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'Kim' is a work that could receive very different reviews depending on the biases of the reviewer.

Any professor from the English department of my alma mater (Rutgers) would insist that 'Kim' should never under any circumstances receive any praise as it is racist, glorifies imperialism, was written by a dead white male, and lacks a political philosophy acceptable to a modern progressive liberal. Well, I suppose that it lacks any real political philosophy (except some very general complimentary comments about democracy) and Rudyard Kipling is dead, white and male, but the first two comments are completely wrong and this sort of review is the voice of ignorance.

A staunch traditionalist, conservative would insist that it is a canonical work that should be read by every school child as a superior example of English literature and the epitome of the written English language. This is equally ill-informed and ill-considered.

'Kim' is a wonderful story of an orphan in India (the part that is now Pakistan; Abid-please consider it a gesture of respect that I mention the change in geography) in the late 1800s. Kim is the son of an Irish soldier raised by locals, familiar with the customs and languages of the Hindus and Muslims of the area who gets recruited by the British to spy for them. Kim acts as a guide for a Tibetan Buddhist priest who is on a quest in India, broadening his knowledge of the cultures of his world and giving him an excuse to travel even further. He comes upon his father's regiment, and the officers of the regiment arrange for Kim to attend a 'proper' British school. Throughout the story, a British spymaster is helping Kim receive an education (both formal and in the skills needed to serve the British rule in India) and arranging for Kim to carry messages and run small but important tasks for him.

Throughout the book, the only Indian group that is treated with disrespect is Hindus who have sacrificed their own culture's customs in order to get ahead in the British government. Frequently, the low opinion of the British held by the Indians (Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist) is mentioned,

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and is usually pretty funny. The other European powers that are mention in the book are not treated with respect, but that is understandable (at least to me in context; other readers will have to make up their own minds).