only through English figures, but primarily through oriental figure.

A Buddhist Lama from Tibet, who is in search of Holy River, perceives Kim as an adventurous spirit of an English boy on the one hand, and an assimilation approach to an Indian culture and context. Therefore, the Lama becomes his trope, who proposed to take possession (Kipling, p. 22). The relationship is established thus because the “in-betweenness of identity” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 219)- of Kim as an English boy by blood and somehow in behavior but Indian in appearance, language and somehow in feeling, is shaped through ambivalence. So, Kim’s personality is drawn in betweenness of Englishness and Indianness. The two worlds in Kipling’s perception, the English world and its culture, the Indian and its oriental feature go simultaneously. His native-ness features of India are beautifully seen in Kipling’s narration. “The woman who looked after him insisted with tears to slip into Hindu or European clothes-trousers, a shirt, and a battered hat. Kim found it easier to slip into Hindu or Muhammadan grab when engaged on certain business” (p. 493). Though Kipling may not have deliberately planned to hybridize Kim from the colonial consciousness, yet the colonial mentality of seeing Kim as orientally dominated and hybridized in India is beautifully expressed through the Lama’s words, “A sahib and the son of Sahib.... No white man knows the land and the customs of the land as thou knowest.... (Kipling, p. 124).” Kim is perceived as European by the Lama; but Kipling presents him sometimes, also to the eyes of some Europeans, as an Indian boy in disguise of European fashion. So, Kim is ‘in-between’ the English cultural behavior and oriental influence of socialization from which hybrid characteristic is clearly seen generating un-decidability from his behavior: whether he is an Indian or an English boy. Each of the place he gets does generate an indication of his belonging to ‘other word’ even if he is well adjusted and behaves and even ‘drinks’ from a cup in a native fashion (p.25). For Indians, mostly he is native Indian and he is trying to deceive them by claiming European. Thus, the novel has endowed with the situation that major groups in it- the English, the Hindus and the Muslim- everyone in Kim is equally an outsider to other groups and an insider in his (Said, 1979, p.

187).

Becoming outsider and insider according to the situation and perception of the people around, Kim becomes a figure of cultural plurality that leads him sometimes in dilemma of identity who could not decide at a moment what he really is, “What am I?” Muslim, Hindu, Jain or Buddhist? That is a hard knot” (Kipling, p. 192). At some moment he thinks himself solely ‘Kim’ for he could not completely assimilate in any cultural group of India. And the question persistently go in him “No I am Kim” (p.159). So, Kim’s position among people as well as his own perception about himself changes, becoming sometimes outsider and sometimes insider in the multiple cultural groups of India. Likewise, he gets sometimes regarded as English and occasionally denied as an English man. The identification of Kim as Other therefore stands in between whiteness and Indianness. The stereotypical approach in identifying white man through white complexion is not apparent in Kim that’s why some white people interpret his appearance thus: “you see, Bennott, he’s not very black ... it is possible that I have done the boy (Kim) injustice. He is certainly white, though evidently neglected (p.117-118). The native in India also identify him in similar way; they also regard white skin and fair hair as stereotypical features of English or European once a native in reporting Kim presence outside the barrack of English at Simla says, “There is a white boy by the barracks waiting under a tree who is not a white boy (p.136). Such an ambivalent appearance to the eyes of both English and Indian resembles to the ambivalent feeling of Kim himself” to his own identity. And this ultimately leads to his hybridity condition, ‘I don’t want to be a Sahib’ (p.145). Not only physically, Kim transforms from one set of values to another and returns back to previous former value system once again and this process of becoming into double consciousness is throughout the novel, to which Edward Said comments that Kim is “a character who can sportingly cross lines and invade territories a little friend of all the world- Kim O’Hara himself, it is as if by holding Kim at the centre of the novel Kipling can have and enjoy India in a way that even imperialism never dreamed of (p. 188). Thus, as a ‘little friend of all the world’. Kim plays double roles- the role model of an English boy and of Indians which sound often “incompatible, mutually exclusive and

capture exactly the inimical dilemma of empire” (Sullivan, 1993, p. 157). In short Kim often gets into an English of ambivalent and generates feeling of hybrid situation and assimilation. This situation of Kim’s ambivalence and assimilation to some extent to India culture is deliberate strategy of persuading the native to gradual acceptance of English culture and assimilation to it.

The concept of hybridity and assimilation is bootied up with the oriental view of English people to Kim: seeing characteristics of Indians in Kim. If we observe Kim from the European perspective, he sounds to be truly a little friend of all the world because he is presented relatively as an all-knowing character, “Kim would i.e. like an oriental; Kim is ability to sleep as the trains roar is an instance of ‘the oriental indifference to mere noise” (Said, 1979, p. 81). European superiority is arrogantly presented by Kipling when he says, “I have never seen white soldiers and they would never harm people except when drunken. The English do eternally tell the truth” (Kipling, p.188). This kind of stereotypical image of English people to define English is a powerful presentation of Kipling in the novel. Therefore, the identity discourse in post-colonial analysis has been generated in explanation of making demarcation between longing and reality.

The condition in which reality is beyond perception instigates mimicry of the character. Representation of something leads to mimic way of presentation as Homi K. Bhabha (1994) has defined. But in this novel, the mimicry seems to be fulfilled by repetition of English people to the concept that they understand the Indian people well. Hybridity is clearly seen in Babu Hurree, due to the context produced by meeting of the West and the East. Kipling himself, unknowingly from modern post-colonial perspective, comments:

Decidedly Hurree is an original.... He is like the nightmare of a Viennese courier[...]. He represents in little India in transition- the monstrous hybridism of East and west[...]. He has lost his own country and has not acquired any other. Be he has a most complete hatred of his conquerors. Listen, he confided to me last night.”(Kipling, p. 286).

Babu Hurree’s combination of East and West- by working as an active Secret Service agent of the English ruler, and having the feeling of doing sincere service to the nation is the oriental and the European, generated in between resistance and assimilation spirit. The English people see themselves objectified in the behavior of Babu Hurree. Whatever service in disguise he performs, it becomes to his own attitude, his pure service to the state, for he could not realize himself being changed into member of the Secret Service of the colonial rulers. He feels pride of his survive and says, “I have done the state some service” (Kipling, p. 290). This

confidence in Babu is not taken as pure service but just an obedience of the oriental to the colonial ruler. Similarly, hybridity is rather best expressed in Kim's personality because he embodies both cultures- his desire to assimilate himself in India through his accompaniment with Teshoo Lama and his active involvement in missionary job of spying and occasionally reflecting himself as an English boy. This cultural hybridity of Kim O'Hara is complex. He makes a recurrent question- 'Who is Kim?' and possesses an elusive answer because it is a human psychology to question oneself occasionally yet no one may be completely aware all the time with a single identity of oneself. Kim in the novel asks this question three times and gradually comes to realize the physical world around him, the influence and shaping of his personality by the world of British-India which to him is itself a hybrid reality or experience, which has been much different from his boyhood experience.

Cultural assimilation in form of understanding differently from the earlier experience takes place through various characters in the novel. The everyday reality of India has been a power to bring different but more realistic impression on the characters. The ending pages of the novel show that the elderly Buddhist lama finally finds out the Holy River, which in his belief can purify his body and desire. Moreover, it will generate transcendental ecstasy of his journey with Kim. The Lama assimilates himself with the higher sail of Buddhist doctrine not only through the knowledge from intellectual teaching but also through practical experience. A deeper sense of assimilation has taken place between the Lama and Kim from the former's perspective. The novel concludes with the Lama's revealing to his dear Chela Kim that he is quite happy in Kim's success in protecting him from the unexpected Russian spies. The entire situations through which they have passed have been relatively satisfactory. And in the Lama's understanding, it is a kind of spiritual unification between people of similar wishes and intention as they are true to each other. The Lama says:

I saw all Hind, from Ceylon in the sea to the hills and my own painted Rocks at such-zen; I saw every camp and village, to the last, where we have ever rested. I saw them at one time and in one place; for they were within the soul. By this I know the soul has passed beyond the illusion of Time and space and of things. By this I knew that I was free. (Kipling, p.288)

This is an assimilation of faith, knowledge and experience. Likewise, Kim's experience through travelling with the Lama at different places, and particularly, in the north-west frontier that brings encounters with Russian and French intruders, purifies his mind with the knowledge that he could become a successful figure of the English Secret Service on the one hand and his

realization of the world he has been for long and its contribution to the knowledge he has got so far, in a sense, brings unification of his mind and heart on the other. And this is an assimilation of ignorance and experience to more confidential reality. Another example of assimilation can be seen in the 'brotherhood' relation of an intellectual Western man Col. Creighton and Teshoo Lama, a religious intellect from Tibet. Col. Creighton works as director of the Ethnographical commission of English people in India. He also acts as grand master who involves in 'Great Games' in India. The Lama knows Creighton as a worthy man to handle English ways of doing India.

CONCLUSIONS

Post-coloniality in *Kim* reflects from the first page of the novel. Kipling's attempt to establish the superiority of English empire is dominantly portrayed through Kim's bold defiance of the municipality rules by sitting astride the gun Zam-Zammah and kicking of a native boy. This is an effort to establish impression on Indians about the power of English as well as the legitimization of English actions in the oriental world. Nevertheless, Kim's crisis lies in -between of his conscious struggle of identifying as an English boy and assimilating himself in the Indian cultural world, for he continuously makes favorable choice of using native language and Indian dress- up habits and he often undergoes with an ambivalence feeling of mimicry and hybridity.

However, Rudyard Kipling in *Kim* has presented a context directed to rationalize that imperialism in India has been for humanitarian purpose and therefore relationship between the British rulers and their Indian subjects has been relatively more amicable. Kipling has keenly presented many examples of consent between the rulers and the ruled to improve both social, political and economic conditions. Yet, implications of growing misunderstanding incompatible to English and Indian peoples have been consciously and unconsciously indicated as imperatives of the historic separation between the two. Kim's growing interest to the British Secret Service and ultimately involvement with a full spirit of Englishness by diplomatically exploiting the natives shows that Kipling's attitude to India ultimately becomes an imperial effort to rationalize colonialism in India. This indicates that struggle for cultural identities of both the natives and of the Anglo-rulers was highly unavoidable. Along with such an indication of incompatibility of interests, growing cases and contexts of hybridization and desire for cultural assimilation are also brewing up. Thus, Kipling proves himself to be standing in-between imperial and post-colonial realities. However, he seems

facing towards imperial support in resisting decolonization efforts and sounds more liberal in cultural assimilation. By showing liberal attitudes to the natives' as well as the Anglo -Indians' inclination to cultural assimilation, he intends to enable the colonizers to assimilate the native gradually to colonizer's culture because in every relation between native and English ruler, the domination is of the latter.

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