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### Film and the British Empire

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# Film and the British Empire

The British Empire impacted film both during its rule and still today.

## Introduction

Throughout history, empire has played a big part. In documenting and marketing the empire, particularly the British, different methods were used, such as film. This project explores the film *Gunga* Din and the ways in which empire has influenced both the way it's made as well as what's in the movie.

# Methods

The film *Gunga Din* explored in a media press kit which includes a movie poster, a set of lobby cards, and a brochure that contains more information about the film, its characters, and the influence that the British Empire had on the film.

## Conclusion

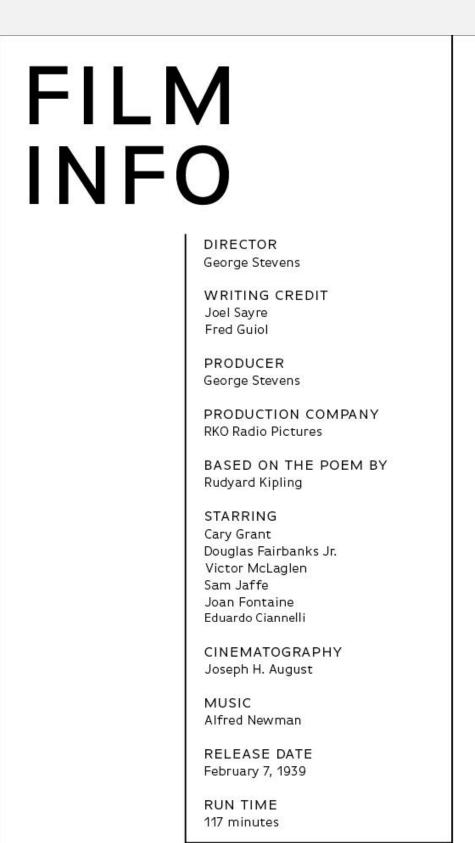
As a result of British expansion, several cliches became common in movies that are still seen today. Some of these cliches are how the indigenous people are portrayed and the relationship between the natives and the Europeans. These films show how the empire has guided its subjects into a better world and way of life.

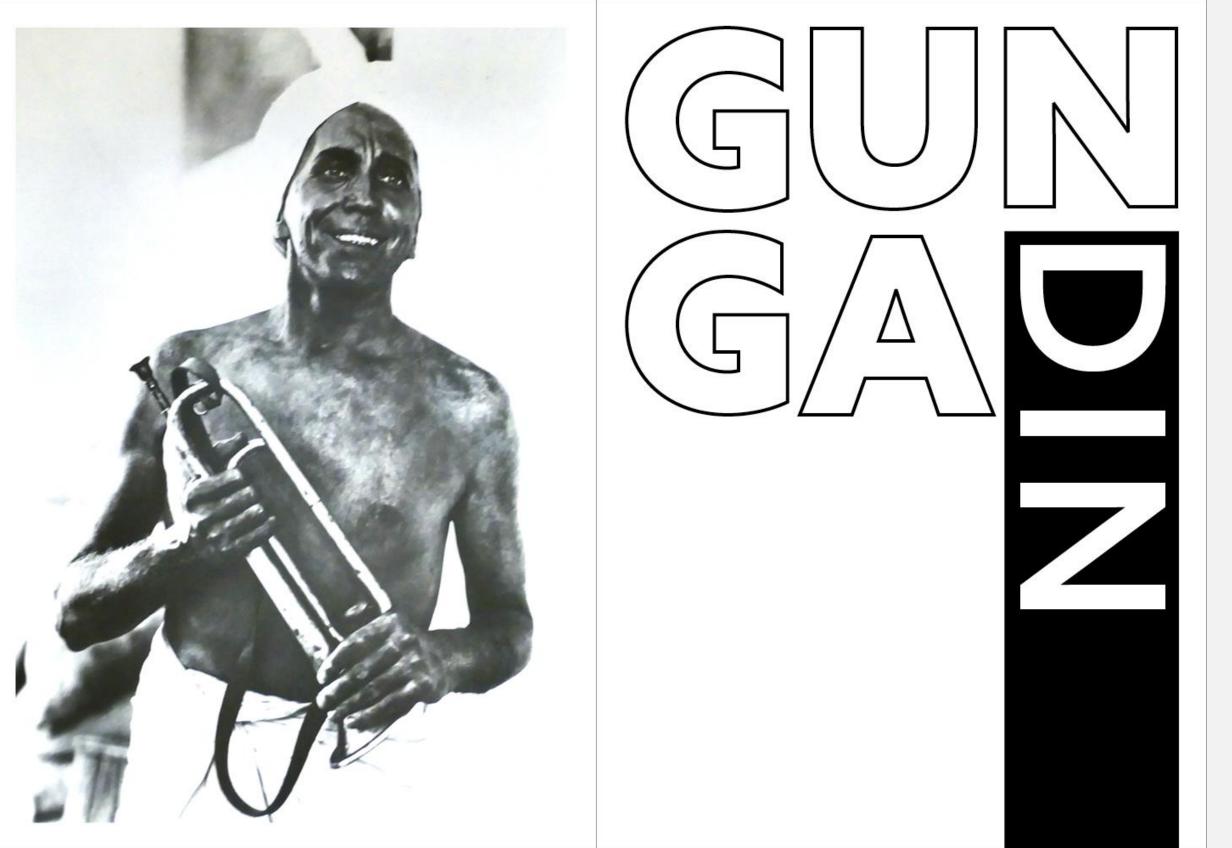


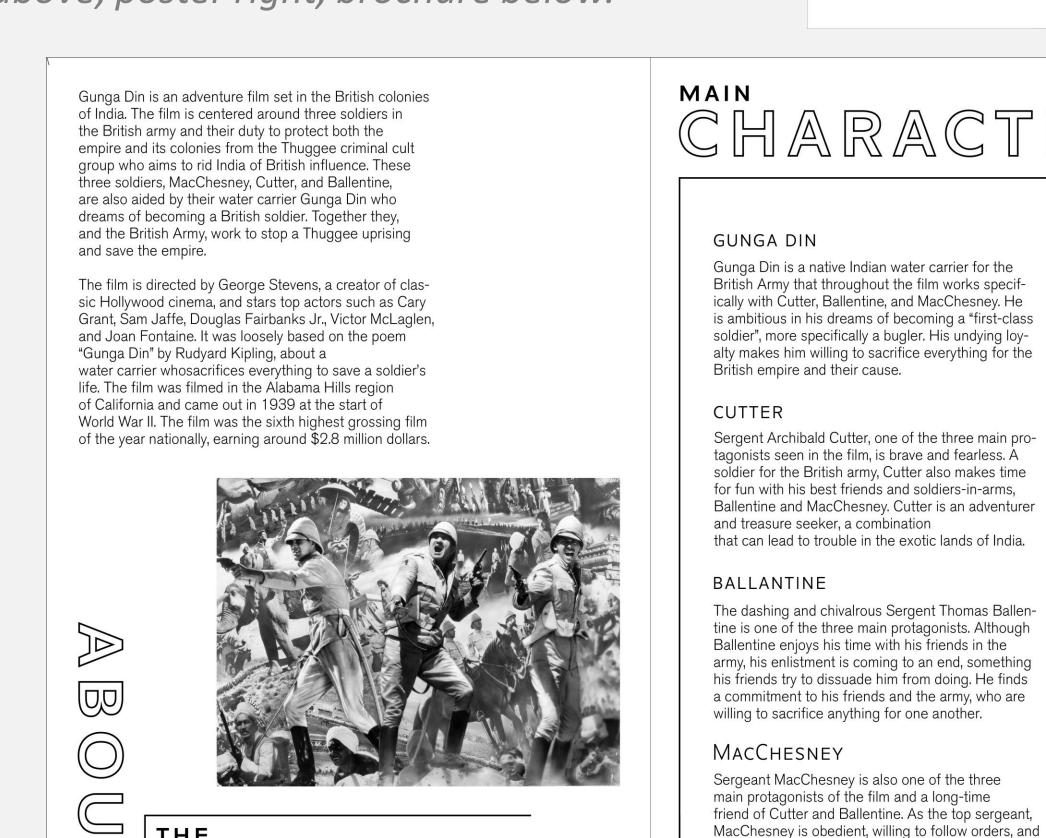
Lobby Cards above, poster right, brochure below.



NUSIC BY ALFRED NEWMAN PRODUCED BY GEROGE STEVENS BASED ON THE POEM BY RUDYARD KIPLING SCREENPLAY BY JOEL SAYRE AND FRED GUIOL STORY BY BEN HECHT AND CHARLES







The idea of empire was one that has stretched far and wide CHARACTERS throughout the history of man, and no can be more a better example than the British Empire. Spanning about a quarter of the earth's landmass from North America to Asia, we see the influence of the empire throughout the world. Many of these subjects lived to document the empire, film was a method employed as a type of propaganda for the empire. Films about the colonies were created for the masses to support imperialism and emphasize the good the empire was doing in these foreign countries. Many of these films began to develop certain tropes for depicting the indigenous peo-Gunga Din is a native Indian water carrier for the ples, countries, and lives of those living under imperial rule. These ically with Cutter, Ballentine, and MacChesney. He tropes became very prominent during imperial rule and can still be is ambitious in his dreams of becoming a "first-class soldier", more specifically a bugler. His undying loy-A trope that is found in many films of this time that can be seen alty makes him willing to sacrifice everything for the in *Gunga Din* is the portrayal of the indigenous people through British empire and their cause. their clothing, speech, as well as the roles they played in the films. In the film, though shown in a variety of ways, the clothing of the indigenous people is mainly depicted wearing a simple white cloth that covers only the vital parts of their body. During their rituals, Sergent Archibald Cutter, one of the three main protheir speech contains a lot of chanting and words that the viewer tagonists seen in the film, is brave and fearless. A does not understand, compared to the British who are depicted as soldier for the British army, Cutter also makes time for fun with his best friends and soldiers-in-arms, more more civilized in their speech. The portrayal of these foreign Ballentine and MacChesney. Cutter is an adventurer lands under imperialism were also seen as dangerous, mysterious, exotic, full of adventure and abundant resources. The film itself is and treasure seeker, a combination an adventure film whose protagonists create a fun and exciting

that can lead to trouble in the exotic lands of India The dashing and chivalrous Sergent Thomas Ballentine is one of the three main protagonists. Although Ballentine enjoys his time with his friends in the army, his enlistment is coming to an end, something his friends try to dissuade him from doing. He finds

a commitment to his friends and the army, who are willing to sacrifice anything for one another. MacChesney Sergeant MacChesney is also one of the three main protagonists of the film and a long-time

level-headed, but also always up for a good

time or a fight.

film is the relationship between the British and the natives. Many of the British characters are in positions of power and leadership over the natives. One example of this can be seen in the character of Gunga Din. Although the poem was based on him and the film itself is named after him, his role is secondary to that of the three main protagonists Cutter, Ballentine, and MacChesney. Another relationship seen throughout the film is the paternal hand that the Empire plays to India and its subjects. In the film Cutter helps teach Gunga Din how to march like a solider. He also does his best to protect him from the Thugees when they find themselves surrounded. The main goal of the Thuggees is to remove the British from the land, however, the British prevail and protect the empire's subjects. The influence of imperialism in film, particularly in this film, show the masses how the empire has guided its subjects into a better world and a better life.

environment in the wilds of India The repeated use of these types

of tropes are stereotypical and often times inaccurate, fueling the

Another way that the influence of imperialism can be seen in this

exoticism of foreign lands to their viewers.



