2018

Constructing the Non-Western 'Other': Euro-American Interpretations of Race and Gender Among Colonial and Indigenous Subjects

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Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty of The College of William & Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts

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College of William & Mary
August 2018

ABSTRACT

The first chapter, “The Heteronormative Gaze: Early Scholarly Discourse on Third/Fourth Gender Native Americans and the Construction of the Indigenous Other,” takes an intellectual history approach, focusing on early anthropological studies which contained accounts of queer/non-binary persons in Native American culture during the early twentieth century. It also examines how this academic discourse shaped the perspective on these individuals and the development of certain terminology over the last century. This chapter analyzes a range of early anthropological literature published between 1903 and 1955 in the academic journal, *American Anthropologist*, by a number of scholars in the field, including W. W. Hill, Elsie Clews Parsons, and others.

The second chapter, “Reconstruction of the Non-Western ‘Other’: Sympathetic Interpretations of Race and Gender in Wilkie Collins’s *The Moonstone,*” explores the historical relationship between British imperialism and the anxieties within the Metropole surrounding Indian people and culture during the second half of the nineteenth century as it is reflected in Wilkie Collins’s *The Moonstone*. Additionally, this chapter enumerates the ways in which Collins’s representation of race and gender associated with non-western colonial subjects contrasted to that of other white Victorian observers.

Despite that both chapters focus on different global regions, and employed two distinct forms of literature for the primary source analyses, the central topic of both chapters revolve around gender and sexuality in the context of British colonialism during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express her appreciation to Dr. Hannah Rosen, under whose guidance this investigation was conducted, for her patience, guidance and criticism throughout the investigation. The author is also indebted to Dr. Andrew Fisher and Dr. Hiroshi Kitamura for their careful reading and criticism of the manuscript.

Lastly, the author also wishes to express her gratitude to Dr. Jonathan Reynolds at Northern Kentucky University for the immense amount of support, encouragement, and intellectual direction in her pursuit of this historical research topic.

Intellectual Biography

In the 2017-2018 academic year, I worked towards completing my MA in History at the College of William and Mary. During which time I was enrolled in several graduate seminars, including two research seminars. The papers which I am including within this portfolio were composed for the two research seminars. Since my research interests revolve around gender and sexuality in the context of British colonialism during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I sought to locate a narrow research topic that drew from this broader lens and incorporated each seminar's central theme. Despite that both papers, in the end, focused on different global regions, and employed two distinct forms of literature for my primary source analysis, the overall historical subject remained consistent.

For the Settler Colonialism since 1783 research seminar I completed in the Fall semester, I took an intellectual history approach to my research, focusing on early anthropological studies which contained accounts of queer/non-binary persons in Native American culture during the early twentieth century. I also examined how this academic discourse shaped the perspective on these individuals and the development of certain terminology over the last century. I analyzed a range of early anthropological literature published between 1903 and 1955 in the academic journal, *American Anthropologist*, by a number of scholars in the field, including W. W. Hill, Elsie Clews Parsons, and others. This particular project idea was encouraged by my seminar professor, Dr. Andrew Fisher. Prior to taking this course, I was aware of the extensive amount of scholarship on the existence of queer/non-binary identities in Native American culture, and since the general theme of the course explored settler colonialism in North America, I felt that this sort of study would be well-supported.

However, due to the fact that I was looking strictly at early academic literature in a field I was predominantly unfamiliar with, my historical background on the careers of these early scholars and their discipline was deficient. In order to strengthen this paper, I will need to engage with more secondary literature on the field of anthropology. Specifically, I must locate secondary literature that will provide me a general history of the discipline, as well as biographical sources on each scholar covered in my analysis. A brief exploration of these scholars' career histories will provide context as to how they each came to their field of study. This, no doubt, will help in understanding their individual perspectives in each piece of scholarship.

For my Spring semester, I enrolled in the Race: History and Theory research seminar, which had a much broader thematic lens, allowing me to dive further into the framework of my research interests and conduct a study outside of North America. British colonialism in India was one such area that had fascinated me since my undergraduate studies, and so I considered looking into the intersectionality of race, gender, and sexuality within this historical context. I had the opportunity to attend one of the campus colloquium events in

September 2017, featuring Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, who discussed transgender activism in India. She spoke about the hijra in India and the history of the penal laws left behind from British imperialism. This inspired me to look at the historical relationship between the hijra and the British Empire. However, due to the limited time within the semester, and the very few resources that were available for me to access quickly enough for this specific topic, I pursued another narrow topic under this framework.

I then sat down with Dr. Chitralekha Zutshi to discuss possible ideas surrounding gender and sexuality within the historical period of British India. She recommended I look at examples of British fiction published in the Victorian era containing depictions of Indian persons who embodied characteristics that were outside the Western values of gender and sexuality. Her suggestion led me to examine some of the existing secondary work on the use of gender in various fictional pieces from this period, specifically ones that have significant imperial themes. While there appeared to be a substantial number of analyses on gender and empire in fictional literature, none appeared to examine the author's relationship with his or her geographical location in the context of the British Empire, and whether or not that affected the author's inventions of non-western forms of gender expression. I came across one monograph which explored queer themes within an array of Victorian novels which seemed to fit within my framework. Thus, for this paper I employed Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*, whose storyline incorporate gendered colonial subjects, and I analyzed his biographical story and relationship to the British Empire, as well as incorporating his own personal politics.

From the Swem Library, I was able to gather edited volumes of Collins's personal writings and letters, along with a couple of secondary biographical sources. These sources revealed how Collins was affected by certain historical events within the late nineteenth century and how these events influenced his opinion of the British Empire and of Indian peoples and their culture. Ultimately, in combination with his class, educational background, and upbringing, Collins's personal politics appeared to be the most influential in his sympathetic regard of the gendered colonial subjects within his novel.

In general, I am quite pleased with this paper and can say honestly that I thoroughly enjoyed writing it. I do believe, however, that pieces of my paper which relay the author's biographical history could benefit from some expansion. I think incorporating more analysis of Collins's socio-economic class, as well as his engagement with British imperial politics, would help in providing a well-rounded picture of his employment of "othering" when composing his body of work.

I feel confident in saying that I have gained a great deal of knowledge while working on these projects, exploring the many ways in which scholars may employ literature within a variety of studies. I am also grateful in having had the ability to explore different paths underneath the umbrella of my research interests. I hope to use both papers as tools to further my research in the future as I move forward in my academic career.

The Heteronormative Gaze: Early Scholarly Discourse on Third/Fourth Gender Native Americans and the Construction of the Indigenous Other

Introduction

This paper constitutes an application of queer theory to the historical study of settler colonialism in North America in the early twentieth century. Through a focus on early anthropological studies, I am writing an intellectual history of queer/non-binary persons in Native American culture, examining how academic discourse shaped the perspective on these individuals and the development of certain terminology over the last century. Within this framework, I will attempt to answer the following questions: (1) what does early scholarly work say about the historical relationship between the heteropatriarchal settlers and the non-binary indigenous people in these North American tribes?; (2) what do these primary documents say about the early academic interest in third/fourth gender indigenous people and the construction of the "Indigenous Other"?

I will use a balance of primary source material and secondary scholarship to explore these research questions. The six primary sources I will analyze for my research paper are a range of early twentieth century anthropological literature published in the academic journal, *American Anthropologist*, by a number of scholars in the field, including W. W. Hill, Elsie Clews Parsons, and others. These early pieces of literature were published from 1903 to 1955. Each primary document involves one or more of these scholars investigating the presence of queer/non-binary persons in Native American tribes and culture at the time. Their work focuses predominantly on the Navajo, Zuñi, and Cherokee tribes.

These early pieces of academic scholarship in the field of anthropology will provide a lens into the history of the heteropatriarchal settler academe, its interest in

non-binary persons in specific Native American tribes, and how these early scholars constructed identity labels, such as *hermaphrodite*, *berdache*, and *two-spirit*, for the purpose of defining the "Indigenous Other."

Over the course of recent decades, scholars have investigated the existence of people outside of the Euro-American gender binary in Native American history. These individuals are described frequently within the literature as *hermaphrodite*, *berdache* or, in recent years, *two-spirit*. Research has shown that third and fourth gender persons were not only visible in over a hundred different Native American tribes, but, in certain tribes, they held important roles within their communities. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, academics within the field of anthropology began to explore the character and culture of these non-binary indigenous persons found in specific Native American tribes. This body of literature produced by early anthropologists has evolved over the decades, and subsequently influenced contemporary scholars in the fields of Indigenous and settler colonial studies to explore this aspect of Native American history.

In the last few years, scholars within the field of settler colonial studies have called for the application of new theories and methodologies to the historical study of Native people – specifically gender and queer theory. Gender and sexual power are discussed at great length in the scholarship of settler colonial studies; however, much of it remains under-theorized regarding the historical relationship between the *heteropatriarchal* colonizer and the *queer/non-binary* colonized. Additionally, there appears to be a need to diverge from using queer theory for the simple purpose of defining a number of persons historically found in Native American tribes and culture. And so, an application of queer theory to the study of settler colonialism in order to analyze the heteropatriarchal settler nation, its relationship to land and culture, and the

effect it has on indigenous people, would be a different direction to take this body of research. I will employ the terms *queer* and *non-binary* to describe Native American persons that do not fit within the Western heteronormative dichotomy of male and female.

Gregory Smithers, a current scholar in Native American history, analyzes in one of his recent articles, "Cherokee 'Two-Spirits,'" that the historical challenges associated with historical studies of "two-spirit," non-binary Native people – specifically within the Cherokee tribe. Smithers asserts that historians have played only a minor role in the scholarly discussions on the existence of "two-spirit" people.[1] He subsequently offers a way in which historians can effectively approach the study of non-binary individuals – employing the early scholarship of anthropology and sociology would help historians to better understand the existence of "two-spirit" people in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.[2] It is this point within Smithers's argument that I hope to pick up from in my study.

Using several works of early anthropological literature published in the *American Anthropologist*, this paper examines the early academic discourse surrounding the definition, origins, and status of non-binary individuals with Native American culture in the early twentieth century. Specifically, this paper's main objective is to historicize the development of interest in queer/non-binary Native Americans by settler academics in the field of anthropology and what influence has their scholarly discourse had on the construction of the "Indigenous Other."

A personal drive within this paper's purpose is to continue this dialogue in the field of history on the existence of queer/non-binary persons in not just the United

[1] Gregory D. Smithers, "Cherokee "Two Spirits": Gender, Ritual, and Spirituality in the Native South," *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 12, no. 3 (2014): 629.
[2] Ibid, 650.

States, but in other parts of the World as well. Queer history has consistently remained a very Western and white area of study, often leaving out some of the most significant elements and individuals out of its range of view. Thus, there is a need to explore the existence of queer people outside the Euro-American culture. Additionally, the study of queer history is still overwhelmingly focused on modern times – specifically looking at Stonewall and the Gay Rights Movement in the 1960s and 70s. And so, there is a call to investigate the history of queer people prior to the 1950s. This paper attempts to contribute a piece of that literature for continuing this dialogue within the field of history.

Settler Colonialism and Queer Theory

In recent years, the field of settler colonial studies has welcomed an expansive application of theories and methodologies to the historical study of Native people. Scholars who have contributed a great deal to the field of settler colonial studies, such as Scott Lauria Morgensen and Andrea Smith, have specifically sought the use of gender and queer theory to this historical study.

In her article, Queer Theory and Native Studies, Andrea Smith argues for the intervention of queer theory to the study of settler colonialism, stating that queer theory would offer a "helpful starting point for enabling Native studies to escape its position of ethnographic entrapment within the academy."[3] The field of settler colonialism is currently an expanding field in the academy, encompassing a wide number of disciplines such as history, anthropology, sociology, and others. In order for this field to continue its conversation with other disciplines, it must attempt to employ different theories and new methodologies.

[3] Andrea Smith, "Queer Theory and Native Studies: The Heteronormativity of Settler Colonialism," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 16, no. 1-2 (2010): 44.

Unlike colonialism, where colonizers and their metropole control an indigenous people, *settler colonialism* is the historical process in which an indigenous people and their culture is eliminated by colonizers. As Veracini describes in his article, settler colonialism is "as much a thing of the past as a thing of the present."[4]

With the understanding of the United States as a settler colony, this paper regards the early American scholars within the anthropological discipline as members of the white settler society at the time. Thus, these scholars were motivated by the ideas, customs, and beliefs of a predominantly white, heteronormative, Christian society, and appears to have driven their studies of queer/non-binary persons in Native American culture. This is abundantly clear throughout their published scholarship, especially in their use of terminology and strongly negative descriptions of sexual and marriage practices among the members of these various tribes. Since these white settler scholars are conditioned by their own cultural beliefs, it would have been easy for them to pass along these negative perceptions and labels of Native Americans.

Queer theory fundamentally points to a divergence from the claim that heterosexuality and the strict dichotomy of male and female are the norm and/or the only natural form sexuality and expression of gender. In other words, queer theorists argue against the idea that heteronormativity is the only *normal* and *valid* expression of gender and sexual practice in human societies. Merely the majority number of individuals who associate and express this sexual orientation views heterosexuality as natural. However, this idea disregards the existence of gender and sexual expression outside of the heteronormative definition across various cultures in history.

[4] Lorenzo Veracini, "Introducing: Settler colonial studies." *Settler colonial studies* 1, no.1 (2011): 3.

At one time, the word *queer* was often used as a derogatory label for gay men and women, but recently has evolved into an umbrella term for a spectrum of sexual identities that fall outside the Euro-American definition of heterosexuality. Within the last two decades, the term *queer* has expanded beyond sexuality to include varying expressions of gender and gender identities outside the perceived binary absolute of male and female. The term *non-binary* refers to gender expressions or identities that are not exclusively male or female (masculine or feminine) – and are, therefore, outside of the two distinct genders recognized by Western heteronormative society. It should be noted that the terms *queer* and *non-binary* are not always used synonymously in scholarship, but they often go hand-in-hand when referring to individuals or concepts that fit within the extensive boundaries of these definitions.

Michel Foucault, the most recognizable founding father of queer theory, pointedly argued against a fixed identity of sexuality, suggesting that "sexuality is not an essentially personal attribute but an available cultural category."[5] In her guidebook to understanding queer theory, Annamarie Jagose points to certain anxieties a number of queer theorists have regarding the term *queer* when used as an "elaboration" of identity for individuals viewed as gay or lesbian.[6] In recent times, scholars have attempted to apply queer theory outside of the field of lesbian and gay studies – using it as a lens with which to analyze topics in other established disciplines such as English, History, Anthropology, Sociology, etc.[7] *Queer* as a theory has sought to "detach the critique of gender and sexuality from narrowly conceived notions of lesbian and gay identity."[8] Furthermore, queer theory has "redefined the practice of LGBT

[5] Annemarie Jagose, *Queer theory: An introduction*, (New York University Press, 1996), 79.
[6] Ibid, 3.
[7] David M. Halperin, "The normalization of queer theory," *Journal of homosexuality* 45, no. 2-4 (2003): 342
[8] Ibid, 341.

history"[9] and it has helped the field of gay and lesbian studies achieve its theoretical goals.

Queer theory – specifically through the employment of the term *non-binary* – is a useful lens through which to view Native Americans who were described by early academics as exhibiting characteristics outside the heteronormative definition of Euro-American society. *Non-binary* is inclusive enough to take in account the cross-cultural differences that scholars less than a century ago failed to consider when employing early terms, such as *hermaphrodite*, *invert*, and *berdache.*

Brief Historical Background

Anthropology emerged in the United States as an academic discipline in the mid-nineteenth century. The academic journal, *American Anthropologist*, published its first volume in 1888 and is considered the first leading scholarly journals in which anthropologists could submit their work.[10]

Some of the American scholars in the early twentieth century who contributed to the field of the anthropology focused a great number of their studies on the existence of non-binary persons in Native American tribes. These scholars include S. C. Simms, whose position in the Field Columbian Museum assisted his study of non-binary Crow Indians; W. W. Hill and Elsie Clews Parsons were considered prominent scholar in the field of anthropology in the early twentieth century and are frequently

[9] Ibid.
[10] American Anthropological Association, "American Anthropologist," Accessed December 7, 2017, http://www.americananthro.org/StayInformed/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=1680&navItemNumber=712

citied in monographs of later scholars, such as Will Roscoe, who has produced a substantial amount of research on the history queer/non-binary Native Americans.[11]

Defining the "Indigenous Other"

As Edward Said argued in his groundbreaking work, *Orientalism*, there was a self-serving purpose behind the Europeans' interests in the Orient – through the process of defining the East as the *Other*, the West was able to construct its own self-image, and how it differed from the Orient. This attempt to define the *other* has not only been made by Europeans on the Middle East, but also by Euro-American settlers on the Native peoples of North America.[12] The "Indigenous Other" follows this line of logic put forth by Said in that there has been this desire to investigate and examine groups of people and cultures that appear different from our own.

Analyses of Early Anthropological Discourse

The following six pieces of early academic discourse in the field of anthropology were published in the *American Anthropologist* from 1903 to 1955. Composed by early twentieth century scholars within the field, each piece of scholarship provides a lens into the scholars' perspectives and understandings of non-binary Indigenous persons in various tribes. Additionally, the personal narratives by these scholars which are included in each work – specifically regarding the use of terminology and how it shifted over the course of just a little more than fifty years – present a glimpse into the heteronormative academic gaze during this period.

[11] Will Roscoe, *Changing Ones: Third and fourth genders in Native North America*, (Macmillan, 2000) 43-191.
[12] Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western representations of the Orient*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1978), 11.

In 1903, S. C. Simms published an entry in the *American Anthropologist*'s Anthropologic Miscellanea. This piece of scholarship is a short compilation of seven entries on a variety of subjects, from Native American cultural facets to environmental archaeology. Simms's entry entitled, "Crow Indian Hermaphrodites,"[13] briefly describes the presence of third and fourth gendered Native persons in the Crow tribe, using the term *hermaphrodite* as their identifying label.

Simms begins by stating how it has been documented that the Crow Indians have more hermaphrodites than other Native American tribes. He cites records from 1848-49 in which Crow hermaphrodites were captured and then killed once it was discovered that these individuals were hermaphrodites.[14] Simms recounts a visit he made to the Crow Indian reservation, while on the direction from the Field Columbian Museum, there he learned of three hermaphrodites living in the relative districts. He remarks that these individuals are typically referred to as *she* – at least one was regarded as a "half man and half woman"[15] – and are known for their exemplary skills at cooking and needlework, and exhibiting a generous nature.

Interestingly, Simms later relays how he was told that when these non-binary persons expressed a "preference for things pertaining to female duties" at a young age, their parents would still force them to wear clothing designated for the male sex. However, once they reached the age where they were no longer required to live under their parents' charge, they were able to dress in women's attire.[16] So, despite the high regard these non-binary persons received within the Crow tribe as adults, as children they were not encouraged to express a gender outside of their physical sex.

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[13] Charles Peabody, S. C. Simms, H. Ten Kate, W. R. Gerard, George Bird Grinnell, A. F. C., and W. E. Roth, "Anthropologic Miscellanea," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 5, no. 3 (1903): 580.
[14] Charles Peabody et al., "Anthropologic Miscellanea," 580.
[15] Ibid, 581.
[16] Ibid.

Simms offers little to no reasoning behind his pursuit of study of these non-binary persons in the Crow Indian tribe beyond perhaps the possibility of his interest being piqued by his reading of the mid-nineteenth century records, “Corbusier winter counts, 1839-1845”[17] and other accounts he had come across. He ends his brief journal entry with a note on how, in recent years, efforts by Indian agents to coerce these non-binary persons into wearing male attire “under threat of punishment” have been attempted, but have remained ineffective.[18]

In 1916, Elsie Clews Parsons published a manuscript narrating the accounts of her time spent with members of the Zuñi tribe. She discusses the small presence of *Ia’mana* or *Ihamana*[19], which is the name assigned to third gender persons, in the Zuñi tribe at the time. Parsons doesn’t appear to employ the term *hermaphrodite* as Simms did, relying mostly on the cultural labels used by those within the Zuñi tribe. Also, unlike Simms, who did not spend much time conversing with non-binary Indigenous persons during his visit to the Crow Indian tribe, Parsons appeared to have engaged with these individuals personally and goes as far as providing each of their names in her work – Kasineli, Tsalatise, and U’k.[20] However, when introducing the third gender persons, Parsons uses the male pronoun almost exclusively and refers to each of them frequently as “man-women.”[21]

Parsons spends a fair amount of her manuscript describing each third gender person’s appearance and the community activities in which they participate. The

[17] Ibid, 580.
[18] Charles Peabody et al., "Anthropologic Miscellanea,", 581.
[19] Brian Joseph Gilley, *Becoming two-spirit: Gay identity and social acceptance in Indian country*, (University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 8.
[20] Elsie Clews Parsons, "The Zuñi Ła'mana," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 18, no. 4 (1916): 521.
[21] Ibid, 521-526.

la'mana are well known for their skills at creating pottery and weaving blankets for their communities. Both Kasineli and Tsalatise, according to Parsons, were a prime example of this. When providing a personal description of Kasineli, Parsons states that they had "the facial expression and stature of a man," but walks in a manner that "is slow and ponderous" like the women in the Zuñi tribe.[22] Unlike the other *la'mana*, U'k is much shorter in stature and is described as somewhat "effeminate looking,"[23] and participates in the ceremonial dances.[24] During one of her visits to the Zuñi tribe, Parsons witnessed U'k wearing the dress and hair in the traditional women's style while engaging in the *chaakwena* dance.[25]

Later in her article, Parsons relays key facets of Zuñi mythology and other cultural tenets where the genealogy of these third gender individuals are described and their existence essentially is explained. Her main contact within the Zuñi tribe is described as an elderly man over the age of seventy.[26] She does not provide the individual's name. This contact person told Parsons of nine *la'mana* that he had known over the years – two of whom were married, "living with men as their wives."[27] Parsons writes that the marriage was described to her as an "economic arrangement,"[28] and she understood that between the la'mana and their spouses that there wasn't "the slightest hint of physical perversion on the part of either the 'husband' or 'wife'."[29] Parsons's personal description of the potential sexual relationship between what she viewed as two men – using the word *perversion* – is most reflective of the heteronormative Euro-American point of view in the early twentieth century.

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[22] Parsons, "The Zuñi Ła'mana," 522.
[23] Ibid, 526.
[24] Ibid, 526-7.
[25] Ibid, 527.
[26] Ibid, 521.
[27] Ibid, 526.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.

Parsons ends her article with a discussion she had with her Zuñi contact person on the burial customs surrounding the *la'mana*, inquiring as to which gender are these individuals are buried with. She states that she was keen to "test the sex status of the *la'mana*."[30] The response she received appeared simple in the point of view of the Zuñi contact: "the men's side, of course."[31]

Parsons's approach to her study of non-binary Indigenous persons appears to be one of the earliest that was as elaborate as this. Her study also involved an attempt at building a personal relationship with the third gender Zuñi persons, and creating an open conversation between the settler academic and the Native peoples. Parsons would return to the Zuñi tribe to continue her study twenty-three years later and publish a second piece of scholarship in the *American Anthropologist.*

Less than twenty years later, W. W. Hill, while holding his academic position at Yale University, published his own thorough analysis of non-binary Indigenous persons in the Navaho tribe, in which he entitled, "The Status of the Hermaphrodite and Transvestite in Navaho Culture." Hill's status as an early twentieth century white, heterosexual settler is well highlighted in the very first sentence of his article. He begins with identifying the dissimilarities of Native American culture from his own, and how "many primitive societies recognize in a social sense, and include in their culture pattern a place for those individuals whose psychic or physiological peculiarities set them apart from the normal."[32] These glimpses of the heteronormative settler perspective appear several times throughout the course of Hill's article.

[30] Parsons, "The Zuñi Ła'mana," 528.
[31] Ibid.
[32] W. W. Hill, "The Status of the Hermaphrodite and Transvestite in Navaho Culture," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 37, no. 2 (1935): 273.

Uniquely, unlike the first two pieces of scholarship covering this subject in the *American Anthropologist,* Hill does not discuss his time on the reservation, nor credit his contact within the Navaho tribe in which he received this information regarding the presence of non-binary persons. Like Parsons, though, Hill does attempt to employ the terminology from the Navaho's native language, *nadle*, but still appears to use pronouns to match the physical sex of the non-binary persons he describes. He also relays that it was explained to him that the Navaho use another term as well – "the real *nadle*."[33] Hill then writes how he was told that the term *nadle* translated to "weaver," but that its origin can be traced to mean "being transformed."[34]

In his comparison of this label, he uses two types of terminology when describing non-binary persons in the Navaho tribe – *transvestites* and *hermaphrodites*. He explains that "hermaphrodites were called 'the real *nadle*'," while *transvestites* were regarded as "those who pretend to be *nadle*."[35] He was also informed that the Navaho differentiate between the two sexes of transvestites. Hill offers a quote to better understand this distinction through the eyes of the Navaho, stating how "a boy may act like a girl until he is eighteen or twenty-five; then he may turn into a man or he may not. Girls do the same thing."[36] He continues his attempt at defining the differentiation of the two terms by stating that hermaphrodites typically wear women's clothing and "assume the position of women when sitting," while transvestites are known to wear "the garb of either sex."[37]

Most interestingly, these terms – *hermaphrodite* and *transvestite* – that Hill uses may describe very different human characteristics today. As stated earlier, a

[33] Hill, "The Status of the Hermaphrodite and Transvestite in Navaho Culture," 273.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid, 275.

hermaphrodite would be considered an outdated term for individual who is intersex today, while a transvestite is someone who may, at certain times and for various reasons, wear the clothing designated for the opposite sex. In his article, however, he doesn't appear to explain what either term means within the early twentieth century academic setting.

The *nadle* are looked upon favorably in Navaho culture, and are described as holding a unique economic role in their community, as they known for having "control of all wealth."[38] Similar to other Native American tribes, the concept of the non-binary persons is present, and their "cultural role well substantiated," in Navaho mythology.[39] Hill continues his narrative by highlighting several aspects in which the *nadle* are well respected and how their existence is key to the survival of the Navaho culture.

Lastly, Hill also notes that the *nadle* were "never made fun of and their abnormalities were never mentioned to them or by themselves."[40] Once again, the heteronormative settler perspective is clear through his choice of words to describes the characteristics of these non-binary individuals. This is also apparent in Hill's discussion of the sexual relationships and marriage unions that the *nadle* engage in. When discussing this cultural aspect, Hill points out the lack of stigma placed on the *nadle* for their "irregular sex activities."[41] He appears surprised by the fact that the typical disdain placed on "abnormal sex relations by normal individuals" are removed in regards to these persons.[42] Hill also describes the sexual practices of *transvestites* and *hermaphrodites* as "sodomy" and that – for transvestites, in particular – have "relations both normally and unnaturally with both sexes."[43] His description of the

[38] Hill, "The Status of the Hermaphrodite and Transvestite in Navaho Culture," 274.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid, 273.
[41] Ibid, 276.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Hill, "The Status of the Hermaphrodite and Transvestite in Navaho Culture," 276.

Navaho *nadle* sexuality further displays the heteronormative settler view of same-sex sexuality and relationships in the early twentieth century.

W. W. Hill continued to pursue his interest in the existence of non-binary persons in Native American tribes in the years following and publish another, albeit a shorter, analysis on these non-binary persons in another tribe – the Pima. In the Pima tribe, Hill paints a very different situation surrounding non-binary Indigenous persons. While the Pima mythology is similar to other tribes' spiritual and religious foundations in the fact that non-binary persons are significantly present; however, their roles are somewhat less positive.[44]

Many Native American tribes, including the Navaho, viewed non-binary members as holding a unique status within their community. However, this was not the case with the Pima tribe. When discussing this fact in his article, Hill states frankly that there was "no sanction for the sexual invert in Pima culture and the cultural pattern had never been modified to allow them a specialized role."[45]

It should be noted that Hill's use of terminology has changed since his first article on the Navaho three years earlier. Here, he references the term *invert* instead of *hermaphrodite*. Hill does not provide an explanation for the change. One may assume that this shift in terminology was due to a change in the academic discourse regarding how scholars described individuals outside of the heteronormative definition.

Hill describes the Pima label, *wi*kovat*, for the "male invert," which can be translated to "like a girl."[46] He then points out that the Pima had no label for non-binary persons with the physical sex of female. Interestingly, Hill appears surprised that the

[44] W. W. Hill, "Note on the Pima Berdache," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 40, no. 2 (1938): 339.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Hill, "Note on the Pima Berdache," 339.

Pima do not differentiate between those "who were hermaphrodites and those whose invert tendencies were due mainly to psychic causes."[47] Much like his reference to comparative terms in his first article, Hill does not provide a reason for his employment of these labels, nor does he offer a definition for either label that may help understand the distinction between the two.

Lastly, this tribe's outlook held less reverence on these non-binary persons than the Navaho, and that, as a result, their "abnormal behavior was definitely stigmatized" within the Pima.[48] Hill reflects at the end of his article how similar the views of the Pima are to the ones found in white settler society on non-binary persons, stating that the Pima opinion "paralleled very closely that in own culture toward the same type of abnormal behavior."[49] However, Hill does not offer a clear explanation as to why the Pima have placed a stigma on their non-binary members.

Despite this predominantly negative view on the *wi*kovat* by the Pima tribe, Hill notes that their existence was "accepted more or less fatalistically," and that "no cure or coercion was attempted" to change them.[50]

In 1939, Elsie Clews Parsons returned to the Zuñi tribe, apparently to observe the status of non-binary persons within their community. Her second article gives the impression of a post-test analysis, considering that it is shorter than the first, and does not provide much detail about the individuals she describes here. Another particularly striking difference is the fact that Parsons does not use the Zuñi label, *la'mana*, to describe these non-binary persons as she did in her first article. More exactly, Parsons

[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid, 338.
[49] Ibid, 340.
[50] Ibid, 338.

uses the terms “transvestite” or “transvestism” in regards to these members.[51] She does not offer a reason as to why she chose to use these terms rather than the Zuñi label.

In her return, Parsons discovered that the group of non-binary persons whom she connected with two decades prior had dwindled, from five to two. Kasinelu and Laspeke were the two remaining non-binary persons within the Zuñi tribe, as the others had passed away since her initial visit. Parsons spends most of her second article describing the activities and physical characteristics of Laspeke and Kasinelu.

At this time, Laspeke did not appear to exhibit any characteristics relative to the *la’mana.* Parsons seemed struck by this since Laspeke, twenty years ago, was observed as a youth “carrying his little sister on his back in a blanket as a girl or woman carries a baby.”[52] She then remarks that no other child since Laspeke has “shown any promise of transvestism.”[53] However, this does not seem to be the case with Kasinelu, leading Parsons to even goes as far as to describe them as “the only surviving transvestite in Zuñi, and almost certainly will be the last one.”[54]

Remarkably, following this statement about Kasinelu, Parsons argues that “American influence will work against the trait.”[55] This suggests that the heteronormative influence of the white settlers is beginning to show within certain Native American tribes in regards to the outlook on non-binary Indigenous persons. Parsons appears to be the first among these early scholars in the anthropological field

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[51] Elsie Clews Parsons, "The Last Zuni Transvestite," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 41, no. 2 (1939): 338.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Elsie Clews Parsons, "The Last Zuni Transvestite," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 41, no. 2 (1939): 338.
[55] Ibid.

to acknowledge the impact that the dominating Euro-American society is having on Native American culture.

Henry Angelino and Charles L. Shedd appear be the first to take this academic discourse to a different level just sixteen years later following Elsie Clews Parsons's second article on non-binary persons in the Pima tribe. Their 1955 article, "A Note on Berdache," acts as a historiographical and etymological analysis on the study of the *berdache* in Native American culture. W. W. Hill is among the various scholars whose work they reference in their analysis.

Angelino and Shedd also appear to be the first scholars to describe a goal for their study and a reason for their investigation into the existence of non-binary Indigenous persons. They state their purpose early on in the article, which was to seek the answers to questions regarding what previous scholars have said about the origins of the *berdache*. The authors also try to determine what terminology accurately describes the non-binary Indigenous persons present in numerous ethnographies.

Additionally, Angelino and Shedd are the first among these early scholars to use the terms homosexual, bisexual, and asexual. The authors immediately recognize the early and common use of the term *berdache* among anthropologists. They then noticed the broad interpretation of the term, and how it was "being used as a synonym for homosexualism, hermaphrodtitism, transvestism, and effeminism."[56] They suggest that these categorizations are too different to be to used as a definition for a single term. Thus, they argue for the location of a different descriptive label to accurately characterize these non-binary Indigenous persons.

[56] Henry Angelino and Charles L. Shedd, "A Note on Berdache," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 57, no. 1 (1955): 121.

Specifically, Angelino and Shedd argue, if *berdache* is continued to be used, then a less complicated definition must be used, and that perhaps this label should be applied to the individual with a "definite physiological sex (male and female) who assumes the role and status of the opposite sex."[57] They further argue that transvestism is not a suitable characterization for the *berdache* label.[58]

Of course, this investigation and discourse regarding proper terminology for non-binary persons in Native American culture will continue amongst scholars in the field for several decades following Angelino and Shedd's work.

Conclusion

Through the use of several works of early anthropological literature published in the *American Anthropologist*, this paper examined the perspectives of the early twentieth century academics on the queer/non-binary indigenous persons in North America. As shown in the analyses above, there is little to no discussion provided in any of these six pieces of scholarship as to why this selection of early academics in the field of anthropology took such an interest in non-binary Indigenous persons. It is also clear that the targeted audience for their scholarship are fellow academics. This is made most clear by the use of terminology – and the absence of definitions for these terminologies – within each piece. It suggests that the persons who were expected to read these scholarly works would be familiar with these terms, such as *hermaphrodite*, *transvestite*, and *invert*, in this context.

Further investigation into the early scholarship produced by anthropologists and ethnographers on the subject of non-binary Indigenous peoples would benefit this study immensely. Additionally, a more in-depth look into the early history of

[57] Ibid, 125.
[58] Ibid.

anthropology, along with the interests in Native American culture by early American anthropologists, would help expand the scope of this study.

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Reconstruction of the Non-Western 'Other': Sympathetic Interpretations of Race and Gender in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*

Introduction

> "It is my conviction, or my delusion, no matter which, that crime brings its own fatality with it."[59] – prologue, *The Moonstone*

> "Physiology says, and says truly, that some men are born with female constitutions – and I am one of them."[60] – Ezra Jennings in *The Moonstone*

Since its publication in 1868, Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* has piqued the interest of numerous readers across the globe and remained as the author's most popular work of fiction. Its story offers many of the alluring qualities of a typical Victorian novel – mystery, romance, supernatural themes, and the lesson that nothing is as it seems. Nevertheless, Collins's novel appears to stand out among other texts from this period, especially in regards to his representation of imperial subjects. The novel's plot follows a series of events surrounding the theft of an invaluable Indian diamond, known as "the Moonstone." The jewel was originally taken from a Brahmin temple during a siege in 1799 by an English soldier named Colonel John Herncastle. In the midst of stealing the Moonstone, Herncastle slaughters the Brahmin temple guards, who deliver a warning to him that the jewel "will have its vengeance yet on [him] and [his]!"[61] Nearly fifty years later, the jewel is sent to England to be given as a birthday gift to the colonel's niece, Rachel Verinder. The curse associated with the Moonstone is well-known among most of the colonel's family, including Lady Verinder's nephew, Franklin Blake – the story's central narrator. Once the jewel is placed in Rachel Verinder's possession, the story becomes more problematic. On the night of

[59] Wilkie Collins, *the Moonstone*, (Penguin Books, 1998), 16.
[60] Ibid, 373.
[61] Ibid, 14.

her eighteenth birthday, the moonstone is stolen once again. The remainder of the novel follows Franklin Blake, along with a handful of other English characters, in search of the lost jewel and those responsible for its disappearance. It is immediately believed – and held for the majority of the story – that three Indians, who were seen on the night of Rachel Verinder's birthday party, are to blame for the crime. It is not until the novel's finale that Collins reveals to his readers that the true culprit is in fact Rachel Verinder's other cousin, Godfrey Ablewhite.

The Moonstone's arrival to England also conjures a number of other "Orient"-related figures from the background, Mr. Murthwaite and Ezra Jennings. Mr. Murthwaite, an Englishman quite familiar with Indian languages and customs as a result of his extensive time in India, informs Rachel Verinder that her life would be threatened if she were to visit India with the Moonstone.[62] During Rachel's birthday party, the dinner is interrupted by a noise outside, and the guests make their way out on the lawn to find three Indian men, seemingly performing a juggling act. Alarmed, though unable to look away, the guests watch the uninvited visitors. Mr. Murthwaite steps forward and speaks to one of the Indians in his own language. This appears to startle them and then the Indians simply bow to Lady Verinder and leave the property. Mr. Murthwaite appears to function as a "proto-ethnographer,"[63] interpreting for the other English characters who are attempting to comprehend the reason behind the Indians' presence and the nature of the Moonstone.

Ezra Jennings, who does not make an appearance until the second half of the novel, is a racially ambiguous man working as the assistant to Dr. Candy – one of Rachel Verinder's birthday party guests. When introducing the character, Collins

[62] Collins, *the Moonstone*, 78.
[63] Margery Sabin, *Dissenters and Mavericks: Writings About India in English, 1765-2000*, (Oxford University Press on Demand, 2002), 97.

describes him as exhibiting physical characteristics often attributed with the "East," particularly in regards to his nose and other facial features. During Franklin Blake's second visit to Dr. Candy's office in London, it is revealed that Jennings was not born in England, and although it is not specified, the logical assumption is that his parentage, at least partly, is from India. In addition to the three Brahmin Indian "jugglers," it is through Jennings's character that Collins clearly depicts the existing British sentiment regarding the non-western "Other." This is apparent in the English characters' first impressions of him, expressing uneasiness with Jennings's "puzzling contradiction between his face and figure" – harboring an overtly "gypsy-complexion" yet "dreamy eyes."[64] Jennings's alluring appearance is noted in a number of instances by Blake. Moreover, the frequent reference to his "dreamy eyes" suggest a layer of femininity to Jennings's character. Indeed, Collins writes how Jennings views himself as having "the constitution of a women."[65] Among the various characterizations of Indian people and culture in his novel, Jennings's character appears to represent a common idea within the British Victorian imaginings of non-western expressions of gender. On an interesting note, Jennings also is a crucial player in the resolution of the problem surrounding the Moonstone, acting as a "savior" to the English characters' troubles.

For this paper, I will examine Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* which incorporates racialized and gendered colonial subjects within its plot. Through Collins's novel, I explore the historical relationship between British imperialism and the anxieties within the Metropole surrounding Indian people and culture during the second half of the nineteenth century as it is reflected in the author's writing. Ultimately, I will

[64] Collins, *The Moonstone*, 369.
[65] Ibid, 373.

enumerate the ways in which Collins's representation of race and gender associated with non-western colonial subjects contrasted to that of other white Victorian observers.

During the mid to late nineteenth century, Great Britain's imperial efforts in India did not remain constricted within the geographical boundaries of the country. The empire infiltrated the imaginations of the Metropole, as well as many staples of British culture. This is especially in the case of literature. During the nineteenth century, these regions, especially in the case of India, became a symbolic tie between "the strong English literary tradition of adventure novels and historical fiction,"[66] the colonial troubles abroad, and the shifting values of the West. From 1850 to 1900, a romanticized view of India persisted in British adventure novels. Even decades after gaining independence in 1947, India remained uniquely present in British consciousness, as seen through several modes of popular culture – not just literature, but television and film.

More than a handful of scholars in the fields of history and literary studies have explored the various depictions of the British Empire through the lens of classic literature. Over the decades, classic literature has become a uniquely popular tool for understanding segments of history as it captures the cultural and political insight of figures from a particular period. For my analysis, I analyze an example of literature from the Victorian Gothic genre. This genre, according to Peter Kitson, can be described as the amalgamation of all the severe "anxieties and fears" of the Victorian age.[67] Novels that were written under this genre typically centered on intensely dark themes and employed a great deal of imagination – containing thrilling romances and frequent uses of supernatural concepts.

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[66] Ralph J. Crane, *Inventing India: A History of India in English-Language Fiction*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1992), 3.
[67] Peter J. Kitson, "The Victorian Gothic," in *A Companion to the Victorian Novel,* eds. William Baker and Kenneth Womack, (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 175.

Definitive human characteristics, such as race and sex, were abundant in the images found in the various forms of printed media within the Victorian Metropole. These characteristics became new methods of distinction between the socio-economic, religious, and ethnic classes – the division between the domestic and imperial. Amidst the growing opportunities for imperial exploration and conquest in the nineteenth century, "the visualization of 'sex' and 'race' [became] a central feature of the developing European consciousness."[68] When describing how these two categories fit into the imperial and domestic schemes, Joanna De Groot writes:

> What became a widely accepted picture of the 'savage', 'decadent', 'uncivilized', i.e. *inferior,* character of African, Indian, Aboriginal, or Middle Eastern societies was based not just on prejudice or convention but on systematic comparisons, empirical detail, and developed theoretical argument. Thus, the images, values, and stereotypes used to define both femininity and non-European cultures and people combined the new prestigious insights and techniques of science with older cultural myths and traditions.[69]

This combination of new "theories and practices" was one of the key influences in the constitution of the feminine and racial "Other," subsequently determining the non-western subjects to seen as weak or inferior.[70]

Many subgenres were formed within the Victorian Gothic, including the "Imperial Gothic" – a late nineteenth and early twentieth century approach to fiction,

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[68] Joanna De Groot, "'Sex' and 'Race': The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century," In *Cultures of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: A Reader*, ed. Catherine Hall, (Taylor & Francis, 2000), 54.
[69] Ibid, 41.
[70] Ibid, 40.

which embodied the "darker sides of the Victorian mind" within the imperial setting.[71] These works of literature would often portray imperial subjects with racial or sexual ambiguities under a menacing light, painting the picture that the colonial setting was a dangerous one – quite unlike the domestic English life of the Metropole. It was common among British nineteenth century writers, particularly those contributing to this genre, to publish fiction which included characters from countries they never visited. Wilkie Collins was certainly no exception.

One significant historical event that fueled a great deal of anxiety in the Metropole was the Indian Mutiny. From 1857-1858, an uprising against British rule spread throughout the northern provinces of India. This event has acquired different titles, depending on the relative viewpoint. The colonial powers saw this "searing chaos of the uprising" as a mutiny; while most of the Indian nationalists would declare it the "First War of Independence."[72] In the decades leading up to the revolt, the colonial relationship between Britain and India underwent significant changes. Even under the severe domain of British rule, the period of the 1830s and 1840s reared "notions of universal human destiny and expectations of progress."[73]

However, the 1870s brought a strikingly more conservative attitude, in which the colonial powers became fixated on a new ideology – one that exercised the belief in an "essential difference between the British and Indian that justified indefinite control of political power by a 'superior race'."[74] In the summer of 1857, the sepoys in the military ranks stationed at Meerut "rose up in the night, massacred the English residents of the town, and marched on Delhi."[75] In addition to the loss of many English

[71] Peter J. Kitson, "The Victorian Gothic," 175.
[72] Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 92.
[73] Ibid, 93.
[74] Ibid, 94.
[75] Ibid, 101.

lives, the rebellion eventually led to the British losing a great amount of control over most of the northern region, and in several places, it would take the British the rest of the year to regain it. In the decades following the revolt, the fear and racism which had emerged in the time leading up to it, only intensified.[76]

Following the India Mutiny, a great uproar occurred in the Metropole – newspapers and journals across England published various opinionated accounts by their contributors on the event, many of which were scathing in their depictions of the Sepoys. Many Victorians were quick to blame the Indians for their "innate treachery."[77] In the case of Charles Dickens, who wrote – imagining himself in the role as an imperial commander – that he would exercise all willpower to annihilate "that Oriental race" for their rebellious actions, and the sepoys, who "not only murdered British officers and soldiers but tortures and raped British women."[78]

The reaction to the event from the Metropole appears to show the link between Britain's domestic and imperial life. In her article, "Dirty Linen," in which she discusses the imperialist themes within Collins's novel, Melissa Free asserts that the nineteenth century English identity was more or less formed by its connection to the British Empire, and became "superincumbent, pressing down on that which simultaneously held *it* up: the subject races, the colonized countries, [and] the 'foreign.'"[79] The British peddled this narrative regarding a distinct binary of the "domestic and foreign," while in reality, the lines between the two were often blurred.[80] Free suggests that Collins diverges from this narrative in *The Moonstone* through his design of a story that is both

[76] Metcalf & Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 108.
[77] Lillian Nayder, "Collins and empire," in *The Cambridge Companion to Wilkie Collins,* ed. Jenny Bourne Taylor (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 144.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Melissa Free, "'Dirty Linen': Legacies of Empire in Wilkie Collins's The Moonstone," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 48, no. 4 (2006): 340.
[80] Ibid.

"a private, domestic history [yet] simultaneously imperial…"[81] Indeed, Collins seems to demonstrate how, despite Britain's attempt to differentiate itself from the colonial environment and its subjects, their imperial plunders can be felt all the way back to the Metropole.

I argue that through his novel, *The Moonstone*, Wilkie Collins sought to challenge the popular imaginings of the "Orient" during the late nineteenth century, which typically portrayed colonial subjects as something wild or dangerous which needed to be tamed or controlled by Western power and ideals, and painted a much more sympathetic and humanistic picture of the non-western "Other." Not only does Collins appear to provide this alternative viewpoint to the prevailing negative sentiment of Indians and their culture , but he also demonstrates that the blame for these events, such as the Indian Mutiny, occurring within the imperial arena are not to be placed on one side, but should be considered as a collaborative result of the dynamics between the colonizer and the colonized. Essentially, Collins seems to suggest that the events surrounding the Indian Mutiny were not solely the fault of the Indians, but were a consequence of the British Empire's actions.

As Collins writes in the prologue of *The Moonstone*, following his description of Colonel Herncastle's theft of the jewel from the Brahmin temple, "that crime brings its own fatality with it."[82] *The Moonstone* is filled with analogies of Britain's imperial efforts in India. The moonstone, as an object, can be argued as a representation of India itself, and the West's desire for the East. Moreover, it appears to describe Britain's persistent interest in India over the centuries, as shown by the English characters' continuous pursuit of the jewel throughout the novel. Colonel Herncastle's greedy nature and ultimate stealing of the sacred jewel seem to resemble the British Empire's

[81] Ibid.
[82] Collins, *The Moonstone*, 16.

economic dependency on India in the nineteenth century. The “crime” that Collins refers to in the prologue is committed by Herncastle, which later leaves his family and friends in England to suffer from the repercussions. It is arguable that Collins sought to make a political statement through this piece of the novel’s plot – a statement that England must recognize the fact that the rebellion of the sepoys, and subsequent death of English residents in India, were a result of the British Empire’s own doing.

Although Wilkie Collins’s political opinions certainly position him apart from other British observers in the Metropole, he is still writing from a position of ignorance. Collins consistently discusses the Indian people and their culture from his position as a white Englishman who never stepped foot in India; similarly, there is no record of him ever having had a connection to anyone of Indian descent. This is made clear by the obvious spectacle of Collins’s depictions of Indian characters and objects. Although these characterizations are more or less positive reflections of Indian culture, it would be quite difficult to suggest that they are totally accurate.

If anything, Collins appeared to use the common Imperial Gothic trope to create his own story; however, his purpose behind his writing differs from that of his peers during this time. Victorian authors of the mid to late nineteenth century contributing to this genre often presented these colonial subjects as weak or dangerous, in ways that could undermine the cherished English domestic lifestyle, as well as the authority of the British Empire. Indeed, most Imperial Gothic texts are filled with themes and characterizations that were interpreted as pro-Empire propaganda, painting British imperialism as a strong and well-intentioned force that benefited both the Metropole and India. In defiance of this trope, Collins appears to have used his writings – in particular, his novel *The Moonstone* – to turn the fear and anxiety of British society (which fueled the Imperial Gothic genre) on its head, highlighting instead the

redeemable qualities of Indian culture and the cruelties of the British Empire. Under the framework of this argument, I also propose that Collins attempted to alleviate the specific fears and anxieties of the British Metropole surrounding the relationship between race and gender in the sphere of colonial subjects through one of *The Moonstone*'s supporting characters, Ezra Jennings.

An overarching theme found within Victorian texts is a differentiation of the non-western "Other" – an effort to highlight the differences between colonial subjects coming from India and the white Britons of the Metropole and the colonial government. Edward Said defined "Orientalism" as the multi-dimensional process in which the West (also known as the "Occident") distinguishes itself from the East (or the "Orient"). This concept, according to Said, is also a reflection of the history in which the West has held power over the East through its imaginative discourse – it became "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."[83] Current scholarship frequently attempts to tie Edward Said's Orientalism to Collins's work. Indeed, Collins is an exemplar of Said's Orientalism – as he is a Westerner writing about his perceptions of individuals and cultures from the East. [84] However, Orientalism only seems to scratch at the very surface of what Collins does in his novel, *The Moonstone*. Interestingly, Said makes no mention of Collins among the European writers he explores in his book.

In response to Said, Catherine Hall argues in her book chapter, "Gendering Empire," that a new approach to the study of the British Empire is necessary – one in which "white identities…are not rooted in a sense of imperial power and of superiority

[83] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) 3.
[84] See Al-Neyadi, Amna Matar. "Depicting the Orient in Wilkie Collins' The Moonstone." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature* 4, no. 6 (2015): 181-189.

but in a recognition of difference."[85] She goes on to highlight the importance of reevaluating the relationship between the empire and the formation of British identity, highlighting that:

> …the colonial encounters that make both colonizers and the colonized, all of whom are subjects of the erstwhile British empire, sharing a common history, all post-colonial subjects, made by the relations of empire, with identities constituted through different relations to colonial and imperial hierarchies of power.[86]

In other words, Catherine Hall presents the case that imperial history cannot be seen simply through the Orientalist perspective – where one entity has complete power and control over the second entity. The colonizer and the colonized affect one another's identity and cultural development through various levels of power, which fluctuate over time and space. In essence, the Orient affected the definition of what it meant to be British, functioning as its opposite in "image, idea, personality, and experience,"[87] and was one of the "deepest and most reoccurring images of the Other."[88]

For the most part, Said recognized the possibility of Orientalism as a two-way path, and that there was a "pattern of relative strength between East and West" in certain discourses regarding the Orient, citing Gustave Flaubert's writing as an example.[89] However, he was most convinced that this concept is "particularly valuable

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[85] Catherine Hall, "Gender Politics and Imperial Politics," in *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective*, eds. Shepherd, V., B. Brereton, and B. Bailey, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 49.
[86] Ibid, 49.
[87] Said, *Orientalism,* 2.
[88] Ibid*,* 1.
[89] Ibid, 6.

as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient."[90] Therefore, while Collins embodies the Westerner reconstructing the Orient, which is at the heart of Said's Orientalism, he breaks away from the fraction of this concept which argues that the West seeks to portray the "Other" as a means to differentiate itself from the East. Instead, through his novel *The Moonstone*, Collins not only appears to present the relationship between the British and India, but he shows the sophistication and positivity of Indian culture.

I use the basic component of Said's *Orientalism* to support my methodology in order to understand Collins's imaginings of the non-western "Other," and how he differed from his fellow Victorian writers in the Metropole who contributed to the Orientalist discourse. Interestingly, much of the current literary scholarship explores the presence of Said's Orientalism in Collins's writing and how he contrasts from other Victorian writers using this lens within their fiction; however, not all studies analyzing the relationship between nineteenth and twentieth century British literature and the East appear to include Collins's *The Moonstone*. Within the scholarship that does incorporate Collins's writing in their analyses, almost none seem to examine the use of Ezra Jennings's character as a sympathetic portrayal of a non-western character with racial and gender ambiguities.

Only one monograph, Ardel Haefele-Thomas's *Queer Others in Victorian Gothic: Transgressing monstrosity,* appears to shed light on the intersectionality of race and gender through Ezra Jennings's character. In this paper, I utilize Haefele-Thomas's observations as a starting point within my own analysis of British Victorian imaginings of non-western forms of race and gender, and apply it to my exploration of

[90] Ibid.

how Wilkie Collins used this particular character to demonstrate that Indians and their culture were not to be feared.

Wilkie Collins in the Metropole

Wilkie Collins was born on 8 January 1824 in London, England to a religious, middle-class family. His father, William Collins, a fairly renowned artist, expressed the desire for his son to become a member of the clergy.[91] This was to no avail, as Wilkie's interest in organized religion diminished as he became older. Instead, the young Collins took up a passion for reading at an early age through absorbing "his mother's collection of Gothic romances while discovering such staples of childhood as *The Arabian Nights*, *Robin Hood*, and *Don Quixote*."[92]

Probably the most significant piece of Collins's biography is his personal connection to Charles Dickens. In 1851, they met at a theatre in London and instantly connected over this mutual love for "amateur" productions. This meeting brewed into a strong and long-lasting friendship between the two writers. Dickens would also remain an influential force in Collins's personal life and writings for many years.

Collins could be described, in essence, as "a liberal in his social and political views," and this was made clear by his work as a writer for a fundamentally progressive magazine, called *the Leader*.[93] Even so, it is suggested that Collins's political beliefs were not totally established, but simply that he was "a conventionally Victorian freethinker."[94] His religious beliefs were just as ungrounded. He didn't belong to any particular organized denomination of Christianity, though he would state that he

[91] Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 8.
[92] Ibid, 12.
[93] Ibid, 46.
[94] Ibid, 47.

"accepted Christ as his Savior."[95] Bottom line, he was more humanistic than anything else. In fact, he often showed much disdain for "evangelicals."[96] These humanistic beliefs and freethinking ideals were more than present in his writings – most of all in *The Moonstone*.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Victorian public experienced a growing interest in the genre of mystery. Authors like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson, and others swept their audiences away with countless stories involving crime-solving mysteries. Detective fiction was probably the most prominent genre in Victorian literature, as it was a time when crime was believed to be on rise. To be sure, the field of criminology was only in its early stages during the late nineteenth century.[97] Wilkie Collins caught this "detective fever" himself, as evident by the mystery and crime thriller tropes were present in both *the Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*. It should be noted that, while *The Moonstone*'s plot is far more complex, extending far beyond the average crime-solving mystery, Collins's novel "did, in fact, become the prototypical English detective novel."[98]

Like Dickens, Collins is also noted for his portrayal of female characters as being well rounded and multi-dimensional, equal to that of his male characters. In his works, *No Name* and *the Woman in White*, his female characters are quite "resourceful and determined,"[99] going very much against the commonly held views of women in the Victorian period. He also seemed to appreciate "the company of independent and strong-mind women."[100] However, Ackroyd argues that it would not be accurate to say

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[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid*,* 129.
[98] Ronald R. Thomas, "The Moonstone, detective fiction and forensic science," in *The Cambridge Companion to Wilkie Collins,* ed. Jenny Bourne Taylor (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 65.
[99] Ibid, 104.
[100] Ibid, 105.

Collins was a feminist as we define that label today. His approval of strong-minded women had limits; however, he was far more inclined to "champion women as outcasts rather than to praise those who had achieved their independence."[101]

At the beginning of 1867, after a period of unsuccessful writing, Collins conjured a "fresh source of optimism"[102] while working for a couple of penny journals. Through this work, he came up with a handful of short stories, as well as another original novel. To further boost his inspiration for this new writing project, Collins spent a great deal of time in the library of the Athenaeum in London. There he conducted extensive research and sought the insight provided by "the volumes on the Hindu religion and on Indian lore."[103]

The sympathizing portrayal of India and Indian culture found within *The Moonstone* is rooted in Collins's opinions of British imperialism. These attitudes, especially towards the British Empire in India, were summed up in one of his earlier essays, "A Sermon for Sepoys," which he published in February 1858 within the journal, *Household Words*.[104] He wrote this essay specifically in response to the Indian Mutiny, speaking highly of the Sepoys and their moral character.[105]

In 1857, Collins and Dickens worked together on another piece for *Household Words*. In the wake of the news regarding the Indian Mutiny, the *Household Words* journal devoted its 1857 Christmas edition on the events. Dickens and Collins's contribution to the edition, "The Perils of Certain English Prisoners," painted Dickens opinions on the Indian Mutiny as "ferocious" Dickens apparently wished to portray the

[101] Ibid.
[102] Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 121.
[103] Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 122.
[104] Nayder, *Unequal Partners*, 166.
[105] Ibid, 104.

"heroism of the English as opposed to the vindictive treachery of the Indians."[106] Collins, on the other hand, used his role as co-author to stem "the racist frenzy of his collaborator" with a "more sympathetic" tone.[107] His reaction was quite "circumspect," jeering at the "racist language used to vilify treacherous Orientals."[108] Instead of joining Dickens in blaming the sepoys, Collins alludes to the "colonial abuses [as] largely responsible for [the revolt]."[109]

Later, *The Moonstone* became a testament to Collins's divergence from the "imperialist arrogance of his contemporaries."[110] This included Dickens himself. Despite their close friendship, Collins and Dickens did not always see eye-to-eye on the social and political concerns of their time. In her monograph, *Unequal Partners*, Lillian Nayder relays how the two authors disagreed on the British Empire's position in India, stating how Dickens's *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* was a method in which he used "to rework Collins's vision of empire and race relations to a more conservative end…"[111]

And while Dickens initially expressed praise for the first three installments of *The Moonstone*, his opinion was changed by the complete publication of the novel. In the summer of 1867, Dickens wrote to his sub-editor, W. H. Wills and relayed his opinion of the novel thus far: "…it is a very curious story – wild, and yet domestic – with excellent character in it, great mystery…It is in many respects much better than anything he had done."[112] Just a year later, though, Dickens offered W. H. Wills a different impression: "I quite agree with you about The Moonstone. The construction is

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[106]Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 80.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Nayder, "Collins and empire," 144-45.
[109] Ibid, 145.
[110] Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 80.
[111] Nayder, *Unequal Partners*, 165-166.
[112] *Wilkie Collins: the Critical Heritage*, edited by Norman Page, (Routledge, 2002), 169.

wearisome beyond endurance, and there is a vein of obstinate conceit in it that makes enemies of readers."[113]

Despite Dickens's subsequent disapproval of the plot, *The Moonstone* became "one of Collins's most successful and popular novels."[114] In August 1877, Collins notes in one of his letters to his mother that *The Moonstone* was to be adapted into stage play for the following month "at the Olympic."[115] Having dealt with a severe illness that year, he told his mother that he would be traveling abroad to Switzerland to achieve any relief from the "mountain air."[116] Interestingly, despite his great interest in Indian religion and culture, Collins never made it to India in the course of his life – the furthest east he ever traveled was to Italy.[117]

Race, Gender, and Empire in *The Moonstone*

In July of 1868, Geraldine Jewsbury composed her review of Collins's novel for the *Athenaeum*, declaring that his audience was deeply moved by the story's finale "…[catching] the last glimpse of the three men, who have sacrificed their cast[e] in the service of their God..."[118] This emotional response had nothing to do with the reuniting of the novel's romantic couple, Franklin Blake and Rachel Verinder, but because the Moonstone had been successfully returned to the Indians.[119] Jewsbury is one example in which Collins received an immediate positive review, and a testament to *The Moonstone*'s message. Collins seemed to have successfully conjured English sympathy for a colonial subject, one that was commonly regarded as a threat to the

[113] Ibid.
[114] Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 129.
[115] Wilkie Collins, *The Letters of Wilkie Collins, Volume 2: 1866-1889*, eds. William Baker and William Clarke, (Macmillan Press, 1999), 408.
[116] Wilkie Collins, *The Letters of Wilkie Collins, Volume 2,* 408.
[117] Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 119.
[118] Nayder, "Collins and empire," 139
[119] Ibid.

Empire's authority and mission – the heart of the English identity. Nevertheless, the prevailing negative sentiment towards the Indians and their culture, especially in the decades following the rebellion, made itself visible in other reviews, namely Collins's own friend and fellow writer, Charles Dickens.

A prevalent theme of Victorian era classic literature – explicitly from 1850 through 1880s – commonly analyzed within the context of the British Empire is India. Considering the many British authors who contributed fictional novels inspired by India over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth century – Frances Hodgson Burnett, Rudyard Kipling, and E. M. Forster to name a few – the volume of scholarship discussing this region is substantial.[120] Notably, an analysis of Wilkie Collins's fiction in the context of the British Empire is not consistently included in this body of scholarship.

India remains constantly in the periphery throughout Collins's *The Moonstone.* While the setting of the plot never leaves the physical borders of England, it appears as though Indian religion, culture, and characters drive the story along its complex course. Whether it is the three nameless elite figures from India, who pose as jugglers in order to locate and retrieve the jewel at the Verinder birthday party in Part One; Mr. Murthwaite, an enthusiastic Orientalist with a great deal of knowledge about Indian culture and religion; and Ezra Jennings, the London physician's assistant who was born and raised in the colonies, and yet belonging to neither the Western nor the Eastern world; the Orient consistently affects the novel's English characters.

Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* was serialized into "thirty-two episodes" in the journal, *All the Year Round*, in 1868.[121] Like his friend, Charles Dickens, Collins frequently used a broad range of characters to guide the plot, and often used multiple

[120] See Anindyo Roy, *Civility and Empire: Literature and Culture in British India, 1821-1921*, (Routledge, 2004).
[121] Peter Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, (Random House, 2013), 128.

narrators within one book. *The Moonstone* was no different – the story shifting back and forth between several different narrators throughout the novel.

While the mystery of the stolen jewel is the dominant force guiding the story, it is not the only theme Collins has to offer his readers. If anything, the story itself appears to function on many levels as a cross-cultural exposition. The novel's title alone offers an allure of mystery from this jewel of non-western origin. Interestingly, Collins published *The Moonstone* in 1868 – nearly eleven years following the events of the Indian Mutiny – yet the central narrative of the book is set nine years prior. Many argue this was intentional on the part of Collins. In his biography of the author, Peter Ackroyd, suggests that in the years following the Indian Mutiny "it was common enough to portray [the Indians] as bloodthirsty savages," yet Collins appears to have approached the discussion of India and its culture with respect.[122]

By the end of the novel, it becomes clear to Collins's readers how he feels about the Indian characters compared to the English ones. Several crimes are committed throughout the story, and while early on it is a part of the mystery to assume that the Brahmin-Indians are the ones to blame for them all, it is revealed in the conclusion that they are only guilty of one – the final time the moonstone is stolen. The Brahmin-Indians are taking back their property. In her monograph, *Unequal Partners*, Lillian Nayder highlights how this element of the storyline shows that "Collins proves more interested in excusing than indicting Indian violence."[123] To be sure, Collins shows no sympathy for the English characters, Herncastle and Ablewhite. Clearly, their actions appear to represent "the military, economic, and moral trespasses of the British

[122] Ackroyd, *Wilkie Collins*, 130.
[123] Lillian Nayder, *Unequal Partners: Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, and Victorian Authorship,* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 170.

Empire" – especially the imperial efforts made in the period just before the Indian Mutiny.[124]

While *The Moonstone* is not set in British India, it nevertheless offers the sensations of an Imperial Gothic novel. Throughout the story, there are several moments where Victorian anxieties of colonial bodies and culture appear to seep through the English characters' dialogue. For instance, following the Indians' visit to Rachel's birthday dinner, Gabriel Betteredge remarks, "Here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond – bringing after it, a conspiracy of living rogues."[125] This fear of a foreign infiltration and disruption of English society – a result of the British Empire's efforts abroad – was no doubt based on the real concerns expressed in the Metropole at the time.[126] Yet, because the point of the overall story is to show that "the Indians are not criminals but victims seeking justice,"[127] Collins tries to offer his readers a mirror in which they may see their misconceptions.

During the height of British colonial rule in the mid to late nineteenth century, Sinha draws attention to a persistent effort "to define and redefine the colonizer and the colonized," which often shifted alongside the "changing political and economic imperatives of colonial rule."[128] The development of certain "imperial social formation" produced distinct definitions for these two sides of the power scale: the masculine colonizer and the "effeminate" colonial.[129] Conjured within the imperial milieu, these

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[124] Ibid, 171.
[125] Collins, *The Moonstone*, 46.
[126] See Nigel Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire*, Vol. 2., (Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[127] Roslyn Jolly, "Postcolonial Readings," in *A Companion to the Victorian Novel,* eds. William Baker and Kenneth Womack, (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 381.
[128] Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The "Manly Englishman" and the "Effeminate Bengali" in the Late Nineteenth Century*, (Manchester University Press, 1995), 3.
[129] Ibid.

figures were rooted in several facets of Victorian society in Britain, including "the emergence of the 'New Woman;' the remaking of the working class; the legacy of internal colonization; and the anti-feminist backlash of the 1880s and 1890s."[130] Sinha further argues that these newly constructed definitions of the colonizer and colonized suggest an "intersection of the imperial with categories of nation, race, class, gender, and sexuality."[131]

In the Victorian age, there was an overwhelming push to bring the domesticities and other aspects of life from the Metropole to the colonial frontier in India. English women, who had been more or less absent from the imperial enterprise before the nineteenth century, were brought over to carry out this desire for culturally reconstructing the Orient. However, much of this effort was futile. As Janaki Nair points out in her chapter of *Cultures of Empire*, the British were quite bothered by "the 'androgyny' of Indian men," and therefore sought to "stifle any sign of weakness [of their own] in order to make their rule plausible."[132] Subsequently, the British employed the characterization of the Indian race as "feminine," or as fragile, in order to enhance the imperial ideology.[133] Sinha states in her analysis regarding the construction of "the concept of effeminacy in colonial India:"[134]

The production of 'knowledge' about India in British Orientalist discourse, for example, was grounded in the nature and history of the British colonial enterprise in

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[130] Ibid.
[131] Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity,* 3.
[132] Janaki Nair, "Uncovering the Zenana: Visions of Indian Womanhood in Englishwomen's Writings, 1813-1940," in *Cultures of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: A Reader*, ed. Catherine Hall, (Taylor & Francis, 2000), 225.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*, 19.

India…[specifically] British colonialism in India that gave rise to dominant British explanations of contemporary Indian society in terms of decline and effeminacy.[135]

The justifications for this effeminacy included Indian "diet, the hot and humid climate," as well as the "social and economic organization of Indian society" brought on by Hinduism and the caste system.[136] Similarly, the "pseudo-scientific studies" on racial origins emerging in the latter half of the nineteenth century were also applied to the idea of Indian effeminacy.[137] Following the rebellion in 1857, there was a new level of threat which India now held, and thus, the claim that English masculinity outweighed that of the Indians' became more accentuated.[138]

After locating the package which the housemaid, Rosanna Spearman, removed from the Verinder estate following the disappearance of the Moonstone, Franklin Blake and Gabriel Betteredge realize that the young woman had concealed evidence suggesting that Blake was in fact the real thief. Baffled by this and having no memory of taking the Moonstone from Rachel's bedroom, Blake travels to London to consult Dr. Candy with the hope of clearing his name. There, he does not find the doctor, but his assistant, Ezra Jennings.

Ezra Jennings, whose parentage and nationality, to a certain extent, is shroud in its own mystery. When discussing the topic of the character's background, Haefele-Thomas points out that while "Jennings never fully articulates his mother's ethnic origins, the implication is that she was Indian."[139] This would be a logical assumption due to the numerous forms of Indian representation throughout Collins's novel. The

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[135] Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity,* 19.
[136] Ibid, 20.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Janaki Nair, "Uncovering the Zenana," 225.
[139] Ardel Haefele-Thomas, *Queer Others in Victorian Gothic: Transgressing Monstrosity* (University of Wales Press, 2012), 34.

confusion surrounding Jennings's racial identity could also serve as an analogy for a melding of the many layers of the British and Indian relationship. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was not uncommon for English men to enter into sexual relationships or marriages with Indian women during their time abroad. Thus, it is likely that Jennings's father was an Englishman. However, as India became increasingly consumed by the British control, "there was a gradual shift in the control of intercourse between English men and Indians, and the colonial regime actively began discouraging officials from marrying indigenous women."[140] This was largely due to the changing narrative defining the British as a superior race separated from that of the Indians, and a desire to "replicate the English home" within the colonial setting.[141] Of course, this did not completely deter these Anglo-Indian relationships from occurring.

The intersection of race and gender can also be interpreted within Collins's characterization of Ezra Jennings. Ultimately, Ezra Jennings seems to function in this fluid state of identity – exhibiting physical and emotional traits that appear as a balance of opposites. This balance covers more than a few "well-established Victorian binaries" such as "Indian/Anglo…female/male," and illuminating the blurred area in between the binary.[142] When first meeting Jennings in London, Franklin Blake, the narrator at this point, describes his complexion as "a gypsy darkness."[143] In his description of Jennings's facial features, such as his nose, Franklin Blake states how it embodied the "shape and modeling so often found among the ancient people of the East, so seldom

[140] Nair, "Uncovering the Zenana," 225.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Haefele-Thomas, *Queer Others in Victorian Gothic*, 36.
[143] Collins, *The Moonstone*, 326. See also Nicholas Saul, "Half a Gypsy: The Case of Ezra Jennings in Wilkie Collins's The Moonstone (1868)," In *Role of the Romanies: Images and Counter Images of'Gypsies'/Romanies in European Cultures,* edited by Nicholas Saul and Susan Tebbutt, (Oxford University Press, 2004), 119–130. Saul analyzes the duality of Ezra Jennings's race and gender through the lens of "gypsy" culture and origins.

visible among the newer races of the West."[144] Similar to his physical description, Jennings assumes the male biological sex, yet he appears to embody strong feminine characteristics, and describes himself as a man with the "constitution of a woman."[145]

Collins also spends time in Franklin Blake's narrative describing Jennings's fascinating and alluring beauty. Blake notes the uncanny features of the other man's face, and specifically how his eyes are "of the softest brown – eyes dreamy and mournful, and deeply sunk in their orbits – looked out at you, and (in my case, at least) took your attention captive at their will."[146] The young narrator continues to stare at Jennings "with a curiosity which, [he was] ashamed to say, [he] found it quite impossible to control."[147]

One could argue, through this somewhat confusing impression of Jennings's character – recognizing both the strange complexities of his appearance and temperament, yet also his striking beauty – that Collins is attempting to portray the West's uncanny attraction to the "Other." Indeed, the English characters, specifically Blake and Betteredge, seem both repelled and enamored by how physically different Jennings appears. This causes both men to refuse his assistance on their first trip to Dr. Candy's office.

As the situation worsens for Blake, he becomes humbled by the loss of his personal connections, and eventually turns to Jennings for help. A mutual respect forms between them when Blake admits to Jennings: "How can I expect to be taken into your confidence if I decline to admit you into mine?"[148] In this scene, Collins

[144] Collins, *The Moonstone,* 326.
[145] Ibid, 373.
[146] Ibid, 326.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Collins, *The Moonstone*, 377.

clearly presents to his readers the equality between the different characters – showing the underlying human connection between England and the Orient.

Lastly, Collins also seems to suggest that non-western ideas in the fields of science are worthy of the West's consideration. After his conversation with Jennings, it comes to Blake's realization that Dr. Candy had given him a dose of opium during Rachel's birthday dinner. That night, under the influence of the drug, Blake had sleep-walked to Rachel's bedroom and taken the stone. Ablewhite, who also was a guest at the house that night, had bumped into Blake in the upstairs hallway. Blake had unintentionally given the stone to Ablewhite, requesting that his cousin take the stone to his father's bank where it would be safe. But Ablewhite chose to keep the moonstone for himself, hoping to sell it for a large amount of money. When Blake accepts Jennings's assistance in retrieving his memory of the night the Moonstone had gone missing, Jennings's solution through the use of the opium drug is dismissed initially as too unconventional. It is this alternative method which Jennings proposes – possibly an allegory for non-western medicine – that ultimately helps Blake save his relationship with Rachel Verinder and rebuild the connections with his family.[149] In the end, the English characters, Franklin and Rachel, are essentially saved by Jennings, the ambiguously racial and gendered non-western "Other."

In the final chapter, Blake and Sergeant Cuff later travel to Ablewhite's lodgings, where they discover his body. They determine that he had been murdered by the three Indians, the stone, back in their possession, is soon to be returned to its place in the Brahmin temple. With Blake's name cleared and Rachel able to return to her family's estate in Yorkshire, the story ends with the two happily married.

[149] Haefele-Thomas, *Queer Others in Victorian Gothic*, 40.

Conclusion

Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1868) diverges from the typical Victorian portrayal of Indian people and their culture. His novel also explicitly touches on non-western expressions of gender, and the intersectionality of race, through the white British imagination. Collins lived his entire life in London, never traveling much farther than Italy. Yet, not only did he center his novel's storyline around various representations of India and its culture, but Collins appears to have placed India on a higher moral level than Great Britain.

In *The Moonstone*, Collins paints the Indian people and their culture in the most sympathetic way – often using them as a means to point out the cruelty and hypocrisy of the British Empire. Considering the fact that Collins had never visited India – his only exposure to Indian culture and history was by what he was able to read at the Athenaeum library in London – it would make sense for Collins to follow in line with his peers in the Metropole, depicting any character or object associated with India in a negative light. However, even when he employs the process of "Othering," which he does in the regards to Ezra Jennings's racial and gender identity, he approaches this non-western character with respect.

Through his positive and sympathetic characterization of Jennings, Collins seems to break away from the common sentiment among his peers, who may have typically contributed to the "Imperial Gothic" genre – a late nineteenth and early twentieth century approach to fiction, which applied the Victorian "fears and anxieties" to an imperial context. These works of literature would often portray imperial subjects with racial or sexual ambiguities under a menacing light, painting the picture that the colonial setting, and anything associated with it, was dangerous. While he certainly portrays Jennings's racial and gender ambiguities as strange, particularly through his

English character's viewpoint, Collins appears to ultimately demonstrate that these differences are not to be feared, but to be shown acceptance.

Ultimately, despite Collins's obvious role as a white Westerner, conjuring these likely inaccurate images of Indian people and culture from his imagination, and functioning well within the parameters of Edward Said's Orientalism, he does so with a positive message. It is this positive portrayal that makes Collins's novel most unique within this time period, and why it is still considered with high regard.

In 2013, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, submitted a review of Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* on NPR, asserting that this novel had become a "guilty pleasure."[150] The story's riveting mystery and beautiful characters drew her in at young age, particularly as she absorbed it from a Classics Illustrated series edition. Having picked up the novel again as an adult – especially now as "a student of post-colonialism" – Divakaruni was unsure if her appreciation would remain unchanged.[151] However, through this second read, she discovered new delights in the story which were unrecognizable in her youth. She praises Collins for his "nuanced" picture of India – providing the three Indian priests with an heroic storyline – and revealing the novel's villain to be English.[152] It is through "this rare depiction of Indian moral superiority in a Victorian novel" that makes Collins's *The Moonstone* an exceptional gem.[153]

[150] Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, "'The Moonstone' is a Hidden Gem of a Detective Novel," review of *The Moonstone*, by Wilkie Collins, *National Public Radio*, August 4, 2013.
[151] Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, "'The Moonstone' is a Hidden Gem of a Detective Novel," review of *The Moonstone*, by Wilkie Collins, *National Public Radio*, August 4, 2013.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.

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