In his article Don Randall argues that "Kim" can be viewed as an ethnographical study, insofar as it presents the reader with a better understanding of the customs and individual peoples and their customs. Working within this definition, the reader gains an insight, to an extent, of the culture and customs of the people of India. Randall states that "Kim," as a novel, is not a typical example of an ethnographic text, as typical ethnographic studies are most often found in journals and studies, not works of fiction. As the author of the novel, Kipling becomes an ethnographer himself, but furthermore he is an imperial ethnographer because he is observing and writing about a culture, Indian to be specific, that has become part of a larger, dominant British culture.

On the subject of Kim himself, Randall suggests that while he is part of both Indian and British cultures and societies, he does not truely belong to either of them. He works within the social constructs of both cultures, but can not call either of them home. This "isolation" has its benefits, as the character of Kim is depicted as being the "site of perfect knowledge" (85); he knows how to manipulate each culture or society as he sees fit in order to survive. The idea of duality is present throughout the book, most noticably of course in Kim himself. As Kim is exists in two cultures simultaneously, he also exists in different positions of power simultaneously. For instance, the relationship between Kim and the lama follow this thinking: Kim is the lama's apprentice, which puts Kim in a lower position of power, however, the lama is dependant on Kim as a guide in order to manage the unknow terrain and peoples along the journey, and this puts Kim in a higher position of power.

--Contributed by J. Ferraro