Chapter 6

Mapping the Colonial Space: Kipling as a Travel Writer

Letters of Marque

Because of its association with various literary genres and its blending of fact and fiction travel literature refuses to be confined within the domain of any single definition. But since the later part of the previous century with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) the literary outputs falling into this category were graced with an awakened interest for their association with colonialism and its aftermath. Focussing on travel narratives from this theoretical approach John Thieme writes "Post-colonial theory has generally viewed travel in a different light, seeing it as an activity which, since it occurs in the LIMINAL space between cultures, opens up possibilities for cultural interchange in an AMBIVALENT environment" (*Post-Colonial Studies: The Essential Glossary* 264). In his pioneering essay "Traveling Theory" (1982), Edward Said uses travel as a 'trope' for the meaningful existence of the theory itself. According to him, travel narrative establishes connections that erode notions of fixed positionality and discrete subjectivity[1]. Almost in the same vein Homi K. Bhabha speaks of the "re-creation of the self in the world of travel" (*The Location of Culture* 9). But while all these theorists put emphasis upon the formation of hybrid culture from the contact zone of the two cultures, the experience of travel may profoundly disturb the security of monocultural version of identity without any prospect of correlation or hybridity. In this chapter I am going to analyze Rudyard Kipling's travel narratives from this perspective.

The very name of the present text indicates that the focus would be upon a privateer commissioned to travel beyond his community, here the Anglo-Indian community during the days of Raj. Covering Kipling's travels to princely states of Rajputana, *Letters of Marque* first made its debut in the *Pioneer* and then in England. These states remain outside the periphery of the direct colonial administration and could offer the White traveller a first-hand account of the exotic India. There is no denying the fact that the narrator, like his creator, is highly prejudiced against the administration of native princely states. In the discussion of

his short story “The Man Who Would Be King” (1888) in the third chapter I have tried to show how European and more precisely British imagination was deeply disturbed at the thought of supposed uncivilized practices going on in princely states. It is precisely this Eurocentric mindset which sees, analyses and forms opinions about people who are hoodwinked to believe themselves as free citizens. But while Kipling criticizes the native rule, his own compatriots, the Whites, are not spared from his assail. Having Indian experience for many years Kipling could not just tolerate any romanticizing about the bare facts or the loudmouthed proclamation of know-it-all as done by fashionable travellers. In the very opening of *Letters of Marque* he shows that this pleasure seeking persona whom he banters as “globe-trotter” is essentially one

> Who “does” kingdoms in days and writes books upon them in weeks. And this desperate facility is not as strange as it seems. By the time that an Englishman has come by sea and rail *via* America, Japan, Singapore, and Ceylon to India, he can…master in five minutes the intricacies of the *Indian Bradshaw*,…Can we wonder that the intoxication of success in hasty assimilation should make him overbold,… (7-8, italics author’s).

Throughout the narrative, Kipling’s protagonist, the unnamed Englishman, did not allow his prejudice impede his curiosity and learning regarding the exploits of the medieval Rajput rulers. He even praised them where it was due. By contrast with all his adulation for exotic India the globe-trotter actually betrays a superficial temperament. Having no reason to bear any grudge against India or her people his account does not fare better than a few pages full of sketchy details of native life. By contrast, Kipling’s protagonist comes into contact with a civilization which he considers as inferior, recognizes its worth and undergoes a thorough change regarding the comparative analysis of princely states of Rajputana and the rest of India under colonial rule.

The beginning of Kipling’s narrative is marked with almost a deceptive simplicity. The Anglo-Indian narrator feels the city life as claustrophobic and yearns for leisure. The British India turns to be a place where

> …Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, Aides-de-Camp, Colonels and their wives, Majors, Captains and Subalterns after their kind move and rule and govern and squabble and fight and sell each other's horses, and tell wicked stories of their neighbours (*LM* 9).

Quite naturally escaped from a world obsessed with hierarchy and social status the narrator gets the touch of a pre-colonial India during his long tour in Rajputana. It is this exulting mind which sees the first rising of the sun in Boondi as the 'First Day' of the creation:

> It is good, good beyond expression, to see the sun rise upon a strange land and to know that you have only to go forward and *possess that land* — that it will dower you before the day is ended with a hundred new impressions and, perhaps, *one idea* (183-184, italics mine).

The facade of craving for easy life is exposed almost unwarily by the narrator himself as his mind is clouded with the idea of conquest and possession — quite in keeping with his colonial legacy. Thus a physical distance from the heart of the Empire is no assurance for a decolonized mind. This "unmasking of the narrator's frontiersman persona", writes Liang Low, is "part of a narrative strategy for revealing the true pioneering heroes" (139). With the gradual exposition of his frontiersman self, his praise for the Empire builders acquires an unabashed note. Thus instead of the office-bound bureaucrats the real makers of the Empire are the Britishers who stay as representatives of the Raj in these princely states. In total contrast to their allegedly effeminate counterparts of the Presidencies, these men actually epitomise the omnipresence of the Empire:

> They are of the same caste as the toilers on the Frontier — tough, bronzed men, with wrinkles at the corners of the eyes, gotten by looking across much sun-glare…and this to the [Anglo-] Indian Cockney who is accustomed to the bleached or office man is curious, there are to be found many veritable ''tiger men''— not story-spinners but such as [we] have,…They are enthusiastic over

> princelings of little known fiefs, lords of austere estates perched on the tops of unthrifty hills, hard riders and good sportsmen (79-80).

One cannot but notice that this attribution of masculinity does not actually coincide with their material prosperity and the scientific and the educational changes they usher in these states. Furthermore by placing these 'tiger-men' with the toilers of the frontier, i.e. the English and largely tribal soldiers of the then North-West Frontier Province, Kipling acknowledges the importance of the valour of the indigenous people for the safeguard of the Empire. Such a recognition necessitates that the colonizers must know and appreciate the exploits of the races without whose service the Empire may collapse. This attempt to know them further generates unease and fear in the traveller's attitude to the Empire.

The first sign of this unease is reflected, again almost unconsciously, in his depiction of the states which bear the least trace of Western civilization. Thus the narrator explores the states of Boondi, Udaipur and Chitor with both adulation and phobic anxiety. In Udaipur the narrator is simply taken away by the bliss of the serene landscape and tranquillity that permeates everywhere. The opal like wine-red coloured hills and the gold-like dust in the rays of the setting sun remind the traveller of Sindabad's exploits. Yet this self-ingratiating string of thought is occasionally interrupted by the passing of the Bunjaras, the 'poor wretches' earning their livelihood as nomads. In a state such as this where a man has to toil relentlessly for bread, the sumptuous dinner of duck served to him pricks his conscience for a while — "It was a brutal thing, this double-barrelled murder perpetrated in the silence of the marsh…" (79). In the Anglo-Indian society from which the narrator hails, such thoughts would probably never have dawned upon him. His thoughts and actions are slowly being affected by the native life and in the subsequent events they are to generate unhomeliness and paranoia.

This paranoia reaches its apogee during his visit to the ancient capital of Mewar — Chitor. Apparently a thriving little town the whole Chitor is pervaded with a 'monstrous gloom' (136). The city stands witness to innumerable strifes for centuries past and to an inquisitive mind such as that of the narrator/Kipling which is full of vivid and terrible memories. Like the wind-swept Troy, Chitorgarh is ravaged

by eerie winds echoing its bygone days of pomp and feud. From the Hall of Audience the narrator sees that light or life is prohibited to enter in the palace by its mazy stairways and marauding trees which make every nook and corner perpetually dark. As if to ward off a trespasser a tall Peepul severs a thick slab from the wall but holds the stone "as a man holds down a fallen enemy under his elbow, shoulder and forearm" (124). Amid this accumulated desolation and waste the narrator wanders lonely, afraid of his own presence that might offend the spirit of the place, the zombie. His spirit was slowly overwhelmed by the 'Spirit of the Place' but his conscious mind warned him to stay away from this claustrophobic ambience:

> The Englishman wandered so far in one palace that he came to an almost black-dark room, high up in a wall, and said proudly to himself:— " *I must be the first man who has been here*"; meaning thereby no harm or insult to any one. But he tripped and fell, and as he put out his hands, he felt that the stairs had been worn hollow and smooth by the tread of innumerable naked feet. Then he was afraid, and came away very quickly, stepping delicately over fallen friezes and bits of sculptured men, so as not to offend the dead; … (124, italics mine)

It is not presumptuous to interpret that the Englishman's boast of being the first man in the dark vault which precedes his fall is an outlandish, though innocent, joke and is retributed justly. Perhaps the one time dwellers of the palace used to indulge in mirth and pride before their fall at the remorseless sieges by foreign invaders. The motifs of innumerable naked feet, dark stairways and smooth stones which recur in the subsequent chapters of *Letters of Marque* become powerful tools to counter the colonial gaze which wants to stereotype and discipline everything they come in contact with. The fear and aversion of the narrator can be traced back to the colonial regime's phobia of unknown and undefined things having the potential to elude or thwart any attempt of classification. In an interview with Jean-Pierre Barou and Michelle Perrot, Foucault casts light upon the colonial regime's reaction to the unknown and undefined things thus:

> A fear haunted the latter half of the eighteenth century: the fear of darkened spaces, of the pall of gloom which prevents the full visibility of things, men and truths. It sought to break up the patches of darkness that blocked the light, eliminate the shadowy areas of society, demolish the unlit chambers where arbitrary political acts, monarchical caprice, religious superstitions, tyrannical and priestly plots, epidemics and the illusions of ignorance were fomented. The chateaux, lazarets, bastilles and convents inspired even in the pre-Revolutionary period a suspicion and hatred exacerbated by a certain political overdetermination (*Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* 153, Cited also in Liang-Low 149).

These unlit chambers have the potential not only to foil the colonial gaze but to turn the gaze upon the colonizer himself. In doing so obviously the traditional binary of colonizer/colonized undergoes an alteration. Before the all piercing gaze of the unseen onlookers the colonizer is reduced to an object of surveillance:

> All Palaces in India…are full of eyes. In some, as has been said, the idea of being watched is stronger than in others. In Boondi Palace it was overpowering…There were trap-doors on the tops of terraces, and windows veiled in foliage, and bull's eyes set low in unexpected walls, and many other peep-holes and places of vantage. In the end, the Englishman looked devoutly at the floor, but when the voice of the woman came up from under his feet, he felt that there was nothing left for him but to go. Yet, excepting only this voice, there was deep silence everywhere, and nothing could be seen (*LM* 228).

The subjection of the narrator is 'real' because his relation to his surroundings is, to resort to Foucault again, 'fictitious' (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 202). Here one may presume that had Kipling used the first person narrator 'I' perhaps he would face difficulty in making his predicament true to life. But the act of hiding the real identity behind 'the Englishman', observes Mary Condé

> does indeed accentuate his isolation and vulnerability, since he is travelling in India amongst Indians (and in an India he does not

> know), especially in what he calls 'the stony pastures of Mewar', where he 'with a great sinking of the heart', begins to realize that his caste is of no value, and that no one is going to defer to him, or help him, in his travels (233).

To perpetuate this subjection the 'faceless gazes' upon him must remain invisible throughout the narrative and the circle is complete during his visit to two more places — Kumbha Rana's Tower of Victory and Gau-Mukh.

The interior of the tower, which itself is a mixture of Hindu, Jain and Islamic edifice, offers no comfort or attraction like a tourist spot. On the contrary, the multitude of Hindu deities in the form of naked human beings and beasts carved upon the now smooth and slimy wall visibly threatened the narrator with chiraptophobia — fear of coming into physical contact. In the palace of Chitor and Boondi he had the feeling of being watched and felt by the all pervasive hostile Presence. But in this 'nine storeys' high phallic tower the Presence seems to be invested with greater potentiality — both watching and exacting power upon a body which refuses to be docile. The reader finds it impossible to miss that the higher the narrator ascends the more he becomes entangled by the curiously concerted idols whose lewdness now almost choked him with fear and aversion. Likewise the descent into Gau-Mukh (cow's mouth) which apparently poses no more threat "than a little spring, falling into a reservoir" forebodes an impending gloom (*LM* 128). The proximity of Gau-Mukh to the subterranean chamber, where the legendary Queen Pudmini and her handmaidens immolated themselves upon pyre, made him feel that he had trespassed into "the very heart and soul of all Chitor" (130)[2]. Like the caves of Marabar Hills in Forster's *A Passage to India* (1924) Gau-Mukh is a place where the time is confined to primeval past and the colonial era dares not intrude upon for fear of being lost:

> It seemed as though the descent had led the Englishman, *firstly*, two thousand years away from his own century, and *secondly*, into a trap, and that he would fall off the polished stones into the stinking tank, or that the Gau-Mukh would continue to pour water placidly until the

> tank rose up and swamped him, or that some of the stone slabs would fall forward and crush him flat (129, italics author's).

Howard J. Booth observes that this place, which bore witness to the fall of ancient dynasties, could foresee the inevitable melting away of the Raj (2-4). Concomitant with this the reader is shown the narrator's reflection on his own insignificance before the overwhelmingly oppressive atmosphere: "…above all, he did not care to look behind him, where stood the reminder that he was no better than the beasts that perish" (*LM* 130). He finds no more suitable word than 'uncanny' in conveying his impression of Gau-Mukh in a nutshell. Written nearly two decades before the appearance of Freud's seminal essay of the same name, writes Zohreh T. Sullivan, "[*Letters of Marque*] is remarkable for its precise anticipation of the term" (21). In defining the nature of 'uncanny', associated with 'infantile complexes', Freud writes:

> …the uncanny [*unheimlich*] is something which is secretly familiar [*heimlich-heimisch*], which has undergone repression and then returned from it, and that everything that is uncanny fulfils this condition (XVII: 245).

It is true that even after being confronted with the 'unheimlich' the narrator upbraids himself for 'childish fear' (*LM* 130). But the return of repressed fear of loss of self, to become one among the teeming million of natives at the sight of lingam, 'the loathsome Emblem of Creation' remains visibly true (Sullivan 21). Thus upon final reflection the words elicited from his mouth are "Oh horror! in that unspeakable Gau-Mukh —" (*LM* 134). As Kipling's narrator, unlike Kurtz, dared not transcend the barrier set up by imperial ideals, he was allowed to return safely.

Recording the English traveller John Barrow's journey into the interiors of South Africa, Mary Louise Pratt writes:

> The subject here is split simply by virtue of realizing itself as both protagonist and narrator, and it tends to split itself even further in these accounts…the self sees, it sees itself seeing, it sees itself being seen (151).

Spoken in the context of sentimental narrative, a usual feature of travel writing, we find an exact materialisation of these hypotheses in the present text. But the narrator/protagonist endowed with this vision of a seer is, unlike Barrow or the young Englishman from Manchester, is no newcomer in India. His long residence in India and the knowledge of the native life gives him enough reason to call India home. Yet this estrangement from the real 'home', i.e., England, and the fact that everything during his travel works together to brand him as an outsider brought about, "a double alienation" (Liang Low 143). Thus his failure to feel any sense of belonging to anywhere foreshadows the condition of the British in India leading lives that can best be termed as 'unhomely' (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 9). This unhomeliness suppressed till now behind the façade of racial and cultural arrogance of Anglo-Indian society breaks out only when the narrator chose to travel outside his community. If unhomeliness and the futility of colonial presence begin to torment the soul of the Anglo-Indian narrator then what impression of a ruled country would he like to leave behind? The answer is in Kipling's own words — "a feeble and blurred picture" (254).

Souvenirs of France

Ere our birth…side by side we lay
Fretting in the womb of Rome to begin our fray.
Ere men knew our tongues apart, our one task was known—
Each to mould the other's fate as he wrought his own.
— "France" by Rudyard Kipling

Published in 1933[3], *Souvenirs of France* is Kipling's memoir of his visits to France in 1878, 1889 and a few more times thereafter. However, the epigraph above the discussion of this text affirms the author's lifelong sense of confraternity, with the overseas nation with whom Britain has kept a love-hate relationship since the time of the Norman Conquest. In the course of the present discussion I shall move beyond the confines of the text to focus on the author's gradually changing perception of France which emerges first as Britain's imperial rival and later an associate. In the first visit on the occasion of Paris Exhibition in 1878 a teenager Kipling was accompanied by his father, John Lockwood Kipling who was in charge of the Indian Pavilion displaying Indian arts and crafts, most of which were brought from the Mayo School of Industrial Art in Lahore. Speaking in material terms, the spectacle of Indian wares failed to create that curiosity and exotic atmosphere which it had created in the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. The Paris Exhibition of 1878, held largely to vie with London's, suffered some serious setbacks. The observation of Mahrukh Tarapor, one of the leading museum professionals today, is worth quoting:

> The critical response to the Indian wares,… was far less happy than at the Exhibition of 1851; indeed, it was precisely in comparison with the latter's standards that the Indian display in Paris suffered. Traditional Indian pottery, for example, which in 1851 had taught English craftsmen the art of representing natural objects in decoration in a strictly conventional manner, in 1878 was represented by extremely mediocre products from the Indian schools of art… Indian

> carpets, which had been in considerable demand in England after 1851, had met with a similar fate (68-70).

However it can easily be surmised that for an adolescent author it is nearly impossible to ponder over these considerations. On the contrary his fascination with his new surroundings provides ample delight to the readers:

> Imagine the delight of a child let loose among all the wonders of all the world as they emerged from packing-cases, free to enter every unfinished building that was being raised round an edifice called the Trocadero, and to pass at all times through gates in wooden barricades behind which workmen put up kiosques and pavilions, or set out plants and trees! (*SF* 2).

We also get the author's pleasant recollections of his acquaintance with two of his compatriots and their playing of paper-chase at Bois de Boulogne.

Thus the first few pages of the *Souvenirs* are full of captivating reminiscences capable of entertaining readers of any age. Notably amid the beauty and opulence of cosmopolitan Paris young Rudyard did not fail to notice the "savage prints and lithographs of the War of '70" (5). The crude reminder of the defeat of France led by Napoléon III at the hand of Prussia in Sedan filled the author's mind with a host of memories prior to his visit beyond the Channel:

> I considered myself well informed as to that war because, a few years before, I had been given a scrap-book of pictures cut out of the *Illustrated London News*. One was called "The Burning of Bazeilles", and another — a terrible perspective of a forlorn army laying down their rifles in a wilderness of snow — represented Bourbaki's disarmament at the Swiss frontier" (5-6).

The passage above and Kipling's own account of his travel provide ample evidence of the nascent notion of imperial ideal in the author's psyche. It is this early acquaintance with imperialism, be it British or continental, which gets more exposure when Kipling visited, on the suggestion of his sire, a pavilion displaying the educational appliances of colonial Algeria:

> It was one of his "suggestions" that led me to look (but not for long) at an Algerian exhibit of educational appliances — copy-books filled with classical French sentences, and simple sums perpetrated *by young Algerians for whom I felt sympathy, being under a similar yoke. By some means or other I gathered dimly that France "had sound ideas about her Colonies*…" (7, italics mine).

The situation of "being under a similar yoke" reminds the reader of westernized Indians who imitate the colonial culture often quite blindfold and lose the sense of belonging to their own people. Neither can they become equal to their masters for whose recognition they have to undertake all these troubles. The colonial Algeria witnessed a same discrimination of westernized natives and indigenous ones, categorically expounded by Frantz Fanon in his seminal work *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) thus:

> The country people are suspicious of the townsman. The latter dresses like a European; he speak the European's language, works with him, sometimes even lives in the same district; so he is considered by the peasants as a turncoat who has betrayed everything that goes to make up the national heritage. *The townspeople are 'traitors and knaves' who seem to get on well with the occupying powers, and do their best to get on within the framework of the colonial system* (89, italics mine).

The last sentence of the above excerpt stands witness to the existence of an Algerian bourgeois class anchored in French language and culture. Like their counterparts in India they are also indispensable organs of the colonial administration. More than half a century after his first visit to France it is but natural for the author to reflect upon and compare the education system of colonial India with that of colonial Algeria. This reflection and comparison were made possible because of the existence of colonial education system in both countries where the colonizer's mother tongue was held in high estimation. In exploring the impact of the colonizer's language and culture upon the subjugated native population Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o writes:

> The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom. But where the former was visibly brutal, the latter was visibly gentle,…language was the most important vehicle through which [colonial] power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. *Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation* (9, italics mine).

Chronicling his experiences in France at a fairly ripe age Kipling can visualize in the spiritually subjugated Algerians a reflection of the spiritually subjugated Indians with whom he has always felt a kind of bonhomie. That is why the Algerian approach to modern education which is but a mimicking of French style moved him to pity. Much later in 1933 Kipling also identifies this similarity between British colonial system and her French counterpart at a Dinner Party Speech in the Africal Society of Trocadéro: "…so far as my information goes, the French colonial administration is remarkably like ours…It is only by watching very closely that [one can] find out that it is a different administration" (*ASBW* 123-124). What is noticeable in this apparently insignificant observation is that Kipling's propensity to change his self with the change of his surroundings. In the company of Algerian youths he viewed the French colonial administration as a 'yoke' and in the company of fellow French imperialists this same mechanism appeared homogeneous. Thus he can identify himself both with the colonized and the colonizer. Put in other words the joy, sorrow, pain and anguish of both parties extricate the same responses from his own self thereby making the interaction between the Whites and the non-Whites an interaction between two yet to be reconciled opposing tides of his 'inner self'. It is the specific situation that determines which side would be prevailing over the other.

The discussion of modern education in French colonies also entails the author's own addiction to French literature. Kipling was not unaware of the late-Victorian stiff upper lip attitude to the French language especially when schoolboys were concerned: "The official study of the French language in the English schools of those days assumed that its literature was immoral…" (*SF* 8). However Kipling's own Francophilia is best summed up in the following lines:

> Give an English boy the first half of *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* in his native tongue. When he is properly intoxicated, withdraw it and present to him the second half in the original. Afterwards — *not* before — Dumas the Prince of *amuseurs*, and the rest as God pleases (8, italics author's).

Evidently writers like Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo and Jules Verne were no less popular than Robert Louis Stevenson or Arthur Conan Doyle among the average English reading public. This newly developing Francophilia or Gallophilism led Kipling spend his holidays reading French books of his interest. At this tender age he also came in contact with Gustave Le Bon, the famous French polymath and right-wing thinker who instilled in the budding author's mind his ideas of 'emprise morale', i.e. 'moral ascendancy'. Apart from the Algerian mimicking of French education at the Exhibition Kipling also gathered considerable knowledge of the colonized Algeria and Le Bon's formula of elevating the educational, moral and material standard of living of the colonized Algerians. Thus Kipling's acquaintance and affiliation with colonial thinkers of the time started at a very early age which later considerably influenced his political alignment.

The first sign of Kipling's awareness of European politics is manifest, as I have already mentioned, by the prints and lithographs of the Battle of Sedan. It is quite possible that Kipling's newly developing admiration for French literature and culture makes him uncomfortable with the event of the defeat of France at the hands of Prussia. The other European imperial nation with whom Kipling was acquainted at this period was the Russians. Kipling's mention of this latter nation, a potential rival of the Crown, is fraught with sarcasm: "Occasionally Russian officers wandered through our part of Northern India who spoke admirable French and explained disarmingly their innocent missions" (10). One can easily remember Kim's mission to intercept two spies, one of whom was Russian, in the high altitude of Himalayas. The author's hostility to Russians is also evident in the poem "The Truce of the Bear" (1898). All these works were accomplished in the background of the 'Great Game' which was followed by emergence of the new areas of dispute like Port Arthur and Manchuria where British and Russian interests were at loggerheads[4]. It is this affinity to French literature and culture and a general

admiration of the French people that sowed in the author's mind the possibility of an Anglo-French alliance against any future aggression.

In the beginning of this discussion I have already stated that the *Souvenirs* is largely a reflection of Kipling's memoirs of France dating from 1878 until 1933. Implicit in this statement is the assumption that the author's notion of French people and their state underwent several phases of transformation, especially with the gradual maturation of Kipling's own imperial ideal. During his second visit to France Kipling found his city, i.e. Paris, much the same but the note of discord arises on the eve of and during the Boer Wars (1899-1902) the political and historical background of which I have already dealt with in a few poems of the previous chapter. After this second visit to France in a trip to Johannesburg Kipling met some German officers who, according to the author, were "unnecessarily interested in the future political relations and armaments, which last their country supplied, of the Boers" (13). In the following years several factors played a key role to strain the Anglo-French relationship. The anti-British propaganda prevalent in the continent during the Boer War was viewed by Kipling as a Germany and U.S. backed ploy into which France was taken in by the former two countries:

> During the Boer War (1899-1902) what should have enlightened us all as to the future was the thoroughness of the anti-British propaganda, much of which rebounded mainly from the United States by way of what was vaguely called "The Continent". Some of it was of French provenance — grossly impolite and playing into the Boches'[5] hands (13).

Another major political event that further embittered the Anglo-French relationship was the Fashoda Incident of July 1898. Both imperialist nations were attempting to occupy Sudan. No actual military skirmish took place in Sudan or anywhere in Eastern Africa but back in Europe both nations engaged in a fierce politico-rhetorical diatribe. Strategically the British troops were in a favourable position and the French troops led by Major Marchand were ordered to withdraw. A keen observer of the major international affairs, Kipling noted that "At that time — '83 to '88 — the French Press was not nationally enamoured of England" (11).

It is this atmosphere of mistrust and political instability which makes Kipling, notes Charles Carrington, pass through an anti-French period of short duration (415). A notable literary output of this phase is the story "The Bonds of Discipline", first published in *Collier's Magazine* in 1903. The story narrates the espionage activities of a Frenchman into a ship of the Royal Navy. But his cover was divulged and the Captain of the ship tricked him to believe the incompetence of the activities of the Royal Navy. But the French were too sensible to stomach Kipling's banter without a befitting rejoinder. Jean and Jérôme Tharaud, widely known as interpreters of French colonial life, published in 1906 *Dingley, l'illustre écrivain* (i.e. *Dingley, the illustrious writer*). The essence of the work just mentioned is summed up thus: " 'Dingley', the hero of the tale, was an English imperialist author who glorified war and was disillusioned when his own son was killed by the Boers (Carrington 415). Written nine years earlier and with no actual malignant intention the story itself is a cruel reminder of the death of John Kipling in 1915. However Arnold H. Rowbotham notes that "even while condemning [Kipling's imperial ideal], [the authors] pay unconscious tribute to the element of grandeur in this conception of imperial duty" (10.6: 476). It is also this feeling of admiration and silent tribute which, notes Rowbotham, made the French critics refrain from attacking *Jungle Books*, where through the activities of the Banderlog a keen satire was intended to the French (10.5: 372). In a letter to Caroline and Elsie Kipling[6], the author reflects upon the popularity of the *Jungle Books* among average French readers who mirror the average Englishmen fond of *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892):

> …the exavocat soldier in Alsace,… asked me, *under fire*, to explain *how* the idea of the Jungle Book had come to me. And a man, unseen in the darkness of a dugout, reached out his hands and shook mine murmuring, "*Le Grand Rutyar*!" (Pinney 4:334, italics author's).

However the cloud of animosity soon passed away with the signing of the Entente Cordiale (Cordial Agreement) in 1904. In this treaty France and Britain not only decided not to obstruct each other's colonial interest but agreed to extend diplomatic support to each other in need.

This melting away of the rivalry makes it possible for Kipling to befriend eminent French politicians, men of letters and military establishment like Georges Clemenceau, Raymond Poincaré, Ferdinand Foch, Joseph Joffre, André Chevrillon, to name only a few. It is true that Kipling shared with many of them, notes Angus Wilson, a common anti-German sentiment (322). But Georges Clemenceau, informs Charles Carrington, was a man after Kipling's heart in spite of being a vociferous critic of the imperial regime of Napoleon III (415). This Francophilia of the author increased considerably during his visit to France in the autumn of 1915 when the Great War was devastating Europe. Kipling's wartime recollections of the days spent in the French soil is recorded in *France at War: On the Frontier of Civilization* (1915). Reflecting on the courage and resilience of French people in the face of ruthless German assault, Kipling writes:

> There is agony enough when the big shells come in; there is pain and terror among the people; and always fresh desecration to watch and suffer. The old men and the women and the children drink of that cup daily, and yet the bitterness does not enter into their souls. Mere words of admiration are impertinent, but the exquisite quality of the French soul has been the marvel to me throughout (47-48).

But to Kipling the frankness of the French women who witness the brutality of the war from close quarters is more heart-touching, partially because it accords with his anti-German sentiment:

> …*we* knew the Boche in '70 when [the English] did not…It is against wild beasts that we fight. There is no arrangement possible with wild beasts. This is the one vital point which we in England *must* realize. *We are dealing with animals who have scientifically and philosophically removed themselves inconceivably outside civilization* (48-49, italics mine).

It is this Germanophobia which prompted the author to write so ghastly a story like "Mary Postgate" (1915) where the eponymous heroine enjoys a sadistic pleasure by refusing to aid a wounded German pilot and letting him die unattended.

The experience of the author from the front proves that if France was the butt of main thrust of the German aggression, the English people were not in a much better position. In the second part of the *Souvenirs* Kipling recollected his tête-à-tête with a prominent Town Councillor of Hamburg. The latter narrates to the author, not in a very suave tone, Germany's immediate expectations and requirements from England. These included, among many other demands, an immediate withdrawal of all tariffs against German merchandise in British colonies, failing which the British Lion must be prepared to bear "Furor Teutonicus", i.e. fury of the Teutons. But what really unnerves Kipling is not the threat but the differences in preparation which France and England took respectively to check the imperial ambition of the Teutons. While the French military preparation, including conscription to match the strength of German army, was underway, the British was still following the proverb: "*Fi de manteau quand il fait beau*" (i.e. In fair weather, forget your coat")[7] (*SF* 34, italics author's). Like the Town Councillor of Hamburg Kipling was also forewarned by a French military officer who made the author realize the situation of the war in no uncertain terms: "He said, above a map, indicating the very place, "If you do not prolong our left *here*, you also will perish!" " (35, italics author's). Having his country helmed by a Liberal Government[8] which was keen on social reform, these were "the years of nightmare" (34). This nightmare was on the verge of becoming reality, thinks Kipling, had not England possessed "an immediately effective Army of 80,000 as well as some Field Artillery" (34). But it is also true that England has to depend heavily upon her colonies for soldiers, arms and ammunition. In the wake of any serious conflict in Europe it would take considerable time to despatch men and arms to the front. By contrast France, whose size of colonies is relatively smaller than Britain's, is more seasoned in continental warfare:

> Of the men and officers of the French Army, it seemed to me that *the demands of their normal national life had spared them some of the subconscious unease that weighed on our people*. Accustomed by heredity and training to the food, exposure, and wasted hours at manœuvres, to lack of privacy and the impact of crowds, they were released from too much desire to dwell on the emotions of civil life (37, italics mine).

Inadvertently this also reflects Britain's own hidden anxiety about the allegiance and efficiency of her Coloured troops in warfare.

This anxiety turns into near exasperation when the U.S. President Woodrow Wilson fails to make his famous "Fourteen Points" passed in the Senate due to the strong opposition by the Republicans. In the discussion of "The White Seal" in chapter 4, I have already hinted at Kipling's anti-American sentiment. But this political failure, thinks Kipling, deprives France of getting assistance from the U.S. and Great Britain. So here his criticism of Americans in general assumes a severe tone:

> But a people whose origins, *ex necessitate, must have abjured, individually and in writing, all European connections, do not readily embrace external responsibilities*. The United States cleared her skirts of the imbroglio with the alacrity of a shocked schoolmistress. *Ethnologically this was inevitable*; objectively it was very comic; but, *in its consequences, never was so far-reaching a refusal nor confusion more incalculable* (40, italics mine).

It is against this political background that Kipling becomes, quite justly, apprehensive of the future of Britain as well as of the continent.

Later working as an advisor to erect cemeteries and write inscriptions for the Imperial War Graves Commission Kipling witnessed the specific nature of devastation that France had to suffer. The more he saw the more he was convinced of the cold-blooded and calculated brutality of German soldiers:

> The devastations were so scientific that one could convey no idea of them to visiting strangers. They would look at a smear of triturated brick-dust on an expanse of pitted mud and say: "But do you mean to tell me that there was ever anything there at all?" I imagine that this was one of the reasons why an English expert,… pronounced at the Paris Conference that the French had "*effrontément exagéré les revendications des régions dévastées*" (i.e. the French had

> shamelessly exaggerated the claims of the devastated regions[9]) (43-44, italics author's).

While the American participation in any future clash with Germany was uncertain Kipling felt that a strong Anglo-French alliance was necessary for the safety and security of the future world. He was happy to find that the general public opinion of the French was propitious to any such alliance despite the presence of many political disagreements:

> There were a thousand points of friction and disagreement. But I think that the detail of that *chiffonnage* along the empty fronts acted as an anodyne. And I know that when a French mining company reinstalled its machinery on a site churned thirty feet deep by the gun-fire of years, they came on what remained of two of our dead. They halted everything, and — the great girders for the engine-beds hanging in the cranes — sent word ten miles to notify our people to take delivery (45-46, italics author's).

The general attitude of the French public to the English in wartime finds an echo in the words and activities of Georges Clemenceau, the then French Prime Minister, who championed such an alliance:

> …Clemenceau put intense diplomatic pressure on Lloyd George to increase the level of British recruiting in the summer of 1918, he justified his conduct in part by pointing out: 'there is always a certain number of enlightened and professional men in your country who persist in thinking that the military effort of Great Britain could be intensified…Even as late as a meeting in London in December 1919, he tenuously asserted the old positivist idea that '[t]he most important thing…to his mind, was that France and England should be in absolute agreement on all big questions' (Hanks 76).

Like Kipling, Clemenceau was also ill at ease with the British bureaucracy (69). But that did not hamper his effort to tie a close knot with Britain thereby earning his reputation as a prominent Anglophile.

Another subtle reason for Kipling's feeling at ease with the French colonial policy is the latter's treatment of her colonies which mirrors the British colonialism:

> …I crossed to the Department of Algiers and found myself returned to a people almost identical in aspect, habit, and gesture with the Moslems among whom I had been brought up. But I understood not a word of their speech. It was like a dream in which one can only make signs to old friends (*SF* 46-47).

Kipling's depiction of Indian people especially those serving under their White bosses in households and government offices, as I have shown in the third and fourth chapters, bears testimony to the essentially unvaried nature of colonized Indians and Algerians. One must not forget Kipling's often comic treatment of westernized Indians for the latter people's mimicking of their colonial masters. To his amusement he found that the Algerians, too, are far from being different:

> A Mayor of Algiers… told me a secret. "It is Paris", said he, "upon whom we depend in the last resort for some of our diplomacy. Our Algerian Deputies go there, of course, to take their seats in the Chambers. Many of our people know Paris, and more since this war…If any important man…feels restless, or neglected, or thinks he would like to be a Prophet, he can always visit Paris" (48).

Kipling thinks that it is this similarity in implementing the colonial rule that reflects European colonialism at its best. This implementation, in Kipling's opinion, must ensure the welfare of the colonized people.

Given the author's firm belief in the White Man's Burden to Black or Coloured people until all are equal, it is not a far-fetched inference that 'civilization' itself is a euphemism for European or to put it more accurately, Anglo-French colonialism. The future of this colonialism can best be secured by a strong alliance of both nations capable of checking the steadily growing military power of Germany after the latter's defeat in the First World War. In a letter to George Bambridge in 1932 Kipling sums up his views on the necessity of good and stable Anglo-French relations upon which the fate of many other nations depend:

> …in the thousand years of our varied relations we had tried each other out and had conceived a lasting respect for each other: and understood that we were the guardians of what remains of civilization in the world…France and England represent the two oldest, and most complete civilizations — stable and complimentary each to the other and, by force of circumstances, *and* survival, pushed into the position of guardians of culture and freedom for *the remainder of the nations all of which were brought into existence later than our selves and whose careers have been subject to more violent alternations and ruptures than ours* (Pinney 6: 136-137, italics mine).

Italy's invasion of Abyssinia in 1935, Hitler's treatment of Jews from the early 1930s and his invasion of Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1938 and 1939, Japan's invasion of Burma in 1942 prove that the world is not at all secure from the younger imperialist nations devoid of responsibility towards the colonized people. It is this grim future of the Second World War which Kipling foresaw as early as 1932 and like a true believer in the imperial ideal and ethics he was horrified to think of the nations being subject to 'violent alternations and ruptures' by Axis powers.

What fascinates the reader is that Kipling's prediction of an upcoming conflict with Germany and the necessity of Anglo-French alliance in the wake of 1930s turned out to be absolutely true. Even his mention of place names like Calais or Dantzig (i.e. Danzig) is significant in the context of the Second World War. His stress on the determination of the French people reminds the reader of the French Resistance to the Nazis in the early years of 1940s:

> England is like a ship moored off a mainland which we visit occasionally. We do not feel at Calais that the earth under foot vibrates sustainedly as far as Vladivostock, Dantzig, and the far South. It is, I think, [the French's] continentality of experience and intuition that gives the Frenchman his unshaken poise irrespective of circumstances or office at the moment;… (*SF* 56-57).

As the general characteristics of the French people, laymen and important personages alike are revealed to Kipling, the French, too, came to know common

practices of English bureaucracy in India. Towards the end of the *Souvenirs* Kipling recollected fondly his last encounter with Georges Clemenceau who narrated his travelling experience in India to the author. During his stay in Calcutta Clemenceau had caught malaria. The doctors attending him forbade him to travel by train. With a hearty laugh he recounted his defiance of the doctors' advice to follow his own whims. When asked about his experience of French colonies Clemenceau refrained from denouncing the colonized people or their culture thereby hinting at the possibility of a cordial relationship between France and her erstwhile colonies in a free world. This seems to strike the right chord in Kipling who made the same beacon of hope for the future generations. In this context it is worth recollecting the teen-aged Kipling's act of entering inside the gigantic Statue of Liberty[10] during his 1878 visit to Paris Exhibition. He was greeted by an elderly Frenchman who told that Kipling had seen through the eyes of Liberty herself. Always receptive to acclaim and censure alike Kipling's prompt reposte was "…It was through the eyes of France that I began to see" (6). The wheel turns a full circle when Kipling finds in Clemenceau's colonial experience an echo of his own. That is why Kipling finished his *Souvenirs* with the line: "And these are some of the reasons why I love France" (59).

Brazilian Sketches

Brazilian Sketches was serially published in *The Morning Post* from 29 November, 1927 to 20 December of the same year and was later anthologized in vol. xxiv of the Sussex Edition of Kipling's work. Later the text was also published in New York in 1940 by Doubleday which is being followed by me in the present discussion. Kipling's trip to Brazil is largely due to the advice of Bland-Sutton, President of the Royal College of Surgeon and a friend to Kipling, to recover from his illness in 1926. As writes Charles Carrington:

> …after nearly twenty years of absence from the tropics, he crossed the line again in 1927 on a voyage to Brazil, taking the deepest interest in his fellow-passengers, mostly Spaniards and Portuguese. With some firmness *he detached himself from publicity, declining to become a guest of the nation*; and revelled in the prospect of a race of Europeans, at home in a tropical climate, and busily engaged in pioneering a new country. *Brazilian Sketches, written for the Morning Post, had the gusto of his early Letters of Marque, and were lightened with verses in his simplest, sincerest style* (499, italics mine).

Perhaps this is the reason why Marghanita Laski dismissed the text of being bereft of any literary significance (106). But in the course of my discussion I shall endeavour to establish that Kipling never failed to judge the impact of colonialism on the socio-economic and cultural life of the people of this vast tract of land in the southern hemisphere. Far from maintaining class prejudice Kipling enjoyed the public life in Brazil and made himself a guest of the literary circle.

Before the commencement of the journey Kipling had had a feeling that this trip was going to be different from the ones he experienced in France or the princely states of Rajputana. Like the globe-trotter in *Letters of Marque* Kipling encountered no superficial persona eager to give vent to his travel account. Despite the apparent lack of interest of the passengers in each other's affairs it never occurred to Kipling that a kind of claustrophobic silence based on racial division prevailed in the whole atmosphere:

> The South American boats are a world to themselves, more intimate and specialised than any other…the passengers do not in the least concern themselves with anything or anybody, or any motive or policy that, till then, one had held to be important. *Before our steamer began to shift the sun, all known centres of gravity had shifted, and were spinning on new bearings* (*BS* 5, italics mine).

But even before setting his foot on the Brazilian soil, Kipling's mind, already having the experience of Empire in Indian subcontinent, South Africa[11] and France, was preoccupied with memories of the Brazilian empire[12] and the expected availability of cosy life like the British cities. In this way he attempts to establish his new *centre of gravity* in accord with his new surroundings:

> …one desire[s] cities as progressive as Birmingham, with Opera and Town Halls, and race-courses of limitless cost and size? Or still green worlds of coffee; or whispering, dark coconut plantations,…one could catch a breath of what life used to be in the days of the superb Brazilian Empire? (7).

But Brazil, a former Portuguese colony, then a monarchy and a Republic during the author's visit, held more surprise than the expectation of Kipling's matured colonial vision.

In one of his first attempts to mix with the Brazilian society Kipling felt that his earlier experiences in colonies were of little avail. The Brazilian society, itself an amalgamation of Europeans mostly Portuguese and Spanish with Coloured and Black people, seemed to snap "…whatever last link there had been with the rest of the world. *These places belonged to another Power, and had risen on foundations utterly alien to [the British]"* (11, italics mine). In the very next page speaking in the context of the city of Bahia in Brazilian life, now known as Salvador, Kipling almost unknowingly hinted at the Power alien to the British:

> …the Church had ruled, very completely; and here had come the slaves in their thousands, unaware that their children should be citizens of a Republic where the Colour Question is not (12).

It is this power of marginalizing the 'Colour Question' at a time when the sun did not set in the British Empire, that empowered Brazil to set her journey as a decolonized nation. In his exploration of the Brazilian history during the period of monarchy William Scully scrupulously takes note of the situation of the contemporary Brazilian social strata which is devoid of any racial bigotry or religious intolerance:

> The population of Brazil consists of three essentially distinct races, the European, the Indian, and the Negro; a proportion of which remain pure, but the majority is composed of an intermingling of these races in every conceivable degree. *No prejudice as regards colour exists in Brazil, and both political and social distinction is open alike to white, black, and red*, many of the chief families priding themselves on their descent from celebrated Indian notabilities. The religion of the people and of the State is Roman Catholic, but all others are tolerated (121, italics mine).

In a letter to André Chevrillon on 26 June 1927, Kipling is quite frank to admit that racial equality is the vital force of this free state:

> …the negroid races rampant at Carnival in Rio de Janeiro. Curious background for a people to have — Black; Red; and White *but* no Colour Question. I frankly couldn't understand it but I can see that it would give them enormous strength and cohesion in any struggle with any race where the colour question is acute (Pinney 5: 375, italics author's).

More than three decades later in his seminal work *The Pleasures of Exile* (1960) George Lamming experienced the absence of the 'Colour Question' in Caribbean people which is best reflected in the formation of their cricket team:

> When the Indian team takes the field at Lords, it is a team of Indians. Some are short and some are tall; but they *look* alike. When the Australian team takes the field at Lords; it is a team of Australians. The English recognise that they look like English people. But when a

> West Indian team takes the field at Lords, Lords itself is bewildered; and not because they are all that ugly. For what do we see? *Short and tall, yes; but Indian, Negro, Chinese, White, Portuguese mixed with Syrian…the mixtures are as weird and promising as the rainbow…That is the West Indian team; for it is, in fact, the West Indian situation* (37, italics mine).

Like the Brazilian families, descending from notable Indian lineage, the West Indies too boasts of cricketers of Indian origin like Rohan Kanhai or Shivnarine Chanderpaul. It is against this backdrop of racial harmony that Kipling visualizes the impact of Western civilization in Brazil.

In the second chapter of the work Kipling gave an elaborate description of the harbour and city of Rio de Janeiro, the then capital of Brazil which was slowly getting westernized with its clubs, shops and cafés. In fact he made a tour of almost the entire city touching the harbour, Botofago and Copacabana. But it appears to Kipling that amid all the glitzy surroundings the city has never lost its contact with nature which soothes the visitors with avenues lined with trees or houses having palm and banana trees. Here the imaginative sketch of Petropolis, a residence of administrators and ambassadors in contemporary times and famous for its breathtaking scenic beauty, appeared to his vision. However he was really impressed after visiting a hydro-electric power plant in São Paulo. Referring to the huge dynamo as the 'Hooded Devil' Kipling sketches a vivid account of the functions of the whole mechanism dedicated to generate power:

> We moved over to the new Power House where some few gallons of the floods impounded above are being used. The terrific mile-length of water dives two thousand feet on to wheels armed at their tips with split buckets,…The whole contraption — it is called a Pelton Wheel — then goes round rather quickly. Two such wheels give life to a Hooded Devil — 'Abu Bijl' — the Father of Lightnings — who must be approached bareheaded,…He is known to his servants as a Dynamo (of many thousand horse-power), and he spins upon the largest bearings in the world (*BS* 39).

But in spite of being all praise for this power generating device Kipling was not blind to the toll it wrung from nature. After the laying of pipes in a deforested hillside Kipling had had some interactions with the local people about the adverse effect of the said work:

> They had had, they told us, some bother with this hillside after deforesting it for the pipes, and were now planting millions of eucalyptus to hold the soil together. But the local ant liked that wood, too, and they thought of gassing him out. *They said that when you once began interfering with Nature you had to go on* (42, italics mine).

The last line of the above excerpt effectively creates the impression that Kipling, a votary of Western civilization based on science and technology and the need to spread it in non-White colonies, was not entirely unaware of its adverse effects. In an age when environmental awareness was minimal in the heart of the Empire itself such realization did not only create a need for self-introspection of the colonized people slowly getting westernized, but also raised questions about the impact of civilization on the flora and fauna of the land of the colonizers too. Thus being a visionary Kipling could foresee the inevitable future expansion of the project to generate more energy:

> The requirements are always expanding, as *São Paulo discovers that she can make more things for herself, or another railway or two goes in for electrification that they may be shut of English coal-strikes*;[13] and it is the simplest of jobs to put up extra Abu Bijl's in the concrete prisons. They say now that they could deliver half a million more horse-power from this place alone; and this is but one of the several places that stand round São Paulo and sell more power to its elbow (44-45, italics mine).

Kipling does not only understand the ambition of Brazil (freed both from colonial and indigenous imperial autocratic shackles) to tread the path of rapid industrial modernization but also its desire to make itself self-reliant. It is by becoming self-

reliant with enough surplus energy to trade with other countries that Brazil can have a chance of meeting other imperial nations with equal terms:

> At that epoch…Brazil, sitting with her back to illimitable electric power, will sell it between Twenty-five North and Sixty South on both sides of her continent — westerly to the 180th meridian, and easterly to somewhere on the far side of dry Africa (45).

It is quite another issue that Brazil could not meet the expectation of this visionary visitor and that another member of the BRICS[14], had become the regional superpower based on the latter's far more superior economic and military strength. But there is no denying that Kipling's ability to foresee the future of a nation retaining the potential to emerge from the status of a colonized country to a power equal to that of Occidental nations.

In the next chapter Kipling recounted his visit to Brazil's most famous and one of the world's leading poisonous animal research institutes, namely Institute Butantan or Butantã Snake Institute, adjacent to the campus of São Paulo University. After coming across a host of venomous and non-venomous snakes and tarantulas he comes to know the effect of antivenom on a person beaten by snake. Throughout the chapter the subjective details of the caged animals and the country's advancement in toxicology apparently drew the admiration of the author. This visibly apolitical piece of narration got a tinge of the author's own political views with this observation: "[The venomous snakes] are not fed because the hungrier they are the more poisonous they grow. (This gift also the Serpent bequeathed to the Sons of Adam.)" (55). In the backdrop of the 1926 general strike and Suffragette Movement involving window breaking, arson and hunger strikes[15] Kipling's observation expresses a stark reality of the volatile political situation of his own country.

The succeeding chapter narrates Kipling's visit to a coffee plantation of uncertain location but somewhere near the stretch of São Paulo Railway. Kipling's praise of coffee, one of Brazil's chief merchandise, is wholehearted:

> Of that coffee, it needs only be said that I discovered that I had never before tasted coffee. One can drink the magic stuff in big cups, each better than the last, and sleep blessedly afterwards (72).

The author becomes equally fascinated after seeing an old-fashioned house on the plantation, which according to him, is still keeping alive the memory of early European settlement in Brazil. An authorial mind like Kipling's, keenly receptive to the nature of people and their surroundings, is likely to become spellbound before this site:

> One wanted to know about this house. *Who* had lived here in the old days? And particularly, who lived here now of nights?... Here — here — here — the House insisted — if one had eyes to see, one would find the heart of Old Brazil — its continuity, its reserves, its courtesies and its force (71-72, italics author's).

William B. Dillingham viewed the powerful and mesmerizing impact of the house upon Kipling's psyche thus:

> Houses exercised an extraordinary power over Kipling. He records in…*Brazilian Sketches* (1927) how a certain ancient house on a coffee plantation was so fascinating to him, beckoning and speaking to him,…that he could not concentrate on or even find interest in such topics as coffee-bean farming on which his hosts wished to enlighten him. All he could think about was that house with the "deep breathing spirit"… *Houses could cast a deep shadow over him if they emitted moral choke-damp* (80, italics mine).

The reader can easily recollect the anonymous Englishman's experience in the Bundi Palace in *Letters of Marque* (1891) or Hummil's last hours in his solitary bungalow in "At the End of the Passage" (1890). If it can be assumed that in both instances the protagonists' bitter fate in India is actually the outcome of their hailing from the colonizing country then Kipling is luckier in Brazil. As Great Britain does not possess Brazil in her list of colonized nations the century old house refrained from emitting further *moral choke damp* on the author.

In the following chapter entitled “Railways and a Two-thousand-feet-Climb” the author celebrated another bout of the country’s technological advancement. The local population, especially the workers, viewed railway as one of their prized possessions:

> …the men in the car…took, according to their offices, the courteous salutes of stationmasters, road-gangs, and signallers, and, like all railwaymen, carried on with their job meanwhile. For the line is always being straightened and improved and pampered at curves and junctions; and they talk it over like a mothers’ meeting… Railwaymen never know how to take holiday. They identify passing trains by their private numbers and official timings; … In the intervals, they gibe at the colours of the passenger coaches of other lines; or explain how superior are their new pressed-steel freight-cars — built,…on East Indian models (*BS* 82-83).

The reason for Kipling’s being enthusiastic is that the rail network is operated mainly by British entrepreneur despite Brazil’s not being a British colony. David Gelber elaborately sketches the first British laying of railway track in Brazil:

> …the Sã[o] Paulo Railway (SPR) — a joint stock company capitalised in London — began the construction of the 86-mile line from the inland city of Jundiaí to the Atlantic port of Santos. The SPR was the inspiration of the Baron de Mauá, a banker and entrepreneur whom the *New York Times* characterised as the ‘Rothschild of the South American continent’… In 1853 he started work on the country’s first line: a ten-mile stretch in Rio de Janeiro between the Guanabara Bay and the foothills behind. Three years later he won a concession from Emperor Dom Pedro II for a more ambitious enterprise: a railway connecting the interior of São Paulo state to the sea (n.pag.).

Initially the serrated terrain with deep gorges and sloping surface often cut with watercourses proved to be a challenging work for the building up of the track. Along with that, the proximity of the Atlantic rainforest often aggravated the danger of the

railway track's being wiped out in the event of flood or landslide. That is why near the end of the journey Kipling could not help exclaiming:

> There must be worse railway country in the world; but I had not seen any. Every yard of these fallacious mountain-sides conspired against man, from the almost vertical slopes out of sight above, to the quite vertical ravines below. One could not help admiring the fiend's own skill with which water always attacks the weakest points of trestle-abutments, tunnel-mouths, and curves (*BS* 92).

The reader can easily remember the recurrent outcome of men's meddling with nature discussed only a while ago. To work out a viable transport system in an unfriendly stretch of land after the European model the state/private entrepreneurs need to engage a vast capital and manual labour regardless of colonized or colonizer countries. At the end the author can only admire the determination of a new republic to attain the benefits of Western civilization which it was not just mimicking, but turned it into a fruitful venture to all layers of society.

In the concluding chapter the author takes also a short notice of intellectuals, especially young writers. He is delighted to find that despite the overwhelming dominance of Portuguese language these writers and thinkers are increasingly leaning towards French language and culture:

> Intellectually, the younger writers seem to orient themselves on France, and in the renewed discovery of, and delight in, their own land, which is moving many of them to-day, words are used with Gallic rigour and precision (105).

This may seem ironical as I have shown in the discussion of *Kim* (1901) and in several other instances how Kipling had loathing for implementing the European, mainly British, education system in non-White colonies. But here where the aboriginal languages have only a handful of speakers coupled with the absence of ancient civilization like that of India's, it is but natural that the emerging Francophilia of a section of society would be of the author's taste, himself a Francophile. However in a speech to the Brazilian Academy of Letters on 2 March

1927, Kipling lavished praise upon the Brazilian intelligentsia for the reawakening of 'Latin', i.e. continental European culture and enriching the land thereby (*ABW* 292). He became all the more happy to find that the existing English community in Brazil acquired a good name despite the political unrest in Britain which affected her trade with other countries. In this context he again took a jibe at the U.S.S.R. for the supposed Soviet involvement in the 1926 general strike: "…had Moscow permitted England to get to work after the War, business between the countries might now be more prosperous" (*BS* 111). But curiously enough, noticed Kipling, Brazil refused to take one stance or the other, namely the socialist or capitalist in key political and administrative matters and prefers to chalk out her own way through the method of "trial and error" (111). In the long run this method appears to be successful as these affairs — political or administrative — are put into force by officials or leaders who are not only educated but aware of each other's ways. Behind this awareness lies a racial harmony which inspires people to transcend the narrow sectarian/racial lineage — Portuguese, Spanish, African, Asian or aboriginal — to assume a greater national identity, namely Brazilian, in the literal sense of the term:

> Communities, of whatever stock, should not be isolated too long. They grow to forget things… [One] will find samples of every race somewhere or other. *Eventually they will become Brazilians. Not by pressure or exhortation — the land is too big for that. The land itself will do it — in time* (112-113, italics mine).

The last criterion, already surfacing in British India, would have been seen by Kipling if he could afford to live another decade. This curious conglomeration of races also reflects the assimilation of races in English history as discussed in *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906) through the ultimate unification of Britons, Romans, Picts, Scots, Angles, Saxons, Danes and Normans. But for the time being, his widely arrayed experiences in a free country incorporating the overall smooth and fair management of racial, social, economical and political issues, make Kipling name Brazil "most fascinating and mysterious world apart" (115).

Sailing in the Far East: A Glimpse on Kipling's Travel to Japan

Rudyard Kipling visited Japan twice — first in 1889 with Professor Samuel Alexander Hill and his wife Edmonia Hill for four weeks and then with his newly-wed wife in 1892 for nearly ten weeks. The thirteen letters of his first visit were written for the Allahabad based newspaper *The Pioneer*. Later on these letters with much truncations and emendations were included in *From Sea to Sea and Other Sketches, Letters of Travel* (1899). It is chiefly due to the appearance of amputated text in *From Sea to Sea* covering the author's staying in Japan that I have chosen to follow Hugh Cortazzi and George Webb's edited version of *Kipling's Japan: Collected Writings* (1988).

While reading the text one should keep the fact in mind that Kipling left India on 9 March 1889 and after touching Rangoon, Singapore, Hong Kong en route arrived in Nagasaki in April 1889. Therefore the memory of India, the vast stretches of land with her apparently unruly, chaotic people, was vivid in the author's psyche. But the interesting point is that while in Japan Kipling used to view things, even if occasionally and for very short duration, from an exclusively Indian perspective rather than from an imperial/colonial one. Although at times critical of Japan's whole-hearted acceptance of European lifestyle Kipling could not remain indifferent to the country's steady progress in the path of modern civilization. With the progress in material life the people also adopted the Occidental codes of decorum although the centuries-old tradition of Buddhism had certainly imparted to the Japanese an innate composure and sobriety manifest in their social life. That is why while watching a famous comic opera of contemporary period he had to restrain himself lest he should give a bad name to the dignity of India which was ostensibly in his keeping (*KJ* 37). Kipling was equally delighted to behold the idols of Lord Krishna and the goddess Kali in a temple of Kobe and was visibly angry when he heard depreciating words about these deities from a priest:

> I hate a man who is ashamed of his faith. There was a story connected with those Gods, and the priest would not tell it to me. So I sniffed at him scornfully, and went my way (63).

This delight and curiosity at the sight of the familiar gods lies in sharp contrast with Kim's scornful dismissal of those very gods when the boy-hero draws a comparison of the hill people and the dwellers of plain in India: "[The Hindu] gods are many-armed and malignant. Let them alone" (*KM* 50). The example itself serves as one of the numerous instances for which Kipling is generally held to be beyond stereotypes of any kind. "It is far preferable to approach this author", in the words of David Gilmour, "as a man of permanent contradictions" (32)[16]. At this point it is not far-fetched to assume that the notion of derision and contempt for the Western educated natives which Kipling developed during his stay in India was very much prevalent on his first arrival in Japan. Upon seeing a Japanese custom official in Nagasaki thoroughly clad in European uniform with apparently gawky behaviour he was greatly amused:

> Had our stay been longer, I would have wept over him because *he was a hybrid — partly French, partly German, and partly American — a tribute to civilisation*. All the Japanese officials from police upwards seem to be clad in Europe[an] clothes, and never do those clothes fit (*KJ* 36-37, italics mine).

However, Kipling was to see through his quick judgement and would alter his perception about Japan's way of approaching modern era. In fact, this is the time when the author was to break away from his stereotypical notion of westernized Oriental people and form new perceptions about the latter. This in turn would pave the way for Kipling's ambiguous approach to imperial colonies across the globe.

The first sign of this changing perception can be seen in Kipling's admiration for Japanese method of agriculture and irrigation during his visit to Osaka narrated in the fourth letter:

> …all I can write will give you no notion of the wantonness of neatness visible in the fields; of the elaborate system of irrigation, and the mathematical precision of the planting. There was no mixing of crops, no waste of boundary in footpath, and no difference of value in the land…the water was everywhere within ten feet of the surface,…On the slopes of the foothills each drop between the levels

> was neatly revetted with unmortared stones, and the edges of the water-cuts were faced in like manner (70).

However, Kipling was not blind to the faults inherent in the European bureaucracy which was gradually affecting the terrace farming in Japan. In the concluding letter of his first visit he mentions that due to red-tapeism the government has to maintain a lot of documents often without proper reason and consequently has to employ a good number of employees (192). But despite these initial hiccups which are but inevitable the country was quickly adopting the European mode of agriculture and irrigation. The author has equally taken to heart the Japanese method of cuisine and hospitality in hotels. In this respect, he reflects, Japan is way ahead of Europe. Cleanliness and hygiene, which many Asian countries are not quick to follow, are essential prerequisites in Japanese hotels and eateries. Apart from these they also provide a guest with every conceivable sort of comfort and facility thereby saving him/her from carrying a weighty portmanteau. These hotels not only prepare and serve their guests indigenous viands and beverages but also insist on their consumption of the same in a native fashion, as the author records amusingly:

> When a Japanese attempts European comforts he is so impressed with the rarity of his purchases, such as knives, forks, cruets and tablecloths, that he leaves them strictly alone, whereby they become very filthy. Also when a Japanese abandons the customs of his ancestors and eats with a knife and fork he is prone to eat like a pig (117).

Despite Kipling's tinge of racial slur over the Japanese people's failure to scrupulously abide by the Western code of conduct there is no denying the fact that the people are far from only mimicking the Occidental civilization. On the contrary they have developed a strong national identity and self-respect which sternly advises against the European hegemony. Instead of using highly inflammatory rhetoric against the Europeans with the creamy layer of the society propitiating the same for personal benefits, Japan, never a colony herself in any period of history, chose to deal with the White races as her equal. The Japanese way of attending a European in a hotel provides an ample example:

> If the Japanese hotel be full you will be turned away without scruple, because you are only a foreigner and your wants and desires must be subordinated to those of the people. I admire the Japanese for this independence. There is no trace of discourtesy in it. You are one of the *queue* and you must take your chance with the others (120, italics author's).

It is this quiet and dignified comportment before the Europeans which has the potential to force the latter to deal cautiously with this Asian race. The Boxer Rebellion in China or the Sepoy Mutiny in India only aggravated the foreign dominance in these two countries followed by the advent of high-pitched nationalistic fervour. That is why even after Independence racial harmony and amity is still a long way to go in either of these two countries.

Of course the Japanese used to hold the British people's proverbial adherence to law and order with great reverence. Again with some humour Kipling recalled how he was mistaken as an English officer and was requested to bear testimony in a street scuffle involving a police personnel and that of an armyman during his trip to Nagoya. It was evident that had Kipling indeed been a man in uniform he would be of help to the concerned policeman: "He came to get a *sahib's* testimony about a row. Such is the incorruptible purity of *sahib-log* when they travel that the nations of the earth hasten to secure their testimony in courts of law,…" (122, italics author's). But such light-hearted observations sometimes change for a bitter and scornful reproach when the author perceives that the Japanese are quick to learn for their own benefits too. To put it in other words they have the capacity and will to learn not only to improve the standards of their civilian life but also their armed forces. Acknowledging the fact that Japan was imitating the West heavily both in civilian and military affairs Kipling reached the conclusion that such borrowings and imitations were actually enriching the former: "[The Japanese infantrymen] are bad little men who know too much" (168). However Kipling's obvious preference for Japan makes such sparse observations lop-sided. This favourable disposition towards Japan continued towards the end of his life and as late as in 1933 he rejoiced in a letter to Elsie and George Bambridge that an arms embargo on Japan imposed by Britain had been lifted (Pinney 6: 167). Like his first

impression of the infantrymen Kipling was similarly baffled at having the Japanese Constitution[17] in pamphlet on his first arrival in Nagasaki (*KJ* 36). But slowly and yet surely he had come to learn that political reforms, representative government, budgetary discussions and debates were but inevitable steps to form unitary parliamentarian system in Japan. To Kipling Japan is all set to claim her place with the European nations after having her system — legislature, executive and judiciary — reformed and modernized after the manner of Europe:

> Japan says that she is now civilised. That is the crux of the whole matter so far as I understand it. 'Let us have done with the idiotic system of treaty-ports[18] and passports for the foreigner who steps beyond them', says Japan in effect. 'Give us our place among the civilised nations of the earth, come among us, trade with us, hold land in our midst. Only be subject to our jurisdiction and submit to our — tariffs'…*The effect of accepting Japan's views would be excellent for the individual who wanted to go up-country and make his money, but bad for the nation. For our nation in particular* (170, italics mine).

Obviously what will be bad for the late Victorian England is to accept and applause Japan's advancement and treat her as an equal. This will mar not only Britain's imperial hegemony but will also set a bad example for colonies like India where extremism against the British imperialism is to surface less than a decade. That Japan is distinct among all Oriental races so preoccupied his mind that he again broods over the question, this time Japan's insistence on accepting her laws by Western powers:

> Says the Japanese Government, 'Only obey our laws, our new laws that we have so carefully compiled from all the wisdom of the West, and you shall go up country as you please and trade where you will,…Treat us as you would treat France or Germany, and we will treat you as our own subjects' (198).

On a closer analysis it appears that the second reflection, made during his second trip to Japan and recorded in the very first letter of 1892 voyage, is more precise than the first. If accepting Japan as an equal is a national humiliation for Britain then for Kipling, it is certainly against the ethos of benevolent despotism. As history records, Japan chooses to westernize herself and on the eve of the Second World War becomes an imperial power. The West, therefore, could not afford to neglect Japan in world affairs. Implied in this statement is the disturbing fact that Japan, like any other Asian or African colonies, does not need to be patronized in her path to modernization. Obviously Japan will modernize herself by following the footsteps and in close collaboration with the West but the extent and specific nature of this modernization will rest solely upon her decision. This last criterion, i.e. the power to decide its own course in internal and external affairs, is starkly against Kipling's idealized vision of benevolent despotism which requires both condescension and collaboration of the colonial master to determine the fate of the colonized.

During a trip to Miyanoshita recorded in the ninth letter of his first voyage Kipling observes on the progress of Japan's railway network and reflects that the country has reached a stage where she can compel the European collaborators to abide by the norms and regulations of the former:

> There are a few European engineers, but they are quite the heads of the departments, and I believe if they were cleared out to-morrow, the Japs would go on building their lines. They know how to make 'em pay…Japan will be a gridiron of railways before long…they'll do it, of course. Their country must go forward (144).

So it is not presumptuous to reach the conclusion that in some areas of mechanical civilization Japan has reached the second, namely 'adapt'[19] stage of postcolonial exchange of civilization. They will obviously build up the railway network with the technological assistance from Europe but with their own money and also to meet their own requirements. But apart from such political and fiscal prerogatives which Japan secures for herself the reader has to keep in mind, as I have pointed out a while ago, that Japan gradually undergoes the successive stages of postcolonialism without facing the exploitation and humiliation at the hands of the Whites. It is this

extraordinary achievement of Japan which at times provokes this extraordinary tourist, albeit absurdly, to keep her away from the path of industrial civilization. In one of his conversations with Professor Hill a joyful Kipling proclaims:

> …let's start a mission and save Japan from herself. I'll run along the streets and knock off the policemen's forage caps, while you go and tear up the railway and pull down the telegraph poles. If they are left to themselves they will…in another twenty years…build black factories instead of gardens (105).

To Kipling's great satisfaction Japan was still attaining self-sufficiency and was not yet a colonial power. Had Japan directed her determination, ingenuity and endeavour in setting up colonies then the country would have emerged as the forerunner of imperialism:

> Verily Japan is a great people. Her masons play with stone, her carpenters with wood, her smiths with iron, and her artists with life, death, and all the eye can take in. *Mercifully she has been denied the last touch of firmness in her character which would enable her to play with the whole round world. We possess that* — we, the nation of the glass flower-shade, the pink worsted mat, the red and green china puppy dog, and the poisonous Brussels carpet. It is our compensation… (92, italics mine).

It is precisely this last touch of firmness in character against which another great seer of the twentieth century, viz. Rabindranath Tagore, warned Japan during his visit to Keio Gijuku university in 1916; collected under the title *The Spirit of Japan*:

> The habits, which are being formed by the modern Japanese from their boyhood, — the habits of the Western life, the habits of the alien culture,—will prove, one day, a serious obstacle to the understanding of their own true nature…*What is still more dangerous for Japan is, not this imitation of the outer features of the West, but the acceptance of the motive force of the Western civilisation as her own*…her modern tendency seems to incline towards political gambling in

> which the players stake their souls to win their game (17, italics mine).

Ostensibly in the context of the worldwide British Empire the motive force of Western civilization can be nothing but to rule the non-White colonies with trade and politico-military dominance. In the early stage of this rule the West had let loose a serious of pillage, massacre and usurpation of state powers in Asia and Africa. Tagore apprehended that in her attempt to secure international recognition Japan would gladly join the Western imperialist nations:

> Japan had all her wealth of humanity, her harmony of heroism and beauty, her depth of self-control and richness of self-expression; yet the Western nations felt no respect for her, till she proved that the bloodhounds of Satan are not only bred in the kennels of Europe, but can also be domesticated in Japan and fed with man's miseries. They admit Japan's equality with themselves, only when they know that Japan also possesses the key to open the floodgate of hell-fire upon the fair earth… (23).

I have already mentioned that Kipling's displeasure at the offer of reading Japanese constitution was spontaneous. Because he knew that this constitution would entail political and economic reforms after Western mode. As Japan was never a colony naturally she would build up colony after acquiring substantial economic and military might coupled with political stability at home. But as he viewed the impact of Western civilization in Japan from a point of view of the colonized he stressed exclusively on the negative aspects of imperialism.

Along with this negative aspect of imperialism several other related issues like racial prejudice and parochialism were also infesting the urbane Japanese mind due to the presence of several overseas clubs for Europeans in Japanese soil. To acquire the stature of a colonizing country from the status of a free state a considerable amount of time is required. But it is easy to be influenced by the activities of foreigners in one's own land. Despite the fact that during his second visit he was honoured by the renowned Tokyo Club itself Kipling squarely blamed

the activities of such clubs for exerting parochialism not only upon the natives but upon the White travellers too:

> London is egoistical, and the world for her ends with the four-mile cab radius. There is no provincialism like the provincialism of London…the waves of all the oceans break on her borders. To those in her midst she is terribly imposing, but they forget that there is more than one kind of imposition. Look back upon her from ten thousand miles, when the mail is just in at the Overseas Club, and she is wondrous tiny. Nine-tenths of her news — so vital, so epoch making over there — loses its significance,…the traveller perceives beyond doubt that the resident [of the club] is prejudiced by the very fact of his residence, and gives it as his matured opinion that Japan is a faultless land, marred only by the presence of the foreign community (*KJ* 211-212).

Thus these clubs, enjoying the stature of almost insular kingdoms can have more adverse impact upon the native people than the heart of the Empire itself. No wonder the natives too would like to give vent to the displeasure against them and the Europeans in general. The author recorded the incident of throwing mud at the foreigners by the students as a common practice (214). However these incidents are largely isolated without having any effect on the general working spirit of the people. Kipling is visibly charmed to find that politics of populism, summed up in the phrase ‘eight-hour day’, has almost no relevance in Japan, especially in the work of her business establishments:

> A fair office day’s work may begin at eight and end at six, or, if the mail comes in, at midnight. There is no overtime or eight-hours’ baby-talk in tea. Yonder are the ships; here is the stuff, and behind all is the American market. The rest is [the worker’s] own affair (228-229).

The above observation will provide an ample example for the peoples’ sincere attitude towards work and the material development of their country. So far politics is concerned the Japanese are far from letting their leaders rest in peace and enjoy

obeisance after being elected. Kipling recollected an incident when a Radical member of the Parliament in Tokyo received a flaying letter from his constituents mostly consisting of peasants. The letter threatened to teach the concerned M.P. a taste of true Japanese spirit for his alleged violation of party principles and pledge to the people. All these instances only prove that although Japan is following West to bring about economic, political and social reform she is careful to appropriate them to meet her own requirements.

It is not unusual that during stages of rapid modernization a nation faces some great catastrophe. During his 1892 visit to Japan, which was largely a honeymoon trip, Kipling suffered both personal and the national disaster of his host country with the failure of the New Oriental Bank Corporation on 9 June. This financial suffering gets a bitter personal touch when one remembers that Kipling's newly-wed bride "Carrie's own grandfather had established the foundations of Japanese banking" (Benfey 75). This bank failure, preceded by an earthquake in his little household, was recollected in *Something of Myself* (1937) thus:

> I returned with my news to my bride of three months and a child to be born. Except for what I had drawn that morning — the Manager had sailed as near to the wind as loyalty permitted — and the unexpended Cook vouchers, and our personal possessions in our trunks, we had nothing whatever. There was an instant Committee of Ways and Means, which advanced our understanding of each other more than a cycle of solvent matrimony. Retreat — flight, if you like — was indicated (97-98).

But the curious thing is that in spite of the presence of a good number of people who must have suffered the loss of each penny due to this crisis, Kipling's pen took no record of violence or riot. This resilience and fortitude in the face of extreme calamity is beyond commendation or praise. Of course the other branches of the bank in Europe will certainly feel the aftershock of the crisis. But the people over there can have the service of various other banks which is not available in Japan as the country has only a few banks with a considerable number of customers. Like the

Japanese the small White community in Japan, especially the residents and members of the overseas club, are far from faring any better:

> There is a notice on a shut door, in the wet, and by virtue of that notice all the money that was theirs yesterday is gone away, and it may never come back again. So all the work that won the money must be done over again; but some of the people are old, and more are tired, and all are disheartened. It is a very sorrowful little community that goes to bed to-night, and there must be as sad ones the world over (*KJ* 233).

Although Kipling, himself a depositor of the bank, was not much troubled on his way to America due to the generous refund by Thomas Cook travel firm and much later recovered nearly one-fourth of his lost money, it was difficult to get away altogether from the mood of general depression and gloom shared alike by the Whites and their Yellow Mongoloid collaborators[20].

It is this financial, political and trade collaborations which created a kind of bonhomie between the Japanese and the foreigners despite Japan's not letting any European nation play the role of benevolent despot. Kipling obviously senses this as he records his liking for the Japanese over almost the perceptible contempt of the Chinese. These latter people, thinks Kipling, pose an economic threat to the Europeans by offering cheap labour. Thus when the Europeans are heavily dependent upon them they are likely to increase their wages by using one pretext or the other. Kipling illustrates his argument by showing the example of British Columbia while touring Canada in 1907:

> The Chinaman has always been in the habit of coming to British Columbia, where he makes, as he does elsewhere, the finest servant in the world. No one,…objects to the biddable Chinaman. He takes work which no white man in a new country will handle, and when kicked by the mean white will not grossly retaliate. He has always paid for the privilege of making his fortune on this wonderful coast, but with singular forethought and statesmanship the popular Will, some few years ago, decided to double the head-tax on his

> entry…This is said to be one of the reasons why overworked white women die or go off their heads; and why in new cities [one] can see blocks of flats being built to minimise the inconveniences of housekeeping without help (274).

This sentiment against the cheap alien labour which adversely affects the indigenous workforce and economy of Canada was very much prevalent in the contemporary political atmosphere. As Caroline Knowles records:

> Aliens are construed in political discourses as displacing Canadian interests. Their effects on Canadian jobs, their ownership of property, the size of their populations and effects on education are carefully documented in the Province of British Columbia (1927) *Report on Oriental Activities*. This report suggests that there was a concerted attempt by that province, which contained nearly all the alien population of Canada, to drive aliens out of the key economic activities of mining, lumbering, the saw mills and fishing,… The trade union lobby especially staunchly defended Canadian workers against cheap alien labour which depressed living standards… Fears of displacement were clearly expressed in parliament — 'We in British Columbia want no more Hindoo, Chinamen and Japs… They are running white people out'[21] — and on the streets in the form of anti-oriental riots in Vancouver in the early years of [twentieth] century (54).

With the economic reformation sweeping China since 1978 today the threat is even more prominent. By virtue of her legendary workforce and export-oriented industries the Chinese economy had become enviable to all nations. Back in the beginning of the twentieth century Kipling resented the short-sightedness of the inhabitants of British Columbia who poured out their invectives against the Japanese and turned a blind eye to the Chinese threat which was dormant. The apparent reason for their being angry with the Japanese is also the practice of exploiting the cheap workforce and thereby lowering the standard of living. But the real reason, as it appears, is Japan's steady economic progress which renders in her citizens the will

and power to thwart any move detrimental to their interest. Kipling recorded an incident of armed protestation by some Japanese inhabitants of Vancouver when the authorities tried to shift them (*KJ* 275). Bereft of economic prosperity and still largely suffering the fate of the colonized nation, China was far from emulating Japan. However, Kipling, with all his prophetic attributes regarding the inevitable doom of imperialism, voiced his concern about the Chinese peoples' efficiency and determination to achieve their goal.

To conclude the reader can infer that Kipling's experiences in Japan had rendered a mixed feeling in him for the race in general. At the end, the Japanese proved themselves as having a *sui generis* geopolitical and national identity. Freshly arrived from India Kipling was quick to find fault with Japan's political and social life which was ostensibly mimicking that of Europe's. But Kipling took considerable time to discover that this imitation should not choke the fountain-head of Japanese spirit. That is why, on the material plane, Japan never lacks native entrepreneurs who would invest to improve the country's transport or sanitation system as well as educational and fine arts institutes. Thus capable of guiding herself Japan wants to confine the role of Europe as only friend/collaborator and philosopher/adviser. In the spiritual sphere the author's recognition of Japan's long cherished Buddhist tradition proves that the Japanese will never stake their souls for material benefit. This recognition is best manifest in the poem "Buddha at Kamakura" (1892) composed after a trip to the statue of Buddha at Kamakura. The poem preaches traditional Oriental piety and stoicism: "[the author's] maturing view of how to respond to the vicissitudes of life, whether triumph or disaster" (Benfey 77-78). This also explains the indomitable nature of the same Japanese spirit which can rebuild the country after the defeat and devastation of the Second World War.