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Consuming India: The Influence of Nineteenth-Century Fiction on British Consumer Culture

submitted by
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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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Abstract

This thesis constructs a cultural biography of tobacco and opium, driven by their representations in six nineteenth-century fictions of India, in order to examine how the British consumption of these imperial commodities changed in the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1857. By engaging with novels by William Browne Hockley, William Delafield Arnold, Meadows Taylor, James Grant, and Wilkie Collins, a wide-range of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian perspectives will provide a sense of the diverse ways that India was represented to, and understood by, British audiences in the nineteenth century. Representations of tobacco and opium in these novels shifted from playing a weaker, metonymic role in the narrative to becoming heavily charged metaphors that associated these imperial commodities with "mutiny," influencing modern British consumer culture in the last half of the nineteenth century.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Consumer Culture, Novels, and Nabobs

This thesis will trace how representations of tobacco and opium consumption in nineteenth-century novels shifted in the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1857, serving to reinforce the perception of a decisively Indian other, which had ramifications for the development of a modern British consumer culture. Though 1857, marked by a military and civilian uprising that unsuccessfully challenged East India Company [EIC] rule, is generally recognized as a watershed moment for British colonialism in India, it also had implications in the social and cultural lives of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons.1 Prior to 1857, representations of tobacco and opium in these fictional works about India provided an obscured archive of background information relating to Indian, British, and Anglo-Indian history. After 1857, these imperial commodities were given agency in the narratives, becoming linked to “mutiny” and the “seditious orient.” This chapter will focus on establishing a theoretical and methodological base for the thesis in order to provide the necessary background for an analysis of nineteenth-century British imperial consumer culture and the novels under study.

As scholars and literary critics such as Ralph Crane, Shailendra Dhari Singh, and Allen Greenberger have shown, the sheer volume of adventure novels and historical fiction centered on India during the nineteenth century played an integral role in firmly

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1 For the purposes of this thesis, the term “Anglo-Indian” refers to someone of British descent who had served in India for an extended period of time or was born on the Indian subcontinent. The term “Eurasian” would be used to describe someone of joint British and Indian descent.
entrenching India in the British imperial imagination. 2 Popular fictions, mass-produced for the masses, were “the chief literary commodity read by the people,” 3 acting as their British audience’s “major source of ideas concerning India.” 4 In the orientalist framework laid out by Edward Said in Orientalism [1978], this enormous catalogue of literature was critical in creating, modifying, and propagating an understanding of India in the British imperial imagination that worked to sustain and justify the imperial project. 5 In The British Image of India [1969], Allen Greenberger argued that the novel can be used as a valuable primary source for historians as it represents a diverse and non-intellectual range of public opinion that served as a major source of information to the literate public. Greenberger stated that these messages did not just have repercussions for metropolitan perceptions of India, but also influenced those who would eventually leave the metropole to govern the empire. 6 As a critical part of orientalist discourse, these nineteenth-century fictions of India would inevitably influence the way that metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons perceived and interacted with India, Indians, and Indian “things.”

The six novels chosen for this thesis have been selected in order to reflect widely varying perspectives on India and the British, Indian, and Anglo-Indian consumption of Indian “things.” The three early nineteenth-century fictions are Pandurang Hārī; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo [1826] by William Browne Hockley [1792-1860], Confessions of a Thug [1839] by Philip Meadows Taylor [1808-1876], and Oakfield; or, Fellowship in the

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6 Greenberger, 1.
East [1853] by William Delafield Arnold [1828-1859]. The three post-1857 selections are First Love and Last Love: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny [1868] by James Grant [1822-1887], The Moonstone [1868] by William Wilkie Collins [1824-1889], and Taylor’s Seeta [1872]. Though the majority of these novels would not be considered, with the exception of Collins’ Moonstone, “particularly distinguished, relative to the high artistic standard of Victorian popular fiction,”7 they have not been chosen for their literary merit. Considered “commercial art,” these novels were designed to be mass-consumed by large and diverse audiences, thus working to create an overarching “popular consciousness” that can provide insight into how the authors of these novels and their metropolitan and Anglo-Indian audiences understood India and the empire.8

Rashna B. Singh, in The Imperishable Empire [1988], locates these novels as critical to the understanding of contemporary nineteenth-century British perspectives on India and Indians. Though most of these novels would now be considered “minor” works, they should be considered as “major” in this context as they were far more appealing and influential to their audience.9 Singh argues:

In the minor works, the clutter of a writer’s consciousness is exposed. Everything that is evanescent, current, and common can be seen. And to see it is to see the process by which existence becomes consciousness and is converted into art...The quality of writing is generally low, so that mimesis easily deteriorates into mimicry. Literature and life reinforced and validated each other. Those who read novels accepted completely their representation of reality, because they shared in it. Among them were those who governed India. In their world, imagination and ideology intruded on each other and Anglo-Indian fiction allowed them both expression.10

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8 Ibid.
10 Ibid., 17-8.
These novels were reflections of their author's views, experiences, and intentions influenced by the continuously developing fact of British colonialism in India. The depictions of Indian life in these novels cannot be taken at face value, however, but do represent the way in which the authors perceived the realities of everyday life in India. A key feature of this nineteenth century realist fiction is the overwhelming amount of "things" that litter the narrative, influenced by a variety of socio-economic factors such as the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the middle class.\(^\text{11}\) By sifting through the clutter for representations of tobacco and opium, this thesis will investigate how the meaning of these objects shifted throughout the nineteenth century, influencing their status in the emerging consumer culture in the latter half of the century.

Though commodity consumption was a key part of British socio-cultural life prior to the 1850s, London's Great Exhibition in 1851 jump-started the beginning of a new and distinct consumer culture in Britain.\(^\text{12}\) Commodities, viewed as little more than objects necessary to stimulate economic circulation in the early nineteenth century, "literally came alive" after 1851.\(^\text{13}\) For Britain, the production, trade, and consumption of commodities existed within the web of empire, a framework that linked the metropole to all corners of the colonial world and implicated colonial activities in metropolitan life. At the Great Exhibition, the centrality of India to the British Empire was recognized by the organizers of the exhibition, with the EIC's Indian exhibit given the most square footage


\(^{13}\) Ibid., 2.
out of all the other British colonies, possessions, and dependencies.\textsuperscript{14} The exhibit depicted India, the British Empire's "Jewel in the Crown," alongside India's Koh-i-noor diamond as well as a veritable "fairyland" of "howdahs, hookahs, shawls, carpets, arms and jewels" that "nurtured imaginations of a luxurious, sexualized and homogenized East."\textsuperscript{15} Not only did fairgoers consume the spectacle of consumer display, they also came to understand what they were looking at through narratives about these exhibits. Authors such as John Cassell, who wrote for the \textit{Illustrated Exhibitor}, for example, created narratives that interpreted exhibits, ordering their contents and imparting meaning to certain objects. The Great Exhibition, therefore, can be seen as one crucial mid-century site through which ordinary, everyday metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons, as part of an imperial nation, were able to learn about and "understand" the empire they interacted with and consumed on a daily basis, through the consumption of imperial objects and through engagement with the narratives of empire.

Of course, the Great Exhibition was not the first or only site through which Britons came to "know" India. Since the mid-eighteenth century, India increasingly had become a fundamental part of Britain's identity, with imperial contact bringing the material artifacts of South Asia home to the metropolitan landscape.\textsuperscript{16} These objects could be consumed and understood through their purchase in shops, their presentation in homes and museums, as well as through the narratives of nineteenth-century realist fiction, rich with depictions of all ranges of mundane and exotic objects. Incorporating


\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 157.

depictions of Indian objects and the narratives of empire, the enormous catalogue of
nineteenth-century fiction of India provides a way to begin to comprehend how everyday
Britons came to understand and engage with their empire and its "things." Thomas
Richards succinctly elaborates the way that the meaning of commodities in general
shifted during the nineteenth century:

In the first half of the nineteenth century the commodity was a trivial
thing...In the second half it had a world-historical role to play in the global
industrial economy...the commodity became and has remained the one
subject of mass culture, the centerpiece of everyday life, the focal point of all
representation, the dead center of the modern world.17

This shift in the meaning of the commodity from "trivial" to the "focal point of all
representation" in British culture was both mirrored in and promulgated by novels that
were produced for British readers. By tracing these changes in six nineteenth-century
fictional works about India, this thesis will explore how the representations of two
seemingly mundane imperial commodities, tobacco and opium, played a role in creating
and modifying the consumer culture of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons.

If the birth of modern British consumer culture can be traced to 1851 and the
Great Exhibition, 1857 can be located as a watershed moment for the way in which
empire was understood. The Indian Rebellion of 1857, or "Mutiny" as British imperialists
came to name it, is traditionally seen as a critical transitory moment in Anglo-Indian
relations due to the significant legal and political changes that followed this event.18

Though initially seen as a shockingly violent mutiny, spurred by untruthful rumours and
limited to Indian troops serving the EIC, it is now clear that it was a wide-spread popular

17 Richards, 1.
Publications, 1990), and Peter Morey, Fictions of India: narrative and power (Edinburgh:
uprising, rooted in longstanding issues with exploitative Company practices.¹⁹ This event led to the end of EIC rule and the establishment of the British Raj with Queen Victoria eventually taking the title of Empress of India in 1877. The Rebellion also changed that way that India was represented in metropolitan and Anglo-Indian fiction. In novels from the pre-1857 period, prior to the rise of a distinct consumer culture in 1851 and the Rebellion, the role of depictions of Indian tobacco and opium was to provide background information to the narrative. After 1857, bolstered by the representative powers given to commodities with the rise of consumer culture, the very same objects were encoded with negative oriental stereotypes, changing the way that metropolitan and Anglo-Indian consumers viewed tobacco and opium.

The importance of these imperial commodities to this thesis is rooted in the metropolitan British fear of the corrupting power of India’s Eastern luxury and culture, inextricably tied to the rise of the “nabob” in the eighteenth century. Prior to the Battle of Plassey in 1757, Britons who became wealthy in India tended to do so through trade, retiring back to the metropole in a fairly innocuous fashion. After Plassey, as the British presence in India spread beyond European settlements and came into direct contact with Indian rulers, Anglo-Indians began to return back to Britain with a “taste for being an oriental prince...desiring titles and deference, prestige and social distinction.”²⁰ As the number of nabobs returning to the metropole grew, they increasingly became associated with the “indolence, despotism, self-interest, corruption, superstition, and degeneration” that “South Asia’s fertile yet dangerous soil” had engendered in their natural British

character. As late as 1901 Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Indian MP elected to the British House of Commons, adopted this historical fear of the nabob while discussing the moral implications of the British opium trade in *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* [1901]:

After having a glorious history of heroic struggles for constitutional government, England is now rearing up a body of Englishmen in India, trained up and accustomed to despotism, with all the feelings of impatience, pride, and high-handedness of the despot becoming gradually ingrained in them and with the additional training of the dissimulation of constitutionalism. Is it possible that such habits and training of despotism, with which Indian officials return from India, should not, in the course of time, influence the English character and institutions? The English in India, instead of raising India, are hitherto themselves descending and degenerating to the lower level of Asiatic despotism.

Though this example is from the twentieth century, it succinctly summarizes the metropolitan British perspective of nabobs that began to be established in the late eighteenth century.

What links nabobs to the study of tobacco and opium in nineteenth-century fiction is the importance of “oriental” objects to the nabob stereotype. Tillman W. Nechtman, in *Nabobs* [2010], argued that a “history of nabobs must, then, also be a history of the material culture of empire and the reaction domestic observers had when they found empire’s footprint in the metropolitan world.” The materiality of India helped define it as different to Britain, but the imperial experience inevitably brought the objects of empire home to the metropole, which threatened to rupture the home/away binary that was so attractive to nineteenth century imperialists. There was an inherent fear that Eastern luxury, perceived to be the root cause of Indian cultural decline, could lead to the

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21 Nechtman, 90.
23 Nechtman, 16.
ruin of Britain if it infiltrated "the metropolitan heart of empire." The third chapter of this thesis, centered on representations of tobacco, is dominated by a discussion of the hookah in nineteenth-century fictions of India. Though closely tied to the nabob, the role of the hookah and other smoking practices in the pre-1857 is to provide an oriental gloss to the background of the narrative, providing a new perspective on how metropolitan and Anglo-Indian authors defined their empire. In the post-1857 selections, however, the hookah is given active agency and directly linked to the "mutiny," becoming strongly associated with the increasingly distrusted Indian other, rebellion, and the corrupting influence of the Orient. Opium, in the fourth chapter, is shown to become a "nabobized" commodity throughout the nineteenth century; associated with the same connotations as the hookah in the post-1857 literature, opium is also shown to be an agent of oriental corruption in the metropole.

Historiography

Typically, the historiography surrounding representations of India in fiction is focused solely on post-1857 Mutiny novels and beyond. This is due to a standard assumption that the rebellion marked a formational shift in the British imagination of India. This sentiment is most clearly stated by Morey in his discussion of Rudyard Kipling’s writing:

The pragmatic and utilitarian impulses of the first half of the nineteenth century, with their reforming zeal...have given way to a dour skepticism about the value of Indian character and culture and an increasingly overt reliance on repression. The roots of this change lie in the psychological impact of the Mutiny of 1857 which continues to haunt Anglo-India and its cultural productions up to, and beyond, independence.
By following this assumption, it is logical to see the Mutiny novel as a starting point for scholars to begin their studies of Victorian attitudes towards race and gender in India. With the marginal exceptions of Kalive Viswanatham and Gautam Chakravarty, who each provide an analysis of one pre-1857 novel in their work, it seems that all scholars writing about Anglo-Indian fiction begin their studies with the Mutiny novels. By largely ignoring the earlier corpus of British depictions of India in works of fiction, however, there is no opportunity to see exactly how 1857 influenced that way that India and Indians were represented. By doing a comparative study of literature in the pre- and post-1857 periods, this thesis will engage with the largely ignored catalogue of early nineteenth-century novels in order to establish similarities and differences between both periods.

Regardless of the fact that the existing historiography on the topic largely ignores the early novels, these studies will be essential in providing a general idea of the standard tropes used in the Mutiny novels. Thus, I will be able to begin my research of pre-1857 literature with an understanding of the main elements of many of the Mutiny novels. For example, *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination* [2005], by Gautam Chakravarty, which assesses a broad range of topics and novels, mainly examines post-1857 literature for themes of gender and the British racialization of Indians in the context of a tale of adventurous imperial heroism. Allen J. Greenberger’s *The British Image of India* [1969] examines how three separate ideas are presented within the Mutiny novels: British self-

27 Chakravarty, 6.
reflection, descriptions of India, and interactions between the British and Indians.\textsuperscript{28} Nancy L. Paxton's \textit{Writing Under the Raj} [1999] devotes two chapters to the study of gender, violence, and the discourse of rape in the Mutiny novels. These studies, focused on a diverse range of topics, have served as a methodological guide and a preliminary framework on which to base the comparisons in this thesis. Clearly, many scholars have used and identified 1857 as a major break in British imperial history, but it can also be seen to have political and cultural ramifications as well. This thesis will add to the established historiography by exploring how 1857 was also a major break in the way in which Indian things, such as tobacco and opium, were consumed by metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons.

\textbf{Methodology and Theory}

As the majority of this thesis is centered on an analysis of nineteenth-century fictional works about India, critical Indian and Anglo-Indian terminology will be defined either in text or in footnotes using definitions from \textit{Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive} [1886] by Colonel Henry Yule, A. C. Burnell, and William Crooke whenever possible. \textit{Hobson-Jobson} has been selected to serve this purpose as it represents a veritable "treasurehouse of information about British India," as well as the British understanding of India, through its attempts to order and define Indian words to its British audience.\textsuperscript{29} The nineteenth century names of cities, regions, and

\textsuperscript{28} Greenberger, 57-79.
historical figures will also be used in order to maintain continuity between the text of the novels and the chapters of this thesis.

As 1857 will be referenced throughout this thesis, it is critical to note that the term “mutiny” has become subject to much debate within the scholarship on this topic. To contemporary British imperialists, the events of 1857 became popularly understood as a surprisingly violent military mutiny, spurred by untruthful rumours and limited to Indian troops serving the EIC. Indian nationalist scholars and revisionist historians have challenged the mutiny thesis as it is clear that it was a wide-spread popular uprising, rooted in longstanding issues with exploitative Company practices, suggesting it be called India’s “First War of Independence” instead.\(^3\) Though the term “mutiny” is problematic as a descriptor for the actual events of 1857, in regards to the corpus of fictional literature it would be a misnomer to categorize the post-1857 novels under any other term, thus it does appear in context throughout this thesis. When not referring specifically to these novels, however, this study will use “rebellion,” “revolt” or “uprising” in an effort to use more neutral and less politically charged language.

Part of this investigation centres on the tropes of “proper/desirable” consumer practice versus “improper/reprehensible” consumer practice, or to put it bluntly, the “good” consumer versus the “bad” consumer. At a moment when the “proper” modern British consumer ethos was being debated in metropolitan circles, the trope of the “bad Indian consumer” was used to construct “good British” habits. In these novels, becoming heightened in the post-1857 catalogue of fiction, “bad consumption” is generally associated with the irrational behaviour of Indian characters. In many of these novels it is

\(^3\) Barbara and Thomas Metcalf, 92.
recognized that good consumers have the potential to be seduced and corrupted by bad consumption practices, in a similar fashion to the way that nabobs were perceived to have declined. It is important to note that in orientalist discourse, the Orient is generally perceived as a "feminine space influenced by climate and easily subjected to passions." In the Victorian mindset, consumption was also often tied to the irrational, "unrestrained physical response" of women with commodities acting as a sort of intoxicant. Lynda Nead suggested that Victorian observers viewed female consumers to be "in a state of perpetual, unsatisfiable longing; poised on the brink of a consummation of her desires and in a state of pleasurable fantasy." Thus, the Indian characters in these novels, considered bad consumers, inherently have this supposedly feminine trait. This gendered perspective of the Indian consumer inherent in colonial ideology suggest that Indian methods of consuming tobacco and opium had the potential to corrupt metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons through their effeminizing effects. By investigating how certain methods of consumption are gendered, this thesis will provide insight into how these nineteenth-century novels worked to "other" both Indian and British consumers.

The focus of this thesis is to read representations of everyday commodities in nineteenth-century fictional works about India in order to investigate how the dominant images in the British imperial imaginings of India were created, propagated, and engrained. As the realist novel was literally littered with objects, it is easy to simply "brush by all kinds of things." By ignoring these objects, however, a great deal of

33 Freedgood, 10.
information about the society that this literature was produced within will be lost. Daniel Roche has suggested that by studying the objects and commodities of mundane, everyday life the "subsoil" of a civilization, where "routine, inertia, minimal consciousness have the greatest influence," can be found. Considered a "texture" of everyday life, an analysis of how commodities were produced, consumed, and understood will lead to a better understanding of the society that they were rooted in. As the meaning of objects are notoriously fluid through time, this thesis will engage in writing a "cultural biography" of tobacco and opium in order to trace how the meaning of these everyday commodities changed throughout the nineteenth century by tracing their representations in fiction.

The importance of studying commodities for more than just their value in trade is inspired by Igor Kopytoff’s article, “The Cultural Biography of Things,” in Arjun Appadurai’s Social Life of Things [1986]. Kopytoff argued that commodities are important not because they are produced materially or traded for material profits, but because they are “culturally marked as being a certain kind of thing.” Commodities are telling of a culture because not everything is commodified. A biography of a commodity traces the reasons why it was commodified, as well as how its meanings and uses change

over time in both the culture it was born within and others by which it was adopted.\textsuperscript{37}

Kopytoff argued:

Biographies of things can make salient what might otherwise remain obscure. For example, in situations of culture contact, they can show what anthropologists have so often stressed: that what is significant about the adoption of alien objects—as of alien ideas—is not the fact that they are adopted, but the way they are culturally redefined and put to use.\textsuperscript{38}

A cultural biography of tobacco and opium will show how these commodities were introduced, adopted, and re-adopted by colonizer and colonized throughout the nineteenth century, becoming “orientalized” and “othered.” This thesis elucidates how objects of everyday life, generally ignored in nineteenth-century fiction, influenced both an understanding of empire and came to be understood, appropriated, suppressed, and feared in the metropole and throughout the empire.

The methodology of this thesis will be largely informed by Elaine Freedgood’s examination of novels for “things,” as she explains in The Ideas in Things [2006]. Freedgood examines nineteenth-century novels for objects, which are shown to represent a largely neglected “critical cultural archive,” for their “fugitive meanings.”\textsuperscript{39} In the novels examined in this thesis, objects ranging from rugs, furniture, diamonds, food, intoxicants, and clothing are scattered throughout the novels in order to “orientalize” the narrative. Freedgood suggested that these objects can be seen to represent metonyms that would offer meaning to the novel’s contemporary audience, but would likely be missed by a reader today due to the historical distance from the Victorian era.\textsuperscript{40} Freedgood’s methodology is dominated by what she terms to be a “strong, literalizing, or materializing

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{37} Kopytoff, 66.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 67.
\textsuperscript{39} Freedgood, 1 and 4.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, 3.
\end{footnotes}
metonymic reading, where the “object is investigated in terms of its own properties and
drty and then refigured alongside and athwart the novel’s manifest or dominant
narrative.” In order to locate the hidden meanings of these metonyms, Freedgood had to
rely on the “mediation” of established historiography on topics such as mahogany. This
analysis will in turn provide a fuller understanding of the history of these imperial
commodities in Britain, India, and the wider imperial world.

In order to fully appreciate the findings of this investigation of nineteenth-century
novels, this thesis will be supported by the use of postcolonial theory. Edward Said’s
concept of the “other” and the “East versus West” binary that was developed in
Orientalism will also be a key analytic tool for understanding the implications of the
representations within these novels. The narratives engaged with in this thesis were
produced by British authors, either from the metropole or British India, who claimed an
authoritative knowledge of the Orient through their novels. Said has argued, however,
that these novels fall into the Orientalist discourse, a “systematic discipline by which
European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically,
sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-
Enlightenment period.” The Orientalist framework suggests that European writing on
the Eastern world, such as India, would be influenced by the author’s Western
perspective, regardless of whether or not they had a great deal of personal experience in
the Indian subcontinent. This thesis will show that the representations of tobacco and
opium in these nineteenth-century fictions, already a part of the Orientalist understanding

41 Freedgood, 12.
42 Freedgood, for example, used N. D. G. James’ A History of English Forestry [1981].
43 Said, 3.
of India, became an even more critical part of the “Occident’s” discourse for “dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” in the aftermath of 1857.44 These methodologies and theories have inspired the way that this thesis will engage with nineteenth-century novels and the representations of tobacco and opium consumption found within them.

As this thesis traces the way that objects and commodities are represented in nineteenth-century fictions of India, it is necessarily divided by two critical formative events in both the metropole and the empire that occurred during the 1850s: the Great Exhibition of 1851 has been located by many scholars as the genesis of modern British consumer culture, with commodities playing an increasingly important role in British society as the century progressed. Other scholars, writing with altogether different analytical priorities, have identified the Rebellion of 1857 in India as a watershed moment in the history of British colonialism, imperial ideology, and colonial resistance in India. If the place of India in British consumer culture was so prevalent, as many Great Exhibition scholars have argued, and if 1857 was so transformative for metropolitan society, as many imperial and South Asianist scholars have argued, it follows that a study of the meanings of certain commodities and consumptive practices in literature concerning British India could provide insight into these central shifts that occurred in the 1850s.

This thesis explores how these two watershed moments in British history became intertwined with each other in the 1850s, with the changing British perceptions of India in the aftermath of 1857 altering the way in which British consumer culture developed at

44 Said, 2-3.
the end of the 1850s. By understanding how “oriental” commodities such as tobacco and opium were depicted in metropolitan and Anglo-Indian fictional works about India prior to the rise of modern consumer culture and the Rebellion of 1857, it will be possible to locate their shifting representations in the latter half of the nineteenth century. After 1857, these Indian “things” became associated with “mutiny” and the negative oriental stereotypes that were sharpened by the event, changing the way that these commodities and objects were viewed in the fledgling consumer culture of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons. The influence that 1857 had on creating an understanding of tobacco and opium in British consumer culture does not just provide new insight to narratives of British consumption or Anglo-Indian relations, but also into the complex imperial web in which these imperial objects and commodities existed within.

This introductory chapter has outlined the theoretical and methodological approaches that will be used in this study of the tobacco and opium consumption practices of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons in the nineteenth century. Methodologically inspired by Elaine Freedgood’s *The Idea of Things* and theoretically supported by Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, this thesis will highlight the changing meanings of tobacco and opium within British consumer culture inspired by this fiction. This analysis will be done in two chapters: “Hubble Bubble: “Oriental” Consumption in the British Imaginings of India.” and “From Medicine to Menace: Opium in Britain and the Empire.” Prior to this analysis, however, the authors and novels will be introduced in “India in British Fiction: Biography and Background” in order to provide the necessary background information.
CHAPTER II

INDIA IN BRITISH FICTION
Biography and Background

As this thesis is set to explore the impact of shifting representations of tobacco and opium within nineteenth-century fictional works about India on the British colonial imagination and emerging consumer culture, it is critical to contextualize the novels and their authors. In *Orientalism* [1978], Edward Said argued that understanding the “individual text or author” is extremely important because of the “determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism.”¹ This section will lay a foundation for the thesis by introducing each of the six novels selected in order to explain their significance within the crowded literary landscape of the nineteenth century,² as well as explore, and in some cases update, the relevant biographical information of each author. By investigating the ways in which each of the authors, whether they are metropolitan or Anglo-Indian, viewed and experienced the empire it will be possible to decipher some of the agendas and biases that influenced their narrative voice. Locating the historical context of each of the novels alongside events at home, in the empire or abroad, will also aid in understanding the subtle messages being broadcast by their authors. The popular and critical reception of each novel will also be gauged through the use of contemporary periodicals, newspapers, and available publishing data. In much the same way that it is

² The over sixty “mutiny” novels published between 1858 and 1900 are but a small part of the “crowded literary landscape” of nineteenth-century fictional works about India. Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 273.
necessary to engage with the historiography of the intoxicants in question in order to locate their “fugitive meanings,” it is necessary to understand the historiography surrounding the authors and their novels before being able to engage in an effective analysis.

This chapter will introduce the five authors and their novels in a roughly chronological order, with the exception of Philip Meadows Taylor who will serve as a bridge between the pre- and post-1857 periods. It will begin with an assessment of *Pandurang Hāri; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo* [1826], which has historically been attributed to William Browne Hockley [1792-1860]. *Pandurang Hāri* has been chosen due to the veil of authenticity given to the novel by Hockley’s experience in India as well as the novel’s format. Hockley’s decade of experience as a civil administrator in India, his “unrivalled” reputation as an author of Anglo-Indian fiction before the success of Philip Meadows Taylor, and the claim that the novel was an English translation of the memoirs of a Mahratta prince would have suggested to the novel’s audience that it was an accurate depiction of “native” Indian life. It is important to note, however, that even though Hockley has been described as the “first Anglo-Indian novelist of any importance” because of the success of *Pandurang Hāri*, questions have been raised as to the actual authorship of the novel.

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In the 1873 republication of Pandurang Hari, with an introduction by Sir Bartle Frere, it is clear that there was a serious lack of information regarding Hockley. Frere noted that very little was known about Hockley beyond the fact that he spent about a decade working as a civil administrator in India before he “fell under a cloud” and left the service.\(^7\) More recent scholarship has suggested that Hockley was born in 1792 and began work in India in 1813, where he eventually became a judge. In 1821, Hockley was accused of receiving bribes and was dismissed from EIC service in 1824 when he began his literary career.\(^8\) Though Frere attributed the novel to Hockley in the introduction, his name does not officially appear on the title page, which suggests that Frere was not wholly convinced of Pandurang Hari’s authorship. Further research has shown that some sources have attributed Pandurang Hari to a metropolitan writer named Cyrus Redding who wrote the novel with inspiration from Hockley’s personal notes from his time in India.\(^9\) Though there seems to be no actual academic consensus regarding the authorship of Pandurang Hari, it does not change the fact that the novel’s contemporary audience believed that Hockley was the author, providing the novel with an aura of authenticity and credibility because of his first hand experience of India.

This veil of authenticity surrounding Pandurang Hari can be seen as problematic, however, when the declared aim of the novel is to correct what the author believed to be

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the general public’s overly positive and sympathetic view of Britain’s colonial subjects in India. The introduction to the novel stated:

Englishmen who have written so much in favour of the natives, it may be boldly pronounced, never mingled in situations where their private contests and private conduct with each other could be clearly observed. The editor went amongst them prejudiced in their favour: a few years undeceived him. From the rajah to the ryot, with the intermediate grades, they are ungrateful, insidious, cowardly, unfaithful, and revengeful.\(^{10}\)

In light of this statement, the veil of authenticity created by Hockley’s experience and the format of the novel is problematic as *Pandurang Hārī* is little more than a three-volume assault on the “natural character” of the people of India. For the novel’s intended metropolitan audience in Britain,\(^{11}\) the tales of treachery, conspiracy, and violence ever-present in the story could begin to create and propagate a disparaging view of India and Indians. Though *Pandurang Hārī* was rarely admired for its literary merit, it received a great deal of praise in various contemporary literature reviews for its supposedly faithful representations of Indian, and specifically Hindu, culture and society.

In 1825, shortly before *Pandurang Hārī*’s official publication, the *Literary Gazette* wrote, “It is replete with dramatic interest; but as a picture of native Indians and of Indian manners and feelings, it has (as far as we are able to judge) a far higher and more permanent value.”\(^{12}\) This is reiterated by the *Monthly Review* in 1826, where it was emphasized that the “editor” of *Pandurang Hārī* had “an intimate acquaintance with the people and the country,” making the story worth reading for its content, as opposed to its

\(^{10}\) [Hockley], *Pandurang Hārī*, vol. 1 (1826), xiii-xiv.


style.\textsuperscript{13} This review, though generally accepting Pandurang Hari’s insistence on the “baser qualities” inherent in the people of India, also recognized a potential issue with portraying Indians as wholly lacking the ability to be “civilized.” The review stated, “Without these [qualities], who shall be required to believe that even a half-civilised state of society could exist?”\textsuperscript{14} The review later challenged Hockley’s flattening of Indian society, highlighting the loyalty and hard work shown by Hindu sepoys in the service of the EIC. The article suggested that Hockley was misdirected in his criticism of Hindus, arguing that he should have focused upon “the most sensual and profligate race of the whole native population...Muselmans.”\textsuperscript{15} Thus, though this review agreed that these “baser qualities” were prominent in the “Asiatic mind,” it was critical that the better qualities of Indians were also highlighted in order to show that colonialism’s purported goal of “civilizing” India was actually possible. Though the majority of reviews supported the perception of India and its people put forward by Pandurang Hari, others openly challenged this prejudice, deeply concerned about the damage this perspective could cause both for Britain and its colonies.

Shortly after the publication of Pandurang Hari, alongside many positive reviews, the Oriental Herald and Journal of General Literature took it upon itself to challenge the discrimination and intolerance deeply embedded in the novel. Though the review stated that Pandurang Hari did not deserve any recognition as it was devoid of literary merit, it argued that it was absolutely critical to discuss the novel as it was

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. 83.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 89-90.
published with a "stamp of reality."\textsuperscript{16} The existence of this purported veil of authenticity, however, is challenged by the reviewer, who suggested that the apparent autobiographer is simply a "European with his face blackened," doing little but producing "monsters such as never were seen in the East."\textsuperscript{17} The review’s most critical passage is worth quoting in detail as it highlights the stakes of suggesting that these negative tales were accurate representations of Britain’s Indian subjects:

If fiction be ever entirely innocent, there can, at least, be no question that it is not so when employed to the injury of others. What should be said, then, of the author of this work, who invents imaginary characters for the purpose of portraying themselves and their countrymen in the most odious colours? These vile caricatures he gives out as real pictures painted by the people themselves, and lays them as such before the British public, who are the sovereigns and guardians of the happiness of that people; and as, for the most part, we can only see them through the medium of written descriptions, the person who avails himself of that medium to distort our vision, and by fiction render these distant people hateful in our eyes, is surely guilty of a fraud of no ordinary magnitude and criminality.\textsuperscript{18}

The review suggested that for Britain’s metropolitan public, devoid of any practical experience in India or the empire, these fictional works were one of the few ways they could begin to learn about and attempt to understand the British Empire’s diverse colonial subjects. Because Pandurang Hāri solely showed India in a negative light, it did nothing more than propagate ignorance and instill a deep rooted prejudice within the reading public who did not, or perhaps could not, find more balanced opinions in news and academic literature. Though Pandurang Hāri was all but forgotten after its original publication in 1826, it recaptured the attention of the metropolitan audience in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
In 1873, *Pandurang Hari* was republished because of the efforts of Sir Bartle Frere, who added an introduction to the novel, and prominent Anglo-Indians such as Dr. George Birdwood and Captain Meadows Taylor.\(^{19}\) Between 1873 and 1898 *Pandurang Hari* was republished four times,\(^{20}\) showing that the novel resonated much more effectively with British audiences in the post-1857 period. Frere, who spent over three decades of his life in India, was a well respected and highly decorated civil servant with the EIC. When he retired from India, Frere was given a seat on the Indian Council in London and made a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India [GCSI].\(^{21}\) In the introduction to the 1873 edition of *Pandurang Hari*, Frere stated that when the novel was first published in 1826 it was received as an “authentic picture of Native Indian society,” which suggested that it did have some effect in shaping metropolitan views of India.\(^{22}\)

However, it is important to note that Frere, along with his Anglo-Indian colleagues, saw *Pandurang Hari* in a much different light. Instead of suggesting that the novel was historical fact, Frere wanted to show how far India had come under British colonial rule in order to highlight the successes of Britain’s colonial project and continue to rationalize a colonial presence in India.

As Frere, Birdwood, and Taylor had extensive experience in India, as well as a familiarity with its customs and people, they viewed *Pandurang Hari* as an interesting historical document. Frere wrote that the novel had “merits of a very rare kind as a series

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\(^{19}\) [Hockley], *Pandurang Hari*, vol. 1 (1873), v.
\(^{22}\) [Hockley], *Pandurang Hari*, vol. 1 (1873), v.
of photographic pictures from the past generations of a great Indian nation." The shift away from perceiving Pandurang Hari as current fact, which can be seen in the reviews discussed earlier, to the historical past, which can be seen in Frere’s introduction, changed the stakes of the novel. Though Frere clearly believed many of the stories within Pandurang Hari, he made a concerted effort to show readers that this was no longer the case in India, asserting that the colonial project was succeeding:

The pictures drawn by Pandurang are by no means flattering or pleasing—they describe a state of society so hideously disorganized, and of morals so base, that they seem incredible as related of a period so near to our own... If then Pandurang’s pictures be, as I believe them to be, substantially correct representations of the state of things in those provinces only two generations ago, it is clear that the country and people to which they relate, possess enormous inherent power of recovering from a state of debasement which would shock any educated native at the present moment. A knowledge of the greatness as well as the rapidity of the change which has taken place, may inspire fresh hope in those who are sanguine regarding the future progress of native society.

It is important to note that Frere’s republication of Pandurang Hari occurred just over fifteen years after the Rebellion of 1857 shocked the British colonial imagination. Frere’s introduction suggested that he sought to use the novel as a way of showing how far India had come under British rule, which argued that regardless of events like 1857 India was capable of “progressing.” However, the novel’s popularity in the latter half of the nineteenth century raises questions as to how the public received the novel. Though Frere, Taylor and Birdwood intended to increase tolerance and rationality in regards to India with the republication of Pandurang Hari, the image of the violent and treacherous Indian portrayed in the novel may have simply reinforced the prejudices that had grown

23 [Hockley], Pandurang Hari, vol. 1 (1873), vi.
24 Ibid., vii-viii.
in Britain towards India after 1857; instead of seeing progress, Pandurang Hārī’s later audience may have simply seen continuity.

In contrast to Pandurang Hārī’s obsession with the flawed state of Indian society, William Delafield Arnold’s Oakfield; or, Fellowship in the East, can be seen as a trenchant critique of the flaws he viewed to be inherent in Anglo-Indian society under the EIC. Arnold was educated as a youth at Rugby School and continued his education for a year at Oxford before being commissioned into the EIC’s military in 1848. Arnold worked in both a military and civilian capacity for four years before falling ill and returning to Britain on the advice of his doctors. It was during his convalescence that he published Oakfield, a partially fictionalized autobiography of his first tenure in India. In 1855, after his recovery, Arnold reluctantly returned to India as the Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab where he instituted a series of educational reforms. Unlike the religious reforms instituted at Rugby School by his father Thomas Arnold, William sought to be “uncontroversial” in the Punjab, forcing neither Christianity nor the English language on its students. While Director of Public Instruction, Arnold was present in India during the 1857 uprising, which spurred him to publish a series of articles on what he viewed to be the root of the popular discontent in India. In 1859, Arnold fell ill again and on the advice of doctors embarked on the voyage back to Britain where he died in Gibraltar.

Oakfield, though generally recognized to be devoid of any true literary merit, is nevertheless an important novel for this study as it is the perfect counterbalance to

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25 Katherine Prior, “Arnold, William Delafield (1828–1859),” in ONDB.
26 R. Singh, 21.
27 Prior, “Arnold,” ONDB.
28 Ibid.
Hockley’s fascination with Indian society in *Pandurang Hārī*. Arnold, in his effort to fully engage in an examination and critique of the Anglo-Indian community in India, almost wholly ignores the existence of Indians. This explicit focus on the actions and morality of the British in India is unique in pre-1857 Anglo-Indian literature, making *Oakfield’s* self-reflection a rare and important resource.\(^{29}\) Though many reviewers were upset by Arnold’s focus on negative aspects of Anglo-Indian society, one that appeared in the *Calcutta Review* argued that it was necessary to “have an honest appreciation of the fearless earnestness of his book.”\(^ {30}\) Just as *Pandurang Hārī* was useful for exploring the meanings behind representations of intoxicants in Indian society, *Oakfield* will provide a chance to explore how these meanings stay consistent or change in regards to the Anglo-Indian community. Arnold also gives his readers a strong sense of the “authentic” India from an Anglo-Indian perspective because the novel loosely outlines his early experiences in India. Arnold was first commissioned into the 39th Bengal Native Infantry [BNI] as an ensign in 1848 and was later transferred to the 58th Native Infantry [NI] during the Second Anglo-Sikh War.\(^ {31}\) Arnold detested life in the Army and after three years of service he accepted a civil covenant\(^ {32}\) with the East India Company as the


\(^{30}\) “India in English Literature,” *Calcutta Review* 33, no. 65 (September, 1859): 44.

\(^{31}\) Prior, “Arnold,” *ONDB*.

\(^{32}\) “Covenanted Servants – This term is specially applied to the regular Civil Service of India, whose members used to enter into a formal covenant with the East India Company, and do now with the Secretary of State for India. Many other classes of servants now go out to India under a variety of contracts and covenants, but the term in question continues to be appropriated as before.” Colonel Henry Yule and A.C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive*, ed. William Crooke (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1903), 267.
Assistant Commissioner of the Punjab in 1851. Though *Oakfield* follows Arnold's life through his military and civil service, the events within the novel can be seen to be "partly invented, partly distortions of what actually happened or imaginations of what might easily have happened." Nevertheless, to its contemporary audience, *Oakfield* was portrayed as an authentic account of the failings inherent within Anglo-Indian society immediately before the Rebellion of 1857.

It is interesting to note that *Oakfield* was originally published by Arnold in 1853 under the pseudonym of "Punjabee," with the novel’s purpose rationalized in a dedication to his friends at its beginning. Arnold was clear that India was a key part of the British Empire, but recognized that the imperial project could not continue to work without reforming the "Englishmen" in India. He wrote:

> It cannot be denied that there is a want of earnestness, a want of moral tone, and, together with much superficial skepticism that would pass for freedom of thought, a want of liberality, greater than exists in corresponding classes of society at home. If this were not so, the greater part of *Oakfield* would be false; it is because I believe it on the whole to be true, that I have, after all, determined to publish it.

These qualities that Arnold recognized to be lacking in Anglo-Indian society are most succinctly personified in the novel by Oakfield's experiences with two officers: Lieutenant Cade, of the 81st NI, and Lieutenant Stafford, of the 91st. In the preface to *Oakfield*, Arnold assured his readers that these regiments, as well as the "villain" Cade

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33 Allott, 8.
34 Ibid., 30.
35 It is likely that Arnold chose "Punjabee" due to his experience in the Punjab, as it is highly unlikely that any reader of his dedication would assume the author to be Indian, rather than Anglo-Indian.
36 Unfortunately I was unable to access an 1853 version of *Oakfield*.
and the morally degenerate Stafford, did not actually exist in India. Though fictional creations, Arnold stated that a “class of men of whom Cade is a fair type, phases of an Anglo-Indian society like the 81st regiment, I have certainly seen too frequently; but nobody is meant by the one, no corps hinted at in the other.”37 These characters, then, serve as a compilation of all the worst characteristics and values of Anglo-Indians that Arnold had experienced during his time in the military and civil service of the EIC. Despite these caveats, Oakfield’s initial pseudonymous publication received so much criticism that the novel was republished a year later, officially attributing the novel to Arnold so he could defend its content.

In the preface to the 1854 edition of Oakfield, Arnold sought to defend his work from the criticism it had faced after its original publication. The most trenchant criticism of Oakfield, which Arnold viewed as an accusation, was that the novel was an “anonymous attack” on those in the service of the EIC’s military.38 Arnold denied that the content of the novel was an attack on the military, insisting that exposing the Cades and Staffords, or “black sheep,” of the service through Oakfield was extremely important in order for improvement and reform to begin.39 Arnold best summed up his intentions as he concluded his preface:

> It surely is superfluous to say that the class alluded to is absolutely distinct from that high and honourable body of Indian officers who have so justly won for the Indian army its great reputation. These will understand me when I say, that whatever accusation may be contained in Oakfield, is directed not against our service, but against that wretched class of men who are its disgrace, and our common enemies; who regard our noble profession not as furnishing a pledge and security for the honour of its members, but rather as

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38 Ibid. x.
39 Ibid.
affording a justification and excuse for license; who denounce uprightness as folly, gentlemanly principle as cant, and common decency as methodism.\textsuperscript{40}

Thus, Arnold simply sought to expose these “wretched” Anglo-Indians, who he viewed to be dangerous to the British imperial project in India, in order to call for an internal “civilizing mission” within Anglo-Indian society. As Oakfield was published only five years before the outbreak of the Rebellion of 1857, Arnold’s call for moral reform was shown to be extremely relevant.

Though Oakfield is rife with examples of the corruption he viewed to be inherent in Anglo-Indian society, one passage in the novel stands out as a direct critique of the “characteristically imperial attitudes” exhibited in Hockley’s Pandurang Hāri.\textsuperscript{41}

Hockley’s views on Indians, stated explicitly in his introduction, are almost introduced verbatim in Oakfield by Lieutenant Wykham, a young, impressionable officer who Oakfield befriends. Wykham stated, “Well, I do detest the natives; they are a mean, lying, fawning, sordid race; and after ten years experience, I say that to call a native ‘a man and a brother,’ is a lie. He is not a man; and I repudiate the fraternity of a scoundrel who lies at every other word.”\textsuperscript{42} This perspective, which essentially dehumanized Indians, was recognized by Arnold to be highly damaging to the potential success of the imperial project. In a surprisingly forward thinking passage, Arnold has Oakfield promote a greater understanding of Britain’s colonial subjects. Oakfield stated, “We esteem them the better the more we know them. Why? because we learn to look at things from their view, instead of arrogantly assuming our own as the true one, and condemning them for

\textsuperscript{40} Arnold, vol. 1, xi.


not coming up to it."^43 Though Arnold is by no means asserting equality between Indians and Anglo-Indians, he does not believe that Indians are hopeless in the same fashion that Hockley does. In a sense, he suggests that the only way for those who govern the British Empire to continue to succeed in India is to try and understand their Indian subjects better before attempting to shape them to British standards. *Oakfield* provides this study with an excellent opportunity to investigate representations of tobacco and opium consumption through Arnold's critical, prescriptive Anglo-Indian perspective of his own society.

The works of Philip Meadows Taylor [1808-1876] serve as an ideal focal point to base an analysis of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian literature on India throughout the nineteenth-century. Taylor's long career in India meant that he produced a sizeable catalogue of Indian fiction that spanned the pre- and post-1857 periods under analysis, which provides a unique opportunity to gauge changing representations of India within the works of the same author. As well, Taylor's works investigate both Indian and Anglo-Indian life, which will allow a level of comparative analysis not possible in the works of Hockley and Arnold. Taylor, the author of *Confessions of a Thug* [1839] and *Seeta* [1872], was born into a merchant family in Liverpool on 25 September 1808. His class background hampered his prospects in India and Taylor, who spent close to forty years of his life living and working in India, did not begin his career either with a covenant in the civil service or commission in the military branch of the EIC.\(^{44}\) Instead, he took up an offer to work in a "merchant's house" in Bombay because of the prospects of a partnership when he came of age. However, when Taylor arrived, it was clear that the

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\(^{43}\) Arnold, vol. 2, 140.

\(^{44}\) Richard Garnett, "Taylor, Philip Meadows (1808–1876)," rev. David Washbrook, in *ONDB*.
prospects of this partnership had been misrepresented and he sought to find a more promising career.\textsuperscript{45} Though his class background limited his possibilities in regards to traditional employment with the EIC, it provided Taylor with the chance to become much more involved with Indian society, which gave him the perspective that Arnold believed all Anglo-Indians needed to have.

Despite having familial connections to the Bombay Government by way of his cousin, William Newnham, Taylor was unable to find a formal position within the EIC. Instead, in November 1824, Newnham found Taylor a military commission within the irregular service of the Nizam of Hyderabad.\textsuperscript{46} Though this commission did not come with “the social position, the pay, privileges, and pension” of a position with the EIC, it proved to be the beginning of Taylor’s long and illustrious career in India.\textsuperscript{47} His close work with the Nizam provided him a chance to create intimate relationships with Indian people and gave him practical experience with Indian culture and customs beyond that of the typical EIC employee. Taylor worked for the Nizam in both military and civilian capacities, and during the Rebellion of 1857 he was stationed in the Berar province of the Nizam’s territories, where he presided over the relative stability of the region and maintained the loyalty of his troops.\textsuperscript{48} After the rebellion, Taylor was named the Deputy Commissioner of the Nizam’s old territories, being overlooked for the top job as he was not covenanted or commissioned in the EIC’s service. Regardless of Taylor’s skills and experience, his class background once again limited his prospects for advancement.

\textsuperscript{46} Garnett, “Taylor,” \textit{ONDB}.
\textsuperscript{47} Allardyce, 578.
\textsuperscript{48} Garnett, “Taylor,” \textit{ONDB}.
Taylor’s long career in India gave him a deep respect for, and thorough knowledge of, the culture, customs, and people of Hyderabad, a region that had become his home. However, in 1860, Taylor fell gravely ill and his doctors believed that he would die if he did not return to Britain. Unable to perform his duties from Britain and hampered by the rules imposed on uncovenanted servants, Taylor was required to resign from his position in 1861. Taylor found adjusting to life in the metropole difficult, feeling thoroughly “Indianized” from his tenure on the subcontinent. In his autobiography, Taylor wrote:

It was a hard battle. My heart was in my work, and I ardently longed to go back and try to carry on what I had been planning for the benefit of the people among whom I had lived my life, and whom I loved; but it seemed as if God, in His wisdom, had taken from me the power and strength I needed.

Taylor, as he rationalized it, turned to writing fiction as a way of getting over the “grief” of resigning his position. Taylor’s novels were viewed as a highly authentic account of life in the Hyderabad region as their locales and characters were created to serve as fond reminders of the time he spent in India.

Meadows Taylor’s career under the Nizam and with the EIC have been portrayed in both positive and negative fashions, showing Taylor to be either a hard working and devoted servant focused on the well being of the Nizam’s subjects or as a prime example of the lazy, eighteenth-century British “nabob.” This shows that Taylor, for better or worse, was seen to be a prominent figure in Indian matters. Dennis Kincaid [1905-1937], a novelist, historian, and civil servant of India, was particularly critical of Taylor’s career.

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50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., 456.
in India, challenging the Taylor's credibility. Kincaid wrote, "At Shorapur ruled
Meadows Taylor, enormous and benign, relishing the devotion and gratitude of a
province and the various pleasures of a well-stocked harem. He sat at ease in a great cane
chair, puffing at his hookah, fanned by chowries."52 Through this description, Kincaid
sought to associate Taylor with negative stereotypes surrounding eighteenth-century
Anglo-Indian "nabobs" such as Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of India who
was impeached for mismanagement and embezzlement in 1787.53 Though many were
prosecuted for exploiting India and its people for immense personal gains, Tillman
Nechtman has suggested that the distrust of nabobs was rooted in a fear that they would
try to bring "Eastern," autocratic governing styles back to the metropole.54 Nabobs were
seen to be Britons who were changed by India, who adopted the greed, laziness, and
corruption seen to be inherent in Indian society, and who would bring these values back
to Britain.55 Though Kincaid clearly viewed Taylor's career in this light, his perspective
does not seem to be shared either by Taylor's contemporaries or more recent historians.

Alexander Allardyce, an established historian and an assistant editor of
*Blackwood's Magazine*, wrote in 1877 after Taylor's death that he had achieved his
position in India through "sheer merit and perseverance."56 After the posthumous
publication of Taylor's *A Noble Queen: A Romance of Indian History* [1878], he was
described as "a born leader of men...few Englishmen in India have shown themselves

Paul, 1973 [1938]), 175.
54 Tillman W. Nechtman, *Nabobs: Empire and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain*
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 12.
55 Ibid., 148.
56 Allardyce, 575.
more powerful for good, mainly because he had studied the natives and sympathized with them.\textsuperscript{57} More recently, the literary critic Shuchi Kapila challenged Kincaid’s negative perspective on Taylor’s career. She wrote, “Rather anomalously for a nineteenth-century colonial ideologue, Taylor was cast in the mold of the good Orientalists of the eighteenth century,” who showed a great passion and respect for Indian culture and knowledge.\textsuperscript{58} Though Taylor had his critics, his career in India has generally been seen as an excellent example of the good that a Briton could do in India, which affirmed his credibility to his audience. From Taylor’s perspective, his enthusiasm for his work in India also endeared him to the subjects of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

Taylor’s perspective on India is also appears more authentic and credible to his readers because of the fact that he was not only seen to respect, but also to be respected by, the Indians that he worked for. The events of Taylor’s last trip to India, recorded by his daughter Alice who accompanied him on the journey, can be found in the conclusion to Taylor’s autobiography. The narrative described Alice’s shock at the reception Meadows Taylor received from the people of Hyderabad: “Some came from long distances, only to see him, to touch his feet, or bring their simple offerings...it was very touching to see the love and reverence the people bore for him...He seemed to be so essentially the people’s friend.”\textsuperscript{59} Though this passage could very well be an exaggeration or orientalist fabrication by Taylor’s daughter, it is clear from his writing that Taylor, at the very least, had a similar reverence and compassion towards the people of Hyderabad:

\textsuperscript{57} “A Noble Queen,” \textit{Edinburgh Review or Critical Journal} 147 (April, 1878): 245.

\textsuperscript{58} Shuchi Kapila, \textit{Educating Seeta: The Anglo-Indian Family Romance and the Poetics of Indirect Rule} (Columbus: Ohio State Press, 2010), 111.

\textsuperscript{59} Taylor, \textit{The Story of My Life}, 467.
People ask me what I found in the natives to like so much. Could I help loving them when they loved me so? Why should I not love them? I had never courted popularity. I had but tried to be just to all, and to secure to the meanest applicant consideration of his complaint, by allowing unrestricted communication with myself.  

It is clear that though Taylor was an ardent imperialist, he believed that he was intimately embedded within all levels of the Indian society at which he worked, and was acting in their best interests as opposed to his own. This “insider”/advocate perspective animated his fiction, and would have likely added a convincing level of authenticity for his British audience. Though Taylor was not without his critics, he has been portrayed as a hard-working administrator whose devotion had earned him respect and loyalty both in Britain and India.

Though Taylor spent his career on the periphery of British influence in India, the authenticity of his written work, the credibility of his opinions on India, and his successes even as an uncovenanted civil servant were formally recognized by a variety of sources. While still in India, Taylor spent many years as the *Times* correspondent in India, where he was charged with bringing information about events in India to the metropolitan public in Britain. After his retirement in 1866, Queen Victoria rewarded “Colonel” Meadows Taylor’s contributions in India retrospectively by providing him with a full pension and appointing him a Companion of the Star of India [CSI]. Even in speeches in the House of Commons, the image of Taylor as a reputable source of information on India, as well as a valued administrator, is evident. In 1858, during a debate on what

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61 It is unclear how Taylor began to be called “Colonel,” as he never held this position in the military service of the Nizam or the EIC. It is possible that it is a title he simply appropriated for himself, which became commonly used.
would later be called the Government of India Act, Taylor was described as “a competent judge” on Indian matters and his letter urging the Crown to take over responsibility for India was read.63 In 1861, during a debate on amending the Indian Civil Service to open vacant positions beyond “covenanted” EIC administrators, Taylor was used as an example of the importance of the amendment as he had been denied promotion throughout his whole career. Austen Layard, the Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office, wrote:

Another object of this Bill was to legalize appointments which might be made, and the want of some such measure was strongly illustrated by a case which had lately occurred. Captain Meadows Taylor had distinguished himself very much in an official capacity in the ceded districts of the Dekkan. By his exertions roads had been made and a variety of improvements had been carried out, and there was no man who was regarded by the Natives of that part of India with greater respect. When those districts were annexed to the Crown the Government refused to appoint him to the government of them because he was not a covenanted servant, and had appointed in his place Captain Cooper, who, as the head of the Enam Commission, was one of the most unpopular men in the West of India.64

In this statement, Layard highlights Taylor’s successes as an uncovenanted civil servant working under the Nizam in an attempt to convince the House that merit and experience, as opposed to lineage and wealth, should be taken into consideration with appointments to an important institution such as the Indian Civil Service. These examples have shown that though Taylor may have been peripheral to actual British operations on the subcontinent, he played a central role in shaping the way that India and its administration were thought about in an official capacity. His most important role, however, would be

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the way that he was able to grip the minds of the audience of his fiction, substantially influencing British imaginings of India.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Taylor published a diverse catalogue of fiction and non-fiction focused on India. Kapila describes Taylor as “one of the most prolific of those nineteenth-century British administrators who lived, worked, and authored literary works in India.” In the field of non-fiction, Taylor published numerous essays, monographs, and even a textbook for school children that viewed India through a diverse range of registers, from political history to architecture to ethnology. However, Taylor was most famous for his historical fiction, with numerous contemporary literary critics comparing his later novels to those of Sir Walter Scott. Kapila attributes this comparison with Scott to Taylor’s characters, as he created “romantic versions of Indian subjects and Indian history.” Taylor has been lauded by both his contemporaries and academics for his attempts at creating realistic characters and scenes from his “intimate” knowledge of the people and customs of, at the very least, his district of India.

Taylor wrote six novels within his lifetime: Confessions of a Thug [1839], Tippoo Sultan; a Tale of the Mysore War [1840], Tara, a Mahratta Tale [1863], Ralph Darnell [1865], Seeta [1872], and A Noble Queen: a romance of Indian history [1878]. To Taylor’s audiences, his public image as an authority on India added a great deal to the perceived authenticity of his fiction. At the end of the nineteenth century, in Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine, Hilda Gregg summarized what she viewed to be the

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65 Kapila, 109.
67 Kapila, 109.
most important contributions to the field of mutiny literature. Gregg wrote that Taylor "and his extensive knowledge of the country of which he writes gives us a pleasant feeling of security—a confidence that whatever information we may pick up from him is so much clear gain."68 In Gregg's assessment of *Seeta*, Taylor's writing was viewed to provide the most authentic perspective of the realities of Indian life beyond any other Anglo-Indian author. According to Shailendra Dhari Singh, an Indian literary scholar writing in 1973, Taylor "[saw] India with clear and unprejudiced eyes," and depicted India in a very authentic, genuine fashion.69 Taylor's reputation as a trusted authority on Indian matters, his painstaking attention to detail, and the constant historical interjections that contextualize his novels, make both *Confessions of a Thug* and *Seeta* extremely valuable resources for this study.

Taylor's first novel, *Confessions of a Thug*, was begun while he was serving in the Nizam's military and published after he returned to Britain to recover from what was known as "jungle fever,"70 a sickness that plagued Taylor throughout his time in India.71 Taylor introduced the novel as a true story of an infamous thug-turned-informer, known in this context as an "approver," which added a further weight of authenticity to the novel for his audience. Though *Confessions* is a work of fiction, historians such as Martine van

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68 Hilda Gregg, "The Indian Mutiny in Fiction," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 161 (February, 1897), 222.
Woerkens have suggested that Taylor’s novel should be considered an important primary source in the study of the thuggee cult in India. This is because of the “many aspects of his narrative that bring out practices mentioned in other sources,” as well as Taylor’s “direct contacts with the assassins.”\(^{72}\) Out of the three novels chosen to represent the pre-
1857 period, Confessions was the most popular, being widely regarded as one of the most important Anglo-Indian novels of the nineteenth century.\(^{73}\) From its publication in 1839 to the beginning of the twentieth century, Confessions had nine separate print editions.\(^{74}\) The influence of Confessions can even be seen beyond the nineteenth century in films such as Help! [1965], by the Beatles, and Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom [1984]. Though, as Taylor’s first novel, Confessions was hardly his finest accomplishment in regards to literary merit, its focus on India’s murderous thuggee cult gripped his readers. Its topic engrossed the British imagination so firmly that Queen Victoria herself is said to have asked for chapters to be sent to her in advance of its publication.\(^{75}\)

Throughout the 1830s, under the direction of William Bentinck as Indian Governor General, there was a concerted effort to rid India of the perceived threat of the thuggee cult. Very simply, the British understood thugs as followers of the Hindu goddess Kali, who would infiltrate groups of travelers and ritualistically strangle them before stealing their possessions.\(^{76}\) Taylor, first as the superintendent of a vast tract of land in Hyderabad and later as a captain in the Nizam’s military, became very active in


\(^{73}\) Nancy Paxton, Writing Under the Raj: gender, race and rape in the British colonial imagination (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999), 59.

\(^{74}\) National Union Catalog, vol. 584 (1978), 688.

\(^{75}\) Allardyce, 580.

the suppression of thuggee because of its supposed presence on the vital road to Bombay.\textsuperscript{77} The actual existence of the thuggee cult in India, however, is something that has been questioned by historians such as Hirala Gupta, Stewart Gordon, Christopher Bayly, and Radhika Singha. These scholars have suggested that thugs were little more than ordinary thieves and murderers, categorized into a cult by the British colonial imagination in order to act as a tool of British domination. However, in response to these revisionist dismissals of the cult, historians such as Mike Dash have delved into EIC archives to show that thuggee, though perhaps not as rigid as was suspected by British colonial officials, was in fact real and operating in the subcontinent.\textsuperscript{78}

Though knowledge of the cult had existed before the 1830s, a renewed fear of thuggee was inspired in the Anglo-Indian community because of an anonymous letter, published in the \textit{Calcutta Literary Gazette} in 1830, which highlighted the systematized religious murders being carried out by the thugs in great detail.\textsuperscript{79} In an almost immediate response to this growing panic, the "Thuggee and Dacoity Department" was established to eliminate the perceived threat. In 1835, much to the disappointment of Taylor, the covenanted Colonel William Sleeman was appointed the department's director.\textsuperscript{80} In an interesting twist, Sleeman was revealed to be the author of the anonymous letter in 1830, which had spurred the creation of the department he now headed.\textsuperscript{81} Taylor’s introduction to \textit{Confessions} suggests that he was following Sleeman’s example by attempting to

\textsuperscript{77} Meadows Taylor, \textit{The Story of My Life}, 46 and 69.
\textsuperscript{78} Mike Dash, \textit{Thug: The True Story of India’s Murderous Cult} (London: Granata Publications, 2005), xi.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 5.
\textsuperscript{80} Giriraj Shah, \textit{The Indian Police: A Retrospect} (Bombay: Himalaya, 1992), 43.
\textsuperscript{81} Woerkens, 6.
instigate a renewed panic about thuggee in order to increase his prospects of obtaining a formal covenanted position with the EIC:

Throughout the whole of India, including all territories of native princes, only eighteen officers are employed as superintendents and agents for the suppression of Thuggee; many of whom besides the labour of this office, which is excessive, have other civil and political duties to fulfil. By a reference to any map, it will at once be seen what enormous provinces or divisions of India fall to the superintendence of each person. Whether it is possible for each to extend to every part of that under his charge the extreme attention and scrutiny which are so imperatively necessary to put an end to this destructive system...must be best known to the government of India. It is only sincerely to be hoped that economical considerations do not prevent the appointment of others, if necessary.82

Though it is clear from the example of both Sleeman and Taylor that thuggee, in the way that it was understood in the British colonial imagination, was highly constructed by the self-serving efforts of British colonial administrators, the actual existence of the cult is still up to debate. However, whether or not the thugs were actually real is irrelevant in the context of this study, as it is most important to acknowledge that both metropolitan Britons and Anglo-Indians believed the thugs to be a real threat that had to be rectified as part of the colonial civilizing mission.83

Taylor’s fifth novel, Seeta, published fifteen years after the Rebellion, will serve as the bridge into the post-1857 period. Christopher Herbert has suggested that the overarching theme in these fictional works about India is a “profound disenchantment with the British imperial regime.”84 Though these novels still support British rule in India, there is generally a clear recognition of the failings inherent in the old EIC regime. However, Taylor used Seeta to actively attack not only the failings of the old regime, but

83 Woerkens, 7.
84 Herbert, 273.
also what he recognized to be a deeply rooted racism towards Indians in metropolitan and Anglo-Indian society. \(^{85}\) *Seeta*’s popularity can be seen by the fact that the novel went through five separate print editions by the end of the nineteenth century. \(^{86}\) The title of the novel was deliberately used by Taylor to invoke parallels between his character and the Hindu goddess Sita, who was one of the main characters in the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. Sita was a representation of the model Hindu wife, who sacrificed herself for her husband much like the protagonist in *Seeta*. \(^{87}\) Taylor’s obsession with the thuggee cult is continued in this novel, as the antagonist and his associates in *Seeta* are implicitly described as thugs, with Taylor essentially blaming the “mutiny” on a thuggee plot. The narrative of *Seeta* has also been shown to be fairly personal. Deputy Commissioner Cyril Brandon, the novel’s idealized, benevolent, and kind Anglo-Indian administrator has been suggested by Shailendra Dhari Singh to be a representation of how Taylor viewed his own career in India. \(^{88}\) The historian-literary critic Nancy Paxton has also drawn parallels between the societal complications associated with the marriage of Brandon and Seeta and to the marriage of Taylor and Mary Palmer, whose grandmother was a princess of Delhi. \(^{89}\)

As well, in line with his personal experience during the rebellion, Taylor situated his characters far away from places such as Meerut, Delhi, Cawnpore, and Lucknow. He did this in order to avoid the gruesome “atrocity tales” that were outlined with zealous

\(^{85}\) Herbert, 279.
\(^{86}\) *The National Union Catalog*, vol. 584 (1978), 689.
\(^{88}\) S. D. Singh, 51.
enthusiasm by other novelists. Taylor’s avoidance of this sensationalism was met with approval from many of his contemporary reviewers. On 5 April 1873 a review in the Spectator highlighted how unique Seeta was from other “mutiny” novels:

Into the ferment of this life, the tumult of this conflict, the high-wrought faith of this struggle, the reader is plunged; but only the heroic side of the Mutiny is presented to him, the horrors which never ought to have a place in fiction are withheld. The chronicler of the pure, lofty, beautiful life of “Seeta” touches his readers’ hearts, but he does not curdle their blood.

In addition, Taylor’s balanced portrayal of Indians and the “mutiny” was in many cases praised for challenging the “prejudice of ignorance” prevalent in British thought and was lauded for reminding his readers of the loyalty of “whole tribes and nations” during the uprising. Of the entire catalogue of mutiny fiction, Christopher Herbert has assessed Seeta to be the most “trenchant critique of the British in India on the venomous racial phobia that it identifies as the mainspring of British attitudes.” Thus, Seeta is an excellent counterpoint to overtly racist mutiny novels such as James Grant’s First Love and Last Love [1868].

James Grant was born in Edinburgh in 1822 and died in London in 1887. Grant was a prolific metropolitan writer, publishing fifty-six novels and numerous historical monographs through his lifetime. His father was a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, serving as a captain in the 92nd [Gordon Highlanders] Regiment of Foot, and his mother was a relative of Sir Walter Scott. After the death of his mother, Grant followed his

93 Herbert, 279.
94 M. G. Watkins, “Grant, James (1822–1887),” rev. Douglas Brown, in ONDB; The modern “Gordon Highlanders” were formed in 1861 with the amalgamation of the 75th (Stirlingshire) Regiment of Foot and the 92nd [Gordon Highlanders] Regiment of
father to Newfoundland where he spent six years living and being educated in the Highlander’s barracks. In 1840, after returning to Scotland, Grant was commissioned briefly into the 62nd Regiment of Foot as an ensign before resigning and pursuing a career as an author. Grant’s novels were predominantly focused on Scottish topics and his earliest and most successful military-historical fictions, such as *Romance of War* [1845], were heavily influenced by his father’s stories of the Gordon Highlanders’ campaign in Europe. Though Grant did not have any direct experience with India, the 62nd Foot had spent the past decade stationed in Southern India and Burma, suffering disastrous losses from cholera. It is likely that Grant’s perception of India and Indians was influenced by the stories told by the veterans of the 62nd Foot who had returned after experiencing these hardships on the subcontinent.

When *First Love and Last Love* was first published in 1868, it was the first of a large catalogue of three-volume mutiny novels that would be published throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and was successful enough to warrant a reprint the following year. However, unlike many of the other novels in this study, it

95 Sutherland, *Stanford Companion*, 258.
96 Sutherland has suggested that James Grant resigned his commission in 1843. However, Grant does not appear at all in *A List of The Officers of the Army and Royal Marines*, published by the War Office on 29 January 1842. As he enlisted on 20 October 1840, this would suggest that he spent no longer than a year as an officer in the British Army.
97 Watkins, “Grant,” ONDB.
failed to establish a literary legacy, only being reprinted once more in 1888. One of the most striking aspects of Grant’s novel is the overt racism towards Indians and graphic depictions of the atrocities supposedly committed against “proper” British women and children during the uprising. This sensationalism is likely because of the fact that *First Love*, published in 1868, was one of the earliest pieces of non-scholarly “mutiny” literature to appear. Herbert has viewed *First Love* as a “terror romance” that opened a “cultural floodgate” in Victorian Britain that filled a sudden public interest in the “gross fabrications” of the atrocity stories. Though many of these stories were indeed fictions themselves and many reputable works of history, such as *Cawnpore* [1866] by Sir George Trevelyan, were published to try and dispel them, the grip that these fictions had on the popular consciousness would likely have severe ramifications for the British perception of Indians in the aftermath of 1857.

To a general British audience, the vivid tales of rape, torture, murder, and deceit within *First Love* would likely bring back the shock and horror from a decade earlier, reinforcing prejudices and re-inspiring anger towards India and Indians. In addition, it is important to note that *First Love* was one of the few of Grant’s novels to be directed at a youth audience. The *Biograph and Review* generally described Grant’s youth fiction, including *First Love*, to be “tales much above what one usually sees written for lads...being all of a thoroughly healthy nature, interesting, and instructive, and thereby imparting good food for the minds of the young.”

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100 *National Union Catalog*, vol. 210 (1972), 378.
101 Herbert, 25-7.
102 Ibid., 15.
can be more clearly seen when read next to Grant’s description of the events in Delhi immediately after the outbreak of the Mutiny:

The bayonet and the butt end of the musket, the sabre and the more terrible tulwar were at work, and deeds of awful infamy were perpetrated; poor little children were hewn to pieces, torn asunder, or brained before the eyes of their agonized parents; women were outraged again and again, ere they were slaughtered, riddled with musket balls, or gashed by bayonets; and every indignity that the singularly fiendish invention of the Oriental mind could suggest, was offered to the dying and to the dead.  

The detail that Grant provided in First Love would have certainly influenced both his youthful and adult audiences. The atrocity tales pervasive throughout First Love would serve not only to reinforce stereotypes for its general readership, but began to inculcate racism into a new generation of Britons, some of who would inevitably become administrators in the British Raj.

The sensationalism of Grant’s open descriptions of rape and murder of Anglo-Indians by Indians has made First Love an important focus for scholars of Mutiny literature such as Christopher Herbert and Nancy Paxton. The vivid, detailed approach to describing the horrors of the “mutiny” in First Love is an excellent counterpoint to the calls for rationality found in the works of Meadows Taylor and other Mutiny novelists after “the first wave of national outrage dissipated and a reaction against extreme retributions set in.” It is likely that the praise given to Taylor by his contemporary reviewers for avoiding these tales in Seeta was inspired by a reaction against the atrocities described in detail by Grant in First Love. Herbert has suggested that Grant’s novel is the most blindly and unabashedly racist novel within the entire mutiny catalogue,

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105 Herbert, 285.
propagating a clear binary of British against Indian: “British heroism and pluck are uniformly glorified and are set off in Grant’s tale against depictions of native Indians’ fanaticism, sadism, treachery, and odious sensuality.”\textsuperscript{106} This made \textit{First Love} unique in its attempt to uphold the British racism and misdemeanors that came to be viewed as a catalyst for the Rebellion of 1857.\textsuperscript{107}

Grant’s focus on both reinvigorating and instilling a racist view towards India and Indians can be best seen through his inclusion of detailed rape scenes within \textit{First Love}. Paxton, in an exhaustive survey of over fifty Mutiny novels, noted that \textit{First Love} was the only novel that openly described the rape of British women in detail:

The most extraordinary feature of James Grant’s \textit{First Love and Last Love: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny}, one early British novel about the mutiny, is that it violates perhaps the most powerful literary taboo of the Victorian era, which otherwise prohibited the description of the naked (white) female body and generally censored mentions of rape in polite literature.\textsuperscript{108}

It is important to note that Grant’s inclusion of the rape of Anglo-Indian women is not limited to vague statements alluding to the occurrence of these events. Some of the most powerful scenes of rape in \textit{First Love} were clearly designed to elicit anger and outrage from the novel’s audience, borrowing from histories of the rebellion or involving central female characters. In order to amplify the revulsion from his audience, Grant ensured that the victims of these tales were clearly depicted as models of Victorian feminine morals.

One of the key moments of “horror” occurs during the outbreak of the “mutiny” in Delhi when the soon-to-be-married daughter of a well-respected Reverend, Mr. Jennings, is “subjected to indignities which a Mohammedan would consider the worst

\textsuperscript{106} Herbert, 283.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 279.
\textsuperscript{108} Paxton, 119.
and vilest his own wife or daughter could suffer." This sub-story is copied verbatim from *The Illustrated History of the British Empire*, published by Edward Henry Nolan, which was likely done by Grant in order to provide a feeling of historical authenticity for *First Love*’s audience. However, Grant’s most powerful depiction of rape within the novel is when Polly Weston, crafted in *First Love* to be the epitome of proper young Victorian woman, was brutally raped and murdered by a crowd of mutineers in the streets of Delhi. After refusing the advances of the Indian prince who had inspired the mutiny, Polly was stripped naked, tied to a cannon, and dragged through the streets of Delhi to be left to the mutineers, with Polly’s fate being left to the imagination of the reader. This action forms Grant’s justification for the cruel, barbaric retributions meted out to the captured mutineers by British troops after Delhi was retaken. The depravities described by Grant throughout *First Love* are taken directly from or inspired by the embellished or wholly fictitious reports from places like Delhi, Futtehgur, and Cawnpore. By doing this, Grant aimed to engrain these stories into, rather than dismiss them from, the British imagination of India, making *First Love* a vitally important novel to study in any examination of Mutiny fiction.

William Wilkie Collins, author of *The Moonstone* (1868), was born into a middle-class family of artists in London on 8 January 1824 and died on 23 September 1889. Wilkie Collins, as he became commonly known, found that he had a talent for

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111 Grant, *First Love*, vol. 3, 270 and 309.
112 Herbert, 190.
storytelling and a passion for writing early in life while attending public school. However, on his father’s urging, Collins first attempted careers as a painter, as a clerk, and in law.\textsuperscript{114} When his father died in 1847, he began to focus more heavily on his writing career, which was bolstered in 1851 by a chance meeting with Charles Dickens.\textsuperscript{115} Collins became both a friend of and an apprentice to Dickens, which provided him with a new outlet for his writing in \textit{All the Year Round} and an opportunity to work on the staff of \textit{Household Words}. This matured Collins as an author and exposed his writing to a much larger audience.\textsuperscript{116} Though Dickens and Collins remained friends until Dickens’ death in 1870, their professional relationship became troubled throughout the 1860s. Catherine Peters and John Sutherland have suggested that the growing distance between the two authors can be attributed to Collins’ increasing dependence on opiates, his complicated relationship with two women, or even “professional jealousy.”\textsuperscript{117}

Of these reasons for the rift between Collins and Dickens, the most significant for this study is Collins’ addiction to opium, which began in the 1860s in an effort to combat “rheumatic gout,” a disease that became increasingly debilitating and painful throughout the rest of his life.\textsuperscript{118} According to Dr. Henry Fuller, recognized as an expert in the field in the \textit{British Medical Journal},\textsuperscript{119} an attack of rheumatic gout “may be ushered in by considerable fever, together with pain and aching of the joints,” with the “small joints of the hands [becoming] painful, swollen, and, in spite of treatment, permanently

\textsuperscript{114} Peters, “Collins,” \textit{ONDB}.  
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 13.  
\textsuperscript{118} Peters, “Collins,” \textit{ONDB}.  
Though it is still unclear exactly what medical ailment Collins was suffering from, Peters has suggested that his chronic illness was a mixture of arthritis and a venereal infection called Reiter's disease, which severely affected arthritis sufferers.¹²¹

*The Moonstone* is the tale of a family's attempted recovery of a lost Indian diamond of immense value, supposedly cursed when it was violently removed from the Indian subcontinent. Though Collins had never been to India, he began planning *The Moonstone* by doing a vast amount of research into Indian history and diamonds in the Athenaeum Club Library.¹²² In order to ensure that both a metropolitan and Anglo-Indian audience would approve of *The Moonstone*’s Indian scenes and characters, Collins sought advice from two members of the Indian Civil Service. John Wylie was consulted about an accurate location for his Indian scenes and Mr. Murthwaite, the novel’s Anglo-Indian traveler, was based upon Sir Austen Layard.¹²³ T.S. Eliot, in the introduction to the 1928 Oxford World’s Classics edition of *The Moonstone*, wrote that Collins had written the “first, the longest, and the best of modern English detective novels.”¹²⁴ Though literary critics such as Ronald Thomas no longer consider *The Moonstone* the first detective novel, it is viewed as “a watershed moment in the history of the genre.”¹²⁵ Collins set the

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standard for later authors of detective fiction, influencing writers such as Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie.\textsuperscript{126}

Originally serialized throughout 1868 in Charles Dickens' weekly \textit{All the Year Round}, \textit{The Moonstone} was met with a mixed critical reception in contemporary literary journals. A review from \textit{Lippincott's Magazine}, like many others, was overwhelming positive in regards to Collins' work: "The novel that now lies before us is the best that Mr. Collins has of late years given to the world, and we are inclined to consider it, with the one exception of the \textit{The Woman in White}, that best he has ever written."\textsuperscript{127} As John Sutherland has highlighted, however, there were many reviews that called into question \textit{The Moonstone}'s literary merits. Sutherland wrote, "The \textit{Spectator} (25 July 1868), opened with the flat condemnation 'The Moonstone is not worthy of Mr Wilkie Collins' reputation as a novelist.' The \textit{Nation} (17 September 1868) pronounced that Wilkie Collins' 'art is bad, and he has not art enough.'\textsuperscript{128} However, regardless of the critical reception that met \textit{The Moonstone}, Collins' story truly captivated its audience. Melissa Free wrote, "\textit{The Moonstone}, in serial form, outsold \textit{Great Expectations} in \textit{All the Year Round}, and 'crowds gathered at the door' of the office 'to buy and read installments [...] fresh from the press.'"\textsuperscript{129} The novel's popularity quickly spread worldwide, being translated into numerous languages, and has been published consistently ever since.\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{126} Peters, "Collins," \textit{ONDB}.
\textsuperscript{128} Collins, \textit{Moonstone}, ed. Sutherland, xxxix.
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{National Union Catalog}, vol. 116 (1970), 12.
The works and life of Wilkie Collins have been examined by academics through a variety of theoretical and methodological lenses since the 1970s, when he began to be recognized as far more than simply a footnote in Charles Dickens' life. These studies have been well summarized in Jenny Bourne Taylor's *The Cambridge Companion* [2006], which examines the historiography surrounding the study of Collins and his work, and highlights newer research in the field. Literary critics have located a diverse amount of "radical and subversive" elements regarding Victorian social and cultural life in Collins' work, and *The Moonstone* in particular has been interpreted as "an orientalist romance, a critique of imperialism, an inheritance plot, [and] an allegory of seduction." What makes Collins' work so important, in the context of this study, is its location. While the other novels are all located on the periphery, in India, *The Moonstone* highlights the effect of the British imperial project on the metropole itself. Catherine Hall has suggested that the British viewed "home" as something completely separate from the empire:

> As a home place, a place that was thoroughly familiar, it was imagined to be essentially impervious to the Empire of which it was a part. Home kept the "other" peoples of the Empire at a distance, "their" strange climates, fruits and vegetables and peoples of colour were living in places that were incommensurable.  

Collins, however, directly challenged the idea that home and empire were separate with the inclusion of the subjects and objects of the empire as key plot devices in *The Moonstone*.

Though *The Moonstone* is mainly based in England, the prologue is set in India during the Siege of Seringapatam in 1799. Collins does this to prelude the theft of the

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133 Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose, *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 25.
Moonstone diamond from the Herncastle family, which becomes the major plot device in the novel, by an original theft of the diamond from India during an intense period of imperial violence. Lillian Nayder has highlighted just how significant Collins' choice to begin the novel in Seringapatam was:

In a novel published on the tenth anniversary of the rebellion that Victorians termed the “Indian Mutiny” – an uprising that generated racial hatred towards South Asians among the British – Collins humanizes figures commonly represented as bestial by his contemporaries and identifies as their rightful property a valuable diamond looted by British forces.134

Collins likely did this as he was, in stark contrast to Charles Dickens, subtly sympathetic in his writing towards the British Empire’s colonized peoples.135 Nayder has argued that by beginning The Moonstone with an act of imperial violence, Collins “suggests that later acts of violence against Britons are marks of retribution triggered by an original, imperial crime.”136 To suggest this in the context of the tenth anniversary of the Rebellion of 1857 would have likely caused a public uproar, as the excesses of the “mutiny” were still fresh in the British psyche.137 Instead, Collins chose to subtly include his political commentary by replacing 1857 with Seringapatam, ensuring that his readers would engage with his message without the emotional overtones inextricable from the events of 1857, as well as avoiding Dickens’ tight editorial control. Thus, The Moonstone is both unique and important for this study as an example of a fiction of India, based in the metropole, written by an author with no direct experience of India, which formed a critique of the British perceptions of India and Indians after 1857.

134 Lillian Nayder, “Collins and Empire,” in Cambridge Companion, 139.
135 Collins, Moonstone, ed. Sutherland, xiii.
136 Nayder, “Collins and Empire,” 139.
137 Free, 347.
The six novels chosen for this study all represent different perspectives on India, giving a wide-range of contexts to study these commodities from: *Pandurang Hari*, by William Browne Hockley, represents a vehement critique of Indian society and culture; *Oakfield*, by William Delafield Arnold, has been chosen as a counterpoint to the previous novel as a representation of a critique of Anglo-Indian society and culture; *Confession of a Thug* and *Seeta*, by Meadows Taylor, has been chosen to represent a sympathetic, “insider” perspective on both Indian and Anglo-Indian society; *First Love and Last Love*, by James Grant, represents the intensely racist reaction against Indians post-1857 that Taylor spoke out against; and *The Moonstone*, by Wilkie Collins, allows for an examination of the empire returning home. This thesis will continue with the analysis of representations of tobacco in these fictions in, “Hubble-Bubble: ‘Oriental’ Tobacco Consumption in the British Imaginings of India.”
CHAPTER III

HUBBLE-BUBBLE

“Oriental” Tobacco Consumption in the British Imaginings of India

This chapter, through a comparative analysis of pre- and post-1857 fictions of India, will explore how representations of tobacco consumption in nineteenth-century novels reflected evolving British attitudes towards “oriental” smoking practices. This chapter will be focused on tracing the shifting cultural biography of the hookah, a smoking device that was so central to an Orientalist imagination of the East that it inspired Malek Alloula to state, “There is no Orient without the hookah.”¹ Representations of many other methods of tobacco consumption, both “oriental” and “metropolitan,” will be discussed in order to contextualize the hookah’s place in the British imaginings of India, an important influence on the way in which Britons consumed tobacco. Though the smoking device was long associated with the metropolitan conception of the much-reviled Anglo-Indian “nabob,” representations of the hookah in the pre-1857 catalogue of novels suggest that it remained an innocuous oriental object in the British imperial imagination in the early nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the hookah became associated with the negative oriental stereotypes surrounding nabobism a century earlier, with the rejection of the hookah representing an Anglo-Indian desire to “de-orientalize” and “re-Britishize” in order to dissociate from the perceived failings of their nabob predecessors. By comparing both time periods, this chapter will show that more than just representations of tobacco consumption changed; it will provide a deeper understanding of why Anglo-Indians

abandoned “oriental” smoking practices, illustrating how the consumer culture of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons was constructed after 1857.

Tobacco has been an essential imperial commodity since the mid-sixteenth century, when *nicotiana* was first introduced to Europe from the “New World.” Though India is the focus for this thesis, it is important to trace the history of tobacco back to its original colonial contact as its full cultural biography provides a perfect example of how the adoption of commodities can make colonizers and colonized mutually constitutive. Europeans brought tobacco from the non-European world back to the metropole, where the consumption of this exotic drug was quickly adopted and culturally redefined, becoming domesticated by European tastes. Tobacco, along with these new, domestic consumption practices was then spread to parts of the non-European world where it was once again quickly adopted and culturally redefined, re-exoticizing European consumption to suit local needs. Through imperialism, the “oriental,” exotic consumption practices that had evolved through this contact were then re-adopted by the colonizer, reversing the process. Though this reverse-adoption began to occur in regards to the Indian hookah and British consumption, the mid-nineteenth century marked a shift away from oriental consumption practices. By tracing the cultural biography of tobacco in India, this chapter will show that 1857 marked a shift in the British depictions of Indian consumption practices in nineteenth-century fictions, which in turn influenced the consumer culture of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons.

In the pre-Colombian period, tobacco was the most commonly used intoxicating plant in “virtually every Amerindian society,” with its use stretching from “Canada’s

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eastern woodlands to southern Argentina.” It appears that Christopher Columbus was the first European to witness the consumption of tobacco in 1492, and within fifty years of Columbus’ expedition tobacco began to appear in various European nations. Tobacco first became popular in metropolitan Britain, and the rest of mainland Europe, because of reports of the drug’s properties as a “panacea or cure-all” inspired by the consumption practices of Amerindian societies who viewed it as a sacred plant. By 1571, tobacco was recognized in European medicine as a treatment for chest congestion, headaches, parasites, rheumatism, and many other ailments. Jordan Goodman, in Tobacco in History [1993], argued that European exploration and imperialism was instrumental in the global spread of this commodity:

By 1570 the plan was growing in Belgium, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and England...By the turn of the century tobacco was also growing in the Philippines, India, Java, Japan, West Africa and China. Chinese merchants introduced the plant into Mongolia, Tibet, and eastern Siberia so that, only one century after Columbus’ voyage, tobacco was either grown or consumed in most of the known world. Magellan’s circumnavigation of the globe was a remarkable achievement; tobacco’s was no less so.

Before being transmitted to the rest of the world, however, the consumption of tobacco was culturally appropriated, being “Europeanized” and domesticated. Though tobacco was first introduced to Europe as a medicine, the cultural history of its consumption was quickly redefined, becoming more associated with recreation than therapy.

The popularization of recreational tobacco consumption is commonly seen to begin during the reign of Queen Elizabeth [1533-1603], with the rise of social smoking

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3 Goodman, 24.
6 Goodman, 37.
generally attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh [1544-1618]. Though Raleigh did not introduce tobacco to England, he "helped make it fashionable at court and in landed society...Smoking was just the kind of habit—dramatic and new-fangled—that would appeal to a man as conscious of his image as Raleigh." Compton Mackenzie, in *Sublime Tobacco* [1854], suggested that Raleigh was responsible for popularizing the consumption of tobacco via pipe smoking, adopted from the traditional Amerindian practice, throughout England and the rest of Europe. The rapid growth of tobacco consumption in England can be seen in statistics that show tobacco importation to England rising from twenty-five thousand pounds of tobacco in 1603 to thirty-eight million a century later. If the rise of European pipe-tobacco consumption can be attributed to England, the popularization of cigar-tobacco consumption is generally associated with Spain. Though these two European nations popularized pipe- and cigar-tobacco consumption in Europe, Portugal is generally credited with spreading these practices worldwide.

Tobacco and its consumption, introduced to the South Asian subcontinent in the late-sixteenth century by the Portuguese, quickly spread throughout all levels of Indian society by the beginning of the seventeenth century. Since its adoption, it has continued to be an important part of the culture and economy of modern India. In 2007 and 2008,

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9 Mackenzie, 84.
10 Goodman, 59.
11 Mackenzie, 120.
India was ranked third in the world for tobacco production and second in the world for consumption, with 27.6% of the country’s entire male population, representing over two hundred million people, shown to use tobacco in some fashion.\(^{13}\) Though Europeans introduced tobacco, established consumption methods were modified and “re-exoticized” by South Asians for their own use: the pipe became the *chilm*, the cigar the *cheroot*, and the Persian water-pipe the Indian hookah.\(^{14}\) As the British East India Company’s [EIC] influence grew in the region throughout the eighteenth century, the growing number of Britons serving in India adopted many of these Indian consumption practices. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, the majority of Anglo-Indians abandoned certain “native” methods, “surrendering” to traditional European products such as the cigar and cigarette.\(^{15}\) Tobacco consumption was such a large part of nineteenth-century metropolitan and Anglo-Indian British culture that its representations were pervasive in fiction written throughout this time period, forming an important background to their characters and narratives.

The actual origins of the hookah have never really been convincingly established, with a diverse array of arguments suggesting that the smoking device’s genesis is rooted in Persia, India, or simply the “Orient.” The *Hobson-Jobson* [1901] glossary defined the “hooka” as:

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\(^{15}\) Mackenzie, 311.
The Indian pipe for smoking through water, the elaborated hubble-bubble. That which is smoked in the hookah is a curious compound of tobacco, spice, molasses, fruit, &c. In 1840 the hooka was still very common at Calcutta dinner-tables, as well as regimental mess-tables, and its bubble-bubble-bubble was heard from various quarters before the cloth was removed—as was customary in those days.

This smoking device first became popular in India during the reign of Akbar the Great [1542-1605], when tobacco was first introduced. It has been suggested that Akbar was given a gift of tobacco and a European style pipe, but was advised not to inhale the smoke by his physician who feared it might be detrimental to his health. The Indian hookah was born when Akbar’s physician recommended the creation of a device that would allow the smoke to pass through water in order to make the smoke safer for the Mughal Emperor. Through the introduction of an Amerindian smoking practice to India, a distinct new consumption method was created. As the use of the hookah became widespread and came into contact with European travelers, traders, and colonizers in the Middle East and India it became a definitive feature in the imagination of an essentialized Orient. For the employees of the EIC, however, the hookah became much more than a symbol of the East; hookah-tobacco consumption became a key fixture within Anglo-Indian society.

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17 Yule and Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, 423. Emphasis in original.
18 Sivaramakrishnan, S.
The historiography surrounding the Anglo-Indian use of the hookah generally agrees that throughout the eighteenth century, the smoking device developed into a central, fetishized item within the social culture of India’s British inhabitants. The British adoption of the hookah represents how colonizer and colonized are in many ways mutually constitutive. The pipe, originally popularized in Europe by the British, was adopted and culturally redefined by Indians into the Indian hookah. When the British Empire extended into India, British colonizers adopted the hookah, which had re-exoticized a previously domesticated consumption practice.

Though hookah-tobacco consumption in Anglo-Indian society can be traced back to 1675 in the factory records of the EIC, it truly became deeply rooted in the society between 1750 and 1785.20 In many ways, Anglo-Indians adopted the consumption practices and symbolic representations that Indian elites placed on the hookah.21 Though the hookah was still used as a way of consuming tobacco, the object itself took on a symbolic importance for Anglo-Indians as a visual representation of status, affluence, and opulence. Though the hookah was also often consumed in private, the smoking practices of the afternoon and evening were largely dominated by social functions. The hookah became a fundamental part of being a hospitable host and it replaced the traditional European practice of smoking cigars after group dinners. A popular perspective of this Anglo-Indian smoking practice can be seen in an article from Harper’s New Monthly Magazine in 1855:

It is the mark of signal hospitality to place the hookah in the middle of the apartment, and pass the long flexible tube from guest to guest, each one

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21 Gokhale, 492.
taking a whiff in turn. Sometimes the liquid contained in the bowl is rose water; in such case the smoke not only loses its solid particles but also acquires added fragrance.22

For the most affluent Anglo-Indians to seem hospitable, however, it was essential to ensure that each guest had their own hookah.23 At these events, generally after dinners, so many people would be smoking at one time that first-hand accounts of these gatherings were often awed with the atmosphere that the hookah created. The *Calcutta Review* published a retrospective article in 1860 that described the hookah’s effect on social gatherings by recollecting the experience of the “late Mr. Blaquier” in 1774: “It is scarcely possible to see through the cloud of smoke which fills the apartment. The effect produced by these circumstances is whimsical enough to a stranger, and if he has not his hookah he will find himself in an awkward and unpleasant situation.”24 Smoking was so pervasive that non-smokers were either completely ignored or were deemed to have forgotten their hookah, as it was generally customary for a guest to bring their own.

In order to fit in with high society it was not enough to simply have a hookah. Though the majority of Anglo-Indians retained many Indian servants, one of the most unique, and thus widely discussed in tobacco historiography, was the *hookah-burdar*. The *Hobson-Jobson* defined the “hooka-burdar” as a “hooka-bearer,” whose “duty it was to attend to his master’s hooka, and who considered that duty sufficient to occupy his time.”25 These servants were tasked with only one duty: to ensure that the hookah was prepared and maintained to the liking of the *sahib*, or Anglo-Indian master, who

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22 “History and Mystery of Tobacco,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 61 (June, 1855), 11.
23 Billings, 157.
25 Yule and Burnell, 424.
employed them. The hookah-burdars were deemed so important that “those especially adept in their station were prized much as one might today prize a fine French chef.”

Goldring concisely described the duty of the hookah-burdar: “These gentlemen not only kept the pipe in perfect repair but freshened the water as so required or requested, prepared the smoking mixture according to his master’s taste, lit the tobacco and kept it burning evenly, and even transported it to social functions.” Thus, the hookah-burdar’s role was not simply limited to the domestic sphere, also extending to the public as they travelled everywhere with their employer. These public consumption practices show that the consumption of hookah-tobacco was well established as part of the “performance” of being Anglo-Indian into the nineteenth century.

Though the process involved in smoking a hookah is fairly complicated, these servants were also instrumental as a status symbol for their employers. Spear argued that as the wealth of the nabobs grew, the hookahs became more opulent and the hookah-burdars became more numerous. Though the hookah was essential for an Anglo-Indian to establish themselves as part of the haut ton, or people of high fashion, it required a great deal of dedication as it was an extremely expensive practice. The Calcutta Review suggested that in the eighteenth century the smoking habits of Anglo-Indians cost around one hundred rupees per month. This cost would have likely restricted the hookah to the rich Anglo-Indian elite, as this practice would take up a substantial amount of an EIC

26 Mackenzie, 310.
27 Goldring, 57.
28 Ibid.
29 Spear, 37.
clerks £200 annual salary in the 1780s. This prohibitive cost, combined with other social factors to be discussed below, was another reason for the hookah’s eventual decline in Anglo-Indian society in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

Regardless of the association of the hookah with nabobish behaviour and oriental corruption from the eighteenth century onwards, the smoking device was also popular in Britain’s metropolitan public sphere. The hookah was often used in public entertainment by the metropolitan leisure industry in order to provide a fully oriental gloss to their themed events in a similar fashion to the way it was used by pre-1857 authors. Pleasure Gardens, such as Vauxhall and Cremorne, exploded in popularity during the nineteenth century, becoming a key part of the Victorian leisure industry. In order to keep patrons interested, a “constantly changing programme of events and attractions, day and night” was necessary. An advertisement for Vauxhall Gardens from the Illustrated London News in 1842 highlights how important the hookah was for oriental themed events:

We love a masquerade—it is an epitome of the world. We may shake hands with the Esquimanx, without the danger of losing our fingers, by exposure to the frost; stroll with an African, without dreading to encounter a lion or tiger in our path, smoke a hookah with a Turkish bashaw; and, stranger still, chat with the fair slaves of his harem without the risk of the bow-string or the sack. Of all places Vauxhall is the best adapted for such an entertainment.

33 This article is an example of how the Illustrated London News sought to raise excitement for these public events through advertising. This suggests that the Illustrated London News would use targeted language in their articles in order to engage their readership, providing insight into the perspectives metropolitan Britons shared about other areas of the world.
34 "Vauxhall Gardens," Illustrated London News, August 6, 1842, 203.
This advertisement shows that the hookah, a highly orientalized smoking device, was not in itself viewed as something to be avoided or feared, even in a mid-century pre-1857 metropolitan setting, suggesting that it did not begin to be feared for its potential corrupting influence until the late nineteenth century.

Though it is clear that the hookah played an important role in the performance of being Anglo-Indian in the public sphere, the consumption of tobacco through the smoking device was also portrayed as a critical part of Anglo-Indian culture. The *Calcutta Review*, depicting the 1860s understanding of nabob culture, stated:

As a sequel to the hookah came the *Siesta*, or mid-day rest, so common in Italy and all tropical countries, so refreshing to early risers; it succeeded to dinner and the hookah...The *Hookah* was the grand whiler away of time in the morning. East Indian ladies were said to have been much addicted to its use, while gentleman, instead of their perusal of a daily paper, “furnishing the head with politics and the heart with scandal,” indulged themselves with the hookah’s rose water fumes.35

This article suggested that the hookah quickly became part of almost every aspect of Anglo-Indian life, and in many ways implies a replacement of “British” characteristics with indolent oriental ones: at breakfast, a gentleman used the hookah to idly pass the time instead of educating himself on current events; at mid-day, the hookah inspired a nap. Even outside of the private space, the habit of hookah smoking infiltrated public spaces that were frequented by Anglo-Indians, such as the theatre, which was forced to adapt to this new habit in order to accommodate the expectations of their patrons. Likely because of the noise and large amount of smoke created, theatres had to design and build special smoking boxes for the hookah.36 From a metropolitan perspective the hookah can

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36 Ibid., 210.
be seen as a critical agent in the nabobification of Anglo-Indians, influencing the modification of long established British customs and practices.

For those in the metropole who feared the corrupting power of India’s Eastern luxury and culture on its British population, the perceived Anglo-Indian addiction to the hookah became a powerful symbol of the “fallen” Nabob. In many ways, the hookah can be seen to have taken on a personification of oriental seduction, effeminization, and corruption, having active agency in a perceived decline of the Anglo-Indian community. This suggestion of agency can be seen in Goldring’s discussion of the oriental smoking device: “The hookah was swiftly adopted by all who encountered its enticing charms, not least of whom were the British who occupied India.” The hookah’s prominent presence in Anglo-Indian society can also be found in art, in paintings such as Richard Earlom’s Colonel Mordaunt’s Cock Match from 1792. In the background of this painting, “which came to epitomize the luxurious ease of the kingdom of Awadh in the later eighteenth century,” there is the image of a lounging Anglo-Indian smoking a hookah while surveying the cockfight. According to Dennis Kincaid [1905-1937], a novelist, historian, and civil servant of India, one of the most prominent images in the late eighteenth century for satirists in London “was that of the lordly European lolling in a long chair, the mouth-piece of a hookah in his hand, a glass of Madeira at his elbow.” Though the hookah had become integral to Anglo-Indian society by the mid-eighteenth

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38 Goldring, 57. Emphasis added.
century, it is most important to note that the smoking device had become a critical part of the metropolitan imagining of Anglo-Indian society, which later came to represent the perceived oriental, effeminate indolence seeping into their natural British character. As the hookah was clearly an essential part of both Anglo-Indian life and the Western conception of the Orient, it is ever-present in the early nineteenth-century novels focused on Indian and Anglo-Indian society and culture. These early representations will provide a base understanding of how this Indian object was perceived before the two watershed moments in the 1850s, providing a greater appreciation of how the hookah was ordered in British consumer culture in the late-nineteenth century.

In the early-nineteenth century, novels focused almost strictly on Indian life such as Hockley’s *Pandurang Hārī; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo* [1826] and Taylor’s *Confessions of a Thug* [1839] were fixated on the Indian consumption of tobacco via the hookah. Throughout these novels, Taylor and Hockley presented the hookah as an essential, or at the very least common, part of everyday life in India. Whether the characters in these novels were wealthy Indian princes, wandering beggars, or travelling merchants, the hookah is often found as a part of a scene’s background. It is important to note that these novels, though generally focused strictly on representations of Indian life, can also tell a great deal about Anglo-Indian society as well. Discussed in more detail below, the representations of hookah-tobacco consumption in these novels often mirror the way that Anglo-Indians adopted its use. For an author like Hockley, who was isolated from Indians during his career in India, these representations may have simply “Indianized” the society he knew while constructing his Indian scenes. For Taylor, who was far more integrated into Indian society, these representations can provide insight into the Indian
practices that were adopted and culturally re-defined by Anglo-Indian nabobs. As
Pandurang Hâri is premised on showing that all Indians are corrupt, lying, murdererous
thieves and Confessions is a novel centered on traveling gangs of murderer-thieves, the
hookah often appears in these novels alongside “evil” Indian characters and actions. The
hookah is so ever-present in these early novels, however, that its inclusion in the narrative
is strictly to bring an “authentically” oriental flair to the scenes and characters in these
novels for the author’s metropolitan and Anglo-Indian audiences.

Before examining the depictions of tobacco consumption in Pandurang Hâri it is
critical to recall a passage from Hockley’s introduction in order to understand how his
perspective of Indians and Indian culture influenced these representations. Hockey wrote,
“From the rajah to the ryot, with the intermediate grades, [Indians] are ungrateful,
insidious, cowardly, unfaithful, and revengeful.⁴¹ Thus, it is important to note that all the
Indian characters in Hockley’s novel, whether they were portrayed with a hookah or not,
would be attributed with at least one of these negative characteristics. In Hockley’s novel,
representations of tobacco consumption and the use of the hookah emerge almost
immediately while the protagonist, Pandurang Hâri, seeks the employ of a corrupt
“Hindoo” prince, Sawunt Rao: “During his dinner, Sawunt Rao never once noticed me;
but afterwards, when smoking his hookah, he exclaimed, ‘Ah, Pandoo, what—can you
write?’ I answered in the affirmative.”⁴² It appears that Hockley, in an effort to make the
scene familiar both to his Anglo-Indian and metropolitan audience, situated the use of the
hookah as well as the conversation between Hâri and Rao after dinner to bring

⁴¹ [William Browne Hockley], Pandurang Hâri, or Memoirs of a Hindoo, vol. 1
⁴² Ibid., 10-11.
authenticity and familiarity to the scene. Hockley also portrays the Ma,ha,raj, as Rao is referred to by his subjects, smoking the hookah in every scene he appears, regardless of whether he is engaged in casual conversation or official court business. Even during serious trials, such as when Hári is charged with murder, Rao is depicted smoking from his hookah:

I was ordered to prepare for the eventful interview, which I pictured full of horrors. I was again ushered into the presence of my master. The Ma,ha,raj was smoking his hookah. He fixed upon me his dark eye, flashing with anger, and exclaimed, “Serpent as you are! instead of protecting the subjects of the world-conquering Holkar, you have stained your hands in their blood—you have committed outrageous crimes.”

Though the hookah is situated firmly in the background of these scenes, by depicting Rao’s oriental smoking practices and habits as far exceeding those of the British, Hockley highlights his “otherness.” This in turn does the same to those Anglo-Indian nabobs who have become seduced by and addicted to the hookah, adopting these oriental consumption methods and habits.

Hockley’s use of the hookah as a background element to provide the narrative with an Indian gloss, as opposed to the smoking device being intricately linked to his corrupt, indolent, murderous “native” characters, is evident throughout the novel. The main antagonist of Pandurang Hári, characterized by Hockley as “sly and designing; a cool, relentless murderer,” is often depicted alongside a hookah:

I came to a door half open; and saw Trimbuckje sitting cross-legged on the floor, with papers before him, and a large figure of Gunputty, with the elephant’s trunk, fastened to the wall over his head. His hookah stood beside him, and he wore a sort of skull cap, with a muslin coat and short breeches. His two-edged sword lay near him, and before him an unsheathed dagger.

43 [Hockley], Pandurang Hári, vol. 1, 44.
44 Ibid., 178-9.
bowed to this “prince of darkness,” whose complexion was the colour of his heart.45

Though the hookah is present in the scene while Trimbukje is being introduced, it is simply one oriental object situated within a room cluttered with other objects that are present for no particular reason beyond establishing the scene as oriental. This claim is further strengthened by the various circumstances in the novel where the hookah appears alongside neutral or inconsequential characters and scenes. At one point during Hāri’s travels, he passes through a traveler’s resting place where he “saw no one but an old Mahommedan, smoking his hookah in a corner,”46 who does little more for the scene than tell Hāri that he had not seen the people he was looking for. Another example of this is the inclusion of a two-rupee charge for hookah in a hoondie, or bill of exchange, which was sent to Trimbukje outlining the costs for keeping two of the novel’s protagonists in prison.47 Thus, Hockley viewed the hookah to be so integral to everyday life in India that he placed it in this inconsequential bill, suggesting it would be considered an assumed cost while keeping inmates. The hookah’s appearance alongside critical characters with negative oriental stereotypes, as well as in seemingly meaningless situations alongside minor, neutral characters, shows that Hockley had no agenda behind the inclusion of the hookah in his novel beyond creating an oriental background.

The hookah’s prevalence in the backdrop of the novel continues in Taylor’s Confessions of a Thug. As the novel was based around thugs, and the thuggee trade was mainly carried out on the roads between cities, consumption of hookah in Confessions often occurs when characters are taking a break during the day or around a campfire at

45 [Hockley], Pandurang Hāri, vol. 1, 189-90.
46 Ibid., 256.
night. In many cases, the hookah was shared between the thugs and the travelling
merchants who they had accosted. In Confessions Taylor located the smoking device in
scenes in order to orientalize the background of his novel, in a similar fashion to the way
Hockley used the hookah in Pandurang Hārī, as opposed to suggesting anything specific
about his characters. Taylor, likely because of his affinity towards Indian culture and
practices, includes the hookah even more frequently than Hockley throughout
Confessions. Right from the beginning of the novel, Taylor established the hookah as an
essential part of a traveler’s equipment: “We were roused from our sleep at the hour
proposed; and after the men had a pipe48 all round, we set off. I was in the dooly with my
mother. The moon had risen; but, as well as I can remember there was but little light.”49
In this passage Ameer Ali, the anti-hero of the novel because of his status as an infamous
thug, recollected how thugs accosted his family during a journey when he was a child.
Throughout Confessions, the hookah makes constant appearances on the road before,
during, and after thuggee acts.

The previous example is one of countless scenes from Confessions that situates
the hookah’s consumption between a group of thugs, acting in apparent goodwill, and
their chosen victims while on the road. The following example comes from a particularly
daring act of thuggee, where the group targets an exceptionally affluent travelling prince:
“Will you now halt for an hour? we can have a pipe all round, and your slave can
prepare your sherbet’…The rude hooka50 passed round among them, while they

48 Taylor uses “pipe” and “hookah” interchangeably throughout Confessions.
50 This likely refers to a crude hookah constructed with a hallowed out coconut.
Edward Balfour, “Hookah,” The Cyclopaedia of India and of Eastern and Southern Asia
cheerfully discussed the merits of the road they had passed, and what was likely to be before them. In addition, throughout the novel the thugs generally used a call for tobacco [tumbako loa] or the hookah as a signal to begin murdering their victims: "'Fazil Khan, bring my hookah,' cried I as loud as I could. It was the signal we had agreed on. 'Ay,' cried the Nuwab, 'I will beg a whiff or two, 'twill be agreeable with my sherbet.'" The hookah also often appeared after the act of *thuggee* had been carried out. The following passage is taken from the point when Ali successfully completed his first murder and is formally initiated into the gang of thugs: "We all collected together, and lighting fires, the hooka passed round, and each one related his achievement, and gloried in the prospect of a speedy division of the booty we had acquired." Though through these three examples it may seem as if Taylor deliberately connected the hookah to *thuggee* acts, when placed in the context of the rest of the novel it is clear that, even when invoked to trigger murder, he included the hookah because he viewed its use to be so commonplace in Indian society it would be seen as perfectly natural.

The hookah appears so often in innocent situations throughout *Confessions*, even more so than in *Pandurang Hāri*, that it should be seen as little more than an oriental prop for Taylor in the construction of his Indian scenes, conveying his Orientalist understanding of India to his readership. Taylor viewed the hookah as such an integral part of a person's possessions that when detailing the sorts of things the travelers in his novel carried with them, the hookah is almost always present: "Just as we had completed all our preparations our friend came...he brought with him what we supposed to be his...."

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51 Taylor, *Confessions*, vol. 2 1839, 160.  
52 Taylor, *Confessions*, vol. 1 1839, 85.  
53 Taylor, *Confessions*, vol. 2 1839, 164.  
54 Taylor, *Confessions*, vol. 1 1839, 224.
valuables; one of his servants carried the bundle, which appeared carefully tied up in waxed cloths, and his hookah, and his bedding."\textsuperscript{55} The hookah also appeared as an integral part of hosting a guest, regardless of the host’s social status: "'I told [the religious mendicant] I was hungry and weary, that I had just arrived from Hindostan, and did not know where to lay my head...he was pacified, and admitted me into his cave, game me some food and a hookah, and we sat carousing for some time.'"\textsuperscript{56} Through passages such as this, Taylor established that the hookah was so ever-present in Indian life that even the meanest of religious mendicants would be able to offer it to their guests. The hookah is again evoked by Taylor at the conclusion of a dinner organized for Ali after he saves a town from gross extortion at the hands of a roving band of plunderers in one of the rare scenes of goodwill towards other humans the protagonist exhibits in the novel: "The dinner was soon brought, and a choice repast it was. We did justice to it, for in truth our travel had sharpened out appetites. These satisfied, [we inhaled] the fragrant smoke of our pipes."\textsuperscript{57} The consistent appearances of the hookah in the background of both \textit{Confessions} and \textit{Pandurang Hāri}, regardless of the events of the scene or the characters involved, mean that its importance lies in the fact that it is seen as a mundane, background feature of life in India. By examining its representations for its hidden meanings that would generally be overlooked today, aspects of social status and conceptions of Indians and Anglo-Indians can be explored.

As was shown in a few examples from Hockley’s \textit{Pandurang Hāri} and Taylor’s \textit{Confessions}, it is possible to see certain Anglo-Indian consumption practices appear in

\textsuperscript{55} Taylor, \textit{Confessions}, vol. 1 1839, 257.
\textsuperscript{56} Taylor, \textit{Confessions}, vol. 2 1839, 46.
\textsuperscript{57} Taylor, \textit{Confessions}, vol. 3 1839, 35.
these novels under the guise of Indian society. *Confessions*, much richer in actual descriptions of tobacco consumption than *Pandurang Hārī*, provides a now-obscured archive of information about the novel’s characters, author, and the society it was based in. Early in the novel, Ali frees a beautiful dancing girl, Zora, from the oppression of an Indian Prince who had stolen her from her family. When Ali brings her home, Taylor described how Zora’s mother, in her joy, allowed him to smoke from her hookah: “At the end, after taking a whiff or two, she carefully wiped the mouth-piece, and presented me with her own hookah, the fragrance of which was beyond that of ambergris or musk. I was in paradise! I was intensely happy!”58 From the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, one of the greatest displays of affection a woman could show to a man in Anglo-Indian society was to offer him the chance to smoke from her hookah without changing the hose.59 Though, according to Louis de Grandpre, a French army officer in the eighteenth century, “the highest compliment [a woman] can pay to a man is to give him preference by smoking his hookah.”60 Grandpre’s passing remark ties the image of a seductive, effeminized oriental India to the hookah, a theme that continues in nineteenth-century representations of the smoking device. These commonalities with Anglo-Indian society can also be found in abundance throughout the tenth chapter of the first volume, which provides the most detailed account of the hookah in *Confessions*.

58 Taylor, *Confessions*, vol. 1 1839, 322.
59 Kincaid, 94.
60 Spear, 99; Mackenzie, 309.
In this chapter, Ali is passing time in the house of a *bhutteara* before embarking on his adventure to free Zora, the captured dancing girl. In order to relax and get some sleep before his mission, Ali requests a hookah from his host. Throughout this chapter, Ali consumes tobacco through the hookah at least three separate times while enjoying the hospitality of the bhutteara. The amount of hookah consumed in this passage becomes more interesting when it is juxtaposed to the reasons for consumption. At first, smoking is a tool to calm Ali’s nerves and allow him to sleep: “My hookah being smoked out, and feeling drowsy, I laid myself down and slept.” After Ali wakes up, he smokes a great deal more hookah in order to keep himself awake: “I cannot sleep again,” said I; ‘I am refreshed, and another hookah or two will keep me awake till it is time to go.’ This not only reflects an Anglo-Indian conception of hookah use by Indians, but also highlights the importance of the hookah within their own culture. Throughout the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth century, hookah was enjoyed at all times of the day; as mentioned earlier, hookah’s were smoked while reading the morning paper, doing business, before meals and as a sedative before bed. The *Calcutta Review* even suggested that in some of the most extreme cases, men were seen smoking hookah while driving their buggies, though this practice was stopped after a concerted series of complaints. A great deal of

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63 Ibid., 228.
64 Ibid., 227.
65 Ibid.
67 Kincaid, 159.
information about class and social status for both Indians and Anglo-Indians can also be read in the depictions of the hookah specifically, and tobacco consumption in general.

It is clear from representations of tobacco consumption in *Pandurang Hāri* and *Confessions* that both authors viewed the hookah as the most prominent smoking device used by the Indian population. In novels such as William Delafield Arnold’s *Oakfield* and Wilkie Collins’ *The Moonstone*, representations of the hookah, among other oriental smoking practices, provide a critical catalogue of information surrounding affluence, class, and social standing in both metropolitan and Anglo-Indian British society. Collins’ *The Moonstone* provides a very clear example of how different methods of smoking tobacco were associated with different classes in England. Gabriel Betteredge, the “house-steward” of the Herncastle estate, is an avid pipe smoker; Franklin Blake, whose tobacco addiction leads to the theft of the diamond when he attempts to quit, is an “inveterate” cigar smoker; and Mr. Murthwaite, the “celebrated Indian traveler” who “had penetrated in disguise where no European had ever set foot before,” is constantly depicted smoking a simple Indian cigar called a cheroot.68 Thus, *The Moonstone* locates class and tobacco consumption along a lower class/pipe, upper class/cigar, and “Indianized” Anglo-Indian/cheroot line.

Though the hookah does not appear at all throughout *The Moonstone*, its location within this framework can be very clearly seen in *Oakfield*, published in 1853 at a time when the hookah was beginning to wane in popularity amongst new British arrivals to India. Oakfield, while discussing the men in his new regiment with his friend Vernon, asks: “‘What kind of man is the quarter master?’ ‘What Jerrold? Oh, he’s a native, you

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know; never stirs out; stays at home and smokes a hookah all day.'" In an Anglo-Indian context, by the 1850s the hookah can be seen to become a symbol a "total" nabob, beyond that of the partially Indianized cheroot smoker. The Anglo-Indian consumption of the hookah began to be seen as a symbol of the full corruption of the British in India by the allure of the luxurious orient. In Oakfield, the EIC's Anglo-Indian officers are depicted as cheroot smokers and the rank and file are associated with the consumption of the traditional European pipe:

"If the English were swept off the face of Hindostan to-morrow, the only trace they would leave behind would be the broken tobacco-pipes of their soldiers." "At any rate they might add the cheroots of their officers," said Oakfield, pointing to Lieut. Dacre, who was just throwing away the remains of the nineteenth and lighting the twentieth cheroot of the morning.70

Oakfield, published in 1853, is representative of the growing shift in Anglo-Indian smoking practices throughout the nineteenth century. By the time The Moonstone was published, the dominant Anglo-Indian smoking practice in the metropolitan imagination was the cheroot.

From Collins' descriptions of Murthwaite in The Moonstone, it can be seen that the popular metropolitan perception of Anglo-Indians included the cheroot and not the hookah. Early in the novel, while Murthwaite is imparting his knowledge of Indian culture and customs to Franklin and Betteredge, Collins mentions the cheroot six separate times.71 Collins wrote, "Going back by way of the shrubbery, [Betteredge] smelt tobacco, and found Mr Franklin and Mr Murthwaite (the latter smoking a cheroot) walking slowly

70 Ibid., 157-8.
up and down the trees." It is important to note in this passage that Collins viewed the cheroot as so important to Murthwaite’s character that he felt it necessary to ensure that his audience knew he was smoking an Indian cigar by including the information as an aside. In the 1820s, it was common to see Anglo-Indian nabobs returning to England with hookahs, maintaining the consumption habits they had developed while in India. Beginning in the 1840s, however, hookahs began to be replaced by cheroots as the favoured smoking practice by Anglo-Indians in India. By the late 1850s, the Indian cigar had become the dominant method of consuming tobacco being brought back to England by EIC employees. This shift by Anglo-Indians away from the hookah, which began to be associated with the negative stereotypes surrounding nabobs, towards the cheroot can be seen clearly in depictions of tobacco use in Oakfield.

The consumption of the cheroot is a key feature of most EIC officers throughout Oakfield. Though tobacco use is not as omnipresent in Arnold’s work, unlike many of the other novels in this study, the cheroot is the only consumption method placed in Oakfield’s background beyond the aforementioned passage containing a hookah. Arnold often has the cheroot appear after dinner, associating Anglo-Indian mess hall culture with proper British smoking habits. After Oakfield’s first dinner in “Indian white-jacketed society,” his friend Stanton asked: “‘Well, what do you think of it?’... when dinner was over and the cheroots were lighted. ‘Oh, I don’t know that there’s much to think.” Later in the novel, the cheroots appear again after dinner in the presence of the much-maligned character Cade: “So the dinner passed off, and by the time the curry and rice

72 Collins, 71.
73 Spear, 99.
74 Collins, The Moonstone, 482.
75 Arnold, Oakfield, 5.
was disposed of, the cloth off the table, and cheroots lighted, Oakfield, who had
exhausted his civilian neighbour, and who observed that Cade and Co. were getting
boisterous, was anxious to decamp. 76 Though Arnold did loosely associate the cheroot
with Cade, it also appears throughout the novel alongside characters not meant to
personify the lack of morality in Anglo-Indian society that Oakfield intended to highlight.
While on a steamer to Allahabad, Oakfield meets the “quiet inoffensive” Lieutenant
Dacre who “managed to get through the short day by the help of three meals, and a
connecting line of brandy and water and cheroots.” 77 Regardless of whether Arnold’s
characters were depicted as a “good” or “bad” type of Anglo-Indian officer, cheroots
were their smoking method of choice, which places representations of tobacco
consumption in the background of Oakfield in the same fashion as Confessions and
Pandurang Hâri. A key feature of the post-1857 catalogue of fiction is the gradual
rejection of the hookah for the cigar and the cheroot, which is clearly recognizable in
Arnold’s mid-nineteenth century novel.

In Seeta and First Love, where depictions of tobacco use are more strongly
weighted symbolically than the background objects of the pre-1857 period, depictions of
cheroots, cigars, and especially hookahs, play roles in both the background and the
forefront of their narratives. In these Mutiny novels, the Anglo-Indian consumption of
cheroots and cigars depicts a form of class conflict rooted in the objects themselves.
When EIC Commissioner Cyril Brandon, the lead male protagonist in Seeta, is depicted
smoking, he is always described as smoking cigars, a symbol of the traditional British
gentleman: “Cyril thought for awhile before going to his room to write. He had lighted a

76 Arnold, Oakfield, 95.
77 Ibid., 150.
cigar, and went out into the verandah to one of the luxurious chairs which were always there, and smoked in peace and quiet.”

Brandon’s position as a district Commissioner, in the upper echelon of Anglo-Indian society, is highlighted by his penchant for smoking cigars. This is done, to similar effect, with Brandon’s companion Philip Mostyn, a judge in the district. After a dinner, Mostyn suggests the two retire for a cigar: “‘I will come and smoke a cigar with you Cyril,’ said Mostyn, ‘if you will let me.’”

The only time that Brandon is depicted as smoking a cheroot in *Seeta* is after a solitary dinner in his private bungalow: “When he had finished his dinner, and putting his legs on the table (who that has so luxuriated in India can ever forget it?), lighted a manilla, and took up the stick again.”

Though Brandon is depicted smoking a cheroot, it is important to note that manilla cheroots were much revered by the Anglo-Indian community for their quality.

Though cigars are clearly the main method of consuming tobacco for Taylor’s protagonists in *Seeta*, it is not so apparent in regards to the leading characters in Grant’s *First Love*. For Grant, depictions of Anglo-Indians smoking cigars and cheroots, as well as the occasional hookah, are far more fluid. Throughout *First Love* the most experienced Anglo-Indians, such as Captain Jack Harrower, Lieutenant Rowley Mellon, and Second Lieutenant Pat Doyle, who have spent more time in India and are thus more likely to be drawn towards oriental smoking practices, are often depicted smoking cheroots. This can be seen at the very outset of the novel in a conversation between Harrower and Mellon about the impending uprising, “the first indications of which they were discussing

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80 Taylor, *Seeta*, vol. 1, 205.
through the pleasant medium of brandy and iced soda water, together with a box of cheroots.\textsuperscript{82} Doyle was also described “smoking fiercely at a cheroot, the lighted end of which glowed like a carbuncle or red fire-fly in the dusky dawn,” while fleeing from Delhi in the immediate aftermath of the revolt.\textsuperscript{83} It is important to note, however, that these characters also smoked cigars in a fashion that at first glance seems interchangeable with the consumption of cheroots. One example comes from the mess of the 54\textsuperscript{th}, where Harrower tells a story to Doyle about the time he got into a “tricky” situation with a married woman:\textsuperscript{84} “By the time Harrower’s story was finished, it was found that Doyle had fallen asleep, and set his black, bushy whiskers on fire with a short cigar.”\textsuperscript{85} As there are countless other examples throughout \textit{First Love} of these characters smoking both cigars and cheroots, further investigation is required to uncover their meaning.

One of the unique aspects of both \textit{First Love} and \textit{The Moonstone} is that Grant and Collins each highlight the symptoms and dangers of addiction that is inherent in the consumption of drugs such as tobacco. Though the example in \textit{The Moonstone} will be dealt with in more detail in the following chapter, because of the critical importance of opium to the novel, it is important to note that the theft of the diamond is directly related to tobacco withdrawal. In order to treat Franklin’s symptoms, he is given a high dose of oriental opium that puts him in a trance, which leads him to steal the Moonstone.\textsuperscript{86} In \textit{First Love}, after the uprising first breaks out in Delhi, the protagonists in the novel are scattered and forced into hiding throughout the countryside, where withdrawal symptoms

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Grant, \textit{First Love}, vol. 1, 2.
\item Grant, \textit{First Love}, vol. 2, 111.
\item The story told by Harrower fits nicely with the concerns raised by Arnold about the degenerate state of morality exhibited by officer in their mess halls in \textit{Oakfield}.
\item Grant, \textit{First Love}, vol. 1, 119.
\item Collins, \textit{The Moonstone}, 379.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
are apparent in many of their musings. This is most clearly shown by Harrower as he wandered aimlessly through the jungle with his love interest, Lena Weston. Though his partner found a romantic appeal to their situation, Harrower could think of little more than his addiction: “Jack saw nothing romantic in their position, for there was nothing of romance in his nature; he was thoroughly practical, and, as he stumbled on through the long jungle grass, he sighed—as only an inveterate smoker can sigh—for a single cheroot.”

Though he longed for an Indian cigar in this passage, when he finally stumbled upon a fellow exile from Delhi, his first thought was to ask for a proper European cigar:

“If you have such a thing as a cigar about you—,” Harrower was beginning. “That’s my last cheroot, Jack,” said Doyle sadly, as they came forth from his hiding-place; “and ere long it’s out of temper I’ll be, as well as tobacco, for with a regular smoker, the two things are inseparable. My last cheroot! Oh! Lord, it’s in a bog-hole, or well nigh as bad, that I’ll be by the time tomorrow.” “Not at all, Doyle—think how long I have been without the soothing weed.”

The prioritization of the cigar over both the cheroot and the hookah in this scene suggests that Harrower was only partially Indianized through his time in India. He only resorted to the cheroot, and even the hookah as will be shown later, in times when a proper European cigar was not available or “intoxicating” enough.

In these later novels the depiction of both Indians and Anglo-Indians smoking the hookah became very selective and was aimed at “othering” the characters associated with the smoking device as opposed to creating an oriental background for the scene. Unlike in Confessions, where the hookah appears pervasively as part of a scene’s oriental milieu, Taylor only invoked the hookah in a select few scenes, directly alongside the instigators.

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87 Grant, First Love, vol. 3, 89.
88 Ibid., 124.
of and participants in the Rebellion of 1857. Though there are a plethora of scenes in *Seeta* that the hookah would have seamlessly fit into, such as dinner parties and other such social gatherings, its consumption is reserved only for the novel's key antagonists.89

One of the most unique aspects of *First Love* is the fact that the hookah appears throughout the novel in the context of both Indians and Anglo-Indians. In a similar fashion to the singular depiction of the hookah in *Oakfield*, Hockley sought to associate the hookah’s consumption to an older class of fully Orientalized Anglo-Indian nabobs:

> “Old Woodby was a dreadful bugbear and bully *beaudar* to all in general...He was stunted in figure, was almost destitute of neck, had a round bilious looking face, with two fierce, twinkling little eyes, and was everyway the best specimen of the old curry-eating, rupee-collecting, yellow-visaged, hubble-bubble smoking Anglo Indian tyrant, I ever met. He hated Europe naturally and all connected with it.”90

Though it is clear that this passage firmly associated the hookah’s consumption by Anglo-Indians with the negative stereotypes surrounding eighteenth-century nabobism, depictions of the smoking device vary, and thus require a more in-depth analysis in order to locate its hidden meaning within the novel.

The hookah’s appearance alongside Anglo-Indian characters in *First Love* is limited to the first volume, before the outbreak of the uprising. Throughout the novel Grant’s Anglo-Indian characters, who are generally officers in the Native Infantry, are depicted smoking cigars, cheroots, and occasionally a hookah. Three different scenarios involving the hookah will have to be discussed in order to unpack the information imparted by the author: the general consumption of the hookah by the officer corps of the 54th Native Infantry at social gatherings, by Irishman Pat Doyle, and by the main

89 Taylor, *Seeta*, vol. 1, 110.
protagonist Jack Harrower. After the last dinner gathering before the outbreak of the Rebellion, officers of the 54th are depicted carelessly going about their business, in denial of the unrest amongst the soldiers under their command:

The goodly row of officers in cool white uniforms, who sat at the long mess-table of the 54th, with a turbaned crowd of dusky attendants hovering behind their chairs—every guest brings his own servants in India—bored, rather than amused him, till the cloth was removed, tobacco introduced, and the business of the rather sultry April night began, while white vests were slyly unbuttoned, cigars were lighted, the hookahs began to bubble under the table, and the great punkah swayed noiselessly to and fro from the ceiling. 91

Many of these officers were adamant, in their conversations around the table while enjoying the hookah, that the Sepoys under their leadership were perfectly disciplined and at no risk of mutiny. 92 Nevertheless, at the outbreak of the 54th NI’s revolt at the beginning of the second volume, Grant subjects these very officers to the “bayonet and the butt end of the musket, the sabre and the more terrible tulwar” of their “loyal” charges. 93 Grant’s decision to associate these failed officers with the hookah, a symbol of the fully orientalized nabob who has lost their British characteristics to the corruption of the East, foreshadows their fate. Though it is clear that Grant associated the hookah to the impotence of the EIC officers in a general sense, it becomes more complicated when placed alongside the novel’s specific characters.

In *First Love*, the only main “Anglo-Indian” character that is depicted directly smoking the hookah, with the exception of Harrower, is the Irish officer Pat Doyle. Though in the context of Great Britain, the Irish, Scottish, and Welsh were seen as “subaltern” citizens, they often played a key role in the administration of the British

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91 Grant, *First Love*, vol. 1, 89.
92 Ibid., 90.
93 Grant, *First Love*, vol. 2, 4.
Empire. Grant’s background as a Scot and his experience with the Gordon Highlanders and the 62nd Regiment of Foot may have left him disillusioned with the dichotomy of “other” at home and “British” abroad. In the above dinner scene, which doomed many of the English nabob officers of the 54th, Doyle is specifically depicted as consuming tobacco through a hookah: “Jack was bored by the chit-chat and gossip which at other times would have amused him…Pat Doyle, who sat next him, had quietly taken the snake of the hookah from his hand, and smoked it for half the night, unheeded by him.”

Though Doyle falls in battle retaking Delhi instead of being murdered like the other English officers, Grant’s decision to specifically associate Doyle with the smoking device serves to “other” him in a different fashion.

Throughout the novel Doyle’s status as an outsider to the rest of the officers, though well liked and accepted, is well established by Grant. After escaping from Delhi at the outset of the Rebellion, Harrower and Doyle reconnect with a troop ship carrying soldiers to retake Delhi while sailing along the Jumna. In order to seek assistance Harrower shouted, “‘We are Englishmen, and want assistance.’” In response, Doyle stated, “‘Speak for yourself, Jack…for I’m an Irishman to the backbone, I’m proud to say.’” Through this passage, Grant clearly seeks to show the importance of the “others” within Great Britain to the British Empire by having the proud Irishman Doyle aid in Harrowers survival, with both being saved by the well-defined Scottish soldiers within the Bengal Fusiliers. Thus, Grant’s direct association of the hookah to Pat Doyle can be

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94 Nechtman, 7.
95 Grant, First Love, vol. 1, 93.
seen to serve as a way of affirming his difference in comparison to the other officers in the 54th.

The consumption of the hookah by the novel’s main protagonist, Jack Harrower, is even more conflicted. Though the hookah’s use is not all that curious alongside the disparaged nabob Colonel Woodby, its consumption by Harrower in the novel is. Throughout the novel he consumes cigars, cheroots, and hookahs, which adds an internal conflict between his British values and a descent into nabobism through oriental seduction. Harrower, in the midst of a sleepless night because of rumours of unrest among the Sepoys and trouble with a love interest, was desperate to fall asleep:

Jack sighed amid his reverie, and mechanically helped himself to a “night-cap,” from the brandy bottle; and though drowsy, and made more so by the soothing effects of the hookah, to which he now resorted, by the monotonous swinging of the punkah overhead.⁹⁷

In this scene, the hookah is used by Harrower as an intoxicant in hopes that it would act as a remedy for his insomnia. The fact that Harrower “resorted” to the “soothing effects” of the hookah also suggests that the oriental device, in some sense, had seduced him with its intoxicating properties. At the end of this scene, however, Harrower rejects the object, “[tossing] away the amber mouth-piece of his hookah.”⁹⁸ Though originally enticed by the drugging effects of the hookah, Harrower eventually rejects the oriental smoking device at the end of this scene. This pattern emerges throughout the first volume of First Love, with the seduction of the hookah often spurred on by trouble in his relationship with Lena Weston. Harrower’s rejection of the hookah marks his rejection of its effeminizing, corrupting properties in order to promote his British masculinity to his love

⁹⁸ Ibid., 19.
interest. Though the consumption of the hookah is depicted alongside Anglo-Indian characters early in the novel, after the outbreak of the Rebellion and the fall of Delhi, the hookah appears solely in the possession of the Indian mutineers.

Though *Seeta* and *First Love* have two very different goals, with Taylor calling for rationality and understanding towards Indians and Grant embarking upon a racialized polemic, the representations of tobacco consumption in these novels are very similar. With the exception of the examples provided above, the hookah is strictly associated with the leaders and participants of the Mutiny in both novels. In *Seeta*, the hookah was no longer a part of Taylor’s novel’s background as in *Confessions*, but became a symbol of the corruption and treachery inherent in oriental society, similar to the traits assumed in Indians by Hockley in *Pandurang Hari*. Before engaging with these scenes, it is important to note that Taylor was careful throughout *Seeta* to distinguish between those Indians who led and participated in what he perceived to be the Indian Mutiny and the rest of India which stayed loyal to the EIC. He wrote:

Not such, however, are the men who declare India to be “an infernal hole;” who speak and think contemptuously of its people, who deny them their sympathy and help, who hold them as “niggers” and “black-fellows,” as if they were negro savages, who over-ride them haughtily, who despise and refuse their society, and never even attempt their friendship...only too many such have sprung up in these latter days, who, in their arrogance, deem themselves wiser than those good and great men, who set a mark upon their times which will ever live in the annals of India’s history.⁹⁹

Unlike the novels by Hockley and Grant that essentialize all Indians as untrustworthy, seditious, corrupt, and murderous, it is clear that Taylor is reserving these traits for the select group of Indians who rebelled against the EIC. Throughout *Seeta*, the hookah is

⁹⁹ Taylor, *Seeta*, vol. 1, 146.
clearly tied to the instigators of the mutiny, but is never consumed by the plethora of loyal Indian troops Taylor includes in his narrative.

In a shift from the mundane background object of Confessions, the hookah is only mentioned a total of four times throughout the novel. In each of these cases, the hookah is directly associated with characters that actively participate in spreading the Rebellion throughout India. The hookah’s first appearance in Seeta is in a meeting between an Indian prince, Nawab Dil Khan and a moulvee, or Muslim religious scholar, Zea Oola, who both seek to incite an uprising. The Nawab seeks to overthrow British rule in order to resume his extortion of the countryside and the moulvee hopes to restore the glory of the Mughal Empire:

The Nawab found his guest seated at the window smoking a hookah which had been served to him, and apologized for his absence...“These English call themselves our masters, but, thanks be to the Lord, there will soon, very soon, be none of them. In a very few days, all will have perished and gone to hell.” “Ah, is it so, really? I have heard the same from others, but as yet there is no sign of that hereabouts.” “Nor will there be till the time comes,” replied the Moulvee; “and that is now very near. The Sepoys will kill them all.”100

In this scene, immediately after the moulvee is introduced smoking a hookah, he outlines how the English will be overthrown. Azrael Pande, the main antagonist, who is being housed by the Nawab after travelling the countryside to incite the uprising, eavesdrops on this part of the conversation and later offers to work together with the moulvee to trigger the uprising at a set time.101 The hookah is also a key feature of one of the Nawab’s female agents in the novel.

One of the key sub-plots in Seeta is Pande’s unremitting lust for the titular character, which leads to various attempts to capture her from the English cantonment

101 Ibid., 264.
where she lived with Cyril Brandon, the novel’s protagonist. After a few failed attempts, Pande recruits one of the Nawab’s favourite “Mámas” from his zenana. Taylor described her as “a tall, portly dame, well dressed, and, like others of her class, with no pretensions to seclusion, walk[ing] about the garden, holding a small silver hookah in her hand, smoking as she walked.”102 Though Taylor goes to great lengths to describe Máma Jumeela as “tall and fat,” very ugly, and richly dressed, the silver hookah is a reoccurring symbol that appears only in relation to her character and the plot to capture Seeta. Taylor wrote, “All day had the dame displayed her magnificence through the bazaar of Noorpoor, sitting cross-legged in her palankeen, with the doors wide open, smoking her silver hookah, which was filled from time to time by her attendant.”103 Though the character of Máma Jumeela is fairly minor, with her influence on the narrative ending beneath an elephant after a failed attempt to capture Seeta by force, Taylor clearly sought to associate the hookah with this Indian conspirator. The most critical appearance of the hookah in Seeta, however, is on the eve of the uprising after EIC Commissioner Cyril Brandon gravely wounds Pande.

Pande is delirious throughout the entire scene because of his seemingly mortal wounds and his constant consumption of marijuana. Buldeo, who eventually serves as an informant for Brandon and aids the British in their fight against the mutineers, describes Pande as “‘too mad to know anybody but me; all he wants in ‘Ganja,’ ‘Ganja,’ perpetually, and somehow or other he contrives to smoke, but it is as if a dead man held the hookah, and I get frightened by myself.’”104 Before Pande consumes the hookah in

103 Ibid., 41-2.
104 Ibid., 19-20.
this passage, his first outburst is mostly about his love for Seeta and has only a minor
violent episode. "'Seeta! Seeta! O beloved, come to me! O beloved, give me thy love, as
thou hast mine!'" Later, with the introduction of a hookah, his rhetoric becomes
increasingly violent towards Seeta and the British in India. Though it is fairly obvious
that Taylor intends for the consumption of marijuana to be the catalyst of the "devils"
that take over Pande's mind, the hookah becomes the vehicle for this possession: "While
Buldeo supported him, Azrael inhaled the fierce intoxication of the hemp leaves in rapid
whiffs, swallowing the smoke, or passing it through his nose. At last he dropped the
hookah and fell back on his bed, snoring heavily." This first instance of marijuana
smoking through the hookah then led to the recital of Hindu scripture that is associated
with violence and Kali.

After Pande's outburst of scripture, he descends into a trance that unnerves his
two associates. By consuming more marijuana through the hookah, he regains focus and
begins to recite passages from an Indian play, foreshadowing the coming rebellion
against British rule. In a clear turn away from the mundane hookah of Confessions,
Taylor directly associated the hookah with marijuana smoking and violence. This
culminates in the most directly violent outburst towards Seeta, Brandon, and the British:
"Mother [Khali]!... 'Take them; kill, slay thine enemies; drink, drink their blood—the
blood of the English. Ah! it is sweet for thee, Mother divine. Spare not one. Let them die,
women, and children at the breast!'" This outburst of unbridled violence, selectively
brought on by Taylor by the consumption of a drug through the hookah, marks a clear

106 Ibid.
107 Ibid., 27.
108 Ibid., 28.
shift in the way this smoking device, which can be seen as little more than a prop in *Confessions*, is depicted in Taylor’s literature. Later in the novel, the hookah is even described as becoming part of Pande’s recovery from his injuries. Taylor wrote, “‘Reach me that hookah. I feel too weak to live,’ ...[he] inhaled several long breaths of smoke. ‘Now I will talk to you, Nawab Sahib,’ he said, more collectedly.”

Thus, through these previous examples we can see that the hookah was provided agency and became a vehicle for sedition and a symbol of the terrors of the Mutiny. This association made the consumption of any commodity, whether it be tobacco or not, through the hookah synonymous with the now highly distrusted Indian “other.”

Though there is no dramatic scene involving the hookah in *First Love* that is equivalent to the previous passage from *Seeta*, the smoking device appears prominently alongside Grant’s Indian villains. The perpetrators of the novel’s most terrible atrocities, which Grant suggests are developed by the “fiendish invention of the Oriental mind,”

tend to be depicted as avid hookah consumers. In the immediate prelude to a meeting between the two Princes of Delhi, Mirza Abubeker and Mirza Mogul, and the rest of the Indian conspirators, the two brothers are pictured smoking from lavish hookahs: “‘Admit the messengers...as he and his brother spread their jeweled fingers over their knees, and relinquished to the pipe bearers their hookahs, which were of the finest Bidri ware, the snakes or coils being covered with threads of silk and gold.”

Of the brothers, Abubeker’s depiction throughout the novel is most productive in regards to the loaded meanings behind the hookah. Grant wrote:

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The prince was an effete, soft, sleepy, and sensual looking man, with small cunning eyes, and thick, full, red lips; and there was an overfed, and greasy aspect about his yellow skin...[Polly] had only a confused idea of a man regarding her with keen, black, twinkling eyes; that his dress seemed a strange arrangement of the richest shawls and masses of jewels, for the smallest sapphire that sparkled in his turban, on his brown fingers, or the hilt of his poniard, might have made a London beauty happy, or a burglar independent.\textsuperscript{112}

This representation of the Prince as the epitome of an opulent, indolent, effeminate, royal oriental is completed by Grant with the addition of an equally impressive hookah in almost every scene he appears in, further tying these stereotypes to the smoking device.

Though the Prince’s impressive hookah appears in a plethora of scenes, the smoking device is best described in his first conversation with Polly Weston, described by Grant to be a “tiny but lovely Hebe,”\textsuperscript{113} after she was captured. Before speaking to Polly, “[the Prince] relinquished to an attendant the curling snakes of a magnificent hookah, the bowl of which stood at some distance off.”\textsuperscript{114} Just as Taylor used the description of the bhutteara’s hookah to reinforce the character’s lower-class status, Grant used the Prince’s hookah to affirm his status as royalty. The hose used to smoke the hookah allowed the bowl to be at a substantial distance from its consumer, thus suggesting that it is of a considerable length. Its “magnificent” appearance likely indicated a large hookah with ornate designs made with a precious metal embedded with precious stones. Beyond this casual use of the hookah as a prop, however, it is clear throughout First Love that the hookah takes on the principles of Oriental betrayal and corruption that can be found in Pandurang Hari’s characters and are reinforced by the presence of the hookah in Seeta. Before this, in one of the Prince’s earliest appearances in

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{112} Grant, vol. 2, 149.\\
\textsuperscript{113} Grant, vol. 1, 21.\\
\textsuperscript{114} Grant, vol. 2, 149.
\end{footnotesize}
First Love, Grant located him in a meeting amongst his advisors, discussing the start of the Rebellion in two days time.

Immediately before calling for the uprising to begin on the centennial anniversary of the Battle of Plassey, a fixation of much nineteenth-century literature about 1857, the Prince was described as having “sat smoking his gorgeous hookah in dreamy thought.” The hookah appeared again when the Prince discussed with an aide how he was going to make Polly his fourth and final wife while he “[puffed at] a fragrant hookah, which two little slave girls prepared and placed beside him.” Much like in Taylor’s Seeta, with the character of Azrael Pande, Grant’s First Love directly enmeshes the hookah with the seditious actions of Prince Mirza Abubeker. Grant takes this association further than Taylor, however, linking the hookah to the premeditated violation of a proper British lady, a scene that is worth mentioning again. Polly Weston, the epitome of a proper young British lady, refuses the advances of the Mughal prince, she is stripped naked, tied to a gun-cart by a hand and a foot and dragged through the streets, eventually being left to the “wicked Oriental minds” of the mutineers. The audience is left to imagine that Polly is part of “the awful spectacle of several Christian women stripped nude, and crucified by the hands and feet...against the stone walls inside the gate!” Nancy Paxton, writing about the depiction of rape in these Mutiny novels, suggested that the British imperial ideology saw British men and women as racially superior to Indians,

115 Grant, vol. 1, 150.
116 Grant, vol. 3, 44.
117 Ibid., 270.
118 Ibid., 290.
with British men dominating the public and private spheres. Thus, Grant depicts the hookah as an agent in subverting the domination and control of British men over British women and Indians. The image of a fat, opulent Indian prince clouded in the smoke of his jeweled hookah condemning the personification of British womanhood to be raped by the rebellious masses in Delhi would likely engrain itself in Grant’s audience’s imagination of India.

This chapter has shown that, through an analysis of six metropolitan and Anglo-Indian fictions, the social biography of the hookah, as well as other methods of tobacco consumption such as cigars and cheroots, evolved a great deal throughout the nineteenth century. It is clear from the historiography that hookah smoking amongst Anglo-Indians peaked around the end of the eighteenth century and slowly declined in popularity throughout the early-nineteenth century. Traditionally, the shift towards smoking cigars, cigarettes, and cheroots instead of hookahs has been viewed as an economic decision because of the high costs of hookah tobacco and the requirement of a dedicated servant. Socially, the decline in the use of the hookah can be attributed to the arrival of “the more conservative memsahib” in the 1830s, who came with “a new sober spirit of dutiful imperialism allied to crusading evangelicism” that disapproved of nabobish living. The “oriental” performances put on by Anglo-Indian men were no longer viewed to be as desirable as they once were, leading to a gradual “de-orientalization” and “re-Britishization” of the Anglo-Indian community. Regardless of this shift, the hookah

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120 Spear, 99.
121 Wild, 125.
still remained a popular smoking practice of the older Anglo-Indian elite until the 1870s. Shortly after the Rebellion of 1857, however, hookah-tobacco consumption was almost completely replaced by other smoking practices by the majority of Anglo-Indians. The overwhelmingly negative stereotypes that became associated with the hookah after 1857 marked the end of hookah-tobacco consumption in a growing modern British consumer culture.

In the first half of the nineteenth century this chapter has shown that the hookah, in William Browne Hockley’s *Pandurang Hārī; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo* and Meadows Taylor’s *Confessions of a Thug*, and the cheroot, in William Delafield Arnold’s *Oakfield; or, Fellowship in the East*, were firmly rooted in the background of these novels as oriental props. Though these tobacco consumption methods were intended to affirm the oriental milieu of the novel’s scenes, by investigating the neglected archive of information inherent in these representations, it was possible to find the author’s perspectives on tobacco use, social status, and both Indian and Anglo-Indian culture. Though this was still possible in the three post-1857 novels chosen for this study, it is clear that depictions of tobacco consumption took on much heavier associations as well. In metropolitan novels, such as Wilkie Collins’ *The Moonstone*, addiction to tobacco was shown to be the locus of the novel’s key crisis, spurring the use of oriental opium. In the novels focused strictly on India, such as Taylor’s *Seeta* and James Grant’s *First Love and Last Love: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny*, the Rebellion of 1857 led to the hookah becoming intricately tied to the growing British and Anglo-Indian racism towards Indians. Instead of the image of the “ungrateful, insidious, cowardly, unfaithful, and

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123 Spear, 99.
Indian supposed to be inherent in the Indian character by Hockley in the early period it became tied to the most oriental of smoking devices, the hookah. Even Taylor, a champion of respect and rational thinking in regards to India in the aftermath of the uprising, could not escape from this overwhelming sentiment. The hookah, in the Mutiny fictions of Taylor and Grant, became linked to the treachery, sedition, and supposed atrocities committed in India through their narratives.

Though economic and social factors may have played a part in the decline of the hookah, its representations in fiction, fixed in the British imagination, played a large role in its decline as well. Its symbolic link with the Indian mutineers and their supposed actions, as well as to the East India Company’s failed, fully orientalized Anglo-Indian nabobs, truly made hookah-tobacco consumption an undesirable Indian practice that had no place in an emerging British consumer culture. The perceived indolence of the EIC officers who were seen to have fatally jeopardized British interests in India before the arrival of the formal British Raj can be seen in Harrower’s musings as he wandered the jungle in *First Love*:

> Though a soldier, he could not but feel the loss of many a luxury that Indian service had rendered a necessity, and a second nature. There were no iced wines now, no tattywallah to drench the hot Mattings and cool the air, no punkah or hookah with its snaky coils, no mosquito curtains, no Bass’s pale ale, not even a cigar!\(^{125}\)

Though Anglo-Indian society continued its opulence after control of India was passed from the EIC to the British Crown, it is clear that the British in India made an effort to de-orientalize themselves by abandoning certain practices and habits of the nabobs who were viewed to have so very nearly failed the British imperial project.

\(^{124}\) [Hockley], *Pandurang Hārî*, vol. 1, xiii-xiv.
\(^{125}\) Grant, *First Love*, vol. 2, 188
This chapter has traced how the meaning of the hookah, an Indian smoking device that was initially embraced by Anglo-Indian consumers, shifted dramatically in the 1850s, effectively ruling this smoking practice out of a developing British consumer culture. With the arrival of the memsahibs in the 1830s, Anglo-Indian society began to focus on being more “Anglo” by excising much of the “Indian” from their social and cultural practices. These women, coming to India from the metropole, came to know India before their travels through the Indian things and narratives that they consumed. The arrival of the memsahib in the 1830s, however, did not cause the immediate disappearance of hookah consumption by Anglo-Indians. This chapter has shown that “mutiny” fictions changed the way that the hookah was understood in the British imaginings of India, associating with horrors, atrocities, and increasingly sharpened negative oriental stereotypes. After 1857, the use of the hookah quickly declined in Anglo-Indian society as a distinctly “British,” as opposed to Anglo-Indian, consumer culture began to develop. Hookah-tobacco consumption tells a story of corruption that was largely limited to the imperial space as its consumption never truly caught on in the metropole. The next chapter, “From Medicine to Menace: Opium in Britain and the Empire,” engages with an oriental commodity that successfully penetrated the metropole from this imperial space, becoming a critical part of British consumption practices prior to the 1850s.
CHAPTER IV
FROM MEDICINE TO MENACE
Opium in Britain and the Empire

In the early nineteenth century, opium was viewed as a panacea for all of Britain’s ailments. “At home” in the metropole, the sale and consumption of opium was wholly unrestricted, viewed as “central to medicine, a medicament of surpassing usefulness which undoubtedly found its way into every home.”1 “Abroad” in the empire, opium served as a different kind of “medicine.” Desperate for a remedy to the silver “bullion drain” to China caused by the tea trade, the British East India Company [EIC] invested heavily in the large-scale production of opium in areas like Bengal and Patna in order to facilitate the illegal trade of opium with China.2 Despite the obvious importance of opium for imperial Britain, the Hobson-Jobson [1901] glossary defined the narcotic in a vague, disinterested fashion, simply tracing its etymology:

This word is in origin Greek, not Oriental...The collection of the...juice of the poppy-capsules is mentioned by Dioscorides, and Pliny gives a pretty full account of the drug as opion. The opium-poppy was introduced into China, from Arabia, at the beginning of the 9th century...The Arab. Afyūn is sometimes corruptly called afin, of which afin, “imbecile,” is a popular etymology. Similarly the Bengalees derive it from afi-heno, “serpent-home.”3

The ambivalent attitude towards opium in Hobson-Jobson at the beginning of the twentieth century, however, can be attributed to the way that perceptions of this narcotic changed throughout the nineteenth. As social problems in China grew, opium addiction

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began to be imagined by the British as the "Orient's distinctive vice." As the nineteenth century progressed, however, it became clear that the dangers of opium use were not limited to the East. Fears of this oriental vice following empire back to the metropole led to restrictions being imposed on the domestic trade while debates raged over the moral contradictions of continuing the trade in the empire.

This chapter will engage with the history of opium and its derivatives in China, India, and Britain, as well as explore contested and changing representations of opium in metropolitan and Anglo-Indian fictions of India throughout the nineteenth century. By exploring these fictional portrayals of the use of opium in regards to Indians, Anglo-Indians, and metropolitan Britons in these nineteenth-century novels, this study will show more than just how popular audiences may have perceived consumption. Prior to 1857, the portrayals of opium consumption reflect opium's confused status as an important but increasingly dangerous narcotic in British society. After 1857, representations of opium suggest that the earlier fears surrounding opium exhibited in the earlier literature were realized. After 1857, opium abuse was linked to the decline of ancient Hindu and Mughal Muslim civilization prior to British contact, and became an "oriental agent," similar to the hookah, which was linked to the outbreak of, and atrocities committed during, the "mutiny." In the metropole, opium became perceived as a "nabobized" commodity, spreading the Orient's perceived corruption through physical addiction as opposed to the cultural habits of wealthy returning nabobs. This chapter will explore how the active agency afforded to opium in novels published after 1857 influenced the narcotic's role in

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the emerging consumer culture of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons while still remaining a critical part of the British Empire’s trade with the “Orient.”

The history of opium’s consumption and trade in an imperial and metropolitan British context will be briefly explained in order to establish an overview of the narcotic’s cultural biography before engaging with the novels. Evidence of the production and consumption of opium for “mind-altering” purposes has been traced back as far as 3100 BCE in the pre-modern European and Mediterranean world.\(^5\) It appears that opium never became a “staple” drug to pre-modern societies like tobacco, alcohol, or coffee as its use was recognized to be too dangerous because of the unforgiving nature of an overdose and its highly addictive properties. It is, however, one of the few drugs that fits within the four major patterns of drug use outlined by Brian Inglis in *The Forbidden Game* [1975]: Opium has been used by various cultures to promote physical healing, mental healing, stimulate work productivity, and as a mind-altering “recreational” drug for pleasure.\(^6\) By the sixteenth century, the potential benefits of opium’s narcotic and anesthetic qualities had made it popular for medicinal and recreational usages, spurring a limited long-distance trade centered out of Turkey, Persia, and India spanning from China to Western Europe.\(^7\) The production and consumption of opium appears to have been introduced to India in the eighth century by Arab invaders, though its commercial potential was not realized on the subcontinent until the rule of Akbar in the mid-sixteenth century.\(^8\) In the Indian Ocean world of the seventeenth century, seafaring Chinese traders

\(^5\) Trocki, 15 and 16.


\(^7\) Trocki, 19; Berridge and Edwards, xxiii.

\(^8\) Janin, 35.
experienced the smoking and ingestion of opium in the Siamese, Javanese, and Bengali cultures they contacted through missions of diplomacy and trade.9

The spread of the practice of smoking opium has also been attributed to the Dutch East India Company [VOC], the first major European trading company to get involved in the Indian Ocean opium trade, which either introduced or encountered it in Java. Throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the VOC slowly expanded and standardized opium production in Bengal and established a fairly consistent trade in opium with China.10 Though the potential dangers of this addictive narcotic’s use was formally recognized in China in the first anti-opium edict in 1729, this did not stop the VOC, and later the EIC, from illegally smuggling opium. In the mid-eighteenth century, the balance of power began to shift away from the VOC, as the EIC began to consolidate its influence and control in India.

The Battle of Plassey in 1757 placed the EIC in an ideal position to become heavily invested in Bengal’s fertile opium fields.11 Between 1757 and 1769, the EIC gained an increasing amount of influence over the administration and revenue collection in a growing amount of districts in Bengal, Bihar, and Oudh, directly controlling the majority of salt and opium production in the region.12 As the EIC looked to expand its influence, Governor-General Warren Hastings passed the Regulation Act of 1773, which effectively declared a monopoly over the production and trade of various commodities,

10 Trocki, 34-5.
11 Janin, 37.
opium included.\textsuperscript{13} They quickly established two different methods of opium production. The first method placed the opium fields of Bengal and the Northwest Provinces, where Company influence was strongest, under the direct control of the EIC, making the production and sale of the narcotic a state sponsored industry.

The monopoly was organized around a contract system, where the head of the monopoly could organize the production system however they felt best as long as a set minimum of opium chests were provided. The system was dependant on the production of opium by licensed \textit{ryots} who had their cultivation supported by cash advances from the EIC.\textsuperscript{14} The ryot was responsible for cultivating the poppies, collecting the opium, and making it ready for transport where it was sent to a major port such as Calcutta to be auctioned to private trading houses that would be responsible for shipping the opium from India to China.\textsuperscript{15} This system, however, was difficult to enforce and rife with corruption. From the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, there were countless tales of ryots being forced to cultivate opium against their will and embezzlement has been recorded at almost every level.\textsuperscript{16} Though this issue is not raised in the \textit{Times}, the \textit{Illustrated London News} recognized this corruption publicly in an article on the opium trade in 1843: "The collectors and inspectors were but poorly paid, and hence arose great aggression, extortion, and fraud; in fact, the whole system was one of iniquity from the commencement to the end, and is still carried on in the same reckless manner."\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[14] "Ryot – It is by natives used for ‘a subject’ in India, but its specific Anglo-Indian application is to ‘a tenant of the soil’; an individual occupying land as a farmer or cultivator.” Yule and Burnell, 777.
\item[15] Janin, 38.
\item[16] Trocki, 47.
\end{footnotes}
Reckless production practices and questionable morals aside the *Review* suggested that "the traffic had now as a pecuniary matter become of considerable national importance, for, as the Chinese made us pay for all our teas in hard cash, so also, in return, the opium-dealers received back that money in payment for opium."\(^{18}\) As the EIC did not have direct control over the entire subcontinent, a second method of enforcing the monopoly had to be devised for opium producing regions that existed outside of the Bengal opium fields.

Two of the EIC’s “princely allies” in the fertile Malwa plateau, Holkar and Sindhia, also had a burgeoning opium industry that was technically subject to the monopoly. The EIC’s second method of controlling the Indian opium trade was to allow “private” opium manufacture in these regions, but impose a system of duties and taxation on the finished product that had to be shipped to Bombay and sold at Company auctions.\(^{19}\) As the EIC was not in complete control of these princely states, however, a black market for opium grew in the Malwa region of India as private entrepreneurs sought to maximize their profits from the trade. In order to avoid paying the tax on opium by going through legitimate channels in Bombay, Indian opium traders became increasingly ingenious in their efforts to hide their cargo.\(^{20}\) The success of these “internal” opium smugglers piqued the interest of nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian authors such as Meadows Taylor, and thus will be examined in more detail alongside the analysis of the pre-1857 novels below. Though opium production was established quite

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quickly in the mid-eighteenth century, the trade of opium with China did not begin in earnest until the 1780s, influenced by Britain’s increasing desire for Chinese tea.

Until the 1780s, the EIC had tried in vain to find a British manufacture that would capture the Chinese consumer imagination in order to avoid the “bullion drain” of silver that the Chinese demanded as payment for tea.\(^{21}\) Sidney Mintz’s influential *Sweetness and Power* [1985] has shown that throughout the eighteenth century legal British tea imports grew from five million to twenty million pounds, locating the EIC as the largest exporter of Chinese tea.\(^{22}\) As there was little interest from the Chinese consumer for British manufactures, the EIC honed in on the growing market for opium in China as a way to ensure that the tea trade stayed practical and profitable.\(^{23}\) It was between 1780 and 1842 that opium became truly commodified like sugar and tobacco, being transformed from “an informally cultivated cash crop to a centralized systematized state-run industry.”\(^ {24} \) As the opium trade with China was illegal, the EIC feared that they would lose their access to China’s tea supplies if they were formally involved with the actual smuggling of opium. In order to avoid this, the EIC hired private agency houses, or “country traders,” to smuggle chests of opium to China in exchange for silver bullion. The EIC, which required the bullion for the tea trade, exchanged the silver for “bills of exchange” that were valid in England, India, and later all over Europe.\(^{25}\) The production of opium in India and its consumption in China grew rapidly at the onset of the


\(^{23}\) Janin, 39.

\(^{24}\) Trocki, 58.

\(^{25}\) Webster, 29.
nineteenth century, ultimately culminating in two "opium wars" between 1839-1842 and 1856-60 that placed the British Empire in a position to control the external opium policies of Imperial China.

Opium use accelerated throughout all strata of Chinese society at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Quickly spreading "downward" from the upper "leisure" classes, opium smoking became a habit of "eunuchs, soldiers, students, women, urban middle classes and rich peasants." As the trade increased, so did tensions between the EIC and China. The anti-opium lobby in China, concerned with the rapid spread of addiction spurred by the increased trade, convinced the imperial government to enforce the ban on the opium trade, leading to the public destruction of over 20,000 chests of opium. This action enraged British interests in the area, eliciting a military response that culminated in the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. The treaty, which opened five "Treaty Ports" and ceded Hong Kong to the British Empire, completely failed to address the root issue of the conflict by avoiding any mention of opium or its trade. As the opium issue was never settled, war broke out again in 1856 and was not resolved until the Peking Convention, which ratified a legal opium trade, was signed in 1860. Now that opium's critical role in Indian, China, and the British Empire has been introduced, a brief discussion of the narcotic's role in the British metropole will provide a sufficient amount of background information prior to engaging with the actual novels.

Medical opium use in England has been traced back to the fourteenth century, though it was not until the sixteenth that the narcotic became firmly entrenched in

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26 Zheng, 15.
27 Janin, 99-100.
28 Trocki, 99.
29 Janin, 106.
Western European medical practice. Unlike in China, where the trade in opium was technically banned in 1729, the sale and consumption of opium was almost wholly unregulated until the latter third of the nineteenth century. Opium could be bought by anyone, practically anywhere, which developed a socio-cultural pre-disposition towards “self-medication.” Virginia Berridge succinctly outlined opium’s place in British society in “Victorian Opium Eating” published in *Victorian Studies* in 1978:

> In the first half of the nineteenth century, opium preparations were freely on sale to anyone who wanted to buy them, in any sort of shop...In general it was used, or recommended, at one time or another to treat almost every disease and condition imaginable...Opium was recommended for everything from influenza and earache, to hydrophobia, haemmorhage, and heart disease.

Opium took many forms in metropolitan Britain, being found in pills, lozenges, powders, candy, and tinctures such as laudanum, geared to both adult and juvenile consumers. Though the dangers of addiction was known, and present, because of rampant self-medication, it was little discussed by the public or the fledgling, fragmented medical profession. Throughout the nineteenth century, however, a growing uneasiness towards the potential effects that opium use was having on British society began to emerge.

Fears surrounding the unrestricted availability of opium in the British metropole began to take shape in the 1830s. Statistics tracing “opium deaths” showed that accidental overdoses and suicides were on the rise, and opium was increasingly being implicated in

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30 Berridge and Edwards, xxiii.
33 Milligan, 542.
34 Berridge and Edwards, 36.
criminal acts. There was also a growing concern about the rise of “irrational” opium consumption by the lower classes, becoming most prominent after 1857, with many in the metropole fearing that the corruption of working-class Britons could seep into the middle class as well. In response to the “opium problem” that was becoming apparent in metropolitan British society, the medical profession began to consolidate itself and the British government slowly began to regulate the narcotic.

In 1841, the Pharmaceutical Society was formed in Britain, which created a “professional body out of an amalgam of chemists and druggists and the dispensing functions of the Society of Apothecaries,” which slowly standardized procedures and necessary qualifications. In 1858, the same year that the Rebellion of 1857 was defeated and during the Second Opium War, the Medical Reform Act was passed by parliament in order to establish the “General Council of Medical Education and Registration of the United Kingdom” that created an organized body of registered and qualified doctors, surgeons, and apothecaries. Though the 1858 act did not include chemists or druggists, it was the first step to creating a unified “medical profession” that aimed to control the sale of opium and limit “self-medication.” A decade later, the sale of opium became formally restricted by the 1868 Pharmacy Act, which officially made “opium available to the average consumer only through a licensed chemist, druggist, or registered medical practitioner.” Opium was not placed in the most strictly controlled schedule alongside cyanide and ergot, however, because of pressure from pharmacists and apothecaries who

35 Berridge, 442-3.
36 Berridge and Edwards, 199.
37 Berridge, 450.
39 Milligan, 542.
wished to ensure that they had more control over the narcotic's distribution, ensuring larger profits from the extremely popular drug.⁴⁰ Therefore, 1858 marked the turning point for opium in a metropolitan British context, with the consumption and sale of the narcotic becoming increasingly restricted as the nineteenth century progressed. As this chapter engages with an analysis of the representations of opium in nineteenth-century fictions of India, the brief imperial and metropolitan history of opium above will be further elaborated upon.

In the two pre-1857 fictions that directly relate to Indian life in this study, Hockley's *Pandurang Hâri; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo* [1826] and Taylor's *Confessions of a Thug* [1839], representations of opium use can generally be associated with British perceptions of Indian consumption and the growing fears of its use in the British metropole. As the production and trade of opium existed in India prior to the arrival of Europeans, opium was widely consumed in India despite attempts by the EIC to discourage Indian consumption in order to maximize the profits of the opium trade with China.⁴¹ Since the introduction of the opium poppy to the South Asian subcontinent, the narcotic properties of the drug have been used for a variety of purposes. Opium was prized in India for its role in medicine, serving most prominently as an anesthetic and a control for gastro-intestinal ailments such as dysentery, but was also a popular recreational intoxicant.⁴² These and many other uses for opium are widely represented in the background of Hockley and Taylor's novels, providing insight into the way Indian and British consumption was changing in the British imagination.

⁴⁰ Berridge, 453.
⁴¹ Janin, 37.
By engaging in an analysis of this obscured cultural archive the representations of opium consumption in both Pandurang Hāri and Confessions represent the Anglo-Indian perspective on opium in India as well as a growing awareness of the dangers surrounding opium use in early nineteenth-century British society. It becomes clear from an analysis of the early-nineteenth century fictions of India by Hockley and Taylor, published in 1826 and 1839 respectively, that these novels were part of the discourse that began to form an official and public awareness of the dangers of the unrestricted availability and habitual use of opium. Though it is Indian characters that exhibit the “anti-social” behaviours associated with opium in these novels, a link can be drawn between their actions and growing issues in metropolitan Britain.

Though opium has historically been most commonly employed as a medicine, it only appears in this context in Taylor’s Confessions and William Delafield Arnold’s Oakfield [1853]. After a boating accident nearly kills Oakfield’s friend Vernon, the injured man was put into a “fitful half-artificial slumber” by a large dose of opium as the doctor declared, “there’s nothing to be done but to ease this terrible pain.”43 In Confessions, opium appears as a painkiller after Ameer Ali44 is nearly strangled to death by the thugs who killed his parents: “I was given some milk and rice to eat in the evening; but before it was time to sleep, Ismail brought me some sherbet of sugar and water, which he said would make me sleep. I supposed there was opium in it, for I remember nothing till the next morning.”45 Though opium is also viewed as dangerous, it is important to note that opium abolition was never implied, as its narcotic properties

44 The “infamous” thug who is both the narrator and anti-hero of the novel.
45 Taylor, Confessions, vol. 1, 19.
made it a critically important utility for the doctors, surgeons, and other professions. This passage also reveals as much about Indian consumption practices as it does about established practices in metropolitan Britain, with the only oriental distinction being the presence of opium in sherbet.

This is unsurprising, as opium has historically been mixed with spices, sugars, and various types of alcohols in order to mask its un pleasingly bitter taste.46 It is interesting to note that this links opium with sugar, another controversial commodity in the early nineteenth century because of its link with slave trade.47 This link with sugar also made the consumption of opium tolerable for children, a popular practice in the early nineteenth century through the consumption of medications such as “Godfrey’s Cordial and Dalby’s Carminative.”48 Opium’s importance as an anesthetic in surgery also appears in Confessions, as a thug recounts a story of being shot in the leg: “[After the ball was removed] the blood flowed copiously; the wound in the leg was only through the flesh, and having taken some opium I soon fell asleep, and awoke, though still in pain, yet easier than I had been.”49 Taylor also commonly portrayed his characters as using opium on their horses during long journeys, a practice that rural workers in Britain were recorded using to promote productivity in the early nineteenth century.50 These representations of opium use in Confessions would serve to both orientalize and familiarize these scenes for Taylor’s metropolitan and Anglo-Indian audience, highlighting positive outlets for the consumption of the narcotic.

47 Mintz, 68.
48 Berridge and Edwards, 24.
49 Taylor, Confessions, vol. 1, 117.
Beyond these depictions of opium use, which would be viewed as mundane and familiar to an early nineteenth century audience, it is clear that both Taylor and Hockley recognized the potential dangers of the narcotic’s consumption in their novels. In *Confessions*, Taylor highlights the downside of the unrestricted availability of opium, showcasing the potential for an intentional opium overdose to serve as a highly effective method of suicide. After a brief love affair with a traveling princess, Ameer Ali attempts to part ways in order to continue his thuggee practice unimpeded. In order to force Ali to continue traveling with her, Ali’s love interest sent her servant to buy a large quantity of opium, threatening to commit suicide unless he agreed to marry her and escort her to her lands. Her servant stated:

> She just now told me to go purchase a quantity of opium for her; and when I refused, and fell at her feet, imploring her to recall her words, she spoke angrily to me, and said, if I did not go, she would go herself. So I have purchased it; but alas! I know its fatal use; and you alone can save her.51

Though statistics are not accessible for India, it is clear that that opiates were the most popular method of “self-destruction” in Britain until the 1890s, with numerous suicide attempts being recorded in the 1820s.52 Taylor appears to suggest through this passage that women were more likely to commit suicide using opium, as Robert Christison in *A Treatise on Poisons* [1832] argued that the narcotic was “the poison most generally resorted to by the timid to accomplish self destruction.”53 Statistics, however, show that men were in fact more likely to use this “timid” option.54 It is also important to note the number of “accidental” deaths caused by an overdose of opiates as coroners in the

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52 Berridge and Edwards, 80-1.
54 Berridge and Edwards, 81.
nineteenth century had a penchant for labeling successful suicides as accidental overdoses.\textsuperscript{55} Though death-by-overdose was not a new phenomenon, it appears that these deaths began to be recognized in British newspapers as early as 1834.\textsuperscript{56} In the context of when \textit{Confessions} was written, it is clear that the novel forms a part of a growing public awareness in the early nineteenth century of the potential dangers of the unrestricted availability of opium in Britain.

In \textit{Confessions}, Taylor also employs opium as a method used by thugs to stupefy their more challenging victims, with the narcotic being used as a poison numerous times throughout the narrative. After establishing themselves in Hyderabad, the thugs discovered the hideout for a gang of murderous thieves disguised as Muslim \textit{fakeers}, or religious mendicants, in a cave outside the city. One of the thugs infiltrated the cave, where he offered the gang’s lookout enough opium to render him senseless until the rest of the thugs could be mobilized, allowing them to strangle the lookout and raid the hideout without any resistance.\textsuperscript{57} The most noteworthy example of opium being used by thugs as a poison occurs during Ameer Ali’s travels as part of a roaming band of plunderers. Taylor, keen to differentiate the thugs from “savages,” sets Ali against a Muslim warlord who is depicted wantonly raping and murdering a Brahmin family in one of their raids. In order to ensure that the thugs would be able to kill the warlord without alerting the camp, Ali proposed the following plan:

\begin{quote}
You know I have still three bottles of the sweet wine of the Feringhees, which I brought with me from Guntoor; [the warlord] is very fond of it, and will
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{55} Berridge and Edwards, 297.
\textsuperscript{57} Taylor, \textit{Confessions}, vol. 2, 46.
easily be persuaded to come here and drink it with us; I will dose his share with opium, and after a few cups, he will be stupefied, and will fall an easy prey to us.⁵⁸

In order to ensure that their plot would not be discovered until too late, the thugs dissolved the opium in wine as is generally necessary for the ingestion of the bitter drug. In metropolitan Britain, it appears that there was a realization of the potential for opium to be used to support criminal acts in the 1820s. Beginning with an 1827 murder case in Cumberland and rumours of prostitutes using opium to rob their “johns” in the 1830s, the use of opium as a poison became criminalized in the 1851 Act for the Better Prevention of Offences and the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act.⁵⁹ Beyond these metropolitan associations, the appearance of opium in Confessions also provides contemporary insight into the history and importance of the Malwa opium trade.

As mentioned above, the EIC’s monopoly on opium relied on the participation of princely allies. The harsh duties and taxes imposed on the Indian production of opium in the Malwa plateau inspired the growth of a black market opium trade. In order to avoid paying the tax on opium by going through legitimate channels in Bombay, Indian opium traders became increasingly ingenious in their efforts to hide their cargo. The EIC eventually abandoned this policy in 1819 because of the success of these traffickers, which can partially be attributed to their cunning and the complicity of the native princes.⁶⁰ The Malwa opium trade was so profitable that contemporary authors, such as Meadows Taylor in Confession of a Thug [1839], and current historians such as Mike

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⁵⁸ Taylor, Confessions, vol. 3, 86.
⁵⁹ Berridge and Edwards, 81-2.
⁶⁰ Dash, 125-6.
Dash in *Thug* [2006] have engrained these opium smugglers into *thuggee* lore as rich targets for India’s “mythic stranglers.”\(^{61}\)

In *Confessions*, Taylor’s contemporary audience would have understood the *thugs* to be interested not in the trade of opium specifically, but in the shipments of cash and bullion from Bombay to Malwa that financed the narcotic’s production:

> [Ameer Ali] proposed that the band should take the high road to the Dukhun, and penetrate as far as Jubbulpore or Nagpoor...[Ali] thought it likely [they] might meet with good booty, as [he] had heard that the traders of Bombay were in the habit of sending large quantities of treasures to their correspondents in Malwa for the purchase of opium and other products of that district.\(^{62}\)

Taylor later portrayed these “treasure-carriers” for the opium financiers as an exceptionally rich target, transporting over seventy thousand rupees worth of cash, bullion and precious stones, after the thugs accost and murder a small convoy.\(^{63}\) Though attacks on the investment side of the Malwa opium trade was highly profitable, Dash has also suggested that thugs would occasionally target small opium convoys on their way to Bombay, including the thugs in this extra-EIC opium trade. Regardless of the EIC monopoly and thug attacks, the Indian driven Malwa opium trade played a significant role in the exportation of Indian opium to China in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.\(^{64}\) The most critical invocation of opium use in these fictions of India, however, is rooted in an Orientalist misunderstanding. Though the portrayal of the use of *bhang*, which was often misunderstood to be a concoction of opium, has no direct correlation to

\(^{61}\) As mentioned in the introductory chapter Mike Dash is revisionist historian who argues that *thugs*, though perhaps not as organized or cultish as imagined by nineteenth-century Britons and Anglo-Indians, did in fact exist.


\(^{63}\) Taylor, *Confessions*, vol. 1, 318.

\(^{64}\) Dash, 126.
the metropole it became a central feature in the British imaginings of the Rebellion of 1857.

The actual composition of bhang, also referred to as *bang*, *bhung*, and *subzee*, seems to be poorly understood in nineteenth century literature. Before engaging in an analysis of the representations of bhang in pre- and post-1857 fictions of India, it is important to explain the actual properties of this intoxicating beverage as well as how it was understood in academic literature and the popular British imperial imagination.

Bhang’s first appearance in the fiction under study is in Hockley’s *Pandurang Hāri*. In order to explain why a *gossein*, which was the term used by Hockley to describe religious mendicants, was unconscious in a burning hut it was declared that he “had been eating *bang.*”65 In one of the rare circumstances that “uniquely Indian” terminology is explained in the novel, a footnote defines *bang* as “a preparation of opium,” a usage that was adopted by many authors throughout the nineteenth century.66 It is important to note that the belief of these metropolitan and Anglo-Indian authors that bhang was an opium-based beverage concocted in nineteenth-century India was likely erroneous. The *Hobson-Jobson* glossary defines bhang as “the dried leaves and small stalks of hemp, used to cause intoxication, either by smoking, or when eaten mixed up into a sweetmeat.”67 Though this is to some degree accurate, the “modern” definition of bhang is most clearly defined by R. N. Chopra, often referred to as the “Father of Indian Pharmacology,” in *Indigenous Drugs of India* [1933]:

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66 Ibid., 100.
67 Yule and Burnell, 58.
Bhang — *Bhang, Siddhi, Subji* or *Palti* is the dried leaves of *Cannabis sativa*, whether male or female, and whether cultivated or uncultivated...Bhang is commonly the name given to the drink made out of *sabji*; ganja pounded up and made into a drink, as is done in case of Garhjat ganja in Puri, also is called bhang. For this reason in many parts of India especially in the south and west the distinction between ganja and bhang is lost.68

According to Chopra, it is clear that bhang is wholly marijuana-based and no mention of opium being used in its preparation appears at all. H. Panda confirms this in a more recent study for India’s National Institute of Industrial Research, which also provides a description of how bhang is commonly produced:

_Bhang, Siddhi, Subji and Patti_ are used with water as a drink which is thus prepared: About three tolas weight are well washed with cold water, then rubbed to powder, mixed with equal parts of black pepper, dried rose-petals, poppyseeds, almonds, cardamoms, cucumber and melon seeds to which sugar, half a pint of milk and equal quantity of water are added. This is considered sufficient to intoxicate a habituated person.69

Panda’s description may in part explain why bhang was commonly misperceived to be an opium-based beverage by nineteenth-century authors. The inclusion of poppy seeds to the concoction, though highly unlikely to actually inspire any narcotic effects, may have been enough to inspire such rumours to circulate.

In the pre-1857 novels, _Pandurang Hārī_ contains the only example of a clear definition of bhang. Though the drug concoction makes numerous appearances in _Confessions_ as either bhung or subzee, Taylor does not bother with providing a definition. By the descriptions of the concoction’s taste and its narcotic effects, however, it is likely that Taylor’s nineteenth-century audience would draw parallels to opium. In

68 Chopra, 89.
69 H. Panda, _Herbs, Cultivation and Medicinal Uses_ (New Delhi: National Institute of Industrial Research, 2005), 211.
Confessions, Taylor’s thugs visit Hyderabad during the beginning of the Muharram festival, which marks the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar and the martyrdom of the prophet Muhammad’s grandson Hussein. At the end of the festival, Taylor portrayed the effects of bhang’s consumption:

In many a shady corner might be seen lying fast asleep, an exhausted wretch—his finery still hanging about him—his last cowree perhaps expended in a copious dose of bhung, which, having done part of its work in exciting him almost to madness during the preceding night had left him with a racking brain, and had finally sent him into oblivion of his fatigue and hunger.

In this passage, the key effects of bhang are its ability of “exciting” its consumers as well as later sending them “into oblivion.” This clearly mirrors the understanding of the effects of opium in nineteenth-century Britain, which provided its consumers with an initial “stimulant” stage followed by extreme sedation. In Taylor’s description of the Nuwab Subzee Khan, a character who is so notorious for his consumption of bhang that he was known as “subzee,” the concoction was suggested to be a “bitter and intoxicating draught” numerous times. As mentioned earlier, opium-based beverages, the most popular in nineteenth-century Britain being laudanum, were widely known to have an exceptionally bitter taste. These examples show that it is highly likely that the British popularly imagined bhang to be an opium-based beverage in the early nineteenth century.

It appears that by mid-century it became apparent to Anglo-Indians that bhang was not actually a concoction of opium but of marijuana. In Edward Balfour’s first edition of the Cyclopædia of India and of Eastern and Southern Asia [1857], published

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72 Berridge and Edwards, xxiv-xxv.
73 Taylor, Confessions, vol. 2, 120, 140, and 162.
when he was the head surgeon in the Madras Army, bhang is defined as a marijuana-based beverage with no mention of opium.\textsuperscript{74} Taylor mirrored Balfour’s declaration in an 1873 reprint of \textit{Confessions}, where he appended a glossary to clarify any Indian and Anglo-Indian terminology, stating that bhang was a “preparation of hemp leaves.”\textsuperscript{75} This may have been done by Taylor either to preserve his image as an authority on Indian matters or to clarify what he perceived to be a common misunderstanding that had arising from his work. Though it is clear that Anglo-Indian “experts” on Indian society and culture understood that bhang was a marijuana-based product, the misunderstanding continued in the realm of popular knowledge into the late nineteenth century.

In 1876, the \textit{Illustrated London News} published an article on life in Hyderabad, where “bang” was defined as an “intoxicating narcotic obtained from hemp and opium” while discussing drug use among the “lower orders.”\textsuperscript{76} The confusion behind what exactly constituted bhang has even continued into today, causing historian Mike Dash to declare without reservation, in reference to Taylor’s character Subzee Khan, that bhang was “an opium-based drink.”\textsuperscript{77} Regardless of the reality that bhang is derived from marijuana and not opium, it is the common metropolitan and Anglo-Indian perception of bhang being opium-based, or at the very least a mixture of opium and marijuana, that is important in the context of this study.

Though becoming more prevalent in the post-1857 period, the depictions of bhang in the pre-1857 literature of Hockley and Taylor were often filled with negative oriental

\textsuperscript{74} Edward Balfour, “Bang,” \textit{Cyclopaedia of India and of Eastern and Southern Asia} (Madras: Scottish Press, 1857), 120. 
\textsuperscript{76} “The Nizam of Hyderabad,” \textit{Illustrated London News}, June 17, 1876, 581. 
\textsuperscript{77} Dash, 157.
stereotypes, and associated with their novel's seditious, untrustworthy, violent, insane, and seditious characters. In these novels, the "irrational" consumption of bhang engendered these traits to the characters, foreshadowing how opium consumption would be depicted in the post-1857 period. Though there is only one direct reference to the consumption of bhang among many descriptions of general opium ingestion in Pandurang Hāri, the intoxicating beverage is associated with the primary antagonist who personifies every negative oriental trait Hockley could fathom. As mentioned earlier, a gossein under the influence of bhang is found insensible in a burning hut by the novel’s protagonist, Pandurang Hāri:

I stumbled over something that seemed to be the body of a man, dead or alive. I lost not a moment in putting out what fire was there, and examining further, found a body, covered with ashes and dirt, apparently lifeless...The sir, assisted by a little water, restored the body to animation. He opened his eyes, exclaiming "àrry, àrry," an exclamation of surprise, and then relapsed into insensibility. More cold water flung in his withered face, revived him, and he asked "who it was that disturbed his slumbers?"78

Just from an initial analysis of this passage, it is clear that Hockley viewed bhang as a dangerous drug, capable of rending its users senseless enough to be burnt alive. As the novel continues, the inherent character of a bhang consumer is made apparent as well. Without delving too far into the novel’s complex and confusing storyline, the gossein introduces himself as Gabbage Goula, who is later explained to be Gunput Rao, Hāri’s uncle. This character was responsible for the attempted murder of Hāri as a child, the murder of Hāri’s father, and a series of other outrages throughout the novel.79 The most relevant of these acts is directly after Hāri saved Rao, before their true identities were

78 [Hockley], Pandurang Hāri, vol. 1, 99-100.
79 [Hockley], Pandurang Hāri, vol. 3, 331-385. The story of Gunput Rao’s deprived acts are so convoluted that it took the author over fifty pages to explain how he was in fact the mastermind behind all the crises encountered by Hāri in the novel.
known to each other. In order to take Hāri’s belongings, Rao stabs himself and then gets Hāri imprisoned after accusing him of attempted murder. The association of bhang with “unsavoury” characters continues in Confessions.

Though Taylor was clearly an advocate for greater British tolerance and understanding for Indian culture and customs, it appears that he did not approve of the consumption of bhang. In Confessions, Taylor suggested that habitual bhang users were to be viewed as unpredictable and untrustworthy, if not feared. The untrustworthy character of a bhang user can be seen in the reaction of the gang of murderous fake fakeers previously mentioned when they return to their hideout. Unable to find their watchman, one of the thieves proclaims: “No light for us, and I warrant the brute has either smoked himself dead drunk or is away at the Bhung-khana just when he is wanted.” Though in this instance it was not the lookout’s suggested opium addiction that caused him to fail in his duties, Taylor makes it clear that the gang viewed his dependence on the “detestable beverage” the most likely reason. Taylor presented the fear of the unpredictable nature of a bhang user earlier in the novel, after Ali is spurned by his first love interest. After being refused to see the woman by her family, Ali rants and raves in the street outside of her house. The reaction of a passerby exposes Taylor’s understanding of the character of a bhang user. The spectator stated, “He is drunk with bhung; Alla knows whether we are safe so near him!—he has arms in his hands; we ought to get out of his way.” Though these are telling examples of Taylor’s perspective on the effects of this narcotic beverage on the constitution of its users, bhang’s most prominent

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80 [Hockley], Pandurang Hāri, vol. 1, 105.
82 Ibid., 152.
83 Ibid., 18.
appearance in *Confessions* is marked by the personification of the drug in the Nuwab Subzee Khan.

Though bhang makes a constant appearance in *Confessions*, the mental and physical effects of the drug suggested by Taylor are most apparent in Subzee Khan’s character. The mental effects are suggested when he is introduced as a target to the thugs: “It is a pity his is so addicted to the subzee or bhang, from which however he has gained a name which it is well known has struck terror into his enemies on the battle-field.” In this passage Taylor suggested that though Subzee Khan’s habit had turned him into a more violent and feared warrior, his addiction had consumed his individuality, becoming little more than personification of the drug he desperately craved. Taylor’s description of this character is also worth quoting in detail as it depicts the author’s perception of the physical effects of bhang addiction:

> His arms in particular, which were distinctly seen through his thin muslin dress, were remarkably muscular, and very long; his figure was slightly inclined to corpulency, perhaps the effect of age, which had also sprinkled his curling beard and mustachios with grey hairs; or it might be that these had been increased in number by the dangerous use of the drug he drank in such quantities. His face was strikingly handsome and at once bespoke his high birth. A noble forehead, which was but little concealed by his turban, was covered with veins which rose above its surface, as though the proud blood which flowed in them almost scorned confinement. His eyes were large and piercing like an eagle’s, and, but that they were swollen and reddened by habitual intemperance, would have been pronounced beautiful.

In this passage, Taylor directly suggests a variety of side effects caused by the excessive consumption of bhang; Subzee Khan is portrayed as aging beyond his years, gaining weight, and having swollen, bloodshot eyes. It is most important, however, to analyze the meaning of this passage alongside the shift in popular metropolitan and Anglo-Indian

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84 Taylor, *Confessions*, vol. 2 1839, 136.
85 Ibid., 142.
representations of India in the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1857 in order to truly highlight its importance.

Though the consumption of bhang was clearly associated with negative oriental stereotypes in the pre-1857 literature already discussed, opium use in general and bhang consumption in specific occupied a critical place in the British imaginings of the uprising. In a similar fashion to the hookah, bhang and Indian opium consumption became associated with the increasingly distrusted and feared Indian other. The relationship between these imaginings and Taylor’s portrayal of the Nuwab Subzee Khan as a high-born noble in Indian society can best be seen in Robert Montgomery Martin’s *The Progress and Present State of British India* [1862], written for the Secretary of State for India. Martin, a staunch supporter of empire, had a wealth of experience as a journalist and civil servant in India and China. His explanation of how Muslim and Hindu society became corrupted and effeminate is also worth quoting at length as it ties Taylor’s depiction of Subzee Khan to opium’s civilization crippling potential:

In their leading characteristics, the Hindoos have changed comparatively little in the course of centuries… The warlike race, especially the Rajpoots (king’s sons), became addicted to the use of opium, and sacrificed the noble through vague aspirations after one Universal Deity taught by the Vedas, to the intoxicating influences of the hateful drug, which heightened the pleasures of the harem or the excitement of the battlefield, but in exchange took from the mind and body their sustained and tranquil energy, and induced the worst infirmities of age. The Mohammedans also became addicted to the use of opium, bang, and similar stimulants, which they smoked or took in confections. The Great Moguls, with the exception of Aurungzebe, and perhaps one or two others, were opium-eaters; and this sensual and suicidal

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indulgence tended more than any other single cause to the decay of both Mohammedan and Hindoo power.87

This government sanctioned report, published over twenty years after Confessions, almost directly mirrors the sentiments that Taylor expressed in regards to the habitual consumption of bhang by Subzee Khan. Consumption inspired feats on the battlefield, caused premature aging, and spurred indolence through its euphoric effects. The association of opium with the decline of civilization so clearly expressed in Martin’s work had ramifications that extended beyond India to metropolitan Britain, and other parts of the British Empire such as China.

After 1857, it appears that the consequences of opium addiction became an engrained facet of an essentialized Orient. The “sensual and suicidal indulgence” of opium addiction, viewed to be a part of China’s civilizational decline in the early nineteenth century, also became associated with the decay of Muslim and Hindu power in India. Both Indians and the Chinese were grouped together as irrational consumers of opium, as well as other orientalized commodities and objects, thus making them incapable of regaining their civilization’s lost glory, reinforcing the importance of the British imperial project. There was also a fear, however, that the imperial project itself could import these oriental stereotypes into metropolitan Britain, causing a cultural decline akin to the decline perceived in India and China, through its association with opium. If 1857 spurred the association of India with China’s civilizational decline through opium consumption, it in turn could tie China to the negative oriental stereotypes surrounding Indians in the aftermath of the “mutiny” that will be described in more detail

below. The association of the symptoms of habitual drug use and the civilizational decline it causes become apparent in both the popular, contemporary reports of the events of 1857-8 and the corpus of "mutiny" fiction that followed.

The annexation of Oude by the EIC because of alleged mismanagement, occurring in 1856 under Lord Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse, is one of the many territorial acquisitions that have been located as a root cause of the unrest that inspired the uprising in 1857.88 An article in the *Illustrated London News*, published six months after the outbreak of hostilities, rationalized the annexation of Oude by suggesting the territory's affairs had been seriously mishandled because of the ex-King's opium addiction: "Unfortunately for the people of Oude, the King was such a slave to opium and every species of dissipation that the finances and the army fell into the greatest disorder."89 As reports from the conflict came back to the metropole, the use of bhang began to be attributed to the actions of the "mutineers." One account stated, "The enemies lie about in all directions: and those who oppose us are losing what little organization and discipline they had left. Still their obstinate defence is wonderful, and can only be attributed to *bhang.*"90 The fear of Indian bhang consumers, present in the pre-1857 novels, became focused throughout the nineteenth century, sharpened by the contemporary reporting on the uprising.

Inspired by these contemporary accounts, novels such as *First Love* [1868] by James Grant and *Seeta* [1872] by Taylor located bhang as a central explanation for the

outbreak of, and supposed atrocities committed by Indians during, the revolt. In both novels the flashpoint of the mutiny is located in fictionalized accounts of the supposedly bhang-induced actions of Mangal Pandey in Barrackpore. Pandey was an actual sepoy with the 34th Native Infantry who is officially documented as attacking his officers on 29 March 1857. Pandey was court-martialed and executed for this act, though there seems to be no historical consensus as to whether he was under the influence of drugs or not.  

In *First Love*, Grant places a great deal of dramatic weight on the “Pandy incident,” focusing heavily on the potential intoxication of the mutineer:

> It was at Barrackpore, twenty-four miles from Calcutta, on the 29th of last month, that, as Captain Douglas of the Delhi palace guard informed me, a sepoy of the 34th Native Infantry [NI]—a wretch named Mungal Pandy, drunk with bang and maddened by hempseed soaked in intoxicating drugs, loaded his musket and swaggered about in front of the lines, uttering uncouth yells and seditious cries. The adjutant and sergeant-major attempted to seize and disarm him, but were both severely wounded, while the whole regiment looked on, sullenly or passively, and, no doubt, approvingly. Colonel Rudkin, of the Oude Irregulars, driving through the Cantonment with his wife by his side, was fired on from the hedge of a compound, and the shot killed her. That shot was fired by Mungal Pandy, whose name is now bestowed upon every mutineer.

In this passage, Grant is careful to ensure that his readers are aware of Pandey’s high level of intoxication, highlighting the dangers of Indian intoxicants, as well as locating the rest of the 34th NI as silently supportive of his actions. Grant also makes this event critical to the narrative of *First Love* as the death of Rudkin’s wife spurs the love triangle that drives the plot for most of the novel. Though Taylor also depicts this event in *Seeta*, he approaches the incident from a different perspective. Countering Grant’s declaration

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that Pandey was under the influence of drugs, Taylor wrote: “It was said he was intoxicated with bhang; but I think his religious ardour and thirst for blood supplied ample motives for the frenzy that possessed him.”

93 Though this seems out of character for Taylor, he suggested that Pandey acted alone, without the support of the rest of the regiment. Taylor stated, “No one interfered with him or checked him; but no one supported him.”

94 Grant’s focus on bhang continues throughout the novel, being attributed not only to the outbreak of the Rebellion, but also to the alleged atrocities committed by the mutinous sepoys.

As was mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Grant’s vivid and sensationalist descriptions of the atrocities committed in places like Delhi in First Love were unique in nineteenth century fiction. Grant depicts the murder of children, the rape of British women, and “every indignity that the singularly fiendish invention of the Oriental mind could suggest.”

95 To further emphasize the irrational barbarity of these actions, Grant makes certain to suggest that the majority of the mutineers were under the influence of some form of intoxicant, reinforcing the idea that Indians were incapable of rational consumption. Grant sets a chilling image of Delhi immediately after its fall to the mutineers: “The noise of the spreading flames, and the crash of falling houses, mingling with the death shriek of a hunted victim and the diabolical yells of the mutineers, most of whom were maddened by bhang, or intoxicated with the liquors of all kinds they had drunk.”

96 Though there are numerous other examples of the degenerate actions of bhang

94 Ibid.
96 Ibid., 5.
users in *First Love*, the most shocking to Grant’s contemporary audience would be those that depicted the potential violation of British women by Indian addicts.

This can be best demonstrated by the ill-fated attempt of Kate Weston, one of the novel’s leading female characters, to escape Delhi after it had fallen to the mutineers. A magnanimous Parsee family who had a deep respect for the Weston family saved her from the streets of Delhi and housed Kate until they could devise a plan to sneak her out of the city. Disguising her as a corpse, the Parsee family attempted to bring her outside the city walls where an intoxicated sepoy intercepted them at the gate. Intentionally aiming to violate their religious customs, he refused to let the family pass until he viewed the corpse:

“Not till we have seen what she was like,” replied the havildar, who was evidently bent on mischief, and drunk with bhang; so he tore away the long white veil which covered the face of Kate, and a fierce and prolonged howl of astonishment rung from the sepoy guard, and the assembled lookers on, when they beheld a—white woman!97

The bhang-induced actions of this sepoy eventually led Kate to the “care” of the ex-thug Pershad Singh. While being held in his residence, Grant suggested that Kate was most at risk to be violated by Singh while he was under the influence of bhang: “It was chiefly when Pershad intoxicated himself with bhang...that Kate feared him, for then his prudence and his fear of the Prince Mogul, alike departed.”98 Though Grant attributed Singh with restraint while sober, this quality disappeared under the influence of bhang. Grant’s penchant for the sensational and the dramatic is not a quality that is shared by Taylor in *Seeta*, however, the depiction of intoxicants alongside the key antagonists does still appear.

98 Grant, *First Love*, vol. 3, 11.
In *Seeta* the two central antagonists are Azrael Pande, who was discussed in great detail during the previous chapter, and the Nawab Dil Khan. It is important to note that throughout Taylor's novel both of these characters are depicted as consumers of opium rather than bhang. This suggests that Taylor, who had officially recognized that bhang did not actually contain opium in the 1870s, had an issue with opium consumption as opposed to the ingestion of bhang. Taylor's perception of the physical effects of habitual opium consumption can be seen in *Seeta* during the first appearance of the Nawab, who provided the resources for the uprising incited by Pande:

The Nawab was hardly pleasant to look on now; his bloated features, deeply pitted by the smallpox, had an expression of alarm and weariness combined; his eyes were heavy and red, for he had not slept off his nightly dose of opium; he was unshaven and unwashed, and his large sensual mouth was marked with the red stains of the pān he had eaten over-night. His thick bull neck looked flabby and dirty, and the fat, hairy arms and hands, which protruded from under the shawl, completed an appearance which was, in truth, most forbidding.  

For Taylor's audience this passage continued to load the Nawab's character, already portrayed as morally destitute because of his seditious and untrustworthy nature, with the negative physical stereotypes associated with oriental opium consumption. This is further emphasized by Taylor's association of Azrael Pande's convalescence with opium.

Though Taylor's focus was on the hookah in the majority of Pande's most violent phases, opium is also present: "If [the Nawab] went to the secret chamber, he found his guest either raving from the effects of the drug he smoked, or the opium he swallowed...crying to the devils he worshipped, or defying or entreating Seeta."  

In a similar fashion to the hookah, Taylor tied opium addiction to the seditious acts of the oriental other and the

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100 Taylor, *Seeta*, vol. 2, 79.
horrors of the mutiny, almost mirroring the growing fear of the narcotic in the metropole.
Taylor’s novel, rife with representations of the dangers of Indian intoxicants being consumed by Indians, was published in the 1870s, at the same time that anti-opium movements in metropolitan Britain began raising a clamour about the perceived issue of “opium dens” at home.\textsuperscript{101}

It is clear that the perception of opium use in metropolitan Britain had shifted towards viewing the narcotic as a dangerous substance requiring strict controls by the time the first Pharmacy Act was passed in 1868, directly corresponding with the publication of William Wilkie Collins’ \textit{The Moonstone} [1868]. Though this Pharmacy Act was not ultimately successful in curbing opium use at this time, it did recognize the importance of the professionalization of drug dispensation, as well as define the narcotic as a poison.\textsuperscript{102} Until the mid-nineteenth century, there was little professional or public discussion surrounding recreational opium use and the dangers of addiction caused by the narcotic’s habitual consumption.\textsuperscript{103}

As a diverse range of ailments were self-medicated with the use of opium in this period because of questionable medical advice and the ease of the drug’s availability, addiction was often rooted in legitimate illness. This can be seen in the life of Wilkie Collins, whose opium addiction was rooted in a chronic, continually worsening illness that he believed to be “rheumatic gout.”\textsuperscript{104} Doctors in the nineteenth century, such as Dr. Robert Adams, thought that there was little that could be done to cure severe cases of rheumatic gout, but believed that “much may be done in the way of palliating the

\textsuperscript{101} Berridge and Edwards, 173.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 114 and 117.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 23.
\textsuperscript{104} Catherine Peters, “Collins, (William) Wilkie,” in \textit{ONDB}.
symptoms of this chronic disease."\textsuperscript{105} This philosophy led to Collins being prescribed laudanum, a tincture of opium dissolved in alcohol, to combat his symptoms and allow him to continue with his work. Collins quickly developed an addiction, and by the mid-1860s was taking so much laudanum that it would have immediately led to a lethal overdose in anyone not accustomed to the drug.\textsuperscript{106}

*The Moonstone*, one of Collins' most famous and groundbreaking novels, was written during a very difficult and painful time in his life, which heavily influenced the content of his work. At this time, Collins was suffering not only from the crippling pain of his illness and the side effects of his opium abuse, but also the death of his mother.\textsuperscript{107} John Sutherland, in the introduction to a modern edition of *The Moonstone*, concisely sums up the importance of opium to Collins' novel:

If *The Moonstone* is primarily the story of a diamond, its other main subject matter is narcotics. The diamond is bequeathed to his niece by an opium smoker. It is subsequently stolen under the influence of opium. The solution of the crime is staged through the experimental application of opium by an opium addict. And, to cap it all, the novel itself was written by another opium eater, so drugged—as he later claimed—that he cannot even remember writing large parts of the novel.\textsuperscript{108}

The novel's importance to this study is rooted in the way that Collins, even as an inveterate opium addict who marveled in its potential, portrayed the oriental narcotic as having a seditious or detrimental agency over the events and the characters of *The Moonstone*. Collins' portrayal of opium addiction as an inescapable nightmare, as well as associating the narcotic to the original colonial and secondary metropolitan theft of the  

\textsuperscript{105} Dr. Robert Adams, *A Treatise on Rheumatic Gout, or Chronic Rheumatic Arthritis of all the Joints* (London: John Churchill, 1873), x.
\textsuperscript{108} Collins, xx.
diamond can be seen to represent prevailing attitudes of opium use in the metropole as well as offer a veiled criticism of the British Empire and opium's role in it.

In *The Moonstone*, Collins seems to exhibit conflicting ideas surrounding the role of opium in metropolitan British life through the musings and actions of two characters: the doctor, Mr. Candy, and his assistant Ezra Jennings. Though Collins still saw value in the medicinal properties of opium, which can be seen through the lens of Mr. Candy, the dangers of habitual opium use are clearly conveyed to the audience of *The Moonstone* through Ezra Jennings, the half-Indian half-British opium addict.\(^{109}\) As Jennings is depicted as a sick man who became desperately addicted to opium in order to control his pain and continue working, it is easy to see him as a "part-autobiographical character" for Collins.\(^{110}\) Though it is Jennings' experience with opium that solves the mystery of the lost diamond, Collins makes the horrors of addiction clear to his audience:

> To that all-potent and all merciful drug I am indebted for a respite of many years from my sentence of death. But even the virtues of opium have their limit. The progress of the disease has gradually forced me from the use of opium to the abuse of it. I am feeling the penalty at last. My nervous system is shattered; my nights are nights of horror.\(^{111}\)

It is made clear by Collins that, despite the fact that Jennings suggests he is only alive because of his opium abuse, the mental and physical costs of opium addiction were exceptionally high. As *The Moonstone* continues, Collins forces his audience to experience Jennings' nightmares, highlighting opium's "vengeance" on the character as

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\(^{110}\) Berridge and Edwards, 58.

\(^{111}\) Collins, 376.
he comes closer to death. From a strictly metropolitan angle, depictions of opium addiction through the experience of Ezra Jennings in *The Moonstone* can be seen as Collins’ personal recognition of the danger of opium use, as well as a warning to his readers.

The meanings inherent behind representations of opium in *The Moonstone* extend far beyond a strictly metropolitan analysis. Jennings’ status as part-Indian immediately suggests that though Collins recognized himself as an addict, opium addiction was still viewed as an Oriental vice. Jennings, actually described as a hybrid between India and Britain, is addicted to an oriental substance that has, through a process of reverse-colonialization, become almost inextricable from the metropole. Through Jennings, Collins locates opium as a “nabobized” commodity; as can be seen through the aforementioned nineteenth century fictions of India, opium became to be viewed as a central part of the corrupting power of India’s Eastern luxury. If opium addiction was inherently oriental, the British Empire’s trade in opium was bringing its potential for corruption back home to the metropole. By associating opium with the theft of the diamond in both an imperial and metropolitan context, Collins is suggesting that through addiction opium had the same potential to bring “indolence, despotism, self-interest, corruption, superstition, and degeneration” back to Britain that Nabobs did with their wealth.

The original, colonial theft of the diamond in *The Moonstone* occurs during Collins’ fictional depiction of the Siege of Seringapatam in 1799 by the opium-addicted

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112 Collins, 392, 396, 405-6, 427.
nabob Colonel Herncastle. It has been suggested that Collins, noted for his Indian
sympathies in the aftermath of 1857, used Seringapatam as a veil for his critique on
British reactions during the Rebellion.\textsuperscript{114} In the prologue, Colonel Herncastle is “cursed”
by one of the three Indians he murdered while stealing the Moonstone diamond from the
Palace of Seringapatam.\textsuperscript{115} After returning to England the Colonel is depicted as living a
“vicious, underground life” where he was “given up to smoking opium” and “amusing
himself among the lowest people in the lowest slums of London.”\textsuperscript{116} The Colonel, known
to have been a “notorious opium eater for years past,” eventually gifts the cursed
diamond to one of his nieces as retribution for the embarrassment inflicted upon him by
her mother.\textsuperscript{117} Collins’ depiction of Colonel Herncastle associates opium with the first
theft of the diamond, colonial violence, nabobism, and corruption.

The agency attributed by Collins to opium during the second, metropolitan theft
of the diamond is where the narcotic truly appears as a nabobized commodity. After the
Moonstone is entrusted to Rachel Verinder at her birthday party, it was left in a cabinet
near her room for safekeeping. In the morning, the diamond was gone and with no initial
leads Collins takes his audience through the web of his detective narrative. It later
becomes clear that Franklin Blake was the “thief,” though he has no memory of the
events whatsoever. After meeting Ezra Jennings, Mr. Candy’s assistant, Blake learns that
he was unwittingly dosed with opium the night the diamond went missing, and Jennings
suggests that he was suffering from drug-induced amnesia. In order to discover what

\textsuperscript{114} Melissa Free, “‘Dirty Linen’: Legacies of Empire in Wilkie Collins’s \textit{The
\textsuperscript{115} Collins, 4-5.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 31.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 31 and 35.
happened to the diamond, Jennings suggests that "we shall have replaced you, as nearly as possible, in the same position, physically and morally, in which the opium found you last year."\textsuperscript{118} The influence of this nabobized commodity "brings its own curse of vengeance back upon the colonizers in England,"\textsuperscript{119} controlling Blake, disposing of the diamond, and erasing his memory. Opium plays the role of a seditious oriental agent in \textit{The Moonstone}, with the narcotic infiltrating an unwitting Briton in order to rectify what is portrayed by Collins to be an original imperial crime.

Though the trade and consumption of opium and opium-derivatives in Britain became increasingly controlled in Britain throughout the nineteenth century, these metropolitan concerns did not translate into the imperial opium trade. The moral contradiction inherent in this practice is strikingly articulated by Dadabhai Naoroji at the beginning of the twentieth century:

In England, no statesman dares to propose that opium may be allowed to be sold in public houses at the corners of every street, in the same way as beer or spirits. On the contrary, Parliament, as representing the whole nation, distinctly enacts that "opium and all preparations of opium or of poppies, as poison, be sold by certified chemists only, and every box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover in which such poison is contained, be distinctly labeled with the name of the article and the word poison, and with the name and address of the seller of the poison." And yet, at the other end of the world, this Christian, highly civilized, and humane England forces a 'heathen' and "barbarous" Power to take this "poison," and tempts a vast human race to use it, and to degenerate and demoralize themselves with this "poison!" And why? Because India cannot fill up the remorseless drain; so China must be dragged in to make it up, even though it be by being "poisoned."\textsuperscript{120}

Though the dangers of this nabobized commodity were recognized to be too dangerous to be left uncontrolled in Britain, the Orient's distinctive vice continued to be promoted in

\begin{footnotes}
\item[118] Collins, 384.
\item[119] Thomas, 71.
\item[120] Dadabhai Naoroji, \textit{Poverty and Un-British Rule in India} (Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1969 [1901]), 201.
\end{footnotes}
the empire. It was not until 1874 that sporadic anti-opium activism amalgamated into a force that would begin to challenge opium’s role in the British Empire.

The fear of opium’s corrupting influence as an agent of oriental subversion by Grant, Taylor, and Collins was also expressed by the actions and publications of the Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of the Opium trade that was founded in London in 1874.121 The Society’s perspectives on opium, China, and the British Empire are concisely described in J. B. Brown’s "Politics of the Poppy" published in the Journal of Contemporary History in 1973:

A study of the Anglo-Oriental Society reveals the sharp limits on contemporary criticism about the Victorian empire. Despite its denunciations of British involvement in the opium trade, this evangelical movement found it difficult to visualize an India or China without a British presence. Indeed, the anti-opium movement advocated the abolition of the drug’s production precisely on the ground that termination would make British imperialism more efficient...It demanded that the empire serve as a moral prophylactic against the further contamination of oriental society by Western greed.122

Opium was viewed by the Society as a moral failing by the British Empire as it not only promoted drug addiction, but stagnated trade in other British manufactures as well as slowing the progress of Christianity in Asia.123

Though the Society was mainly focused on the abolition of the opium trade, it also turned its gaze to the British metropole, where it was instrumental in “the association of domestic opium use with an alien minority.”124 Anti-opium activists believed that the rise of opium dens in the East End of London was the “immorality of Britain’s conduct

121 Brown, 97.
122 Ibid., 98.
123 Ibid., 102.
124 Berridge, 460.
towards China” coming back to the metropole to “roost.” As mentioned earlier, there
was a rising fear throughout the nineteenth century that irrational opium consumption
leading to addiction was rising amongst another “other” in Victorian society: the working
class. In the late nineteenth century, the Society raised the stakes of this sentiment,
suggesting that irrational Chinese opium consumption in London’s opium dens would
spread rapidly throughout the British lower classes. In turn, the “fear of pollution though
opium smoking extended into a belief that opium smoking was spreading among the
white middle-class population.” Though this was largely just sensationalist postulation
by anti-opium activists, the consumption of opium evolved from ingestion to injection
because of the professionalization of the medical community in the nineteenth century.

The invention of the hypodermic needle and rise of morphine in the 1870s and
1880s led to a new “disease” known as “morphinomania” that generally afflicted women
and medical professionals. In 1898, the isolation of heroin continued opium’s legacy of
addiction in the British metropole, exploding into a veritable epidemic in the mid-
twentieth century. Through this process heroin, generally injected hypodermically,
became domesticated, losing the “oriental stigma” surrounding opium smoking and
eating that emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Though the British
medical community and the British Parliament attempted to control opium after it became
perceived as a dangerous oriental drug following the Rebellion of 1857, the implications

125 Berridge and Edwards, 198.
126 Ibid., 199.
127 Milligan, 541; Susan Zieger, “‘How Far am I Responsible?’: Women and
Morphinomania in Late-Nineteenth-Century Britain,” in Victorian Studies 48, no. 1
128 Berridge and Edwards, 255.
of its use and abuse in the nineteenth century continue to reverberate into the twenty-first century.

This chapter has shown that the perception of opium changed dramatically in Britain throughout the nineteenth century, with fiction influencing and mirroring shifts in the medical profession and governmental legislation. In the early nineteenth century, representations of opium consumption reflected the growing awareness of opium’s danger in British society. In William Browne Hockley’s *Pandurang Hari; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo* and Meadows Taylor’s *Confessions of a Thug*, representations of opium use as a medicine, an intoxicant, and as a poison in an Indian context can actually be seen to mirror the growing fears of the narcotic’s potential dangers in metropolitan Britain. Though this growing worry led to changes in the metropole, opium’s trade continued unabated in the imperial realm. In addition, these novels began to establish stereotypes of Indian drug abusers by turning bhang consumption into a symbol of the seditious and violent behaviour of Indian opium addicts. In the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1857, in novels such as James Grant’s *First Love and Last Love: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny* and Taylor’s *Seeta*, bhang’s symbolic status became attached to the supposed excesses committed by Indian mutineers, situating opium abuse as a critical element in the British imaginings of the “mutiny.” In the mid-nineteenth century, opium abuse also became linked as a root cause in the decline of Muslim and Hindu civilization. By the 1860s, the official recognition of the realities of opium abuse and addiction in metropolitan Britain can be seen in the enactment of the first Pharmacy Act and novels such as Wilkie Collins’ *The Moonstone*. At home, opium became a physical realization of the corruption and degeneration that could be caused by Eastern luxury and indolence, taking on the image
of a nabobized commodity. Though still a critical component of medicine in metropolitan Britain, by the end of the nineteenth century opium shifted away from being a widely available panacea to a tightly controlled orientalized narcotic in the emerging British consumer culture.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This thesis has shown that 1857, generally discussed as a watershed moment for British colonialism in India, can also be viewed as a critical event in the creation of a modern and distinctly British consumer culture that began to emerge in the 1850s. This has been done by tracing the changing representations of tobacco and opium in six nineteenth-century fictions of India written by authors with diverse backgrounds and experiences with India, Indians, and the Indian commodities under investigation: William Brown Hockley’s *Pandurang Hārī; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo* [1826], William Delafield Arnold’s *Oakfield; or, Fellowship in the East* [1853], Philip Meadows Taylor’s *Confessions of a Thug* [1839] and *Seeta* [1872], James Grant’s *First Love and Last Love: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny* [1868], and Wilkie Collins’ *The Moonstone* [1868]. Distinct themes emerged between these pre- and post- 1857 novels through an investigation of the depictions of tobacco and opium consumption; representations of these imperial commodities shifted from acting as mundane, background elements to the narrative before 1857 to becoming active oriental agents afterwards, in ways that shaped how metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons could respectably consume these commodities.

Prior to 1857, representations of commodities such as tobacco and opium generally played a background role in the novels, providing an obscured archive of information that offers insight into numerous aspects of British and Indian history. For representations of tobacco, and specifically the hookah, the depictions within the novels can provide information about metropolitan and Anglo-Indian British society, culture, and consumer habits, as well as how these authors perceived these same aspects of Indian
society. Within these representations themes of the exotic, seductive, effeminate, and effeminizing Orient are found, in addition to prescriptive information about “proper” consumption to maintain class and social status. To a historian, these themes provide a greater understanding of the way that these authors perceived their version of colonial India and the consumer objects that were crafted within it. In regards to opium, these representations provide information about a commodity that came to be both respected and feared in the nineteenth century, highlighting growing anxieties about the dangers of opium and the importance of the drug to medicine in India and Britain.

After 1851, when commodities became “the focal point for all representation,” and the “mutiny” of 1857, these Indian products took on a more dominant role in narratives of metropolitan and Anglo-Indian fiction. This reflected a changed attitude towards a now firmly essentialized and distrusted Orient, which in turn shaped the way that modern British consumer culture, which began to emerge in the 1850s, carefully appropriated or rejected these “oriental goods.” In these novels the hookah stood in for the mutiny, and opium became a seditious oriental agent in the metropole. After 1857, hookah consumption and opium use were deemed irrational and dangerous, being strongly associated with the seditious oriental Indians that caused the outbreak, and perpetrated the excesses, of the “mutiny.” The irrational consumption of these commodities then became associated with a distinctly oriental “other,” regardless of whether the consumer was Indian, British, Anglo-Indian, or Chinese, located in metropolitan Britain or abroad in the empire. In the emerging British consumer culture this shift essentially eradicated the use of the hookah by metropolitan and Anglo-Indian Britons. Though the government, through legislation, and the emerging medical
profession attempted to control and restrict the use and abuse of opium at home in the metropole, opium continued to be given free rein in the imperial realm.

It is important to note that the United Kingdom continues to struggle with hookah and opium consumption, and the symbolic connections these two things have to the Orient and Britain’s colonial past, to this day. With rising multiculturalism in the UK because of Britain’s colonial legacy, the hookah has become a prominent feature of metropolitan life. Though technically against British law, hookah bars continue to open across Britain, becoming villainized as a dangerous “foreign habit” in the press. Depicted as “illegal shisha dens” by the BBC, the public use of the hookah has been attacked as a “health and safety risk” with stories of underage smoking and fire risks being reported to raise popular condemnation of hookah-tobacco consumption.¹

Heroin, first developed by Bayer in 1898, later became the most abused opiate in the world. Though opium was viewed as a dangerous, “oriental” drug at the end of the nineteenth century, heroin became viewed as a product of Western science and medicine. In order to produce heroin, a “semi-synthetic” narcotic, it must be synthesized from morphine, which in turn has to be isolated from the “latex” of the opium poppy. Heroin is further disassociated from the consumption practices of “oriental” opium as it is generally consumed intravenously by using a hypodermic needle. The most recent addiction statistics from the British Home Office are from 1997, with 40 000 identified heroin

abusers recognized in the UK, with current estimates locating 1% of Britain’s population addicted to the drug.²

Though the shift in the way in which imperial commodities such as tobacco and opium were depicted in fiction influenced British consumer culture in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the battle against the consumption of these two imperial commodities still continues in Britain today. Hookah consumption continues to be associated with the irrational and dangerous practices of a foreign “other,” challenging the legal and moral authority of Britain in the metropole. Though opium was perceived to be “de-orientalized” and domesticated by the synthesis of heroin at the end of the nineteenth century, this discovery did little more than reinforce the lasting legacy of addiction that “oriental” opium has left in the British metropole. These current issues surrounding hookah and opiate consumption in Britain can be tied back to the rise of modern British consumer culture in the latter half of the nineteenth century; the symbolic association of hookah-tobacco and opium consumption with the negative “oriental” traits that became sharpened in the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1857 in fictions of India created an orientalist understanding in British consumer culture that continues to reverberate today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHORS</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Browne Hockley</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td><em>Pandurang Hari; or the Memoirs of a Hindoo</em></td>
<td>The &quot;memoirs of a Mahratta prince.&quot; The novel shows the author’s extreme prejudice against Indians, though the actual authorship has been called into question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meadows Taylor</td>
<td>1839</td>
<td><em>Confessions of a Thug</em></td>
<td>Fictional account of the life of one of India’s “mythic stranglers.” Taylor’s earliest and most popular work of fiction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Delafield Arnold</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td><em>Oakfield; or, Fellowship in the East</em></td>
<td>A fictionalized autobiography of Arnold’s experiences in India. A treatise against what Arnold viewed to be the moral dissolution of Anglo-Indian society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Grant</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td><em>First Love and Last Love: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny</em></td>
<td>One of the earliest “mutiny novels.” Notable due to detailed accounts of “outrages” committed against Anglo-Indians and overt racism towards Indians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilkie Collins</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td><em>The Moonstone</em></td>
<td>Early example of the detective novel, involving Indian opium in the theft of an Indian diamond. Wilkie Collins was himself an opium addict, purportedly writing much of <em>The Moonstone</em> in an opium trance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meadows Taylor</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td><em>Seeta</em></td>
<td>Taylor’s contribution to the catalogue of “mutiny novels,” calling for restraint and rationality towards India after 1857. A polar opposite of Grant’s <em>First Love.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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