INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®

Rudyard Kipling, Hollywood, and the Imperial Gaze: The Politics of Looking in Kipling's 1901 novel and MGM's 1950 film Kim

by

Sumita Lall

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the Department of English
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Master's Degree at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1997

© 1997 Sumita Lall

National Library of Canada
Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Acquisitions et services bibliographiques
395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-52591-0

Canada

ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to articulate the nature of Kipling's colonial vision in the novel Kim (1901) as it was appropriated by Hollywood in 1950. Borrowing from the writings of various Kipling scholars, postcolonial theorists, psychoanalysts, and film theorists, I tackle the issue of subjectivity as it applies both to the colonizer and to the colonized in his/her act of representing and, subsequently, of identifying with that which exists as other or external to him/herself. I argue that what is central to the act of representing the other, especially for the colonizer, is a dependency on the process of signification in the field of vision: both the colonizer and the spectator of film must encounter images visually -- by looking at the other and by being looked at in the process -- in order to exist as subjects. I refer to this visual economy in terms of the concept of scopophilia and, therefore, also examine the issue of pleasure as a modality of desire. Throughout this thesis, I approach the ideas of Jacques Lacan through the theories of postcolonial and film critics alike, but I also argue against the ways in which Lacan has been applied to the situation of the Othered "subject" because I realize, as an Indo-Canadian woman, that these theories fail to articulate my own experiences of desire in the forms of pleasure and repulsion. I argue that the ways in which the colonizer *desires* cannot be applied to the ways in which the colonized experiences "subjectivity" as an object of the imperial look and gaze. Because of the corporeal fetishization of the colonized as the Other of the white self, I am prevented from experiencing subjectivity in the conventional Lacanian sense and, instead, must perpetually embody a position as Other. However, my objectification in the field of vision does not mean that I fail to look at images and, therefore, that I fail to "desire" from my othered position. It is precisely this other form of "desire" that I ultimately explore in the thesis, concluding that the parameters of filmic participation need to be expanded.

To the memory of my father and to his daily coaxing from above and within that helped me to finish this work.

To mom, Vipin, and Sangeeta for their constant support.

To Eric for helping me battle my gremlins.

To Wendy Foster whose unassuming brilliance continues to baffle, but inspire, me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii

DEDICATION v

PREFACE vii

CHAPTER

I. Kipling's Kim (1901): The Colonial Self as Voyeur and Its Other as Spectacle 1

II. Hollywood and the Commodification of Kipling 22

III. Cinema as Apparatus and the Othered Spectator: Exploring Multiple Looks as Manifestations of the Gaze 36

IV. Watching Kim Watch Me: Pleasure, Suffering, and the Cultural Gaze 60

BIBLIOGRAPHY 109

VITA AUCTORIS 117

PREFACE

While reading Frantz Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks as an undergraduate student, I came across an intriguing comparison between the native Antillean's experience as a spectator of film in his country of birth and his experience as a diasporic native in a movie theater abroad:

> In the Antilles, the young Negro identifies himself *de facto* with Tarzan against the Negroes. This is much more difficult for him in a European theater, for the rest of the audience, which is white, automatically identifies him with savages on the screen. . . A documentary film on Africa produces similar reactions when it is shown in a French city and in Fort-de-France . . . In France a Negro who sees this documentary is virtually petrified. There he has no more hope of flight: He is at once Antillean, Bushman, and Zulu. (152-153)

I realized, immediately, how applicable Fanon's statement was to my own spectatorial experience as an Indo-Canadian woman. During my trip to India as a child, I remember now, my cousins were particularly fond of American cartoon figures like Popeye and Bugs Bunny, figures that freely ridiculed the customs and behaviours of non-white peoples.[1] Whereas in Canada, I had always identified with and had known myself to be culturally apprehended as the savage on-screen, my cousins in India laughed unabashedly at these images of "goons" and savage natives, indicating that they comfortably assumed the position of the targeted viewer in their identification with Popeye or Bugs Bunny. Unlike my relatives in India, I have from early childhood been aware of the colonial look that constructs the visible minority on the basis of his/her fetishized skin. I have, therefore, always watched images of "goons" and dark-skinned natives with horror, fearing that the next time I ventured outside my home I would again be accused of cannibalism or savagery. My awareness of being looked at within the libidinal economy of visual identification, of my constructedness as a spectator of images, forced me to acknowledge the inherent tension between the racialized spectator's look and the cultural gaze.[2]

---

[1] I recall images of Popeye, for example, jeering at black-skinned, fat-lipped and illiterate, but noisy, "goons."

Addressing the racialization of non-white peoples in Canada, Himani Bannerji writes that

> [t]his category of "visibility," and the construction of one's self as a minority . . . work as operative categories not because they possess any truth, but because they enforce the racist and imperialist relations which are already in place. . . . To be labelled "visible" is to be told to become invisible, to get lost. ("Popular Images of South Asian Women" 149)

As an Indo-Canadian woman, I have been socially constructed in terms of the visibility of my epidermis which marks my difference as a Canadian. In this thesis, I deal with the politics of visibility and invisibility as it relates to the issue of colonial representations of the South Asian, and subsequently to my own self-representation in language as a spectator of film. Having identified with and been socially perceived as the "goon" in childhood, I am thrilled at the prospect of images of South Asians on-screen which allows me to become a consumer and, therefore also, a participating spectator of images in the media. However, converging on this anticipatory excitement at becoming a spectator is the sensation of horror that prevents my participation in the act of consuming images: I am the abject viewer who is denied the act of identification because the image on-screen is the prescribed Other of the white, male self that I have come to embody off-screen.

---

[2] Kaja Silverman writes that "Lacan sharply differentiates the gaze from the subject's look, conferring visual authority not on the look but on the gaze. He thereby suggests that what is determinative for each of us is not how we see or would like to see ourselves, but how we are perceived by the cultural gaze" (The Threshold of the Visible World 19).

I choose to explore the politics of looking through the texts of Rudyard Kipling whose representations of India and the Indian have influenced filmic portrayals of the East more pervasively, I believe, than any other writer's. Commenting on the neo-colonial nostalgia for empire that the Raj mania films of the 1980s reconstruct for Britons, films which include the 1984 version of Kim starring Peter O'Toole as the lama,[3] Salman Rushdie suggests that "Britain is in danger of entering a condition of cultural psychosis in which it begins once again to strut and posture like a great power" (Charles Allen "In the grip of Raj mania" 10). Rushdie's attention to the nostalgia evoked in the films of the 1980s is interesting when it is applied to the classic Hollywood films about India that preceded the Raj hype era, many of which were adaptations of Rudyard Kipling's works.[4] In this thesis I address the issue of a nostalgia for empire in terms of MGM's 1950 film Kim which I believe to be a perfect early example of a postcolonial longing for "the good old days when Britannia ruled the *kala pani*" (Allen "In the grip" 10). Kim reproduces the anxiety of Kipling's colonial narrative and, in typical imperialist fashion, repeats the group fantasy of white supremacy in order to sustain a sense of coherence for the white male self at a time when it began to disintegrate historically. Filmed only a few years after India's independence in 1947, MGM's Kim appropriates Kipling's Orientalist fantasy of "the inferiority of non-white races, the necessity that they be ruled by a superior race, and their absolute unchanging essence" (Said Culture and Imperialism 151) which, like other Orientalist Hollywood productions, reconciled the ambivalence of America's own imperialist activities and ensured Hollywood's "expansion as modernity's dominant purveyor of information, attitudes, entertainment, and consensus" (Andrew "Praying Mantis" 232).

---

[3] Examples of other films of the Raj revival era include Jewel in the Crown, Staying On, Heat and Dust, The Far Pavilions, A Passage to India, and Tales of India.

[4] For a comprehensive filmography of Rudyard Kipling-based films, refer to the article "Kipling on Film" by Philip Leibfred.

Recognizing the importance of Rushdie's comment concerning the ideological implications of film, this thesis explores the influence that Kipling's novel had on MGM's film Kim and on other popular, filmic representations of the South Asian. Beginning with an analysis of Rudyard Kipling's novel Kim in Chapter One, I address the discursive authority with which Kipling wrote about the East, particularly about India, and represented the native as the Other of the white, male self within the field of vision. Kipling's authority, I suggest, hinges on his identity as an Orientalist. In the forward to Nightrunners of Bengal, a popular, fictional account of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, John Masters writes, in typical Orientalist fashion, that in order to appreciate fully his depiction of India the reader must "experience the anticipation and self-recognition and therefore the compassion, which I believe to be the province of historical fiction" (ix). Although Kipling never claimed to be a writer of historical fiction, he often appealed to his readers as an Orientalist by inscribing within his fiction objective, voyeuristic narrators who spoke with ethnographic authority. Kipling was, therefore, categorized as a colonial expert on the Indian sub-continent, a categorization with which I deal extensively in the second chapter of this thesis.

What becomes apparent from Kipling's Orientalist practice of interpreting and subsequently representing images of the South Asian is the importance of the colonizer's act of looking at others as a means of translating his own experiences into forms of knowledge. In order to maintain the authority of this look, however, the colonizer must, I suggest, secretively peer in on native life from the position of the invisible voyeur, a position that is constantly threatened by a larger and omnipresent cultural gaze. I address the cultural gaze in the second chapter of the thesis in terms of the ways in which Kipling, as an imperial bard, and his images of India(ns) are represented by the writer's implied and popular audiences. Kipling's constructedness as a writer and the ways in which he is represented in Hollywood films suggest that he is, ultimately, unable to maintain the boundary between the invisible colonizer as spectator and the visible colonized as spectacle. It is the very *performativity*, therefore, of the colonizer's identity that becomes apparent in Kipling's novel and MGM's film Kim.

Chapter Three is an interrogation of the issue of desire as it takes form in the process of identification that accompanies the act of watching a film. Film theorists like Christian Metz and Stephen Heath turn to the theories of Jacques Lacan and discuss desire in terms of scopophilia, the desire to look and to be looked at. For both theorists, the camera-eye acts as the metonymic replacement of the ideal subject-spectator's "I" in its identification with the objectified image on-screen. The technology of the camera-eye combines with the larger cinematic institution, which includes classical Hollywood's ideological framework (e.g. the "star" system, advertising, screen writing), in order to position the ideal viewer as a voyeur-spectator. I argue in Chapter Three, branching off from the theories of various feminist film critics, that the racially othered and gendered viewer only masochistically assumes the voyeuristic position of the ideal subject-spectator, but that this space of masochism is not the only available position from which to look. Referring to the autobiographical accounts of Frantz Fanon, I argue that the othered viewer is often prevented from becoming a voyeur and, instead, watches images from a position off-screen as a spectacularized-spectator based on the fetishization of his/her epidermis. The othered viewer is aware, more specifically, of the cultural gaze by which she is defined as a spectator and does not, like the ideal viewer, mistake her look for the illusory authority of the voyeuristic gaze in her identification with the camera-eye and with the images on-screen. In this thesis, therefore, the terms "colonial gaze" and "cultural gaze" refer, respectively, to the look of the white, male colonizer who perceives himself as an invisible voyeur, and to a space outside of the subject-spectator (i.e. the ideal viewer or the colonizer) that ensures his visibility in the field of vision. Moreover, I take the look generally to be any particular manifestation of the gaze, any *diachronic* occurrence of the *synchronic* gaze. Therefore, whether the gaze manifests itself in the illusory authority of Kipling's look, Hollywood's look, or even the colonial looks of literary and film critics alike, it is the othered viewer's act of looking back at the collective colonial gaze that ultimately subverts its assumption of power.

In this thesis, I intend to address the issue of representation on two levels. First, I explore the ways in which the colonial gaze commodifies the racialized body of the South Asian in Kipling's and Hollywood's texts. I then examine the ways in which the othered viewer is prevented from representing herself in language, prevented from desiring an illusion of psychic coherence in language because of her awareness of the cultural gaze by which she has become a fetishized image. The othered viewer, therefore, is the spectacularized-spectator who looks back at the colonial gaze in her encounter with filmic images, an act that challenges the universality of the spectator's position in consuming filmic images. In Chapter Four I use textual analysis as a strategy in my examination of Kim's appeal to the ideal reader/viewer. At the same time, however, I examine my own so-called "identification" with the text in order to suggest the ways in which the othered viewer is denied the process of seeking a coherent self-image in the specular mirror of identification. This thesis, therefore, is not about articulating a politics of resistance by which the othered viewer becomes an active agent in reconstructing stereotypical images of the native from the perspective of an authentic, cultural position. As an othered viewer, I am clearly not interested in becoming a subject-spectator of film in order to define the ways in which visible minorities participate as film-viewing communities in Canada. I neither represent the viewing experiences of visible minorities in Canada, nor speak for Indo-Canadian woman at large. Instead, I am interested in charting the sensations of pleasure and repulsion that I experience as a viewer and, subsequently, in redefining the position of the subject-spectator from my own position as an othered viewer.

Kipling's Kim (1901): The Colonial Self as Voyeur and Its Other as Spectacle

In his autobiography Something of Myself Rudyard Kipling considers his novel Kim in retrospect and writes that he "had a vague notion of an Irish boy, born in India and mixed up with native life" (139), but he later confesses that

> [t]he only trouble was to keep him [Kim] within bounds [because] [b]etween us, we knew every step, sight, and smell on his casual road, as well as all the persons he met. (Something 140)

In a novel like Kim, whose representations of native life depend on the constructing look of the colonizer, the "bounds" to which Kipling anxiously refers are primarily visual. Kipling, like his character Kim, realizes that "[n]o man could be a fool . . . who moved so gently and silently, and whose eyes were so different from the dull fat eyes of other Sahibs" (Kim 568). As an Anglo-Indian[1] himself, Kipling extols the perspicuity and inconspicuousness of Kim's Anglo-Indian perspective which, because of its spatial proximity to native experience, has acquired enough insight to inform the implied reader's limited vision of the world. Kipling believes that he, through the character of Kim, can penetrate or, like Colonel Creighten, see "with a look that pierce[s] through" (Kim 569) the chaos that surrounds him. For Kipling, therefore, the colonial look is the authorial gaze that invisibly, yet attentively, examines native life. It is the eye that, in turn, collects, interprets, categorizes or names, and subsequently colonizes the native as objectified image or metaphorized representation.

---

[1] In this thesis, I use the term "Anglo-Indian" as it was used during Kipling's time, namely in reference both to the experiences of Rudyard Kipling who was born and raised in India, and to the experiences of British subjects who moved to India later in life to serve the Queen.

In Orientalism Edward Said refers to this act of looking, which maintains the illusory unity and authority of the colonial gaze, in terms of cultural appropriation, the "long and slow process of appropriation by which Europe, or the European awareness of the Orient, transform[s] itself" (210). Colonial signification, for Said, is motivated or driven by "a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different world" (Orientalism 12). Said's focus on the ways in which the colonial self transforms images of the Oriental or Other into forms of knowledge points to the discursive authority with which Kipling, by way of the colonial gaze, represents the East to the West. In Something of Myself, for example, Kipling writes of his intentions to interpret India for his audience in England and comments on what he perceives to be his role as an Anglo-Indian writer: "I exposed my notion of trying to tell to the English something of the world outside England -- not directly but by implication" (90). Kipling's intentions as a writer, which he addresses in Something of Myself, are complicitous with an ethnographic tradition of representing the native as Other or foreign. Kipling's perception of his role as an Anglo-Indian writer, in other words, suggests the way his colonial identity colludes with certain traits of the traditional ethnographer's identity. James Clifford suggests that the ethnographic identity, "whether cultural or personal, presupposes acts of collection, gathering up possessions in arbitrary systems of value and meaning" ("On Collecting Art and Culture" 52). As an Anglo-Indian writer, Kipling assumes a position of authority whereby the self and its Other are represented in the familiar tropes of colonial ethnographic discourse, often in terms of Edward Said's definition of the Orientalist "poet or scholar, [who] makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, [and] renders its mysteries plain for and to the West" (Orientalism 20-21).[2]

Kipling, however, makes other references in his autobiography to his cultural identity as an Anglo-Indian which complicate his position as an Orientalist and ethnographer. Kipling confesses that during his time in England as a child,

> I have known a certain amount of bullying, but this was calculated torture -- religious as well as scientific . . . [,y]et it made me give attention to the lies I soon found it necessary to tell; and this, I presume, is the foundation of literary effort. (Something 6)

Kipling's early experiences of "bullying" in England contribute to his retrospective awareness of his position both as an othered

---

[2] Kipling's title Plain Tales from the Hills provides an obvious example of his Orientalist intention to render "mysteries plain" or in unaffected terms. Various critics and reviewers of Kipling's fiction and verse have commented on the success of the writer's honest or "plain" representations of Indian life, particularly in three reviews written between 1891 to 1892. Lionel Johnson wrote that "Mr. Kipling's Indian stories . . . sing[] the common soldier in a common way . . . phrase follows phrase, instinct with life, quivering and vibrating with the writer's intensity" (Kipling: The Critical Heritage 99-100). Oscar Wilde, in 1891, wrote that "From the point of view of life, he [Kipling] is a reporter who knows vulgarity better than anyone has ever known it" (Kipling: The Critical 104). In 1897 Charles Eliot Norton wrote that "Plain Tales from the Hills gave proof that a man who saw through his eyes was studying life in India and was able to tell us what he saw . . . [and even with] Departmental Ditties and Other Verses, or . . . Barrack-Room Ballads . . . showed . . . the same sure touch, the same insight, the same imaginative sympathy with all varieties of life, and the same sense of the moral significance of life even in its crudest, coarsest, and most vulgar aspects" (Kipling: The Critical 186).

Anglo-Indian and as a teller of stories later in life. However objective Kipling wants the narrators of his stories to appear to his implied audience,[3] he is aware, at least in his autobiography written years after his experiences in India, of the cultural expectations upheld by his British public, a public whose critical reception indicates an othering of Kipling as an Anglo-Indian writer. This othering of Kipling is especially significant when we consider what Stephen D. Arata suggests in "A Universal Foreignness: Kipling in the Fin-de-Siecle," that "Kipling himself was often described in terms that made his racial heritage problematic" ("A Universal Foreignness" 17) as an Anglo-Indian.[4] Kipling, whether he is aware of the implications of this othering by critics and reviewers or not, feels the need to tell "lies" (Something 6), to "produce new myths to consolidate these [England's] cultural ideas as a part of his own search for an integrated selfhood" (Ashis Nandy, "The Psychology of Colonialism: Sex, Age, and Ideology in British India" Psychiatry 197-198). The "lies" that Kipling feels he needs to tell, furthermore, indicate his need to redeem the Anglo-Saxon virtues of the British living in India or to disguise what is considered ethnic about his identity, to undergo almost a process of "cultural passing" as a white, Anglo-Saxon male who holds only an objective, perhaps even ethnographic, relation to Anglo-Indians. Consequently, Kipling engages in an ethnography that represents both native and Anglo-Indian life problematically because in order to redeem his authority as an Anglo-Indian writer, and subsequently to overcome the anxiety of his racialized identity as an author, he must construct and reconstruct the colonial myths of white superiority in the genre of the male romance.[5]

---

[3] In his short story "In the House of Suddhoo" from Plain Tales from the Hills, for example, Kipling inscribes the narrator's position early in the story: "Then there is Me of course; but I am only the chorus that comes in at the end to explain things" (148). In "By Word of Mouth" from the same collection, the narrator confesses that "I have lived long enough in this India to know that it is best to know nothing, and can only write the story as it happened" (304). Ironically, aside from his confessions in his autobiography, Kipling's projection of his narrators' objectivity in their accounts of Indian life and his sensational representations of Hindu "jadoo--white [and black] magic" in, for example, the story "In the House of Suddhoo," are designed to shock his audience with graphic descriptions of Hindu superstition and horror.

[4] Arata writes that "From the 1870's onward, as the study of race became both more widespread and more 'scientific,' the question of the Anglo-Indian's racial status became increasingly vexed" ("A Universal" 15). With the increase in "scientific" analysis of populations in India, Satya P. Mohanty suggests in his essay "Drawing the Color Line: Kipling and the Culture of Colonial Rule" that problems arose in classifying the "numerous 'poor whites' [in India] who lived close to the natives and often even in the streets..[because] [m]ost of these 'poor whites' were not 'half-castes,' that is, of mixed Indian and British origin" (325). One can only imagine the fear and anxiety that this widespread discourse on race, this late nineteenth-century episteme of ethnology, produced in Kipling as an Anglo-Indian who increasingly faced the dangers of being defined racially by critics in England. Kipling's ethnographic objectification of the common soldier in his writing, however, demonstrates his attempt to dissociate himself from the potentially sordid aspects of the category "Anglo-Indian."

Stephen D. Arata suggests that many reviewers of Kipling during the 1890's saw him as "a literary saviour, as one who could cure the accumulated ills of what many considered a moribund English art . . . [or an art of] introspection and an increasingly rarefied sensibility" (9). Arata allies Kipling's writing with the genre of

---

[5] In Kipling and Conrad: The Colonial Fiction John McClure highlights Kipling's problematic relationship with traditional ethnography and Orientalism: "Kipling's vision in the imperial fiction of the eighties and nineties is that of the Orientalists . . . [who] were the men with whom he had grown up; he shared their fears, their values, and their aspirations...[but] [h]is stories and novels illuminate the source of the[ir] weaknesses...[because] his own authoritarian qualities, instilled during childhood, keep him from imagining morally palatable solutions to the problems he confronts" (29).

"male romance" that became popular during the fin-de-siècle,[6] a genre that he suggests, citing Elaine Showalter, worked

> against the novel of (feminine) domestic realism . . . [by] posit[ing] a world abroad of adventure, exotica, and sexual license freed from the constraints of convention and routine . . . fantasies [that] were enacted within a literary form which was aggressively misogynist and anti-intellectual. ("The Universal" 12)

Kipling's writing, particularly his novel *Kim*, works to some extent as escapist, adventuristic Orientalism with its many depictions of foreignness: its representations of Asiatics and Eurasians; its embedded references to the Indian Mutiny and the caste system;[7] its descriptions of Indian landscapes and the Grand Trunk Road;[8] and its panoramic images of, what Kipling calls, "happy Asiatic disorder" (*Kim* 535). As a bildungsroman of an Irish beggar boy immersed in the sights, smells, sounds, and tastes of a culture completely foreign, completely Other, to the experiences of Kipling's implied audience, the novel *Kim* acts as an ethnographic, and therefore exoticized, representation of both native and Anglo-Indian life in

---

[6] The "male-romance" genre is associated with what Gail Ching-Liang Low calls a general cultural "fascination...[with] the lives of figures such as Sir Richard Burton and T.E. Lawrence and is apparent in the fiction of writers such as Henry Rider Haggard, Rudyard Kipling, John Buchan and Joseph Conrad" (*White Skins Black Masks: Representation and Colonialism* 3).

[7] The Mutiny is alluded to several times in the novel, one example being an old soldier's story which he tells Kim and the lama: "A madness ate into all the Army, and they turned against their officers . . . they chose to kill the Sahib's wives and children" (*Kim* 528). The old soldier in *Kim* is referring to the Anglo-Indian war of 1857-58 which is also called the Sepoy Revolt.

[8] Kipling, for example, writes in *Kim* that "the Grand Trunk Road is a wonderful spectacle . . . [that] runs straight, bearing without crowding India's traffic for fifteen hundred miles--such a river of life as nowhere else exists in the world" (531).

India.[9] "Through reality," writes Edward Dowden in 1901 on Kipling's poetry, "Mr Kipling reaches after romance . . . [in] its masculine . . . form . . . [because] the nostalgia of the wanderer who has responded to the invitation of the East[] has never been expressed with more of genuine magic than by Mr. Kipling" (*Kipling: The Critical Heritage* 266-268).[10] Sir Edmund Gosse, writing in 1891 about Kipling's early fiction, similarly refers to Kipling's writing as "exotic realism . . . [and to Kipling's] temperament [a]s eminently masculine" (*Kipling: The Critical Heritage* 106), a masculinity he counteracts with what he sees as a literary trend of "curiously feminized . . . [writing] excess[ive in] psychological analysis" (Kipling 105-106).

---

[9] As Zoreh T. Sullivan writes in *Narratives of Empire: The Fictions of Rudyard Kipling*, "Kipling himself was of course an early ethnographer of the behaviour of the colonizer (and the colonized) on the plains and hills of India...an inquiry [that] was in part a critique of Western ethnocentricism, and in part a willingness to construct India as 'a circus of competing systems of meaning'" (64). Sullivan's statement illustrates the ways in which Kipling's writing complicates the boundary between self and Other in India because the native in his writing is not always the object of the ethnographic and ethnologic gaze, but rather the colonizer--usually a private soldier considered sub-class even in India--and his encounters with the land and peoples of India become the objects of critics' and reviewers' scrutiny. Francis Adams writes in 1891, for example, that in Kipling's writing "[w]e see rows of Anglo-Indian bachelors of all sorts (some the most commonplace sorts) inspiring dark-eyed little native girls with dog-like adorations" (*Kipling: The Critical* 154). Also referring to Kipling's representations of the lives of common soldiers in India, Sir William Hunter in 1888 wrote that "Mr. Kipling achieves the feat of making Anglo-Indian society flirt and intrigue visibly before our eyes [and] [i]t is not, as he discloses it, a very attractive society . . . [but one of] [h]eat, solitude, anxiety, ill-health, the never ending pain of separation from wife and child . . . th[e] realistic side of Anglo-Indian life" (*Kipling: The Critical* 38-41). One anonymous reviewer of Kipling's *Soldiers Three* wrote in 1889 that "[t]he actualities of barrack-room life...[,] the tone of the whole is sound and manly [and] [t]he author does not gloss over the animal tendencies of the British private, but he shows how in the grossest natures sparks of nobility may lie hid" (*Kipling: The Critical* 42). In these reviews, it is apparent that Kipling's ethnographic representations of Anglo-Indian life become the ground for British, intellectual speculations on both ethnology and the body politic which, according to Gail Ching-Liang Low, "was articulated against a concept of femininity and 'effeminacy'" (*White Skins Black Masks* 21). The Anglo-Indian private soldier becomes the embodiment of a particularly 'manly' rigour against what was commonly thought of as a physically oppressive climate.

[10] Edward Dowden was a scholar, critic, and Professor of English at Trinity College, Dublin (*Kipling: The Critical Heritage* 259).

Citing various late nineteenth-century reviewers of Kipling, namely Andrew Lang and Alfred Lyall, Gail Ching-Liang Low writes that "the novel of manners (realism) . . . was seen to be largely moulded by women . . . [and was] accused [by Lang particularly] . . . of unmanning both the novel form and its readers" (White Skins 33). Kipling's writing, on the contrary, as Andrew Lang argues in 1891, is "manly" on the grounds that Kipling

> makes us regard the continent . . . [as] full of marvels and magic which are real . . . [and that] people have become alive to the strangeness and fascination of the world beyond the bounds of Europe and the United States. (Kipling: The Critical 71)

In Lang's account of Kipling's fiction, the colonial landscape which is "strange" or exotic acts antithetically to the "probable and natural" (Lang Kipling: The Critical 74) domesticity of home or of the world within "bounds." Lang argues that Kipling's writing "is both real and romantic . . . because he has a sharp eye for the reality of romance, for the attraction and possibility of adventure" (Kipling: The Critical 72). Lang's focus on the genre of "male romance" during the fin-de-siècle indicates a particular fascination with, what Ching-Liang Low calls, "The spectacle of masculinity [that] (re)generates the health and innocence of boyhood as that of man's" (White Skins 33). Manhood (re)generated by boyhood, in Andrew Lang's comments, is not only conflated with physical, emotional, and moral health, but is defined against what critics like Sir Edmund Gosse see as the 'effeminate' degeneracy of his age. Kipling's novel Kim, therefore, chronicles more than just the life of a boy in the form of a bildungsroman; Kim excites the imagination of the implied (white, male) reader and elicits from this audience an identification with Kim that allows it to "see what he [Kipling] sees; and, when we have lost India, when some new power is ruling where we ruled . . . future generations will learn from Mr. Kipling's works what India was under English sway" (Kipling: The Critical 71). Not only is "Mr. Kipling" maintained as a figure of authority in Lang's reviews, but his work becomes an ethnographic object of a larger British, critical gaze.

In various reviews of the novel Kim, which was first published in 1901, we see a similar tendency in critics to elevate Kipling to a position of authority. One reviewer, J.H. Millar, wrote in the year of the novel's publication that

> the charm of Kim . . . lies in the wonderful panorama it unrolls before us of the life of the great Peninsula over whose government England has now presided for more than a century . . . giving our readers an[] adequate conception of the glorious variety of the feast here spread before them . . . and consider for a moment . . . the protracted observation, the thorough knowledge . . . [of] Mr. Kipling [who] knows everything by instinct. (Kipling: The Critical Heritage "J.H. Millar reviews Kim" 271)

The vision of India Kipling presents to his readers is, according to Millar, informed by his instinctual knowledge of the land and its peoples based on his "protracted observation." As in the reviews of Kipling's earlier fiction and verse, Millar engages in an othering of Kipling that goes hand-in-hand with British intellectual constructions of Kipling as an Anglo-Indian. In Millar's rather confused assessment of *Kim*, Kipling's understanding of India has less to do with his lived experience than with his "instinctual" knowledge, a knowledge perhaps attributed to Kipling because of what Millar might have considered to be the writer's ambiguous racial origins as an Anglo-Indian. Edmund Gosse, referring in 1891 to Kipling as "a new star out of the East" (*Kipling: The Critical* 105), maintains this mythic category of the Anglo-Indian writer. However, unlike Millar, Gosse emphasizes Kipling's lived experience as the basis for the authority of his colonial gaze: "It is in the[] Indian stories that Mr. Kipling displays more than anywhere else the accuracy of his eye and the retentiveness of his memory" (*Kipling: The Critical* 119). Kipling's "accuracy" as a writer is associated not so much with his inherent knowledge of the exotic world, but with his ability to remember life in India which provides the ideal reader with a culturally inside perspective. Kipling is perceived and constructed as an Eastern "star" who looks in on native life and represents the native world for the pleasure of the public 'eye' in the West. The scopic authority that Gosse attributes to Kipling suggests the ways in which Kipling undergoes a transformation as a colonial figure: whereas Millar constructs Kipling as the bearer of the gaze based on his instinctual knowledge of the East, Gosse represents Kipling as "a new star" and, therefore, inadvertently as the object of the cultural gaze.

Addressing the history of twentieth-century exoticist, anthropological forms of writing in his essay "Traveling Cultures," James Clifford defines anthropological interlocutors or "'informant[s]' . . . [as] complex individuals routinely made to speak for 'cultural' knowledge, [and who] turn out to have their own 'ethnographic' proclivities" (Clifford Cultural Studies 97). The anthropological interlocutor or ethnographic "informant" is, according to Clifford, engrossed in "[i]ntensive participant-observation" ("Traveling" 99) and, therefore, is immersed in "the field" ("Traveling" 99) of analysis. The laboratory space of ethnographic investigation is, in other words, also the ethnographer's "site of displaced dwelling" ("Traveling" 99). Kipling, especially given his othered position as an Anglo-Indian writer, plays a similar role as ethnographic informant: he acts as an interlocutor between the East and the West from, what his critics consider, a culturally inside perspective as one who dwells with the natives, while he simultaneously assumes a position of ethnographic authority as an Orientalist. Sullivan, who also addresses the issue of the Anglo-Indian ethnographer's hybrid positionality, suggests that the political machinery of empire produced in Kipling a contradictory pattern of desire by which India became for him both the site of desire and the site of power and control (Narratives of Empire 2).[11] We are made aware of such a contradictory pattern of desire through the character of Kim who is "in the seventh heaven of joy . . . seeing all India spread out to left and right [,for] [i]t was beautiful to behold" (*Kim* 534). As voyeur travelling the Grand Trunk road, Kim possesses the power and control of the narrative's gaze, yet he simultaneously "could not give tongue to his feelings" (*Kim* 534); India as an object of Kim's desire produces in him an incoherence that is contradictory to his sense of scopic control. Kipling's position as an Anglo-Indian ethnographer produces another contradiction: although Kipling records the ostentation of British presence in India by representing the lives of Anglo-Indians, he becomes an ostentatious figure himself in the eyes of the British public who see him as an imperialist bard who will sing the glories of the British Empire and provide a rejuvenated sense of masculine, British, cultural nationalism. Kipling's identity emerges, as Satya P. Mohanty suggests, from the British public's

---

[11] In my thesis I do not focus, as does Sullivan, on "the familial trope" (Narratives 2) as the symbolic or linguistic order by which Kipling represented the self and its desired Other in fiction. My analysis of colonial desire differs, to a great extent, from Sullivan's in that I do not focus on mother England as "'ma-baap' (mother/father), the native as untrained child, and the empire as drawing room" (Narratives 3) in dealing with the question of representation. Instead of emphasizing the family as a metaphor for "the ideology responsible for the forbidden countered by the fear of punishment" (Sullivan Narratives 11), I discuss desire in terms of the linguistic order of the "eye" or the *visual* economy of (self-) representation in language.

> contradictory desire to fashion the self -- the British white [male] self -- as a spectacle . . . [f]rom dress and physical appearance to the determination of when to be visible, how much and to whom, [so that] colonial culture becomes obsessively concerned with marking difference with ostentation . . . [and] we are presented with a contradiction between two images of the ruling self: one tends toward the invisible, the other toward the eminently spectacular. ("Kipling and the Culture of Colonial Rule" 339).

The tendency of Kipling's reviewers to see the writer and his works as eminently spectacular representations of the colonial self problematizes, to an extent, Kipling's affiliation with traditional ethnography. First, Kipling's objectification by his reviewers, his construction as Anglo-Indian ethnographic "informant," complicates his own position as an author and as a colonial self. Second, when we consider Kipling's subversive ethnographic positioning of the colonizer -- the Anglo-Indian private soldier as the *object* of the implied reader's gaze -- the "exotic" native is no longer solely representative of Otherness, but rather the *private soldier* becomes a visually erotic (i.e. scopophilic), masculinized spectacle. Kipling, therefore, maintains a coherent sense of the British male self only by simultaneously informing his implied audience while being an object who is informed upon by his public.

George Moore, who reviewed Kim in 1904, also addressed the authority of Kipling's panoptic, ethnographic perspective. Kipling, he suggests, "writes with the eye that appreciates all that the eye can see" (Kipling: The Critical 289). Moore, however, criticizes what he believes to be Kipling's surface treatment of Indian life, a criticism influenced perhaps by Kipling's history of reporting for the Civil and Military Gazette and the Pioneer, and of writing from the perspective of removed or detached first-person narrators in Plain Tales from the Hills and Soldiers Three. Moore writes that "of the heart he [Kipling] knows nothing [which is apparent in] . . . his characters [who] are . . . external . . . and stationary" ("George Moore on" 289). Other reviewers like Robert Buchanon, who in his famous article "The Voice of the Hooligan" (1899) focused primarily on Kipling's earlier works, also criticized Kipling for creating stock characters and dealing "almost entirely with the baser aspects of our civilization, being chiefly devoted to the affairs of idle military men, savage soldiers, frisky wives and widows, and flippant civilians" (Kipling: The Critical 237). Buchanan's view, however, is clearly hypocritical in its liberalist, humanitarian approach to the British Empire: he writes, for example, that "true Imperialism has nothing in common with the mere lust of conquest, with the vulgar idea of mere expansion, or with the increase of the spirit of mercenary militarism" (Kipling: The Critical 248). Buchanan is clearly speaking from a perspective that upholds the ideology of the civilizing mission that allowed the British Empire to translate the Western signs of rationality, civilization, and progress into various local discursive structures (e.g. colonial administration, education, and the military in India).[12] Buchanon's condemnation of Kipling's attention to the baser aspects of British civilization is similar to George Orwell's belief that

> Kipling's verse is so horribly vulgar that it gives one the same sensation as one gets from watching a third-rate music-hall performer . . . [, a sensation of] shameful pleasure, like the taste for cheap sweets that some people secretly carry into midle life. ("Rudyard Kipling" 135)

Orwell's comments illustrate the paradoxical relationship that Kipling's writing has had with reviewers throughout history. The wicked pleasure that Kipling's base sense of culture provides for his audiences, implied and real, could easily be counterpoised with his popular appeal that, according to Orwell, defines Kipling "as a good bad poet . . . perceived by generation after generation to be vulgar and yet goes on being read" ("Rudyard" 136). Buchanon's and Orwell's condemnation of Kipling is perplexing considering that Kipling wrote within the genre of male romance that, during the fin-de-siecle, held such popular appeal with its British, male readers. Considering also that Kim is written in the genre of male romance that upholds certain forged virtues of manhood, from its adventurism to its treatment of Kim's eventual sense of freed sexual license, it is strange that Kipling's writing is often evaluated against liberalist and humanist criteria which dismiss the vulgarities of the male romance.

---

[12] Zoreh T. Sullivan addresses the importance of Kipling's representations of the vulgar and base in the Empire: "His stories...transgress the official by centering what imperial society had marginalized--the dirt, the smells and the tastes of India, the British failure, the suicide, the syphilitic soldier, the rebel, the Indian child, the Indian woman, the dying, and the dead" (Narratives of Empire 17).

In "Reading Formations in the Victorian Press: The Reception of Kipling 1888-1891" Ann Parry writes that "the inscriptions within the periodical reviews of Kipling's work were just one of the means by which . . . imperialist ideology was attained and disseminated" (261). More importantly, the visual appeal of Kipling's images for his Victorian audiences and the importance Kipling placed on the act of looking as a means of translating the colonizer's experience into forms of knowledge, makes his impact on Western perceptions of the East even more significant. It is obvious that despite the disagreement between Kipling's reviewers, most critics of Kipling acknowledge his role in presenting a vivid, spectacular, and often fantastical India for the voyeuristic pleasure of audiences in England. We see in Kipling's reception by the Victorian public, in other words, that the Anglo-Indian writer and his works have become appropriated within a larger discourse dealing with the development and distribution of knowledge on the East. Kipling the Orientalist not only enters a larger discursive practice of writing or representing India for the pleasure of western "eyes" in general, he also becomes the object of a larger critical gaze that represents him as an imperialist writer and as an ethnographic "informant." Furthermore, in an act of distancing the voyeuristic self from the object which it sees as Other, whether that Other is a brown native or a sub-class private soldier, Kipling maintains a colonial position of authority. It is from this objectifying position as subject that the body of India, both its land and its people, is mapped for the West. As Deleuze and Guattari suggest, "the socius is inscriptive . . . marking bodies" (Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia 185) and Kipling, as an assembling "eye" that transforms India into meaningful metaphors, engages in a similar spatializing process. If we use the terminology of Deleuze and Guattari, Kipling "reterritorializes" India through colonial signification and constructs a geographical, cultural, and bodily space that is informed by a collective or group fantasy of authority and power whereby the colonial self is maintained against what it sees as other in its physical surroundings.

Given the historical influence that Kipling's colonial gaze has had on audiences, therefore, it is interesting that by the end of the novel Kim, the authority and subjectivity of that gaze is threatened. Kipling tries to contain the visual fantasy of the colonizer in the gaze of the character Kim who invisibly travels through India first as a beggar boy and then as a spy in the Great

Game constructing images of the land and its natives during his travels. However, near the end of the novel Kim feels the compulsion to repeat to himself, "I am Kim -- I am Kim -- I am Kim -- alone -- one person -- in the middle of it all" (632). Kim, in the middle of the chaos that is India, finds that the stability, coherence, and autonomy of his "eye's" encounter with the land and its peoples, are overwhelmed, perhaps to the point of paranoia, by the impossibility of "seeing the world in real truth" (Kim 541). The "great, grey, formless India, beyond tents and padres and colonels" (Kim 554) threatens the fragility of the boundary between self and other, colonizer and colonized, spectator and spectacle, the invisible and visible. The assembling "eye" begins to waver in its act of spatializing the East as a territorial trope for the West. Kim begins to

> look[] with strange eyes unable to take up the size and proportion and use of things . . . while he felt, though he could not put it into words, that his soul was out of gear with its surroundings. (Kim 666)

It is at this point, when the unity of Kim's vision begins to disintegrate, or in Deleuze and Guattari's terms "deterritorialize," that the colonial self must repeat once again, mantra-like, the words "I am Kim. I am Kim" (Kim 666). The colonial Self, in other words, must produce and reproduce, construct and reconstruct, itself discursively in order to secure its colonial position of authority. Kim, in transition from childhood to an adulthood of becoming Sahib or colonial father, must perpetually repeat his name which marks the symbolic transformation of the colonial sign, so that "[t]hings that r[i]de meaningless on the eyeball . . . slid[e] into proper proportion . . . [and are made] perfectly comprehensible" (*Kim* 666).

In Lacanian terms, the compulsive repetition of "I am Kim" to ensure the psychic stability of the colonizer suggests the ambivalence with which the "I," as the subject of enunciation in this example of discursive colonial signification, represents "Kim," as the "me" or object of discourse.[13] Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* writes that

> the Lacanian schema of the Imaginary . . . is the transformation that takes place in the subject at the formative mirror phase, when it assumes a discrete image which allows it to postulate a series of equivalences, samenesses, identities, between the objects of the surrounding world. ("The Other Question" 77)

Bhabha's reference to Lacan's notion of psychic identification in language suggests that his Other, unlike Said's Oriental as Other, is the Otherness of the colonial self, the Oriental within the Occident. This very splitting of the ego that occurs when the colonial self is represented in language indicates the fiction of the narcissistic sense of wholeness with which Kim as a colonizer tries to see his self in the Othered, Indian native. The colonial self can only, Bhabha argues, maintain a sense of unity by its displacement of the Other in a fetishized, namely metonymic or metaphoric, image or representation.[14] In the statement "I am Kim," Kim must repeat his name, a metaphor which marks or inscribes his colonial presence as a complete identity or ego. The "I" as colonizer -- autonomous, independent, progressivist, and unified -- can only exist for Kim if the "eye," which acts as a metonymic replacement of the "I," can successfully maintain mastery and coherence over the images of the native and of the land that surround him. Behind Kim's visual identification with his surroundings, therefore, is the drive for completion because, as Bhabha suggests, "the post-Enlightenment man [is] tethered to, not confronted by, his dark reflection, the shadow of colonized man, that splits his presence" ("Interrogating Identity" 44). Through repetition, in a sense, the name "Kim" becomes a reified -- i.e. constructed and reconstructed -- identity in the mirror of representation which completes Kim's self-image as a colonial subject, while it simultaneously produces a sense of anxiety and alienation.

---

[13] Here, I am referring to the post-structuralist theories of Jacques Lacan who addresses the splitting of the ego that occurs during the "mirror phase" of ego-formation which "teaches us not to regard the ego as centered on the perception-consciousness system, or as organized by the 'reality principle' -- a principle that is the expression of a scientific prejudice . . . [:] we should start instead from the function of méconnaissance that characterizes the ego in all its structures" (*Écrits* "The Mirror Stage" 6). For a definition of "the repetition compulsion," see Lacan's essay on "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis" in which he writes "I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object" which must continually be retrieved (*Écrits: A Selection* 86). Also, for an account of the Lacanian formation of the ego, the process of self-representation in language, see Lacan's "Aggressivity in Psychoanalysis" in which he describes in detail the different stages of identification from childhood as "undifferentiated . . . [to] the first stage of the dialectic of identifications" (18).

It is obvious, therefore, that the "bounds" to which Kipling refers in his autobiography fail to congeal, except upon thematic grounds alone, because the fiction of colonial subjectivity which secures the position of the colonizer in Kipling's India cannot easily be fixed, "territorialized," or, simply, maintained by the constructing or objectifying "eye." It is precisely the ambivalent construction of the statement "I am Kim" that evokes in Kimball O'Hara, the Sahib, an anxiety in the form of paranoia which can be eased only by either a compulsive repetition of the colonial father's name or by a spectacular fashioning of the self through cross-cultural dressing.[15] Consequently, we are left by the end of the novel not only with "a vague notion of a . . . boy" (Kipling, Something 139) who resists closure along racial lines, but with a narrative that cannot easily be contained within the economy of colonial signification. Although Kipling would like to keep Kimball O'Hara, his lithe and protean Irish or "Rishti" beggar boy, contained within the adventuristic, Orientalist fantasy of a "life wild as that of the Arabian Nights" (Kim 498), Kim the novel and Kim the character are constantly threatened by the instability of their metonymic and metaphoric constructions, especially considering the racial ambivalence of Kim's Irish descent, a racialization already built into the narrative. As Ching-Liang Low suggests, "it is only through a fetishism of Kim's whiteness that the colonial text is secured and the reader enabled to participate in the pleasurable fantasy of cultural/racial metamorphosis . . . [or in] Kim's protean ability to change identities at will" (White Skins 215). Kim's donning of native dress as both disguise and as exhibition provides the reader with a sense of the fragility and performativity of the colonial adventurer's invisibility. Therefore, the control and authority of Kim's gaze, through which he becomes an ethnographic "informant" or "spy," are always threatened by the instability of his look.

---

[14] In this thesis, I turn to Jacques Lacan's ideas concerning metonymy and metaphor from Écrits, particularly from his essay "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud." Lacan writes that the subject is a slave not only to language, but to "a discourse in the universal movement in which his place is already inscribed at birth, if only by virtue of his proper name" (148), and we see this inscription of place particularly in terms of Kim's self-representation with the statement "I am Kim." Lacan writes that metonymy is "[t]he part taken for the whole . . . so that meaning can emerge there . . . in the signifying chain" (156-157), and thus "the symptom is a metaphor . . . as desire is a metonymy" (175).

---

[15] Again, I turn to Lacan who writes that "the functions of mastery, which we incorrectly call the synthesizing functions of the ego, establish on the basis of a libidinal alienation [from which] follows...what I once called the paranoiac principle of human knowledge, according to which...objects are subjected to a law of imaginary reduplication" (Écrits "The Freudian Thing, or the Meaning of the Return to Freud in Psychoanalysis" 138).

Hollywood and the Commodification of Kipling

Zoreh T. Sullivan writes that Kim is "[a]t once a spy thriller, a picaresque adventure story, a maturation story, and a quest romance" (148). I have suggested, previously, that Kim is also, at once, Orientalist escapism with an ethnographic appeal to audiences. Perhaps it is this richness of Kim's narrative that encouraged Hollywood to acquire the property rights to its name in 1938 when MGM first proposed that Freddy Bartholemew would play its lead. Although Kim was not filmed in 1938, MGM revived the idea of shooting it in 1942 with Mickey Rooney, Conrad Veidt, and Basil Rathbone; however, "[t]his was the version the Bureau of Motion Pictures aborted" (French, "Kipling and the Movies" 167) "at the request of the Office of War Information, who thought that its imperialist tone would prove offensive to Asiatics" (Leibfred, "Kipling on Film" 33). I find the precautionary efforts of the Office of War Information particularly interesting considering that only three years earlier RKO had produced Gunga Din, an overtly "offensive" pro-Imperialistic mishmash of Kipling's Soldiers Three tales and Barrack Room Ballads. Reviewers of RKO's Gunga Din considered it a "historical film" (The Commonweal February 10, 1939) of "[f]irst class entertainment . . . [and an] expert o[n] Rudyard Kipling and brown Indians in bed-sheets" (Time 1939). The reference to "bed-sheets" suggests, of course, the insipid humour of this film and of its reviewers which was, I am sure, "offensive to Asiatics." However, more important in these reviews is the reference to the film's "expert[ise] o[n] Rudyard Kipling" which comments, I believe, on a particular scene in the film in which Kipling is represented by an actor playing the figure of Rudyard Kipling, the colonial writer.

I wish to address the significance of this event, the appearance of Kipling as a visual icon in the film Gunga Din, because of its implications concerning the simulacral relationship between Kipling the writer and Kipling the Hollywood representation. According to Philip Leibfred, "[t]he Kipling family objected to the scene wherein the author composes the title poem ["Gunga Din" from Barrack Room Ballads] at a battle site" ("Kipling on Film" 33).[16] The family's objection to the scene indicates a certain anxiety produced at the moment of the Kipling family's visual contact with Kipling's image, an anxiety which is, perhaps, a product of the family's concern about Kipling's intentions as a writer. If, indeed, it was Rudyard Kipling's intention to remain an invisible, objectifying "eye" -- i.e. to look at native life invisibly like "Kim with one eye laid against a knot-hole in the planking" (Kim 511) -- the film Gunga Din, by its very visual or iconographic representation of the writer, transgresses certain boundaries between self and other, between the invisible colonizer as spectator and the visible colonized as spectacle. Gunga Din provides a concrete example of the way a literary figure like Rudyard Kipling, perceived as an imperialist bard and an ethnographic "informant" by reviewers and critics of his works, undergoes his own process of (re)construction by the commodifying gaze of Hollywood.[17] We see in Gunga Din, in other words, the very process by which a writer, whose unity as "I" is always already threatened by the instability of its vision or of its "eye" in representations, becomes a fixed or metaphorized spectacle in Hollywood's act of appropriating Kipling's India and, at the same time, the writer as a colonial icon.

---

[16] In this vital scene from Gunga Din, furthermore, RKO tampered with the final product: in order to "block[] the figure of Reginald Sheffield, who portrayed Kipling" (Leibfred 33), RKO superimposed an image of a wagon on the figure of Kipling. Leibfred writes that both versions, "with and without the wagon [are] in circulation today" (33).

By the time of Kim's production in 1950, Kipling the imperialist writer had, like Tennyson's Ulysses, "become a name" already circulating in the constructions of late nineteenth-century reviewers and in the reconstructions of Hollywood's gaze. Consequently, the defensive actions against the filming of Kim taken by the Bureau of Motion Pictures and the Office of War Information in 1942 -- and Frantz Hoellering's reaction to Gunga Din (1939) cited in the footnote above -- suggest, in some ways, the hypocrisy of Hollywood's seemingly "liberalist" condemnation of pro-Empire writing and film. A 1950 review of the film Kim in Newsweek addressed the fact that the film

---

[17] Interestingly, Frantz Hoellering, who was another reviewer of RKO's Gunga Din, felt that the film was comparable to "German or . . . Italian . . . government-controlled fascist produc[tions]...[whose] only one plausible character . . --the others are inhuman dummies -- [is] Gunga Din, the dumb water-carrier" (Hoellering The Nation 1939). Hoellering's review, although it redeems the uncle-Tomish character of Gunga Din, points to another interesting role that Rudyard Kipling played as a colonial figure before the cultural screen of Hollywood. Hoellering associates Gunga Din, because it is a Kipling-influenced film, with fascism and inhumanism. His seemingly "liberalist" review, although unconsciously, alludes to Kipling's previous involvement in propaganda film, "namely an unfilmed . . . script" (French "Kipling and the Movies" 162) which Kipling wrote for the Empire Marketing Board in 1926. The irony in Kipling's 1926 involvement with the Empire Marketing Board is that "Kipling did not want to be publicly associated with the Board" (French 162). After all, according to George Orwell, Kipling "was *not* a Fascist . . . [and] was further from being one than the most humane or the most 'progressive' person is able to be nowadays" ("Rudyard" 124). However, it is obvious from Hoellering's review that despite Kipling's desire to be dissociated from Fascist propaganda, the writer still represents for some critics during the screening of Gunga Din a fascism which is associated with imperialism.

> was shelved at the suggestion of the OWI [Office of War Information] which had reason to fear that the Orient might be offended by the book's [Kim's] implication of white supremacy . . . [but that t]here is little offense in the story as the screenplay now stands. (Newsweek Dec.18th, 1950)

The anonymous Newsweek review assumes that India, once it has achieved Independence and has become a postcolonial nation, will no longer harbour hostile feelings toward its colonizers, and that representations of the British Empire after India's independence will no longer be offensive: white supremacy will no longer be an issue of contention. The danger of this kind of liberalism is evident in the comments made by Kim's screenwriter Helen Deutch who, in an article entitled "The 'Congo Kid' Herself Speaks Up" from The New York Times, wrote that she was

> an authority on far-away places with strange-sounding names . . . [; therefore,] [n]aturally, when M-G-M undertook its production of Kipling's "Kim," I was called in to help with this story of India in the days when the Czar was lurking dangerously near the Khyber Pass. Now I have a smattering of Hindustani to add to my Swahili, Bantu, Carib Indian . . . and several varieties of pidgin. (April 30, 1950)

Representing herself as a multilingual and protean Kim-like figure, "The Congo Kid" takes pride in her ability to transform herself through cultural and linguistic drag. It is hard to imagine, however, a screenplay producing "little offense" from a "Congo Kid" who claims to know the exotic world by virtue of her ability to collect identities and names, her practice of a popular cultural ethnography. In "English Classics for Cold War America: MGM's Kim

(1950), Ivanhoe (1952), and Julius Caesar (1953)" John H. Lenihan writes that Kim's "Screenwriter Helen Deutch sought to avoid racist or overtly imperialist connotations in depicting British rule: [quoting Deutch] 'This is too close to recent history and may lose the sympathy of the audience'" (44). The fact that Kim's screenwriter fears the loss of audience support for the film suggests that her condemnation of, perhaps Kipling's, "overtly imperialist connotations" has less to do with ethics than with economics. The greatest irony of such liberalist statements as Newsweek's and Deutch's is that Kipling had, by 1950, already become a reified image in Hollywood's colonial representations; consequently, MGM's waiting until after the war and until after India's independence from British rule to film Kim simply increased the marketability of the film and achieved very little in terms of an "ethical" representation of colonialism. In a review of Kim from The Saturday Review, Evelyn Gerstein expresses a similar liberalist sentiment. She writes that the film is "a resplendent version of the white man's burden in the Orient, [a] relic of an outmoded politic" (The Saturday Review December 16, 1950). What is particularly interesting in Gerstein's comment is that she recreates the rhetoric of the Raj with her reference to "the white man's burden," an ideological emblem of the British Empire's modernizing or civilizing mission and its utilitarian liberalism [illegible] yet at the same time points to the liberalism that she believes to have replaced the "politic" of the British Raj with her reference to the rhetoric's outmodedness. Instead of a racism contained by the

Manichean logic of colonialism, therefore, we have in various reviews of *Kim* (1950) examples of *post*colonial racism, racism whose logic became slowly, but dangerously, encoded in a commodification of reconstructed images of both Kipling and his literary representations.

The 1950 *Newsweek* review of *Kim* cited above repeats many of the same sentiments of Kipling's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century critics and reviewers:

> "Kim," with its bazaars and crowded landscapes and Himalayan horizons, is scenically extremely gratifying, with something of the same armchair, exotic escapism that currently distinguishes M-G-M's "King Solomon's Mines." (*Newsweek* Dec.18, 1950)[15]

What is most intriguing about this review is its reference to "armchair, exotic escapism" which suggests, repeating the views of Kipling's contemporaries, *Kim*'s association both with ethnography (i.e. the "armchair" as the locus for reading about the East and, therefore, the means for increased understanding of the East) and with the genre of "male romance" (i.e. "exotic escapism"). In this review, furthermore, we see how Kipling's panoramic view of India is fetishized as an authentic representation of the Indian landscape. A review of *Kim* in *Time* magazine situates Kipling, the novel, and the film in the late nineteenth-century genre of "male romance," while simultaneously fetishizing the adventurism of both the literary and filmic texts:

---

[15] The *Newsweek* review is referring, of course, to a filmic adaptation of Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, another example of the "male romance" genre whose screenplay, like *Kim*'s, was written by Helen Deutch.

> *Kim* (M-G-M), a lushly Technicolored version of the Rudyard Kipling adventure novel, will tempt small boys to trade in their Hopalong Cassidy duds for a turban, a walnut-stained complexion and a British Secret Service mission in the Empire's wild East of 1885. (*Time* Dec.11, 1950)

Time's review, appealing to the American popular imagination by using "the wild West" as a universal trope for adventurism, clearly engages in a marketing of Kipling's images to a particularly American (and white) audience of the 1950s. In the review from *Time*, Kim's cross-cultural dressing, symbolized by the "turban," is easily exchanged for the cowboy costume of Hopalong Cassidy.[13] In all of these reviews of the film *Kim*, some form of colonial racism remains lodged in the film's critical reception: in the *Newsweek* review Kipling's colonial authority is maintained and fetishized; in *The Saturday Review* Kipling's India is evoked in order to appeal to the (white) audience's sense of liberalism; in *Time* magazine Kipling and his representations of life in India become commodified images to be marketed in America as "the Empire's wild East of 1885."

It is with this recognition of postcolonial racism as it is embedded in popular cultural representations, that I intend to take up the question of Kipling's images and his own fetishized identity as a colonizer in Hollywood productions like Kim (1950). I am not so much concerned with defining the popular imagination, which I believe to be a dubious and totalizing category to begin with, but rather I am intent on exploring the processes by which racist colonial images and representations undergo various translations and transformations in the imaginations, collective or personal, of different audiences, readers, and spectators. David Harvey in The Condition of Postmodernity, referring to the theorist Charles Jencks (1984), writes that

---

[13] In his book *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*, Robert F. Berkhofer addresses the literary genre of the American Western, what came to be popularized later as the cowboy and Indian movies of Hollywood: "What distinguishes a Western from other types of adventure literature is the setting and the costumes...and its timing in the history of westward expansion of White society" (97). The irony of *Time*'s review is that certain defining characteristics of the American genre of "the wild west" are easily replaced by Kiplingesque images. The reviewer, I think, realizes that *Kim*'s appeal lies in its sharing with American popular culture the mythos of civilization meeting savagery along the frontier, whether that frontier is the West or the Northwestern Khyber Pass.

> [w]e all of us, says Jencks, carry around with us a musée imaginaire in our minds, drawn from experience (often touristic) of other places, and knowledge culled from films, television, exhibitions, travel brochures, popular magazines, etc. (87)

Harvey focuses on Jencks' idea of the "musée imaginaire" in order to emphasize the spatialization, or "geography of differentiated tastes and cultures [which] is turned into a pot-pourri of internationalism" (The Condition 87). When we take into account the ways in which India, its natives, and the Anglo-Indian are constructed by the colonial gaze, whether Hollywood's or Kipling's, we seen that the spatializing process of "reterritorializing" India in terms of colonial signification is not simply a practice of ethnographic realism that attempts to represent a settled community or a collective group.

In "Empire, Identity and Place: Masculinities in Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan" Griselda Pollock addresses this process of internationalization in terms of Africa's cultural globalization and suggests that "a total worlding and appropriation of Africa in cinematic representation [has occurred] for the West's imaginary as its field of adventure and self discovery" (Me Jane: Masculinity, Movies and Men 130).[23] We see this process of internationalization, for example, in Hollywood's representations of Kipling and his works whereby Kipling's literary images of India are transformed into visual icons in order to translate the East into meaningful metaphors for American audiences of film. Fetishized images undergo a process of exchange and replacement depending on the tastes of the audience: for example, the spectacularized Wild West of Hopalong cowboy is easily exchanged for Kim's British nineteenth-century adventurism in the genre of the "male romance." India becomes, through Hollywood's process of iconographically "worlding" India, a "pot-pourri" of colonial images in the Social Imaginary, and it is this cultural gaze or popular imagination that informs the subjective experiences and imaginations of readers and spectators. Harvey emphasizes that these subjective experiences are "mental spaces and maps" (The Condition 203) which are produced not only within the confines of an audience's isolated encounter with texts like Kim (1901 and 1950), whether we are speaking of an academic or a popular audience, but within a larger discursive field of colonial representations in the symbolic.[21] What is called the popular in both literature and film *informs* an audience's "perception, imagination, fiction, and fantasy" (Harvey The Condition 203) regardless of the reader's or spectator's class, race, or gender while, at the same time, these categories of difference effect how the popular is *read*. Consequently, the danger of Hollywood's filmic translation of Kipling's Kim (1901) does not lie in, as most academics dealing with Kipling and film have pointed out, the film's thematic or structural infidelity to the novel, but rather in what the film has "'naturalized' through the assignment of common-sense everyday meanings" (Harvey The Condition 203), meanings captured in fetishized images of the native and his life which have been uncritically translated into film and which have informed so-called 'popular' and academic audiences alike.[22]

---

[23] Both Harvey and Pollock describe, I think, a spatializing process similar to nineteenth-century Orientalist transformations of experience or perception into forms of knowledge for the purposes of the white self's fashioning, although this process of "internationalization" or "worlding" is much more complicated when we consider multiple and 'othered' audiences in a postmodern world of pastiche and parody.

---

[21] There is no way of isolating a "popular" imagination in this thesis. This difficulty is particularly evident when we consider, for example, the fact that Kipling's writings belonged to a wide range of Orientalist practices during the end of the nineteenth century (e.g. Departmental Ditties). We are aware of Kipling's fascination with the music-hall sub-culture, for example, from his autobiography in which he writes, "My rooms were small . . . but from my desk I could look out of my window through the fan-light of Gatti's Music-Hall entrance. . .It was here . . . that I listened to the observed and compelling songs of the Lion and Mammoth Comiques, and the shriller strains . . . of the Bessies and Bellas, whom I could hear arguing from beneath my window . . . as they sped from Hall to Hall"(Something of Myself 79-81). Kipling is, obviously, aware of the influence "popular culture" had on his writing; however, what is fascinating is the invisible and almost ethnographic position he assumes in his encounter with the music-hall. Colin MacInnes writes: "Of the[] maverick explorers of the music-hall sub-culture, it is certain Rudyard Kipling was one . . . [and] as to style, when it comes to the 'popular' poems, in which he [Kipling] writes what purports to be proletarian speech, there are lines that are almost interchangeable with those of music-hall ditties" (The Age of Kipling, "Kipling and the Music Halls" 59). Therefore, Kipling's role as a cultural producer--and this role was 'ambivalent' given Kipling's position as a consumer of a larger Orientalist discourse into which he wrote from an ethnographical position--is complicated by the fact that he cannot be easily categorized as either an elite/high or a popular writer.

Hollywood's appropriative process of colonial signification, however, is even more complicated than the nineteenth-century Orientalist's because not only is it dependent on the myth of unity, accuracy, and authority in Kipling's gaze, but it must also construct and maintain the unity, accuracy, and authority of the camera's gaze. At a double remove from its original colonial source, Hollywood's reconstructions of the Raj are dependent on, to an extent, the colonial "star"-status of a figure like Kipling in order to maintain the validity and coherence of its own gaze. Anne Friedberg writes that

> [t]he fascination with a film star is not a fascination with a single signified person...or with a single signifier... but with an entire system of signifiers and a code -- the commercialized erotic system that fits, what Jean Baudrillard has called the 'metaphor of fetishism.' ("A Denial of Difference: Theories of Cinematic Identification" 42-43)

Although I am hardly suggesting that a few representational appearances of actors playing the colonial figure of Rudyard Kipling in films -- films like Gunga Din (1939) and The Man Who Would Be King (1975) -- secure, in any way, the "star"-status of Kipling in film, I *am* arguing that Kipling's fetishized image as a colonial novelist and poet has become a vital link between nineteenth-century constructions of the colonial gaze and the twentieth-century constructions of the camera's gaze. We see in Hollywood's representations of Kipling's Kim, and in nineteenth-century critical reviews of Kipling's work for that matter, a certain spectacular *performance* of colonial identity. Evelyn Gerstein writes in her review of Kim in The Saturday Review that

---

[22] In "All About a Boy: Kipling's Novel, MGM's Film" William Blackburn writes that the director of Kim (1950), Victor "Seville[,] could have learned much by studying the careful design of Kipling's novel" (105). Blackburn concludes with, "Seville's film falls short...of Kipling's novel" (110).

> "Kim" -- though apparently made for the most part in India, with the combined collaboration of the Magarajahs of Jaipur and Bundi, who loaned dancing girls, elephants, and the use of their realms -- never quite convinces one of its authenticity . . .[and] the film too often gives the impression that it might as easily have originated in Hollywood, with its red and gold uniforms as immaculate as anything newly rented from Brooks, and the rude intrusions of unnaturally green studio trees and pop-planted hummock's of grass unduly luminous in closeups...[:t]here are moments, however, when Kipling's India asserts itself. (The Saturday Review Dec.16, 1950)

Kipling's India, in Gerstein's review, is associated with all that is "authentic" about the land and its peoples which indicates the reviewer's belief in the authority of Kipling's ethnographic realism. Gerstein fails to realize the full implications of Kipling's engagement in Orientalism and in the "male romance" genre that places Kim in a tradition of European self-fashioning through and as spectacle. Satya P. Mohanty writes that "the ritualization of colonial culture, the adoption and adaptation of the native North Indian durbar -- or royal display -- by colonial British administrators, was an essentially new feature in the late nineteenth century" ("Kipling and the Culture of Colonial Rule" 339). The 'durbar' is, if we consider the film Kim's pageantry, an essential element of representing India and Kipling as spectacle. However, given Mohanty's comment, it is important to understand that this act of representing the British Empire's ostentatious presence in India is not exclusively a twentieth-century Hollywood practice.

In other words, the excessiveness and tackiness of Hollywood's representations of India are direct offshoots of Kipling's Orientalist practices which allowed him to construct the imaginary coherence of the white, male, heterosexual, academic self by a process of collecting and representing images of the British in India: in Kipling's Kim we see how the performance of the self as a colonial identity depends on the instant commodification of images of the other as reified images of the self.

It is this precession of simulacra, the perpetual "deterritorialization" and "reterritorialization," never an authentic "territorialization," of self and other (using Deleuze and Guattari's terms), that confirms Baudrillard's idea that

> Abstraction today is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror or the concept: Simulation is no longer that of the territory, a referential being or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. (Simulations 2)

Baudrillard is not denying that discursive reality exists, that real sociocultural interactions have contributed to a construction of the self over time, but rather that the power and authority of the colonial sign as it has undergone various significatory processes "is nothing more than operational" (Simulations 3). Baudrillard is, in a sense, reformulating the way we theoretically conceive of the real (i.e. of the subject/self) by suggesting that the power of the Western Sign, as a source of colonial authority, is only ambivalently maintained in the symbolic order where the meaning of signs is contained. Baudrillard's theory of simulacra can be applied to Hollywood's appropriation of Kipling because it addresses the proliferation of colonial signs that has resulted from the transformation of Kipling's linguistic codes into iconographic codes. In his essay "Requiem for the Media," Baudrillard writes that

> in the simulational model of communication...[w]hat really circulates is information, a semantic content that is assumed to be legible and univocal...[b]ut as soon as one posits ambivalent relations, it all collapses. (Video Culture 136)

Baudrillard's ideas concerning the circulation of information are important because they address both the way Kipling has been influenced by a group fantasy of colonial authority, and the way he has, in turn, influenced the construction of Hollywood's gaze and of the spectator's "musee imaginaire." Victor Burgin addresses this idea of the circulation of information within the "musee imaginaire" in terms of "the way we may 'remember' a film we never saw except through such things as reviews, posters, trailers, and television clips, synopses, illustrated books and so on" ("Visualizing Theory" Visualizing Theory 455). All of these "mental spaces and maps" (Harvey The Condition 203), these films of memory, which influence our identifications with images can be interpreted in terms of Baudrillard's theory of "abstraction" because the formation of a mental map is dependent not on authentic images of a culture, but on the constructedness of a culture based on a wide range of discursive practices in literature, magazines, films, tourist brochures etc. Baudrillard's "simulational model of communication" suggests that the circulation of information is *not* the circulation of truth, especially because what is supposedly being communicated is so easily disrupted by the ambivalent relations -- or, in the Lacanian model, by the ambivalent identifications -- of Kim's spectators.

Cinema as Apparatus and the Othered Spectator: Exploring the Multiple Look as a Manifestation of the Gaze

In his monumental essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin addresses the ways in which changes in artistic representation, specifically the change from theatre and the stage to cinema and its medium of the screen, de-mystify what audiences of the past have considered "sacred." When an audience encounters a filmic image, Benjamin suggests, the "aura" once produced from the audience's immediate encounter with a stage actor's presence in person "has left the realm of . . . 'beautiful semblance'" (37) or mimesis. Benjamin argues that the formal changes in representation that have accompanied specific historical changes in humanity's mode of existence have also resulted in a "greatly increased mass of participants [that] has produced a new mode of participation" (44). The public-eye of theatre that once encountered the full body of the actor in person is now guided or mediated by the camera-eye:

> Guided by the cameraman, the camera continually changes its position with respect to the performance...[and] [t]he audience's identification with the actor is really an identification with the camera[;] [c]onsequently the audience takes the position of the camera. (Benjamin 36)

Benjamin makes a very important observation in suggesting that a film's audience assumes, in many ways, a voyeuristic position in relation to the camera because of its identification with the camera-eye.[23] Technology, in other words, has not only made artistic representations more accessible to a larger public, but it has also contributed to the theoretical development of the spectator's role in encountering cultural productions. More specifically, Benjamin's essay emphasizes the importance of the spectatorial ego, the development of subjectivity by which the individual becomes aware of his identity as an audience member. As a spectator, the subject of film participates in the spectacle before him by identifying with the camera's look. Technology, therefore, has increased the level of activity that an audience experiences in its encounter with artistic representations. Assuming the position of voyeur, the public has entered a new mode of participation with the object of its view. However, Benjamin suggests that the audience still runs the risk of becoming passive to the conditions of its experience of looking which are embedded in a complicated politics of representation: "the public [is] in the position of the critic, . . . [t]he public is an examiner, but an absent-minded one" (45). At the end of the preceding statement, Benjamin suggests that a spectator's encounter with film runs the risk of inducing passivity in an individual who does not pay attention to the ways in which the camera positions both the spectator and the images on-screen, who does not bear in mind his own process of identification with the camera-eye. Although Benjamin's essay introduces many fundamental ideas concerning the spectator's look in relation to its surroundings, his assumption that the spectator's visual identification with the film's representations automatically places the spectator in the position of the camera overlooks two very important issues. Benjamin explores neither the multiplicity of identifications that accompany "[t]he greatly increased mass of participants" (44), nor the very reasons an audience identifies with the camera's fetishized, as opposed to "sacred" or full-bodied, image of the actor in the first place.

---

[23] Problematically, of course, Benjamin always refers to the audience both in the collective and in the singular in his essay.

Christian Metz in The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and Cinema writes that "[a]t the cinema, it is always the other who is on the screen; as for me, I am there to look at him" (42). Metz's ideas about the importance of the spectatorial ego agree with Benjamin's ideas concerning the spatial distance between the audience and the camera's representations. Like Benjamin, Metz focuses on the notion that cinema is an imaginary space of spectacle constructed by the camera-eye, whereas

> the theatre, the opera and other spectacles of the same type...differ[] from the cinema...[in that] they do not consist of *images*, [and] the perceptions they offer to the eye and ear are inscribed in a true space (not a photographed one). (The Imaginary 43)

However, unlike Benjamin, Metz accounts for the libidinal drive behind a spectator's psychic identification with the screen image. What Metz emphasizes about cinema is the spatial distance between the spectator's look off-screen and the "photographed" object of his look on-screen, the distance between the spectator's perceptual organ and the cinematic spectacle. The spectator's identification with the object of his look, therefore, is dependent on an image that is already constructed by the camera-eye. Metz writes, developing the theories of Jacques Lacan, that "[t]he practice of the cinema is only possible through the perceptual passions: the desire to see [which is the] scopic drive, scopophilia, voyeurism" (The Imaginary 58). Scopophilia is the spectator's desire to complete his self-image through the act of looking erotically at an objectified image on the screen which is a constructed metaphor that is always at a distance from the spectator's body, always elsewhere and external to the voyeur (Metz 59-60). In Questions of Cinema Stephen Heath taking a slightly more technical perspective, supports Metz's Lacanian ideas concerning the imaginary space of cinema in suggesting that the moving picture is "the guarantee of its [the photograph's] vision in a constant -- industrial -- production of meanings" (26), a "vision which brings with it the concern to sustain the camera as eye . . . an eye free from the body" (32). Heath isolates, I think, the importance of the "eye" as a metonymic replacement of the "I" in film spectatorship and draws attention to the ways in which the spectator -- as in Benjamin, in both the singular and collective -- identifies with the camera's gaze in his act of looking and, in turn, this identification, guided by "the camera as eye," produces meaning. Heath, like Metz, addresses the issue of the spectacle offered by cinema to the viewer, a spectacle of images capable of constructing meaning for the spectator:

> Resting on an industrializable technological base, cinema, different to theatre, offers the possibility of an industry of spectacle . . . [which is] evidently crucial with its introduction of the hold of meaning and vision and representation into, as a fact of, the industry itself. (Questions 228)

Heath realizes that cinema, as an industry producing images, specifies or locates "the individual as subject . . . [in] [t]he imaginary--the stand-in, the sutured coherence, the fiction of anticipated totality" (Heath 15). Like the fiction of unity of Kipling's colonial "eye" discussed above, the spectator's "eye" in viewing a film also demands suturing, "'suture' refer[ing] to the relation of the individual as subject to the chain of its discourse where it figures missing in the guise of a stand-in" (Heath 52). Here Heath is referring to Lacan's idea of méconnaissance, the subject's or spectator's

> ever-growing dispossession of that being of his . . . by recognizing that this being has never been anything more than his construct in the imaginary and that . . . in this labour which he undertakes to reconstruct *for another*, he rediscovers the fundamental alienation that made him construct it *like another*. (Lacan, Écrits "The Function and Field of Speech and Language" 42).

Lacan, in this passage, points to the anxiety that is produced in the subject-spectator after the rediscovery of his likeness to the other in the process of psychic identification with the camera's gaze. The spectacle or objectified image which the gaze of the camera constructs is, according to Heath, the "missing [figure] in the guise of a stand-in" (Heath 52) of the self, an object misrecognized for the self which produces, first, anxiety and, then, pleasure by its completion of the lack in the subject-spectator. This process of scopophilic identification with the other on the screen produces, therefore, the very desire for the object or for the other of the self.

In Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan Through Popular Culture, Slavoj Zizek writes that "drives are by definition 'partial,' they are always tied to specific parts of the body's surface...which... result from the signifying parceling of the body" (21). It is, for both the Orientalist discussed above and the spectator of film, the "eye" that functions as that part of the body which derives pleasure from its encounter with an objectified image. The source of the drive behind scopophilia in the libidinal economy of looking and being looked at, however, is not so much the eye itself, but rather the distance between the eye and its object, between the metonymic replacement of the "I" and the filmic image as its Other. Scopophilia, therefore, is the desire produced by the partial drives of voyeurism-exhibitionism and sado-masochism, drives that compel subject-viewers of film to become spectators desiring a suturing of the distance between the I and its Other. Within the economy of this desire, the spectator whose psyche is constructed both by the cinematic apparatus and by drives, identifies with the camera "eye" and is, in turn, positioned by the film.

Clearly, both Metz and Heath suggest that the cinematic subject/spectator's perception of images is highly dependent on the cinema as an apparatus or as an ideological image-producing machine. Louis Althusser in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" writes that

> individuals are always-already interpellated by ideology as subjects, which necessarily leads us to one last proposition: individuals are always-already subjects. Hence individuals are "abstract" with respect to the subjects which they always-already are. (246)

The spectator of film is, using Althusser's terminology, "interpellated" as a subject by the discourse of cinema and is always-already, in the words of Heath, "[t]he spectator . . .

produced by the film as subject in process, in the process of demonstration of the film" (Questions 169). According to Heath,

> [c]inema, with its screen, its frames, its binding memory, is perhaps *the image* machine...because it holds the subject -- on screen, in frame --in the exact turning of symbolic and suture, negativity and coherence, flow and image. (Questions 15)

Heath's emphasis on the ways in which cinema's production of images locates or positions the subject of film points to the process of signification and identification that Althusser's "interpellated" subject must also undergo.[24] Although Heath recognizes the ways in which classic cinematic narratives construct ideal viewers, however, I find his cinema-as-apparatus approach problematic because I do not believe that the object of every spectator's identification is undeniably the narrativized object of the camera-eye. The idea of the spectator's suturing by the film's representations, by its narrative structure, or by the context of viewing the film leaves many questions about spectatorship unanswered. I find it hard to believe, for example, that the cinema as an image-producing machine or ideological institution can position the spectator as unproblematically as Metz and Heath suggest. Desire is not a simple matter when we consider multiple spectators and their individual looks within the varying contexts of the cultural screen. As Judith

---

[24] Althusser writes in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" that "The duplicate mirror-structure of ideology ensures simultaneously: . . . the interpellation of 'individuals' as subjects . . .[and] their subjection to the Subject" (248). Similar to Lacan, Althusser suggests that the subject is, in fact, split and that his process of identification with objects is founded on an act of misrecognition. Ideology, therefore, is not some kind of monolithic force that constructs subjects, but is rather the dynamic interaction between the subject (i.e. his imaginary construction of the Self) and the reality that exists external to him.

Mayne suggests, "texts may inspire unconscious responses, but they don't 'have' an unconscious, only people do" (Cinema and Spectatorship 109).

Both Christian Metz and Stephen Heath introduce fundamental Lacanian concepts to the act of looking in cinematic representations and spectatorship; however, both theorists simply mention and do not address, as do many feminist film theorists, the full implications of cinema as an enunciative discourse for the othered spectator. Metz and Heath have, in their theories, produced a universal spectator whose identification is based not only on the idea of a lack in the scopophilic economy of desire, but whose object of identification is automatically the camera-eye's construction of images.[25] In her important contributions to early feminist film theory, Laura Mulvey writes in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" that

> the woman displayed [as filmic image] has functioned on two levels: as erotic object for the characters within the screen story, and as erotic object for the spectator within the auditorium, with shifting tension between the looks on either side of the screen. (62)

Mulvey addresses the ways in which women as representations in film and as spectators have been positioned by Hollywood films of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Mulvey also introduces to film theory the problems of conceiving of the spectator as universally male:

---

[25] Heath, for example, writes that "[t]he subject . . . is . . . the result of a structure of difference, of the symbolic order, and that result indexes a lack -- the division -- which is the constant 'drama of the subject in language,' the inscription of desire and the elaboration of an imaginary order of wholeness, a set of images in which the ego seeks resolution as totality . . . [through] projection, [a] function of the imaginary" (Questions 118).

> In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female...[so] that...the spectator [is] in direct scopophilic contact with the female form displayed for his enjoyment...[and is also] fascinated with the image of his like set in an illusion of natural space ("Visual Pleasure" 62-63)

Although Mulvey exposes the distinction made in classical Hollywood films between active/male spectator and passive/female object of the gaze, her discussion does not concentrate on the development of the othered viewer's spectatorial ego. Clearly more important to the focus of this thesis is Mulvey's reference to the tension between looks on- and off- screen which significantly contributes to the field of spectator analysis. Mulvey reminds us that

> The voyeuristic-scopophilic look that is a crucial part of traditional filmic pleasure can itself be broken down . . . [into] three different looks associated with cinema: that of the camera . . . , that of the audience as it watches . . ., and that of the characters at each other within the screen illusion. ("Visual Pleasure" 68)

Mulvey underscores the politics behind the look of the spectator in his encounter with filmic images by suggesting that the spectatorial ego does not develop in isolation: that, in fact, various looks intersect in film-viewing that contribute to the spectator's voyeuristic scopophilia.

In her rejoinder essay to "Visual Pleasure," "Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' inspired by Duel in the Sun," Mulvey attempts to read female, as opposed to male, spectatorship. Her analysis of female psychic identification, however, is highly dependent on the narrative constructions of gendered relationships in the film Duel in the Sun -- on "the pleasure on offer" (70) by the film -- which makes her discussion less concerned with the female spectator's identification as an othered identity than with the film's ideal viewer and "masculine 'point of view'" (70). Consequently, in Mulvey's account of female spectatorship, the camera maintains a "masculinized" point of view with which the female spectator can identify only if she "accept[s] 'masculinization' while watching action movies with a male hero . . . [because] Hollywood genre films [are] structured around masculine pleasure ("Afterthoughts on..." 70-71). Mulvey's account of sexual difference in cinema raises a crucial ambivalence about a spectator's process of identification with the point of view offered by the film and, therefore, problematizes the issue of audience reception. For Mulvey, there is no way of determining whether a female viewer is "secretly, unconsciously almost, enjoying the freedom of action and control over the diegetic world that identification with a hero provides" ("Afterthoughts on..." 70). Although in Mulvey's discussion of spectatorship the female viewer's object of identification cannot be easily located by the cinematic apparatus and the gaze that the camera-eye constructs for the ideal viewer, she nevertheless maintains a sense of film as an ideological apparatus that positions the female viewer only in relation to the film's masculinized point of view. The female spectator in Mulvey's account of scopophilia automatically finds her ego-ideal in the hero's or the camera's perspective in her identification with the text.

Joan Copjec suggests that in textual analyses of traditional narrative film which emphasize point of view, women can only exist as the object of the gaze, as the lack that completes the Self (Althusser), or as the Other of the self (Lacan). Copjec writes that

> the point of view and the structures of voyeurism, exhibition, identification which follow from it are always, repeatedly, male. Women, therefore, can not look, can not be represented -- as women. ("Indian Song/Son nom de Venise dans Calcutta desert: The Compulsion to Repeat" 233)

According to the libidinal economy of visual identification, in order for women to assume the position of the implied or ideal viewer, especially in cinema-as-apparatus theories, they must identify with the camera-eye which manipulates objectified images of women. As Mary Ann Doane argues, "The woman . . . as spectator . . . must look, as if she were a man with the phallic power of the gaze, in order to be that woman [as a character in the film]" ("Caught and Rebecca: The Inscription of Femininity as Absence" 199). Therefore, women must derive pleasure from the act of looking at themselves and at other women as objects of the gaze, an identification that is clearly masochistic. It is clear in these feminist accounts of spectatorship, therefore, that in order for women to become voyeurs or spectators of film they must identify with the objectified image -- almost always the eroticized female -- from a masochistic position, at least in terms of visual pleasure.

There are, however, certain problems with these theories that emphasize the positioning of the spectator by the film as a text or as a projection of the cultural screen. Why, for example, must women's pleasure be referred to in terms of secrecy or masochism which both maintain that women can only become active spectators or voyeurs if they assume a deviant, 'masculinized' position of sadistic control? What remains unanswered by these theories is the issue of the othered spectator's critical reception of film, the ways in which women resist the ideological structuring of classical Hollywood cinema by their often ambivalent identifications with filmic texts. The female spectator, like the universal spectator in Metz's and Heath's theories, cannot always be located in a single position of determinable identification. The female spectator's look is not only multiple (e.g. in terms of race, sexuality, and class), but her identification with an objectified image fails to be solely a product of the ways a film constructs her according to the cultural screen or Social Imaginary. It is important, therefore, to question the very drive behind scopophilia or behind the "pleasure in using another person as an object of sexual stimulation through sight" ("Visual Pleasure" 61) in order to examine the critical reception of cinema by othered spectators. One must not ignore, I think, the question of multiple identifications generated by the ambivalence of psychic identification at the point of visual contact with an objectified image. A spectator's identification often oscillates between subject and object positions which are not necessarily dependent on gendered distinctions between activity and passivity. This oscillating process of the spectator's identification needs to be explored further in order to show how spectatorship often resists closure along the gendered and racial boundaries structured by the film as a text.

Regardless of its shortcomings, feminist film theory's focus on female spectatorship has prompted critical discussion concerning traditional film theory's avoidance of the problems facing othered spectators and their identifications with filmic representations. Although theorists like Mulvey have offered ways of looking that are confined solely to textual positionings of the othered spectator, feminist film theory has, in general, confronted traditional film studies with the importance of "address[ing] the problems of spectatorship in a post-Freudian sexual/social economy of sadomasochism" (Kristina Straub, "Reconstructing the Gaze: Voyeurism in Richardson's Pamela" 71), often questioning the universalized basis of desire. Furthermore, feminist film theory has forced us to acknowledge the complexity of Mulvey's three-way cinematic look, the ambivalence of the individual spectator's desire, which has opened up the possibility of multiple, as opposed to single, psychic identifications in cinematic audiences.

Feminist film theorists point to, although they do not directly theorize, the flip-side of passive and active scopophilia which Robert Young, in Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race, addresses in terms of "desire['s] . . . antithesis, repulsion" (169). Young refers to Deleuze and Guattari's idea of group fantasy, an idea that does not fall under the Oedipal economy of conceiving of desire as lack, and posits that "Desire is a social rather than an individual product" (168); therefore, repulsion as desire's antithesis is also a social product. This idea of a socially produced repulsion in the form of racism is clear in Frantz Fanon's Black Skin White Masks in which the black man's desire is described as a suffering under the social conditions of racism:

> I begin to suffer from not being a white man to the degree that the white man imposes discrimination on me, makes me a colonized native, robs me of all worth, all individuality. (Black Skin 98)

Robbed of all individuality and, therefore, prevented from seeking coherence as a spectator of filmic images through a process of identification with an objectified Other, Fanon can only "desire" in terms of desire's antithesis, repulsion, which manifests itself in Fanon's suffering. This experience of suffering produces a complicated libidinal economy in which *desire*, in fact, translates as *repulsion* for the colonized person. For Fanon, more specifically, the manifestation of this repulsion is the suffering that he experiences at the expense of being prescribed as the Other of the the white, male self, of being objectified by the white, male spectator. Interestingly, the desire-repulsion manifested in suffering that Fanon describes in the passage above is a reaction to racism and, therefore, is a social product and not simply a process of the Unconscious.

Conceiving of desire-repulsion as a social product and not as an individual process of coming to terms with the social Imaginary complicates the view of cinema as a despotic ideological apparatus that alone positions or 'interpellates' the viewer as a spectator desiring narcissistic completion in his act of looking.[26] It is clear that the racially othered spectator watches a film very differently than the ideal viewer theorized by Metz and Heath because a very different libidinal economy arises when the spectator experiences repulsion from his objectification within the field of vision. In fact, the racialized subject of film could be called a spectacularized spectator who, like Fanon, cannot escape his objectification by the cultural gaze within the Social Imaginary. Instead of seeking coherence in his Other, the spectacularized spectator experiences suffering in his encounter with images projected onto the cultural screen of cinema. Experiencing repulsion at what he believes to be his own image projected on-screen, the racially othered viewer fails to be constructed as a voyeur whose scopophilic drive is contained within the apparatus of cinema. When, for example, Fanon writes in The Wretched of the Earth that "the emotional sensitivity of the native is kept on the surface of his skin like an open sore . . . and the psyche shrinks back, obliterates itself" (56), it is obvious that he is not describing desire as it is experienced by the voyeur-spectator. If, indeed, the experience of desire for Fanon's black man is the sensation of suffering that accompanies his objectification within the Social Imaginary, the native's psyche or spectatorial ego fails to exist -- it "obliterates itself" -- when the native makes

---

[26] Heath writes that "What 'subject' designates is not a unity, not even a unity of division, but a construction and a process, a heterogeneity, an intersection. Lacan's version of the causation of the subject and the very introduction of suture are indicative here: the subject is minus one, the real of castration; plus one, the resolution of that real in the imaginary; a movement in the symbolic..." (106). Heath's Lacanian metaphors of

---

spectatorship indicate that the Other in film is the image or representation as object of the spectator's gaze, an object that belongs to the discourse of the film. Because this object, or Other in Lacan's terms, belongs to the film's dominating discursive formation (i.e narration), the subject of film becomes an active spectator only after being positioned or structured by the film (i.e. by its preconstruction, construction, and progress) and attempts to find completion or unity -- however impossible this attempt might be -- within the restrictions of the point of view offered by the camera itself.

contact with his own image as the prescribed Other of the white, male self. The objectification of Fanon's black man in the Social Imaginary is the result, Fanon argues, of a

> collective catharsis . . . an outlet through which the forces accumulated in the form of aggression can be released . . . [in the form of] Tarzan stories, the saga of twelve year-old explorers, the adventures of Mickey Mouse, and all those "comic books" [which] serve actually as a release for collective aggression. (Black Skin White Masks 145-146)

Fanon addresses the aggression which accompanies the colonizer's act of constructing images of the black man or the native as the Other of the self. The colonizer, by desiring a narcissistic sense of completion in the act of self-representation in language, engages in "the 'partial drives' of scoptophilia [sic], [and] sadomasochism" (Lacan, "Aggressivity in Psychoanalysis" Écrits 25) which, Fanon argues, are released in the violence of a "collective catharsis" on the (social) body of the objectified black man. It is from a bodily, i.e. epidermal, position of inscription that Fanon's black man looks at an objectified image and it is clear, if we were to apply Fanon's insights to the issue of cinematic spectatorship, that Fanon's spectator of film, as a racialized subject, not only "identifies" with an objectified image on-screen from a phobic position off-screen, but "identifies" on the basis of an epidermal objectification which he shares with that image.[27] The black man becomes, therefore, his own spectacle off-screen, but unlike the colonizer, the black man suffers not from his (mis)recognition of the Other for the self, but rather from a recognition of his own prescribed construction by the colonizer on- and off-screen. What Fanon describes as the native's "open sore" is both the transgressive surfacing of the native's racial objectification in the symbolic structures of his socialization, and the bodily inscription of the native's own phobia of his Otherness kept within bounds by suffering. A product of repulsion, the native is prevented from achieving voyeuristic coherence as an "I": his "psyche . . . obliterates itself" because of the metonymic, i.e. epidermal, racialization of his body not only by the collective "eye," the group fantasy of the white colonizer, but also by his own "eye" that encounters itself phobically. Therefore, Fanon's black man does not experience desire in any conventional sense, but experiences a denial of the Self (using Althusseur's term). The black man is denied the process of identifying with surrounding object-choices, of misrecognizing the Other for the self, because his ego-ideal, or rather a visual self-image that is anything but ideal, is already chosen for him by the colonizer.

---

[27] Fanon writes in Black Skin White Masks that "If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process: --primarily, economic; --subsequently, the internalization--or, better, the epidermalization--of his inferiority" (11).

Julia Kristeva addresses this idea of desire's antithesis in terms of abjection in Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection:

> there are lives not sustained by *desire*, as is always for objects. Such lives are based on *exclusion*. They are clearly distinguishable from those understood as neurotic or psychotic, articulated by negation and its modalities, transgression, denial, and repudiation. (6)

Kristeva problematizes the issue of desire in her discussion of abjected identities. What appeals to the imaginary of the abjected subject is not an object of desire, but rather an other as a repugnant alter ego.[28] For those who experience abjection, representation of desire is an impossibility that prevents, what Stephen Heath calls, a suturing of the self in a junction of the imaginary (i.e. the viewer) and the symbolic (i.e. the view) which is offered by the narrative structure of film.[29] Unlike Heath, Kristeva emphasizes that abjection is not about a discourse or narrative of desire, but is rather about sensation and denial:

> The vision of the ab-ject is, by definition, the sign of an impossible ob-ject. . . A fantasy . . . which prevents images from crystallizing as images of desire and/or nightmare and causes them to break out into sensation (suffering) and denial (horror), into a blasting of sight and sound (fire, uproar). (Powers 154)

It is impossible, therefore, for the abjected viewer to become the quintessential subject-spectator of film because a viewer of film who experiences abjection does not desire an Other to complete the self in a narcissistic fantasy of suture. Instead, the abjected viewer disrupts any notion of an identity founded on suture because she experiences phobic sensations, and not scopophilic desire, in her encounter with a filmic image.

---

[28] In Powers of Horror Kristeva addresses the abject in terms of a pleasure in self-abasement, and in terms of a pleasurable phobia: "It follows that jouissance alone causes the abject to exist as such. One does not know it, one does not desire it, one joys in it... Violently and painfully. A passion. And, as in jouissance where the object of desire, known as objet à (in Lacanian terminology), bursts with the shattered mirror where the ego gives up its image in order to contemplate itself in the Other, there is nothing either objective or objectal to the abject. It is simply a frontier, a repulsive gift that the Other, having become alter ego, drops so that 'I' does not disappear in it but finds, in that sublime alienation, a forfeited existence. Hence a jouissance in which the subject is swallowed up but in which the Other, in return, keeps the subject from foundering by making it repugnant" (9).

[29] Heath writes that "the functioning of suture [is] the junction of symbolic and imaginary. [There is] [n]o discourse without suture." (100-101)

Addressing the issue of spectatorship directly, Fanon writes in Black Skin White Masks,

> I cannot go to a film without seeing myself. I wait for me. In the interval, just before the film starts, I wait for me. The people in the theatre are watching me, examining me, waiting for me. A Negro groom is going to appear. My heart makes my head swim. (140)

We see here how Fanon's desire cannot be contained within the economy of scopophilia because something fundamental, a phobic resistance to the objectified image on- and off-screen, erupts before the cultural gaze which does not allow Fanon to project his desire onto the screen before him. I am particularly intrigued by Fanon's account of watching cinematic representations because in the statement "The people...are watching me" it is apparent that Fanon cannot become invisible in the darkness of the theatre,[37] an invisibility that is necessary in order for him to assume a position as voyeur constructed by the cinematic apparatus.[31] Fanon's experience of spectatorship contrasts with the ideal viewer's experience in Metz's account of the cinematic spectator who, we are told, "has already known the experience of the mirror (of the true mirror), and is thus able to constitute a world of objects without having first to recognise himself within it" (The Imaginary Signifier 46). Metz also writes, "The imaginary of the cinema presupposes the symbolic, for the spectator must first of all have known the primordial mirror" (The Imaginary 57). Similarly, Kaja Silverman writes in The Threshold of the Visible World that "all visual transactions are inflected by narcissism, . . . [and] only by moving through the mirror stage [does] one enter[] the scopic domain" (3). The ideal viewer of cinema is able to recognise filmic images or the constructions of the camera eye as objects of his authorial gaze which he does not mistake for the Other of the primitive stage during ego formation. As one who has already entered the symbolic order, the ideal viewer does not experience identification in its primal form while watching a film, but rather knows that "the screen is not a mirror" (Metz The Imaginary 48) and that his experience as a spectator is "secondary identification" (Metz 56).

---

[37] Mulvey, for example, refuses to deal with the full implications of multiple and ambivalent identifications in her comment about the off-screen conditions which produce desire for the woman spectator: Mulvey suggests that "the extreme contrast between the darkness in the auditorium and the brilliance of the shifting patterns of light and shade on the screen helps to promote the illusion of voyeuristic separation" ("Visual Pleasure..." 60). Mulvey emphasizes that the darkness of the auditorium are ideal for the development of the spectorial ego by providing the illusion that the specator's "eye" is separate from the representational space projected onto the screen. Similarly, Douglas Davis in his essay "Filmgoing/ Videogoing" writes that the experience of seeing a film "begins early in our lives, with the approach of the theatre . . ., [and] the seat found in darkness" ("Filmgoing" 270). The darkness that surrounds the ideal spectator and the white female viewer in an auditorium allows him/her to separate his/her metonymic, corporeal self (the "eye") from his/her Other on the screen. Therefore, having maintained the assurance of invisibility in the darkness of the auditorium, the ideal spectator, and even the white female viewer, experiences the pleasure of maintaining coherence or suture between the imaginary and the symbolic which lends to the experience of a pleasurable tension between the view and the viewer.

Fanon's statement "I wait for me" suggests that the native's experience of cinematic spectatorship is closest to that of primary identification in the mirror of representation; however, this experience of identification undergoes a slight variation when we examine Fanon's awareness of the people in the theatre watching him through the spectacle of the Negro groom projected onto the screen. What Fanon reveals by this awareness is the native spectator's recognition of the cultural gaze, of the unapprehensible and unlocalizable entity that watches him.[32] Fanon's statement "My heart makes my head swim" illustrates the sensation of suffering that this recognition elicits in the native viewer who realizes that the image on the screen has, to a degree, constructed the way non-native audiences perceive the native. Kristeva addresses this complicated issue of primary identification in the mirror stage in terms of abjection:

---

[31] Addressing the issue of the spectator's invisibility, Metz writes that "in traditional cinema, the spectator['s] ...identification is no longer constructed around a subject-object, but around a pure, all-seeing and invisible subject" (The Imaginary 97).

> I experience abjection only if an Other has settled in place and stead of what will be "me." Not at all an other with whom I identify and incorporate, but an Other who precedes and possesses me, and through such possession causes me to be. A possession previous to my advent: a being-there of the symbolic that a father might not embody. (*Powers* 10)

Kristeva's account of ego formation points to the ways in which the Other of visual identification eludes becoming the scopophilic object of the abjected I's gaze. The Other, for the abjected self, is not the object of discourse (i.e. the ego-ideal), but rather "a being-there" that precedes the subject. For Fanon, the Other is the filmic image of the "Negro groom" (Black Skin 140) on screen who precedes and possesses the native spectator of film and does not allow him to become a subject of enunciation awaiting suture. The "Negro" viewer is denied, and denies himself through his experience of "desire" (i.e. his sensation of suffering), the process of becoming a subject of film, a spectatorial ego in the symbolic.

---

[32] Lacan writes in *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* that "[w]hat determines me . . . in the visible, is the gaze that is outside. It is through the gaze that I enter light and it is from the gaze that I receive its effects" (106). Commenting on Lacan's distinction between the gaze and the look, Kaja Silverman writes in *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* that "it is at precisely that moment when the eye [the look] is placed to the keyhole that it is most likely to find itself subordinated to the gaze" (130). The voyeur can only *exist*, therefore, if he not only looks at an object, but also becomes an object or a spectacle himself. In Fanon's account of the native's experience, however, the racially othered viewer cannot participate as a subject-spectator of film because he cannot easily assume the illusory position of voyeur and is, subsequently, unable to enter the identity of the voyeuristic self: as a spectator, he is aware that the voyeur is only a fantastical construction.

In Fanon's account of spectatorship the tension between looks develops not so much from the I's misrecognition (meconnaissance) of the Other for the self in the discursive formation of the subject, but from what Kristeva refers to as an Other settling in the place of what is expected to be the object of discourse. For Frantz Fanon, whose racialized ego is defined discursively by the surface layers of his skin so that the epidermis functions as a metonymic replacement of the I, the individual Unconscious is prevented from ordering experience in an act of self-representation based on "so-called instinctual stage[s]" (Lacan "The Function and Field of Speech" 32).[33] Instead, the Unconscious for Fanon remains forever constructed by the Social Imaginary, forever translated by colonial signification into racialized metaphors which confront native spectators as their repugnant Others. Spectators who experience abjection, however, continue to look at images regardless of the fact that these metaphorized objects do not produce the pleasure that comes with a sense of narcissistic completion or wholeness. Abjected viewers of film still look at images even though they are repulsed by them. Evidently, the idea of abjection as a narcissistic crisis disrupts the distinction made by many feminist film theorists between passive and active scopophilia.[34]

---

[33] Lacan writes that the psychoanalyst "teach[es] the subject to recognize as his unconscious...the historical 'turning-points' in his existence . . . [so that] every fixation at a so-called instinctual stage is above all a historical scar . . . And to put it clearly [the unconscious is], the subjectivity of the child who registers as victories and defeats the heroic chronicle of . . . his movements...into symbols" ("The Function and Field of Speech" 52-53). Lacan defines the Unconscious in terms of self-representation in language which, of course, for Fanon's black man is a process of identification that is clearly impossible, except in terms of suffering.

Frantz Fanon's account of cinematic spectatorship illustrates that the discursively marginalized identity does not identify with images from the position of active voyeur. In Fanon's account of looking, instead of visual pleasure or scopophilia produced from the partial drives of voyeurism and sadism, we have visual repulsion or scopophobia produced from a denial of the Self (i.e. one's construction as an Other) as self (i.e one's ego-ideal), a visual repulsion contained by the sensation of suffering. Identification, already an ambivalent process for women, is even further problematized for the racialized subject-spectator who, at least from Fanon's experience as a man, cannot easily oscillate between racialized boundaries in the darkness of an auditorium because of his awareness of being looked at as a projection of the gaze onto the cultural screen. As an epidermally fetishized metaphor on and off the screen, Fanon's subject-spectator recoils at the sight of an Other who precedes and possesses him as a projection of the colonizer's desire on the screen in the theatre. To look, therefore, is not necessarily to experience pleasure in terms of scopophilic desire, but rather for Fanon, to look is to experience the sensation of suffering. This sensation for Fanon, more specifically, results from his awareness that the colonial gaze is dispersed across the audience and their colonizing looks. The native spectator, who is constantly reminded of his bodily existence, experiences abjection because when he hears the words "'Dirty nigger!' Or simply, 'Look a Negro!'" (Black Skin 109) he knows the impossibility of desiring an illusion of coherence. Fanon's native knows from his racialized experience that he can never desire within the fantasy of a subjective suturing contained by the trope of corporeal wholeness or completion. The native, instead, exists in bits and pieces because of his metonymic replacement by the epidermis and, therefore, he realizes the impossibility of experiencing "a slow composition of my *self* as a body in the middle of a spatial and temporal world" (Black Skin 111), that is, of experiencing a fantastic composition of an illusory *self*.

---

[34] Kristeva writes that "Abjection is therefore a kind of *narcissistic crisis*: it is witness to the ephemeral aspect of the state called 'narcissism' with reproachful jealousy. . .[The] abject appears in order to uphold I within the Other. . .[The abject] assigns it [the ego] a source in the non-ego, drive, and death" (14-15).

Watching Kim (1950) Watch Me: Pleasure, Suffering, and the Cultural Gaze

Although I do not believe that the viewer of film is entirely positioned or structured by the film as a text, I am not particularly convinced that the study of the multiple gaze or of the critical reception of film by different audiences is a better route in examining othered spectators. It is crucial, instead, to explore the connections between cinema as an apparatus and the ambivalent identifications of spectators in their reception of films. In this chapter, I will discuss the two main discourses, the ethnographic and the heterosexist, by which the ideal spectator and his look are positioned in the film Kim as manifestations of the colonial gaze. I will also address, however, the ways in which the othered viewer either allows for or disrupts such a positioning by looking back at the constructedness of these forms of the colonial gaze. I intend, therefore, to use textual analysis as a strategy in my exploration of the narrative structure of Kim, and yet at the same time examine my own process of identification with the film and its images which often verges on abjection. By undergoing this two-part analysis of spectatorship, one based on the film as a text and the other based on autobiography, I will demonstrate the ambivalence of my own desire as an Indo-Canadian female spectator encountering that which simultaneously causes me both suffering and pleasure.

After the opening credits, the film Kim begins with a prefatory acknowledgement of India's postcolonial government and its royalty for allowing the filming of Kim to take place in India:

To the Government of India and to His Highness, the Maharajah

> of Jaipur and His Highness, the Maharajah of Bundi, we express our deep appreciation for the facilities afforded us in filming this picture in India.

The film's seemingly direct form of gratitude to a postcolonial India, however, masks a very important, but subtle, implication made in the film's preface. The preface claims to have been filmed in India when in fact "a large portion of Kim was filmed in California and the film's 13-year-old star, Stockwell, never set foot in India" (The Motion Picture Guide 1528). The film's claim to geographic authenticity in the preface situates the ideal viewer in an exotic space that has been deployed for reasons of appealing to the viewer's popular imagination. The ethnographic preface also evokes the exotic Other with its references to two Indian Maharajahs which immediately aligns Kim with the genre of romantic escapism. Kim's preface, thus, reminds the ideal viewer of past literary and cinematic representations of Maharajahs and their bizarre characteristics as rulers.

Orientalized representations of Eastern/Middle Eastern rulers, whether Indian or not, often emphasize the effeminate excessiveness of the Maharajah, Sheik, or Emperor, an excessiveness that renders these rulers ineffectual in dealing with the harsh realities of inter-tribal warfare which is represented as inherent to native relations in Britain's colonies. In Alexander Korda's The Drum (1938), for example, the fictionalized Maharajah (Khan of Takot) is depicted as a mysterious figure whose effeminate indulgence in pleasure endangers his son's life and allows him to be defeated by his native usurper. The Maharajah's inability to protect his son (played by Sabu) contrasts with the stern tactfulness of the British in dealing with the tribes of the Indian Northwest Frontier and in protecting their loyal subjects.[35] Korda's film illustrates that only the virility of the British can control the mysterious feminine desires of its colonized peoples, an assertion about India's native rulers of the nineteenth century that Kipling also makes in his 1899 novel written in collaboration with Wolcott Balestier, *The Naulahka: A Story of West and East*.[36] In *The Naulahka*, Kipling writes of the usurpation of a Maharajah's power by the head queen in the ruler's court, suggesting the effeminate and whimsical nature of the native ruler: "Tarvin learned that the head queen . . . [was a] gypsy without lineage [,but she] held in less than a year King and state under her feet -- feet . . . . roughened with travel of shameful roads" (81). The Maharajah's acceptance of the queen's rule in his court suggests not simply the instability of the native ruler's command over his subjects, but more importantly, the instability of the Maharajah's character as a ruler in India. Because the Maharajah's disposition is so easily swayed by the charms of his female subjects, he is represented as inherently effeminate himself. Clearly, Kim's acknowledgement of real Indian Maharajahs in the preface, therefore, immediately blurs the distinction between the symbolic and the imaginary for the ideal viewer whose memory of past cinematic and literary representations influences his perception of India's government and of the Maharajahs mentioned in the preface. The ideal viewer is, using Althusser's term, "interpellated" by the film's preface which positions him as a voyeur of an impotent and incompetent Maharajah objectified on- and off-screen. The ideal viewer, therefore, does not so much escape the symbolic into an imaginary space on-screen, but rather experiences a transgression of the boundary between the imaginary and the symbolic in his act of viewing Kim: one space constructs and is constructed by the other.

---

[35] Maurizia Boscagli writes in *Eye on the Flesh* that "The real man that Baden-Powell wanted to create was modeled on the image of the colonial frontiersman, the pioneer imperialist whose qualities of courage and sportsmanship were for him the essential virtues of the virile nation" (87). As Kipling's contemporary, Powell and his beliefs demonstrate the colonial ideal against which India and its natives were represented as feminized. In *The Rhetoric of English India* Sara Suleri writes that "the feminization of the colonized subcontinent remains the most sustained metaphor shared by imperialist narratives" (16).

[36] Walcott Balestier was an American agent of an American publishing firm whose popularity in London secured contracts with many British authors, which included the contract, and subsequent friendship, that he established with Kipling. Kipling later married Balestier's sister, Caroline.

There is a further dimension to Kim's preface: the preface points to Hollywood's postcolonial appropriation of Britain's colonial civilizing mission. Similar to Alexander Korda's The Drum (1938) whose fictionalized Maharajah befriends the British government -- "If England is our friend, we shall have peace," the Maharajah tells his court -- the film Kim declares in the preface a camaraderie between the primitive, the Maharajahs who give consent to MGM, and the modern, American Hollywood and its filming of India's land and peoples. Kim's preface suggests that even in a postcolonial world India's government and Maharajahs (and the two are projected as one and the same) support the filming of colonial fictions like Kim which confirm India's affiliation with modernity, progress and civilization. MGM's preface assumes, more importantly, the native rulers's desire for American presence in India in the form of Hollywood productions like Kim. The film's prefacatory expression of America's postcolonial importance in the civilizing mission becomes apparent in the way Errol Flynn, who plays Mahbub Ali, is represented as a white star figure enjoying the benefits of his colonial status as an American in India. During the filming of sections of Kim, The Motion Picture Guide, 1927-1983 states, "Flynn undoubtedly enjoyed his stay in India, receiving a royal treatment from the Maharajah and discovering a love of hunting" (1529). This declaration of Flynn's royal treatment in India reveals the actor's constructedness in the Social Imaginary. The Motion Picture Guide projects an image of the actor as a colonial adventurist by describing Flynn not only as a star enjoying an Indian Maharajah's hospitality, but also as a guest in India who has discovered a love for a colonial sport like hunting. In line with Flynn's persona as a wild adventurer and colonizer off-screen, the image of the actor's receiving special treatment from a Maharajah in India fulfills the expectations of Kim's ideal viewer. Inadvertently, Hollywood in its representation of Flynn appropriates both Kipling's colonial myths of the white man's position of power in India and also Flynn's own experience as a slave recruiter in New Guinea.[37] Constructed by the cinematic apparatus to represent all that is dashing and rugged about manhood in the genre of male romance and adventure, with past roles in films like Captain Blood, The Charge of the Light Brigade, and The Adventures of Robin Hood, Errol Flynn's persona, in the description of the filming of Kim above, embodies the paternal authority of the civilizing colonizer in India. By taking on qualities of the colonizer's role as symbolic father in India, Flynn's persona, in turn, maintains a connection between the British Sahib's identity in nineteenth-century, colonial India and the Hollywood Sahib's identity in twentieth-century, postcolonial reconstructions of colonizer-colonized relationship. The Motion Picture Guide constructs Flynn as an actor enjoying the privileges of stardom in India not only because of his positioning by the cinematic apparatus, but also because of his whiteness which is perceived as superior in India and abroad. According to Flynn's biography, the actor "had been . . . hailed as a Briton by ancestry, . . . and then, in the United States, he had become a huge success and a credit to the English land" (Conrad Errol Flynn: A Memoir 73). Hollywood's pride in Flynn's off-screen British heritage intersects with the way the actor is described as a star in India reveling in a Maharajah's hospitality. As a credit to the white, Anglo-Saxon race, Flynn is perceived in light of an American belief in the British colonizer's past deification in India. Flynn's persona, therefore, perpetuates the myth of India's desire to please the Sahib and is a product both of the camera's projection of images and of white America's perception of Flynn's racial superiority. These perceptions of Flynn on- and off-screen, in turn, reinstate the white Sahib as colonizer, but in a postcolonial world of American iconographic domination.

---

[37] In his biography Errol Flynn: A Memoir, Earl Conrad refers to Flynn as "the young adventurer . . . [who] started a tobacco plantation . . . [,]played the role of the colonial exploiter to the hilt [,] and was honest enough to say so" (34-36). Flynn's off-screen persona becomes an important part of the way he is constructed in The Motion Picture Guide as having experienced the privileges of the colonizer in the treatment he receives from "the Maharajah"-figure in India.

Flynn's performance of colonial identity on- and off-screen is most evident in Michael Curtiz's The Charge of the Light Brigade in which the pleasure that India offers Flynn's character, Major Geoffrey Vickers, reflects the supposed pleasure offered to Flynn in his visit to India during the filming of Kim. What is described as Flynn's experience in India while starring in Kim carries overtones of his character Vickers's encounter with the fictionalized Maharajah or Khan of Suristan in The Charge. Entertaining Captain Vickers with a particularly Orientalized grandiloquence, the Khan comments on the precision of Vickers's hunting: "Vickers . . . [is] one of the best marksman it has ever been my good fortune to entertain" and, later, on a hunting excursion the Khan again comments on Vickers's "brilliant shot." What becomes obvious in the depiction of Flynn's treatment by the Maharajah figure both on- and off-screen is the fictionalized Maharajah's perpetual stroking of the Sahib's sense of Self as a colonizer. The Charge's filmic example of the colonial relations between the Sahib-figure and his native subjects, the Khan of Suristan in this case, suggests the ways in which the images projected by the cinematic apparatus influence the implied audience's perceptions of the power relations between the colonized and the colonizer off-screen. Clearly MGM in the preface to Kim is claiming its appropriation of the colonial civilizing mission and its imposition of Kipling's colonial fictions on both the imaginary and the symbolic, revealing the extent to which Hollywood perceives its aesthetic and political codes as universally desired standards of representation.

In the beginning of the film Kim, a turban-headed native played, in typical fashion, by a white actor in blackface wears gold tights and a royal blue robe, an image carrying overtones of the current Air India icon, and it is clear that the "native" is playing a Pathan, a Mahbub-Ali-type character in a gaudy Hollywood costume. The "native" points to a screen behind him and directs our gaze to a framed visual space of nostalgic significance. The native's voice and the images that appear on the screen document an era of "magnificent pageantry" and "romance," a nostalgic reconstruction of India as a colonial nation:

> India, . . . the jewel of the Orient, land of mysticism . . . whose history is filled with the romance and intrigue of the nineteenth century . . . belong[ing] to the romantic domain of Rudyard Kipling. (Kim MGM 1950)

These references to India allow the ideal viewer to escape into, what Mary Louise Pratt calls in her discussion of travel writing, the exotic "body as seen/scene . . . [which] [t]he eye 'commands' . . . within its gaze; the mountains 'show themselves' or 'present themselves'; the country 'opens up'" ("Scratches on the Face of the Country" 139-143). The camera eye behind the narrator offers panoramic, topological views of the natives of nineteenth-century

India which are unveiled before the eyes of *Kim*'s ideal viewer.[35] Furthermore, the narrator's ethnographic documentation of India's tribal "turmoil and bloodshed, caste against caste, creed against creed . . . [and] the warlike hillmen" (*Kim* 1950) lures the ideal viewer, whose implied civility contrasts with the barbarity of *Kim*'s natives, into a fantastical space of exotic intrigue and adventure which he encounters visually. The opening comments by the Pathan narrator in *Kim* (1950), together with the documentary-like panoramic visual images to which he points on the screen behind him, not only fetishize Kipling as an Orientalist historian who provides access to the East by offering a visual "gateway to the East," but also consolidate Kipling's fantastical construction of India through a further process of reterritorializing the authority of Kipling's colonial signification by which the coherence of the Sahib is maintained. In the film *Kim*, Kipling as a white Anglo-Indian author is replaced by a blackfaced actor playing the part of a native narrator who, in a sense, ventriloquizes for Kipling while, at the same time, being ventriloquized by what Hollywood believes are Kipling's words. Kipling and his vision of India do not so much inform Hollywood's representations from a position of authenticity;

The same ethnographic unveiling takes place later in the film when the voice-over narrator describes to the ideal viewer "the Grand Trunk Road, running straight across India for fifteen hundred miles . . . [and] Kim's eyes were bright and wide open drinking in the sights of this endless highway." The footage that accompanies this narration could have easily been extracted from documentaries on the lives of Indians and the ethnographic effect of the native speaker's voice-over narration, in the words of Renato Rosaldo, elides questions concerning "Who is speaking to whom, about what, for what purposes, and under what circumstances" ("After Objectivism" 111). It is important to keep in mind that "Kim's eyes . . . [are] drinking in the sights" which the camera eye presents to the ideal viewer; consequently, we are again reminded of the ethnographic position that Kim assumes in the film.

Hollywood, in fact, constructs its own filmic vision of Rudyard Kipling by romanticizing the author and his text based on the author's status as a colonial star. MGM is obviously representing Kipling as an authority based not on his Anglo-Indian experience, but on his "instinctual" knowledge of the East which comes from his having been born in India, a point often stressed by Kipling's nineteenth-century critics. The film, however, does not conflate Kipling's identity with the native's by this obvious replacement of the author because the narrator makes several references to Rudyard Kipling as an imperial figure and constructs an author who is adored not only by his subjects (i.e. the Pathan narrator), but also by Hollywood and the film's ideal viewer. MGM's Kim, as a costume period-romance and a spectacular durbar of the "romantic domain of Rudyard Kipling," does not simply represent Kipling's India: MGM, instead, participates in its own version of ethnography by projecting Kipling as an Orientalist, contributing further to the practice of othering the writer or of making him the spectacle of the cultural gaze.

The narrator's pointing to a screen behind him directs our attention as viewers to a screen within a screen, a space before us that is self-consciously constructed for the pleasure of our viewing. This pointing to a screen indicates that the character Kim is not the initial or immediate object of identification through whom the ideal viewer encounters the mystery of India. The film disperses the authority of the colonial gaze between the eyes of the camera and of the character Kim, eyes that secretively look in on native life. Through his identification with the camera's and Kim's colonial looks as manifestations of the cultural gaze, the ideal viewer is subsequently invited to assume a position as voyeur of the secret underworld that Kim inhabits, a fantastical space accessed through the peep-holes of *Kim*'s, and Kim's, eyes. Interestingly, however, the eyes of the camera and of Kim, although they provide the means by which the ideal spectator is positioned, cannot facilitate the process of idealization for the othered viewer, especially since her positioning as Other by the Social Imaginary off-screen prevents her from seeking her ego-ideal in self-same, narcissistic images on-screen. If, in other words, the viewer demands a suturing of the self in his viewing of *Kim* (Heath 15), he not only easily identifies with the camera's or Kim's looks -- a process which allows him to develop an ideal spectorial ego -- but also assumes that the perspectives of these eyes on-screen and the authority of the cultural gaze off-screen are one and the same. This ideal spectator accepts, therefore, the camera and/or the character Kim as possessing the omnipotent gaze through which he encounters the film's images of India. The images he encounters, in turn, become the Other of the ideal viewer's self in his narcissistic longing for unity and coherence during a moment of secondary identification with the objectified images on-screen. If, however, during the native narrator's voice-over commentary the viewer realizes that the visual identity she is invited to assume through a process of identifying with the camera's or Kim's looks is a constructed position, she is unable to assume the identity of the active voyeur who seeks his ego-ideal. Her act of watching Kim is not driven by the perceptual passion of scopophilia by which the camera's or Kim's eye becomes the viewer's eye and sutures the distance between the spectator and the spectacle. Unlike the ideal viewer, the othered spectator is aware of the constructedness of the "gaze." She realizes that the film's looks taken as the "gaze" do not possess voyeuristic authority but can be subject to the othered viewer's dismantling "eye:" Kim's on-screen "gaze" may, in fact, be *looked at* by the othered viewer. It is, ultimately, the viewer's awareness of the cultural constructedness of Kim's on-screen looks that allows for a differentiation between the authority of the colonial gaze disseminated in the looks of Kim and the camera on-screen, and the unlocalizable omnipresence of the cultural gaze. Therefore, the position that the ideal viewer occupies in the first scenario of looking is not one of voyeuristic autonomy, but rather is dependent on the partial drive of exhibition. Although the narrative structure of the film positions the ideal viewer as voyeur in his identification with the camera's and/or Kim's "gaze," the othered viewer's off-screen look cannot easily be positioned by the cinematic apparatus which allows for the potential subversiveness of the cultural gaze. It is the othered viewer's act of *looking back* at the screen which defines her that suggests the potential play of the *cultural*, as opposed to *colonial*, gaze. The "gazes" with which the ideal viewer identifies, therefore, are "looks" on-screen which simultaneously construct the ideal viewer and are potentially deconstructed by the multiple, othered viewer.

If we consider the ideal viewer's encounter with Kim's narrator who points to a screen behind him at the beginning of the film, it is obvious that the film deliberately constructs the ideal viewer using ethnographic discourse. Attempting to contain all that is uncanny and bizarre about India through its representations of natives and their lives, the screen to which the narrator points in Kim places the ideal viewer within a landscape of colonial adventure and, therefore, displays the body of India as the object of the ideal viewer's desire for exotic self-fashioning. The camera eye and the voice-over narrator in Kim immediately evoke in the ideal viewer a nostalgia for the lost romance of the British empire in India before the dissolution of the white male self as colonizer or as Sahib. The layered narrative structure of the screen within a screen invites the ideal viewer to witness a nostalgic reconstruction of the British Raj with its mapped boundaries and strategic points of defense against the Russian Tzar, its charging brigades of soldiers, and its secret service spies. From the opening credits of Kim, the ideal viewer is engaged in a nostalgia that hinges on what could be referred to as a desire for Raj kitsch. Maurizia Boscagli writes that

> Kitsch has been read by its critics . . . as an attack on authenticity and on what Walter Benjamin termed the aura of the original. As a derivative 'bad copy,' kitsch merely imitates, but it imitates in excess . . . as a second-degree art [that] belongs avowedly to the sphere of consumption and partakes of the commodity's keenness to comfort the consumer: it is not meant to unsettle an already established set of values but rather to confirm and consolidate them. (Eye on the Flesh 98-99)

The narrator's nostalgic reconstruction of the Empire on-screen with its interludes of documentary footage is a spectacularization of the Indian body as seen/scene to be consumed by its ideal viewer as excess, as both tourist propaganda and romantic adventure. For example, during the opening credits of *Kim* the film secures the spectator in its narrative structure by appealing to his expectation of images which consolidate his touristic vision of India in the Social Imaginary. In the opening credits, which are accompanied by Andre Previn's orientalized symphonic music, the Taj Mahal appears in the background, sometimes duplicated by the camera so that two angles of the Taj Mahal are projected onto the screen. These obviously touristic images of India are projections of the ideal viewer's desire for escape.[39] Sections of *Kim* could be called, therefore, docudramatic in that the ideal viewer is often presented a field of vision that is clearly ethnographic and allows the viewer to travel vicariously through India from the safety of his armchair, and yet is simultaneously dramatic in its fantastical appeal of perilous adventure. The images that the viewer as voyeur encounters, however, have no real referent. These images are, instead, representations that could be compared to what Frederic Jameson calls "pastiche, a bravura imitation so exact as to include the well-nigh undetectable reproduction of stylistic authenticity itself" (Postmodernism 133).

---

[39] Kipling's ethnographic writing in *The Letters of Marque* also contribute to the ideal viewer's expectation of images: "as the train sped forward, and the mists shifted and the sun shone upon the mists, the Taj took a hundred new shapes, each perfect and beyond description. . . It may be that the mists wrought the witchery, and that the Taj seen in the dry sunlight is only as guide books say a noble structure" ("Of the beginning of Things" 4-5). Kipling constructs the Taj as a romantic and mysterious object of seduction, an architectural site fetishized for the colonizer's consumption.

The visual contact the ideal viewer makes with India in his identification with Kim's and the camera's eyes replaces the viewer's actual tour of India. However, an even more complex replacement occurs: the visual tour of India further replaces the experience of adventure that the viewer desires. What is most interesting about the layered politics of the simulational model by which Kim appeals to the desire of the ideal viewer is the film's displacement of the viewer's sense of danger in watching images of the native. Much like the "human curiosities" (James B. Twitchell Carnival Culture 63) exhibited in lecture halls in America and the "touring panoramas" (Antonia Lant "The Curse of the Pharoah" 75) of Egypt in exhibition halls in England during the middle to late nineteenth century, the film Kim appeals to the ideal viewer's desire for the supernatural allure and exoticism of India.[40] In line with the spectator of the American 'freak show' and of British Egyptomania, the ideal viewer of Kim is comforted by the spectacle before him that positions him as a voyeur of what can only be seen by those who have, like Kim, either disguised themselves as natives, dwelled in the bazaars and gutters, or played "The Great Game." The ideal viewer's sense of coherence is maintained by means of his identification with the film's adventurists, which include both the camera and the film's characters, and by the subsequent junction between the imaginary and the symbolic that his act of watching Kim allows. The ideal viewer's identification with the "gaze" that positions his own look, in other words, helps to suture the physical distance between the viewer's eye/I and the text's eyes.

---

[40] Twitchell provides an interesting overview of the way P. T. Barnum purchased a New York museum in 1862 that he converted into "an entertainment center . . . [in which] 'human curiosities' were displayed . . . including an albino family, the last Living Aztecs, the Swiss Bearded Lady . . . and most famous of all, the 'What Is It?' (a mentally retarded black man)" (Carnival Culture 63). Lant provides evidence of a similar exhibitionist display of the Other in her account of popularized Egyptology in nineteenth-century England: "A second panorama, the 'Overland Route to India,' began at the Gallery of Illustration . . . and drew a quarter of a million customers before it closed. It consisted of a moving middle section . . . [and] a travelling painted scene . . . to illustrate the journey from Cairo to Suez" ("The Curse" 75). Both writers address the almost freakish spectacularization of the Other for the purposes of colonial commodification.

This ethnographic discursive framework within which the ideal viewer is positioned, however, fails to provide the conditions necessary for the othered spectator's assumption of the voyeur's position. For example, in my own viewing of Kim on late night Canadian television as an Indo-Canadian woman, I am aware of the thousands of eyes reading the film's preface and awaiting technicoloured images of "brown Indians in bedsheets." This expectation of a fetishistic image of Indians on-screen fills me with an anticipatory sensation of horror and yet at the same time thrills me, even though I see myself in my identification with these images on the screen. Although I perceive myself as the projected Other of both the camera-eye and the ideal spectator's narcissistic gaze I do not, however, simply recoil at the thought of seeing these images because I am simultaneously thrilled by the possibility of becoming visible to the thousands of viewers watching the same film on television, a medium which denies my presence as a consumer of images in the symbolic. Kaja Silverman writes that "To 'be' is in effect to 'be seen'" (Threshold 133). Himani Bannerji supports this idea:

> Even though South Asian women are members of the so-called 'visible' minority groups -- and visibility should have something to do with visual images -- research shows that there is a remarkable paucity of their images in the Canadian media . . . [: that is,] South Asian women are not seen as aids to trade and, as such, are not used to sell a variety of objects -- ranging from sexual fetishes or objectified sex to gadgets -- which uphold the happy, white bourgeois home. ("Popular Images of South Asian Women" 144-145)

South Asian woman on- and off-screen are defined as the Other of the self for a white majority in Canada, a definition which prevents images of South Asian women from becoming eroticized commodities. As a visible minority in Canada ,I have become fetishized by a white majority, like Frantz Fanon, on the basis of my epidermis which acts as a metonymic replacement for my identity as a consumer. By assuming a prescripted bodily position as a racialized object and **not** as an enunciative agent seeking coherence through identification, I am prevented from seeking my ego-ideal as a consumer/spectator of images. Silverman's and Banerji's ideas of visual presence can also be applied to the film Kim. Kim's ethnographic attempt to appeal to its ideal viewer fails to appeal to the racialized and the gendered spectator: as an Indo-Canadian woman, instead of seeing myself in relation to the film's representations through a process of secondary, excorporative identification, I *am* the representation on- and off-screen of both the camera's and the ideal viewer's looks. My awareness of the cultural gaze, of the ways in which I am constructed by the Social Imaginary on- and off-screen, prevents my *identification* with the camera's or Kim's constructing eyes. Instead, I am thrilled by the few images of South Asian woman objectified on-screen that provide me with the opportunity to incorporate the racialized and gendered spectacle which the Social Imaginary projects onto Hollywood's and the media's screens.

To *be* is, in fact, to be seen, to misrecognize the self as Self before the public eye and to recognize this Self's being looked at as an object of the cultural gaze. However, to *be* for the othered spectator is not so much to misrecognize the distanced and external Self/Other on-screen for the self off-screen, but to incorporate the Self/Other on-screen and off-screen as self, an act of embodiment that results from being denied the process of identification with the self's external, excorporative Other. Subsequently, by failing to be positioned by the narrative structure of the film or even by the larger cinematic apparatus which locates the subject-spectator as voyeur, the othered viewer is prevented from becoming a consumer of images off-screen. Instead of undergoing a process of identification with images in Kim, an excorporative process by which the viewer is able to see himself in relation to cultural representations, I have been positioned from without by a cultural gaze that represents the South Asian as a spectacle -- although this act of representation is rare -- and not as a consumer dependent on the voyeuristic drive. As an embodiment of the racially objectified Other on- and off-screen, I am aware of my positioning as the object of the ideal viewer's and the cultural gaze. My need to be seen, however, cannot be explained by the partial drives of exhibitionism or masochism because in order to become visible, to "be," I immediately incorporate and do not see as external to my self the image on-screen. During my act of so-called "identification" with Kim's fetishized images of the South Asian, I *require* (not *desire*) to be seen, to "be." This need positions me not as a voyeur consuming images, but as a spectacularized-spectator, as a spectacle that looks back at the very "gaze" that ensures my presence at the very moment that it constructs me.

My appropriation of psychoanalytic terminology in order to articulate a politics of looking back as the spectacularized Other disturbs the economy of the scopic drive which is dependent on the possibility of suturing the distance between the voyeur off-screen and the object of his look on-screen. It is precisely my need to be seen that disrupts the command that the cinema as apparatus has on me as an othered spectator. The sensations I experience while watching Kim cannot be contained solely by the drive of exhibitionism or by a psychical need for visual objectification. As the camera-eye zooms in on the screen to which the Pathan narrator points behind him, I anxiously await images of India as "the jewel of the Orient . . . and the land of mysticism" which the voice-over narration of the Pathan narrator conveys to me. I desire my own opening up, to have my body seen by the ideal viewer through my identification -- that is, an awareness and acceptance of my objectification by the cultural gaze -- with the many touristic scenes of India represented in the film. The screen within a screen switches scenes from a durbar of elephants and multi-coloured turbans to marching, white Sahibs on horses. The spectacle evokes in me both horror and relief: better to be represented in a nostalgic longing for "the days when the white man was called Sahib" than not to be represented at all; better to be an erotically desired object fetishized in the imaginary space of Kim than to be denied an iconographic sense of presence, a sense of visibility, on screen.

What Raj kitsch offers me is a sense of the reality that I experience off-screen as a visible minority in a racist culture. Both on- and off-screen, I am defined as an othered spectacle and not as a voyeuristic spectator seeking my ego-ideal in object-choices exterior to my self; therefore, what I experience cannot simply be called a masochistic identification with Hollywood's India appropriated from Kipling, but rather a sense of presence by means of the "pastiche" or the excessive constructedness of Kim. My desire to watch Indians fetishized in Kim, in other words, is not a product of a masochistic longing for my own oppression because my desire is not driven by scopophilia, by an eroticized pleasure in looking at images as a spectator and, therefore, as a voyeuristic consumer of images. My participation in the act of watching Kim is an act of *looking back* at the cultural screen or the Social Imaginary that defines me incorporatively and excorporatively. My so-called desire for presence is an understanding of my own survival achieved by watching the very images which have sustained my sense of identity as an Indo-Canadian living in an era of American cultural domination. The suffering I experience while watching Kim, therefore, determines the nature of my participation as a consumer of images, as a spectator, of Kim. I do not assume the spectorial position of the ideal viewer whose look seeks narcissistic gratification,[42] but rather I watch Kim with an awareness of the ways in which my own position as a spectator has become spectacularized before the ideal viewer's and the film's colonial looks on- and off-screen. As projections of the colonial "gaze" -- in actuality, the cultural gaze that disperses its authority across the looks of Kipling's constructing eye and Hollywood's cinematic apparatus (i.e. the look of the ideal viewer and the camera-eye) -- the images I embrace provide me with a sense of my lived reality as an Indo-Canadian woman surviving in a racist society. I realize that I cannot separate my identity off-screen from the image projected on-screen, a cultural screen that precedes and possesses me in the Social Imaginary.

My awareness of the constructedness of the gaze allows me to become a performative identity. I am able to see myself in Korda's and Kim's Maharajahs, an ability which ensures my presence as a Canadian. Andre Previn's orientalized music, Kim's gaudy native costumes, its native women in sheer skirts and short blouses hidden from all eyes, its repetition of "Salam" and "Sahib" and other

---

[42] In The Imaginary Signifier, Christian Metz compares the "filmic state" with the "dream state" and suggests that "[t]he narrative film does not incite one to action, and if it is like a mirror, this is not only . . . by virtue of . . . put[ting] the spectator-subject in a position to admire himself like a god, or [by] . . . reactivat[ing] in us the conditions belonging to the mirror stage in Lacan's sense . . . -- it is also and more directly . . . [by] encourag[ing] narcissistic withdrawal and the indulgence of phantasy" (107).

Anglo-Indianisms, and images of Indian elephants adorned in colours matching the turbans of their ineffectual native riders are all images of the British Empire's spectacularity in India; however, they are also images of excess, of leisure, that guarantee the visibility I require as an Indo-Canadian. I realize both that ***I am*** the native fetishized in Kim and that the film's kitsch constructs, to a great extent, my understanding of Indian-ness in the symbolic. Every time I step outside the doors of my apartment, I perceive myself being watched by the ideal viewer whose identity has undergone a process of interpellation by the Social Imaginary. I am, therefore, a product of both the images with which I "identify" on screen and of the ideal viewer's perception of me off screen.

As the music in the film Kim switches from Previn's orientalized version of Indian music to a popular Hindi film song, the screen within a screen documenting native life disappears and is replaced by an image of a turban-headed boy in a dhoti, skipping from rooftop to rooftop in the dark. We are told by the native narrator's voice-over commentary that "among the roof top quarters of women who were well guarded from all eyes . . . there roamed a small boy known as Kim, a product of the bazaars and gutters." Unlike Kipling's novel, the film makes no immediate mention of Kim's race and, instead, underscores Kim's life of adventure which the novel, only later in the narrative, tells us is as

> wild as that of the Arabian Nights . . . [with its] sights and sounds of the women's world on the flat roofs, and the headlong flight from housetop to housetop under cover of the hot dark. (Kim 498)

What comes to the viewer's immediate attention in the film is Kim's invisibility in the dark of the night, not Kim's race or class which Kipling focuses on in the beginning of the novel:

> Kim was English. Though he was burned black as any native; though he spoke the vernacular by preference, and his mother-tongue in a clipped uncertain sing-song; though he consorted on terms of perfect equality with the small boys of the bazaar; Kim was white -- a poor white of the very poorest. (Kim 497)

The film, however conscious it is of Kim's race, initially positions the viewer in a world of adventure that evades, to a greater extent than the beginning of the novel, the racial paranoia underlying Kipling's Kim which overcompensates for the writer's anxiety, his feelings of inadequacy as an Anglo-Indian, by its repetition of the racial difference between the Anglo-Indian Kim and his native counterparts. Only after the opening scene does the native voice-over in the film tell us that

> Kim found it more convenient to pose as an Indian because the missionaries sent white boys to school . . . [,so only when] it suited his purpose he would don the dress of his own race.

It is clear, therefore, that the director of Kim eventually feels the need to convey to the viewer through the native voice-over narration that Kim belongs to his "own race." However, attempting to project its liberalism, the film masks the issue of race in its opening shot by positioning Kim in the darkness of the night, in the dark mystery that is the India to which Kim belongs as an Anglo-Indian pauper. Therefore, instead of overtly emphasizing Kim's race, Kim presents images of India as a primitive and dark world of mystery and danger which reflects what a British sergeant of the Mavericks tells us in Kipling's novel, that "Injia's a wild land for a God-fearin' man" (Kim 554).

The film's focus on the primitive converges on a particularly capitalistic notion of the spectator as tourist. The film tries to position its ideal viewer as a voyeuristic tourist who looks at natives not because he identifies with them on the basis of their fetishized epidermis, but rather because he is a free consumer of images in a capitalist culture. In his essay "Cannibal Tours," Dean MacCannell writes that "The touristic ideal of the 'primitive' is that of a magical resource that can be used without actually possessing or diminishing it" (102). Like this touristic ideal, the scopophilic desire of the ideal viewer of Kim is, in fact, a desire for the visual possession of an objectified image dependent on the partial drive of voyeurism. Since the ideal viewer is structured by the film to identify with the look of the camera-eye, however, he sees in the opening scene an India of shadows that does not differentiate its objects on the basis of colour. Lost in the homogeneity offered by the camera-eye, the ideal viewer risks experiencing a narcissistic crisis that prevents him from achieving a sense of unity in his act of looking at the screen because he cannot visually locate an object. Under the guise of a liberalist, touristic ideal Kim does not, therefore, initially racialize its characters; however, Kim's whiteness is crucial to the film. Kim can only position the ideal viewer as a voyeur-spectator if it eventually divulges Kim's race which, subsequently, allows for the ideal viewer's identification with Kim to occur. In the darkness of the night Kim assumes the invisibility necessary to become the bearer of the gaze on-screen with which the ideal viewer identifies as a voyeur in the darkness of the theatre off-screen. The ideal viewer's awareness of Kim's whiteness ensures Kim's position, like Kipling's, as an ethnographic informant who is invisible, but through whose eyes India is constructed for the viewer. In turn, the ideal viewer's awareness of racial difference mobilizes his own desire, by means of his identification with Kim, for self-fashioning in the genre of male romance.

At a double remove from its Anglo-Indian source in Kipling's colonial novel, the narrative of Kim that MGM constructs is an Americanized version of the colonial fantasy that treats race as secondary to Kim's chameleon identity. The film attempts to portray Kim as a "friend of all the world" not because of his skin colour, but because he is a Huckleberry Finn-type character whose worldly cunning permits him to avoid the entrapments of civilized life.[42] In the novel, Kipling writes that Kim's "eyes rov[ed] in defiance of the Law from sky's edge to sky's edge" (Kim 623) much like the eyes of Mark Twain's Huck, but it is eventually the Sahib's Law that provides the necessary words "I am Kim" which keep Kim within bounds of the symbolic order. Kim's similarity to Huck and his defiance against the moralizing and civilizing codes of a feminized culture point to another way that MGM reconstructs Kipling's novel in a particularly American fashion. Embedded in MGM's skirting of Kipling's focus on race is, more importantly, the American mythos of the cowboy frontiersman who faces the unknown along the Northwest interiors of the land of colonial conquest. After all, Kim was filmed in the year that "One out of every three pictures shot . . . [was] a Western" (Schnee "Boots and Saddles"). Instead of Kim's racial superiority, therefore, the immediate focus of the film Kim is the boy's physical proximity to native life which offers the ideal viewer in America the fantasy of contact with the "wild East" disguised in the familiar trope of the "wild West."

---

[42] We are told by the voice-over narration in the film that Kim, also like Huck, "was ever willing to risk his neck for . . . a good friend."

Referring to the work of Jane Thompson, Dennis Bingham writes that "The project of the Western . . . is the suppression of women, and the creation of an imaginary world in which women are unnecessary encumbrances" (Acting Male 42). When, indeed, women enter the traditional Western, they are represented within the "schoolmarm/dance-hall girl split" (Bingham Acting Male 234), as either virgin or whore, and in typical Hollywood fashion, they ensure that some kind of love interest takes place in order to confirm a larger cultural heterosexist economy. The cinematic apparatus, in other words, attempts to maintain its hold over the ideal viewer by counterpoising the blatant homosocial bond that characterizes the traditional Western with a heterosexual love interest between its characters. In MGM's film, as in Kipling's novel, the lama tells Kim that "it is a sin to be led by affection," a religious rule that supports the philosophy of Colonel Creighten's Great Game which dismisses women as serious obstructions to maintaining the order necessary to govern a colony. However, unlike the novel, the film maintains what appears to be the heterosexual narrative economy of the classic Hollywood big Western.[43] Perhaps because of Flynn's star persona with its masculine appeal off-screen, the film Kim portrays Errol Flynn's character, Mahbub Ali, in the same light that the genre of the Western film in Hollywood portrays the cowboy, ignoring the fact that Mahbub is, in fact, a Pathan and not a white man. MGM constructs Mahbub Ali as a solitary and self-efficient horse trader who lusts after his mistress, a whore, whom he treats with irreverence in much the same manner as the cowboy treats a dance-hall woman in the big Western.[44] MGM's characterization of Mahbub significantly overlooks the importance Kipling places on Mahbub Ali's race as an Asiatic from Kabul. Whereas Kipling underscores Mahbub's irrational temper, a stereotypical portrayal of the native, which does not allow Mahbub to become the romantic cowboy "figure of repose" (Warshow, "Movie Chronicle: The Westerner" 402),[45] MGM characterizes Mahbub as a detached and self-contented philanderer who seeks the company of whores solely in order to fulfill his physical needs. Kipling's Mahbub Ali is different from MGM's in that the novel's Mahbub makes reference neither to his involvement with whores, nor to his lust for women in general, but instead remains dedicated, both physically and philosophically, to Colonel Creighten's Great Game, the Way of the colonizer in India. Kipling's Mahbub does not pursue his mistress "the Flower of Delight . . . [at the] Gates of the Harpies" (Kim 510) for physical pleasure, but rather he is "at some pains to call on the one girl who, he had reason to believe, was a particular friend of a smooth-faced Kashmiri pundit" (Kim 510). What motivates Mahbub Ali to seek the company of women in the novel is not so much the erotic appeal of the "Flower of Delight," but rather his dedication to the Great Game which requires of him the particularly painful pursuit of so-called female "Delight." The novel's Mahbub becomes, in a sense, a stoic player of the Great Game whose rules of discipline and abstinence characterize Kipling's construction of masculinity. Kipling, therefore, portrays Mahbub as he does the lama who is reluctant to indulge in all physical pleasures that threaten to lead men away from their duties in following the Way: "Chela, know this . . . there are no liars like our bodies" (Kim 660), the lama tells Kim in the novel. The novel, therefore, remains true to the genre of the male romance by maintaining a very strict homosocial bond between men.

---

[43] This economy relies, according to Judith Mayne, on "so much of the ideology of the cinematic institution [which] is built simultaneously on the heterosexual couple as . . . the promise of romantic fulfillment" (Cinema and Spectatorship 98).

[44] The role of the whore in Kim mirrors that of the women in traditional Westerns: the Flower of Delight represents an encumbrance to the wild freedom that the cowboy-figure, in this case Flynn as Mahbub, embodies.

[45] For example, Kipling describes Mahbub as an Oriental whose "eyes blazed like red coals . . . [and who also] growled" (Kim 603).

Depending heavily on Errol Flynn's status as a dashing and suave star, MGM attempts to appeal to the ideal viewer's popular imagination by reconstructing the character of Mabub Ali to resemble the Flynn-like persona of the ultra-masculine frontiersman.[46]

---

[46] Earl Conrad writes that Flynn was "a total male constantly at work" (Errol Flynn 43), a perception of the actor that Hollywood tried desperately to

According to Robert Warshow,

> The Westerner is not . . . . compelled to seek love; he is prepared to accept it, perhaps, but he never asks of it more than it can give, and we see him constantly in situations where love is at best an irrelevance. (*Film Theory and Criticism* 403)

A writer of classical Hollywood Western films informs us that "The 'big' Western [must] capitalize[] on 'love stuff'... if [it is] to appeal to women in the audience ...[without whom] an audience is small" (Schnee, *New York Times* August 13, 1950). Consequently, MGM compensates for what is lacking in Kipling's narrative structure, particularly the heterosexual love interest, by appealing to its implied audience's awareness of Flynn's persona off-screen, indicating the ways in which extratextual elements in the cinematic apparatus are used to position the ideal viewer. In line with the big Western and other adventure films that are targeted at larger audiences, the first scene of *Kim* immediately frames the image of a native woman peering out of a window at Kim. She is, therefore, exposed and unveiled before the eyes of the implied viewer who accesses this prohibited world through Kim's eyes. The dialogue between Kim and the woman is directed at the woman's beauty and we learn that she is the mistress of Mahbub Ali played by Flynn. Kim tells Mahbub later that she is "younger than some and prettier than many that you've sent me to," a comment to which Mahbub responds, "Ahh, the sky's the same colour wherever you go." The comment that Helen Deutche, *Kim*'s screenwriter, has Mahbub say through Flynn's

---

maintain, regardless of Flynn's many problems with the law regarding his "oversexed" (Conrad 43) lifestyle.

voice in the film does not appear anywhere in the novel, and yet it is a very important line in the film because it illustrates the specific way in which Mahbub has been constructed for American audiences. The comment that Mahbub makes indicates that his character is cast in light of Flynn's persona as a licentious philanderer and/or in the image of the free and carefree cowboy. What Earl Conrad purports Flynn once to have said supports the possibility of Mahbub's alignment with Flynn's persona as a promiscuous figure later in life: "'They're all sisters under the skin,' he said, recollecting his amours" (Errol 73). Flynn is also supposed to have said in response to a question regarding his promiscuity that "from the time I began to have women, . . . on the assembly line basis, I discovered that the only thing you need, want or should have is the absolutely physical. Simply the physical" (Conrad, Errol 165). Although the ideal viewer is not expected to have access to Flynn's confessional statements, he is still expected to associate the actor with his image of sexual freedom and experimentalism. Noted for "his beauty (his fabled cock)" (Neil Bartlett, "The Voyeur's Revenge" 41) in a current article about his performance in The Adventures of Robin Hood, Flynn embodies a complicated persona: Bartlett writes that "no performer more completely lack[s]. . . sexual ambiguity or self-awareness than Flynn" ("The Voyeur's" 41). It is Flynn's "aggressive, athletic, dominant persona" (Bartlett 41) that, I believe, influences the film's characterization of Mahbub and, in turn, appeals to the ideal viewer's desire to watch the star-figure in action on-screen.

Although Flynn is in blackface as Mahbub, he remains an embodiment of the colonizer's manliness in India which, on the one hand, downplays what Kipling believed was Mahbub's racial inferiority as a Pathan, but, on the other hand, allows MGM to ride on the star's shoulders in promoting the marketability of the film. In order to secure the position of the colonizer in India and also, in turn, that of the ideal viewer, MGM must cast a star-figure like Flynn to play Mahbub in the place of a native actor, such as Sabu, who might represent all that is effeminate to the ideal viewer. By means of Flynn's presence on-screen, MGM secures a place in the film for the ideal viewer who, without Flynn, would experience a crisis of subjectivity as voyeur.

In line with the ways in which women are represented in the Western film, Mahbub's mistress plays a version of the femme fatale with her sense of self-possession and her manipulative charms that are meant to threaten the order of Colonel Creighten's Great Game to which Mabub belongs. The film's close-up of her shapely leg covered by her transparent 'harem pant' and her high-heeled gold slippers kicking Mahbub Ali twice in the ribs is an eroticized image of femininity that does not appear in Kipling's misogynist text.[47] Kipling's Flower of Delight objectified on screen is represented as suitable enough to attract Mahbub's attention. She is an image of alluring beauty that MGM not only eroticizes but also makes the object of Mahbub's, and the ideal viewer's, scopophilic pleasure. What I find intriguing about MGM's translation of Kipling's images, especially of women, is the perspective constructed by the camera eye from which the ideal viewer is positioned as a voyeur. Kim is accused by an angry native of being "a defiler of the women's quarters" to which Kim responds in jest, "A defiler of the rooftops?" The convergence of the "women's quarters" and the "rooftops" in this exchange between a native man and a white boy articulates the perspective from which the space of abjection, of coinciding desire and defilement, is exposed to the ideal viewer. Because Kim transgresses the boundaries that separate the civilized and barbaric worlds by means of his cross-cultural dressing and his invisibility on the rooftops, his eyes see what the ideal viewer can only imagine of the East: that is, the mystery that is "well guarded from all eyes" except from, the film suggests, Kim's eyes that force their way into the dark interiors of the women's quarters. Kipling's novel, in contrast, does not directly make this world of Indian women accessible to its implied reader, but maintains its voyeuristic command over the body as seen/scene by encoding the colonizer's scopophilic desire in the metaphor of India as a veiled country awaiting the colonizer's active unveiling. Kipling locates the feminine in the mystery of a veiled India that must be "penetrated far and far into the Backs of Beyond" (Kim 509). The colonizer's voyeuristic act of looking is, therefore, a violent penetration into the body of India which must be opened up for spectacular consumption.

---

[47] Edward Said describes Kipling's novel Kim as "an overwhelmingly male novel . . . [in which] women . . . Are remarkably few . . . and all of them are somehow debased or unsuitable for male attention -- prostitutes, elderly widows, or importunate and lusty women" (Culture and Imperialism 136-137).

The following is another example of Kipling's use of the metaphor of a veiled and feminized India: "Then the night fell, changing the touch of the air, drawing a low, even haze, like a gossamer veil of blue, across the face of the country" (*Kim* 535). The women's quarters that the film's voice-over narrator describes to us are, however, not simply an encoding of the female body in the metaphor of Mother India, but is rather the "harem" or secluded social space of women that has been popularized in Hollywood films. Consider, for example, the fantastical harem in the technicoloured film *The Thief of Baghdad* (1940) with its giggling women in sheer skirts and short blouses and, in typical Hollywood style, its many reflective ponds that duplicate the bodies of the almost naked nymph-like attendants of the Oriental princess as she enters the water to bathe. Reading the historical harem against Hollywood's King Solomon-style representations, Ella Shohat defines this social space of women as consisting of a "complex familial life and a strong network of female communality horizontally and vertically across class lines . . . [in the] Middle East" ("Gender and Culture of Empire" 50).[45] In the film *Kim*, the women's quarters are represented by MGM as a space of eroticized femininity that fails to be kept "well guarded from all eyes" because it is transgressed by Kim who devours this sight of seclusion from his position as voyeur on the rooftops, a position with which the ideal viewer identifies. The ideal viewer is told that through Kim's eyes he will also peep in on abjected identities -- on the women of the bazaar and other gutter dwellers -- an act of watching that consolidates Kim's and the viewer's collective fantasy of sexual omnipotence over the women's quarters.

---

[45] Ironically, Kipling refers to King Solomon once in *Kim* by describing Kim's demeanour while speaking, a description that conflates Kim's identity with that of the popularized King of harems: "'All women are thus.' Kim spoke as might have Solomon" (*Kim* 544). The irony in Kipling's rather underhanded challenge to the authority of Kim's perspective is actually, therefore, at the implied reader's expense.

In line with the genre of the male romance, the novel's world is that of the astute individualist, a masculine world devoid of all the evils of cultivated life and domesticity. Edward Said in Culture and Imperialism writes that Kipling's novel

> Kim celebrates the friendship of two men in a difficult, sometimes hostile environment [in which t]he American frontier and colonial India are quite different, but both bestow a higher priority on 'male bonding' than on a domestic or amorous connection between the sexes. (138)

Kim, for example, expresses the following belief in his conversation with the lama in Kipling's novel: "As I remember, . . . thou hadst told me that marriage and bearing were darkeners of the true light, stumbling-blocks upon the Way" (Kim 530).[43] Women, it is clear to Kim, must neither become the object of male desire nor intrude upon the bond between men who are following the Way and, therefore, also the Great Game. Kipling's novel Kim constructs an exclusive space of homosocial bonding in which Kim's only "sexual" encounter is the kiss he gives to the Woman of Shamlegh. This Woman, however, is represented as a masculinized figure who not only has five husbands, but who speaks hoarsely and describes herself as a "foul-faced... hillwoman" (Kim 656), a representation that carries overtones of Chaucer's Wife of Bath.[50] The so-called "merit" (Kim 656) or pleasure that Kim acquires from his encounter with "the Woman," therefore, is not so much a pubescent consummation of his heterosexuality as it is a narcissistic affirmation of his position as Sahib in India: "Thy face and thy walk and thy fashion of speech put me in mind of my Sahib" (Kim 655) the Woman tells Kim in the novel and, knowing this, "her hard eyes softened" (Kim 656).

---

[43] Kim's adherence to the Lama's Way represents "a form of sexual sublimation, a way of channelling the energy of the body away from sexuality; to become a 'real man' meant to invigorate the body toward a purpose other than pleasure or expenditure" (Maurizia Boscagli, Eye on the Flesh 87) which is also a tenet of the Sahib's Law of the Great Game.

Although South Asian women in Kipling's novel are represented as unsuitable for the affections of either the author or the implied (white, male) reader, their images provide the othered reader with the opportunity to become the object of the author's and the implied reader's look, an opportunity generally denied the racially othered reader. Consequently, in MGM's translation of Kipling's literary images of South Asian women into iconographic images, the othered spectator experiences rather contradictory sensations of both excitement and suffering at the thought of being affirmed visually on-screen as a filmic representation. The contradictory sensations that the othered viewer experiences point to the importance of Himani Bannerji's argument, stated above, concerning the paucity of erotically desirable images of South Asian women for the consumption of the cultural gaze at large, a paucity of images that denies the presence of the racially othered viewer as a representation in Hollywood's world of kitsch, pastiche, and iconographic reterritorialization. As an Indo-Canadian woman, I realize my own presence as a viewer, although not as a consumer or spectator, of images through my encounter with MGM's representations of Kipling's women, some of which are suitable for the attention of men, like the Flower of Delight, and others which are repellent objects like the cackling, witch-like Woman of Shamlegh. Forcing their way through the purdahs that keep South Asian women hidden from the ideal viewer's look, both Kipling and MGM unveil the mystery that the othered spectator has come to embody as a socially epidermalized presence. Consequently, I watch in horror as Kipling's women appear on the screen before me. I do not so much *identify* with these images as I come to *embody* them because I am so thoroughly implicated in them in terms of my survival as a (social) body dependent on the erotics of looking. As an othered viewer, I assume the position of the spectacularized-spectator, the exhibitionist, in defiance of the film's positioning of the ideal viewer as a voyeur-spectator of the Othered women on-screen. I watch the film, in other words, with an understanding of the way it gazes back at me through the cultural screen of the Social Imaginary, and with an understanding of the politics behind the look which defines me as invisible on-screen when, in fact, I embody visibility off-screen. The very contradiction behind my experience as a viewer of Kim forces me to look at images from a position of abjection, and from this abjected position I realize that my look is excessive: it is, in fact, the mere residuum left over from the libidinal economy of scopophilia.[51] It is not that I seek pleasure in my objectification on-screen, but rather that I must, if I desire presence, be objectified as a viewer. In other words, unless I force myself to identify with the images on-screen from the position of the subject, undergoing a masochistic subjectification that disavows my real experience as a racialized Other, I am prevented from becoming a voyeur-spectator of film by the very cinematic apparatus that positions the ideal viewer.

---

[50] There are many depictions of masculinized women in Kipling's narrative: for example, Kipling describes through Kim's eyes "a gang of changars--the women who have taken all the embankments of all the Northern railways under their charge-- [as] a flat-footed, big bosomed, strong-limbed, blue-petticoated clan of earth-carriers . . . belong[ing] to the caste whose men do not count" (Kim 534). Kipling's description of these working class native women carries overtones of the sketches of "the late Arthur J. Munby, well-known Victorian barrister and man of letters (1828-1910)" (McClintock, Imperial 76) whose representations of London's working class, especially of "the collierywoman[,] is the picture of maleness . . .face dark and hooded, the shoulders enormously bulky beneath a man's coat" (McClintock, Imperial 105-106). Kipling also describes old native women as desexualized objects, women "withered and undesirable, [who] do not...object to unveiling" (535). All of these women, as threats to the colonizer's maintenance of colonial power in India, represent abjected identities. Kristeva's idea of abjection when applied to the sexual politics of the novel Kim, suggests McClintock, illustrate the ways in which Kim is "constituted through the force of expulsion" (Imperial 71) because women in the novel act as the limit of Kim's identity embodying the threat of emasculation.

Another way in which MGM translates Kipling's literary images problematically, especially when we consider the politics of the gaze embedded in the ideal viewer's positioning by the cinematic apparatus, is its spectacularized representations of men extracted from Kipling's homosocial text. Kipling's novel is homosocial in that it replaces Kim's desexualized encounter with "the Woman" with the bond that develops between Kim and the Tibetan lama, and later between Kim and those men who play the colonizer's Great Game. Kipling writes that "Kim followed [the lama] like a shadow . . . [who] was his trove, and he proposed to take possession" (Kim 504). The obsessiveness with which Kim attaches himself to the lama is reciprocated by the lama who declares his "heart went out to [Kim]" (Kim 551). It is important first to recognize that in both the film and the novel, using the words of Ann McClintock, "Female sexuality . . . serves as a continual threat to male power" (Imperial Leather 70). However, whereas Kipling's novel represents solely the homo**social** bond between men in a world of abstinence and self-denial, MGM's film represents both the homosocial and the homo**erotic** bond between men in a world of hypermasculinity where, especially in terms of Flynn's sexualization of Mahbub Ali's character, the male body is on display. Boscagli defines hypermasculinity as the bodily "spectacle of eroticized masculinity" (Eye on The Flesh 204) which "blur[s] . . . established boundaries between [the body's] use and ornament, function and show, the necessary and the superfluous" (100). Kim's spectacle of the male body includes numerous performances of masculinity in which being a man in colonial India means garishly maintaining the masquerade of individuality, sexual or political prowess (depending on one's specific allegiance to the homosocial bond), and a self-contentment verging on narcissism. Hypermasculinity, therefore, is excessive in that masculinity becomes Hollywood's commodified image which lacks a real referent.

---

[51] My use of the term "residuum" recalls Deleuze and Guattari's "body without organs [which] is the ultimate residuum of a deterritorialized socius" (Anti-Oedipus 33), in this case the socius being the body of the Despot or the colonizer's prescription of the colonized's body according to his own desiring-production. It is precisely the colonized's inability to "desire" within the colonizer's libidinal economy because of her fetishized (i.e. capitalized) skin that decodes the flows of the colonizer's desiring-production.

In MGM's translation of Kipling's representations, not only is "the linguistic semiotic code . . . subordinated to the visual semiotic code . . . [that places] attention . . . on the erotic spectacle of the body" (Morton, "Tracking the Sign" 109), but also the homosociality that defines the colonial Game or Way is subordinated to a heterosexist narrative economy in which the homoerotic look is encoded. More specifically, although *Kim* (1950) begins as an ethnographic docudrama of adventure and exotic intrigue, a very different order of erotics arises between looks because of the film's introduction of Errol Flynn as Mahbub Ali whose manly presence becomes a potential object of scopic desire both on the screen and off.[52] The spectacularization of the male body ensues from both Errol Flynn's aura as a star and MGM's specific representation of the relationship between Kim and Mahbub Ali as friends or partners against evil. MGM constructs a film that spectacularizes the male body by conforming not only to the cowboy Western genre, but also to 'the buddy film' which Judith Mayne suggests in *Cinema and Spectatorship* "is as drawn to a homosexual connection as it is repelled by it" (97). MGM's development of the "buddy theme" between Kim and Mahbub, both characters sportively playing Colonel Creighten's Great Game, initiates, furthermore, many questions concerning the stability of what is masqueraded as masculine in the film. For example, before venturing into the mysterious domain of the women's quarters, Mahbub Ali conducts a very interesting verbal and gestural dialogue with Kim. As Kim fondles Mahbub's sheep skin coat hanging in the corner of the room, Mahbub rubs spices on his beard in preparation for his encounter with the Flower of Delight. "Masala, what perfume!" Mahbub tells Kim, "The beard becomes silk. Try it next time you grow one." The jest with which Mahbub teases Kim about his adolescent longing for entrance into manhood is accompanied by Mahbub's self-aggrandizing gestures as he pats his beard with masala and peers into his mirror. Mahbub only occasionally looks at Kim who assumes the position as adoring onlooker. The exchange of looks on-screen and its appeal to the look of the viewer off-screen self-consciously constructs a scenerio in which the male body becomes an eroticized spectacle: Mahbub's heterosexual desire for the prostitute is a performance of desire that hinges on Kim's homosocial reverence. In this scene, Mahbub's desire to be seen as the object of the Kim's gaze suggests not only the exhibitionism of MGM's Mahbub Ali, but also MGM's eroticized spectacularization of Errol Flynn on-screen. The film, however, must encode its representation of the male body, with all of its erotic possibilities, in a socially acceptable form of desire; consequently, the film tries to portray Kim's act of looking and gesturing, his pawing and smelling of Mahbub's garments, as indicative of the boy's heterosexual longing for physical maturity and his desire to become a virile lady's man like the film's Mahbub Ali. Kim's desire is portrayed as a longing to copy Mahbub's irreverence to the dangers of life, including his nonchalance towards the constant threat of femme fatales like the prostitute he is preparing to meet.[53]

---

[52] In *The Woman at the Keyhole*, Judith Mayne writes that "the very establishment of th[e] ego-ideal often relies on a slippage between the male as subject and as object -- on, that is, the possibility of homosexual desire as well as same-sex (and implicitly heterosexual) identification" (67). Flynn's Mahbub, while providing the ideal viewer with a perspective with which to identify in the narrative structure of the film, also becomes the potential object of the viewer's desire depending on the viewer's positioning off-screen.

The source of the bonding between the Pathan and the boy, however, is clearly not Mahbub's anticipation of what he calls his "hour of beauty" with the prostitute, but rather Mahbub's and Kim's recognition of their shared participation in the Great Game or the Law of the Sahib which provides them, the film, and the ideal viewer with a sense of psychic coherence. The very sport of the Great Game with its secretive rules and tenets -- self-denial, voyeurism, and cross-dressing -- ensures Mahbub's and Kim's active presence as partners against evil. On-screen, therefore, Mahbub and Kim are generally made objects of the camera's gaze when they are in action, when they are either secretively discussing or carrying out their missions as spies. Maurizia Boscagli writes that "the 'big game' . . . represented a form of sexual sublimation . . . [because] to become a 'real man' meant to invigorate the body toward a purpose other than pleasure and expenditure" (Eye On the Flesh 87). However, Mahbub's obsession with his self-image and Kim's fascination with Mahbub's performance of masculinity clearly suggest a spectacularization of the male body to be consumed as a pleasurable sight or as an object of homosexual and/or heterosexual scopophilia.

I am particularly intrigued by Mayne's comment about the homoerotics behind the "buddy film" genre because of Kim's display of passionate **hetero**sexual bonding between men which, I think, allows for a development not only of a homoerotics between looks on-screen, but also of multiple identifications with Kim's filmic images off-screen which counteract the ideal viewer's paranoiacally heterosexist identification.[54] The "buddy" theme, furthermore, problematizes both our definitions of masculinity and the distinctions we make between heterosexuality and homosexuality. Referring to the theories of Steve Neale, Leon Hunt writes that "the male body cannot be marked explicitly as the erotic object of another male look" without an ensuing sexual anxiety and disavowal (Hunt, "What Are Big Boys Made Of?" 69). Because MGM's film constructs a narrative that focuses on the development of a boy becoming Sahib in India, it must contain the eroticism of Kim's look on-screen and the ideal viewer's off-screen within a heterosexual libidinal economy that marks the male body as an object of a narcissistic, as opposed to a homoerotic, desire. In other words, the director of Kim, Victor Saville, must position Mahbub before a mirror even though the motivation for his self-fashioning is Kim's adoring look from behind. The ways in which Mahbub and Kim redirect their desires in the film clearly demonstrate, therefore, the film's sexual paranoia in making the male body an erotic spectacle.

---

[53] In the film, Mahbub light-heartedly tells Kim after killing a man in his caravan, "Ahh, this is a world of danger to peaceful men like thee and me." Mahbub's ability to stay level-headed and unaffected after the murder suggests how closely MGM modelled Mahbub after the cowboy-figure of Hollywood.

---

[54] By passionate heterosexual bonding, I am referring to the ways in which men in the film -- for example, Colonel Creighten, Mahbub Ali, the lama, Kim, Hurree Chunder, and Lurgen Sahib -- are passionately united on the basis of their shared allegiance to the Way or the Great Game. This shared and passionate allegiance, I believe, manifests itself in the form of an exchange of looks and body gestures that have the potential to induce very different kinds of responses (i.e. multiple identifications) in the film's audience at large.

MGM's objectification of the male body as a sight of pleasure is demonstrated several times in the film. Kim, in order to escape the confines of being a Sahib during his holidays from Xavier school has his skin dyed with walnut leaves by a native woman whose body we see from behind but whose face is never shown to the viewer. By refusing to film the actual eye of the woman, the camera never allows the viewer to identify with the native woman's look. Instead, the ideal viewer, in his identification with the camera eye, encounters Kim's brown skin and native dress full-bodied on the screen. By means of the blackface and the costuming that Kim dons, the spectator is made aware of the performativity of the colonizer's identity, a performativity that appeals to the ideal viewer's desire to escape into the exotic space of the film's symbolic constructions. Such a performitivity, furthermore, indicates the ease with which the white actor can assume blackface and disguise the colonizer by cross-culturally and cross-racially slipping into the sartorial and epidermal identity of the fetishized Other, a disguise that classical Hollywood prevents black actors from assuming. As Boscagli suggests,

> the exoticism and savagery of the native other do not rely on mere nakedness, which had been the usual trope . . . in nineteenth[-]century versions of the colonial encounter, but on the operation of costuming, exposing, and decorating the body. (Eye 167)

The self-fashioning that Kim undergoes, however, is not the object of the camera's gaze for long because the viewer is immediately returned to Kim's perspective from which he is allowed to enter the private spaces of native life. The camera shifts its angle to focus on the spectacle of Mahbub Ali's caravan and the spectator comes to understand that Kim's performative identity is a direct offshoot of his position as colonizer in India. Kim's cultural and racial cross-dressing reinstates his voyeuristic position as a Sahib, as an invisible eye on-screen through which the ideal viewer can look in on native life until the removal of the walnut stain by Mahbub Ali. Mahbub's removal of the walnut stain from Kim's skin carries overtones of the nineteenth-century "Victorian dirt fetish" (McClintock, Imperial Leather 152).[55] If indeed, as Mahbub tells Kim, "a true man like a true horse runs with his breed," Kim must remove the taint of his association with the native prior to his official entry into the Great Game that comes with his training under Lurgen Sahib. The scene involving Kim's ritual cleansing by Mahbub Ali portrays not only the initiation rite of Kim's passage into Sahibhood, but also the spectacularization of the colonizer's body based on the colour of his skin. While Mahbub scrubs off the walnut stain from Kim's skin, he tells Kim, "you'll like being with Lurgen Sahib." Mahbub's statement indicates, especially given the context of Kim's nakedness in the tub, his repressed feelings of jealousy towards the purity of Kim's whiteness which is as easy to restore as are the privileges of Kim's race that come with the removal of the walnut stain. Mahbub's statement also indicates, more importantly, his repressed feelings of jealousy in sharing Kim with other members of the Great Game.[56] The bonding Mahbub experiences with Kim, their partnership as buddies, must now be extended to the entire team playing the Game. The jealousy that is implied in Mahbub's statement, however, is undiscernible from Flynn's gestures and facial expressions. Flynn, as a white actor playing the part of Mahbub, appears totally unaware of the irony involved in the Pathan's removal of Kim's bodily stain and, instead, allows the character of Mahbub, a Pathan or Afghani whom Kipling considered inferior to the white man, to become totally implicated in his own star-persona as a dashing ladies' man, unaffected by the look of the camera. Indifferent also, therefore, to the viewer's look off-screen, Flynn looks at Kim with, what Neil Bartlett calls, his typical "blandness" ("The Voyeur's" 41): "his is the least knowing smile in Hollywood" (Bartlett 41).

---

[55] McClintock writes that "In Victorian culture, the bodily relation to dirt expressed a social relation to labor . . . [but] [c]lass and gender distinctions were displaced and represented as natural racial differences across time and space" (Imperial Leather 154), namely within the context of imperialism.

In Kim's spectacularization of the male body -- i.e. the sexualization of Mahbub's character through Flynn's persona, and Kim's body adorned in racial and cultural drag -- the ideal viewer is positioned by the camera as a voyeur of the cleansing ritual on-screen which appeals to his own sense of racial coherence. Kim, after all, is a white Anglo-Indian and Mahbub's cleansing ritual returns the viewer, through his identification with Kim, to the safety that his whiteness assures. In my own viewing of the film, however, I am denied the opportunity of identifying either with Dean Stockwell's Kim or with Errol Flynn's Mahbub because both actors playing these characters remain oblivious to the privilege that their white bodies grant them. Allowing them to engage in the freedom that accompanies cultural and racial transvestism, the whiteness of Stockwell's and Flynn's bodies ensures that both actors remain oblivious to their roles in native blackface. As an Indo-Canadian woman whose epidermal visibility cannot be shed like Kim's walnut body-stain, however, I know the impossibility of donning the blackface that Kim so easily slips on in the narrative and that Flynn so easily performs as a white, male, Hollywood star. Unlike the ideal viewer, I cannot simply return to the comfort or privilege of being white. Instead, through the camera's objectification of Kim's epidermal masquerade, I understand that I am forever the Other of the ideal viewer's look and can never, as a female and as a visible minority in Canada, impersonate the Other of my self. My Other is, in fact, that which "precedes and possesses me, and through such possession causes me to be" (Kristeva, Powers 10). My Other is, in fact, my ~~self~~. I am speaking, more specifically, about myself as the Other who watches Kim and experiences the contradictory sensations of excitement and suffering as a viewer.

---

[56] "How will you manage without me Mahbub Ali?" Kim asks at the end of the film as Mahbub cradles him in his arms parading on a horse with the regiment of the Mavericks. This image of Kim as a young Sahib paraded in the arms of a gallant star-figure like Flynn recalls not only Flynn's romantic image off-screen, but also an earlier image in the film, when Kim is swept up into the arms of Mahbub and is placed in the Pathan's lap as they ride into the desert. These images of Mahbub and Kim astride a horse together are interesting because they suggest the ways in which Kim, "the friend of all the world," becomes the object not only of the lama's look, but also of Mahbub Ali's look, especially as Mahbub is performed through the figure of Flynn whose past roles in films align his look with that of the romantic, leading hero. Colonel Creighten's look suggests a similar homoeroticism in his encounters with Kim, especially during a scene in which the young Sahib is interrogated for his misbehaviour after being brought to Creighten Sahib by Mahbub. Creighten's desire becomes apparent when he tells Lurgen Sahib that Kim "is very fond of Mahbub, and of me a little" (Kim 602).

On the one hand, I am excited by Kim's and Flynn's performance of blackface which ensures my visibility before the camera's and, therefore also, the ideal viewer's looks because of my implication in the epidermal fetishization of these characters' bodies on-screen. On the other hand, I am objectified by the camera's and the ideal viewer's looks which establish in place of "me" an epidermally fetishized Other that exists "previous to my advent" (Kristeva, Powers 10). I do not so much identify with the characters of Kim in blackface and Flynn as Mahbub, but rather I suffer, like Fanon, from wearing the surface of my "skin like an open sore" (The Wretched 56), from objectifying my epidermis, my metonymically defined *self*, before the looks of the ideal viewer and the camera in place of being seen by the cultural gaze that ensures one's *presence* as a consumer of images. The only way that I am able to perform the role of a spectator, therefore, is by wearing my skin, by becoming a body upon which desire's antithesis, repulsion, assembles like "an open sore." In other words, because the colour that Mahbub washes off of Kim is the colour of dirt that I have come to accept as "me" in Canada, I can only masquerade my self by entering this social body. As I watch Kim, I am reminded of my first day at kindergarten and the girl who could not help from squinting every time she looked at me and called me "Cucka face." I now willingly enter this prescribed, shit-coloured body because it is the colour of shit, the dirty excess of "the happy, white bourgeois home" (Bannerji 145), that I have come to represent in Canada, and that provides for a me a way of participating in the viewing of films like Kim. Kim's excoriation of this dirt from the surface of his skin, therefore, does not produce in me the comfort of racial coherence, but rather becomes a violent spectacle of self-mutilation that eliminates my presence as a consumer of images because I realize that I am each skin cell that floats in Kim's tub. Mahbub's scrubbing off of Kim's walnut stain is a painful removal of my own skin which defines me on- and off-screen.

My viewing of Kim is based not on *desire* as it has been traditionally defined, but on my "exclusion" (Kristeva, Powers 6) from participation in the consumption of images as a spectator. I do not seek, therefore, a narcissistic completion of my identity as a spectator-voyeur, but realize, like Fanon, the impossibility of seeking an object (i.e. an Other) in order to complete my *self*. I realize, in other words, that the epidermal fetishization of my body will forever attach itself both to my look and to the colonizers' looks by which I am defined before the cultural gaze. It is this awareness, of the politics behind the look and the gaze, that allows me to keep watching films even though such contradictory sensations arise from my viewing situation. Neither masochistic nor exhibitionist in the traditional sense of partial drives, my watching of films like Kim is an act of accepting the repulsion and spectacularization that I have come to embody as an Indo-Canadian woman: it is an act that defies all attempts to force the othered viewer of film and her rootedness in social experience into the scopophilic narcissism of the ideal viewer's psychic experience.

Works Cited

Allen, Charles. "In the grip of Raj Mania." The Listener. 24 Jan. 1985: 10-11.

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: On Ideology." Critical Theory Since 1965. Eds. Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle. Tallahassee: Florida State UP, 1989. 238-250.

Andrew, Dudley. "Praying Mantis: Enchantment and Violence in French Cinema of the Exotic." Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film. Eds. Matthew Bernstein and Gaylyn Studlar. New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1997. 232-252.

Arata, Stephen D. "A Universal Foreignness: Kipling in the Fin-de-Siecle." English Literature in Transition 1880-1920. 36.1 (1993): 7-38.

Bannerji, Himani. "Popular Images of South Asian Women." Returning the Gaze: Essays on Racism, Feminism and Politics. Ed. Himani Banerji. Toronto: Sister Vision Press, 1993. 144-152.

Bartlett, Neil. "The Voyeur's Revenge: The Adventures of Robinhood." Sight and Sound. 2.5 (1992): 41

Baudrillard, Jean. Simulations. Trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman. New York: Semiotext[e], 1983.

---. "Requiem for the Media." Video Culture: A Critical Investigation. Ed. John Hanhardt. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1986. 124-143

Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Video Culture: A Critical Investigation. Ed. John Hanhardt. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1986. 27-52.

Bergstrom, Janet. "Enunciation and Sexual Difference." Feminism and Film Theory. Ed. Constance Penley. New York: Routledge, 1988. 155-186.

Berkhofer, Robert. The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present. New York: Vintage, 1979.

Bhabha, Homi K. The Location of Culture. London: Routledge, 1994.

Bingham, Dennis. Acting Male: Masculinities in the films of James Stewart, Jack Nicholson, and Clint Eastwood. New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1994.

Blackburn, William. "All about a Boy: Kipling's Novel, M.G.M's Film." Children's Novels and the Movies. Ed. Douglas Street. New York: Ungar, 1983. 101-110.

Boscagli, Maurizia. Eye on the Flesh: Fashions of Masculinity in the Early Twentieth Century. New York: Westview Press, 1996.

The Charge of the Light Brigade. Dir. Michael Curtiz. Perf. Errol Flynn, and Olivia deHavilland. Warner Bros, 1936.

Clifford, James. "On Collecting Art and Culture." The Cultural Studies Reader. Ed. Simon During. New York: Routledge, 1993. 49-73.

---. "Traveling Cultures." Cultural Studies. Ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler. New York: Routledge, 1992. 96-116.

Conrad, Earl. Errol Flynn: A Memoir. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1978.

Copjec, Joan. "India Song/Son nom de Venise dans Calcutta Desert: The Compulsion to Repeat." Feminism and Film Theory. Ed. Constance Penley. New York: Routledge, 1988. 229-245.

Davis, Douglas. "Filmgoing/Videogoing: Making Distinctions." Video Culture: A Critical Investigation.Ed. John Hanhardt. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1986. 270-273.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984.

Deutsch, Helen. "The 'Congo Kid' Herself Speaks Up." The New York Times Film Reviews. 30 Apr. 1950: A.

Doane, Mary Ann. "Caught and Rebecca: The Inscription of Femininity as Absence." Feminism and Film Theory. Ed. Constance Penley. New York: Routledge, 1988. 196-215.

The Drum. Dir. Alexander Korda. Perf. Sabu, Raymond Massey, and Valerie Hobson. London Film, 1938.

Fanon, Frantz. Black Skin White Masks. Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove Weidfeld, 1967.

---. The Wretched of the Earth. Trans. Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Press, 1963.

French, Philip. "Kipling and the Movies." The Age of Kipling. Ed. John Gross. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.

Friedberg, Anne. "A Denial of Difference: Theories of Cinematic Identification." Psychoanalysis and Cinema. Ed. Ann Kaplan. London: Routledge, 1990. 36-45.

Gerstein, Evelyn. Rev. of Kim, dir. by Victor Saville. The Saturday Review. 16 Dec. 1950: 28-29.

Green, Roger Lancelyn, ed. Kipling: A Critical Heritage. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971.

Hantung, Phillip T. Rev. of Gunga Din, dir. by George Stevens. The Commonweal. 10 Feb. 1939: 441.

Harvey, David. The Condition of Postmodernity. London: Blackwell, 1989.

Heath, Stephen. Questions of Cinema. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1981.

Hoellering, Franz. Rev. of _Gunga Din_. dir. by George Stevens. _The Nation_. 4 Feb. 1939: 158.

Hunt, Leon. "What are Big Boys Made of? _Spartacus_, _El Cid_ and the Male Epic." _You Tarzan: Masculinity, Movies and Men_.Eds. Pat Kirkham and Janet Thumim. London: Lawrence, 1993. 65-83.

Jameson, Fredric. _Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism_. Durham: Duke UP, 1991.

Kim. Dir. Victor Saville. Perf. Errol Flynn, Dean Stockwell, Paul Lukas, and Robert Douglas. MGM, 1950.

Kipling, Rudyard. _Departmental Ditties, Barrack Room Ballads and Other Verses_. New York: Doubleday, 1925.

---. _Letters of Marque_. New York: P.F. Collier & Son, n.d.

---. _The Naulahka: A Story of East and West_. New York: Doubleday and McClure Company, 1899.

---. _Plain Tales From the Hills_. New York: Doubleday, 1934.

---. _Soldiers Three, Story of the Gadsbys, In Black and White_. n.p.: Doubleday, 1915.

---. _Something of Myself_. London: MacMillan, 1937.

---. _The Jungle Book, The Second Jungle Book, Just So Stories, Puck of Pook's Hill, Kim_. London: Octopus Books, 1901, 1984.

Kristeva, Julia. _Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection_. Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1982.

Lacan, Jacques. _Ecrits: A Selection_. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton, 1977.

---. _The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis_. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton, 1978.

Leibfred, Philip. "Kipling On Film." *Films in Review*. 45.1-2 (1994): 28-35.

Lenihan, John H. "English Classics for Cold War America: MGM's Kim (1950), Ivanhoe (1952), and Julius Caesar (1953)." *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 20.3 (1992): 42-51.

Low, Gail Ching-Liang. *White Skins Black Masks: Representation and Colonialism*. London: Routledge, 1996.

MacInnes, Colin. "Kipling and the Music Halls." *The Age of Kipling*. Ed. John Gross. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.

Mayne, Judith. *Cinema and Spectatorship*. New York: Routledge, 1995. -

---. *The Woman at the Keyhole: Feminism and Women's Cinema*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990.

McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. New York: Routledge, 1995.

McClure, John A. *Kipling and Conrad: The Colonial Fiction*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981.

Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and Cinema*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1977.

Mohanty, Satya P. "Drawing the Color Line: Kipling and the Culture of Colonial Rule." *The Bounds of Race: Perspectives on Hegemony and Resistance*. Ed. Dominick LaCapra. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991. 311-43.

Morton, Walt. "Tracking the Sign of Tarzan: Trans-Media Representation of a Pop-Culture Icon." *You Tarzan: Masculinity, Movies, and Men*. Eds. Pat Kirkham and Janet Thumim. London: Lawrence, 1993. 106-125.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Feminism and Film*

Theory. Ed. Constance Penley. New York: Routledge, 1988. 57-78.

---. "Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' inspired by Duel in the Sun." Feminism and Film Theory. Ed. Constance Penley. New York: Routledge, 1988. 69-79.

Nandy, Ashis. "The Psychology of Colonialism: Sex, Age, and Ideology in British India." Psychiatry. 45 (1982): 197-217.

"New Films: Kim." Newsweek 18 Dec. 1950: 93.

"The New Pictures: Kim." Time 11 Dec. 1950: 100.

Parry, Ann. "Reading Formations in the Victorian Press: The Reception of Kipling." Literature and History 11.2 (1985): 254-63.

Parry, Benita. Delusions and Discoveries: Studies On India In the British Imagination 1880-1930. London: Penguin, 1972.

Pollock, Griselda. "Empire, Identity and Place: Masculinities in Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan." Me Jane: Masculinity, Movies and Men. Eds. Pat Kirkham and Janet Thumim. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1995.

Resaldo, Renato. "After Objectivism." The Cultural Studies Reader. Ed. Simon During. New York: Routledge, 1993. 104-117.

Rev. of Gunga Din. dir. by George Stevens. Time. 6 Feb. 1939: 33.

Rev. of Kim. dir. by Victor Saville. Newsweek. 18 Dec. 1950: 93.

Rev. of Kim. dir. by Victor Saville. Time. 11 Dec. 1950: 100.

Ross, Stanley Ralph, and Jay Robert Nash. eds. The Motion Picture Guide: 1927-1983. Chicago: Cinebooks, 1985.

Said, Edward. Orientalism. New York: Vintage, 1979.

---. Culture and Imperialism. New York: Vintage, 1994.

Schnee, Charles. "Boots and Saddles: Some notes on the 'Big,' or Adult-

Type Westerns, by a Man Who Writes Them." The New York Times Film Reviews. 13 Aug. 1950: A.

Shohat, Ella. "Gender and Culture of Empire: Toward a Feminist Ethnography of the Cinema." Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film. Eds. Matthew Bernstein and Gaylyn Studlar. New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1997. 19-66

Silverman, Kaja. Male Subjectivity at the Margins. New York: Routledge, 1992.

---. The Threshold of the Visible World. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Straub, Kristina. "Reconstructing the Gaze: Voyeurism in Richardson's Pamela." Gender: Literary and Cinematic Representation Ed. Jeanne Rupport. Gainseville: UP of Florida, 1994. 66-81.

Suleri, Sara. The Rhetoric of English India. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1992.

Sullivan, Zoreh T. Narratives of Empire: The Fictions of Rudyard Kipling. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993.

Taylor, Lucien. ed. Visualizing Theory: Selected Essays from the V.A.R. 1990-1994. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Twitchell, James B. Carnival Culture: The Trashing of Taste in America. New York: Columbia UP, 1992.

Warshow, Robert. "Movie Chronicle: The Westerner." Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings. Eds. Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP, 1974. 401-416.

Young, Robert. Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race. London: Routledge, 1995.

Zizek, Slavoj. Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through

Popular Culture. Cambridge: October Books, 1992.

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Sumita Lall

PLACE OF BIRTH: Windsor, Ontario

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1973

EDUCATION: University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario
1991-1995 B.A.