

## LITERARY STYLE AND THEMATIC EXPLORATIONS IN KIPLING'S WORKS

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**Abstract:** *This article is about the distinctive literary style of Joseph Rudyard Kipling's works and an analysis of some of these works.*

**Keywords:** *novels, reviews of works, pictures, collections of stories, social scenes in India*

**Izoh:** *Bu maqola Joseph Rudyard Kipling ning asarlaridagi o'ziga hos adabiy uslubi va ushbu birqancha asarlarning tahlili haqida bo'ladi*

**Kalif so'zlar:** *romanlar, asar sharhlari, obrazlar, hikoyalar to'plamlari, Hindistonda ijtimoiy manzaralar*

**Аннотация:** *Эта статья посвящена своеобразному литературному стилю произведений Джозефа Редьярда Киплинга и анализу некоторых из этих произведений.*

**Ключевые слова:** *романы, рецензии на произведения, картины, сборники рассказов, светские сцены в Индии.*

Kipling's nuanced understanding of the complexities of identity, the human condition, and societal dynamics positions him as a literary luminary whose works remain fertile ground for exploration and interpretation. Whether through the lens of postcolonial studies, cultural criticism, or moral philosophy, Kipling's writings invite contemporary readers to engage with timeless themes and grapple with questions that transcend the boundaries of time and place.

These are some reviews for his popular works:

1. "The Jungle Book" (1894):

This collection of stories introduces readers to Mowgli, a young boy raised by wolves in the Indian jungle. Through Mowgli's adventures, Kipling explores themes of identity, the law of the jungle, and the delicate balance between human and animal instincts.

2. "Kim" (1901):

Set against the backdrop of British India, "Kim" follows the journey of an orphaned boy named Kimball O'Hara. The novel delves into the complexities

of identity, as Kim navigates the cultural and social landscapes of India while grappling with questions of allegiance and self-discovery.

### 3. "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888):

This short story explores themes of ambition and the consequences of unchecked aspirations. Peachey Carnahan and Daniel Dravet, two adventurers, seek to establish themselves as kings in a remote part of Afghanistan, leading to a dramatic tale of hubris and the clash between lofty dreams and reality.

### 4. "If—" (1895):

One of Kipling's most renowned poems, "If—" imparts timeless wisdom and advice. Written as paternal guidance to his son, the poem encapsulates virtues such as patience, courage, and resilience. Its universal themes resonate with readers across generations. Irony and Satire: Kipling employs elements of irony and satire to critique the protagonists' grandiose ambitions and their ultimate fate. Personal Integrity: The poem imparts wisdom on qualities such as patience, courage, and perseverance, serving as a moral compass for personal integrity. Resilience and Stoicism: "If—" encourages readers to face challenges with resilience and maintain their composure in the face of adversity.

Parallel Structure: The poem's use of parallel structure creates a rhythmic flow, emphasizing the repetition of virtues.

Universal Applicability: The simplicity of language and universal themes make "If—" accessible and relevant to a wide audience.

Identity: Whether explored through Mowgli's struggle in "The Jungle Book" or Kim's journey in the novel "Kim," identity is a recurring theme in Kipling's works.

Imperialism: Kipling critically examines the impact of British imperialism in India, offering nuanced perspectives in works like "Kim" and "The Man Who Would Be King."

Ambition and Consequences: The theme of ambition and its consequences is evident in stories like "The Man Who Would Be King," where characters grapple with the ramifications of their aspirations.<sup>135</sup>

Vivid Descriptions: Kipling's works are characterized by vivid descriptions of settings, whether the jungles of India or the bustling streets of Lahore.

Symbolism: The use of symbolic elements, such as animals in "The Jungle Book" or the journey in "Kim," adds layers of meaning to the narratives.

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<sup>135</sup> "Rudyard Kipling: The Complete Verse", 1940, London by Hodder and Stoughton (800 pages)

Moral and Philosophical Reflections: Kipling's writings often incorporate moral and philosophical reflections, seen prominently in poems like "If—."

The integration of theoretical and practical analyses will further illuminate the enduring impact of Rudyard Kipling's literary works and their contribution to the broader literary landscape.

Rudyard Kipling's literary corpus, deeply rooted in the era of British imperialism, exhibits a complex and multifaceted engagement with the theme of imperialism. While some of his works seemingly endorse the imperial project, others offer nuanced critiques, reflecting the ambivalence and contradictions of Kipling's perspectives.

Kipling's early works, including poems like "The White Man's Burden," often convey a paternalistic view of imperialism. The notion that the "white man" has a duty to civilize and uplift the "lesser" races is articulated through a lens of moral responsibility. This perspective aligns with prevalent imperialistic sentiments of the time, where the expansion of European powers was often rationalized as a mission to bring progress and enlightenment to colonized territories.

However, Kipling's exploration of imperialism extends beyond a simplistic endorsement. In works like "The Man Who Would Be King" and various stories set in India, he delves into the unintended consequences of imperial endeavours. The characters in these narratives often grapple with the complexities and pitfalls of their ambitions, showcasing a more critical examination of the impact of imperialism on both colonizers and the colonized.

Kipling's writings frequently reflect a strong sense of patriotism and pride in British identity. Poems such as "The Recessional" celebrate the glory of the British Empire, emphasizing the greatness of the nation and its imperial mission. Kipling's nationalism, however, is not confined to a narrow parochialism; rather, it encompasses a broader sense of duty to the empire and a belief in the superiority of British values.

In novels like "Kim," Kipling explores cultural hybridity and the blending of identities. The protagonist, Kimball O'Hara, embodies the synthesis of British and Indian cultures, symbolizing the complexities of national identity in a diverse colonial setting. Kipling's portrayal of characters who straddle multiple

cultural worlds challenges simplistic notions of nationalism and underscores the fluidity of identity in a colonial context.<sup>136</sup>

Kipling's works serve as a mirror to the attitudes prevalent in colonial society during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His writings capture the zeitgeist of an era marked by the confidence of imperial powers and the belief in the civilizing mission of the West. Through characters like the "Sahibs" in India or the adventurous protagonists in "The Man Who Would Be King," Kipling reflects and shapes contemporary perceptions of the roles and responsibilities associated with imperialism.

Kipling's celebration of British national identity, especially in poems like "If—," contributed to the construction of a narrative of British exceptionalism. The idea of British values as a guiding light, coupled with a sense of duty to the empire, resonated with a society grappling with the challenges and responsibilities of maintaining a global imperial presence.

Despite resonating with certain segments of society, Kipling's views faced contestation. Critics and intellectuals questioned the moral underpinnings of imperialistic ideologies, challenging the assumed superiority of Western values. Kipling's writings, while reflecting prevailing sentiments, also became a battleground for debates on the ethics of imperialism and the consequences of unchecked nationalism.

His writings have faced persistent criticisms for their ethnocentric perspectives and racial stereotyping. Characters in some of his works are often depicted through colonial lenses, reinforcing prevailing stereotypes of the time. The poem "The White Man's Burden," in particular, has been critiqued for its paternalistic and condescending attitude toward colonized peoples.

The era in which Kipling wrote also saw the emergence of antiimperialist movements and sentiments. Figures like Joseph Conrad and George Orwell offered counternarratives, challenging the romanticized notions of imperialism. Kipling's views, entangled with the prevailing imperial discourse, faced opposition from those advocating for a more critical and ethical examination of colonial practices. Kipling's legacy remains intertwined with controversies surrounding his political views. In the postcolonial era, scholars and readers continue to grapple with the ethical dimensions of his writings. The ongoing debates underscore the complexities of Kipling's legacy, as his

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<sup>136</sup> Julian C. Smith "The Children's Literature of Rudyard Kipling: A Survey and Bibliography",1979, Scarecrow Press (224 pages)

contributions to literature are both celebrated and critiqued within the evolving framework of contemporary ethical and social sensibilities.

In contemporary literary and academic circles, there is a growing reassessment of imperialist narratives, leading to a more nuanced understanding of Kipling's works. Scholars engage with Kipling not only as a product of his time but also as a complex figure whose writings provide insights into the prevailing attitudes and power dynamics of the colonial era.

Contemporary scholarship often seeks to decolonize interpretations of Kipling's works, recognizing the need to critically examine the biases inherent in colonial narratives. This involves acknowledging the impact of colonial legacies while also recognizing the agency and perspectives of the colonized, which might be marginalized or absent in Kipling's depictions.

### CONCLUSION

Rudyard Kipling's views on imperialism and nationalism are complex and multifaceted, reflecting the ambivalence of an era marked by imperial confidence and the challenges of maintaining global dominance. Kipling's works, while sometimes endorsing imperial ideals, also offer critical examinations of the consequences of imperialism. His nationalism is intertwined with a sense of duty to the empire but is tempered by explorations of cultural hybridity and identity.

The impact of Kipling's writings on contemporary societal attitudes is undeniable. His works served as both a reflection and a shaper of the prevailing colonial ethos, contributing to the construction of narratives around national identity and imperial responsibilities. However, the legacy of Kipling's political views is contested, facing criticisms for ethnocentric perspectives and racial stereotyping.

In the evolving landscape of contemporary perspectives, there is a continuous reassessment of Kipling's legacy. Scholars and readers engage with his works to navigate the complexities of imperialist narratives and decolonize interpretations. As we reflect on Kipling's political views, it becomes evident that his legacy is both a testament to the prevailing attitudes of his time and a subject of ongoing dialogue and critique in the broader context of postcolonial studies.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> "Rudyard Kipling: The Complete Verse" by Rudyard Kipling, 1994, Wordsworth Editions Ltd (2018) - 800 pages



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