

**Double Visions:
Eastern Mysticism in Kipling's *Kim*
and Forster's *A Passage to India***

David Lucking

(*University of Salento*)

Abstract

This article examines Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* and E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* from the point of view of the religious elements, deriving from Buddhism and Hinduism respectively, contained within them. What is entailed by the clash of cultures depicted in both works is a confrontation between different conceptions of the world, and more especially of the value of action within that world. If the story of the Buddha, and more particularly of the Bodhisattva, provides Kipling with a metaphor for the complementary quests of Kim and the lama in *Kim*, it is I suggest one of the cardinal religious texts of Vedantic Hinduism, the *Bhagavad Gita*, that provides the metaphorical underpinnings of *A Passage to India*.

Key Words – E.M. Forster; Rudyard Kipling; *A Passage to India*; *Kim*; Buddhism; Hinduism

1. The «peculiar gift of India»

My intention in the following pages is to contribute my widow's mite to a conversation, pursued by now for many years, concerning the manner in which Eastern religious thought impinges upon the works of two British writers closely associated with India in the minds of many readers. These are Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster, and the works I will be discussing are what are often regarded as being their most significant novels, if for no other reason than that they constitute what one critic has described as «the major literary monuments of British rule in India» (Trivedi 2020: 260). Kipling's *Kim* was published in book form in 1901, and Forster's *A Passage to India* in 1924, although its gestation dates to a period in which *Kim* was enjoying considerable popularity and its author had recently been awarded the Nobel Prize for literature¹. Both writers had intimate personal experience of India, though of very different kinds. Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay, where his father was a school principal and museum curator, and although like most Anglo-Indian children of his generation he received his schooling in England he returned to his birthplace at the age of sixteen and remained there for the following seven years. A number of his works are set in India, but of these it is *Kim* for which he is most often remembered today. E.M. Forster was not Anglo-Indian as Kipling was, but he did pay two extended visits to India, during the second of which he worked as the private secretary for the Maharaja of a native state, and he wrote and edited several works in which India figures large. The most famous of these is, of course, *A Passage to India*.

Forster's choice of titles is significant. In 1870 the American poet Walt Whitman published a poem entitled «Passage to India», in which, celebrating the momentous engineering feats that had done so much to facilitate communication and transportation between the continents of the world – the Suez Canal had been opened a year before – he envisages a future in which Christopher Columbus's dream of linking East and West has been triumphantly fulfilled:

Bridging the three or four thousand miles of land travel,
Tying the Eastern to the Western sea,
The road between Europe and Asia. (Whitman 1993: 249)

Both *Kim* and *A Passage to India* might be read as commentaries on this enthusiastic vision, and in one edition of his work Forster explicitly acknowledges that his title is inspired by that of Whitman's poem (Forster 1965: xxix). Whitman's anticipation of a world in which «All these separations and gaps shall be taken up, and hook'd and link'd together», and «Nature and Man shall be disjoin'd and diffused no more» (Whitman 1993: 251-252), struck a chord with Forster. He had used the phrase «Only connect» as the epigraph to his novel *Howards End*, published in 1910, and his belief in the necessity of forging links between different cultures, different mentalities, and even different aspects of the individual self, was central to his thinking. But when it came to the relation between Britain and India things were very far from being as simple as might have been wished, because in the course of his sojourns in India he became aware of the unresolvable nature of the tension between East and West, between different and incompatible mentalities that no amount of merely physical proximity could reconcile. At a certain point in *A*

¹ For an account of Forster's complex and in some ways ambivalent view of Kipling's work, which acknowledges the older writer's genius but at the same time critiques it on political and aesthetic grounds, see Lackey 2007.

Passage to India, an Indian named Aziz tells a young Englishman that, however much personal sympathy might be felt between individuals belonging to their respective countries, «the two nations cannot be friends» (Forster 1974: 306). Whitman's vision of «The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage», and «The lands to be welded together» (Whitman 1993: 248), is in other words understood to be a wistful fantasy that can never be realized in practice.

That Kipling was also deeply conscious of this gap would seem to be indicated in the opening line of one of his most frequently cited poems, «The Ballad of East and West», which begins «Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet» (Kipling 1929: 75). This is not all there is to the matter, however, because Kipling, while appearing to acknowledge the fact that convergence and reconciliation between the mentalities of East and West are impossible in practical terms, also suggests that there are ways in which the differences can be transcended. There is division, it is true, but there also exists the possibility of mutual understanding. The line I have just quoted from Kipling's ballad is closely followed by others of a quite different tenor:

But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!
(Kipling 1929: 75)

These two lines effectively deny the trenchant assertion with which the poem opens. Those whom the poet describes as «strong men», whatever their race or class or religion, can after all develop a relationship with one another which is almost fraternal. The idea is that there are certain values held in common by such men that conduce not only to reciprocal respect but even, in some cases, to genuine friendship. This is what happens with the two protagonists of Kipling's ballad, one of whom is a British colonel's son, and the other a brigand harassing British forces on the North-West Frontier of the Indian Empire. Though one represents the mentality of the imperialist, and the other that of the indigenous tribesman resisting imperial incursions, they pass beyond their initial antagonism to exchange gifts and pledge blood brotherhood with one another. For such men, notwithstanding the ethnic and cultural differences that divide them, the gulf between East and West is effectively, if only provisionally, annulled.

The shared values of which Kipling is speaking in his poem are of course the quintessentially masculine virtues he attributes to «strong men», preeminent among which are courage in the face of danger and the capacity for endurance. Forster's personal value system was radically different from that of Kipling, but nonetheless, as Eloise Knapp Hay points out (Hay 1984: 129-30), there is an analogy to this poem to be found in *A Passage to India*. The Indian doctor Aziz encounters for the final time the Englishman Fielding, who in the past has been a close friend but from whom, once again for reasons of diverging ethnic and cultural allegiances, he has been long estranged. In the course of their last conversation together Aziz, who has earlier declared that the «two nations cannot be friends», promises Fielding that India will eventually become independent of Britain. «If it's fifty five-hundred years we shall get rid of you», he says: «yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea» (Forster 1974: 317). This sounds uncompromising enough, but what is more important is what he says next. «And then», he adds, «[...] you and I shall be friends» (Forster 1974: 317).

What we have in the cases of both Kipling and Forster, then, is a seeming contradiction, a simultaneous perception of diversity and even enmity, on the one hand, and of unity, or at least communion, on the other. What is interesting is that the two works

I am discussing here – *Kim* and *A Passage to India* – both, though in somewhat different ways, make use of religious metaphors to articulate this contradiction. And even more interesting is the fact that the metaphors they employ are derived not from the Christian culture with which their authors were most immediately conversant, but from rival religious traditions upon which, in the evangelical activities of certain individuals and institutions present in their works at least, Christianity was attempting to impose itself, the traditions of the East itself. The religions they draw on are Buddhism, in the case of Kipling, and Hinduism, in that of Forster.

However different the two men were in temperament and sensibility, as well as in political and ideological orientation, Forster was acutely aware of the looming presence of Kipling when he wrote *A Passage to India*, and given the setting of his novel could hardly have avoided being influenced by it. In a lecture delivered in 1909, shortly after Kipling had received the Nobel Prize, he praises *Kim* in no uncertain terms as «the greatest of all his books» (Forster 2007: 21)². And in elaborating on this judgement it is specifically the religious dimension of the work he singles out for attention:

Kim is Kipling. It is the one book that we must bear in mind when we are trying to estimate his genius, for it contains the spiritual standard by which all his developments must be measured. Mysticism may be a mistake but no one will deny this – that if once a man shows traces of it, those traces must be carefully scanned by all who are trying to understand him. To have felt, if only for a moment, that this visible world is an illusion, to have conceived, however faintly, that the real is the unseen, to have had even a passing desire for the One is at once to be marked off from all who have not thus felt, thus conceived, thus desired. There is no explanation of the gift of mysticism; [...] only one thing is certain; it is the peculiar gift of India, and India has given it to Kipling, as he gave it to his boy hero, Kim. (Forster 2007: 21)

«India», says Forster, «is the most important religious influence that Kipling has ever felt» (Forster 2007: 22). However strenuously Kipling advocates the rigours of Calvinism with its stern emphasis on duty and hard work, Forster remarks, «behind it all there remains the mystic passionless face of India and the Lama saying to Kim, “Just is the wheel! Certain is our Deliverance. Come!”» (Forster 2007: 22). Commenting on this lecture, which is at least as revealing about Forster as it is about Kipling, Trivedi observes that Forster «waxed eloquent about Kipling’s mysticism, so much [...] as to sound even a little envious» (Trivedi 2020: 275). If this is so, then Forster’s envy was of a singularly productive kind. Notwithstanding his own agnosticism in matters of religion, in the novel that he himself set in India the younger writer followed Kipling’s example in exploiting the symbolic potentialities of Eastern mystical traditions, which therefore provided the ground for a meeting of the twain between authors who in most other respects could not be more different from one another.

2. The Wheel and the Game

Kim has been described by Deanna K. Kreisel as «the most sustained literary treatment of Buddhism in the Victorian period» (Kreisel 2018: 228), a period which, as Kreisel

² Margaret D. Stetz argues that Forster was in this lecture seeking to forge a voice for the modern age by distinguishing his own response to Kipling from that of Max Beerbohn, and that his strategy for dealing with Kipling’s work was therefore conditioned by this agenda (Stetz 2020).

demonstrates at length, witnessed a remarkable burgeoning of interest in Buddhist thought³. There is an important observation to be made before proceeding. Buddhism is not today, and was not in Kipling's time, one of the major religions in India. The dominant religions in India are Hinduism and Islam, both of which are alluded to frequently in *Kim*, and both of which have their exponents in the *dramatis personae* of the novel. The main Buddhist character in *Kim* is not in fact Indian at all, but a Tibetan who has travelled to India on a personal quest for salvation. But Buddhism had its historical origins in India, and the major sites associated with Buddha's life and teaching are located in that country⁴. It is for this precise reason that the Tibetan lama who is so important a figure in Kipling's novel has made his pilgrimage there. «I go», he says, «to see the Four Holy Places before I die» (Kipling 1951: 8), and those holy places are all situated in India.

Kim traces the growth to maturity of the orphan son of an Irish soldier. Though he is of European extraction, the boy has been raised as an Indian in the slums of Lahore, and blends so completely into the local culture that he is not recognized as being foreign by the Indians themselves. He befriends a Tibetan lama and accompanies him on a quest to find a river, associated with the Buddha, that will allow the holy man to cleanse himself of his sins and thus emancipate himself from what he repeatedly describes as the «Wheel of Things» (Kipling 1951: 14). In the course of their journey Kim encounters a British regiment which happens to be that of his deceased father, and, having been recognized as the son of a former soldier, is sent to a Catholic school to receive an education befitting his racial identity. As he continues to grow to adulthood Kim becomes profoundly divided in his cultural allegiances, and spends much of the novel alternating between his identities as an Indian and as a European. He remains deeply committed to the lama, continuing to accompany him on his quest to find his sacred river. But at the same time he undergoes training as an agent in the secret service at the hands of his British mentors, and becomes increasingly embroiled in the «Great Game» of espionage that is being played out between various imperial powers in the region (Kipling 1951: 183). At the conclusion of the novel, pivoting on the lama's final achievement of enlightenment, it is not explicitly indicated which of the ways open to him – that of the Great Game or that of Buddhist spirituality – Kim will pursue in the future.

References to Buddhism abound from the very beginning of *Kim*. The epigraph to the novel is taken from one of Kipling's own poems, entitled «Buddha at Kamakura», and is an admonition to those inclined to denigrate «the heathen» not to pass judgement on those who worship Buddha (Kipling 1951: 1). The novel opens at a museum in Lahore in which Buddhist artefacts are on display, and where the Tibetan lama takes a tour under the benevolent auspices of an English curator (modelled on Kipling's own father) who shows the greatest respect for his rather strange visitor:

³ Kreisel offers an extensively documented account of the Victorian reception of what was at the time referred to as Buddhist «psychology», which was deemed by many exegetes to have significant affinities with European theories of mind and consciousness. For a thorough account of Kipling's exposure to Buddhism both in India and subsequently in the course of his travels in Burma and Japan, see Scott 2012. Scott points out that Kipling's informed and by and large sympathetic treatment of Buddhism in *Kim* and elsewhere seriously challenges what he describes as Edward Said's «Orientalism paradigm» (Scott 2012: 49-52), an argument that he also pursues in a slightly earlier article (Scott 2011).

⁴ In her excellent discussion in art-historical terms of Buddhist elements present in *Kim*, Janice Leoshko argues that «the fact that India was the Buddha's homeland is a crucial aspect of the tale which hinges upon the regard given Buddhism when Kipling wrote *Kim*. The fact that Buddhism was, however, no longer practiced by Indians, allowed many in the nineteenth century to view it as representing a lost, ideal past which contrasted with the seeming chaos of the present» (Leoshko 2001: 57).

In open-mouthed wonder the lama turned to this and that, and finally checked in rapt attention before a large alto-relief representing a coronation or apotheosis of the Lord Buddha. The Master was represented seated on a lotus the petals of which were so deeply undercut as to show almost detached. Round Him was an adoring hierarchy of kings, elders, and old-time Buddhas. Below were lotus-covered waters with fishes and water-birds. Two butterfly-winged *dewas* held a wreath over His head; above them another pair supported an umbrella surmounted by the jewelled headdress of the Bodhisat. (Kipling 1951: 9)

Kipling's personal sympathy for Buddhism cannot be mistaken, as he describes the «beautiful story» of the life of Buddha in precise and enthusiastic detail:

Here was the devout Asita, the pendant of Simeon in the Christian story, holding the Holy Child on his knee while mother and father listened; and here were incidents in the legend of the cousin Devadatta. Here was the wicked woman who accused the Master of impurity, all confounded; here was the teaching in the Deer-park; the miracle that stunned the fire-worshippers; here was the Bodhisat in royal state as a prince; the miraculous birth; the death at Kusinagara, where the weak disciple fainted; while there were almost countless repetitions of the meditation under the Bodhi tree; and the adoration of the alms-bowl was everywhere. (Kipling 1951: 11)

The lama recounts to Kim a story concerning the young Siddhartha, the prince who would later become known as the Buddha. Siddhartha launches an arrow, and the place where it lands becomes the source of a river which has the power to wash away sin. «By it one attains freedom from the Wheel of Things» (Kipling 1951: 14), says the lama, who has made the River of the Arrow the object of his own quest. The Wheel of Things to which he refers is *samsara*, the recurring cycle of birth, suffering, death, and rebirth that, according to Buddhist thought, ends only when the soul achieves enlightenment. Enlightenment occurs when the soul recognizes the illusory nature of earthly experience and, abandoning all attachment to the things of this world, attains that state known as Nirvana. The lama carries about with him a depiction, drawn by himself, of the Wheel of Life, of the kind used by Buddhists as a visual representation of the cycle of existence. All living creatures are bound to this wheel, and the lama feels sympathy for all of them, not excluding a cobra that Kim wants to destroy:

«He is upon the Wheel as we are – a life ascending or descending – very far from deliverance. Great evil must the soul have done that is cast into this shape.»

«I hate all snakes,» said Kim. No native training can quench the white man's horror of the Serpent.

«Let him live out his life.» The coiled thing hissed and half opened its hood. «May thy release come soon, brother!» the lama continued placidly. (Kipling 1951: 61)

But the Wheel from which the lama seeks deliverance actually exerts considerable fascination over Kim, who takes an active pleasure in life in all its infinite variety. He obligingly studies the lama's drawing of the Wheel of Life, but «when they came to the Human World, busy and profitless [...] his mind was distracted; for by the roadside trundled the very Wheel itself, eating, drinking, trading, marrying, and quarrelling – all warmly alive» (Kipling 1951: 302). On one level, the «Wheel» to which the lama constantly refers manifests itself in the «Great Game» being pursued between the British

and Russians in Asia, and in which Kim himself comes to play a part. When he embarks upon his training for the British secret service, we are told, «Kim flung himself wholeheartedly upon the next turn of the wheel» (Kipling 1951: 210). The Great Game in which Kim participates so enthusiastically becomes almost a metaphor for life itself, seen in its positive aspect rather than solely as a source of anguish.

As a European raised in an Indian environment Kim might be expected to act as a mediating figure between the two cultures he embodies, or at least to be able to reconcile their conflicting claims in his own perspective on life, but this is not in fact what occurs. East and West continue to be divided from one another even within his own personality. Indeed, just to complicate matters, even the «oriental» part of himself is multiple, since he can disguise himself with equal facility as a Hindu or as a Moslem, and can play the part of either. The eighth chapter of the novel begins with an epigraph from a poem entitled «The Two-Sided Man», referring to the «two / Separate sides to my head» which Allah has bestowed upon the speaker. That speaker says that he would sacrifice anything rather than «for an instant lose / Either side of my head» (Kipling 1951: 186). Kim is similarly Janus-headed, and this inevitably leads to problems of personal identity. This emerges when he is talking to Mahbub Ali, one of the men who are preparing him for his role as a secret agent:

«Therefore [says Mahbub Ali], in one situate as thou art, it particularly behoves thee to remember this with both kinds of faces. Among Sahibs, never forgetting thou art a Sahib; among the folk of Hind, always remembering thou art – » He paused, with a puzzled smile.

[To which Kim replies] «What am I? Mussalman, Hindu, Jain, or Buddhist? That is a hard knot.» (Kipling 1951: 203-204)

What is entailed by the clash of cultures depicted in *Kim* is a confrontation between different conceptions of the world⁵, and more especially of the value of action within that world. The lama teaches that the world is *maya* – illusion – and that to participate actively in the world is merely to perpetuate that illusion. But by character, as well as by training, Kim is deeply committed to the world of action. The Great Game may only be a game, but it is one that Kim takes very seriously. This difference in outlook leads to a number of discussions between the two characters:

«Then all Doing is evil?» Kim replied, lying out under a big tree at the fork of the Doon road, watching the little ants run over his hand.

«To abstain from action is well – except to acquire merit.»

«At the Gates of Learning [that is, at his school] we were taught that to abstain from action was unbefitting a Sahib. And I am a Sahib.»

«Friend of all the World,» – the lama looked directly at Kim, – «I am an old man – pleased with shows as are children. To those who follow the Way there is neither black nor white, Hind nor Bhotiyal. We be all souls seeking escape. No matter what thy wisdom learned among Sahibs, when we come to my River thou wilt be freed from all illusion – at my side.» (Kipling 1951: 303)

⁵ Mark Kinkead-Weekes describes *Kim* as «the product of a peculiar tension between different ways of seeing» (Kinkead-Weekes 1966: 233), while Mathew Fellion, examining the work from the point of view of the competing epistemologies represented within it, argues that the novel, «declin[ing] to offer a stable position from which true knowledge can be produced [...] dramatizes diverse positions and approaches to knowledge» (Fellion 2013: 897).

The crisis in Kim's development occurs towards the end of the novel when, after driving himself to the limits of exhaustion by devotedly attending to the needs of the lama at the same time as he is performing his duties as a British agent, he succumbs to a phase of complete physical and mental prostration. The world suddenly appears wholly meaningless to him, and he feels himself to be utterly alienated from it:

The bigness of the world, seen between the forecourt gates, swept linked thought aside. Then he looked upon the trees and the broad fields, with the thatched huts hidden among crops – looked with strange eyes unable to take up the size and proportion and use of things – stared for a still half-hour. All that while he felt, though he could not put it into words, that his soul was out of gear with its surroundings – a cog-wheel unconnected with any machinery. (Kipling 1951: 402-403)

But the episode of estrangement does not last long, and Kim returns to a world that now makes perfect sense to him:

«I am Kim. I am Kim. And what is Kim?» His soul repeated it again and again. He did not want to cry, – had never felt less like crying in his life, – but of a sudden easy, stupid tears trickled down his nose, and with an almost audible click he felt the wheels of his being lock up anew on the world without. Things that rode meaningless on the eyeball an instant before slid into proper proportion. Roads were meant to be walked upon, houses to be lived in, cattle to be driven, fields to be tilled, and men and women to be talked to. They were all real and true – solidly planted upon the feet – perfectly comprehensible – clay of his clay, neither more nor less. (Kipling 1951: 403)

While some commentators have read this episode as signalling Kim's «commitment [...] to the Wheel of earthy and human life», and rejection of the Buddhist view which «holds that all these things are illusion» (Kinkead-Weekes 1966: 231), others have argued that the perception of reality to which Kim returns is, as Kreisel expresses it, «perfectly consonant with the Victorian understanding of the aims of tantric and esoteric practice» (Kreisel 2018: 255). According to the perspective of the lama, of course, the world to which Kim has returned is part and parcel of the illusion from which he himself is trying to liberate himself. At the same time, though the episodes are of course completely different in kind, there is a significant parallel between Kim's experience of detachment from the world, and subsequent reintegration with it, and that of the lama which constitutes the climax of the novel. For notwithstanding his aspiration to escape from it, the lama too discovers that he is not completely remote from the world. Ironically, it is Kim himself who becomes the link connecting him with the universe of illusion from which he seeks release, the reason for this being that he has developed a great personal affection for his disciple. In order to attain freedom the Buddhist should shun all forms of attachment, but this the lama has failed to do:

«And I am a Follower of the Way,» he said bitterly. «The sin is mine and the punishment is mine. I made believe to myself – for now I see it was but make-belief – that thou wast sent to me to aid in the Search. So my heart went out to thee for thy charity and thy courtesy and the wisdom of thy little years. But those who follow the Way must permit not the fire of any desire or attachment, for that is all Illusion.» (Kipling 1951: 130-131)

The lama does at last achieve release at the end of the novel, and when he does so his experience resembles that of Buddha himself, who is said to have attained enlightenment after meditating for seven days beneath the Bodhi tree:

I took no food. I drank no water. Still I saw not the Way. They pressed food upon me and cried at my shut door. So I removed myself to a hollow under a tree. I took no food. I took no water. I sat in meditation two days and two nights, abstracting my mind; inbreathing and outbreathing in the required manner [...] Upon the second night – so great was my reward – the wise Soul loosed itself from the silly Body and went free. (Kipling 1951: 410-411)

The process of liberation involves the annihilation of selfhood, escape from the toils of illusion, and the union of the soul with the Absolute:

Yea, my Soul went free, and, wheeling like an eagle, saw indeed that there was no Teshoo Lama nor any other soul. [...] I knew the Soul had passed beyond the illusion of Time and Space and of Things. By this I knew that I was free. [M]y Soul was all alone, and I saw nothing, for I was all things, having reached the Great Soul. (Kipling 1951: 411)

But the lama, having achieved his deliverance from the world, and poised on the very threshold of the Nirvana he has been seeking all his life, makes an unexpected and extraordinary decision. He chooses to return to the world he has left behind him, and to assume once again his former identity. The reason he does so is the compassion he feels for Kim:

Then a voice cried: «What shall come to the boy if thou art dead?» and I was shaken back and forth in myself with pity for thee; and I said: «I will return to my *chela* [disciple], lest he miss the Way.» Upon this my Soul, which is the soul of Teshoo Lama, withdrew itself from the Great Soul with strivings and yearnings and retchings and agonies not to be told. [...] I pushed aside world upon world for thy sake. I saw the River below me – the River of the Arrow – and, descending, the waters of it closed over me; and behold I was again in the body of Teshoo Lama, but free from sin. (Kipling 1951: 411-412)

The lama's last words in the novel are those that Forster would, in his lecture on Kipling's poetry, later quote with such sympathetic appreciation (Forster 2007: 22): «I have wrenched my Soul back from the Threshold of Freedom to free thee from all sin – as I am free, and sinless! Just is the Wheel! Certain is our deliverance! Come!» (Kipling 1951: 413). Here, then, we seem to have a partial compromise between total renunciation of the world and existence within it. Such a compromise might seem to conflict with the tenets of the lama's religion, but in fact it is one contemplated in some forms of Buddhism itself. That branch called Mahāyāna Buddhism, in particular, incorporates the figure of the Bodhisattva, who rather than seeking his own deliverance in isolation feels the obligation to assist all souls in their quest for deliverance, so that when he does achieve enlightenment he also willingly postpones Nirvana for the sake of his fellows. Far from abandoning his quest, then, the lama, in the words of Avram Alpert, «simply fulfills the Bodhisattva ideal of putting off Enlightenment in order to help others» (Alpert 2017: 30). It is of course the Bodhisattva who is several times mentioned in the description of the Buddhist artefacts in the Lahore Museum at the beginning of the novel.

While it might seem curious that the final words of the novel are assigned to the lama and not to Kim, the focus of the novel having apparently shifted away from the figure who is supposed to be its protagonist, what is important is the relevance of what happens to the lama to what is occurring in Kim himself. There is a clear parallel between the final experiences undergone by Kim and his mentor, and they are meant to reflect on one another. Both men experience phases of complete detachment from the world, and both, though in very different ways and for very different reasons, return to that world. The lama has achieved freedom, but he also feels a deep personal commitment to Kim that does not allow him utterly to renounce the world. Indeed, he goes still further in acknowledging the claims of material existence, implying in the course of a conversation with the secret service agent Mahbub Ali that the spiritual life he has planned for Kim may not after all interfere with the life of action to which his young friend is committed. Commenting on his disciple's future, the lama says: «Let him be a teacher; let him be a scribe – what matter? He will have attained Freedom at the end. The rest is illusion» (Kipling 1951: 407). To which Mahbub ironically responds: «now I understand that the boy, sure of Paradise, can yet enter Government service, my mind is easier» (Kipling 1951: 407). The implication would seem to be that Kim can continue to play the Great Game, a metaphor for the life of action, but at the same time can continue to pursue the spiritual trajectory that has been traced out for him by the lama. As James H. Thrall suggests in a very perceptive discussion of *Kim*, «Kipling invites his readers to hold two visions – one supposedly “Eastern”, one supposedly “Western” – simultaneously at the end, for both would seem to be true» (Thrall 2004: 63). As I will be suggesting in what follows, Forster's *A Passage to India* contains implications of a very similar kind.

3. «The climax, as far as India admits of one»

A Passage to India, like *Kim*, depicts a kind of spiritual quest, as the name of one of the English protagonists, Adela Quested, makes clear. Adela and her friend Mrs Moore visit a city named Chandrapore in British India, where Adela is determined to see the «real India» (Forster 1974: 25). The young Moslem physician Dr Aziz encounters Mrs Moore in a mosque, and notwithstanding his distrust of the English is moved by the respect she shows for his religion. The sympathy is mutual, and when the school headmaster Cyril Fielding, who in many respects seems to be a surrogate for Forster himself, organizes a tea party, Aziz is also invited at Mrs Moore's request. In the course of this encounter Fielding and Aziz become friends, and for a while it looks as if people of good will, whether British or Indian, can get along together in perfect harmony. But the *rapprochement* is short lived. Eager to please his new English friends, Aziz arranges an excursion to a cave complex located in a place called Marabar, and here events take a sinister turn. Mrs Moore enters one of the caves and is overwhelmed by an insistent echo which reverberates within its walls. Adela also enters a cave, but then flees from the party in distress, and shortly afterwards Aziz is arrested on the charge of having assaulted her. As preparations are underway for the trial, the tensions between the Indian and British communities intensify. Among the English, only Fielding defends Aziz, and is ostracized by his compatriots for his disloyalty. Mrs Moore also believes in Aziz's innocence, but has been so completely enervated by her experience in the cave that she is unable to take practical measures to defend him. It is Adela who in the end exonerates Aziz during the trial, when she suddenly remembers, and testifies to, the fact that Aziz did not follow her

into the cave. Impressed by her courage in telling the truth despite the pressure of the English community, Fielding subsequently befriends Adela, and urges Aziz not to seek financial compensation from her. Aziz consequently feels betrayed by Fielding, and therefore severs their relationship and moves to another part of the country, while Fielding returns to England. Some years later Fielding pays a visit to India, and although the personal affection between himself and Aziz is rekindled Aziz pronounces the words I have already quoted: «if it's fifty five-hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then [...] you and I shall be friends» (Forster 1974: 317).

If the story of the Buddha, and more particularly of the Bodhisattva, provides Kipling with a metaphor for the complementary quests of Kim and the lama in *Kim*, it is I suggest one of the cardinal religious texts of Vedantic Hinduism that lies behind *A Passage to India*⁶. This is the *Bhagavad Gita*. Forster's novel in fact makes explicit reference to the poem when a minor character remarks that «the Mutiny records [...] rather than the Bhagavad Gita, should be your Bible in this country», but then adds as a curious afterthought: «Though I'm not sure that the one and the other are not closely connected» (Forster 1974: 166). One critic has located what he calls «Forster's outstanding aesthetic quality» in what, invoking Forster's own phrase, he identifies as his «double vision» (Sivaramkrishna 1981: 148). Though it takes a very different form, such an ambivalence of perspective, reminiscent of the dual vision which is articulated by Kipling in *Kim* with its simultaneous renunciation and affirmation of action, is also implicit in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

In the *Bhagavad Gita* the prince Arjuna is preparing to go into battle, but hesitates when he recognizes his own kinsmen in the ranks of the enemy, finding himself paralyzed by his sudden consciousness that he participates in the existence of those he has resolved to destroy. But his charioteer, who is an incarnation of the god Krishna, strengthens his resolve by pointing out that the world must be maintained through ceaseless activity even if it is ultimately one. By becoming aware of this the individual can be free of his acts in the very moment of performing them. This lesson is concretized in a vision in which Krishna reveals himself in his two aspects: the one of changeless unity, the other of never-ceasing and destructive activity. First the god appears to Arjuna in his supreme divine form: «Arjuna saw in that radiance the whole universe in its variety, standing in a vast unity in the body of the God of gods» (trans. Mascarò 1975: 90). But a moment later the prince perceives the sinister reality implied by this discovery: «But the worlds also behold thy fearful mighty form, with many mouths and eyes, with many bellies, thighs and feet, frightening with terrible teeth: they tremble in fear, and I also tremble» (1975: 91). For Arjuna sees the armies of both sides drawn, inexorably and without distinction, into the terrible mouth of the god: «And as moths swiftly rushing enter a burning flame and die, so all these men rush to thy fire, rush fast to their own destruction» (trans. Mascarò 1975: 92). Having thus attained enlightenment – though it is enlightenment of a singularly dark kind – the prince accepts this relentless process of universal devastation, and knowingly marches to a battle in which both armies are annihilated.

There are interesting analogies between the revelation which Arjuna is vouchsafed in a Sanskrit poem written more than two thousand years ago and the insight achieved by Mrs Moore and, in a somewhat different aspect, by Adela Quested in the course of *A Passage to India*. Furthermore, as a metaphor this revelation seems to adumbrate the

⁶ Among those who have discussed Forster's complex attitude to the Hindu doctrines and practices he encountered in the course of his travels in India are Michael Spencer (Spencer 1968) and G.K. Das (Das 1977: 93-112). Forster records something of his own response to Hindu beliefs in *The Hill of Devi* (Forster 1953).

fundamental philosophy of life and action underlying Forster's novel⁷. For the implications of *A Passage to India* would appear to approximate quite closely to those conveyed by the *Bhagavad Gita*. Human beings must act, if necessary in opposition to one another, for humanity can only realize itself through action. But any activity that is pursued should be embraced for the sake of a totality which is single, and which lies beyond all action. Thus the necessity for individual activity in the material world, an activity which often brings enmity and suffering in its train, is reconciled with the perspective which declares the ultimate unity of all creation. As McBryde observes to Fielding, even the brutal horrors of the Indian Mutiny are not incompatible with the vision of transcendent oneness which the *Bhagavad Gita* imparts.

The drama of *A Passage to India* revolves around the opposition of forces making for unity and separation, the dynamic interplay between the empirical fact of human division on the one hand, and the aspiration towards integration on the other. The tension between Indian and Englishman is certainly the most obvious kind of division we see represented in the novel, but it is only one instance of a universal condition. We are reminded continually of the «spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments», and that «the fissures in the Indian soil are infinite» (Forster 1974: 127, 288). Opposing themselves to this basic fragmentation are the various manifestations of a will to unification, an impulse expressing itself, among other things, in sometimes brave but uniformly futile efforts at contriving «gatherings» in which people can come together. These include a so-called «bridge party» attended by both Englishmen and Indians, Fielding's tea party, Adela's attempt to arrange a visit to an Indian home, and Aziz's doomed expedition to Marabar. While the novel insistently presents an image of a fragmented humanity, various characters, impelled by varying degrees of good will, are engaged in a search for the principle by which unity can be achieved. But all these efforts are undermined by their excessively idealistic, or no less excessively theoretical, approach to the problem. Fielding, for instance, cherishes a liberal humanist vision of a «globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of good will plus culture and intelligence» (Forster 1974: 62). This is an attractive recipe, but one that is manifestly irrelevant in this context. The well-meaning Adela takes a similar view of the situation, but when she puts it into words it appears unrealistic:

«There will have to be something universal in this country [...] or how else are barriers to be broken down?»

She was only recommending the universal brotherhood he [Aziz] sometimes dreamed of, but as soon as it was put into prose it became untrue. (Forster 1974: 143)

A rather different approach to the problem of overcoming the barriers separating human beings is manifested in the attitude of Adela's companion Mrs Moore, who senses the possibility of unity not in theoretical or even sentimental terms but on a spiritual level. An authentic mystic in her own way, who is recognized as an Oriental by Aziz when they meet early in the novel (Forster 1974: 24), she yearns continually for integration not only with other human beings but with the entire universe. After her meeting with Aziz, for instance, «a sudden sense of unity, of kinship with the heavenly bodies, passed into the old woman and out» (Forster 1974: 30). The spontaneous expression of sympathy elicited

⁷ Forster's interest in the inner meaning of the *Bhagavad Gita* found expression in a brief but revealing commentary he wrote entitled «Hymn before Action» (Forster 1964: 343-345), an essay which is examined by G.K. Das (Das 1979: 211ff.).

from her by the glimpse of a wasp in her room (Forster 1974: 35) – a response which is contrasted with that of various other characters elsewhere in the novel (Forster 1974: 38, 281-2) – is reminiscent of the lama's expression of benevolence with respect to a cobra in *Kim* (Kipling 1951: 61). But if the ready sympathy and mystical tendencies of Mrs Moore seem suggestive of a mode of perception in which the world can be conceived as one, it turns out that this perspective is all too vulnerable. As Arjuna learns in the *Bhagavad Gita*, a vision of cosmic unity can present itself as a dark and demonic mysticism.

The crisis occurs during the expedition to Marabar, where Mrs Moore is subjected to an obscure but alarming epiphany which reveals the sinister side of her insight into the unity of all things. She has longed to attain a perfect vision of oneness, but when at last she is vouchsafed such a vision it is in the form of a dark revelation whose effects find symbolic expression in an echo:

The echo in a Marabar cave [...] is entirely devoid of distinction. Whatever is said, the same monotonous noise replies [...] «Boum» is the sound as far as the human alphabet can express it, or «bou-oum», or «ou-boum», – utterly dull. Hope, politeness, the blowing of a nose, the squeak of a boot, all produce «boum». (Forster 1974: 145)

This is certainly unity, but not of the kind that Mrs Moore has yearned after. The echo she confronts in the cave may, as several critics have suggested, be a parody of the sacred syllable «Om», which in the Hindu religion signifies, among other things, ultimate reality and the oneness of the universe (Spencer 1968: 284; Allen 1968: 129). After her ordeal in the cave Mrs Moore's life becomes infected with the reverberations of the echo, which seem to cut relentlessly through the distinctions which give meaning to life:

«Pathos, piety, courage – they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value.» If one had spoken vileness in that place, or quoted lofty poetry, the comment would have been the same – «ou-boum». (Forster 1974: 147)

But all this is not entirely new to Mrs Moore. Rather, it is the intensification and crystallization of a process that has been working in the old woman since her arrival in India. Somewhat later in the novel it is suggested that this crisis is somehow connected with the encroachments of old age, that Mrs Moore is a victim of «the twilight of the double vision in which many elderly people are involved». And the author elaborates on this:

In the twilight of the double vision, a spiritual muddledom is set up for which no high-sounding words can be found; we can neither act nor refrain from action, we can neither ignore nor respect Infinity. (Forster 1974: 203)

Mrs Moore's paradoxical position of being able neither to act nor to refrain from action is analogous in many respects to the dilemma in which Arjuna finds himself in the *Bhagavad Gita*, and also bears comparison with the quandary besetting the principal characters in *Kim*. Her insight into the transcendent unity of all creation, like that of Arjuna, reveals itself in its dual aspects: the opposed faces of a single coin. Like Arjuna she has become aware of her own participation in the existence of other creatures, and the dream she lives by is that of the mystic: «To be one with the universe! So dignified and simple» (Forster 1974: 203). But while she is intent on this absorption into the One the terrible wisdom of the Marabar caves upsets her serene vision. As Arjuna perceives that

destruction is rampant throughout the universe, so does the Englishwoman discover that all things might be one in a negative respect only, that good and evil might reduce in the end to the same essence. At this point her insight into reality might seem to parody the philosophy of the Brahman Godbole, which holds that «Good and evil are different as their names imply. But [...] they are both of them aspects of my Lord» (Forster 1974: 175)⁸. As the *Bhagavad Gita* suggests, Hindu thought can accommodate the darker implications of such a vision. So in the end can Mrs Moore, for as she discovers before leaving India the caves at Marabar do not have quite the last word.

After her experience at Marabar Adela too is virtually helpless. Like Mrs Moore and Arjuna she can «neither act nor refrain from action», and she submits to the painful ordeal of Aziz's trial not out of any personal conviction but because the British community demands it of her. Nevertheless, in the course of the trial she is finally able to break step with this crowd, for while she is giving evidence she manages to retrieve from her confused recollections a truth which can serve as the basis for action, understanding suddenly and very simply that Aziz is innocent. Of course, as Godbole reminds Fielding, there is a sense in which Aziz *is* guilty, for «all perform a good action, when one is performed, and when an evil action is performed, all perform it» (Forster 1974: 174). But, again like Arjuna, Adela must pass beyond this dim intuition of universal participation if she is to act at all. And the catalyst precipitating her final emancipation from this debilitating bewilderment is the spectacle of a low caste menial in the courtroom. This is the servant working the punkah:

The first person Adela noticed [...] was the humblest of all who were present [...] the man who pulled the punkah. Almost naked, and splendidly formed [...] he seemed to control the proceedings. He had the strength and beauty that sometimes come to flower in Indians of low birth [...] When that strange race nears the dust and is condemned as untouchable, then nature [...] throws out a god [...] to prove to society how little its categories impress her. This man [...] stood out as divine [...] [He] seemed apart from human destinies, a male fate, a winner of souls. (Forster 1974: 212)

The god who reveals himself to Arjuna on the battlefield is of course Krishna, but the description of the punkah wallah in Forster's novel is reminiscent also of the iconography of the Hindu god Shiva, who is often represented as being absorbed in the ceaseless dance which is the universe in all its aspects. The punkah wallah, so important in Adela's transformation, is specifically likened to a god, and if he does not like Shiva whirl in the dance of the world, his demiurgic activity is nonetheless suggested by the rhythmic operation of his punkah as, in many depictions, Shiva beats a drum. His impassiveness, his detachment from the events of the courtroom, emphasize his remoteness from the confusion of the world over which he presides as a male fate and winner of souls. Indifferent to the petty dramas enacted before him, he merely pulls the cord which symbolically generates the scene.

The account of this strange trial ends by focussing once more on the figure which throughout has «seemed to control the proceedings», appearing to embody the one process which lies behind all contending processes:

Then life returned to its complexities, person after person struggled out of the room to their various purposes, and before long no one remained on the scene of the fantasy

⁸ Frederick C. Crews points out that «Mrs. Moore's experience in the Hills is a kind of parody of the recognition of Brahma» (Crews 1962: 155).

but the beautiful naked god. Unaware that anything unusual had occurred, he continued to pull the cord of his punkah, to gaze at the empty dais and the overturned special chairs, and rhythmically to agitate the clouds of descending dust. (Forster 1974: 224)

But the drama of unity and separation must be played out to another conclusion than this. I have mentioned that in the *Bhagavad Gita* Arjuna, temporarily paralyzed by his awareness of the unity of all things, overcomes his inertia when he realizes that action is necessary and that action presupposes discrimination. I mentioned also that in Kipling's novel *Kim* experiences an episode of complete and debilitating detachment in which everything is shorn of meaning, but that subsequently the things of the world once more come to make sense to him and he is able to return to the life of action (Kipling 1951: 403). Mrs Moore, we learn in *A Passage to India*, like Adela and like Kim, also manages to pass in the final days of her life to a view of things in which discrimination and action are again possible. Even before she leaves Chandrapore she is able to distinguish between different paths of action, is able to say to Adela for instance that «there are different ways of evil and I prefer mine to yours» (Forster 1974: 200). By the time she arrives in Bombay her thinking has entered an entirely new phase, and now «she longed to stop [...] and disentangle the hundred Indias that passed each other in its streets» (Forster 1974: 204-205), while as she leaves India the farewell comment she imagines being addressed to her by a line of coconut palms is: «So you thought an echo was India; you took the Marabar caves as final? [...] What have we in common with them, or they with Asirgarh?» (Forster 1974: 205). This reaffirmation of complexity and diversity corresponds to the final maturation of Arjuna's vision, the complete illumination which allows him to proceed to battle in spite of his insight into the destructive nature of cosmic process.

In the final section of *A Passage to India*, the torn fragments of a divided humanity are partially, and all too briefly, reassimilated in an episode that has unmistakable mystical overtones. Aziz and Fielding, who have long been estranged, both take out boats so that they can observe from the water the chaotic festival surrounding the birth of the god Krishna. As they drift towards the scene they witness the celebrants engaged in a ritual described as «preparing to throw God away» (Forster 1974: 309). Forster offers us a description of the significance of this ceremony which, with its emphasis on the word «passage», reminds us once again of Whitman's poem:

Thus was He thrown year after year, and were others thrown – little images of Gampati, baskets of ten-day corn, tiny tazias after Mohurram – scapegoats, husks, emblems of passage; a passage not easy, not now, not here, not to be apprehended except when it is unattainable: the God to be thrown was an emblem of that. (Forster 1974: 309)

The ceremonies are brought to an end by a naked servitor, and it is apparent that in his person the god once again presides over the climax which is to follow, as in the form of the punkah wallah he presided earlier over the «fantasy» of the trial:

He was naked, broad-shouldered, thin-waisted – the Indian body again triumphant – and it was his hereditary office to close the gates of salvation. (Forster 1974: 309-310)

But before he quite does so the two boats, each bearing a fragment of a divided humanity – Fielding and his wife in one, Aziz and the son of Mrs Moore in the other – collide and

«drifted forward helplessly against the servitor, who awaited them, his beautiful dark face expressionless, and as the last morsels melted on his tray, it struck them» (Forster 1974: 310). The tiny craft capsizes, and the occupants tumble into the waters in which «King Kansa was confounded with the father and mother of the Lord» (Forster 1974: 310).

The «lord» being alluded to here, of course, is Krishna, the god whose birth this festival is celebrating. The reference to King Kansa is to another figure in Hindu mythology, this being the king who imprisoned Krishna's parents, and sought by all means to destroy Krishna himself, but was in the end slain by the god. It is a violent story of mutual hatred and retribution, yet in the ceremonies celebrating the birth of Krishna, these inveterate enemies who inflict so much hurt on one another are confounded together, shedding their separate identities in the primal waters of the One. Notwithstanding the destructive enmity that governs their actions, it would seem, they belong in the end to the same transcendent reality. «That was the climax, as far as India admits of one», Forster somewhat reticently tells us at this point (Forster 1974: 310), and from the symbolic point of view, at least, the personage making such a climax possible is the very one who has seemed to «control the proceedings» in the drama of the courtroom earlier in the novel, the god-like figure impassively «agitat[ing] the clouds of descending dust» because only through ceaseless motion can the divine purpose unfold.

4. Coda

In their different ways, then, as I have already suggested, both Kipling's *Kim* and Forster's *A Passage to India* can be read as commentaries on Whitman's «Passage to India», and both in their different ways take issue with Whitman's vision. The two authors seem to agree that, in Kipling's words, «East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet». But both also appear to suggest that there is a sense in which there is unity among all the inhabitants of the world, though perhaps only on a mystical level. I have been arguing that it is religious metaphors associated with India itself – those provided by Buddhism, in the case of Kipling, and Vedantic Hinduism, in that of Forster – that makes it possible to convey this apparently contradictory vision. There is in fact a great deal in common between Hinduism and Buddhism from this point of view, which is not really surprising considering the common origins of the two religions and the fact that many of their sacred texts are the same. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna tells Arjuna that «In any way that men love me in that same way they find my love: for many are the paths of men, but they all in the end come to me» (trans. Mascarò 1975: 62). In *Kim*, a Hindu holy man, to whom Kim has given the impression of being a Moslem, expresses the identical idea when he says that «It is a long road to the feet of the One; but thither do we all travel» (Kipling 1951: 266). Elsewhere in the same novel the Buddhist lama, speaking in the idiom of his own religion, says of Kim that «Let him be a teacher; let him be a scribe – what matter? He will have attained Freedom at the end» (Kipling 1951: 407). And perhaps in his own way even the Moslem Aziz of *A Passage to India* is expressing a sentiment similar to this when he argues that «there are many ways of being a man; mine is to express what is deepest in my heart» (Forster 1974: 263). In each case the fundamental idea is the same. Human beings must pursue their separate paths in order that the divine purpose may be fulfilled: each acts out their portion of the universal dance, and individual salvation rests in a continual awareness of the cosmic perspective in which one's own acts and being assume their place. Thus Aziz promises Fielding, in the course of their

final ride together, that «if it's fifty five-hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then [...] you and I shall be friends» (Forster 1974: 317). And thus the contradictory principles of division and union, both operating forces in the world, are poised in an equilibrium which rests beyond the tragic and comic visions both.

Bibliography

- The Bhagavad Gita* (trans. Mascarò, Juan 1975), Harmondsworth, Penguin.
- Allen, Glen O. (1968), 'Structure, Symbol, and Theme in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*', in Shahane, V. A. (ed.), *Perspectives on E.M. Forster's A Passage to India: A Collection of Critical Essays*, New York, Barnes & Noble, 121-141.
- Alpert, Avram (2017), 'Buddhism Between Worlds', *Religion and Literature* 49 (3), 23-48.
- Crews, Frederick C. (1962), *E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism*, Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press.
- Das, G.K. (1977), *E.M. Forster's India*, London, Macmillan.
- Das, G.K. (1979), 'E.M. Forster, T.S. Eliot, and the "Hymn Before Action"', in Das, G.K.; Beer, John (eds), *E.M. Forster: A Human Exploration: Centenary Essays*, London, Macmillan, 208-215.
- Fellion, Mathew (2013), 'Knowing Kim, Knowing in Kim', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 53 (4), 897-912.
- Forster, E.M. (1953), *The Hill of Devi*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.
- Forster, E.M. (1964), *Abinger Harvest*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Forster, E.M. (1965), *A Passage to India*, London, Dent.
- Forster, E.M. (1974), *A Passage to India*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.
- Forster, E.M. (1992), *Howards End*, London, Hodder & Stoughton.
- Forster, E.M. (2007), 'Kipling's Poems' (ed. Lackey, Michael), *Journal of Modern Literature* 30 (3), 12-30.
- Hay, Eloise Knapp (1984), 'Kipling and Forster: A Case for Dual Biography', *Biography* 7 (2), 123-133.
- Kinkead-Weekes, Mark (1966), 'Vision in Kipling's Novels', in Rutherford, Andrew (ed.), *Kipling's Mind and Art: Selected Critical Essays*, Stanford, Stanford Univ. Press, 197-234.
- Kipling, Rudyard (1929), *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses*, London, Methuen.
- Kipling, Rudyard (1951), *Kim*, London, Macmillan.
- Kreisel, Deanna K. (2018), 'The Psychology of Victorian Buddhism and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*', *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 73 (2), 227-259.
- Lackey, Michael (2007), 'E.M. Forster's Lecture "Kipling's Poems": Negotiating the Modernist Shift from "the authoritarian stock-in-trade" to an Aristocratic Democracy', *Journal of Modern Literature* 30 (3), 1-11.
- Leoshko, Janice (2001), 'What Is in Kim? Rudyard Kipling and the Tibetan Buddhist Traditions', *South Asia Research* 21 (1), 51-75.
- Scott, David (2011), 'Kipling, the Orient, and Orientals: "Orientalism" Reoriented?', *Journal of World History* 22 (2), 299-328.

- Scott, David (2012), 'Kipling's Encounters with Buddhism and the Buddhist Orient: "The Twain Shall Meet"?'', *Cultural History* 1 (1), 36–60.
- Sivaramkrishna, M. (1981), 'Epiphany and History: The Dialectic of Transcendence and *A Passage to India*', in Shahane, Vasant A. (ed.), *Approaches to E.M. Forster: A Centenary Volume*, Atlantic Highlands, Humanities Press, 148-161.
- Spencer, Michael (1968), 'Hinduism in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*', *Journal of Asian Studies* 27 (2), 281-295.
- Stetz, Margaret D. (2020), 'E.M. Forster and the Legacy of Aestheticism: "Kipling's Poems" (1909) and Forster's Dialogue with Max Beerbohm', *Language and Literary Studies of Warsaw* 10, 239-258.
- Thrall, James H. (2004), 'Immersing the *Chela*: Religion and Empire in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*', *Religion & Literature* 36 (3), 45-67.
- Trivedi, Harish (2020), 'Forster, Kipling and India: Friendship in the Colony', *Language and Literary Studies of Warsaw* 10, 259-281.
- Whitman, Walt (1993), *The Walt Whitman Reader: Selections from Leaves of Grass*, Philadelphia, Running Press.

David Lucking
 University of Salento (Italy)
davidianlucking@gmail.com