

Sabina Fazli

Indian Diamonds in Victorian Fiction
Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*,
Anthony Trollope's *The Eustace Diamonds*,
R. L. Stevenson's "The Rajah's Diamond"
and Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*

Introduction

If there is one object in nature, more interesting to human beings than another, it is the Diamond. Why this should be so, Philosophy might perhaps be able to tell if we consulted her; but it is not surprising that Poetry, who is always more or less inclined to superstition, should refer the influence of the stone over our judgments and imaginations to some occult talismanic power working upon us like fascination. (L.R. 49)

The arrival of the Koh-i-Noor in England incited widespread interest, and the fascination with the diamond which the anonymous writer of the 1849 article "The Koh-i-noor, or Mountain of Light" expresses is by no means short-lived. James Bond is equally amazed a hundred years later in Ian Fleming's novel *Diamonds are Forever*.

Now he could understand the passion that diamonds had inspired through the centuries, the almost sexual love they aroused among those who han-

dled them and cut them and traded in them. It was domination by a beauty so pure that it held a kind of truth, a divine authority before which all other material things turned, like the bit of quartz, to clay. In these few minutes Bond understood the myth of diamonds, and he knew that he would never forget what he had suddenly seen inside the heart of this stone. (Fleming 13)

Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, published in 1868, was an instant success and is today viewed as the first detective novel written in English. Apart from inaugurating a new genre, *The Moonstone* influenced a number of successors which take up the idea of an Indian diamond as the focus of the plot and the object of detection. Other literary diamonds which followed the Moonstone are Arthur Conan Doyle's Great Mogul in *The Sign of Four*, R.L. Stevenson's Rajah's Diamond in the *New Arabian Nights*, and Anthony Trollope's Eustace Diamonds in the novel of the same name. Although *The Eustace Diamonds* is usually regarded as a realist domestic novel, it still boasts two burglaries and a police investigation with no less than three officers in search of the stolen diamonds, so that here again the diamonds are the objects of detection.

Diamonds are present in literary texts as solid objects, as the focus of detection. In this position they are naturally central to the plot. The detective discourse, Elaine Freedgood asserts, is the area where things have to be read and are expected to have a meaning as evidence and clue to the solution of the case (150). It is therefore possible to read the diamond narratives as significantly shaped by the diamonds and attendant connections which they introduce to the text. With the precious stones not only the discourse of detection enters the stories but also their place of origin in India. Although by the middle of the nineteenth century, other sources of diamonds had been opened up, and the Indian mines had lost their significance in the international diamond trade, the novels retain the idea of historical diamonds with an identifiable Oriental aura.

On the other hand, diamonds work as vehicle for metaphor. Coventry Patmore expresses the Victorian reverence for the 'Angel in the House' through a comparison of Honoria with the Koh-i-Noor. In his metaphor, Patmore combines the sacred domestic space and its representative with the ultimate symbol of colonial rule in India, the 'Jewel in the Crown' of British imperialism. This yoking together of the domestic and the imperial points to the multifaceted way diamonds figure in literary texts, often uniting opposing qualities. The different interpretative possibilities partly owe to the fact that, over time, diamonds have been associated with different ideas. The Moonstone and its successors are imagined as bearing a curse, while in folklore, diamonds have been thought of as a charm against evil, possessing magical and healing properties) since the Middle Ages (Harlow, "History of Diamonds" 127-128. This notion can be traced back to ancient Indian sources which enumerate the beneficial use of diamonds as talismans (Tolansky 747). The formerly positive properties of diamonds are hence turned

into the negative, although the basic assumption remains that an object of such immense value, rarity and often age, must exert some kind of unexplainable influence.

The “poetry” of the journal article and Fleming’s “myth” evoke the otherworldly and romantic associations of diamonds. The otherworldly quality of diamonds surfaces in their connection with the Oriental ‘treasure trove’. Diamonds serve as an ideal romanticised stand-in for this imaginary region through their association with luxury, abundant and presumably ownerless treasure.

Diamonds as such have always been the centre of legends and myths: In Hindu mythology they come into existence through the sacrifice of a god (Harlow, “History of Diamonds” 119), and the famous fable of the valley of diamonds, featuring either Sindbad or Alexander the Great as its principle hero, has been transmitted in innumerable versions. Real historical diamonds, too, seem to have attracted stories like hardly any other objects (Proctor 287). The stories especially those about the history of the Koh-i-Noor captured the attention of the Victorian public on its arrival in England.

Famous historical diamonds have a more or less thoroughly documented history; it is usually a mingling of fact and fiction which also often features different crimes. As the object of such a narrative, the diamond is individualised and identifiable by name. Such a legendary diamond presents the twofold allure of a mythical object and a financial asset. A singular and often named diamond, however, lacks the interchangeable quality and anonymity of cash or any precious metal. In turn, the individualised diamond is the centre and instigator of stories.

It should by now have become clear, I think, that diamonds in fiction and detective fiction cannot be regarded as a mere “MacGuffin” to keep the plot in motion (Hennelly 27) or as the plug for a text with “a hole in the middle” as Patrick Brantlinger described *The Moonstone* (Brantlinger, “What is Sensational” 22, qtd. in Hennelly 28). I would rather argue that the diamonds in *The Moonstone* and the later texts cannot be exchanged with any other objects. They are integral to the texts and as they are identified as Indian their Otherness must be significant. I propose to analyse the diamonds as Indian objects in texts which are concerned with detection, either very overtly as in Doyle and Collins, or more peripherally as in Trollope.

I will look at the fictional diamonds from different angles and concentrate first of all on their stories which partly draw on existing and famous contemporary diamonds. In the next step, I will consider the contexts which the diamonds appear in in England, namely possession and inheritance, which are naturally central themes of detective fiction. In a separate chapter the focus will be on the intricate web of significances and metaphors which connect diamonds and women and their ownership of diamonds. The introduction of romance into the detective plot also provides a frame to analyse the endings of the stories and relies on diamonds as distinctly Orientalised objects. A mode of writing termed the “Imperial Gothic”

by Patrick Brantlinger articulates the fears surrounding the contact with the colonies towards the end of the nineteenth century. Images of contamination and invasion inform the description of diamonds as well as the depiction of opium, another ambiguous colonial product, which already appears alongside the Moonstone. Both the Oriental drug and the diamonds are perceived as uncanny.

The texts I will rely on for in-depth analysis are Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, Robert Louis Stevenson "The Rajah's Diamond", Anthony Trollope's *The Eustace Diamonds* and Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*. My criteria for choosing these texts are their focus on identifiably Indian diamonds as the focus of crime.

The Moonstone first appeared in serialised form in Charles Dickens' *All the Year Round* in 1868. It is conceived as an epistolary novel in which the theft of the Moonstone in India, its bequest and second theft in England and its return to India are narrated in letters and diary entries assembled to document and solve the crimes. *The Moonstone* has attracted a lot of critical attention and has been variously evaluated. T.S. Eliot famously hailed it as the "first and greatest of English detective novels" (Eliot 377, qtd. from Gruner 127) while Brantlinger complained of its "hole in the middle" thus obsessively circling a void (Brantlinger "What is 'Sensational'" 22, qtd. in Hennelly 28). John R. Reed proposed the first postcolonial analysis of *The Moonstone* (Reed 345) and reads the novel as an indictment of imperialism (Reed 281).

The Eustace Diamonds (serialised 1871-1873) by Anthony Trollope presents a decidedly domestic take on the plot of *The Moonstone* and has even been called a "parody" (Milley 656) or mere rewriting of the former (Daly 69). Lizzie Eustace insists on keeping her deceased husband's diamonds while the Eustace family's lawyers try to reclaim them for his family. At the bottom of the dispute is the diamonds' legal status as either heirloom or paraphernalia. While Lizzie is in possession of the diamonds, she is on the one hand an eligible match due to her wealth, but on the other hand her retention of the diamonds gives rise to rumours. At an inn the diamonds' box is stolen; Lizzie keeps it from the police that the box had been empty, and that she is still in possession of the diamonds. In a second burglary, her diamonds are really stolen and it transpires that she has lied. This damage to her reputation appals all her former suitors, and she has to marry below her station. Although Trollope's novel is often classed as domestic, it has colonial connections. The Eustace diamonds are stated to come from Golconda, the famous Indian mines (Trollope 138), and they appear in England in 1799, the year of the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War which is also the site of the plundering of the Moonstone (Daly 75). In a sub-plot another legal case concerning stolen property complements Lizzie's endeavours to keep the diamonds: An Indian prince, the fictional Sawab of Mygawb, claims back his land, and two of Lizzie's suitors are engaged in the case on opposite sides.

In 1875, a short-story in two instalments appeared in Charles Dickens' *All the Year Round*, by an anonymous contributor. It is called "The Rajah's Diamond" and

tells of a diamond miner in southern Africa who travels to Borneo to obtain the “largest and finest diamond in the world” (2: 155) from a local rajah. The diamond is cursed and every single rajah who had guarded it had died a violent death (1: 138). It does lend itself to a comparison with the other texts, though, as the action is mostly set in Borneo and not in Europe. The story, nevertheless, is interesting because, like *The Datchet Diamonds*¹, it juxtaposes southern African and Oriental wealth. Furthermore, Stevenson chose the same title for his short-story three years later.

R. L. Stevenson’s “The Rajah’s Diamond” was published in *The London Magazine* in 1878 before it appeared in the collection of the *New Arabian Nights* (1882). The collection was published in two volumes with “The Suicide Club” and “The Rajah’s Diamond” making up the first. Both stories feature the pair of Prince Florizel of Bohemia and his faithful servant Colonel Geraldine. “The Rajah’s Diamond” tells of the eponymous diamond’s passage from one owner to the next in a succession of intentional and unintentional thefts and recoveries. “The Suicide Club” and “The Rajah’s Diamond” are embedded in a frame narrative of an editor recounting these stories from an Oriental manuscript and mediating the “Oriental’s” voice (Stevenson, “Suicide” 68). This frame narrative imitates the *Arabian Nights* of the title in connecting the different stories.

Arthur Conan Doyle admired Stevenson’s “The Pavilion on the Links” in the second volume of the *New Arabian Nights* (Gray 90). Doyle produced his own diamond narrative in *The Sign of Four*, published in 1890 in *Lippincott’s Monthly Magazine*. It marks the second appearance of Sherlock Holmes and his friend, biographer and sometime co-lodger Dr. John Watson, following their first adventure in *A Study in Scarlet* (1887). Both novels split their action between London and a colony so that Holmes investigates colonial crimes which follow their perpetrators back to England, a device which recurs several times in the Holmes canon. Doyle references *The Moonstone* in the plot of his novel and also in the name of “Able White” (Doyle, *Sign* 214), an Anglo-Indian planter. Three other Sherlock Holmes stories involve the theft of diamonds, “The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet” (1892), “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle” (1892) and “The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone” (1921). “The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet” identifies the diamonds as presumably colonial. The beryl coronet is “[o]ne of the most precious public possessions of the empire” (Doyle, “Beryl” 470) and thus evokes objects like the crown jewels and a range of historical diamonds. The plot also shows some resemblance to *The Moonstone*, but Doyle does not so much focus the description on the Indianness of the diamond but on the scene of the theft of the Moonstone in Rachel’s room, although with reversed roles. In Doyle’s version, Arthur watches his cousin Mary steal the coronet to run away with her lover. He snatches part of it back, but he is caught by his father when he puts it into the

¹ See p. 108.

cabinet and is thus falsely accused of the theft. As he does not want to incriminate his cousin, he refuses to testify. Consequently, an innocent maid servant is suspected of the theft, and Holmes has to clear up the case on the grounds of circumstantial evidence.

“The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone”² (1921) revolves around the theft of the “Crown Diamond” (“Mazarin” 559), “the great yellow Mazarin Stone” (562). The thief is the Italian Count Negretto Sylvius, a big-game hunter in Algeria (566).

In criticism, the dependence of *The Sign of Four* on *The Moonstone* has often been remarked and the two texts have been viewed together for example, by Jaya Mehta who links both texts to colonialism abroad and the “detective romance” at home (613). Suzanne Daly and John Plotz point out the connection between the realist domestic novel by Trollope and the detective mystery by Collins. Arndt Mersmann groups together *The Moonstone*, *The Eustace Diamonds* and *The Sign of Four* as texts which focus on “the absence of diamonds or jewels” (187). In his discussion of *The Moonstone*, Jean Pierre Naugrette also includes *The Sign of Four* and briefly touches upon Stevenson’s “The Rajah’s Diamond”. The *New Arabian Nights* as a whole seem to have been eclipsed by Stevenson’s other more famous texts, and critics seem to have largely ignored it. The only other instance in which “The Rajah’s Diamond” is mentioned together with *The Moonstone* seems to be Bhupal Singh’s *Survey of Anglo-Indian Fiction* of 1934. Singh identifies a set of texts which centre on “Jewel hunting”, and he lists Stevenson’s short-story as an emulation of *The Moonstone* (268). Singh further concentrates on popular adaptations of the theme in the 1920s and 30s.

A lowbrow forerunner of these can be found in Richard Marsh’s³ *The Datchet Diamonds* (1898). Its plot again consists of the search for diamonds. The Duchess of Datchet’s diamonds are stolen and ultimately retrieved by detective John Ireland. Cyril Paxton, a stockbroker, accidentally picks up the wrong suitcase in a train restaurant and finds himself in possession of the stolen diamonds. He plans to keep them as he has lost money in his investment in shares and plans to marry. From then on, he is on the run both from the police and from the original thieves. In a happy-ending the diamonds are restored to the Duchess, Cyril is pardoned, and he can marry as a company he holds shares in has discovered gold in southern Africa. The diamonds are set in “the Begum’s brooch” and “the Rani’s bracelet” (46) and thus again identified as originally Indian possessions.

² In the short-story, a “French modeller” named Tavernier is mentioned. He fashions a figure of Holmes in wax which he places at the window to mislead Sylvius (“Mazarin” 564). Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, a French eighteenth-century traveller and diamond trader, is one of the most famous and widely quoted references on historical Indian diamonds. The bulk of information on the history of diamonds from Persia and India goes back to his descriptions and drawings. The name might thus be a side-effect of Doyle’s research on diamonds as it is impossible to read up on diamonds without encountering Tavernier.

³ Pseudonym of Richard Bernard Heldmann.

It is obvious, I think, that the theft of diamonds which are more or less clearly identified as Indian, is the feature of a number of texts, at least from the publication of *The Moonstone* onwards. Through the diamonds as stolen goods, India enters the text and invariably connects the domestic problem with the reality of British imperial possessions. It is therefore necessary to look at the underlying pattern of imperialist discourse and the extent to which the domestic genre of detective fiction is concerned with and dependent on imperial relations.

Orientalism in Literature

Empire relies on “cultural representations” (Boehmer 5) to persist in imagination and reality. Geographical expansion has to be supplemented by a general cultural climate which sustains imperial domination and supports its foundation. Literature in general, and in the nineteenth century the novel in particular, supported and perpetuated imperialist ideology (Said, *Culture* 74). The representation of the colony and the metropolis as realms of the Other and the self transports the intrinsic difference between the two spaces. The writing of empire rationalises and justifies domination by ascribing a set of notions to these spaces which are presented as natural and unchanging. Orientalism as a discipline and system of ideas defines the Orient as the utter and deviant opposite of the Occident and western civilisation (Said, *Orientalism* 58). In the logic of binary oppositions the Other comprises the deviances from the colonisers’ auto-stereotype of masculinity, rationality, civilisation and individuality. The Other is imagined as deficient, as “less human, less civilized, as child or savage, wild man, animal, or headless mass” (Boehmer 76). These ascriptions feed on projections and imaginations which are, in the example of the Victorian novel, continually bequeathed as a rigid structure to later texts. Edward Said argues that this ideology is taken for granted and underlies even the most domestic plots as a silent and basic assumption (*Culture* 74-75). This system of ascriptions is not confined to the Orient, but any culture or social group can be thus othered and understood as inferior and opposite to one’s own.

Orientalism as an academic discipline was directly implicated in the imperial project. Amassing knowledge on the Other and ordering it along western scientific models is essential in governing them. Accordingly, Said describes the writing of the *Description de l’Égypte* in the wake of Napoleon’s conquest as the quintessential Orientalist project. It achieves the retelling of history from a western point of view and consolidates power through a renaming and reinterpretation of the other culture (86-87).

In my analysis of the texts, I will draw on Said’s thesis that the idea of empire is an all-pervading element in Victorian novels and constitutes an integral, albeit muted element. The importance of knowing and charting the Oriental Other in order to gain power over them, which Said points out, also surfaces in studies on the literary detective and his imperial predecessors. The specialised and scrutinis-

ing ethnographic knowledge is supposed to make the Other knowable and to exert control over the criminal who is himself always othered (A.D. Miller 36).

Contexts

Before I will look at the texts themselves I will briefly sketch the historical and cultural background. The Victorian attitudes towards India as well as their articulation in the literature of the time, are a complex topic. As already said, the diamonds are the centre of plots of detection. Detective fiction, the genre which *The Moonstone* arguably initiated, heavily relies on the writing of empire. The British view of India painted a picture of the colony as a hotbed of crime. Caroline Reitz contends that even at the beginning of the century this notion intrinsically influenced the formation of detective fiction. The constellation of the detective, crime and India is a common denominator of my chosen texts and therefore deserves prior consideration.

Lastly, I will briefly outline the significance of diamonds in Indian culture and their introduction into Britain as a colonial product and the growing interest in stories and legends surrounding them.

India in Literature: The Fashioning of India as ‘Criminal’

The image of ‘criminal’ India came up in the late eighteenth century and informs the discourse on India in the Victorian period (Mukherjee 23). The expansion of empire relied on the justificatory myth of spreading civilisation and progress. It brought “order, justice, and legality” to a place which was in turn imagined as lacking all of these, a site of unchecked crime and injustice (25). This constellation was repeated in further violent encounters where Indian rebellion was not viewed as politically motivated but as the expression of an innate tendency to crime. The first and enduring instance may be the infamous ‘Black hole’, the prison where the inhabitants of the British settlement in Calcutta were held, in 1756. While contemporary texts were more concerned with the emasculating effect of having been defeated by a people that was considered to be inferior, the construction of Indians as ‘criminal’ emerged in later accounts of the ‘Black hole’ when the East India Company began to establish wider political domination and could make ideological use of the stereotype (26-27).

Thuggee and the Detective

The idea of innate criminality infused British contempt for Indian religions. Hindu iconography was condemned as immoral in its depiction of sexuality and as exalting not only deviant but criminal behaviour (Mukherjee 33). An influential in-

stance which depicts the conflation of religion and crime and then generalises the idea to comprise the whole of the population was the popularity of narratives of Thuggee. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the figure of the Thug became an important symbol for Indian cruelty and immorality. Thuggee came to stand for crime rooted in religion, social organisation and culture (Reitz 25). The sect drew its legitimation from the devotion to the goddess of destruction, Kali, and her decree to provide her with human sacrifices (Rapaport 662). Thuggee was perceived as widespread but hidden from imperial eyes. Deception could also be detected in the way Thugs murdered: they used a sash which could be concealed on the body (Reitz 28). Disguise and - murder were seen as the hallmarks of Thuggee and applied to India as a whole. An important aspect of Thuggee is its wide literary dissemination in Britain as representative of India through the success of Philip Meadows Taylor's *Confessions of a Thug* (1839). In the discussion of Thuggee as an omnipresent phenomenon, it should be noted that actual numbers of stranglers and victims are unknown (Rapaport 661-662) and that the allegation was also used to discredit resistance to British rule in general as during the Indian Mutiny⁴ in particular. Considering the uncertainties surrounding the historical existence of Thuggee, critics even speak of an invention and "manufacturing" to justify rule and provide the colonial administration with a success story in exterminating crime (Mukherjee 103). The conflation of religion and crime, however, also entails the idea of criminal castes, which gained impetus especially after the Mutiny. The conviction that criminal behaviour is inevitably tied to certain castes actually turns into law in the 'Criminal Tribes Act' of 1871. The distinction between caste and tribe was blurry at best but nevertheless strengthened the notion of a systematic and deeply rooted social leaning to crime (Yang 109).

The depiction of William Sleeman and the work of the colonial 'Thagi and Dakaiti Department' figures in a number of texts from the 1830s onwards and informed the public's image of the upright policeman and colonial administrator. His opponents, the sect of Thugs, served to provide a neat "compartmentalization" of "English cops and Indian robbers" (Reitz 23)⁵. The excessive secrecy of Thuggee demands an emphasis on detection and confession which often provided the only chance to penetrate the Thug network. The main strategies employed were the use of spies and approvers as witnesses were generally unwilling to testify

⁴ I will use the term Mutiny as this was the designation used in Victorian writing and carries the connotations which I am interested in with regard to the texts, although more appropriate terms such as First Indian War of Independence, the Great Revolt or Uprising, etc. are used by historians to account for the Indian perspective.

⁵ The colonial setting naturally highlighted the Englishness of the detective. This was important as the reform of the police in England was widely opposed. The presentation of an English detective in India helped disperse these reservations and cleared the way for the acceptance of new forms of policing in England. The colonial detective furthermore rallied the imperial project as the spread of justice and law. The police as benevolent reformers was more readily accepted and supported as colonial agents than the military or the East India Company. (Reitz 29)

(28). These new and inventive means, often original and sometimes barely legal, also proved fertile for the literary detective (Perera 112). The same form of police intelligence, which had hitherto been rejected or at least been frowned upon in England, was implemented in London in the wake of its colonial success (Reitz 28). As Caroline Reitz argues that the birth of the whole genre of detective fiction heavily relied on India as the site of crime, the pedigree of crime fiction includes Taylor as an important and influential contributor (22). The type of the Thug as representative of India and the conventional literary villain congealed into a repeatable literary stereotype. The close intertwining of the colonial adventure story and the rise of the literary detective in England, Reitz suggests, make Dickens and Collins not so much into inventors of the genre but inheritors of an imperial tradition (45). In situating the birth of the detective in India, she also explains the conflation of colony and crime which is to become a fertile impetus for detective literature and refutes the traditional histories of the genre which posit the detective novel as purely “homegrown” (46). Detective fiction is thus one mode which perpetuated the image of the criminal colony .

Meadows Taylor immortalised another Indian ‘criminal’ in his novel on the Mysore wars, in *Tippoo Sultaan* (1840). The figure of Tipu was made famous, primarily, through captivity narratives which showed him as a despotic and cruel ruler (Mukherjee 110). His ‘fame’ was definitely comparable to Nana Sahib, the icon of the Mutiny.

The Mutiny

The Indian Mutiny of 1857/8 consolidated this image and again saw the indiscriminate labelling of the colony as inherently prone to crime. The great outrage the Mutiny had incited in Britain is impressively mirrored in the literary output. Fifty novels on the Mutiny were written before 1900 and another 30 before World War II (Brantlinger, *Rule* 199). The Mutiny was the subject of countless other texts: “[t]here was a deluge of eyewitness accounts, journal articles, histories, poems and plays dealing with the 1857-58 rebellion” (199). The Indian Mutiny was the defining moment in the mid-Victorian attitude to British colonisation of India and India itself and caused a boost in public interest in the colony (Pionke 109)

Writings on the Mutiny signalled a change in the attitudes towards India. Although, before the Mutiny, India was represented in Orientalist stereotypes, many writers still expressed the possibility that Indians could be ‘civilised’ and ‘elevated’ from their state of ‘barbarism’. The discourse which underpinned British rule in India posited the mild and passive Hindu as longing for and consenting to British rule and reformation (Sharpe 58). The possibility of change for the better, in British eyes, is rendered impossible after 1858. The trope of India as unchanging and forever caught in the same “superstition and violence” (Brantlinger, *Rule* 200) supersedes the ethnocentric and philanthropic, though racist, aspirations of earlier

times. The stereotype of the Indian now includes innate and unreformable savagery to explain the Mutiny (Sharpe 201). Post-Mutiny writing is thus governed by binary oppositions of “good and evil, innocence and guilt, justice and injustice, moral restraint and sexual depravity, civilisation and barbarism” (Brantlinger, *Rule* 200).

Nana Sahib’s massacre of women and children in Cawnpore is the most enduring moment of the Mutiny in British fiction and came to stand for the Mutiny as a whole, with Nana Sahib representing the quintessence of Indian cunning and Oriental cruelty (Brantlinger, *Rule* 204; 222). In the British public, the fact was suppressed that Nana Sahib’s massacre at Cawnpore might not have been an act of gratuitous violence, but a retaliatory action for atrocities the British had committed in Benares and Allahabad (201). Patrick Brantlinger argues that the pre-eminence of Cawnpore in the British imagination of the Mutiny is a symptom of a much larger reduction of the Mutiny. Crime rather than politics is seen to be at the root of the rebellion, and Cawnpore supersedes all other accounts of the Mutiny, including British violence and actions of revenge (201-204). The massacre at Cawnpore also confirmed and propagated the fear that English women especially are in danger of being the victims of Indian violence and sexual predation (Free 357-358). Rumours of mass rape were readily accepted as truth in England and entered official history (Sharpe 65). In the criminalisation of the Mutiny, the figure of the rebel was conflated with the earlier image of the Thug as representing the natural criminality of Indians (Mukherjee 102-103, fn. 26).

For imperial ideology, the protection of innocent women and children after the Cawnpore massacre played an important role as it provided a just cause for action: The call for revenge for the murdered women and children was used to justify the extreme violence of the ‘devil’s wind’, and in presenting the political cause of the Mutiny as a (sex) crime, it became devoid of any political intent (Sharpe 65-66).

Opium

Partly coinciding with the Mutiny, Britain fought another colonial war with China. China had tried to stop the influx of opium, and enforced restrictions which led to the ‘Opium Wars’ fought in 1839-42 and 1856-58, to force the Chinese market open to British opium from India. After the second war, which Great Britain fought in alliance with France, China was forced to completely legalise the import of opium. Other European colonial powers also profited from the sale of opium: France established a government-held monopoly in Indo-China, an example which the Netherlands copied in Indonesia in the late nineteenth century (Van Ours 141).

By the middle of the century opium was, alongside tea, one of the most important products imported from India and was sold profitably abroad and consumed

in Britain itself (Keep and Randall 207). The East India Company held a monopoly on opium cultivation in Bengal and exported the product to China and Asian regions with Chinese minorities.

Until the 1860s, opium was freely available in Britain, and both opium and alcohol were the “favourite drugs of the Victorians” (McCormack 139). Both alcohol and opium, pure or mixed as laudanum were not only recreational drugs but also a staple medicine used for all kinds of complaints. The consumption of opium was not yet regarded as morally dubious. After the middle of the century, however, the danger of addiction began to be emphasised over the drug’s usefulness as a medicine and tranquilliser so that the Pharmacy Act of 1868 checked the availability of opium (139-140). The excesses of Romantic culture at the beginning of the century were now frowned upon and what had been regarded as a “moral weakness” eventually came to be viewed as a “disease” (139). The first society which promoted the ban of opium and a cessation of opium trade to China had been founded in 1840, but their cause gained renewed impetus after the Opium Wars with the “Anglo-Indian Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade” in the 1880s. By this time, under the impression of the Opium Wars, demands for further outlawing of the drug were helped by a decline in the opium trade. With the financial gains diminishing, as China herself had started to cultivate opium poppies, the moral arguments against opium found more supporters (Foxcroft 67). Furthermore, with the discovery of alternative drugs as narcotics and pain-killers, the use of and need for opium in medicine dwindled (Van Ours 141).

The attitude towards opium (and alcohol) in Victorian literature was marked by a growing severity as the century advanced, directed against all threats to the Victorian ideals of “sobriety, responsibility, self reliance, chastity, moderation, perception, and domesticity” (McCormack 143). With the growing demonisation of opium it came to be viewed as a poison rather than a medicine and thus perceived as criminal and especially connected to the criminalised East as part of its huge repertoire of murderous substances (Harris 455). The effects of opium, too, were imagined as a tropical disease, contagious and dangerous, issuing from the land itself (454).

The Orientalisation of opium in literature goes back to Thomas De Quincey’s *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, the origin of a set of recurring motifs such as the “exotic and sinister foreigners who smoke, eat, drink, convey and dispense opium to decent Englishmen” (McCormack 142). Doyle’s opium dens as in “The Man with the Twisted Lip” (1891) have been prefigured by Dickens’ *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870). With the suggestion that the empire enters the nineteenth-century novel primarily in the shape of its products (Boehmer 26) opium comes to represent exotic and negative aspects associated with India and the Orient which infect the imperial centre. An interest in opium and also in its criminal potential was incited by James Esdaile’s *Mesmerism in India* (1866) and other works in the same vein detailing the way mesmerism in combination with opium is used to

commit crimes (Ascari 71). Opium is one of the products of empire which incited discussion, and it is closely linked to imperial history through the Opium Wars. The fact that it also highlights the economic interrelatedness of Britain and its colonies will be the basis for my analysis of how the perceived relation between opium and diamonds informs the texts.

“Imperial Gothic”

If the literary detective is imagined as originating from the encounter with the Other and their criminality, detective fiction provides a frame which contains and regulates the foreign elements in England. The reliance on science and rationality which the Holmes stories propagate contrasts with another tendency in mid- and late Victorian literature which describes the encounter with the Other as threatening and uncontrollable.

When the British Empire was at its height, the optimistic belief in its stability and progress was undermined by visions of imminent decay and danger for the nation as a whole and the individual. The celebration of British imperialism in Queen Victoria’s Gold and Diamond Jubilees in 1887 and 1897 is thus contemporary with the mode of imperial Gothic in Victorian fiction. An interest in the occult in connection with the exotic and mysticism had existed since mid-Victorian years, but it produced a specific tone through the rise of a pessimist outlook on empire. Occultism and imperialism, separately and mixed, stood in for a loss of religious certainties and faith. Several themes and motifs, attendant on the consolidation of empire in the last decades of the century, address a sense of insecurity and fear surrounding Britain’s expansion. The mode of imperial Gothic transforms the progressive belief in the superiority of science and Darwinian ideology into their darker undersides of occultism and the possibility of regression (Brantlinger, *Rule* 227-228).

Patrick Brantlinger identifies three distinct themes in imperial Gothic: The fear of “going native” as reversed evolution in an individual and the regression to an earlier stage of civilisation expresses an awareness of just how thin the dividing line between coloniser and colonised was. From the middle of the century onwards, the superiority of the British over their colonial subjects had been based on race (David 88-89), a concept which could now be contested. The fear of invasion and the appearance of “barbarism” and “demonism” far from their assigned places on the periphery in the middle of British society is another recurrent theme. These occult forces were imagined to follow homecoming colonials to England. Lastly, Brantlinger cites the waning of “opportunities for adventure and heroism in the modern world”. The “Colonial Adventure Story” thus propagated an image which had lost its credibility. (*Rule* 230-231).

The imperial Gothic draws its unsettling quality from the assumed diminution of distance between the self and the Other. While the sensational novel had al-

ready depicted crime in the domestic sphere, it is now colonial spectres that appear in the metropolis. In reading the diamonds as Indian, their intrusion can be analysed through the categories Brantlinger defines.

Diamonds in India and Britain

Diamonds in Nineteenth-Century Britain

The history of diamond trade to Europe can be divided into three phases according to their places of import. From ancient times until the 1730s, diamonds were imported from India, from then on until the 1860s they mainly came from Brazilian mines, and the third phase sees the dominance of southern Africa in the international diamond trade (Gaggio 76-77).

India is the oldest export region for diamonds, but little is known about its first mines. Pliny the Elder in the first century and Ptolemy in the second century CE both mention Benares as the place from which diamonds are brought to Europe. In the thirteenth century, Marco Polo reports new mines in Golconda. In the fifteenth century, the Portuguese from their base in Goa, began to dominate the diamond trade with Europe – which also became more organised - and they were followed by the British and the Dutch based in Madras (Gaggio 76). The output of the Indian mines was limited, and only a small percentage of stones reached Europe, as the local rulers often claimed the largest stones for themselves and only allowed minor diamonds to be exported. India was succeeded by Brazil as the main source of diamonds in the 1730s, when the Indian mines showed the first signs of exhaustion, until, in 1866, diamonds were discovered in southern Africa (Levinson 73-75).

With the turn to Brazil for the import of stones and the increasing output of the South American mines, a growing middle-class in Great Britain was able to afford diamonds. The quite uncontrolled output of the Brazilian mines led to a crash in prices, and traders contrived to ship their diamonds to India whence they could be sold as more expensive and rare Indian stones (Proctor 388). This practice is also mentioned by King who asserts that Brazilian diamonds sold as Indian had more of “a character” in European eyes (34). Even when hardly any diamonds were imported from India, Indian diamonds were still thought to be more desirable than Brazilian ones and retained a special allure. The availability of diamonds was further facilitated by the discovery of deposits in Africa, whose mines topped the output of the Brazilian ones. In England, the luxury of a diamond purchase was consequently democratised (Levinson 78-79; Proctor 390).

An interest in the history of diamonds was also emerging, and diamonds as the focus of ancient legends and history naturally aroused interest. The rise of different historical sciences additionally fed the interest in objects and their histories (Goetsch 68). Kurt Tetzeli von Rosador observes that “from the middle of the

[nineteenth] century onwards a steady stream of books on gems and jewels appears,” which perpetuates anecdotes and scientific information read by a wide public (300). The increasing availability of diamonds thus also spawned a rising interest in texts on and about the subject. C.W. King explicitly refers to this interest in the preface of *The Natural History, Ancient and Modern, of Precious Stones and Gems and of the Precious Metals* (1865), the text which Wilkie Collins studied in preparation for the writing of *The Moonstone* (Hennelly 29). King introduces his text by claiming that “the owner of a jewel, however insignificant, is naturally desirous to know something of its character and value” (v), testifying to the spreading ownership of diamonds. The rise in the interest in diamonds might also have been occasioned by the presentation of the Koh-i-Noor in the Great Exhibition of 1851. Since Victoria was proclaimed Queen and, in 1876, Empress of India, the colony came to be called the ‘Jewel in the Crown’, connecting the land and the symbol of rule. Furthermore, the stories surrounding the Koh-i-Noor, and what King called “its character” and reputation, made it a must-see object.

Diamonds in Hinduism

References to diamonds in Sanskrit sources date back to 300 BCE. It cannot, however, be ultimately verified whether all the precious stones mentioned there are actually diamonds in today’s sense of the word or comprised of other very hard material (Proctor 385). The words most often used for ‘diamond’, *vajra* and *indrayudha*, denote ‘thunderbolt’ (Platts, “Vajra”) and ‘Indra’s weapon’, Indra being the Vedic god of war (Harlow, “History of Diamonds” 119).

The *Ratnaparikṣa* by Buddha Bhatta, from the fifth century CE, contains the diamonds’ myth of origin: According to this legend, the gods were unable to overcome the king Bala. To avert defeat they ask him to offer himself in sacrifice in a ritual to their honour. Bala is too proud to refuse, and his body is torn to pieces. Because of the valour and purity of his voluntary death, his remains turn into diamonds. Gods, serpents and the minor divinities of Siddhas and Yakshas pick them up and, in flying over the land, let them fall to the earth and there create diamond deposits. From their origin in Bala’s noble act, diamonds in Hinduism possess divine powers which can be used to benefit or harm their owner (“History of Diamonds” 118-119).

The *Rāṅaniḡhaṅṡu*, a medical dictionary written in the thirteenth century CE by the physician Narahari, ranks diamonds according to colour (Garbe vi), a classification in which it concurs with the *Ratnaparikṣa* (Harlow, “History of Diamonds” 120). The appearance of diamonds in a dictionary of medical terms also highlights the medieval Indian view of diamonds as medicines and beneficial. Narahari distinguishes four different colours, white, red, yellow and blue-black (Garbe 82). Diamonds of these colours correspond to different castes (varna) and can only be worn by their respective members. Brahmins are allowed to wear white, Kshatri-

yas (warriors) red, Vaisyas (merchants) yellow and Sudras (craftsmen) black diamonds. If a diamond is worn by the member of a wrong caste, it brings bad luck and even death. Yet, as long as the rules are observed, the diamonds are supposed to grant wealth and social esteem (82). White diamonds bestow power, wealth and friends, red ones grant health and prevent old age, yellow ones bestow success and the blue-black diamonds provide for good fortune. The donation of a diamond to a temple assured the giver of eternal life (Anon, "Diamond"). In the iconographical depiction of Hindu gods, especially in temples, a recurrent element is a "jewelled girdle" as in the different avatars of Vishnu and Shiva (Bunce, "Viṣṇu"; Bunce, "Shiva").

Narahari further details the medical usefulness of different diamonds, and he emphasises that only unflawed diamonds are auspicious (Garbe 81). The earlier *Ratnapariksa* further stipulates the privilege of kings to wear diamonds of all colours. Buddha Bhatta also asserts that a flawed or damaged diamond is sure to bring misfortune and death to its owner (Harlow, "History of Diamonds" 120).

Although sources on Hindu views on diamonds are rare, it seems clear that they were valued as talismans and their influence regarded so highly that their wearing was strictly regulated. In accounts of the diamond trade to Europe, it is further remarkable that only smaller stones were traded west, as Indian kings had the right to the bigger diamonds found in their lands (Levinson 72). In the stories which centre on historical Indian diamonds their association with Indian religions almost forms a staple ingredient.

Real and Fictional Diamonds: Story and History

The Models: Famous Indian Diamonds and their Stories

In the preface of the 1868 edition of *The Moonstone*, Wilkie Collins gives the Koh-i-Noor and the Orlov as sources on which he modelled the Moonstone. Both diamonds, he asserts, used to be part of Hindu cults:

With reference to the story of the Diamond, as here set forth, I have to acknowledge that it is founded, in some important particulars, on the stories of the royal diamonds of Europe. The magnificent [Orlov] stone which adorns the top of the Russian Imperial Sceptre was once the eye of an Indian idol. The famous Koh-i-Noor is also supposed to have been one of the sacred gems of India; and, more than this, to have been the subject of a prediction which prophesied certain misfortune to the persons who should divert it from its ancient uses. (Collins, Preface 5)

Jaya Mehta adds three other diamonds as possible sources for the Moonstone: "Charles Reed's moonstone; the Pitt diamond, which [...] proved a curse to its owner; and the Sancy [...] believed to have been returned to India" (ftn.6, 649). In

the following I will look in detail at the stories of the Koh-i-Noor and the Orlov. I will include other famous diamonds whose histories and legends might have contributed to the plot of *The Moonstone* and other texts centring on Indian diamonds. Given the general interest in diamonds from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards and Collins' own well-known research into diamonds, it is more than likely that he would have been familiar with these stories as well as his Victorian readers. The existence of these stories, more widely known in the nineteenth century than today, may also refute the claim that the Moonstone is an interchangeable and meaningless item to trigger the detective plot and actually evokes a range of associations with existing diamonds.

C. W. King describes the transmission of the legends surrounding diamonds as conspicuously unreliable: “[T]here is no class of relics (except sacred) whose whole history swarms with confused and conflicting stories, re-copied and re-blundered by careless writers, [...] and these fictions [...] obtrude themselves into newspaper paragraphs” (King vii). The layer of fiction, which constitutes parts of these stories, feeds on Orientalist stereotypes. As many of the stories were collected and edited for a growing interested Victorian reading public (Rosador 300) the image of India which is conveyed oscillates between excessive violence, excessive riches and the occultism of an unknown religion. This becomes evident in the recurring motif of the theft of diamonds from a temple or statue of a god and the idea of a curse laid on the diamond. While the disregard for native “superstition” establishes the thief as superior and immune to “heathen” beliefs, the theft also holds the possibility of an Oriental revenge in the form of a curse which reflects the interest in occultism (Brantlinger, *Rule* 227). The original function of diamonds in Hinduism as talismanic and generally auspicious is suppressed in these stories.

When the Koh-i-Noor reached England in 1850, it could already boast a documented history of many centuries. According to legend, the diamond was mounted in a statue of Shiva as his third eye. Its earliest known owner was the Rajah of Malawah (Harlow, “Great Diamonds” 109). His kingdom was conquered by the first Mogul emperor of India, Barbur, who obtained the Koh-i-Noor as loot after his taking of Agra in 1526. It became a symbol of omnipotence and power (Balfour 15-16) and thus remained in the hands of Humayun, Barbur's son and successor to the throne. In the reign of Aurangzeb, it passed to Persia after the sacking of Dehli in 1739. Nadir Shah there named it the *Kob-i-Noor*, the ‘Mountain of light’ (Mersmann 178). The last Persian owner of the diamond was Shah Shuja, who traded it to Maharajah Ranjit Singh of the Punjab for protection in Lahore after he had been driven out of his country. Ranjit Singh, at one point, intended to dedicate the diamond to the temple of Jaganath in Puri, but was dissuaded by his treasurer (Balfour 23). This episode, however, was to become the basis of one of India's claims for restitution. The British took the Koh-i-Noor from Ranjit Singh's son Dalip Singh after the conquest of the Punjab in the Second Anglo-Sikh War of 1849. The peace treaty which was drawn up between the

Punjab and the East India Company minutely regulated the ownership of the Koh-i-Noor and made it over to Queen Victoria, thus providing a “legalistic façade” in an attempt to erase its history as an object of plunder (Mersmann 178). The greater part of the history of the Koh-i-Noor so far, as Mersmann remarks, had been distinguished by “violence, dispossession, torture, extortion, [and] cruelty” (177). On its arrival in England, rumours spread that the diamond was ill-fated and even cursed. When Queen Victoria was attacked, shortly after the diamond’s arrival in Britain, the public was quick to blame the cursed Koh-i-Noor for the incident (Balfour 25; 28).

The almost magical properties which were ascribed to the diamond and its association with India posed specific problems in its appropriation in England. The Koh-i-Noor’s distinct biography was determined by its prestige as a symbol of rule and power. Its new owners in England coped with these problems by containing the diamond in a controllable frame. It was first presented to the public at the Great Exhibition of 1851, providing a very particular space for the reinterpretation: It was on display in the British department rather than in the Indian Court (Mersmann 179-180). The Koh-i-Noor actually presented an antithesis to the underlying idea of the Exhibition which was devoted to the display of neatly arranged “classes of commodities”. The Koh-i-Noor stood apart as a symbol of a pre-modern, Orientalist economy, of social and political concepts completely at odds with those propagated by the Great Exhibition (180). It served as the symbolic opposite of industrial mass production, which was imagined as democratic and morally superior. The Koh-i-Noor was the fascinating but detestable exponent of a society imagined as feudal and backward including aristocratic luxury and over-consumption built on ruthless tyranny (182-183).

Before its exhibition, Queen Victoria had the diamond re-cut to remove a yellow tinge, and its size was significantly reduced in the process (Balfour 27). In the 1850s Dalip Singh, its last owner in India, came to live at Queen Victoria’s court and again presented the diamond to her as a gift. Both Arndt Mersmann and Jaya Mehta emphasise this as an “element of subaltern resistance” (Mersmann 186; Mehta 615). The gesture turned the diamond from a symbol of conquest into a generous personal gift fashioning the giver as an equal to the Queen. In any case, Dalip Singh’s token gesture renewed the public discussion on the Koh-i-Noor, its alleged curse and also the legitimacy of its seizure, as Singh presented it as a personal possession and not as property of state, which could have been confiscated in war (Balfour 28).

The Koh-i-Noor was set in a cirlet for Queen Victoria and later reset for Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, but it was only rarely worn. Mersmann argues that at the bottom of this could be the Indian Mutiny of 1857/58 together with the – perhaps unconscious – realisation of guilt as to its

theft from Singh and India (186). Thus the Orientalist aura and history seems to have proven too persistent an element in the domestication of the diamond⁶.

Ellenborough's attempt to restore the Gates of Ghazni to their original site in Somnath was also widely debated at the time. The plundering of Somnath by the Afghan Muslims in 1024 is mentioned in the prologue of *The Moonstone*. Ellenborough seized the famous gates during the Afghan campaign which ended in 1842. He suggested restoring them to the Hindu temple in Somnath whence they had presumably been stolen by Mahmud. The act was supposed to cover the otherwise disastrous results of the war and to ingratiate themselves with the Hindu population. The plan was, however, fiercely rejected by Ellenborough's contemporaries and marked the end of his career (Jasanoff 129-130). The Sancy offers an interesting instance of an Indian diamond which actually found its way back to India and thus upset the connotation of historical Indian diamonds as loot, trophy and a representation of the splendour of a subjugated colony. It presumably came to Europe in the sixteenth century through Portuguese trade and was henceforth in French possession. The diamond was bought by a Bombay merchant in 1865, who then sold it on to the Maharajah of Patiala two years later, or, according to another version, kept it until the late 1880s (Balfour 34).

The second diamond mentioned by Collins is the Orlov which is also supposed to have been a sacred stone, set in a statue of Vishnu in Srirangam, in southern India. It was supposedly stolen from the shrine by a French soldier, who had deserted from his regiment and feigned his conversion to Hinduism. The priests of the temple eventually granted him access to its inner precincts where he stole the diamond and escaped to a British station. It was purchased in Amsterdam by Prince Orlov and presented to Catherine the Great of Russia. According to legend, when Napoleon invaded Russia and searched for the diamond, he opened the tomb of a priest where it lay hidden. The ghost of the priest then appeared and cursed anyone who dared touch the diamond (Balfour 79-80).

The diamond in *The Sign of Four* evokes two historical stones. Doyle names it after the existing Great Mogul which is now lost (Balfour 44). The setting in Agra, the capital of the Mogul emperors, also suggests the Agra diamond which was smuggled by British soldiers out of India, at exactly the time of Small's story, i.e. during the Mutiny in 1857. In its history as a trophy of war, it too, had been in the possession of Humayun, perhaps together with the Koh-i-Noor (Balfour 37).

"The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" also draws on an existing diamond, or rather a collection of diamonds: The diamonds which Cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602-61) bequeathed to Louis XIV included the celebrated Sancy, and the whole

⁶ The Koh-i-Noor continued to spark controversy when the Indian government claimed the return of the diamond in 1947. India was followed by Pakistan and Iran to ask for restitution. Additionally, the Indian federal state of Orissa demanded that the diamond ought to be given back to its rightful owner, the god Jaganath (Balfour 28).

collection was named the ‘Mazarins’. In a spectacular heist they were stolen in 1792, and only some have since been recovered (Balfour 60-61).

The diamond which is today known as the Regent was formerly named after its owner Pitt. Thomas Pitt was the East India Company’s president of Fort Madras and also traded in diamonds. In this function, he somehow obtained the diamond and, on his return to England, rumours spread that he had used foul play. During his lifetime, Pitt not only suffered from the slander, but he was also constantly afraid that his diamond might be stolen and desperately tried to sell it. Philippe II, the Regent of France finally bought it and incorporated it into the French crown jewels (Balfour 61-66).

Obviously, a range of motives in fictional texts have their parallels in the legends and histories of existing diamonds. While the Koh-i-Noor furnishes the archetypal story, some of the factual and legendary instances in the histories of other diamonds also have inspired the histories of fictional stones. The slander surrounding the acquisition of a valuable diamond and misbehaviour in the colony is prefigured in the story of the Regent and also appears in *The Moonstone* and “The Rajah’ Diamond”. The curse is a recurring element in many stories and is associated with the Koh-i-Noor and the Orlov and its ghostly guardian. The story of the Frenchman serving the Hindu priests to get near the diamond bears resemblance to “The Rajah’s Diamond” and Thomas Vandeleur’s services to the Rajah of Kashgar. The disguised three Brahmins of *The Moonstone* – who are, moreover, supposed to have converted to Islam –, also recall the Orlov and its history. Apart from the Koh-i-Noor and the Orlov, other precious stones like the Nassak, too, were believed to have been part of a statue of a god and hence stolen in an act of sacrilege (Balfour 97).

The legends surrounding the historical Indian diamonds unanimously suggest that objects of such great value invariably boast a history of violence and theft. The abundance of legends and fables testifies to the diamonds’ propensity to generate stories and especially crimes and to stand at their centre with owners as well as crimes revolving around them. They are, furthermore, associated with distinctly Indian episodes, the recurrence of Hindu temples and deities and the violence of the Mutiny in the legend of the Agra posit them as positively Oriental.

The Description of the Fictional Diamonds

Most of the texts I am concerned with give the diamonds an individual name. The implication is that these share the individuality and history of their real-life counterparts. Furthermore, the names already signal their Indian origins. The Rajah’s Diamond’s other appellation, the “Eye of Light” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 88) echoes the Koh-i-Noor, the ‘Mountain of Light’ and the Nur-ul-ain, the ‘Light of the Eye’, a famous diamond in the Persian crown jewels (Balfour 51). Richard Marsh, too, refers to the diamonds’ putative previous owners, as the Datchet diamonds

are set in “the Begum’s brooch, the Rani’s Bracelet” (Marsh 46). Without any further explanation, these designations co-exist with the collective name of the jewels as “Datchet Diamonds”. Doyle calls his diamond after the once existent Great Mogul but changes its history. This diamond, of course, also evokes Indian rule through the Mogul dynasty. Its last descendant, Bahadur Shah II, was briefly installed as Indian emperor during the Mutiny but disposed of after the rebellion had failed (Mehta 616). The Hindu and Muslim honorifics ‘rajah’, ‘rani’, ‘begum’ and ‘Mogul’ in the diamonds’ names evoke their Indian owners and a history of aristocratic possession, however indistinct.

The Koh-i-Noor’s name changed at least once, when Nadir Shah gave it the present name instead of its older designation as Babur’s Diamond (Mersmann 178). Only in the Datchet Diamonds does the name of the English owners overwrite the former possessive claims. In the Eustace Diamonds all former ownership is erased.

While the Moonstone alone forms the centre in Collins’ novel, the other diamonds are part of larger treasures. In Stevenson, however, the treasure gradually disintegrates, and the diamond is the last and most representative item that is left in the end. In *The Sign of Four* the treasure stays intact, but the diamond again represents and crystallises its significance into one single object. They are both elevated from the unnamed mass of lesser diamonds which highlights their special status.

The direct descriptions of the Moonstone and the Rajah’s Diamond draw on a similar vocabulary and imagery. In *The Moonstone*, the paramount impression which is evoked through its depiction is its “unfathomable” nature. It is described in greatest detail by Betteredge:

As large, or nearly, as a plover’s egg! The light that streamed from it was like the light of the harvest moon. When you looked down into the stone, you looked into a yellow deep that drew your eyes into it so that they saw nothing else. It seemed unfathomable: this jewel, that you could hold between your finger and thumb, seemed unfathomable as the heavens themselves. We set it to the sun, and then shut the light out of the room, and it shone awfully out of the depth of its own brightness, with a moony gleam, in the dark. (Collins, *Moonstone* 70)

The diamond’s property to glow in the dark possibly shows that Collins knew King’s study (Hennelly 29) who, after all, asserts that the diamond “alone among gems has the peculiarity of becoming phosphorescent in the dark, after long exposure to the sun’s rays” (King 37). The radiance of the diamond is described as “awful”, which foreshadows the sublime in the scene of its restitution. Furthermore, it turns the light of the sun into a “moony gleam” which also lights its restitution in the “dark, [...] awful [and] mystic” light of the moon in India (Collins, *Moonstone* 464).

According to Hennelly, Collins' use of King as a source can also be seen in the Moonstone's "flaw, in the very heart of the stone" (Collins, *Moonstone* 46) (Hennelly 29) which links it to the Koh-i-Noor. Additionally, the Hindu sources unanimously suggest that a flawed diamond is the most dangerous of all. The flaw in the diamond bears on its interpretability in the English context as a potential cash item: Together with its uniqueness, its imperfection makes it hard to estimate the Moonstone's price on the market as "[t]he question of accurately valuing it presented some serious difficulty. Its size made it a phenomenon [...]; its colour placed it in a category by itself, and, [...] there was a defect [...]" (Collins, *Moonstone* 46). Betteredge expresses the same uncertainty when he repeatedly states the Moonstone's "unfathomable" nature.

The seemingly abysmal depth of the diamond has a mesmerizing quality and captivates the attention of even an unwilling onlooker. Through Betteredge's description, the Moonstone is twinned with the Shivering Sands' "unfathomable depths" (Collins, *Moonstone* 308) (Mehta 629) and their allure for Rosanna (Collins, *Moonstone* 34). In both cases, the objects are both fascinating and at the same time destructive. Another inbuilt contradiction is evident in the diamond's physical size comparable to a "plover's egg" which contradicts its ability to conjure the illusion of infinity in its lustre, creating a disparity between its material existence and the mirage of an "unfathomable" inner depth.

The imagery in the description oscillates between extremes: The lunar brilliancy and the infinity of heaven have their counterpart in the "yellow deep". The recurrence to these extremes mirrors Betteredge's insistence on the impossibility to fathom the Moonstone and the fact that its character defies expression. The prosaic problem of estimating the Moonstone's worth in terms of cash is thus complemented by the impossibility to grasp it in words and evaluate its significance. The Moonstone can neither be defined in terms of cash nor in words which adds to the "elements of uncertainty" surrounding it (46).

The description of the Rajah's Diamond is in some points similar to the Moonstone's. Before Prince Florizel throws the diamond into the Seine, he muses:

'We have spoken of corruption,' said the Prince. 'To me this nugget of bright crystal is as loathsome as though it were crawling with the worms of death; it is as shocking as though it were compacted out of innocent blood. I see it here in my hand, and I know it is shining with hell-fire. I have told you but a hundredth part of its story; what passed in former ages, to what crimes and treacheries it incited men of yore, the imagination trembles to conceive, for years and years it has faithfully served the powers of hell; [...] enough of broken friendships; all things come to an end, the evil like the good; pestilence as well as beautiful music; [...] its empire ends tonight' [...] 'Amen,' said Florizel with gravity. 'I have slain a cockatrice!' (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 131)

The juxtaposition of physical size and “unfathomable” allure links the two diamonds. Prince Florizel can hold the Rajah’s Diamond in his hand, and yet it shines “with hell-fire”. While Prince Florizel asserts its extraordinary beauty (130), it is associated with everything satanic. Its dual nature is expressed in the image of the “cockatrice”, illustrating its two contradictory qualities, beauty and destructive power, in the hybrid mythological creature. It also draws attention to the allure of the visual as the cockatrice kills through its stare.

The Moonstone, likened to the devil (Collins, *Moonstone* 43; 78), resembles the “satanic” Rajah’s Diamond in its association with ultimate evil. Its treachery has its equivalent in the Moonstone which “has misguided everyone who has come near it” (300). Both diamonds are thus imagined as wilfully deceptive. Furthermore, they destroy friendships and disrupt social relations. The “broken friendships” find their counterpart in the Moonstone’s ability to “poison” the rapport between people and scatter a household which before had been presented as cohesive (186).

Prince Florizel’s speech combines the accusation of the treacheries with their history, which is presumably long but remains unknown. The dimension of the long procession of crimes is unconceivable and evokes the diamond’s age. *The Moonstone* ends on a similar note emphasising the diamond’s durability with an assertion of the eternal “cycles of time” which might bring more adventures of the Moonstone in endless repetitions (464).

The Rajah’s Diamond is further characterised as a misfit on two levels. Firstly, it is perceived as “monstrous” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 121) by Frank Scrymgeour. The monstrosity of the diamond may on the one hand be attributed to its excessive and ‘monstrous’ value. On the other hand Indian diamonds actually did appear as monstrous due to the Indian way of cutting which aimed at preserving the greatest possible size in the diamonds. The European fashion demanded lustre rather than size and was content with smaller diamonds which showed more brilliancy (Mersmann 185-186). C. W. King calls the Koh-i-Noor a “monster diamond” before its size and weight were reduced (36). The same notion is taken up again when Simon Rolles carries the diamond around with him: “The diamond in his pocket occasioned him a sensible physical distress. It burned, it was too large, it bruised his ribs” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 99). Harry Hartley thinks of the diamond as an “incubus” (76) and believes that the possession of the stone brings “most uneasy dreams” (99) to Simon Rolles. This shows the diamond’s uncanny propensity to influence its owner.

Secondly, the possession of the Rajah’s Diamond is alien to the political system or at least perceived as an anachronism: Prince Florizel expresses the aristocratic and basically undemocratic nature of the Rajah’s Diamond when he claims that “[j]ewels so valuable should be reserved for the collection of a Prince or the treasury of a great nation. To hand them about among the common sort of men is to set a price on Virtue’s head” (97). His speech reiterates the notion of the Koh-i-

Noor as the antipode of the British democratic mass-production of commodities as presented at the Great Exhibition of 1851. Additionally, handing around the diamond among common men exactly describes the plot of "The Rajah's Diamond". According to Prince Florizel, it has therefore entered a system alien to it. Ironically, Prince Florizel is of course not a "common man", yet he eventually also falls prey to the diamonds' influence (129).

To sum up, the basic idea which both texts convey is the Otherness of the diamonds. This is expressed in their ability to escape definition. Their effect on the onlooker as well as their appearance has to be compressed in indistinct and sometimes contradictory images. Moreover, their price cannot be securely set and adds to their elusiveness. The flaw in the Moonstone and the assertion by Prince Florizel that the Rajah's Diamond was not meant to circulate in the market defines them as alien and disruptive to the economic and social system. The excessive worth concentrated in a small stone cannot be securely contained by society and, as John Plotz argues, "threatens to become illegible" (34) and thus also indescribable in familiar terms. The recourse to the vast but indistinct images of heaven and hell reflects this impossibility of finding precise and moderate terms. Moreover, it removes the diamonds from the everyday sphere and contributes to the mystification of their nature which places them in romance rather than reality. The monstrosity of their value is complemented by their monstrous age which also has to remain undefined.

Diamonds as Cash

While the Moonstone's singular nature is expressed through its religious significance, the Rajah's Diamond and the Great Mogul are set apart from the lesser diamonds through their exceptional size and value. The Rajah's Diamond is "the sixth known [sic] diamond in the world" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 71) and the Great Mogul "is said to be the second largest stone in existence" (Doyle, *Sign* 224). The once existent Mogul was ranked as the largest stone ever to have been discovered in India (King 34-35).

The Agra Treasure as a whole is worth "not less than half a million sterling" (Doyle, *Sign* 150). The Moonstone's worth is, as already mentioned, hard to pin down because of the flaw in its middle. Franklin and Mr. Luker both deposit it in the safe of a bank as "a valuable of great price" (Collins, *Moonstone* 55; 204). Ablewhite has Mr. Luker estimate the worth of the Moonstone at thirty thousand pounds (450), while it has been valued at twenty thousand before (89). As a cut-up "marketable commodity" (452; 454) it is worth even more. Ablewhite then draws two thousand pounds on the diamond to cover his embezzlements and the expenses for keeping his mistress. The value of the Eustace Diamonds is put down as ten thousand or twenty thousand pounds (Trollope 130; 194). The Datchet Diamonds are worth a quarter of a million:

The value of their [the Dukes of Datchet's] collection is fabulous – the intrinsic value of the stones [...] was a quarter of a million of money! [...] This was the net value [...] and quite apart from any adventitious value which they might possess, from [...] the point of view of historical association.” (Marsh 21)

The Mazarin stone, a “Crown diamond”, is worth a hundred thousand pounds (“Mazarin” 559). Marsh’s text sets off the trade value against the historical value of the diamonds, which cannot be expressed through money and recognises an invaluable aspect in the existence of the diamond. The always impending cutting of the diamonds is prefigured in the history of the Koh-i-Noor. C. W. King criticised its reduction in size. He calls it “[a] most ill-advised proceeding, which has deprived the stone of all its historical and mineralogical value” (36). The historical value, then, depends on wholeness and invests the diamonds with symbolical meaning. As in the instances of historical diamonds, they symbolise power, and as the witness of conquests they are the lasting trophy of victory. The Moonstone, however, combines its existence as a trophy of war with its religious significance.

The Sacred Gem: The Moonstone

The Moonstone follows the pattern of stories of historical diamonds in its description as a sacred part of a statue of a god. Originally, it was set in the forehead of the “moon-god” (Collins, *Moonstone* 12), Soma⁷. The historical temple of Somnath was dedicated to Shiva in his incarnation as ‘Soma’s Lord’, *Som-nāth* (Platts “Soma”). The temple held a linga beset with jewels (Thapar 31). Lingas are the common emblems used to represent Shiva in temples and are usually preferred to figurative depictions (Michell 38). Somnath was, at the time of its sacking by Mahmud of Ghazni, known for its wealth and several kilograms of jewels which adorned its statues (Thapar 31).

The depiction of Soma mounted on an antelope in *The Moonstone* (464) references the traditional iconographic representation of Soma with a three-wheeled chariot drawn by an antelope (Bunce, “Soma”). In *The Moonstone*, the association with Shiva is abandoned in favour of “Vishnu the Preserver” (Collins, *Moonstone* 12), who guards the diamond. He is a much more benign god than Shiva, who is also associated with the legend of the Koh-i-Noor. Shiva is worshipped as the deity of destruction and chaos, and the god of battlefields and cremation (Michell 25). Vishnu, on the other hand, represents the life affirming elements of creation and preservation. He also maintains the order of the universe and, in myth, res-

⁷ Indra, who wields the ‘thunderbolt’, *vajra*, is allied with Soma in mythology (York 807). *Vajra* is Sanskrit for ‘diamond’.

cues mankind from destruction (26). The Moonstone is dedicated⁸ to Soma because of its propensity to mirror the phases of the moon. It is thus believed to have an organic connection with the god and wax and wane independently. The colour yellow is also associated with the god Soma and either present as the colour of his skin or garments (Bunce, “Soma”). Soma has a twofold meaning as it first denoted the Vedic drug and only later came to stand for the moon. The Moonstone thus also represents the juice of Soma which was won from the “moon-plant” and is, in the Vedas, described as drunk at sacrifices (Bunce, “Soma”).

The sanctity of the Moonstone relies on its wholeness. The destruction of its “sacred identity” (Collins, *Moonstone* 82) puts an end to its existence as a religious symbol. The cutting of the diamond turns it from a holy relic into brilliants, but these would be worth more than the uncut diamond (47). Its spiritual significance is thus distinctly set off against the value for which it is admired in England. Its significance as a whole but worthless sacred symbol and cut but valuable cash item constitutes another paradox in its existence.

The anonymous narrator of the prologue compares the practice of donating a diamond to a shrine to customs of antiquity. In this respect, Indians, ancient Romans and Greeks, his comparison concludes, share the same superstitions (Collins, *Moonstone* 11). This idea may partly rely on King’s chapter “Sacred Gems” (406-409) which enumerates such customs from Greek antiquity to the Middle Ages. The parallel between antiquity and India, where diamonds are revered as holy objects, also throws into relief the similarity of the British and Mogul interpretations of the diamond as plunder. Additionally, the comparison of Greece, Rome and India creates a cultural intimacy between India and Europe and at the same time a temporal gap because the ancient superstitions, long abandoned in the west, still flourish in the East, which is thus imagined as stuck in time and development.

While the prologue is set in India it is also located in an apparently timeless and “romantic” (Collins, *Moonstone* 462) space. The emphasis is on the age of the Moonstone and the long and uninterrupted line of Brahmins who guard it: “One age followed another” (repeated twice on the same page), “generation after generation”, “the generations succeeded each other” (12). The specific indications of time only occur in connection with conquests that interrupt the customs which had existed “for centuries” (12). Mahmoud of Ghazni in the “eleventh century of the Christian era” and Aurangzeb in the “first years of the eighteenth century of the Christian era” (12) interrupt this flow of time and are granted an approximate dating. Together with its guardians the Moonstone is the unchanging witness of different violent conquests. The Moonstone is raised from the indistinct and unmarked flow of time, it is suggested, on the “4th of May 1799” (11) when John

⁸ Given the Hindu conviction that flawed diamonds are singularly inauspicious, the dedication of such a diamond to a god is rather unlikely.

Herncastle steals it and, at the same time, elevates it into the realm of precise historicity. The exact dating, in contrast to the blurry history before, reflects the notion that history arrived in India only with the East India Company's aggression (Mukherjee 25). In the same way, the history of the Moonstone is framed as myth, called "[o]ne of the wildest of these stories" (11), "the fanciful story", "a fable" (13), and "the fantastic Indian legend" (16).

When the Moonstone is reinterpreted as a religious object it also again enters the same cyclical pattern of history as the ending of Murthwaite's letter affirms its reimmersion in the "cycles of time" (Collins, *Moonstone* 464). This conception of history also refers to the Hindu belief in continual rebirths. The virtually indestructible diamond aptly figures eternal repetition.

The Acquisition of Trophies: The Moonstone, the Rajah's Diamond and the Agra Treasure

The history of the Moonstone especially emphasises its status as a trophy. The Muslim invaders of Benares carry away the diamond which then passes from one of Aurabgzeb's officers to Tipu. The Moonstone is removed from its place in the statue and set in the pommel of a dagger (Collins, *Moonstone* 13). It is thus changed from a religious artefact which adorns a god into a symbol of power and rule and into a trophy of war which remembers a historical event. The diamond as a receptacle of memory is prefigured in the history of the Koh-i-Noor whose passage marks the transition of power.

The acquisition of the diamonds in India relies on the notion of the East as 'treasure trove' and the ready availability of these treasures. The adventure story set in the colony propagates the imperial right to the apparently ownerless riches. The idea of the colony as a huge treasury is, according to Elleke Boehmer, one of the central images of imperialism at its height (23). "A prime way of 'selling' empire was to portray it not as a scheme of financial gain, but as thrilling adventure" (45), Diane Simmons contends. The reward for the adventurer is "some final prize: victory against the native, wealth, the achievement of identity, personal or national honour and withal, status as a Briton and a man" (Boehmer 73). The texts, however, describe the 'earning' of treasure as problematic and as inevitably bound up with crime and criminals, undermining this notion.

Herncastle steals the Moonstone in the plundering, after Seringapatam has been stormed, in a battle which became notoriously famous for the undisciplined looting (GoGwilt 68). The "riot and confusion" (Collins, *Moonstone* 14) allows Herncastle to reach the treasury where he commits the crimes which, however, cannot be ultimately proven. His entrance with "a torch in one hand, and a dagger dripping with blood in the other" (14) can be read as a denunciation of the supposedly enlightened civilising mission, which provides the respectable veneer for plunder and murder (GoGwilt 65). Called the "Honourable John" (Collins, *Moon-*

stone 40) by Betteredge, Collins puns on the title used with the East India Company combining it with its slang designation as “John Company” (GoGwilt 65). The allegorical light of progress and the pun on his name suggest that not the individual crime is at stake but its enmeshing in the wider context of British expansionism. The Moonstone remains a trophy in the hands of Herncastle as its passage again marks the transition of power from the Indian ruler to the European power.

The provenance of the Rajah’s Diamond is only revealed in the last story entitled “The Adventure of Prince Florizel and a Detective”. An allusion to Thomas Vandeleur’s crime relating to the diamond appears early on in the story in a rather sketchy version: “For some reason, some service the nature of which had been often whispered and repeatedly denied, the Rajah of Kashgar⁹ had presented this officer with the sixth known diamond of the world.” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 71) Only in the end can Prince Florizel give a coherent account. He narrates the whole story of the diamond and also names the “service which had been often whispered” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 71):

‘An officer,’ began Prince Florizel, ‘a man of courage and conduct, who had already risen by merit to an eminent rank, and won not only admiration but respect, visited in an unfortunate hour for his peace of mind, the collections of an Indian Prince. Here he beheld a diamond so extraordinary for size and beauty that from that instant he had only one desire in life: honour, reputation, friendship, the love of country, he was ready to sacrifice all for this lump of sparkling crystal. For three years he served this semi-barbarian potentate as Jacob served Laban; he falsified frontiers, he connived at murders, he unjustly condemned and executed a brother-officer who had the misfortune to displease the Rajah by some honest freedoms; lastly, at a time of great danger to his native land, he betrayed a body of his fellow-soldiers, and suffered them to be defeated and massacred by thousands. In the end, he had amassed a magnificent fortune, and brought home with him the coveted diamond.’ (130)

The “time of great danger” may be identified with the Mutiny which would set Stevenson’s text even more firmly in the same line of tradition as *The Moonstone*. The motif of labouring for the diamond, as it is suggested by the reference to the biblical story of Jacob and Laban, also appears in *The Sign of Four*. Thomas Van-

⁹ Kashgar is now part of the Sinkiang Uigur Autonomous Region of China. From 1755 to 1862 the Muslim population was under Chinese rule. From 1862 until 1875 a rebellion established a Muslim as king of Kashgar (Anon., “Kashgar”). I do not know I do not know? Assess wird in solchen Kontexten eigentlich gar nicht gebraucht. if this actually is the reason for wie wärs denn mal mit “is the reason for”? you inform very often! the choice in Stevenson’s text, but ‘rajah’ is not a title used by Muslim rulers. I would rather think that the Rajah of Kashgar is just a stand-in for some-exotic sounding Indian prince and place. The link with the Mutiny which the text suggests rules out any actual significance of the historical Kashgar apart from the name.

deleur's corruption is directly brought about by the diamond and exploited by the "semi-barbarian potentate"¹⁰, who seduces him to violence and treason. In his violence and cunning he 'turns Indian', forsaking his "courage and conduct" and also his fellow countrymen. Although Thomas Vandeleur does not steal the diamond, he commits crimes to possess it, and in these crimes, he is in league with an Indian prince. The diamond is the direct reward for immoral and supposedly Oriental treachery. The crime is the "skeleton in the house" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 75), as Lady Vandeleur's excesses in luxury cover this more substantial secret. The skeleton aptly represents his actions in the service of the Rajah of Kashgar so that the crime of overindulgence at home and the crime of excessive greed in India overlap.

Two of these aspects recur in *The Moonstone*, namely the "unspeakable" crimes which consist in disloyal behaviour, and alienation. John Herncastle's desire to keep the diamond makes him disregard his superiors' orders which prohibit looting. Like Thomas Vandeleur, he scorns former loyalties to gain possession of the diamond. He also turns against his cousin and, in order to keep the diamond, he refuses to attempt reconciliation with his relatives and is ostracised by society. The coveting and eventual theft of the diamonds goes hand in hand with an alienation from former loyalties. The obsession which compels the English characters to forsake everything to own the diamond is a common denominator in these two texts. Prince Florizel highlights the diamonds' propensity to destroy social bonds when he compares it to the "apple of discord" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 97), dissolving an assumed previous harmony at home. In the same way, the Moonstone sows discord as part of its nature as a tool of vengeance (Collins, *Moonstone* 186) and scatters the household. Thomas Vandeleur is in league with the rajah while John Herncastle takes up the habit of smoking opium and dabbling in arcane sciences (40-41). The dangerously diminished distance between the English protagonists and the Indians and Indianness are a common hallmark in the hunt for the diamonds which is repeated in *The Sign of Four*.

In *The Sign of Four* Jonathan Small is in the same way seduced to violence by Indians as Thomas Vandeleur is by the rajah. The agents of his seduction are the Sikhs of his watch party. His account of the theft of the "Great Agra Treasure" is given by himself and narrated to Sherlock Holmes. The first sentence resembles Prince Florizel's account of Thomas Vandeleur's story: "It was an evil day for me when first I clapped eyes upon the merchant Achmet and had to do with the Agra treasure" (Doyle, *Sign* 207). Both characters' desires are focused on the treasures "in an unfortunate hour" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 130) when they see the diamond for the first time. Jonathan Small also labours to "earn" (Doyle, *Sign* 213) the

¹⁰ At another point in the story, the Rajah of Kashgar is termed a "prince of great enlightenment" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 97). The statement could be ironic; perhaps it draws on the character of Tipu Sultan who founded a Jacobin club in Seringapatam and admired the French Revolution. These sympathies also led to the British invasion of Mysore (Jasanoff 125).

treasure in “slavery” (207) and thus justifies his right to ownership by his suffering for the coveted treasure like Thomas Vandeleur.

In a British fort, besieged by Indian mutineers, Jonathan Small enters into a close relation with the Sikhs, who, as Jeffrey Richards points out, bear “impossible Moslem names” (17) which they soon exchange for “The Sign of Four”, the appellation of their secret pact. By “the threefold oath which no Sikh was ever known to break” Jonathan Small becomes one of them (Doyle, *Sign* 219). As in *The Moonstone* and “The Rajah’s Diamond”, in view of the diamonds, loyalties shift and Jonathan Small adheres to the pact’s principles. His scruples about murder are waived by Abdullah Khan’s unmasking comment that he must only “do that which your countrymen came to this land for [...] to be rich” (219). The Sikh Khan unmasks the hypocritical nature of colonialism where the hunt for treasure is hidden under the mask of the civilising mission and other myths of empire. As this is voiced by a native and a criminal the impact and credibility of this statement is lessened. However, it is noteworthy that the imperial maxim of gain in the colony is perpetuated and acted upon by the Sikhs themselves, the colonial subjects. The implication is that they assume the exploitative stance of the coloniser, thus exculpating Small who has been seduced by the stereotypical arguments for empire voiced by the colonised themselves. Jonathan Small only has to consent to “be rich”, and he becomes part of the Indian plot of “the Four” and is subsumed under the strange signature, which erases racial differences in the commitment to crime. He agrees to his accomplices’ murder of Achmet, the carrier of the treasure and becomes involved in colonial crime like John Herncastle and Thomas Vandeleur.

While “the Four” pursue the treasure in the labyrinth of the old Agra fort the Mutiny rages outside the walls. The Mutiny, the quintessential manifestation of Indian cruelty and violence serves as the background for British crimes in *The Sign of Four* and “The Rajah’s Diamond” which aligns the perpetrators with their Indian accomplices.

In both “The Rajah’s Diamond” and *The Moonstone* the British crimes in India, which surround the diamonds, are unspeakable: “It was said he [John Herncastle] had got possession of his Indian jewel by means which, bold as he was, he didn’t dare acknowledge” (Collins, *Moonstone* 40) and Thomas Vandeleur rendered a “service which had been often whispered” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 71). The initial silence around the circumstances under which the diamonds have been acquired mirrors the unspeakability which surrounded the Mutiny in contemporary British discourse. Despite an outpouring of texts on the subject, Christopher Herbert observes, many of them refer to the “unspeakable horror” (Herbert 21; also Sharpe 66) which can only be hinted at but not fully expressed. Thomas’ brother John Vandeleur served the government in the Mutiny through “services, by which the Government profited, but which the Government dared not recognise” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 96). The second-hand account of the Moonstone’s theft em-

phasises the uncertainty of the “rumours” as John Herncastle’s nameless cousin admits: “I have not only no proof that he killed the two men at the door; I cannot even declare that he killed the third man inside – for I cannot say that my own eyes saw the deed committed” (Collins, *Moonstone* 15). The events connected with violence in the colony and the acquisition of the diamonds is shrouded in a mystery which is perpetuated in England and transforms into rumours and slander. The attempted silencing, which mirrors the reactions to the Mutiny, implies a sense of guilt and its repression.

In “The Rajah’s Diamond” another context for the interpretation of the diamonds as trophies is opened up: The hunt for treasure which also underlies the adventure story is discredited in the character of John Vandeleur. “He sees the colony as the legitimate hunting ground: “I have hunted most things, from men and women down to mosquitos; I have dived for coral; I have followed both whales and tigers; and a diamond is the tallest quarry of the lot.” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 127) Similarly, in the Sherlock Holmes short-story “The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone”, the villain Count Negretto Sylvius is a big-game and diamond hunter in Algeria, the colonial possession of France (Doyle, “Mazarin” 566). Hunting as the trope of subjection and exploitation of a country formed an important part in imperial self-fashioning (Siddiqi 241). Its importance grew especially after the Mutiny when hunting stood in for the “civilising” of India and at the same time displayed untainted British prowess (Nayar 133). The diamonds are, in “The Rajah’s Diamond”, the reward for a successful hunt and aligned with big game. At the same time this notion is discredited in the unscrupulous character of the adventurer John Vandeleur who hunts men as well as beasts.

The crimes committed in India mark the diamonds’ transition into British ownership. The acquisition of the diamonds always must be regarded before a more comprehensive backdrop of violence and politics. The silences which mark the accounts of the *Moonstone* and the *Rajah’s Diamond* enforce the connection with the historical event. The Mutiny and the siege of Seringapatam serve as the foil on which the crimes are enacted. Both events significantly determined the relationship between Britain and India. Through this association with events that relate to British domination over India, the diamonds acquire the status as trophies of war and thus signify rule as prefigured in the Koh-i-Noor and its symbolic incorporation into the crown jewels. While this status as a trophy is plausible in the context of untroubled British victories, the diamonds which are associated with the Mutiny are not so much trophies but mnemonic objects of insecurity and almost-defeat. This property vies with the traditional view of the Indian diamond as, in a synecdoche, figuring the possession of India.

India thus is not only the treasure trove of ‘Adventure Literature’ but also a place replete with violence and crime. While the rumours about the *Moonstone* captivate John Herncastle and instigate him to murder its guardians and steal the diamond, it is Indians who, in the two later texts, seduce the English protagonists

to commit murder for the acquisition of the treasures. The allure of the diamonds makes them into instruments of natives and thus reverses their loyalties. While Thomas Vandeleur turns against his own countrymen, both Jonathan Small and John Herncastle disobey orders to seek advantage for themselves. The slander, which follows them to England, socially censures their behaviour. The Mutiny which was framed as an outburst of Indian criminality rather than a politically motivated anti-colonial uprising is thus complemented by British crime. *The Moonstone* is a special case as the reference to the Mutiny is somewhat obscure. Nevertheless, the siege of Seringapatam can be read as a stand in for the more topical rebellion.

The Mutiny and The Moonstone

The event which Collins puts at the beginning of the story is the siege of Seringapatam in 1799. The conquest of Mysore and the death of Tipu are significant in Anglo-Indian history as they marked the rise of British power in India (Free 347) and the halt of French influence through Tipu's alliance with France.

The notorious large-scale plundering of Tipu Sultan's extensive treasures led to an unprecedented influx of Indian artefacts into Britain. One of the most famous was a mechanical toy, 'the tiger of Mysore', which, when displayed in London, attracted a wide public. Other objects appeared in the salons and drawing-rooms all over the country as trophies of the Company's victory (Jasanoff 124-125). John Herncastle's acquisition of the Moonstone thus turns it into another of these trophies which found their way to England in the wake of the conquest. In the context of the victory over Tipu Sultan, the theft of the Moonstone appears quite realistic as yet another Indian curiosity which comes to Britain.

Sir David Baird's widow commissioned Collins' godfather Sir David Wilkie with a painting to commemorate her husband's victory. Wilkie Collins probably knew the painting which shows Baird triumphing over Tipu's stripped and plundered body (GoGwilt 68). In the painting, General Baird strikes a pose as if giving orders. In front of the stripped Sultan's body this gesture might well refer to the controversy which ensued around the British troops' uninhibited plunder. The inclusion of Baird's effort to halt the plunderers would then amount to an attempt of exculpation of the General (68). This recurs in *The Moonstone* when Herncastle's cousin describes the scene: "It was [...] after General Baird himself had found the dead body of Tipu under a heap of the slain, that Herncastle and I met. We were each attached to a party sent out by the General's orders to prevent the plunder and confusion that followed our conquest" (Collins, *Moonstone* 13). When the painting was exhibited in 1839, it seems to have failed its purpose of glorifying the British triumph because viewers also sympathised with the vanquished Tipu (Mehta 620).

The choice of Seringapatam as the background for the prologue situates the Moonstone in the flow of objects that reached England as plunder and at the same time references the ambivalent stance towards Tipu, who was depicted as both villain and victim. Tipu Sultan had inspired great interest at the beginning of the nineteenth century when he was cast as a “popular villain of cult status” (Mehta 618). Yet, his fate also elicited sympathy, not the least because of the excesses of the campaign and his depiction in Wilkie’s painting (GoGwilt 69).

In the siege of Seringapatam, the situation is reverse to that of the Mutiny: In *The Moonstone* the British besiege and finally capture the city in which Tipu Sultan holds out (Mehta 618) while narratives of the Mutiny focus on the British as victims of the Indian onslaught as in descriptions of the siege of Lucknow. Nevertheless, Collins uses Seringapatam as a guise for the Mutiny: *The Moonstone* was written in 1868, and the story starts on the Verinder estate in 1848, the same year that saw revolutions on the continent, Chartist agitation in Britain as well as the British invasion of the Punjab (622). The last letter in the novel, written by Murthwaite in 1850, marks the year when Dalip Singh, the last Indian ruler of the Punjab, surrenders the Koh-i-Noor to the East India Company (Pionke 124). The Indian Mutiny, “the most significant and horrific event in the history of British India, [...] took place precisely at the mean of those two dates” (Mehta 617), i.e. ten years before Collins began writing the novel and ten years after the Moonstone arrives on the Verinder estate. Moreover, the impression of the Mutiny was still vivid in Victorian minds in the 1860s when Collins wrote the novel, and the topicality of the rebellion would always let it resonate with readers. If the siege of Seringapatam recalls the Mutiny, the casting of the Indians as victims and the British as unchecked criminals also draws attention to the often suppressed violent retaliation after the Mutiny, the “Devil’s Wind” (Free 350) and British aggression in India. Collins alludes to the rebellion but never names it, yet, with its images still present; the reversal of the roles of aggressor and victim must be evident to the reader through the evocation of one important historical battle in the conquest of India and the submerged presence of another more recent one.

Wilkie Collins wrote on the Mutiny for Dickens’ *Household Words* and expressed a much more moderate and conciliatory view than his friend. Dickens, more in tune with the public opinion, demanded the eradication of India’s whole population (Nayder, “Collins and Empire” 144). The depiction of British crime in the Mutiny would thus have been a hotly disputed topic which Collins avoids through the cover of another battle.

The Moonstone suggests British aggression as the crime in the background of the theft of the diamond, while both “The Rajah’s Diamond” and *The Sign of Four* paint a picture of Indian aggression which underlies the acquisition of the diamonds. They are consequently viewed as trophies of war, such as the Koh-i-Noor actually is. A trophy of war is a mnemonic symbol of victory inextricably linked with the site of its acquisition, but in the fictional diamonds’ stories the Mutiny

and the siege of Seringapatam are not heroic conquests but fraught with crime. These always include disloyalty and treachery, the very quality which is later ascribed to the diamonds themselves (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 131; *Moonstone* 300). The idea of crimes as the basis of colonial wealth leads to these stories being repressed in England or censured through slander. The diamond as trophy is a decidedly imperial reading. Diamonds, however, also figure as a domestic metaphor.

Diamonds as Metaphor

"The Angel in the House" and Promiscuous Paraphernalia

Originally, diamonds were exclusively worn by men. In the Middle Ages, when they began to appear in the crowns of European kings, Louis IX of France decreed that women were not allowed to wear diamonds. This seems to have changed in the fifteenth century when diamonds began to be worn at court by both men and women (Harlow, "History of Diamonds" 130-131).

In the analysis of the complex imagery relating to women and diamonds, Suzanne Daly offers a helpful point of departure in her differentiation between the domestic and colonial imagery attached to jewels which accounts for a range of contradictions. She argues that there are

[...] two strands of gendered imagery that tend to be disconnected in Victorian literature [...] jewelry as identification or identity found in the domestic novel, in which gems are understood to be property, and the colonial treasure trove, found in the novel of adventure, in which gems are understood to be plunder. (Daly 70)

Daly further argues that these two strands can overlap, but I will, first look at, what she terms, the "domestic strand". Kurt Tetzeli von Rosador focuses on Daly's first category, the function of diamonds in domestic fiction. There, he argues, diamonds are used as a means of characterisation, drawing on a wide range of shared knowledge of their attributes and appropriateness in certain social contexts. These diamonds can also expose their wearers to moral judgment and imply that a woman may be immodest and lacking appropriate Christian contempt for material wealth (292). Diamonds as a means of characterisation have to be fixed property. Tetzeli von Rosador refers to the literal use of jewellery as a means of characterisation, but there is also a metaphorical use of diamonds.

The wearing of diamonds makes women the object of the male gaze by which they are themselves objectified so that the object which had been used to characterise now supersedes character (Tetzeli 284) and turns them into the focus of lust and gazing (Menikoff 349). In the novels, Lizzie Eustace for example, relies on the Eustace Diamonds for social representation and the construction of her identity

(Lindner 76). Lord George's desire confuses Lizzie and her diamonds; he is equally covetous of both and drops Lizzie when she loses the diamonds.

The metaphor of diamonds as a stand-in for female sexuality relies on the equation of women and diamonds as cash items, as valuably marketable in marriage. In their function as heirlooms, the Eustace Diamonds confer identity because an heirloom presupposes fixity. As a bequest they are bound to the male line. As paraphernalia, however, they are regarded as female and can be tendered and "circulate promiscuously through the commodity marketplace" (Lindner 83). As a commodity which is traded and coveted, they can be read to stand for female sexuality. This also provides the psychoanalytical reading of the *Moonstone* before the first postcolonial interpretation by John R. Reed (1973). The *Moonstone* as a symbol of Rachel's virginity is kept in her bedroom and stolen by night, only leaving a stained nightgown. As long as the diamond remains uncut, Rachel, as a virgin, is a valuable object to trade (Gruner 135). The same conflation of illicit sexual encounter and diamonds figures in the Sherlock Holmes short story "The Beryl Coronet", where the taking of the diamonds coincides with the girl's elopement. The theft of the Eustace Diamonds from Lizzie's bedroom mirrors *The Moonstone* and lends itself to the same interpretation. "The Rajah's Diamond", as Barry Menikoff observes, revolves around interactions which are either sexual or economic (348). The primary object which connects people in the story is, of course, the diamonds which combine both associations. The potentially adulterous Lady Vandeleur is a "gem of the first water" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 90). The joy which Harry derives from the sight of the diamonds and which Francis experiences in the presence of the dictator's daughter elicit the same reaction: Both see "all the colours of the rainbow" (111; 84).

As a commodity for purchase, diamonds lose their positive ascriptions, and as they are "tendered openly in the market" they, just like women, "lose their [...] most alluring charms of feminine grace" (Trollope 523). According to this reading, diamonds as free floating objects are thus gendered as female, and the image they confer on their wearers is negative as they are associated with moving and sellable goods.

This imagery is usually opposed to the "sentimental" or "affective" (Plotz 334; 337) use of the trope of the virtuous woman as diamond (Daly 74). If diamonds represent fickleness and eroticism as moving objects, their absence connotes simplicity and naturalness. Lizzie's opposite is the poor governess Lucy, wholly devoid of any kind of jewellery comparable to the Eustace Diamonds. Yet, the narrator constantly evokes the tear in Lucy's eye, sparkling like a diamond: "[...] in her eye, too, a tear would sparkle, the smallest drop, a bright liquid diamond that never fell" (Trollope 212). Although in criticism, Lizzie is always compared to her diamonds, Trollope's narrator states that Lucy is a treasure (61) and a diamond: "Lucy held her ground because she was real. You may knock about a diamond, and not even scratch it; whereas paste in rough usage betrays itself. Lizzie [...]"

knew that she was paste, and knew that Lucy was real stone” (628). In her simplicity and moral uprightness she is everything which Lizzie is not: “She was not beautiful. She had none of the charms of fashion. [...] There was a reality and a truth about her [...]” (151). To a certain extent Miss Morstan falls into the same category: “There was, however, a plainness and simplicity about her costume which bore with it a suggestion of limited means. The dress was sombre grayish, beige, untrimmed and unbraided [...]” (Doyle, *Sign* 131). Miss Morstan, as well, in the end, is the true reward for Watson, the socially acceptable substitute for the immense riches of the Agra treasure. Both Lucy and Mary Morstan are described as plain so that the metaphor of the diamond-like virtuous woman can be conferred on them.

The most telling use of the sentimental image of the diamond can be found in Coventry Patmore’s *The Angel in the House* of 1856: Felix compares Honoria, the idealised wife, to the Koh-i-Noor (Patmore 185) (Hancock 8). Canto XIII of Book II, “The Espousals”, is titled “The Koh-i-Noor” and praises Honoria’s submissiveness, but also her cunning and lying in pleasing her husband: “She joins the cunning of the snake, / to rivet and exalt his love; / Her mode of candour is deceit” (Patmore 181). It is probably no coincidence that Patmore associates Honoria’s “cunning” with the diamond. It is, of course, unintentional and comes to her naturally, “[t]o the sweet folly of the dove” (181). The Canto ends asserting that “A woman, like the Koh-i-noor, / Mounts to the price that’s put on her” (185). Canto IX, “The Friends”, directly following “The Koh-i-noor”, contains the related imagery of empire: “A woman is a foreign land, / Of which, though there he settle young, / A man will ne’er quite understand / The customs, politics and tongue” (186). While Patmore obviously draws on what Plotz terms the sentimental or affective image of woman as diamond, he inevitably leads over to a comparison of woman and a colonised land. The explicit naming of the Koh-i-Noor already introduces empire and the diamond as a symbol of possession.

I will look at this connection in a separate chapter and begin by showing that it is possible to distinguish two currents of imagery in the narratives of diamonds where there are “two very different circulatory systems, one affective, the other fiscal” (Plotz 337) both subsumed under Daly’s domestic (70) strand. The diamond which moves around, like money, which is paraphernalia as the Eustace Diamonds, highlights its material worth and its evasiveness as a possession. It represents female sexuality as “tendered openly in the market” (Trollope 523). The diamond as a sentimental metaphor, as applied to Lucy or as in Patmore’s poem, retains the view of women as objects of desire, minus the fiscal considerations of material but rather sentimental worth, as the unassuming “Angel in the House”.

Gendering the 'Jewel in the Crown'

India is the space primarily associated with diamonds, regardless of the decline in its exports since the early eighteenth century. With the seizure of the Koh-i-Noor, its representative in the English crown is a diamond, and the appellation of 'Jewel in the Crown' captures the combination of the object and its source. India is thus closely associated with diamonds, but it is also perceived as a female space.

Coventry Patmore who celebrates the domestic virtues of Honoria compares "a woman" to a "foreign land" which has to be discovered, just after having likened her to the Koh-i-Noor (Patmore 186). He draws on the prevalent imperial notion that "whole continents and worlds exist as mysteries to be solved by Europeans [...]" (Mehta 612), meaning European men. In the logic of binary oppositions, woman is thus othered as alien, and non-European spaces are in turn gendered as female.

The colonial counterpart to Daly's domestic imagery of diamonds is the "treasure trove", a female space where male adventurers conquer diamonds as prize and reward for endured hardship (Daly 71). The active male colonialist can thus seize and dominate the passive, female land by maintaining a neat binary opposition

[i]n that colonization was a struggle for supremacy, not only white against black, but between European nations, the scramble for territory took on the aspect of a conflict between competing virilities. From this it becomes clear how the ranking of cultures relative to a dominant and warlike Europe might have led to the feminization of other peoples [...]. The people of India, especially of Bengal, were typically characterized as passive, soft, seductive, languid, and generally effeminate [...]. (Boehmer 82)

The diamonds as imperial objects and symbols of rule are thus gendered as female as they are the stand-in for a female space. They furthermore enforce the view of the colonised as effeminate as they are associated with the luxury and decadence which the diamond suggests.

The feminisation of diamonds as objects with colonial connotations and as plunder can be illustrated with Stevenson's "The Rajah's Diamond." Sir Thomas Vandeleur has to earn the Rajah's Diamond: "For three years he served this semi-barbarous potentate as Jacob served Laban" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 130). Thomas Vandeleur is cast into the male role of the wooer and the Indian diamond is the reward he hopes to earn.

The gendering of the colony as female (as well as its representative, the diamond) then leads to "[t]he geography of rape as a dominant trope for the act of

imperialism” (Suleri 17)¹¹ in which the diamonds are again taken to signify female sexuality. However, Nancy L Paxton points out that the trope of rape in imperial discourse differs in pre- and post-Mutiny narratives. While, before 1857, in more sympathetic accounts of India, the exploitation by the East India Company was criticised as a “rape” of the land, after the Mutiny, the idea of the native-as-rapist and Englishwoman-as-victim prevails (Paxton 5-7). With reference to *The Moonstone*, critics have remarked on the parallel thefts of the diamond from Tipu’s treasury and from Rachel’s “Indian cabinet” in her bedroom, so that plunder and metaphorical rape are conflated (Nayder, *Wilkie Collins* 118). This scene therefore rather conforms to Paxton’s pre-Mutiny cast of the metaphor. Nevertheless, in the direct confrontation with the Brahmins, the image of Indians threatening English womanhood is confirmed. Rachel is the subject of their scrutiny as she is wearing the diamond on her dress (Collins, *Moonstone* 78).

It has become apparent that the two realms of imagery, the domestic and colonial are linked in the gendering of diamonds. This naturally leads to a multi-layeredness of diamond narratives where diamonds as sentimental and sexual imagery always bear Orientalist overtones.

Owning the Diamonds in England

Relocation of Agency

Indian Revenge and Imperial Forgetfulness

Jaya Mehta argues that “imperial violence, originally wrought on the colony by the English, [is] subsequently represented as springing from the colony” (613). This can be clearly seen in the reactions to the Mutiny. It was not understood as an uprising against colonial suppression, but as originating in Indian society and its proneness for crime and violence which had to be checked.

The idea that the diamonds have actively been ‘sent’ to Europe, that they are part of some deliberately designed plan to work revenge on an innocent and harmonious society is explicitly expressed in “The Rajah’s Diamond”. It is Prince Florizel, the detective figure, who is able to suggest this plan: “[I]f the Rajah of Kashgar [...] desired vengeance upon the men of Europe, he could hardly have gone more efficaciously about his purpose than by sending us this apple of discord” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 126). The revenge, it is implied, consists of sowing distrust and inciting “discord” in an otherwise peaceful and cohesive society. It is

¹¹ Sara Suleri goes on to argue that the colony frequently is not gendered as female at all, but as masculine, albeit effeminate. The encounter then takes on homosexual connotations (16). The main point, though, is that it has to be gendered as deviant in relation to the male coloniser.

deliberately suppressed that Thomas Vandeleur desired the diamond and brought it to London himself.

In *The Moonstone*, Colonel John Herncastle turns the curse of the diamond into the weapon of his personal revenge on his sister. Yet, in the following, agency is attributed to the diamond itself (Free 154). Betteredge exclaims: "I wish to God the Diamond had never found its way into this house!" (Collins, *Moonstone* 147), and "here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues" (43), "blame the Diamond!" (147). Even more explicitly, he accuses the diamond of deception: "That cursed jewel has misguided everybody who has come near it" (300). Herncastle's malignant intentions are reflected onto the diamond and he, the actual agent, seems to have no part in the events. In the same manner, Prince Florizel accuses the Rajah's Diamond of having "faithfully served the powers of hell" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 131) with the same sense of independent agency which brings the diamond from India to England. *The Eustace Diamonds* contains the same idea of the diamonds as malevolent agents when Lizzy deplores that "[t]hose ill-starred jewels have been almost as unkind to him [Benjamin] as to me" (Trollope 760).

The diamonds as agents and the covetous English as victims of the diamonds' power cover the initial plundering in India. The crimes are imagined as emanating from India in the form of Indian objects and infecting England so that "[t]he crime of colonialism," as Jaya Mehta argues, "is replaced by colonial crime" (634).

The assigning of an agency to the diamond also contributes to their perception as an uncanny presence. Freud identifies the uncertainty whether an object is alive or not as the point of departure for his own theory of the uncanny (Freud 157). The descriptions of the diamonds as being uncannily alive and animated by a curse illustrate this idea. Another source which feeds into their perception as animate is the manner of their passage from one owner to the next.

Fetishes and Chance

The most prominent and unifying feature in the English main protagonists in *The Moonstone*, "The Rajah's Diamond" and also in *The Datchet Diamonds* is the almost accidental acquisition of the diamonds. In "The Rajah's Diamond", Harry Hartley carries a band-box without knowing what it actually contains and unwittingly becomes an accomplice in Lady Vandeleur's plot. Simon Rolles chances upon the diamonds in a flower-bed, and Miss Vandeleur hands Francis Scrymgeour the diamond wrapped in a handkerchief. When he unwraps it together with Prince Florizel, he maintains that "I possess no stolen property" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 122).

In *The Datchet Diamonds* the initial innocence of the protagonist and the unpremeditated theft of the diamonds are stressed through the mere coincidence of the events. Cyril Paxton comes into the possession of the stones as he picks up

the wrong suitcase in a train restaurant (Marsh 251) after the diamonds had already been stolen, and he maintains his innocence: “The diamonds came into my possession owing to an accident” (294), “he had but found them” (48).

Franklin Blake unconsciously steals the Moonstone while he is under the influence of opium. Dr Candy, as well, suffers from a “mysterious amnesia” after he has dosed Franklin (Duncan 314). The reason for the restaging of the theft in the novel is not to determine the identity of the thief but to clear Blake of guilt, as Melissa Free remarks that opium serves to divest Blake of any guilt whatsoever (354). Similarly, Godfrey Ablewhite, the true villain does not himself take out the diamond from Rachel’s chest, but Franklin presents it to him so that, although Ablewhite acts consciously, he is helped by Blake who actually takes the diamond from the cabinet. Sergeant Cuff’s statement that “[n]obody has stolen the Diamond” (Collins, *Moonstone* 113) appears as a very lucid remark. At the same time, as opium exculpates Franklin Blake from the theft, his attitude reiterates the attribution of an agency to the diamond. The denial of blame for having plundered mirrors Herncastle’s looting and perpetuates the same view in England (Free 154).

Not only *The Moonstone*, but other texts, as well, exhibit this tendency to transfer agency from the diamonds’ owners onto the diamonds. Prince Florizel’s remark, that the slipping of the diamond from one owner to the next can only be explained by providence (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 128) points to the notion that the human agent is directed by some other power. None of the characters set out with the intention of stealing the stones but each was ‘accidentally’ made into thieves by circumstance. This unintentional acquisition of the diamonds, however, is restricted to their passage within England.

The transference of agency from person to object is that of a fetish, as Ian Duncan suggests with reference to the Moonstone: “The fetishistic displacement of agency from persons onto the relic of an apocalyptic collectivity constitutes *The Moonstone*’s figure of mystery [...]” (318). Christopher Lindner observes the same in *The Eustace Diamonds*: “What Trollope is essentially showcasing is commodity culture’s fetishistic tendency. More precisely, [...] Trollope exhibits a distortion of vision in which the commodity appears to erase all trace of human presence that animates it” (76). Lindner and Duncan base their analyses on Marx’s definition of a fetishistic relation between people, “the social relation between people *looks* like a relation mediated by things” (Lindner, 76, italics in the original). The fetish in Marx is a product which takes on religious dimensions turning products into agents:

Hier [in der Religion] scheinen die Produkte des menschlichen Kopfes mit eigenem Leben begabte, unter einander und mit den Menschen in Verhältnis stehende selbstständige Gestalten. So in der Waarenwelt die Produkte der menschlichen Hand. Dies nenne ich den Fetischismus, der den Arbeitsprodukten anklebt [...]. (Marx 103)

In "The Rajah's Diamond", the diamond is described as such a fetish demanding veneration: "[A] savage would prostrate himself in adoration before so imposing a fetish" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 92). Lizzie, in her room with the boxed diamonds prays in front of them: "Some short prayer she said, with her knees close to the iron box [containing the necklace]" (Trollope 440).

Both the labelling and presenting of the diamonds as fetishes and the circumstances of their theft in England serve to exculpate the thieves. They are victims, if not of the diamonds, then at any rate of circumstance. It also highlights the crimes committed before the diamonds reached England. Both Colonel Herncastle and General Vandeleur actively plot and labour to gain possession of the diamonds. Although the action of theft establishes parallels between the colonial and the domestic crimes, the circumstances of these crimes separate them and suggest discontinuity as the thefts in England are presented as unintentional. While Melissa Free suggests that this denial includes the thefts in India (352-353), I would argue that the innocent thieves in England are at first glance in opposition to the imperial plunderers while they are still, and very visibly living on the spoils of empire which are disguised as the product of chance and situation. A dividing line is drawn between the evil exertions of plunderers and the innocent and unintentional thefts at home. The distinction, however, cannot be drawn sharply as the parallels between the theft of the Moonstone from the Indian treasury and the Indian cabinet obviously invite a comparison. Once in England, the diamonds figure in contexts which are designed to turn them into domestic objects and to 'fix' them.

Diamonds as 'Curiosities': Collection and Greed

Collecting was a nineteenth-century obsession fuelled largely by natural philosophy and Darwinism (Whitworth 111). In the context of empire 'curiosities' were brought from all parts of the world and exhibited in Britain. Exploring, collecting and classifying the Other defined the boundaries between the colonisers and the colonised in an important imperial practice (Jasanoff 113). The presentation of the Koh-i-Noor in the Great Exhibition of 1851 provides a telling example of the effectiveness of exhibiting items in a different frame and, as objects of curiosity, in a controlled context. As curios, oriental objects have long been part of European collections, one of the contexts diamonds would figure in in the West. The image of the collector in literature, grew decidedly more negative towards the end of the century. Paul Goetsch observes that

[i]n the late-Victorian period, collectors in literature were often seen as self-ish adventurers, unscrupulous scientists or capitalists, criminals, amoral aesthetes and decadents. Concomitantly, collecting is frequently associated with exploitation, violence, and crime. (Goetsch 68)

Collecting means ownership for the sake of owning without any considerations of usefulness. The aim of a collection therefore is not gain but completeness. The prime motive among the collectors of diamonds in the texts is possession rather than realising wealth from the stone. This practice bears negative connotations as it aligns the English protagonists with Indians or exposes them as greedy and Orientalised.

John Herncastle owns the Moonstone just for the sake of owning: “He never gave it away; he never even showed it to any living soul” (Collins, *Moonstone* 40) for fear of his persecutors. The Moonstone is an object known among collectors and a valuable item. For John Herncastle, the possession of the diamond goes along with “smoking opium and collecting old books, [...] trying strange things in chemistry” (40-41). The Orientalising aspect is alluded to in paralleling John Vandeleur and the Rajah of Kashgar as collectors (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 97; 130). In “The Rajah’s Diamond”, Prince Florizel describes John Vandeleur’s motif for stealing his brother’s diamonds: “Not to be richer, nor to have more comforts or more respect, but simply to call this diamond yours for a year or two until you die, and now and again to open a safe and look at it as one looks at a picture” (97). The Rajah of Kashgar, as well, owns not only the diamond but a whole “collection” (130). John Vandeleur is a collector of diamonds which he brings “from all parts of the world” (110) and hoards in his house. This passion is complemented by his hunting: “I have hunted most things, from men and women down to mosquitos; I have dived for coral; I have followed both whales and tigers”, (97) he professes. The hunting of “men and women” highlights John Vandeleur’s personality. Francis Scrymgeour catches John Vandeleur in the act of robbing Reverend Rolles surrounded by these collections, which form part of the crime scene: “In a small apartment, carpeted with matting and surrounded by glazed cabinets full of rare and costly curios, Mr. Vandeleur was stooping over the body of Mr. Rolles” (117).

The connection between collector and crime which the setting highlights can also be found in *The Sign of Four*. John Sholto is too greedy to share the treasure with its other ‘rightful owners’, and he withholds it from Miss Morstan. On his deathbed he confesses to his sons:

The cursed greed which has been my besetting sin through life has withheld from her [Miss Morstan] the treasure, half at least of which should have been hers. And yet I have made no use of it myself, so blind and foolish a thing is avarice. The mere feeling of possession has been so dear to me that I could not bear to share it with another. (Doyle, *Sign* 145)

In this handling of the treasure, John Sholto directly parallels its original owner, the Indian rajah, “who is of a low nature and hoards his gold rather than spend it” (Doyle, *Sign* 220). Even Lizzie owns the Eustace Diamonds just for the pleasure

of possession as she admits that they will probably always be locked up in an iron box because of the danger of showing them in public (Trollope 81).

The collecting for the pleasure of possession is thus presented as an Oriental trait which is spelled out in the character of Bartholomew Sholto, John's son. He is a greedy decadent who lives in "Eastern luxury" (Doyle, *Sign* 142) complete with a "Hindoo servant" (141). Furthermore, he is a collector of art, both Indian and European (143). The interior of his house compared to its exterior "looked as out of place as a diamond of first water in a setting of brass" (141). The same picture of mismatch and incongruity is created by his Indian servant "standing in the commonplace doorway" (141). Collecting and the pleasure of possessing the diamonds or anything valuable, as presented in the texts, is Oriental and inherently distasteful and also alien to Englishness as the mismatch of outside and inside of the house suggests. Thaddeus Sholto, too, lives in a "House full of Indian curiosities" (164), Pondicherry Lodge, which he has inherited from his father. The image of the Orient as an immense 'treasure trove', as mediated in the *Arabian Nights* is mirrored in its interior. Both Bartholomew and Thaddeus are collectors of Indian curiosities and perpetuate the greed of their father in initially withholding the Agra treasure from Mary Morstan.

Mere owning of value is harmful for a market economy. Possession is unproductive and dangerous and testifies to a "low nature" (Doyle, *Sign* 220). "To sustain commodity culture," Christopher Lindner argues, "it is necessary to circulate and consume commodities" (Lindner 10). The diamonds which incite greed represent inert and unproductive ownership. In the Sholtos and John Vandeleur, the refined collectors of art and the ruthless hunter of treasure respectively, the collecting of Indian 'curiosities' is represented as abnormal and socially disruptive. The misgivings about the diamonds as objects of vanity are founded on the same notions that were expressed about the Koh-i-Noor during the Great Exhibition of 1851. The diamond then came to represent a "premodern, Orientalist economy" (Mersmann 180) which is at odds with the modern market economy of Great Britain. The diamonds bring about a relapse into this more ancient structure. Likewise, Prince Florizel asserts that the Rajah's Diamond is an aristocratic possession which cannot be handed around "among the common sort of men" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 97). Not even in the context of inheritance can the diamonds be integrated in the existing system; they represent an alien force.

Diamonds as Inheritance

Allan Hepburn suggests that inheritance automatically creates a plot. It assumes a past and points into the future and thus creates expectation. Property changing hands automatically devises a "narrative sequence". He argues that "[i]nheritances change destinies and instigate stories" (3). Inheritance was commonly used as a plot device especially in Victorian novels (GoGwilt 60). Like detective fiction, the

plot of inheritance highlights objects. It also proposes a specific model for detective fiction as a temporal trajectory into the past is opened up, and previous events have to be discovered to explain their influence on the present.

The subject of inheritance turns up most prominently in *The Moonstone* and *The Eustace Diamonds*, but also in *The Sign of Four* and “The Rajah’s Diamond” in which colonial riches are juxtaposed with native English inheritances. Yet, the inheritances are treated before the foil of the crimes surrounding the diamonds so that a comparison between the two modes of gaining wealth seems to be implied: The inheritance of land and money in England and the inheritance of colonial wealth from India.

I will first turn to the English inheritances. In the earliest novel, *The Moonstone*, Franklin Blake is called back from his travels “in the East [...] camped on the borders of a desert” (Collins, *Moonstone* 292) when he is informed that his father has died and that he has inherited “his great fortune” (292). This English inheritance naturally draws him home, back from a place almost at the edge of civilisation where the diamond, Rachel’s Indian inheritance, has lured him. This solves the debts he had run up on the continent and for which the Moonstone loomed as a possible solution. It also again calls to attention that Franklin, too, is denied an inheritance (Dolin 76):

Hearing what I [Betteredge] now tell you, you will naturally ask how it was that Mr Franklin should have past all the years, from the time when he was a boy to the time when he was a man, out of his own country. I answer, because his father had the misfortune to be next heir to a Dukedom, and not to be able to prove it. (Collins, *Moonstone* 24)

Betteredge here points to the connection between the disinheritance of Franklin’s father and his vagabonding life which has given him, in Betteredge’s view, several un-English identities. Franklin’s internationalism is thus only cured through the marriage to Rachel and his acquisition of landed property, a rightful English inheritance.

In “The Rajah’s Diamond”, Harry Hartley loses the diamonds he was entrusted with, but is compensated for the loss by an inheritance from “a maiden aunt in Worcestershire” (89). In *The Sign of Four*, the chapter entitled “The Science of Deduction” contains a number of minute facts which foreshadow the following story and lay the foundation of Holmes’ deductions later on. Holmes is shown to have completed studies on different subjects from which he will conclude the solution of the one to come. The “lunkah smoker” and the “diamond polisher” are already mentioned (Doyle, *Sign* 126), and at the beginning of the story, Holmes is presented as a user of Oriental drugs. Similarly, the subject of inheritance is touched upon (128-130) which will also become prominent through Mary Morstan’s appeal for help. In the context of the other items foreshadowing the case to follow, the mention of an heirloom, too, has to be regarded as a prolepsis. Watson

wants to test Holmes' abilities of deduction and presents a watch (128). Just by examining it, Holmes infers that it is an heirloom which has come down to Watson from his father through the death of his older brother. "Jewellery usually descends to the eldest son," (128) he concludes alongside other observations on the brother's character and habits, which are all inscribed on the watch.

With these heirlooms, Franklin's and Harry's money and Watson's watch, wealth and memory are passed on in a regulated and official manner. They provide stability and continuity over many generations. In the case of Franklin, being denied the inheritance of the dukedom and his ensuing exile, the destabilising effect of the denial shows in his unstable identity, as described by Betteredge. In *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four* these inheritances are juxtaposed with the Indian diamonds which are also passed on as bequests. Yet they do not function in the same stabilising manner.

The Moonstone is left to Rachel by her uncle John Herncastle, and it is made clear that it is intended as a revenge on her mother. Franklin Blake pointedly questions "the Colonel's motive in leaving this legacy to his niece, for my aunt's sake" (Collins, *Moonstone* 49). The diamond and the will are used to wreak vengeance on the relatives as John Herncastle knew well that the possession of the diamond is dangerous (44). The diamond also threatens the Verinder's property in that it upsets Lady Julia's provisions in her own will. Rachel is only entitled to a life-long interest in her property to avert fortune-hunting suitors like Godfrey Ablewhite who would squander the property. Through the inheritance of the Moonstone, she is again exposed to the risk her mother wanted to avert and whose legal precautions are nullified (Dolin 78). Thus the inheritance of the Moonstone confers both an alleged Oriental curse and social and economic vulnerability.

The same danger of prosecution impends on the owner and heir of the Great Agra Treasure. Bartholomew and Thaddeus Sholto inherit the treasure from their father John Sholto. One half of the treasure was supposed to go to his accomplice Arthur Morstan, but is withheld from his daughter, Mary Morstan. The recovery of the treasure would make her "the richest heiress in England" (Doyle, *Sign* 150). As in *The Moonstone* the owner of the diamonds is threatened by a mysterious third party that follows it. In *The Sign of Four* it is Jonathan Small and Tonga, who are responsible for the deaths of John and Thaddeus Sholto. They go where the treasure is and represent the inheritance's threatening side.

Anthony Trollope's *The Eustace Diamonds* is another example of Indian diamonds bequeathed in England and a young woman claiming them. The emphasis is on the legal status of the diamonds, and the question of ownership is paramount as Lizzie refuses to give them up. The legal battle which is fought over the diamonds concerns the possibility of their status as an heirloom of the Eustace family, which would force Lizzie to give them back to her husband's family. Their great value is cited as an argument to the negative which actually confirms Lizzie's claim that they are paraphernalia, but this information is withheld from her. The

legal complications and her lies estrange her from her late husband's family and gain Lizzie Eustace a bad reputation in society. In the end, the diamonds do not secure her social status but destroy it.

In the texts, inheritance is addressed as an unproblematic and positive way of securing a place in society. An heirloom is exempt from "the world of commodity exchange" (Lindner 83) and gains a special and fixed status. As such it confers identity, it becomes "domestic" (Daly 70) and thus characterises its wearer (Tetzeli 299). The incorporation of the diamonds into this same pattern marks, as Christopher GoGwilt observes, "the disintegration of (Indian) culture into (British) goods" (81). Yet, the diamonds' history of theft and murder is contrary to the 'English' inheritances. Furthermore, they cannot stand for uninterrupted succession. Their legal status is as insecure as their ownership and they disrupt the stabilising effect of the domestic bequests.

The strong link between material inheritance and national economy is stressed by Allan Hepburn: "Especially in nineteenth-century novels, property ownership functions within the dual framework of personal and national heritages" (9). Together with the diamonds their history is inherited, the nation's involvement in colonialism. Considered as national rather than private objects, the possession of the diamonds raises the question whether, "a nation inherit[s] the evil of its forebears if it accepts the benefits derived from the crime?" (Reed 287) The texts unanimously suggest that the inheritance of colonial wealth is problematic and potentially threatening.

In addition, the diamonds' heirs are all women – a fact which further seems to stress the insecurity of the transference of wealth – and their inability to keep them is emphasised. Women are not only more prone to lose the diamonds to a third party, but the pattern that an heirloom "usually descends to the eldest son" is disturbed. The presence of future male heirs in *The Moonstone* and *The Eustace Diamonds* relieves this anxiety.

Women as Owners of Diamonds

Mary Morstan and Rachel Verinder are the inheritors of the Moonstone and the Agra treasure respectively. Lizzie Eustace styles herself as the wronged widow who fights for her inheritance of the Eustace Diamonds, and she tries to manipulate her intermediaries to argue for her ownership of the diamonds. Eventually, all her attempts are in vain when the diamonds are stolen. Mary Morstan's and Rachel's inheritances, as well, are stolen from them or their claims are refused. In all of these texts, women are the victims of theft, and their ownership of the diamonds is presented as insecure and contested which is partly due to the disruption of male inheritance which I have already discussed. Yet, Mary Morstan and Rachel Verinder are threatened in their inheritance and ownership of the treasures by

some lurking dark forces represented by the three Indians and Jonathan Small and Tonga who break into their domestic security.

In *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four* the history of the diamonds is bound up with the Mutiny. The most enduring image of the Mutiny was the Well of Cawnpore. The event influenced the ideological discourse and underpinned counter insurgent aggression. The representation of women and children as the major victims of the Mutiny and the depiction of the rebels as criminal sexual perverts directed the focus on the endangered ideal of the peaceful Victorian home as the main point of attack. The lasting theme in writing on the Mutiny became “white womanhood threatened by dark natives” (Mehta 646) and the projection of devilish and deviant impulses on Indians (Brantlinger, *Rule* 210). The diamonds bring the violence and irrationality of the Mutiny to England, in their history and their surrounding conspiracies. In threatening domesticity in their eruption into the “quiet English house” (Collins, *Moonstone* 43), they first and foremost threaten women in their position as keepers of the Victorian ideal of the peaceful home. The constellation, moreover, reflects the preset stereotypical depiction of Mutiny violence. In *The Moonstone*, the danger which Rachel incurs is spelled out: First Murthwaite affirms that she would be in great danger in India (74) and later, she actually is the object of the Indians’ threatening gaze: “[T]here she stood, innocent of all knowledge of the truth, showing the Indians the Diamond in the bosom of her dress” (78). It is suggested that Rachel is especially vulnerable and thus unable to securely guard her diamond as property. *The Sign of Four* addresses the Mutiny directly, and Jonathan Small, in his confession, describes the violence of the rebels in their assault on the Indigo farm: The book-keeper’s wife is “all cut into ribbons, and half eaten by jackals and native dogs” (Doyle, *Sign* 215). He also mentions Cawnpore and the danger that women and children incur (218) in the hands of the mutineers.

The Eustace Diamonds alludes to another Indian crime against women which attracted sensational coverage in the nineteenth century. “Suttee propensities of all sorts, from burning alive down to bombazine and hideous forms of clothing, are becoming less and less popular among the nations,” (Trollope 229) the narrator ironically comments on Lizzie’s longing for entertainment. Frank Greystock also refers to “suttee” when he explains “the burning of Indian widows” with the unconscious Indian realisation of the “unfitness of women for solitude” (258). Lizzie’s situation as a young widow thus evokes *sati*, phrased ironically by the narrator and more seriously by Frank. Lizzie, however, obviously wants to avoid the renunciation which society demands from her, symbolised through *sati*, the mourning and giving up of the jewels, which are so important to her identity. The association of Lizzie’s situation with *sati* articulates the threat to her life and identity, which rests in the diamonds. This threat is represented through an Indian practise.

In her legally contested property Lizzie is linked to the Sawab of Mygawb¹². The parallelism of his case and her own is enforced by the Orientalising of Lizzie's widowhood. He is in a similar situation as Lizzie as the court decides whether he "should have twenty millions of rupees paid to him and be placed upon a throne, or whether he should be kept in prison all his life" (63). Lucy Morris, depicted as morally superior to Lizzie, defends the cause of the Sawab when she complains that "the prince is being used very ill – [...] he is being deprived of his own property, [...] he is being kept out of his rights, just because he is weak" (102). Although Lizzie's claim for the diamonds rests on lies, she, too, is deliberately kept in ignorance of her rights (273) and thus remains at the mercy of men in power.

The emphasis on the legal status of the Eustace Diamonds points to another context for the discussion of women as owners, topical in the 1870s, which is detached from the diamonds as Oriental objects. The first 'Married Women's Property Act' had, even long before it was passed in 1870, stirred a discussion on the subject. The underlying intention was to improve the standing of working-class women who had to hand over their wages to their husbands. The controversy, however, also exposed the injustices women faced in the middle and upper classes (Dolin 68-70). Before the act was passed, all property owned by a woman automatically passed to her husband on marriage, and she lost all rights to income and revenue from her property.

The insecurity of women's possession of objects of great value which the texts address is illustrated by the immediate danger through some Oriental design. In *The Eustace Diamonds* the reference is more obliquely introduced in the disempowered state of widows through *sati* and the parallels to the Sawab of Mygawb's case. Lizzie is in the first instance threatened because of her unprotected and, according to Frank, unnatural state as a widow. In the comparison with the Indian prince, her precarious position is likened to his as both of them depend on the intervention of men in power like Lord Fawn and Frank Greystock, both involved in the case. Frank Greystock pleads in the Sawab's favour and also supports Lizzie's claim of the diamonds while Lord Fawn opposes both.

Women appear as unable to hold possession of the diamonds but are at the same time bound up in the imagery of metaphors and similes conferring the corrupting or desirable qualities of diamonds on the female protagonists. In the plots, women and diamonds also occupy a usually mutually exclusive position as reward for successful detection in the reestablishment of order at the end of the stories. I

¹² The name alludes to the long-running court case of the insolvent Maharajah of Mysore (Trollope 773 note 6). Krishnarajah Wodeyar ascended the throne after the defeat of Tipu, 1799. He was removed in 1831 because he had incurred heavy debt and the British government took over the administration of the state. In 1867 it was decided that Mysore should again be ruled by an Indian prince, and in 1881 Krishnarajah's successor ascended the throne (Anon., "Mysore"). The novel's action is set in 1865-66 (Sutherland 24) when the question of native rule was debated before the decree took effect one year later.

will therefore consider the aspect of romance as a necessary substitute for the failure of the detective to effect order.

The Failure of Order and Detection

In detective fiction the ending imposes order on a chaotic and unintelligible world (Siddiqi 244). It involves the reconstruction of significant past events which make sense of the present:

Eigen schließlich ist zum dritten jenes entscheidenste Kriterium, das den Detektivroman von allen anderen Erzählformen trennt, so eben sein Unerzähltes und dessen Rekonstruktion [...] das Herausfinden eines bereits Geschehenen ante rem. (Bloch 334, italics in the original)

The aim of detection, in all of the stories, is the recovery of the diamonds. In *The Sign of Four* and “The Rajah’s Diamond”, which share a similar ending, the finding of the diamonds and their sinking is accompanied by the discovery of their history in India and the crimes which had been committed long before. Thomas Vandeleur’s services to the Rajah of Kashgar had only been rumours, but Prince Florizel can offer their details in a coherent narrative together with the diamond. He presents the diamond to the startled detective together with the account of its appropriation by Thomas Vandeleur in India and its passage to Paris (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 130-131). His position of near omniscience has aptly been prefigured in the impression he had made on Simon Rolles: “[T]he man who seemed, like a god, to know all things and to have suffered nothing” (96) can oversee both Indian and metropolitan crime.

In *The Sign of Four*, Jonathan Small who has been arrested as the thief narrates the theft of the treasure in India in his confession. His revelations thus not only include the solving of the immediate crime in England, but the discovery of the crimes’ pre-history. Sergeant Cuff, however, ignores the Moonstone’s Indian pre-history and, one could argue, fails in his task (Free 342). Keep and Randall suggest, with reference to *The Sign of Four*, that “[n]arrative thus substitutes itself for the unrecuperated aspect of the case” (218), which also holds true for “The Rajah’s Diamond”. In both instances, however, the momentous recovery of the treasures is followed by their loss in the rivers Thames and Seine respectively.

The Moonstone is also lost to its English owners. It is not sunk but returns to India as the three Brahmins manage to outwit the police. The restitution of the diamond to its place in a statue in Somnauth undoes not only the British plundering of Seringapatam, but also the earlier conquest of Somnauth by the Moguls, 800 years ago, so that the time arc of the story reaches back before the beginning of the prologue. The English, however, do not have a hand in this restitution. Yet, the narrative as substitute for a failed recovery does play a role. Murthwaite’s surveillance of the scene and his reporting back of the discovery constitutes such a

compensation. His presence and knowledge reassert the perspective of empire over the success of the nameless Indians (Nayder, "Collins and Empire" 148).

Another aim of detection, the identification of the culprit, is equally difficult to achieve in the three stories as they present a whole array of thieves. Yumna Siddiqi argues that the "assigning of guilt purifies the community as a whole" (244). As already discussed, the accidental passages of the diamonds in England explicitly avoid the concentration of guilt in one individual. According to Siddiqi, the exculpation of the community (244) is impossible without determining the culprit and thus constitutes another problem in the closure of the detective plot.

From the perspective of the detective plot, the fact remains that complete closure is impossible because the objects cannot be restored by the detective and vanish into the water or back to India. I will relate the failure of the detective to the element of romance which enters the detective discourse and suggest that the latter works as a substitute for a satisfactory closure through detection. The element of romance pervades the whole of the texts in *The Moonstone*, *The Eustace Diamonds*, "The Rajah's Diamond" *The Sign of Four* and *The Datchet Diamonds*. Before assessing its relevance in the resolution of the narrative of detection, I will point out the conspicuous references to romance, their origin and effect.

Romance as Substitute Closure and the Arabian Nights' Entertainment

"Here was romance indeed!" (Anon., 1: 155) The hero of "The Rajah's Diamond", a short story, which appeared in two instalments in Dickens' *All the Year Round* in 1878, identifies his situation as romantic. He pursues "the largest and finest diamond in the world" (Anon., 2: 155), the property of an Oriental rajah. The narrator later on affirms that "[t]he mystery and romance of his position worked their spell" (2: 156). The diamond is, of course, old (1: 135) and he is distracted from diamond hunting by the rajah's daughter (1: 137).

Romance has a twofold meaning: It denotes both "the oriental, the exotic, the occult, the dangerous and the mysterious" and "the domestic story of wooing, winning and wedding" (Mehta 611). The Oriental aspect clearly influences the novels in the shape of the diamonds which evoke the quintessential European fantasy of the Orient, the *Arabian Nights*.

Antoine Gallard's French translation of the *Nights* appeared between 1704 and 1717 and exerted a strong influence on European literature. An English translation followed very quickly, and the editions of Edward William Lane's and Richard Burton's further popularised the *Nights* (Mack 470). The stories played a major role in shaping the western image of the Orient. In describing and understanding the Orient the *Arabian Nights* furnished the vocabulary for fictional and non-fictional texts. They present "an instance of Orientalist thought: the way in which the West perceived the East as taking the form of its own fantasies of a paradisaical Orient" (Boehmer 43). An important part of the *Nights* is their setting in a rich

and urban environment which adds to the ‘treasure trove’ image of the Orient. The “domestic romance” which culminates in marriages upon the loss of the diamonds and the exotic romance of a removed fairy-tale like Orient, as represented in the *Arabian Nights*, are entwined in the narratives.

The romance element is highlighted in all of the stories, which is especially conspicuous in *The Sign of Four* as the Sherlock Holmes stories usually do not include romance in the domestic sense. The insistence on romance contrasts with the analytical and ‘modern’ prerogative of detective fiction. This reservation is voiced in *The Sign of Four* and “The Rajah’s Diamond”. Romance in detective plots is contrary to readers’ expectations. Simon Rolles, in his role as a reader of detective fiction in “The Rajah’s Diamond”, is frustrated with Gaboriau’s narrative: “He [Rolles] was annoyed, moreover, to find the information scattered amongst romantic story-telling” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 95). Similarly, Holmes rebukes Watson for his writing of *A Study in Scarlet*:

‘Detection is, or ought to be, an exact science and should be treated in the same cold and unemotional manner. You have attempted to tinge it with romanticism, which produces much the same effect as if you worked a love-story or an elopement into the fifth proposition of Euclid.’ (Doyle, *Sign* 125)

In *The Sign of Four*, however, the romance plot like the stock characters of fairy-tale are deliberately mentioned: “‘It is a romance!’ cried Mrs. Forster. ‘An injured lady, half a million in treasure, a black cannibal, and a wooden-legged ruffian. They take the place of the conventional dragon or wicked earl.’” (188) Similarly, in *The Eustace Diamonds*, Lizzie imagines herself as the hero or heroine of such an exotic romance as Mrs. Forster envisions. She chooses the *Arabian Nights* as a fitting frame because it unites romance and romantic treasure:

‘I do feel so like some naughty person in the Arabian Nights,’ she said, ‘who has got some great treasure that always brings him into trouble; but he can’t get rid of it, because some spirit has given it to him. At last, some morning it turns into slate stone, and then he has to be a water carrier, and is happy ever afterwards, and marries the king’s daughter. What sort of king’s son will there be for me when this turns into slate stones?’ (Trollope 323-324)¹³

As a story from the *Arabian Nights*, Lizzie imagines the plot of Collins’ and Doyle’s novels: The possession of the diamonds turns into a curse, and marriage compensates for the renunciation and loss of the treasure, a hope which is disap-

¹³ This forms part of Lizzie’s frequent attempts to imagine her life in terms of romance: She fashions Lord George as her Byronic “Corsair” (Trollope 371), and alludes to Frank’s position as resembling Lancelot between two women through Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King* (209) (Trollope 778, fn. 1).

pointed for Lizzie as she will not find a “king’s son” but only a scheming preacher. The bad outcome could already be prefigured in the reversed gender roles of her imagined romance indicating that Lizzie’s life does not correspond to the Oriental model she dreams up. In *The Datchet Diamonds*, too, Cyril Paxton wonders whether he was “the victim of some extraordinary hallucination or the hero of a fairy tale” (Marsh 42).

As part of the *New Arabian Nights*, “The Rajah’s Diamond” is framed as the recounting of such a story from the Orient: In situating half of the action in Paris, Stevenson references at the same time Poe’s Dupin (Ascarì 99) and the intertext, the *Arabian Nights* of the title. Stevenson invents an Oriental source from which a narrator copied the stories. The fairy-tale quality of the text is highlighted by the hero’s very name, Prince Florizel, which is taken from Shakespeare’s romance *The Winter’s Tale*. A prince who walks in disguise among the common people also references the ‘original’ *Arabian Nights*. The stories which are set in London and Paris are thus embedded in an Oriental frame and controlled by a western editor relying on an Oriental source. The original stories are told by an omniscient narrator, the “*Arabian author*” (Stevenson, “Suicide” 31)¹⁴ or “*this Oriental*” (68), providing a frame-narrative. Yet, the setting and characters are European so that an ironic tension is created between the occidental story and setting and the Oriental frame. The stories are mediated by the voice of an editor who comments on the narrative behaviour of the “*Arabian Author*” and occasionally disapproves of it, for example when the “*Arabian Author breaks off the story of THE YOUNG MAN IN HOLY ORDERS*” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 102), and the editor “*regret[s] and condemn[s] such practices*”, or the editor admits to changes in the text, “[*o*]mitting some reflections on the power of Providence, highly pertinent in the original, but little suited to our occidental taste” (Stevenson, “Suicide” 65). The few allusions to the editor’s changes contrast with the overall transformation of a supposed Oriental original and its impossible setting in London. The discrepancy creates the text’s irony and also introduces the editor/narrator as unreliable or at least misrepresenting his source. The exotic romance of the *New Arabian Nights* is present in these allusions to its generic model. Thus “The Rajah’s Diamond”, too, frames the story of the diamonds as belonging to the world of romance. The close connection between the diamond and the Oriental frame is evident in the simultaneous discarding of the diamond into the Seine and the Oriental author “into space” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 132).

Two different aspects drive the romance plot. One is the European text of the *Arabian Nights*. As a model for romance it unites the two disparate strands of romance, exoticism and chivalric love, and at the same time it includes the diamonds. The chivalric romance draws on narratives of the Mutiny which is more or less obliquely referenced in the texts by Collins, Stevenson and Doyle. The influence could be Mutiny narratives which highlighted the threat of Oriental lechery

¹⁴ The passages in which the editor takes over from the Oriental source and comments on the “*Arabian Author*” or provides summaries are set off by italics from the rest of the text.

to helpless white women and resurrect the “chivalric code” (Paxton 9). The male protagonist would then, of course, be rewarded for his feats by marriage. The years following 1857/8 saw a wave of such texts in which this motif turned into a staple ingredient (6).

In a brief summary I will give an overview on the couples that marry upon the loss of the treasures and for whom the loss of the diamonds is a prerequisite for marriage: Obviously, Rachel and Franklin in *The Moonstone* can only get together after the Moonstone has been found and Franklin has been cleared of guilt. In *The Sign of Four* Mary Morstan and Watson fall in love during the investigation. If Mary would have come into the possession of the treasure, she would have been too rich a bride for Watson. He brings her the chest, presumably filled with the Agra Treasure. When they find out that it is empty, Watson confesses his love, now that “the golden barrier was gone from between us” (Doyle, *Sign* 211). In “The Rajah’s Diamond”, the diamonds pass through several hands. The first “thief” is Harry Hartley, who, on his flight, meets Prudence, a maidservant. He manages to lose all of the diamonds and subsequently marries Prudence on “a sum of money [inherited] from a maiden aunt in Worcestershire” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 89). Francis Scrymgeour gives up the diamond to Prince Florizel who arranges the longed-for marriage to Miss Vandeleur and induces John Vandeleur to give her a dowry of one thousand pounds. In *The Datchet Diamonds* Cyril Paxton has to give up the diamonds and can finally marry Daisy Strong on money he earns from his soaring shares in a southern African gold mine. The loss of the diamonds is compensated by more secure financial means and the texts close with marriage.

On the one hand, the persistence of romance in these detective plots points to the lack of an alternative closure through successful detection and restoration of the stolen property, the natural and satisfying ending of detective fiction which reinstates order. Additionally, it also owes to the Victorian preoccupation with domesticity. This has also moral implications as the young male heroes renounce the worldly wealth of the dangerous Indian diamonds and opt for the quiet Victorian house. The diamonds themselves, as insecure colonial possession or domestic fiscal objects, are then traded for the reified sentimental image of the “Angel of the House”, Patmore’s Koh-i-Noor. The idea is evident in the exchange of treasure for love that underlies the endings which follow this plot as Watson exclaims: “Whoever had lost a treasure, I knew that night that I had gained one” (Doyle, *Sign* 211). The evil Agra Treasure has to disappear to clear the way for the romantic metaphor of Mary Morstan as treasure.

On the other hand, the diamonds seem to press the connection not only with the Orient in general but with a fairy-tale like version of it, modelled on the *Arabian Nights* in their European editions. The recurrence to a fairy-tale Orient as the provenance of the diamonds renders the “romantic regions” (Collins, *Moonstone* 462) of India as ahistorical and unchanging as the prologue to *The Moonstone* sug-

gests (12). The history of the diamond in India is consequently presented as “a fable” (12) and, as Matthew Bruff, the solicitor puts it, as the “romance of the diamond” (278). This phrase as well as Lizzie’s “spirit” (Trollope 323) who unconditionally gives away a treasure, obliterates the actual provenance of the diamonds. Jonathan Small can immediately identify the gems of the Agra treasure as something he has “read and thought about” when he was “a little lad at Pershore” (Doyle, *Sign* 224). He understands and frames it as literary rather than real. The notion of the fairy-tale treasure propagates the same idea as the colonial adventure story, the existence of ownerless Oriental wealth (Boehmer 23).

Romance, in particular Oriental romance, not only offers a conclusion to the story of an insoluble crime, but also produces a frame for the diamonds which is less threatening and more removed, more literary and less real than their actual history and origin.

Insecure Possessions

The passage from one owner to the next through chance and/or theft points to the problems of secure possession of the diamonds. Another variation of the same idea is the abundance of empty boxes, the “focus on the absence of diamonds or jewels” (Mersmann 187) through their empty containers, which makes them the subject of the discourse of detection. The empty Indian cabinet in Rachel’s room stood “wide open. One of the drawers inside was pulled out [...]” (Collins, *Moonstone* 87). In the scene of Godfrey’s murder, as well, “[a] small box was found [...] open and empty” (445). The box of “Indian workmanship” (Doyle, *Sign* 205) in *The Sign of the Four* only seems to hold the diamonds because of its weight, but when found, “[t]he box was empty!” (211)! In *The Eustace Diamonds*, as well, the box that is supposed to hold the jewels, is empty and the thieves in the first burglary escape with this “iron emblem of their [the diamonds] absence” (A.H. Miller 163). The Datchet Diamonds, too, disappear from their box: “When the box was opened, it was empty! There was nothing of any sort to show that the diamonds had ever been in it – they had vanished into air” (Marsh 23-24). The “impossibility of fixing these stones” (Mersmann 187) is not only emphasised through their empty containers but also through multiple thefts. The diamonds in *The Moonstone*, *The Sign of Four*, *The Eustace Diamonds*, *The Datchet Diamonds* and “The Rajah’s Diamond” are stolen at least twice. The initial crime committed in India is multiplied in England, and it is impossible to identify one single thief.

The theft of objects in detective fiction necessarily draws attention to the question of ownership: The detective not only has to find the stolen objects but also to return them to the rightful owner to restore order. But ownership of the diamonds is precarious and uncertain. The Rajah’s Diamond is devoid of a fixed status: it is not “stolen property” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 122) in the hands of Francis, and Harry replies to Raeburn, the gardener: “The jewels are not mine, and I

cannot share what is another's, no matter with whom, nor in what proportions" (86). Jonathan Small tentatively asks: "Whose loot is this, if it is not ours?" (Doyle, *Sign* 213) In Marsh's *The Datchet Diamonds*, the thief Lawrence answers to Cyril's question, why he supposed that he was the "rightful owner of the Datchet diamonds": "By right of conquest" (Marsh 252). The legal status of the Eustace Diamonds is never fully resolved: Lizzie keeps/steals them claiming them as a present from her late husband in Scotland. Mr. Dove asserts that they are "paraphernalia" rather than an "heirloom" (Trollope 263-264), a fact that is kept from Lizzie. Thus, as long as Lizzie insists on keeping up her lie, the true owner of the Eustace Diamonds cannot be determined. The question of the whereabouts of the owner is further complicated by determining the original owner. At the basis of this question the original theft of the diamonds from India introduces a complication.

The never-ending passage from one potential owner to the next emphasises their mobility. This contrasts with the secure inheritance of land as in *The Moonstone*. "The Moonstone seems to embody this shift from land to capital, with the diamond itself objectifying the intrusion of capital into the landed estate." (GoG-wilt 63). The diamond, consequently, cannot confer identity as the inheritance of land does. The substitution of marriage and domestic inheritance for the recovery of the diamonds compensates for the loss and also corresponds to the Victorian reverence for domesticity.

The problems of the unresolved detective plot are partly accommodated by assigning the diamonds to the realm of romance. Objects from this fairy-tale Orient are devoid of historical and political implications as their status as trophies would suggest. They thus belong to an imaginary place without the threatening connotations of Mutiny violence and colonial exploitation.

The romantic version of the diamonds, however, does not erase their geographical and historical provenance. The colonial implications raise specific fears of infiltration which intensify in late Victorian times. I will now look at the ways in which this fear is expressed and framed in the texts. The most obvious elements of invasion are the foreigners who follow the diamonds.

Invasion and Contamination

The Intrusion of the Periphery

The Inside: The Quiet Country House

While *The Moonstone* is set in the country side and the Verinder's belong to the landed gentry, *The Sign of Four* and "The Rajah's Diamond" transplant the action to urban settings. Both London and Paris are the capitals of empires and important gateways to the colonies. London is infused with colonial goods and subjects

that bring the colony home to England and carry among them the spoils of war of the diamonds. The Vandeleur brothers as well as the abundance of characters in *The Sign of Four* – Jonathan Small and Tonga, Captain Morstan, the Sholtos and Dr. Watson – testify to the literary interest in the “flotsam and jetsam of Empire” (Siddiqi 233) and also to the possible disturbance they impose. However, the description of the “tranquil English home” (Doyle, *Sign* 167-168) is a staple in both *The Sign of Four* and *The Moonstone* (Collins, *Moonstone* 296) (Mehta 612).

One of the hallmarks of sensational fiction, the genre Wilkie Collins wrote in, is the proximity of crime to the domestic (Mukherjee 166). This also holds true for *The Moonstone* which grew out of this tradition and is concerned with the immediate impact of colonial crime on the domestic sphere and the intrusion of Others into the home. The proximity of the Other is suggested through the presence of the Shivering Sands in the English landscape of Yorkshire (Carens 248). It implies that the English Yorkshire landscape is much closer to the colonial Other than might be evident at first glance. The interior of the Verinders’ house itself betrays its long involvement with the East. Rachel puts the Indian diamond into the Indian cabinet, for the purpose of “two beautiful native productions to admire each other” (Collins, *Moonstone* 84-85). Her Indian cabinet belongs to the furniture and forms part of the English interior. Similarly, the crimes of the Rajah’s Diamond, Mrs. Vandeleur’s unchecked spending, covered by the diamond as well as Thomas Vandeleur’s desertion in India belong to the inside of the London house as the proverbial “skeleton” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 75) in the cupboard.

The country house, on the other hand, is a metonymic representation of a self-sufficient and ordered national community (Kenny 204). Since the beginning of industrialisation, the urban centres overtook the countryside in importance so that the image of the country house is a nostalgic remnant. It is nevertheless used to set off the peaceful rural areas from the mysterious imperial regions. Prince Florizel unravels the story of the Rajah’s Diamond on the bank of the Seine which, however, seems like “some country river” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 130) in her tranquillity. Through the sinking of the diamond he tries to restore the purely rural which is supposedly untainted by and independent of imperialism.

In both *The Moonstone* and “The Rajah’s Diamond”, the contrast between roses and flowers and the diamonds is stressed, to juxtapose the exotic and the domestic rural. Sergeant Cuff explicitly states: “I also think a rose much better worth looking at than a diamond” (Collins, *Moonstone* 177). Instead of probing into the unsolved case of the Moonstone he prefers a discussion of the “dog rose” with the Verinder’s gardener (177)¹⁵. After retirement, he devotes himself to his true pas-

¹⁵ In the context of the establishment of the detective police the depiction of policemen as something thoroughly English harks back to Dickens’ attempts to popularise detectives in London. In *Detecting the Nation* Caroline Reitz argues that the detective police was only slowly accepted in England and was formerly regarded as outright un-English. Sergeant Cuff therefore has to “forge relationships with those figures who initially set themselves against him” (Reitz 60).

sion, not the pursuit of mysterious Orientals in an imperial city but the cultivation of the national flower: "Far from the crimes and the mysteries of the great city, the illustrious thief-taker was placidly living out the last Sybarite years of his life smothered in roses!" (354). In "The Rajah's Diamond" the diamonds are "rolling here and there among the rosebushes like drops of morning dew" (84). The picture of innocence evoked through the flowers and diamonds as fresh dew stand in stark contrast to the description of the Rajah's Diamond as "crawling with the worms of death" and "compacted out of innocent blood" (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 131). The contrast which is established here pits the roses as a symbol of the domestic against the diamond. The value and exotic splendour of the one is juxtaposed with the native, natural but invaluable beauty of the other. In the face of the ancient and "unfathomable" (Collins, *Moonstone* 70) Moonstone the roses are the natural and unrefined answer that promise simplicity. In the same vein, the "little nosegay" reminds Ezra Jennings of pleasant experiences in England as opposed to his 'unspeakable' upbringing in the unnamed colony: "'How beautiful they are!' he said simply, showing this little nosegay to me [Franklin Blake]" (366). The presentation of England as rural assumes that it is not involved in colonialism and also untainted by crime.

Betteredge with his "English ideas" (81) and long service in the Verinder family stands for the decidedly English values which are also present in the setting of the country house. His constant reading of *Robinson Crusoe* exemplifies his representation of Englishness. The religious reverence with which he treats it, however, rather evokes the Indian "hocus-pocus" that he condemns. He mimics Robinson Crusoe's use of the Bible during his isolation on the island so that Betteredge perpetuates the practise found in *Robinson Crusoe* using the narrative of European colonialism in the Caribbean to find answers in the use of *Crusoe* as "a combination Bible and Ouija board" (Mehta 622) in the present. Duncan asserts that Betteredge's domestic leisure pursuit is downright imperialist: "*Robinson Crusoe* is the founding fable of a modern, economic, and colonial formation of British identity, while tobacco is one of England's original imperial commodities" (Duncan 309-310). Betteredge's reading of *Robinson Crusoe* and his tobacco pipe brings together one of the earliest ideological founding texts of imperialism and its contemporary economic result. The substitution of *Robinson Crusoe* for the Bible already suggests the stand-in of imperialism for faith which marks the late-Victorian times (Brantlinger, *Rule* 228). Betteredge's ignorance of the connection between the theft of the Moonstone and the colonial implications of *Robinson Crusoe* is illustrated in his checking his digression on *Crusoe* with the words: "Still this don't look much like starting the story of the Diamond, does it" (Collins, *Moonstone* 19), when the colonial text clearly is a very good starting point for "the story of the Diamond." Gabriel Betteredge and Sergeant Cuff, who represent 'Englishness, are united by their ignorance of colonial connections to their respective situations. Cuff ignores the Indian origin of the Moonstone, and Betteredge equally unre-

flectingly uses *Robinson Crusoe*. This denial ties in with the haze of forgetting and repressing which surrounds the theft of the Moonstone from Rachel's cabinet. In the following I will look at the way the intrusion of the Other is depicted and how contact with the Other is framed.

The Moonstone: The Three Indians

As the Indians do not speak, their characterisation relies on the perception of the diverse cast of letter writers. This strategy first and foremost characterises the people who describe the Indians rather than the Indians themselves. They function as a foil on which the different writers project their fears and expectations. The anonymous cousin's account of the siege of Seringapatam which forms the *Moonstone's* prologue, describes the ancestors of the Brahmins and depicts the custom of their watch over the diamond since the eleventh-century. The most striking characteristic in the Indians is the absence of any individual trait. Not only are the three Indians who follow the Moonstone to England undistinguishable, they have also been devoted to the same cause in the same manner over many generations. The lack of distinctive traits among the three Brahmins is complemented by their featurelessness as compared with their ancestors in Tipu Sultan's palace: "They are indistinguishable from each other, a unitary sign of India: as reliable and as persistent as ants, unchanged across generations, outside of history" (Dolin 77). For ages, the same task has been fulfilled by an undistinguishable procession of descendants of the Brahmins from Somnauth. While, in this case, the Brahmins belong to the realm of "fable" and "fanciful story" (Collins, *Moonstone* 13), determined by the nameless cousin's "superstition" (16) surrounding the Moonstone, they step out of the fairy-tale frame in Betteredge's description: For him they are not mythical agents of Vishnu's will but a threat to the Verinders family silver, while asserting that he would not "distrust another person because he happens to be a few shades darker than myself" (26). After the legend of the prologue, down-to-earth Betteredge relates the Indians only to his narrowly confined realm of the house. Apart from the comic effect, Betteredge's character is established as practical and unconsciously hypocritical. Betteredge who had earlier admitted to the Indians' superior manners later describes them as "snaky" and possessing a "tigerish quickness" (79). He further remarks that the Brahmins' pursuit of the diamond "didn't at all square with my [Betteredge's] English ideas" (81). The juxtaposition of the English and the Indian runs through other remarks by Betteredge: "Here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond – bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues" (43). He furthermore condemns the Indians as practicing "hocus-pocus" (28) and later applies the same term to Ezra Jennings' experiment (403). For Betteredge, the alleged epitome of sound Englishness, "the Hindu priests [...] represent dangerous tropical animality that has encroached upon the temperate and familiar regions of Eng-

lish country life.” (Carens 247) However, the parallels between his own use of *Robinson Crusoe* for divination and his ‘belief’ in “that immortal book” (Collins, *Moonstone* 178) is not too far removed from the Brahmins’ practice of clairvoyance (Mehta 622).

Murthwaite shares Betteredge’s stereotypical assumptions, but he bases them on “his superior knowledge of the Indian character” (Collins, *Moonstone* 287) which he has acquired in “the wild places of the East” (74). He also describes the Indians as having the “patience of cats” and the “ferocity of tigers” (80), reiterating Betteredge’s image of their “tigerish quickness” (79). Yet, Murthwaite’s description of the Indians largely relies on generalisations of pseudo-science: He knows that “no Indian [...] ever runs an unnecessary risk” (286). Through his knowledge he rationalises their séance with the English boy: “The clairvoyance in this case is simply a development of the romantic side of the Indian character [...] We have nothing whatever to do with clairvoyance, or with mesmerism, or with anything else that is hard of belief to a practical man” (285-286). Rather than dismissing mesmerism as “hocus-pocus”, Murthwaite offers Bruff an explanation for the Indians’ behaviour, distinguishing the Brahmins’ efforts at detection from his own rational method, which “trace[s] results back, by rational means, to natural causes” (286). For Murthwaite the Brahmins present the confirmation of preset rules, similar to the description of Tonga in *The Sign of Four*. But Murthwaite is also sympathetic to them, calling them “a wonderful people”, while Betteredge insists on “murdering thieves” (81-82).

The evangelical Miss Drusilla Clack fashions the Indians into protagonists of her religious allegory: “How soon may our own evil passions prove to be Oriental noblemen who pounce on us unawares!” (203) For her, they are evil personified as opposed to the “Christian Hero” Godfrey Ablewhite and his natural antagonists. Through the satiric representation of Miss Clack these ascription have to be immediately questioned by the reader.

The Indians are further present in the text by the things they carry into London: In their assaults on Mr. Luker and Godfrey Ablewhite the Brahmins engage their attention through “two unusual things” (201): A manuscript laid out on a table and the smell of “musk and camphour” (201). Both evoke a mysterious and sensual Oriental atmosphere. The manuscript, “richly illuminated with Indian figures and devices” (201), seems to mesmerise the onlooker in a similar way as the *Moonstone* which draws all attention to it on its first presentation (70). Furthermore, the manuscripts are a symbol for the Indians’ silence in the text which is constituted of letters but only contains one short written note by one of the Brahmins’ collaborators in London (288). The manuscripts belong to the group of writing which remains unreadable like Franklin’s “hieroglyphics” (178). Another signifier of the Indians’ presence is a “morsel of torn gold thread [...] which persons expert in such matters declare to be of Indian manufacture, and to be a species of gold thread not known in England” (446) at the site of Godfrey Able-

white's killing, which serves to indicate the Brahmins to be Godfrey's murderers. Together with the sound of their drums (78) which announces the arrival of the jugglers at the Verinders house, the Indians are surrounded by everything Oriental: The luxury of musk, the mystery of the manuscripts, the wealth suggested by the gold thread and the archaic and mesmerising beat of the drum. They thus represent the "romantic regions" (462) which are the origin of the Moonstone. The gold thread especially evokes the luxury of the eastern 'treasure trove' but it is, like the Moonstone, subject to the scrutiny of a detective.

Critics differ in their evaluation of Collins' presentation of the Indians. John R. Reed contends that the description of the Indians is absolutely positive. He sees them as "heroic figures, while the representatives of Western Culture are plunderers" (283). In the decades when the Indian Mutiny still loomed large in British fiction on India, the favourable depiction of Indians would be the more remarkable. Other critics foreground the negative stereotyping and marginal position the Brahmins occupy and the fact that the ultimate restitution of the diamond can only happen under British surveillance (Mukherjee 178). In comparison with the texts that took up the idea of *The Moonstone* in later years, Collins' treatment of the Indians is certainly more positive. The ambiguity he creates through the use of multiple perspectives through the epistolary mode stands in stark contrast to the description of Tonga by the authoritative voices of Sherlock Holmes and Watson.

The Sign of Four: Tonga

Tonga does not first and foremost exist as an individual but as an exemplary specimen of his race as he is described through the article of an encyclopaedia, which minutely defines him and prefigures his actions. The ability of "forming most devoted friendships when their confidence has once been gained" as well as the use of "their poisonous arrows" (Doyle, *Sign* 186) apply to Tonga and, predictably, will be confirmed by Jonathan Small. Similarly, the mention of "misshapen heads" (186), intractability and fierceness are confirmed in the rest of the story. The encyclopaedia thus provides an almost exhaustive image of Tonga who conforms to all the criteria set down for him. This is Orientalism in the narrower sense as defined by Edward Said: The Other has been made an object of study, scrutiny and knowledge. "The object of such knowledge is inherently vulnerable to scrutiny; this object is a fact [...] To have such a knowledge of such a thing means to dominate it, to have authority over it" (Said, *Orientalism* 32). Furthermore, the "fact" cannot change. Thus Tonga has to make use of his poisonous arrow, kill and generally display his fierceness and morosity. Holmes, in this instance, perpetuates what Caroline Reitz calls "the imperial gaze", the foundation of empire (Reitz xxiii). Holmes' all-encompassing knowledge of imperial subjects is already introduced in the beginning of the story. Among the "monographs" of which he "pleads guilty" are ones on distinguishing the hands of a diamond pol-

isher and on different types of ashes to identify a lunkah-smoker. Together with another work on the tracing of footsteps a number of events in the story are already foreshadowed in writing (Doyle, *Sign* 126).

Christopher Keep and Don Randall observe that the description of Tonga's deformity evokes "contemporary accounts of the murderous rage exhibited by the Sepoys during the Mutiny, the maddened features of the cocaine addict, and late nineteenth-century fears concerning devolution and degeneration" (214). Tonga can be read as impersonating the curse of the treasure and as functioning as its evil spirit. The Mutiny, poison and going native are equally evoked through the Agra treasure, its theft and its intoxicating quality. The danger that emanates from both leads to Tonga and the treasure being sunk in the Thames together (Doyle, *Sign* 205), which further emphasises their connection. Yet Tonga does not only display every imaginable trait of barbarism, but he is also described as "a black cannibal" (188). Although he is a native from the Andamanese islands, his name connotes the South Seas and thus links him even closer to a region which was long thought to be inhabited by cannibals.

Tonga's main action is the murder of Bartholomew Sholto. The episode is a nod to E.A. Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue", which introduced the locked-room mystery. Tonga shoots Bartholomew with a poisoned arrow and leaves traces which first leads the reader in the same direction as in Poe's version of the mystery: Holmes observes that Tonga's toes are "each distinctly divided" (170) and evokes the ape that turns out to be the murderer in Poe's story. After his escape, Tonga is then traced by a dog through the scent of creosote, another hint at his animal rather than human nature as he is turned into game (160)¹⁶. Tonga's murder of Bartholomew Sholto additionally associates him with "Senegambia" in Holmes encyclopaedic knowledge of "parallel cases" (159). Tonga thus signifies more than just India but the generally dangerous and exotic Other capable of and importing crimes that have previously been unknown in England and must necessarily originate in some 'barbarous' region.

While both novels draw on the fear of infiltration, the Brahmins and Tonga as representatives of India paint two very different pictures. *The Moonstone's* Indians are the agents of an alien culture while Tonga is the personification of a threatening wilderness. The Brahmins, by their designation as such alone testify to the existence of a whole civilisation. This strange culture imbues the Moonstone with its meaning as a religious artefact. Tonga, by contrast, is not represented as the exponent of a native Andamanese society but as the embodiment of wilderness. The image of India as such a wilderness also informs "The Rajah's Diamond" and John Vandeleur's character as a hunter (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 127). This presupposes the colony as jungle, a view which the two later texts share.

¹⁶ "The Crooked Man" is a Sherlock Holmes story with a locked-room mystery and a monkey as the alleged suspect.

The Moonstone and *The Sign of Four*, nevertheless, frame fears of intrusion and invasion in a similar manner and draw on the popular perception of the Mutiny as a conspiracy against British dominion.

Secret Societies and Thuggee

The idea of a murderous and secretive India is largely based on two sources. The immense interest in Thuggee at the beginning of the century and its popularisation and fictionalisation in Philip Meadows Taylor's successful *Confessions of a Thug* (1839) almost certainly shaped the image of India as the site of murder which is rooted in religion but underpins the whole of society (Mukherjee 108). The problems which arose in the attempts to suppress Thuggee made for popular plots and secured it an afterlife detective fiction. The sensationalist press coverage of Thuggee also nurtured the belief that Thugs could appear in the middle of London or Paris, and motifs and figures from Thug narratives found their way into all kinds of crime fiction in the latter half of the century (níFlathuín 35-36).

The outbreak of the Mutiny revived the notion of Indian conspiracies as contemporary explanations centred on the existence of secret societies, which aimed to overthrow British rule in India. Again, it was thus possible to reduce the popular basis of the rebellion and deny a more widespread discontent with British rule. Furthermore, the theory also paid off ideologically, as British resistance and retribution was directed against the secret and cowardly plans of ungrateful conspirators (Pionke 114-118). Patrick Brantlinger also acknowledges the Victorian resorting to these theories and sees Nana Sahib cast into the role of prime conspirator, while at the same time Indians as a whole were held to be incapable of acting on an organised scheme (203).

Deception is therefore rooted not in personal ability but in religion which encompasses the whole of society. Thus concealment and murder are hallmarks of Indian rather than Thug culture (Reitz 25). Consequently, the Indians in *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four*, who allegedly conspire to harm English persons, appear as secret societies. *The Moonstone* might have been the "object of a conspiracy in India" (Collins, *Moonstone* 43) and Murthwaite remarks that "a Hindoo diamond is often part of a Hindoo religion" (74) and that there was "a conspiracy then in existence to get possession of the gem" (461). These instances show that the elements of the discourse of secrecy and conspiracy recur in *The Moonstone* with reference to the diamond itself. The depiction of the Indians, of course, follows the same lines. First of all, their "modest little Indian organisation" (284) conflates the image of the gang of wandering murderers with the emphasis on their religion. Their voluntary forfeiture of cast obliquely evokes the affair of the greased cartridges (Pionke 126). The mutineers in *The Sign of Four* are accordingly described as "fanatics" and "devil-worshippers" (Doyle, *Sign* 216). This also transports the underlying notion that they are completely determined by their religion and em-

phasises the point that their actions directly grow out of their religious devotion in the same way as the Brahmins murder Ablewhite to fulfil their vow to Vishnu. Franklin Blake consequently ascribes their behaviour to the well-known “influence of oriental religions” (Collins, *Moonstone* 48).

The assaults on Mr. Luker and Godfrey Ablewhite can be read as oblique allusions to Thuggee. The assertion that human lives are irrelevant for them further stresses the connection (81). The Indians’ method of strangling their victims leads Suvendrini Perera to the assumption that Collins derived them directly from Taylor’s novel (113). The Brahmins’ devotion to Vishnu and fulfilling of the god’s command is reminiscent of the worship of Kali which is at the core of Thuggee. However, rather than directly drawing on Taylor, Collins might as well have used the most prominent stereotypes of his times which grew from Taylor’s influential depictions as well as the more recent events of the Mutiny.

The mysterious “Indian plot” (Collins, *Moonstone* 283) at the centre of English society also articulates undefined fears of infiltration. It is as Caroline Reitz remarks the original constellation from which the English detective figure evolved and accordingly casts the conspiratorial pacts as his antagonist. The “Indian plot” (283) suggests that there must be a hidden network of conspirators to support the pursuit of the diamond. The edges of this network are visible in the worker in Mr. Luker’s shop, the letter the Indians receive in prison and the dummy who hires their rooms. Their dealings, however, remain hidden and impenetrable. The depiction of the Indians as subversive and invisible also leads to their perception as “spies”¹⁷ (285) by Bruff suggesting invisibility but uncanny omnipresence. At the centre of this conspiracy is the diamond imbued with a secret meaning generated by a secret society which the English characters cannot read or even misread.

The motif of an Indian diamond at the centre of an Indian conspiracy is taken up again two decades later in *The Sign of Four*. Jonathan enters the secret pact to murder and steal the Agra treasure. When “the Four” are betrayed by John Sholto and Captain Morstan, Small seeks vengeance for his accomplices. It is further suggested that Small’s implication in the otherwise exclusively Indian pact is part of his corruption and downfall in the colony, which, in the end, sees him in the place of a typical native guarded by white guards.

Doyle’s novel explicitly links the Mutiny with the pact, but he might also have drawn on the contemporary fear of European secret societies which were thought to be imported to Britain by emigrant revolutionaries from the continent. The myth of Indian Thuggee is thus complemented by a literary current in novels of the end of the century to revolve around repentant terrorists who cannot escape their ex-comrades and are bound by an unbreakable oath (Ascarri 54). Doyle alludes to this notion in his first novel *A Study in Scarlet*, where the obvious but

¹⁷ The method of spying, however, opens another interesting parallel as Betteredge confesses that the “natural occupations of people situated as we [Betteredge and Rosanna]” are “prying, and peeping, and listening” (Collins, *Moonstone* 149).

wrong suspects are continental secret societies and German revolutionaries who hide out in London (Doyle, *Scarlet* 33). Major Sholto and Thaddeus Sholto, although not directly bound by the pact of “the Four”, still break their promise and are consequently sought out by Small. Thus Thaddeus Sholto sees “secret agencies at work all around us” (*Sign* 147) and assumes the same omnipresent and deceptive plot as in *The Moonstone*. Both texts, however, assume different attitudes towards the secretive pacts. The opacity of the Brahmins’ dealings juxtaposes Small’s complete confession of the conspirators’ deeds so that *The Sign of Four* presents a conspiracy that is finally unravelled. The diamonds instigate these conspiracies and function as the bond which draws the alien characters to England. They are associated with the obscure, criminal invasive.

The ‘Close’ Other

The Eustace Diamonds: Harter, Benjamin and Emilius

The mysterious Indians who follow the Moonstone and who are perceived as a threat to Rachel have somewhat less sensational counterparts in *The Eustace Diamonds*. The firm of Harter and Benjamin, Jewish moneylenders and jewellers, is responsible for the two burglaries to steal Lizzie’s diamonds, one attempted and the other successful. As Jews they represent a version of the ‘close’ Other, alongside the racial hybrid as represented in Ezra Jennings.

The stereotypical depiction of Jews in nineteenth-century realist literature shifts from the mythical arch-villain to the economic criminal. His relation to the rest of society is structured by his economic activity and his exaggerated embracing of capitalism and casts him as a new threat to the established and especially to the landed society. This stereotype is backed by the much older stereotype of Jews as usurers (Schuhmacher 44-45).

In *The Eustace Diamonds*, Benjamin and Harter are from the beginning introduced as shady and dishonest, as they knowingly accept Lizzie’s lies about her age and upcoming marriage and agree to support her scheme of letting Sir Florian pay her debts after their marriage (Trollope 40-41; 46). Mr. Benjamin’s desire for the Eustace Diamonds surfaces very early on when Lizzie presumes that “if Mr. Benjamin got them into his hands, Mr Benjamin might perhaps not return them” (79), and “she was wise enough to know that [...] Harter and Benjamin were not trustworthy” (80), that they were not “as firm as rocks” (80). Respectability and honesty described as adamant firmness are also attributed to Lucy but not to Lizzie, who knows that she is “paste” (628).

According to Lord George, who is in debt to Benjamin, he has “that greasy, Israelitish smile” (494). Harter and Benjamin are immediately suspected by the police to have stolen the diamonds (474): “That there was nothing ‘too hot or too heavy’ for Messrs. Harter and Benjamin was quite a creed with the police of the

West-end of London" (475) and also by Lord George (493). Mr. Benjamin's involvement is finally proven, and he is sentenced to fifteen years of penal service (753). In the end Lizzie feels pity for Mr. Benjamin and tries to differentiate between his desire for the diamonds and her own, clinging to her self-deception: "[H]e [Mr. Benjamin] coveted them. I never coveted them, Mr. Emilius, though I clung to them because they were my darling husband's last gift to me." (760) Lizzie's greed for the diamonds then is rendered even more repulsive as it connects her with Mr. Benjamin, who is ironically termed "her old friend" (478).

Lizzie's downfall is illustrated by her marriage to Mr. Emilius, who is "a renegade Jew" (639) with a "hooky nose" (759) whom the narrator disqualifies as a "scheming hypocrite, craving her [Lizzie's] money" (762), perpetuating the traits attributed to Mr. Benjamin. Mr. Emilius, a converted Jew, is additionally described as an impostor and a bigamist. While the narrator in *The Eustace Diamonds* only hints at Mr. Emilius' being married (636), later novels, in which Lizzie returns, confirm his bigamy (Sutherland 14). The descriptions of Mr. Benjamin and Mr. Emilius rely on a stereotyped image of Jewishness. The Jews in *The Eustace Diamonds* are united by their desire for Lizzie's diamonds and money. To get them Benjamin and Harter cooperate with the thieves Smiler and Billy Cann, and Emilius ingratiates himself with Lizzie and marries her. They are furthermore criminalized by their occupation as money-lenders, conforming to another established prejudice. Unlike the Brahmins in *The Moonstone*, they are not granted a redeeming excuse. Mr. Benjamin and Lizzie are both thieves and resort to lies and scheming to possess the diamonds. By introducing Benjamin into the story, greed is presented as an alien passion from which Lizzie suffers, too. It is a general "Jewish" fault as all three of the Jews in the novel, Mr. Harter, Mr. Benjamin and Mr. Emilius, are caught up in the pursuit of other people's wealth.

Jews who covet "English" diamonds also reference a contemporary colonial context. From the late 1860s onward, southern Africa supplied the bulk of diamonds on the market (Levinson 73-75). British and Jewish traders fought over the rights to claims in Kimberley, most notably Cecil Rhodes and the Jew Barney Barnato (Kaufman 518). Cecil Rhodes prevailed with the founding of De Beers which still controls the diamond industry and trade in Africa. Press and literature, too, depicted Jews who tried to secure a share of the market as inferior¹⁸ (Kaufman 519).

The Jews here function as another version of the Other: the Oriental "rogues" who follow the diamonds appear in their domestic version as greedy and deceiving Jews. Greed is thus dispersed and deflected. *The Moonstone*, however, features a character who is not involved in the pursuit of the diamond, but still represents the 'close' Other: the appearance of the colonial in the metropolis.

¹⁸ According to Heidi Kaufman, the anti-Semitic sub-text of H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) feeds on these historical circumstances and fictionalises the British conquest of Jewish diamonds in Africa (528).

The Moonstone: Ezra Jennings

Ezra Jennings acts as an intermediary figure in the novel. Born to an English father and a foreign mother he personifies another version of the ‘close’ Other and “performs a link between the Indian frame and the English center” (Mehta 628). Three times Franklin Blake describes Ezra Jennings as “remarkable-looking” (Collins, *Moonstone* 321; 332; 356), thus constantly drawing attention not only to his racial markedness. The other “remarkable-looking man” in the novel is the chief of the Indians, who sees Mr. Bruff at his office. He speaks “in an excellent selection of English words” and appears in “European costume” (278). The adjective thus seems to be reserved for the more or less hybrid characters and emphasises their visibility without approving of their appearance which imitates English norms. The behaviour is similar to Homi K. Bhabha’s concept of “mimicry” (Bhabha 86), which necessarily disturbs imperial self-fashioning and accounts for the excessive repetition of the “remarkable” appearances which finds the narrators lost for words.

In Franklin Blake’s description Ezra Jennings’ appearance seems inexplicably incongruent. He is neither young nor old and has piebald hair: “Over the top of his head it was still of the deep black which was its natural colour. Round the sides of his head – without the slightest gradation of grey to break the force of the extraordinary contrast – it had turned completely white” (321). To Franklin he “look[s] old and young together” (364). Furthermore, Jennings describes his own character as hysteric and alleges that “Physiology says, and says truly, that some men are born with female constitutions – and I am one of them” (369). His psyche, too, is described as indeterminate. His mental instability is further stressed by his opium use because of “an incurable internal complaint”: “My nervous system is shattered; my nights are nights of horror” (375). Physical and mental illness are thus paired. The indeterminacy in his character stems from the “mixture of some foreign race in his English blood” (367) which Franklin Blake detects in his physiognomy, where he can “read” “[t]he story [...] in his face” (366):

His complexion was of a gypsy darkness; his fleshless cheeks had fallen into deep hollows, over which the bone projected like a pent-house. His nose presented the fine shape and modelling so often found among the ancient people of the East, so seldom visible among the newer races of the West. (Collins, *Moonstone* 321)

As in his bicoloured hair and indefinable age, Franklin’s reading of Jennings’ face shows that Jennings’ body is the key to his “remarkable” position.

Ezra Jennings himself allegedly has an indistinct criminal past which is never fully explained and follows him as slander which he cannot set right (Collins,

Moonstone 374). It is equally “a blank” (455) as his origin¹⁹. In the discovery of the diamond, he translates and completes Mr. Candy’s confession spoken in delirium. Ezra Jennings functions as a medium because of his own opium usage and his intermediate and indeterminate position due to his mixed racial heritage. Through the mediation of Dr. Candy’s delirious words, and in helping Blake to identify opium as the true cause for the theft, he is in both instances a “mysterious intersection point” (Thomas 71) situated on the borderline between sanity and insanity, the domestic and the Other. It also accounts for his access to Dr. Candy’s irrationality. Both in Dr. Candy’s delirious speech and in the revelation of Franklin Blake’s involvement in the theft, Ezra Jennings interprets the subconscious to solve the crime. The regular representatives of the police, Superintendent Seegrave and Sergeant Cuff, at least partially fail at this task (Ascari 71).

Ezra Jennings offers an alternative method of detection, as many critics argue: “Jennings then is a man of faith as opposed to reason” (Murfin 663). Yet the opium experiment is conducted as a scientific undertaking and Ezra Jennings can finally offer the explanation for Franklin’s theft, not the least because he is a professional physician and scientist (Thomas 70). His detection combines science with methods reminiscent of the Brahmins’ mesmerism in his use of opium, and its success thus “unsettles imperial dichotomies” (Carens 257) as the combination proves successful. In criticism, Jennings’ behaviour is seen as either proof of his role as “serving” Franklin and thus as a deliberate assertion of the existing imperial order (Nayder, *Wilkie Collins* 122) or as a subversive and triumphant undermining of racial stereotypes (Carens 256). Although Jennings is depicted as a wreck whose misfortunes, it is indicated, are at least partly caused by his heritage, he nevertheless assumes a position of power: Ronald R. Thomas argues that, in solving the crime, Jennings relies on the latest forensic research and applies it to turn Franklin Blake’s body into the evidence for his guilt (67). The solution demands the scientific scrutiny of Franklin’s body so that he finds himself in the same position as Ezra Jennings before him: Ezra’s “remarkable” appearance, , speaks against him and makes him a suspect. The same scrutiny applied to Franklin’s body, its “reading” proves his complicity albeit an unconscious one, in a crime.

All Others are first perceived as perpetrators and as inherently suspicious. The image of the “criminal who is by definition the ‘other’” (A.D. Miller 36) is turned around in *The Moonstone*. The potentially thieving Indians of Betteredge’s narrative (Collins, *Moonstone* 26), later suspected of having stolen the diamond, are pronounced to be “as innocent as the babe unborn” (91; also 154). Following in the same vein, Ezra Jennings first elicits the expected reaction of distrust from Betteredge: “We none of us liked him or trusted him” (153; also 322) and Franklin admits that “his appearance [...] was against him” (364). Nevertheless, Ezra

¹⁹ Ronald R. Thomas takes it for granted that Jennings’ mother is Indian (71), but this is never clarified in the text.

Jennings turns out to hold the key to the mystery. The initial anticipation of an alien thief is turned around in the conviction of Godfrey Ablewhite. *The Moonstone* as the earliest of the texts discussed here thus presents the most ambivalent picture in the description of its racial Others, while in *The Sign of Four* and *The Eustace Diamonds* the stereotypical characters fulfil their role as villain. Ezra Jennings is further set off from the other outlandish characters because he does not desire the diamond.

The desire of the English protagonists for the diamonds is represented as infertuous and addictive. The intrusion of the Other is imagined as the spread of poison and the effect on the individual is a contamination. The diamonds are caught up in the same imagery and thus complement the invasion by a foreign people.

Oriental Contaminants and “the intoxicating chrystal”

A discussion of poison and drugs in the stories has become necessary for two reasons: The diamonds and their passing from India to Britain and through many hands suggests an image of imperial economy in which goods and raw material are hauled from the colony to the centre for profit and consumption. Drugs formed an important part in the economic relation with the colonies. Opium was harvested in India and profitably passed on to the Chinese market. Yet, addiction also became a problem in Britain itself and the potential dangers of the drug were realised. Opium and diamonds share a violent history, and a history of exploitation. Opium, according to Keep and Randall, is an “uncanny” element in British culture (207) which has not shaken off its imperial associations and as such resembles the diamonds as products which still remember the violence of their history. The opium traffic draws attention to the imperial economy and the close interrelatedness of the markets of India and Britain. It also exposes the suffering this market produces as the opium addicts appear in the heart of London itself.

Secondly, imported to and consumed in Britain, opium furnishes a powerful image of contamination:

Cultivated in India for export throughout the empire, [...] opium above all other substances represented the global penetration and ontological contamination of a modern imperial economy. The commodity in its pure state as all-pervading, all subverting fluid, opium enralls the inner subject to an alien, Asiatic identity. (Duncan 310)

Elleke Boehmer asserts that, especially towards the end of the century, the perceived threat of degeneration was articulated in images of contamination (66). Ezra Jennings serves as the prime example of mental contamination through opium addiction in combination with “the mixture of some foreign race” (Collins, *Moonstone* 367).

In combination with the secret societies of *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four*, the image of opium metaphorically articulates the fear of infiltration. Opium shares this ascription with the diamonds in *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four* as the “quiet English house” (Collins, *Moonstone* 43) is colonised by the diamonds. In “The Rajah’s Diamond” Prince Florizel actually uses the vocabulary of poison and drugs to describe the influence of the diamond when he says: “I myself, Mr Vandeleur, could scarce handle the intoxicating crystal and be safe” (Stevenson, “Rajah” 97)²⁰. In the same way, Franklin describes the influence of the Moonstone: “Scattered, disunited – the very air of the place poisoned with mystery and suspicion [...] The Moonstone has served the Colonel’s vengeance” (Collins, *Moonstone* 186). The influence of the diamond works to spread fear and disharmony and poisons relations. Their influence, analogous to the drug, is perceived as corrupting. The diamonds are, analogous to opium, described as addictive: The Rajah’s Diamond casts a spell (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 130) and binds Thomas Vandeleur to the Rajah of Kashgar almost as a slave. His “peace of mind” is gone and the desire for the diamond replaces “honor, reputation, friendship, the love of country” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 130). John Herncastle, too, obsessively pursues the Moonstone and refuses to give it up, although its possession is dangerous.

The diamonds present a condensed version of the process of Othering. The properties which are imposed upon them display Orientalist notions current in nineteenth-century Britain. At this point in time, when anxieties about the future of the empire grew, the fear and threat of the Other was imagined as contamination, especially in racial terms: “Despite efforts at containment, the fear of other cultures, or of the primitive, found its way into texts, cropping up in all manner of images of *contamination*, infection, and bewitching” (Boehmer 66, italics in the original). Opium thus also functions as a metaphor for the fear of corruption through alien influences.

Oriental substances then not only embody the infection with the native and Other, but also imply a grander scale than the single body as the site in danger as they circulate in the national economy. Society as a whole can be infected and disrupted by being poisoned, a threat ultimately growing from the expansion of the empire. With the ‘body politic’ as the target of Oriental poison and poisoners, the reach of this metaphor explains its persistence (Harris 452).

Poison and Murder

In nineteenth-century Britain, poisoning was regarded as a thoroughly Oriental way of murder. It was perceived as rooted in the eastern flora and fauna which

²⁰ Jean-Pierre Naugrette suggests an etymological reading of the Moonstone as a ‘gift’, a present and poison at the same time. Opium has the same ambiguous properties as a medicinal and addictive drug (Naugrette 410-411).

was, as such, thought to be harmful to Europeans. The land itself, it was believed, produces sicknesses and tropical plants which yield lethal poisons. The inhabitants, naturally and inevitably, use these poisons while it was thought that the use of Oriental poison by Englishmen was very unusual. This view of the poisonous East was so pervasive that scientific texts of the time frequently cite an undetectable Indian poison, the perfect but imaginary weapon for professional murder (Harris 447; 450). It was especially India that served to supply hideous and secret ways to commit murder (Reitz 25). Again, the influence of Meadow Taylor's *Confessions of a Thug* (1839) and his depiction of the strangling and secretive sect might have reinforced the image of deceitful and skilled murderers. This notion is combined with the general perception of India as naturally unhealthy for Europeans.

The definitive association of poison with the Other is evident at the scene of Sholto's murder in *The Sign of Four*. Holmes' reasoning depends on the assumption that no Englishman would commit a murder using such an Oriental weapon as Tonga's poisoned arrow. The identification of the poison with the land it comes from is apparent, as in Jonathan Small's account the Andamans are described as "dreary, fever-stricken" (Doyle, *Sign* 226), surrounded by shark-infested waters (186), and Tonga is "as venomous as a young snake" (231). Thus, naturally, it is he who brings the deadly poison to England.

Another case of poisoning can be found in "The Rajah's Diamond". John Vandeleur, who has been introduced as completely reckless in the hunt for diamonds, poisons Simon Rolles to steal the Rajah's Diamond (115). It is suggested that John Vandeleur has not only acquired riches in the colonies but also poison and, more importantly, the inclination to use it. The "transmission pattern" (Harris 452) is the same as in many Sherlock Holmes stories which revolve around the return of Englishmen from the colony, who bring with them an exotic poison and a mind to use it. This is attributed to their prolonged contact with an alien and corrupting environment. The other culture is thus presented as both morally and physically unhealthy (452). The motive for both the murder of Bartholomew Sholto and the poisoning of Simon Rolles is greed for the Indian diamond. The influence of the diamond on the mind has already been described in terms of a poison (Stevenson, "Rajah's" 97) and subsequently leads to poisoning, presumably with an Oriental toxic.

There is yet another way to link poison and diamonds: in their respective connections to alchemy. It has been suggested that, in earlier times, Indians considered diamonds to be poisonous when swallowed (King 37). Transmitted to Europe in the Middle Ages, this lore was turned upside down and diamonds were used as a cure against poison. C.W. King, Collins' source, reiterates the ancient association of diamonds and alchemy (Hennelly 31) (King 6; 10) which must have arisen from these earlier beliefs. The texts, consequently, link diamonds and chemistry as in John Herncastle who intends to found a professorship of experimental chemistry, should the Moonstone be cut up (Collins, *Moonstone* 47) (Thomas 72).

The Agra Treasure is hidden above Bartholomew Sholto's rooms which are, not purely by chance, outfitted as a laboratory (Doyle, *Sign* 233). The belief in the magical alchemistic properties of diamonds is translated into the scientific interest in chemistry which, nevertheless, investigates invisible influences and potentially harmful substances. It is noteworthy that both Herncastle and Sholto are presented to have acquired this interest in India.

Opium and Contamination in The Moonstone and The Sign of Four

In the texts, opium and cocaine are presented as both controllable and threatening forces. A connection between the diamond and opium is established almost from the beginning of *The Moonstone*. The history of the Moonstone includes its theft from the city of Somnauth (12), named after the Hindu god of the moon but also the ritualistic Vedic drug (Mehta 629). This link with another Indian drug²¹ paves the way for the entwining of opium and diamond. The linking of opium and the Moonstone is evident very early on when, in Betteredge's account, Herncastle is described to be "given up to smoking opium" after his return from India (Collins, *Moonstone* 40) (Mehta 630) and Betteredge implies that the story of the Moonstone might just be a product of his imagination, "a matter of opium" (45).

Opium also figures in Jonathan Small's narrative of his theft of the Agra treasure during the Mutiny, albeit imbued with different connotations. The rebelling sepoys outside the besieged fort are described as drugged: "The beating of drums, the rattle of tomtoms, and the yells and howls of the rebels, drunk with opium and with bang" (Doyle, *Sign* 218). The connection of the Mutiny and opium heightens the perception of the rebellion as irrational and thus unjustified. The evocation of drums and inarticulate yells suggests primitivism and a lack of restraint. It is these aspects which Keep and Randall see embodied in Tonga (214). Patrick Brantlinger's remark on the Mutiny that "[m]ost Victorian accounts insistently mystify the causes of the Mutiny, treating the motives of the rebels as wholly irrational, at once childish and diabolical" (*Rule* 222) also provides the adjectives which apply to Tonga, who is first thought to be a child and then a simian (Doyle, *Sign* 160). The introduction of "opium and bang" into the narrative thus serves the same effect as the accusation of secret societies at work in instigating rebellion in "Indian plots" (Pionke 115). Another such image without mention of opium consists of "the black fiends [...] dancing and howling round the burning house" (Doyle, *Sign* 216). Uncontrollable ecstasy connected to drugs and the violence of the Mutiny are brought together and form the backdrop for the theft of the Agra Treasure. With both Tonga and Herncastle, opium finds its way to England in the wake of the diamonds. The connection between opium and diamonds, Hennelly suggests,

²¹ The actual plant that yields Soma cannot be ultimately identified in Vedic scripture but probably was hallucinogenic (Hillebrandt 4).

thus lies in their shared “irrationality” (31) so that both can also stand in for the event which escapes all attempts at rationalising, the Mutiny.

In the theft of the Moonstone in England, opium has a twofold function: Superficially, it leads Franklin Blake to theft, but it also exculpates him. Collins wrote *The Moonstone* under the influence of strong doses of laudanum and claimed that he did not recognise what he had been dictating before as his own invention (Hayter 255). In fact this is exactly what Alethea Hayter has identified as a common characteristic in descriptions of the effects of opium usage (333). She furthermore describes the genesis and content of the novel as “the actions of an opium-dosed man [...] described by an opium addict who is the invention of a writer heavily dosed with opium” (159). The inability to recall actions under the influence of opium is pivotal to the plot of *The Moonstone*. The accidental dosing of Franklin sets in motion the theft and quest for the Moonstone. It is assumed that opium brings about a split of personality with a sober and a drugged conscience functioning independently of each other. For this reason the detection of the diamond is only successful when Blake is dosed again. The experiment Jennings conducts with Franklin draws on an assumed regularity and predictability of the effect of opium under similar circumstances. The trust in the ultimate rationality of the working of the drug informs the use of opium in the detection of the diamond in *The Moonstone* and turns it into a tool. The “irrational” which Hennelly assumes as the connecting property between diamond and opium lets Franklin steal the Moonstone while the second dosing harnesses the drug for a controlled scientific experiment.

Dr. Candy’s “mysterious amnesia” after he has dosed Franklin (Duncan, 314) and Franklin’s own inability to remember, tie in with the denial of agency which informs many of the texts discussed here. The emphasis on forgetting also implies repression which I will deal with later. If opium is read as an Oriental contaminant, Franklin under its influence reveals a formerly repressed side of his character (310). The appearance of the Indians in the countryside and the presence of opium in his body all threaten the stability of the country house community and the possession of the Moonstone. It should, however, be noted that Dr. Candy’s administration of opium is connected to another colonial product. He wants to cure Franklin’s insomnia induced by his weaning from the smoking of cigarettes, the fashionable addiction of the day (310). Tobacco in *The Moonstone* is the inevitable accompaniment of Betteredge’s reading of *Robinson Crusoe*. As a colonial product from the West Indies it is as permanently connected with colonialism as opium (GoGwilt 78). One colonial substance is thus replaced by another suggesting that the overt intrusion of opium into the English house is by no means an unparallelled or singular event.

The Sign Four begins with Sherlock Holmes’ injecting himself with cocaine. Although cocaine originates in South America it came to be regarded as resembling opium. It was first used and discussed as a valuable medicine. By the 1890s, how-

ever, its addictive nature, colonial origin and degenerative effects led to its association with opium (Keep and Randall 209). The conflation of the two went even further as cocaine was classified as “a sub-category of opium” which obscured its chemical and geographical origins (210). Both Tonga’s poison and Holmes’ cocaine are actually derivatives of alkaline.²² In the description of the rebels mad with opium, Sherlock Holmes’ sobriety when under the influence of the drug is juxtaposed with their irrationality. He methodically uses it to bridge the ennuï between his intellectual engagements.

The treatment of opium and opiate derivatives in *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four* is ambiguous. Yet, the association of opium and the Mutiny provides a much more threatening image in the later text. Remarkably, although the effect of opium turns the Indian mutineers into an irrational mob, the English users of the drug can turn it into a tool for detection and apparently even control it. In *The Moonstone*, the unreliability of Herncastle’s story is based on his having been “a notorious opium-eater for the years past” (Collins, *Moonstone* 45), while the detection of the diamond demands “accepting a matter of opium as a matter of fact” (45). Opium, in the ending of *The Moonstone* is not the substance to cloud but to lighten. While Louise Foxcroft and Kathleen McCormack assert that generally in Victorian fiction the negative and immoral aspects of the drug are emphasised (McCormack 138; Foxcroft 58), *The Moonstone* reflects the early Victorian stance towards opium as a medicine. In addition, Collins’ own attitude certainly also led to a more favourable depiction.

Contrarily, *The Sign of Four* explicitly aligns opium with the violence of the Mutiny and assigns it to the periphery of the story and the empire. In *The Moonstone*, on the other hand, opium takes centre-stage in the crime and its solution.

Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes represents the fin-de-siècle aesthete for whom opium alone is “too quotidian a drug” (Foxcroft 57). In the use of cocaine, the drug does not have the same uncontrollable effect on Holmes as opium has on the Indians. Unlike *The Moonstone*, *The Sign of Four* shows the different effects the drugs have on the white and contained character of Sherlock Holmes, and the uncontrolled Indians in Small’s narrative of the Mutiny.

Going Native

One of the fears surrounding empire which found expression in imperial Gothic was the anxiety about an atavistic backslide into “barbarism” through contact with the Other (Brantlinger, *Rule* 229). The idea is based on an earlier turn in imperial attitudes towards race: From about the middle of the century onwards, supremacy over subject peoples was not imagined to be grounded in a superior culture and

²² Morphine, Holmes’ alternative to cocaine, is a derivative of opium and subject to the same process of Orientalisation.

rapid industrial progress any more, but in race. Before the 1860s, racial others could still be 'civilised'. With the turn to Darwinian explanations of supremacy, race and the purity of race become the defining markers of superior civilisation and the legitimation for rule (David 88-89).

In the texts discussed, there are several different images which draw on this theme. In all of them the influence of the colony is depicted as deforming and asserts itself as deviation in body and/or mind. The body which is deformed and altered through contact with the Other highlights the notion of racial difference. Contamination through Otherness therefore also shows in the body and also points to a mind tainted by the other:

[T]he coloring, physique, physiognomy, and vestments of the European body all bespoke the puissance of a ruling race, as it was celebrated in public rituals of social power, whether on parade or on a hunt. But at the same time Europeans were continually aware of the weakness and vulnerability of their bodies. Influenced by the theories of degeneration that were popular in the late Victorian period, English people believed that imperial location had harmful effects upon European bodies, passions, and intellects. (Siddiqi 241)

What I will look at first is the deformed body in "The Rajah's Diamond" and *The Sign of Four*. The Sherlock Holmes stories swarm with "returned colonials"²³ and the concept is ever present in Holmes' co-lodger and biographer John Watson. In *A Study in Scarlet*, Watson introduces himself as a former army surgeon. He was "struck on the shoulder by a Jezail bullet" (Doyle, *Scarlet* 3), followed by "enteric fever, that curse of our Indian possessions" and his "health [was] irretrievably ruined" (4). The colony here appears as a place of both human and natural violence from which Watson barely escapes. In *The Sign of Four* Jonathan Small suffers very similar afflictions: A crocodile bites off his leg in the Ganges (Doyle, *Sign* 214) and he serves his sentence on the Andamans, a "dreary, fever-stricken place" (226). As if to emphasise the connection between the two characters, Watson's wound, located in his shoulder in *A Study in Scarlet*, suddenly wanders to his leg in *The Sign of Four* (Doyle, *Sign* 125) (Mehta 636).

Jonathan Small's mutilation has to be connected with his involvement with the "Sign of Four", the Indian secret pact, which also transfigures him morally²⁴. To-

²³ One of the most conspicuous is Henry Wood in "The Cooked Man": Tortured by Indian rebels during the Mutiny he is deformed, "carried his head low and walked with his knees bent", "he spoke in a strange tongue sometimes" (Doyle, "Crooked" 656), "living and crawling with a stick like a chimpanzee" he has lived among Indians rather than return to England (660). India obviously has reduced Wood, who was once "the smartest man in the One Hundred and Seventeenth Foot" (658) to a more animal-like creature, an association which is driven home by his only companion, a mongoose.

²⁴ Thomas Vandeleur in "The Rajah's Diamond", induced by greed, also enters a pact with an Indian and serves him against his own countrymen during the Mutiny. He "betrayed a body of

gether with the three Sikhs, Jonathan Small swears the oath that makes him one of “the Four”, an Indian conspiracy to murder for greed. The oath is taken in the Agra fort which is divided into two parts: “[A] modern part, which took all our garrison, women, children, [...]” and an “old quarter, where nobody goes, and which is given over to the scorpions and the centipedes” (Doyle, *Sign* 216-217). The old part is “a labyrinth of passages and corridors” and “it is easy for folk to get lost in it” (217) and it is here that Small agrees to enter the pact. The fort thus figures as the wilderness and the uncivilised. The labyrinth is exactly the place where Small gets lost morally. This is the place where the treasure is buried (225), in the wilderness of a ruined hall.

Small stays true to his oath and seeks revenge for his Sikh accomplices. The racial difference in this pact is dangerously blurred and following racist logic, overstepping the line leads Jonathan Small to crime. On the Andamans, he is then guarded as a prisoner by Sholto and Morstan, the reversal of his employment as supervisor on the indigo plantation before the Mutiny. In his change from supervisor to supervised, Small’s descent is apparent as he has left the white and ruling class of the guards and is classed with captives and criminals, the natives. Furthermore, the white officers are not the only people who have power over him now, but the camp is also guarded by “a vile Pathan who had never missed a chance of insulting and injuring [Small]” (232) and Small is being “bullied by every cursed black-faced policeman who loved to take it out of a white man” (213)²⁵. Jonathan Small’s pairing with Tonga offers another instance of his native character. While Tonga is implicitly dehumanised, Small, too, is described as “monkey-faced” (180). The connection between the two, however, is revised after Tonga’s death. Small confesses that his friend killed Sholto and claims, in an attempt to win favour, that he himself would never have committed this deed.

Driven by greed, Thomas Vandeleur in “The Rajah’s Diamond” also enters a pact with an Indian and serves him against his own countrymen during the Mutiny. He “betrayed a body of his fellow-soldiers, and suffered them to be defeated and massacred by thousands” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 175). John Vandeleur, “the biggest adventurer” and some-time “Dictator of Paraguay” is known for “his exploits and atrocities” in America and “services in the Indian Mutiny” (96).

[H]is whole appearance that of a swift, violent, unscrupulous man of action; and his copious white hair and the deep sabre-cut that traversed his nose and temple added a note of savagery to a head already remarkable and menacing in itself. (96)

his fellow-soldiers, and suffered them to be defeated and massacred by thousands” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 175).

²⁵ Yumna Siddiqi argues that it was especially colonial working-class characters like Jonathan Small who worked in direct contact with the natives, as on the indigo plantation, that threatened the clear division between the rulers and the ruled (239).

In John Vandeleur, even more so than in his brother, the colony is connected with amorality and crime. Prince Florizel insinuates that he has no scruples in the pursuit of diamonds (97). Here again moral depravity is marked on the body, the scar which makes Jack Vandeleur look savage and serves as a visual reminder of the disfiguring influence of the colony. In his love for the diamond he parallels his brother, but Thomas is not so much interested in the hunt for diamonds as in climbing the social ladder through wealth. Jack Vandeleur has his double in the original owner of the diamond, the Rajah of Kashgar, who is a “semi-barbarian potentate” and in Prince Florizel’s story of the diamond, evidently a tyrant (130), very much like the despotic Dictator.

Godfrey Ablewhite and Murthwaite, the traveller, are examples of Europeans trying to pass as natives. In *The Moonstone*, which is not as obsessed with anxieties of contagion as the Sherlock Holmes stories, two versions of disguise exist: Murthwaite is the “celebrated Indian traveller [...] who, at risk of his life, had penetrated where no European had ever set foot before” (Collins, *Moonstone* 74), “beyond the civilized limits” (81). He at once detects the Brahmins’ disguise as jugglers (79) because of his “superior knowledge of the Indian character” (287). In his conversation with Matthew Bruff, he is able to partly explain the “Indian plot” just through the information the solicitor gives him. In this rational reasoning on the grounds of second-hand information, he employs the favourite method of Sherlock Holmes (Mehta 633). Although Murthwaite can “pass” “undetected” (Collins, *Moonstone* 462) among the Indians, he is not in the same danger of losing his English identity as Jonathan Small or Thomas Vandeleur. “Murthwaite demonstrates the detective’s unromantic ‘English mind’” (Reitz 62) as opposed to “the romantic side of the Indian character” (Collins, *Moonstone* 285). In Caroline Reitz’ study on the colonial origin of the English detective, Murthwaite is paired with Sergeant Cuff, the epitome of Englishness (Reitz 61). In *The Moonstone’s* last chapter, Murthwaite assumes the “imperial gaze”, separated from, aloof and superior to the Indians and the Hindu ceremony he surveys (Reitz xxiii). The comparison of his position with Jonathan Small’s direct involvement shows the security of the one and the precariousness of the other’s white identity.

The principle that the criminal is always the Other (A.D. Miller 36) is played with in the character of Godfrey Ablewhite. To escape, he also uses a disguise. He dresses as a lascar and darkens his face. Sergeant Cuff discovers “the whiteness of the thief” (Nayder, *Wilkie Collins* 119) when he washes off the paint and at the same time undermines the notion that the perpetrator always has to be Other.

The characters whose English identity is thus threatened are Godfrey Ablewhite, John Herncastle, the Vandeleur brothers and Jonathan Small²⁶. They are ‘infected’ by contact with the Other but also by contact with the diamonds. “[G]reed [...] has been my besetting sin” (Doyle, *Sign* 145), John Sholto avows. In

²⁶ I leave out Thaddeus and Bartholomew Sholto as they seem to have ‘contracted’ their decadence and Orientalness from their father, John Sholto, in a curious instance of heredity.

different forms, the characters desire the diamonds and are consequently disfigured by the contact with the Orientalising vice of greed. They are obsessed with the idea that the diamonds are valuables which have to be obtained at all costs. The Sholtos, John Vandeleur and John Herncastle are, accordingly, in relation to the diamond, depicted as unscrupulous collectors of treasure. The presence of the diamond as a collectible thus leads to the discourse of degeneration through the appropriation of an Oriental practice.

The Return of the Repressed: The Diamonds as Uncanny Spectres

In his essay “The Uncanny” (1919), Sigmund Freud defines the uncanny by reiterating the etymology of its German equivalent and the relation between things *heimlich* and things *unheimlich*. He explains the etymological relation by stating that the uncanny is “something repressed which *recurs*” (Freud 166, italics in the original) and which is intrinsically known. The known and *heimlich* fact turns *unheimlich* when it reappears in an altered form from the state of repression to which it had been banned (166). The imperial gothic, like the gothic, is preoccupied with this kind of return and the uncanny effect of the altered revenant.

The most obvious instances of repression are the sinking of the Rajah’s Diamond in the Seine and of the Agra Treasure and the Great Mogul in the Thames. In both instances the irretrievability of the diamonds is emphasised. Jonathan Small throws the Agra treasure into the Thames because he insists that “no living man has a right to it, unless it is three men who are in the Andaman convict – barracks and myself” (Doyle, *Sign* 212). He distributes the treasure over a great stretch of the riverbed so that it is impossible to retrieve it. Tonga, too, lies on the bottom of the Thames, and in describing his resting place, Watson conspicuously employs the present tense when he says that “[s]omewhere in the dark ooze at the bottom of the Thames lie the bones of that strange visitor to our shores” (*Sign* 205) (Keep and Randall 217). The impossibility of recovering the treasures and Tonga’s body assures their continuing existence in the rivers.

Prince Florizel throws the Rajah’s Diamond into the Seine to end “its empire” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 131). The sinking of the Rajah’s Diamond collides with the discarding of the “Arabian author”: In the end of “The Rajah’s Diamond”, the editor takes his place in finishing the story and sends the “Arabian author” “topsy-turvy into space” (131-132). In discarding the “Arabian author” of the presumed ‘original’, Stevenson turns around the hierarchies which have been established in the text before, as the narrator/editor professed that he “*must follow [bis] original*” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 102). Thus in the final paragraph, “the outside narrator, by the merest succession of words and sentences, can turn the Arabian author into an invention and the narrator into a reality” (Menikoff 343). While the “Arabian Author” is exposed as literary, the editor meets Prince Florizel in a metalepsis which bridges frame and nested narrative. The authority of the Oriental

original text and the “empire” of the diamond are both discarded in the same moment. The Rajah’s Diamond, too, is unlikely to be recovered as its exact position in the Seine is unknown (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 131).

Both the Rajah’s Diamond and the Great Mogul of the Agra treasure cannot be recovered from the rivers. While this on the surface denotes their ‘destruction’, this happens without touching their integrity and destroying their identity. At the bottom of the rivers they thus continue their existence as mnemonics, which is a more threatening prospect than the actual destruction of their identity through cutting. It is noteworthy that both texts emphasise the impossibility to recover the diamonds so that they will have an continuing presence. Both the Thames and the Seine are gateways of imperial cities to their overseas colonies. The interrelatedness of metropolis and colony through the transportation of goods and people takes place through this connection (Keep and Randall 217).

Repressed colonial history also informs the description of the Moonstone. The appearance of its lustre as unfathomable depth links it to the Shivering Sands, the close site of repression in the Yorkshire landscape. Rosanna Spearman feels drawn to the quicksand, which has “laid a spell on [her]” (Collins, *Moonstone* 34) and exercises an irrational power. It literally functions as a place of suppression when Rosanna destroys evidence of Franklin Blake’s guilt by throwing the stained nightgown in the quicksand.

Moreover, the Shivering Sands visualise colonial violence. The anthropomorphic description of the quicksand as a “broad brown face” (35) alludes to the racial Other. Rosanna further describes the Shivering Sands as concealing “hundreds of suffocating people under it – all struggling to get to the surface, and all sinking lower and lower in the dreadful deeps!” (35). The suffocating and amorphous multitude represents colonial upheaval (Mehta 625) and can be related to the Black Hole of Calcutta, the Well of Cawnpore and the Mutiny, or Morant Bay (Mehta 623; GoGwilt 67). Yet the image is ambiguous enough to merely suggest violent subversive turmoil suspended before the outbreak. The indistinct movements are half hidden with an intact surface concealing their true nature. The repressed still stays in place but shows that repression is precarious. The presence of the Shivering Sands close to the Verinders country house reveals the proximity of the perceived Other. The quicksand is furthermore situated between land and sea and at high tide lies underwater (Collins, *Moonstone* 49). The tidelands are a liminal landscape only temporarily exposed and a threshold between land and sea. Franklin travels to such a place when he camps “on the borders of a desert” (292). These “borders” are a similarly indefinable landscape between civilisation and wilderness. Both sites then suggest the theme of possible transgression.

Catherine Wynne traces a whole sequence of such instances of “unstable grounds” (76) in Doyle’s works²⁷ which are, or so she contends, an image of the

²⁷ The bog in Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, another story of a troubled imperial inheritance, also belongs to this category.

uncivilised in the midst of civilisation (77). The Andamanese swamps and the Thames marshes in *The Sign of Four* as well as *The Moonstone's* Shivering Sands, are representations of treacherous ambiguity. They are not only physically but also psychologically threatening (77) as a landscape which exists both in the colony and in England. The “fever-ridden swamps” (Doyle, *Sign* 213) on the Andamans and the “melancholy Plumstead Marshes” (204) are the sites where the struggle for the treasure takes place and which are thus linked (Wynne 78).

The common denominator which connects the quicksand as a site of repression with the rivers is the spatial dimension. The repressed is topographically situated at the bottom and imagined as buried which reflects its psychological place in the sub-conscious. Suppression can thus be visualised as ‘sinking’, through permeable surfaces. This place below the surface is assigned to the diamonds and to Rosanna Spearman and Tonga. While Rosanna carries with her revolutionary ideas as voiced by her friend Limping Lucy, Tonga is the diabolic personification of the Mutiny.

Forgetting and silencing, too, are markers of repression and accompany the acquisition of the Rajah’s Diamond and the Moonstone. The unspeakable nature of Thomas Vandeleur’s services, which, are the true “skeleton in the house” (Stevenson, “Rajah’s” 75), and John Herculastle’s silence mirror the discourse of the Mutiny. As “The Rajah’s Diamond”, *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four* all emphasise the historical background of the hunt for the diamonds, the diamonds are associated with colonial violence and colonial history. While both are confined to the far-away periphery, the diamonds bring these events uncannily close. Like real diamonds which are typically invested with some legendary history, the fictional diamonds reveal the violence behind the flow of wealth to Britain. The protagonists in Britain thus have to be absolved from this guilt so that acquisition by chance becomes a common feature. The amnesia in Dr Candy and Franklin Blake equally bears traces of repressing guilt.

In the same way that opium turns Blake into a thief by activating a buried identity, the diamonds animate “dark and irrational passions” (Carens 240-241), which was projected on the Other but actually exist in the middle of English society. Greed and criminal intentions are constantly ascribed to Others, as the Rajah of Kashgar in “The Rajah’s Diamond”, the Sikhs in *The Sign of Four*, the three Indians in *The Moonstone* and the Jews in *The Eustace Diamonds*, but actually motivate the Vandeleur and Sholto brothers, Godfrey Ablewhite and Lizzie Eustace. The repressed thus also comes to reside in the Others as the “evil passions” as evangelical Miss Clack warns: “How soon may our evil passions prove to be Oriental noblemen who pounce on us unawares!” (Collins, *Moonstone* 203)

The Curse

The curse that the diamonds carry is a hallmark of all the stones in the texts. It implies a malignant supernatural influence which has been wilfully bestowed on the diamonds to turn the pleasure of their possession into punishment. The curse which rests on the Moonstone is conditional. Only if the stone is taken from Soma's statue will the taker be cursed. Vishnu's prediction is turned into a curse by the dying Brahmin. In folklore, gods and persons close to death are believed to have special powers in cursing so that Collins evokes an extremely powerful invocation in combining the two (Anon., "Curse"). While in *The Moonstone*, the pronouncing of the curse is described, the other diamonds are perceived as cursed because of the misfortunes which are seen as an effect of a curse. The curse, then, is fashioned from crimes attributed to a single root and follows the logic of gothic fiction: "[F]ollowing the psychological mechanism of cause and effect [...] evil is rooted in previous evil" (Ascari 53). The biblical idea and the new interest in heredity combine in the plot so that the curse can be passed on over generations (58). This is illustrated in the emphasis on the diamonds as inheritance which shows the hold of the dead over the living and the ongoing influence of the past. The diamonds not only function as the focus of a chain procession of crimes but as uncanny agents implying "that the history of this particular commodity informs and even determines that of its possessor" (Lindner 74) as it conforms to and repeats past events. The belief in a supernatural phenomenon is contingent on the diamonds belonging to the east, the realm of romance, where the 'cursing', as Collins describes it, seems possible.

In *The Moonstone*, the diamond is under the protection of Vishnu. The god promises to destroy those who violate his decree. In the first chapter of *The Moonstone*, two sources for the curse are thus given. One arises from the breach of a religious law and the profaning of the diamond. The stories of historical diamonds provide ample sources for diamonds being stolen from temples and statues.

The other source as perceived by the letter writer, stems from Herncastle's crime of manslaughter. According to the anonymous cousin, it is not Vishnu's curse which will prove dangerous but Herncastle's crime of theft and murder, when he asserts "that crime brings its own fatality with it" (16). This guilt shares the curse's longevity and will pass from one owner to the next (16). The old age of the Moonstone and the accumulated crimes also play an important part in its curse. Its historicity alone serves to characterise it as evil, as Sara Suleri argues that Indian pre-colonial history was uniformly regarded as "evil" (34).

The cursed diamonds form part of a larger discourse on uncanny colonial objects. Very successful later examples of the same notion are mummy narratives which also rely on the sensational appeal of exoticism and occultism. Like the diamonds, they are the remnants of a colonised culture. Their removal, however, is perceived as the same sacrilege as the one attached to the theft of diamonds, and leads to the curse. Mummy narratives, too, draw on the uncanny effect of the

reappearance of the Other in the metropolis and thus spell out fears of invasion. As dead bodies uncannily preserved, they also suggest the confusion of animacy and inanimacy which is perceived as uncanny (Freud 157). Both are strange objects which come to life again to invade the familiar space with their colonial presence. All in all, the perception of the diamonds as uncanny remnant relies on their association with unacknowledged crime and the revelation of the brittleness of boundaries between the Other and the Self.

Conclusion

Looking at the diamonds in the texts from many different angles shows that diamonds as objects of detection are singular in many respects. They combine a multi-layered imagery with a highly topical interest of the Victorian period. As Indian objects, the fictional diamonds evoke their real life counterparts which are themselves the subjects of story and legend. As objects, the fictional diamonds find numerous parallels in named and unnamed diamonds in collections and trophies of war, the most important being the Koh-i-Noor. Hence, the diamonds are not a self-referential 'MacGuffin' but open up a large area of colonial objects with their own stories.

In the discourse of detection, the diamonds appear as criminal as the thieves themselves. In fact, one of the hallmarks of the diamond narratives is the confusion surrounding the crime. Thefts depend often entirely on chance or on accidents while the diamonds themselves are blamed for their 'poisonous' influence. The problem posed by the circulating commodity in England is augmented by the diamonds as individualised Indian artefacts with a distinct history of their own. The multiple thefts and owners testify to the uncertainty and fear surrounding the diamond. The detective's presence owes to the Otherness of the diamond and the impossibility of their smooth integration into imperial possession. They individualise the otherwise anonymous flow of goods through their singular identity and history, fashioned on existing stones. The diamonds' socially and economically disruptive presence is evident in their role as inheritances, a practice that is supposed to grant stability and continuity but achieves the opposite. The diamonds are imagined as parallel to opium, as sharing not only their provenance but also their effect on society.

The social disturbance which the diamonds create is supplemented by foreign intrusion in the form of Others who also desire the diamond. They threaten possession and transport colonial crime into English society. The Jews in Trollope's realist novel fill the same place of the opposing party. The greed which motivates the English characters finds its counterpart in the Orientals and depicts the desire for the diamonds as a potentially corrosive and un-English threat.

Diamonds inevitably invite references to fairy tale and the intertext of the *Arabian Nights*. These texts offer patterns of narratives revolving around treasures,

and the *Arabian Nights* is at the source of European imaginations of the Orient as luxurious and decadently wealthy. The immense value of the diamonds is thus framed by references to their unreal quality and their being part of timeless legend rather than the present. The fictional geography of a literary Orient, however, overlaps and contrasts with the history of British India and the diamonds as colonial objects. The notion of a curse laid on a treasure points to the imagined origin of the diamonds in a world apart. This image exists side by side with the very real association of the diamonds with the violence of the Indian Mutiny.

The Mutiny which forms the backdrop of the theft of jewels from India in *The Moonstone*, *The Sign of Four* and Stevenson's "The Rajah's Diamond" conveys the notion that the far-off events in the colony do have a bearing on presumably innocent subjects at home. The fictional diamonds, like their real-life counterparts, are inevitably bound up with important events in the colonisation of India. The traditional function of diamonds as mnemonic trophies now transports threat and trauma instead of images of a glorious victory. The long-lasting influence of the Mutiny on the perception of India is evident in the persistence of its depiction from *The Moonstone* to *The Sign of Four*. The Mutiny thus already introduces crime as lying at the root of the plots.

In their attitudes towards colonial products, the texts also address the change of the image of the colony from being a site of heroic and financially rewarding adventures to a more troubled view of the 'treasure trove' as the origin of crimes and curses. The extraction of wealth, which was formerly framed only as adventure, is now a crime. The image of India as criminal is supplemented by the idea that it also converts Englishmen to criminals and exports crime. Threatening natives and drugs appear accompany the diamonds. The prominence of drugs in *The Moonstone* and *The Sign of Four* is complemented by metaphorically imbuing the diamonds with a contagious disease. Like the diamonds, opium is a colonial product which still retains its Oriental character. It likewise shares the Orientalisation of the commodity.

Apart from the realms of history and romance, diamonds unite the disparate spaces of the domestic and the colonial. They are a stock metaphor in the Victorian praise of the dutiful "Angel in the House". Coventry Patmore, deliberately chooses the Koh-i-Noor, the figuration of India, to describe Honoria. Accordingly, in the texts the woman and the diamond are linked, but the material Indian diamond and the metaphor of domestic bliss are mutually exclusive. Only when the treasures disappear from England can the male protagonist be rewarded with marriage. The prerequisite to reinstall domesticity is the destruction of the diamonds and their history as loot. This however, is only partly successful as the Rajah's Diamond and the Great Mogul lie irrecoverably at the bottom of rivers where their uncanny presence continues. *The Moonstone*, too, ends on a similar note, promising more adventures in the future. In these endings, the diamonds have again evaded control and exhibit the same resistance to appropriation.

Diamonds are thus ambiguous objects in fiction which contain numerous contradictions. In a domestic context they can retain their Otherness, they are on the one hand singular and individualised as mythical or historical objects, and on the other hand they are a potential cash item. They transport both a fantastic and a historical imperialist version of India.

Works Cited

Primary Literature

- Anon. "The Rajah's Diamond." Part 1. *All the Year Round*. 15.362 (1875): 134-138.
- Anon. "The Rajah's Diamond." Part 2. *All the Year Round*. 15.363 (1875): 155-159.
- Collins, William Wilkie. *The Moonstone*. London: Penguin, 1994.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *A Study in Scarlet. Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories*. Vol. 1. New York: Bantam, 2003. 1-120.
- . "The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet." *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories*. Vol. 1. New York: Bantam, 2003. 467-492.
- . "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone." *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories*. Vol. 2. New York: Bantam, 2003. 558-575.
- . "The Crooked Man." *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories*. Vol. 1. New York: Bantam, 2003. 644-662.
- . *The Sign of Four. Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories*. Vol. 1. New York: Bantam, 2003. 123-236.
- Fleming, Ian. *Diamonds are Forever*. London: Penguin, 2006.
- Marsh, Richard. *The Datchbet Diamonds*. London, 1898.
- Patmore, Coventry. *The Poems of Coventry Patmore*. Ed. Fredrick Page. London and New York: Oxford UP, 1949.
- "R., L". "The Koh-i-Noor, or Mountain of Light." *Chamber's Edinburgh Journal*. 291 (1849): 49-52.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis. "The Rajah's Diamond." *New Arabian Nights*. Northridge, CA: Aegypan, 2005. 71-132.
- . "The Suicide Club." *New Arabian Nights*. Northridge, CA: Aegypan, 2005. 9-70.
- Trollope, Anthony. *The Eustace Diamonds*. London: Penguin, 2004.

Secondary Sources

- Anon. "Curse." *Dictionary of Anthropology*. Ed. Charles Winick. New York: Philosophical Library, 1956.

- Anon. "Diamond." *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Myth, and Legend*. 2 vols. Ed. Maria Leach. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1949.
- Anon. "Kashgar." *Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*. 15th ed. 12 vols. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2002.
- Anon. "Mysore." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 23 vols. Ed. Harry Scott Ashmore. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1962.
- Anon. "Somnath." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 23 vols. Ed. Harry Scott Ashmore. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1962.
- Ascari, Maurizio. *A Counter-History of Crime Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Balfour, Ian. *Famous Diamonds*. London: Collins, 1987.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Bloch, Ernst. "Philosophische Ansicht des Detektivromans." *Der Kriminalroman. Zur Theorie und Geschichte einer Gattung*. Vol. 2. Ed. Jochen Vogt. München: Fink, 1971. 322-343.
- Boehmer, Elleke. *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors*. Oxford: OUP, 2005.
- Brantlinger, Patrick. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988.
- . "What is 'Sensational' about the 'Sensational Novel?'" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 37 (1982). Quoted in Mark M. Hennelly, Jr. "Detecting Collins' Diamond: From Serpentstone to Moonstone." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 39.1 (1984): 25-47.
- Bunce, Fredrick W. "Shiva." *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu Deities, Demi-Gods, Godlings, Demons and Heroes. With Special Focus on Iconographic Attributes*. 3 vols. Ed. Fredrick W. Bunce. New Delhi: Printworld, 2000.
- Bunce, Fredrick. "Soma." *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu Deities, Demi-Gods, Godlings, Demons and Heroes. With Special Focus on Iconographic attributes*. 3 vols. Ed. Fredrick W. Bunce. New Delhi: Printworld, 2000.
- Bunce, Fredrick W. "Viṣṇu." *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu Deities, Demi-Gods, Godlings, Demons and Heroes. With Special Focus on Iconographic Attributes*. 3 vols. Ed. Fredrick W. Bunce. New Delhi: Printworld, 2000.
- Carens, Timothy L. "Outlandish English Subjects in *The Moonstone*." *Reality's Dark Light. The Sensational Wilkie Collins*. Ed. Maria K. Bachman, and Richard Cox. Knoxville, TN: U of Tennessee P, 2003. 239-265.
- Collins, William Wilkie. Preface. *The Moonstone*. By Collins. London: Penguin, 1994. 5.
- Daly, Suzanne. "Indiscreet Jewels: The Eustace Diamonds." *Nineteenth Century Studies* 19 (2005): 69-82.

- David, Deirdre. "Empire, Race, and the Victorian Novel." *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Ed. Patrick Brantlinger and William B. Thesing. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002. 84-100.
- Dolin, Tim. *Mistress of the House: Women of Property in the Victorian Novel*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997.
- Duncan, Ian. "The Moonstone, the Victorian Novel, and Imperialist Panic." *MLQ* 55.3 (1994): 297-319.
- Eliot, T. S. "Wilkie Collins and Dickens." *Selected Essays, 1917-1932*. New York: Harcourt, 1932. 313-382. Quoted in Elizabeth Rose Gruner. "Family Secrets and the Mysteries of *The Moonstone*." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 21 (1993): 127-145.
- Foxcroft, Louise. *The Making of Addiction: The 'Use and Abuse' of Opium in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.
- Free, Melissa. "'Dirty Linen': Legacies of Empire in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 48.4 (2006): 340-371.
- Freedgood, Elaine. *The Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2006.
- Freud, Sigmund. "The Uncanny." Trans. by James Strachey. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. Ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. Malden, MASS: Blackwell, 1998. 154-167.
- Gaggio, Dario. "Diamond Industry." *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Economic History*. Oxford: OUP, 2003. 76-81.
- Garbe, Richard. *Die indischen Mineralien, ihre Namen und die ihnen zugeschriebenen Kräfte. Narabari's Rāganighaṅṭu Varga XIII: Sanskrit und Deutsch, mit kritischen und erläuternden Anmerkungen*. Leipzig, 1882.
- Goetsch, Paul. "Uncanny Collectors and Collections." *Magical Objects: Things and Beyond*. Ed. Elmar Schenkel and Stefan Welz. Berlin: Galda, 2007. 67-90.
- GoGwilt, Christopher. *The Fiction of Geopolitics: Afterimages of Culture, from Wilkie Collins to Alfred Hitchcock*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000.
- Gray, William. *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Literary Life*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Gruner, Elizabeth Rose. "Family Secrets and the Mysteries of *The Moonstone*." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 21 (1993): 127-145.
- Hancock, Michael W. "The Stones in the Sword: Tennyson's Crown Jewels." *Victorian Poetry* 39.1 (2001): 1-24.
- Harlow, George E. "Following the History of Diamonds." *The Nature of Diamonds*. Ed. George E. Harlow. Cambridge: CUP, 1998. 116-135.
- . "The World's Great Diamonds." *The Nature of Diamonds*. Ed. George E. Harlow. Cambridge: CUP, 1998. 105-115.

- Harris, Susanne Cannon. "Pathological Possibilities: Contagion and Empire in Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Stories." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 31.2 (2003): 447-466.
- Hayter, Alethea. *Opium and the Romantic Imagination*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1968.
- Hennelly, Mark M. Jr. "Detecting Collins' Diamond: From Serpentstone to Moonstone." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 39.1(1984): 25-47.
- Hepburn, Allan. "Introduction: Inheritance and Disinheritance in the Novel." *Troubled Legacies: Narrative and Inheritance*. Ed. Allan Hepburn. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2007. 3-25.
- Herbert, Christopher. *War of no Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2008.
- Hillebrandt, Alfred. *Soma und verwandte Götter*. Breslau: Koebner, 1891.
- Jasanoff, Maya. "Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning." *Past and Present* 184 (2004): 109-135.
- Kaufman, Heidi. "King Solomon's Mines?: African Jewry, British Imperialism, and H. Rider Haggard's Diamonds." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 33 (2005): 517-539.
- Keep, Christopher, and Don Randall. "Addiction, Empire, and Narrative in Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*." *Novel* 32.2 (1999): 207-221.
- Kenny, Virginia C. *The Country-House Ethos in English Literature 1688-1750: Themes of Personal Retreat and National Expansion*. Brighton: Harvester, 1984.
- King, C.W. *The Natural History, Ancient and Modern, of Precious Stones and Gems, and of the Precious Metals*. London: n.p., 1865.
- Levinson, Alfred A. "Diamond Sources and their Discovery." *The Nature of Diamonds*. Ed. George E. Harlow. Cambridge: CUP, 1998. 72-104.
- Lindner, Christoph. *Fictions of Commodity Culture: From the Victorian to the Postmodern*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- Mack, Robert. "The Arabian Nights' Entertainment and Other 'Oriental' Tales." *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English*. Vol 3. Ed. Stuart Gillespie and David Hopkins. Oxford: OUP, 2005. 470-475.
- Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. „Das Kapital“ und Vorarbeiten. Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 6. Berlin: Dietz, 1987.
- McCormack, Kathleen. "Intoxication and the Victorian Novel." *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Ed. William Baker and Kenneth Womack. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2002. 137-150.
- Mehta, Jaya. "English Romance, Indian Violence." *Centennial Review* 39.3 (1995): 611-658.
- Menikoff, Barry. "New Arabian Nights: Stevenson's Experiment in Fiction." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 45.3 (1990): 339-362.

- Mersmann, Arndt. "‘Diamonds are forever’ – Appropriations of the Koh-i-Noor: An Object Biography." *Journal for the Study of British Cultures* 8.2 (2001): 175-193.
- Michell, George. *The Hindu Temple: An Introduction to its Meaning and Forms*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988.
- Miller, A.D. *The Novel and the Police*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1988.
- Miller, Andrew H. *Novels behind Glass: Commodity Culture and Victorian Narrative*. Cambridge: CUP, 1995.
- Milley, James Wye. "The Eustace Diamonds and The Moonstone." *Studies in Philology* 36 (1939): 651-663.
- Mukherjee, Upamanyu Pablo. *Crime and Empire: The Colony in Nineteenth-Century Fictions of Crime*. Oxford: OUP, 2003.
- Murfin, Ross C. "The Art of Representation: Collins' *Moonstone* and Dickens' Example." *English Literary History* 49.3 (1982): 653-672.
- Naugrette, Jean-Pierre. "The Moonstone: Signes Indiens." *Études Anglaises* 48.4 (1995): 407-418.
- Nayar, Pramod K. *English Writing and India, 1600-1920: Colonizing Aesthetics*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Nayder, Lilian. *Wilkie Collins*. New York: Twaine, 1997.
- . "Collins and Empire." *The Cambridge Companion to Wilkie Collins*. Ed. Jenny Bourne Taylor. Cambridge: CUP, 2006. 139-152.
- níFhlathúin, Máire. "The Making of a Master Criminal: The 'Chief of the Thugs' in Victorian Writings on Crime." *Victorian Crime, Madness and Sensation*. Ed. Andrew Maunder and Grace Moore. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.
- Paxton, Nancy L. "Mobilizing Chivalry: Rape in British Novels about the Indian Uprising of 1857." *Victorian Studies* 36 (1992): 5-29.
- Perera, Suvendrini. *Reaches of Empire: The English Novel from Edgeworth to Dickens*. New York: Columbia UP, 1991.
- Pionke, Albert D. "Secreting Rebellion: From the Mutiny to *The Moonstone*." *Victorians Institute Journal* 28 (2000): 109-141.
- Platts, John T. "Soma." *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English*. Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2003.
- . "Vajra." *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English*. Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2003.
- Plotz, John. "Discreet Jewels: Victorian Diamond Narratives and the Problem of Sentimental Value." *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects, and It-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England*. Ed. Mark Blackwell. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2007. 327-354.

- Rapoport, David C. "Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions." *The American Political Science Review* 78.3 (1984): 658-677.
- Proctor, Robert N. "Anti-Agate: The Great Diamond Hoax and the Semiprecious Stone Scam." *Configurations* 9 (2001): 381-412.
- Reed, John R. "English Imperialism and the unacknowledged Crime of *The Moonstone*." *Clio* 2.3 (1973): 281-290.
- Reitz, Caroline. *Detecting the Nation: Fictions of Detection and the Imperial Venture*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2004.
- Richards, Jeffrey. *Sherlock Holmes, Conan Doyle and the British Empire: An Investigation into Conan Doyle's Links with the British Empire as expressed through his Sherlockian and other Literature*. Huddersfield: Musgrave, 1997.
- Rosador, Kurt Tetzeli von. "Gems and Jewellery in Victorian Fiction." *REAL* 2 (1984). 275-317.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage, 1994.
- . *Orientalism*. London: Penguin, 2003.
- Schuhmacher, Manfred. *Barabas' Enkel: Juden-Bilder in der englischen Literatur bis zur Moderne*. Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 2000.
- Sharpe, Jenny. *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text*. Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 1993.
- Siddiqi, Yumna. "The Cesspool of Empire: Sherlock Holmes and the Return of the Repressed." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 34.1 (2006). 233-247.
- Simmons, Diane. *The Narcissism of Empire. Loss, Rage and Revenge in Thomas DeQuincy, Robert Louis Stevenson, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, and Isak Dinesen*. Eastbourne: Sussex Academic, 2007.
- Singh, Bhupal. *A Survey of Anglo-Indian Fiction*. London: Curzon, 1975.
- Smith, Travis L. "Śiva." *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism*. Ed. Denise Cush and Catherine Robinson. London: Routledge, 2008. 799-803.
- Suleri, Sara. *The Rhetoric of English India*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992.
- Sutherland, John, and Stephen Gill. Introduction. *The Eustace Diamonds*. By Anthony Trollope. London: Penguin, 2004. 7-28.
- Thapar, Romila. "Somanātha: Narratives of a History." *Narratives and the Making of History: Two Lectures*. Oxford: OUP, 2000. 24-51.
- Thomas, Ronald R. "*The Moonstone*. Detective Fiction and Forensic Science." *The Cambridge Companion to Wilkie Collins*. Ed. Jenny Bourne Taylor. Cambridge: CUP, 2006. 65-78.
- Tolansky, S. "Some Folklore and History of Diamonds." *Royal Society of Arts Journal* 109 (1961): 743-763.
- Van Ours, J.C. "Opium and Narcotics." *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Economic History*. Oxford: OUP, 2003. 141.

- Whitworth, Michael H. "Science and the Scientist in Victorian Fiction." *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Ed. William Baker and Kenneth Womack. Westport: Greenwood, 2002. 111-122.
- Wynne, Catherine. *The Colonial Conan Doyle: British Imperialism, Irish Nationalism, and the Gothic*. Westport: Greenwood, 2002.
- York, Michael. "Soma." *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism*. Ed. Denise Cush and Catherine Robinson. London: Routledge, 2008. 807-808.
- Yang, Anand A. "Dangerous Castes and Tribes: The Criminal Tribes Act and the Magahiya Doms of Northeast India." *Crime and Criminality in British India*. Ed. Anand A. Yang. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 1985. 108-127.