

**Gasanov N. A.**

Baku State University

**THEMES OF THE EAST IN KIPLING'S LITERARY WORK**

*The fervor for transformation is among the most alluring characteristics that Kipling can ascribe to an individual. The capacity to wholly commit oneself to existence encompasses it entirely. For Kipling, this encapsulated the sagacity of the East, and he discerned two modalities of approaching it – through multifaceted Ness and self-denial-embodiment of a diverse persona and a relinquishment of the self that elevates the individual to a personage. The elements of the colonial novel manifest in the text of “Kim” coexist alongside the author’s admiration and interest in the country, its rich culture, its populace, and its customs. It is noteworthy that the oeuvre of the “bard of imperialism” remains highly esteemed in contemporary India. His volumes are published in substantial editions, and his works are integrated into academic curricula at both the school and university levels. Concerning the degree to which the political dimension influences the literary appraisal of Kipling’s legacy, it should be noted that most Western literary scholars do not perceive a significant transgression in the author’s imperialist inclinations; when they reference Kipling’s jingoism, it is merely to state a fact. British English-speaking India ultimately found its literary figure. Within the four-million-strong English-speaking community in India, everyone recognized Kipling, even though few had heard of him beyond its boundaries. At this juncture, Kipling’s poetry and narratives were regarded as provincial, or “colonial,” literature. Within a few years, his works attained popularity in England as well. Kipling communicated with his readership as if they were individuals in a convivial setting, where it appeared that everyone was privy to everything about one another, and there was nothing to conceal. Nevertheless, in these verses, he did not unveil colonial politics, and if he addressed it at all, he did so without any reverence. His authentic protagonists became the builders of bridges and roads, medical practitioners, engineers, ordinary soldiers, and junior officers, who, in his estimation, safeguarded the integrity and security of India.*

**Key words:** R. Kipling, Kipling’s oeuvre, Eastern coloration and themes, characteristics of personal-psychological analysis of characters.

**Introduction to the Problem.** R. Kipling’s inaugural narrative, “The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows,” was published when he was 19 years old in the same “Civil and Military Gazette” on September 26, 1884, in Allahabad (currently located in Pakistan), where he resided, worked, and disseminated his intriguing reports. This narrative heralded the commencement of an extensive series of tales that were printed almost weekly in the Lahore publication and subsequently in numerous other print organs of India. At that time, there existed 4 million Anglo-Indians inhabiting India. Suddenly, these individuals were afforded the opportunity to read about themselves and the country they cherished in these “sketches of Indian life”.

Subsequent to the narratives, Kipling’s poetry was collated in “Departmental Ditties” (1896). The author’s detachment in his poetry bordered on irony. In England, Kipling did not endure a prolonged wait for acclaim. Wheeler, the editor of the “Civil and Military Gazette,” published a collection of poems, “Departmental Ditties,” at his own expense and dispatched a portion of the print run to England. The

prominent critic of the era, Andrew Lang, offered a favorable review of Kipling’s poems, deeming the author a genius. In the compilation “Departmental Ditties,” the author’s detachment almost invariably bordered on irony.

Kipling engaged with his readers as though they were part of a single familial circle, where it appeared that everyone possessed comprehensive knowledge about one another. However, he refrained from exposing the colonial administration, despite discussing it without enthusiasm. Within a few years, Kipling had already achieved considerable recognition throughout the four-million-strong English community in India. Notwithstanding the acclaim he garnered there, Kipling’s narratives and poems continued to be regarded as provincial literature in the eyes of readers, although the most discerning among them recognized even then that it would not be long before he attained prominence throughout England. As is well documented, he subsequently achieved global renown.

**Degree of Research on the Problem.** It is noteworthy that the oeuvre of R. Kipling remains the sub-

ject of vigorous discourse both within Western literary circles and among English-speaking nations of the East that once aligned with the British Empire. Undoubtedly, significant interest in his work is manifested among Russian scholars, as well as researchers from neighboring countries. Each of these scholars interprets Kipling through their unique lens. He is characterized as a storyteller, peacemaker, author of adventure narratives, the “bard of imperialism,” and an innovative poet, among other designations. Despite the diverse perspectives of scholars, a critical examination of the works dedicated to Kipling indicates that Kipling studies today can scarcely claim to be a fully established literary discipline.

According to researchers, “the distinctive features of Kipling’s creative method are described in detail yet fragmentarily; the nature of the author’s artistic consciousness remains far from comprehensively understood. Even regarding the question of what position should be accorded to the ‘Iron Rudyard’ in the global literary canon, literary scholars have yet to achieve consensus. Kipling’s works are variously classified as romanticism, neo-romanticism, realism, or decadence, or they are simply elevated to the status of a unique cultural phenomenon existing outside conventional literary movements. This situation appears to disrupt the cohesive representation of Kipling’s artistic universe and hinders an objective evaluation of the author’s contribution to the global literary discourse” [3, p. 4].

The researcher contends that the primary challenges in contemporary Kipling studies are substantially related to the “ontological” gap that undermines the integrated depiction of Kipling’s artistic universe and obstructs an objective assessment of the author’s contribution to the global literary discourse [3, p. 5].

The researcher emphasized in this regard that “the Anglo-Indian reader would perceive the term ‘neo-romantic’ in relation to Kipling with considerable astonishment. In both style and subject matter, he was a realist among realists. However, outside of India, Kipling’s works were perceived differently. He wrote about something exotic, unfamiliar to the readers, and that which they yearned to comprehend [4, p. 7].” Day after day, Kipling, while executing exhausting editorial duties, composed over forty stories within a year. The majority of these later constituted the collection *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888) [2]. Almost every English-descended resident of India capable of reading eagerly purchased his story collection and immersed themselves in it.

George Orwell, who acknowledged the author’s talent as a storyteller, nevertheless underscored the

ignorance and sentimental aspects of imperialism present in Kipling’s worldview: “Kipling’s romantic notions about England and the Empire could be of no significance if he did not support them with class prejudices that always followed him” [5]. Orwell’s statement is intriguing in that the critic discusses romantic ideas rather than the author’s overall artistic style.

C. Allen, in a study dedicated to the Indian phase of Kipling’s biography, conveys the notion that even then “Kipling was largely a writer with a ‘cold gaze,’ approaching human frailty and the desire for candid discussions with realism. However, this does not imply that Kipling was incapable of such sentiments” [6].

Researchers explain the enigma of Kipling’s ascent by stating that “Kipling entered literature during a period of timelessness, at a juncture when the seemingly unassailable bastion of Victorian consciousness had begun to fracture... Literature was in need of rejuvenation, and when Kipling published several dozen stories and ballads in England in 1888, it became evident that among the listed ‘literary luminaries,’ a ‘lawless comet’ had emerged, poised to disrupt the established system of genres and styles from within. In the unclear, nebulous context of the era, Kipling managed to discern a vast lacuna, a need for a modern romantic hero, for a new moral code, for a new myth that would resonate with Darwinian theory of evolution, encapsulated in its rigid formula: “Survival of the fittest” [7, p. 7].

The researchers, who esteemed Kipling’s oeuvre highly, asserted: “Kipling is as original as anyone in contemporary literature. The power of the means he possesses in his works is truly inexhaustible. The enchanting allure of the narrative, the unusual plausibility of the tale, striking observation, wit, brilliance of dialogue, urban scenes, and simplicity of heroism, precise style, or rather, dozens of precise styles, exotic themes, a vast depth of knowledge and experience, and much, much more constitute Kipling’s artistic attributes, which he wields with unprecedented force over the intellect and imagination of the reader [8, p. 478].”

The objective of this investigation is to elucidate the researchers’ attitudes towards the Eastern themes in the works of R. Kipling.

**Methods.** An analysis of the approaches and ideas of several researchers who have engaged with Kipling’s oeuvre has been conducted.

#### **Main Content.**

#### **Images and Characters in R. Kipling’s Works.**

There exists a spiritual dimension atypical for children’s literature, which primarily pays homage to

adventure. This is manifested in “The Great Game” (the activities of the English intelligence in India), a secondary, incidental theme of the novel, the primary purpose of which is to depict Indian quotidian life, while Kipling, who was entirely unfamiliar with the upper and middle classes of Indian society (as opposed to Anglo-Indian society), had profound knowledge of its lower strata. The prototypes of Kim can today be abundantly found in any city in India” [4, p. 23].

Thus, Charles Carrington noted that “the interests of the young author (who arrived in India on September 20, 1882) extended beyond the confines of the insular circle of Anglo-Indian aristocracy, and the young journalist was known for his superior understanding of the lives of commoners in Lahore compared to the police, and he earnestly studied the very ‘bottom’” [14]. In corroboration of Carrington’s assertion, Kipling himself remarked: “I wandered until dawn through all sorts of random establishments: taverns, gambling dens, and opium smoking rooms, which are not at all mysterious or enigmatic; I observed street dances” [15, pp. 51–53].

Professor Bhupal Singh of Lahore University, in his book “Survey of Anglo-Indian Literature,” critiques Kipling’s works dedicated to India, stating, unlike other compatriots who view Kipling’s so-called Indian cycle positively, that “Kipling was unable to deeply comprehend Indian society and its culture. Therefore, he, remaining within the confines of English stereotypes, described them superficially” [16].

R.T. Hopkins, in turn, emphasized that the novel “Kim” is realistic in form but still romantic in spirit” [17].

Equally intriguing is D. Palmer’s perspective, who asserted that “we must express our final protest against the overly popular misconception regarding Mr. Kipling’s stories. Kipling’s passion for specificity, which is the passion of a genuinely creative individual, along with his keen enjoyment of the works of the world, were the reasons Kipling was mistakenly considered a realist of the modern type” [18, p. 98]. However, by denying Kipling the right to be classified as a realist, D. Palmer sidesteps the question of which literary movement the author gravitated towards.

Some literary scholars, like C. Norton, assert that Kipling is undoubtedly a realist, as realism does not oppose romanticism and is genetically linked to it: “Yesterday’s and today’s realists are descendants of the romanticists and idealists of the mid-century, following, as children do, a path different from that of their parents” [19].

Meanwhile, E. Dauden contends that Kipling achieves realism through romanticism [20]. Thomas

Stearns Eliot approached Kipling’s imperial pursuits from literary-critical positions [21, p. 12].

Researchers observes that “E. Genieva’s stance on this issue is multifaceted: ‘in her works, on the one hand, she addresses romantic worldviews; on the other hand, she reduces romantic canons to heroic attributes and romanticism’” [3, p. 12].

Conversely, V. Betaki asserts that “Kipling is a romantic author, yet philosophically, he was never a romantic in his personal disposition,” and posits that “Kipling employed romanticism as a mechanism of psychological influence on children and adolescents (which, according to the scholar, constitute his primary readership), who are predisposed to interpret literature in a more or less romantic fashion” [22].

Researchers viewpoint on this matter is equally distinctive: “Perhaps if he had written for the English not about their compatriots residing in India, but about themselves, he would have been considered a naturalist. However, he wrote about individuals both akin to and divergent from his presumed compatriots, and moreover, living in a foreign context, rendering it impossible to classify him as anything other than a neo-romantic” [9, p. 6].

It is noteworthy that for English and American scholars, “Kim” is unequivocally regarded as an absolute classic. Supporting this assertion is the perspective of Anglo-American poet, playwright, and critic T.S. Eliot, who labeled Kipling “the preeminent literary figure of his era,” and designated the novel “Kim” as “Kipling’s most distinguished work” [20].

Charles Carrington, the author of the authoritative monograph “Rudyard Kipling” (1955), also remarked regarding “Kim”: “undoubtedly, no other English writer has engaged with India with such affection and curiosity” [24]. Mark Twain expressed a warm sentiment about it: “the profound and subtle allure of India permeates ‘Kim’ like no other book in existence. In this resides its very atmosphere. I reread it annually and, thus, without experiencing the fatigue of travel, return repeatedly to India, the sole foreign country I envision and desire to revisit each time” [4, p. 24].

The English author and literary critic, Angus Wilson, also contributed his insights on “Kim,” referring to the protagonist of this book as “the Ariel of Kipling’s Indian magical realm,” and characterizing the novel “Kim” as “the most enchanting creation of Kipling, one of the most extraordinary masterpieces ever conceived” [4, p. 24]. In his biography of Kipling, “The Mysterious Travels of Rudyard Kipling: His Books and Life” (1977), Angus Wilson articulated: “Kipling’s fervent interest in individuals, their language, endeavors, and preoccupations constitutes

the essence of the magical allure inherent in all his works” [24].

**The Unveiling of the Personal Qualities of Characters in Kipling’s Works** Researchers, who esteemed the author’s oeuvre highly, particularly his poetry and shorter prose works, expresses partial dissent with Angus Wilson’s evaluation and, seemingly urging the English scholar to exercise greater precision in his reflections, cautiously observes: “Strange? Perhaps. One should not anticipate an abundance of such credible texts in world literature, with each detail originating from fairy tales (like the ‘Jungle Books’). Nevertheless, it is still inappropriate to assert literary uniqueness in a broader context” [4, p. 24]. To bolster the persuasiveness of his assertions, the Russian scholar provides substantial and logical arguments and examples.

For instance, Researchers posits that “Kipling does not rank among the most erudite English writers, although he possessed an excellent command of poetry. His knowledge, while extensive, was often ‘acquired haphazardly’ and frequently derived from secondary sources. However, he was well-acquainted with and fond of Dickens. In essence, Kipling was, as his English scholars prefer to articulate, a ‘discriminating reader.’ He could overlook significant literary works and become engrossed in authors of merely entertaining value” [4, p. 26]. Thus, “he derived considerable delight from prestigious academic degrees, as they served as a unique psychological compensation for the absence of a conventional diploma” [4, p. 25].

Mark Kinkade Wicks, in his scholarly treatise “The Scope of Reality in Kipling’s Novels,” asserts that “Kim” represents an enthusiastic and refreshing response to the realities of the world, and the allure of this text is amplified by its portrayal of India – in all its extensive diversity. According to M.K. Wicks, “it is challenging to divert one’s gaze from this kaleidoscope of races, castes, customs, and beliefs, depicted with a warmth of sentiment that is nearly impossible to find elsewhere in Kipling” [4, p. 29].

The protagonist of “Kim,” Kimball O’Hara, the offspring of an Irish soldier from a regiment stationed in India, and the lama who has arrived from Tibet, are neither Indians nor Englishmen. However, Kim can be characterized as Anglo-Indian. Some foreign scholars of Kipling’s oeuvre categorize “Kim” as a “road novel,” analogous to Cervantes’ “Don Quixote” [4, p. 27]. Although Kipling had not yet distinguished himself as a novelist, he was an exceptional storyteller. The lama and Kim represent the two principal figures in Kipling’s narrative. The Irish boy Kim, perceived

as Irish by all, and the Tibetan lama, navigate the authentic terrain of India.

However, English literary critic Edmund Wilson, in his comprehensive work “Kipling, Whom Nobody Read” (London, 1941), extols “Kim,” characterizing the novel as an exhilarating, nearly archetypal book. According to E. Wilson, in “Kim,” Kipling “loosened the reins” and permitted, more than in any other work, not only his imagination but also his ability to observe and penetrate the essence of things to flourish.

As a result of this, the literary work emerged as “the most dense and complex” of all that he had composed [4, pp. 31–32]. Nevertheless, E. Wilson observes that there exists one fundamental shortcoming in his novel. The dichotomy between the tangible and the spiritual is not fully articulated and ultimately dissipates, as there is not a single episode in which spiritual pursuits and the realities of life come into sharp confrontation. This would be anticipated: after all, the concrete elements in “Kim” lead to the protagonist, having undergone the requisite training and demonstrated his utility, becoming an agent of British intelligence – in other words, he begins to serve those forces that oppose the India he so dearly cherishes. In this case, the novel presents a clear internal contradiction: just at the moment when Kim is prepared to embrace all of humanity, he is granted a position within the “Intelligence Service,” which does not constitute an organization that advocates for universal human values.

English critic Noël Annan, author of the work “Kipling’s Place in the History of Ideas” (1959), disagrees with E. Wilson’s assessment. According to N. Annan, E. Wilson’s perspective is entirely predictable for that era [4, p. 32]. However, Wilson, as N. Annan perceives, evaluates Kipling’s novel from a contemporary viewpoint rather than from the time it was composed [4, p. 32]. The circumstances in India were different during that period. Therefore, one cannot impose our current interpretations of the world onto the novel.

Without comprehending Kipling’s perspectives, one cannot grasp why this novel succeeded so remarkably for him. “Kim” does not, and cannot, present a dramatic confrontation between the ideal and the real, primarily because the “real” is embodied not solely in Kim’s understanding of life but also in his service in intelligence. Researchers approaches this issue in his own manner. He writes: “Edmund Wilson was entirely correct when he asserted that there is no direct dramatic conflict between two opposing factions in ‘Kim.’ However, he is mistaken in another regard: such a conflict cannot exist in a ‘road

novel.' It is outside the principles of this genre. This conflict is untenable due to the writer's perspective, which regarded British rule in India as a benefit for that country" [4, p. 34]. Kim is merely a youth who realizes the potentials inherent in the character of the boy Kim.

Kim is yet another "natural man" for Kipling. In "Kim," apart from him, there exists a "natural environment," and this environment is India – multifaceted, cacophonous, multilingual, distinct in each of its elements while simultaneously close to nature. Yet now he assumes a special role – he is an agent of British intelligence. This service precisely necessitates absolute involvement in the life of the nation. "As he ascends the social hierarchy, 'trained in the sahib manner,' he remains among those with whom he was raised. This in no way obstructs him from being a hero of the English 'road novel.' He is almost 'like everyone else,' yet at the same time – different" [4, p. 35].

What captivates the reader in "Kim" is the protagonist's capacity for metamorphosis. He is multifaceted, akin to India, yet simultaneously cohesive. The resourcefulness characteristic of quotidian life – exemplified by cunning, agility, the ability to engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds, humor, and other traits – culminates in Kim. It is no coincidence that Angus Wilson regards this depiction as one of Kipling's foremost artistic achievements [2, p. 35].

It is noteworthy that one of Kipling's esteemed characters is none other than Strickland, who emerges in the narrative "Keep it as Evidence" [4, pp. 18–19]. Subsequently, he reappears in many of Kipling's other narratives and later features in "Kim." In comparison to the Englishmen, Strickland possesses a significant advantage. This advantage manifests in his extensive comprehension and insight into the country acquired during his service in India, enabling him to assume the persona of any of its representatives at will. Occasionally, he acts independently, contravening the opinions of his superiors. In pursuit of essential information, he adeptly adopts the identities of various individuals. One can assert with confidence that he is one of the remarkable English detectives operating in India.

Contrary to popular belief, "Kipling never denied the merits of Asian culture," as noted by researchers: "Moreover, he patiently endeavored to comprehend the 'Law' of the East, decipher its 'code,' and even perceive the world from its perspective. The dilemma

confronted by the protagonist of his novel 'Kim,' who oscillates between two behavioral paradigms – Eastern or European – seemed entirely authentic to him" [7, pp. 3–26].

Salman Rushdie, who maintained a rather critical stance regarding Britain's imperial policies and its colonial literature, elucidates this paradox: "Kipling will always present numerous aspects that I find challenging to forgive, but there is sufficient veracity in his narratives to merit engagement rather than outright dismissal" [25, pp. 74–80].

Among those who previously resisted acknowledging him, by the conclusion of the 20th century, a consensus emerged regarding the necessity of recognizing his individuality and talent, including Cornel Lewis. His work "Kipling in India" [26], one of the few dedicated to Kipling's oeuvre, garnered considerable attention from readers. In this volume, the author generally offers a commendable evaluation of Kipling's contributions while addressing the issue of India's position within Kipling's literary corpus.

A contemporary of Kipling, the author of renowned adventure novels, Rider Haggard, after visiting Kipling in January 1922, recorded in his diary: "He adheres to the most disheartening perspectives regarding the situations in Ireland, Egypt, and India, going so far as to state: 'It appears the Empire is disintegrating.' The dissolution of British imperialism was inevitable, and Kipling comprehended this no less than anyone else" [27].

The American historian, cultural theorist, and literary critic of Arab descent, Edward W. Said, in his publication "Orientalism" [28] in 1978, emerged as one of the first to address the theme of stereotyping in criticism and to scrutinize the Western cultural canon alongside the cult of imperialism. In his subsequent works, particularly his most renowned contribution to cultural studies, "Culture and Imperialism" (1994), he further articulated the notion that the authentic East, due to its colonial legacy, had been deprived of its own voice for centuries, rendering its representatives as victims, stripped of the right to genuine cultural representation [29].

**Conclusions.** R. Kipling was a figure of considerable talent, and his impact on global literature is profound. Numerous works transcend the confines of traditional novels and concurrently embody both colonial and anti-colonial elements. This, along with his life, is intimately connected to India and the broader region, as well as to the national culture and the overall lifestyle of Eastern peoples.

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**Гасанов Н. А. ТЕМИ СХОДУ В ЛІТЕРАТУРНІЙ ТВОРЧОСТІ КІПЛІНГА**

*Прагнення до трансформації є однією з найпривабливіших характеристик, які Кіплінг може приписати людині. Здатність повністю віддавати себе існуванню охоплює його цілком. Для Кіплінга це втілювало в собі мудрість Сходу, і він розрізняв дві модальності підходу до нього – через багатогранний Несс і самозречення – втілення різноманітної особистості та відмову від себе, що підносить індивіда до особистості. Елементи колоніального роману, які проявляються в тексті «Кіма», співіснують поруч із захопленням і інтересом автора до країни, її багатой культури, населення, звичаїв. Примітно, що творчість «барда імперіалізму» залишається високопоставленою в сучасній Індії. Його твори публікуються значними тиражами, а його праці включені до навчальних програм як на шкільному, так і на університетському рівнях. Стосовно ступеня, до якого політичний вимір впливає на літературну оцінку спадщини Кіплінга, слід зазначити, що більшість західних літературознавців не бачать суттєвої трансгресії в імперіалістичних нахилах автора; коли вони посилаються на шовінізм Кіплінга, це просто констатують факт. Британська англомовна Індія зрештою знайшла свою літературну*

фігуру. У чотиримільйонній англомовній спільноті в Індії всі впізнавали Кіплінга, хоча мало хто чув про нього за її межами. На цьому етапі поезію та оповідання Кіплінга вважали провінційною або «колоніальною» літературою. За кілька років його роботи набули популярності і в Англії. Кіплінг спілкувався зі своєю аудиторією так, ніби вони були окремими особами в дружній обстановці, де, здавалося, усі були в курсі всього про одного, і не було чого приховувати. Тим не менш, у цих віршах він не розкривав колоніальну політику, і якщо взагалі звертався до неї, то робив це без будь-якого благоговіння. Його справжніми героями стали будівельники мостів і доріг, лікарі, інженери, рядові солдати та молодші офіцери, які, на його думку, захищали цілісність і безпеку Індії.

**Ключові слова:** Р. Кіплінг, творчість Кіплінга, східний колорит і тематика, особливості особистісно-психологічного аналізу персонажів.