FACULTY OF ARTS
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‘Now Tell Me What You Think of the Missionaries’:

COLONIAL DISCOURSE AND WOMEN’S IMPERIAL MISSION IN *THE ENGLISHWOMAN’S DOMESTIC MAGAZINE* (1852-1879)

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Preface

Completing my thesis in extraordinary times like these has not been easy. As I did have access to all the resources I needed, the impact of the Corona crisis on my writing process has primarily been psychological. Finding the motivation to keep on writing has sometimes proved difficult, but at the same time the investigation of a Victorian magazine offered me the possibility to escape to a different world for a while and has brought me many hours of pleasurable research.

This thesis is not only my own accomplishment but is realised thanks to the support of a number of people. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. Dr. Marianne Van Remoortel for her enthusiasm about periodical studies as well as her helpful guidance and constructive feedback. I am also grateful to the Gale Cengage Company as well as the HathiTrust Digital Library for making Victorian periodicals digitally accessible around the globe, without whose work this thesis would not have been possible.

Additionally, a special thanks to my friends for the many uplifting conversations and film nights, for their words of encouragement and for offering a listening ear, not only while I was writing his thesis but during the whole four years of my degree. Last but not least, I want to thank my parents, who not only have given me the opportunity to study at university but also support me in everything I do – even though their requests to do the dishes have not always come at convenient moments.

Judith Laemont
19th May 2020

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Introduction

Over the course of nineteenth century, the periodical press developed into *the* mass medium of Britain. In particular "after the reduction of advertising and newspaper taxes in the 1830s, and most significantly after the abolition of all taxes on print material in the 1850s" (Finkelstein and Peers 5), the publication of periodicals boomed. Additionally, this proliferation was supported by the development of a more efficient postal system, due to reforms introduced by Rowland Hill (Menke 34–42), and by the effects of the industrial revolution. Improvements to the printing press and to paper production, such as the introduction of the Hoe printing press and a new type of paper made from esparto grass, made the publication of periodicals cheaper and faster, while the growth of railway transport improved distribution and prompted market expansion (Lee 54–63).

At the same time, nineteenth-century Britain was characterised by imperial expansion: "From the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the Congress of Vienna in 1815, to the beginning of the First World War in 1914, British empire builders spread their political, economic, and cultural institutions to the furthest reaches of the world" (Parsons 1). Once again, this development can be related to the industrial revolution: "Convictions of superiority that underpinned the British imperial ethos were deeply rooted in national pride. The industrial revolution and the ensuing developments – urban centers, mass production, an extensive and sophisticated infrastructure – gave Britain the lead over industrializing nations until the 1870s" (Burton 36). The industrial revolution not only supported the idea of British superiority and the concomitant conception of the civilising mission, but also accelerated the process of expansion itself. The development of steamboats and firearms, for example, were essential in the conquest of foreign peoples, and the arrival of the telegraph and railway facilitated both domestic and overseas communication.[1]

For most Britons, the British empire was, however, a far-away entity of which they did not have personal experience but which they only knew through others' accounts. Information about the colonies was not only provided through the government's official news but also by

[1] For a more extensive description of the link between the industrial revolution and imperialism, see Daniel R. Headrick's *The Tools of empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (1981).

the many Britons who (had) lived in the colonies, such as military men, administrators, missionaries, traders, planters, foresters and railwaymen – and their wives, who usually accompanied them (Morris 7). Thus, various accounts of the colonies, underpinned by various ideological views, found their way back to British society. Imperial representations appeared in multiple shapes in the public domain, such as in the form of theatre, exhibitions and postcards, but the most influential source of imperial knowledge was undoubtedly the Victorian press: "The press, in all its manifestations, became during the Victorian period the context within which people lived and worked and thought, and from which they derived their (in most cases quite new) sense of the outside world" (Shattock and Wolff xiv–xv). Imperial content in periodicals did not only take the form of news reporting, for which periodicals primarily relied on telegraphic news agencies (Nalbach 71), but the colonies also featured in a wide variety of genres such as fiction, poetry, recipes or informational articles, which were generally provided by people residing in the colonies for reasons other than journalism. Indeed, every Victorian had their own motives for travelling to the colonies and imperial ideology was by no means a monolithic doctrine. Nevertheless, the second half of the nineteenth century was characterised by a general notion of British racial, cultural and moral superiority (Parry 15–18; Burton 37–41). Not in the least through the periodical press, "British people were bombarded with stereotyped images of racial difference, and encouraged to see themselves as members of a superior race, bound to dominate what they perceived to be irredeemably savage Africans and Asians" (Potter 52–53).[2]

This conception of Western superiority and colonial inferiority forms one of the major critiques of postcolonial theory, which mainly studies the impact of European colonial rule on colonised peoples and territories during and after the time of colonisation.[3] The starting point

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[2] Although it cannot be denied that stereotypical colonial imagery regularly appeared in the Victorian periodical press and in Victorian culture at large, the impact of this imagery on Britons' national and imperial identity is contested. In his study *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (2004), Bernard Porter, for example, argued that "empire only ever exerted a marginal influence over Britain's own development, reinforcing existing domestic trends but never reshaping the way that British people viewed themselves and the world, and seldom encouraging them to think primarily in racial terms" (qtd. in Potter 53). In accordance with the views of, among others, Antoinette Burton, Catherine Hall, John Mackenzie, Benita Parry and Edward Said, this thesis, however, builds on the assumption that imperialism did have a significant impact on British society and identity.

[3] The term 'postcolonial theory' defies, however, a clear-cut definition because postcolonialism can take many forms and can be studied in a wide variety of academic disciplines. For a more extensive discussion on the definition(s) and applications of postcolonial theory, see, for example, Ania Loomba's *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (1998) or Leela Gandhi's *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (1998).

of postcolonial theory can be situated in 1978, when Edward Said published his foundational work *Orientalism*. Since the publication of *Orientalism*, much scholarly attention has been directed towards the study of 'colonial discourse', which can be defined as "the language employed by representatives of the great colonial powers in establishing authority over vast regions of Africa, Asia, the South Pacific, and Latin America during the period of imperial expansion that reached its height at the end of the nineteenth century" (Spurr 8). Since the inception of postcolonial theory, scholarly research on colonial discourse has primarily focused on analyses of literary fiction and travelogues.[4] More recently, literary scholars have, however, acknowledged that "the circulation of periodicals and newspapers was wider and more influential than that of books in Victorian society" (Vann and VanArsdel, 'Periodicals of Queen Victoria's Empire' 3) and more academic research has consequently been directed at the use of colonial discourse in the Victorian periodical press.

A first influential work in this study area is John Mackenzie's *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (1984), which examines how a wide variety of media – including juvenile magazines – propagated imperial ideology. Secondly, David Spurr has identified twelve rhetorical modes that were used from the 1870s onwards in British non-fictional writing to depict foreign cultures in his study *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (1993). Additionally, there is the essay collection *Negotiating India in the Nineteenth-Century Media* (2000), edited by David Finkelstein and Douglas M. Peers, which examines representations of colonial India in both Indian and British periodicals published between 1840 and 1900. Another influential work in this area is *Imperial Co-Histories: National Identities and the British and Colonial Press* (2003), edited by Julie F. Codell, which explores how the periodical press shaped the creation of national and imperial identities in Britain and its colonies. Finally, *The Victorian Periodicals Review* has also published a special issue titled *The Nineteenth Century Press in India* (vol. 37, no. 2, 2004), which focuses on the emergence of colonial Indian periodicals, while the journal

[4] See, for example, Benita Parry's *Conrad and Imperialism: Ideological Boundaries and Visionary Frontiers* (1983), Homi Bhabha's *Nation and Narration* (1990), Patrick Brantlinger's *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (1990), Sara Mills' *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel writing and Colonialism* (1992), Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), Deirdre David's *Rule Britannia: Women, Empire, and Victorian Writing* (1995), Tim Youngs' *Travellers in Africa: British Travelogues, 1850–1900* (1995) and Susan Meyer's *Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction* (1996).

has featured some individual articles on imperialism in the periodical press outside this special issue as well.[5]

Research on colonial discourse in Victorian women's magazines is, however, notably scarce and takes the form of academic articles or book chapters rather than book-length studies. *Imperial Co-Histories,* for instance, includes an essay by Denise P. Quirk titled "'True Englishwomen' and 'Anglo-Indians': Gender, National Identity, and Feminism in the Victorian Women's Periodical Press" and *Negotiating India in the Nineteenth-Century Media* contains Nupur Chaudhuri's "Issues of Race, Gender and Nation in *Englishwomen's Domestic Magazine* and *Queen*, 1850-1900", but that is about it.[6] Quirk nevertheless argues that "In the 1860s and 1870s – that is, in the period between the Indian Mutiny and the onset of British 'high imperialism' – hundreds of articles on the Empire appeared in mainstream women's periodicals and women's rights journals" (Quirk 167). Moreover, "[i]n the second half of the nineteenth century, women were an essential component of the imperial mission. The number of women travelling to India increased considerably. A number of them wrote about India and Indians, and often called on their experiences to help promote an imperial ethos" (Chaudhuri, 'Issues of Race' 52). Although often overlooked by historians of British imperialism, "the inescapable fact is that from the 1860s onwards they [women] were inducted into the otherwise largely male-oriented colonising process and, as members of the ruling race, participated in the colonial agenda in diverse and complex ways" (Sen, *Woman and Empire* 33). Women's magazines formed not only an important channel for the dissemination of imperial knowledge and ideology but also shaped and encouraged what can be called 'women's imperial mission'. Women's magazines contributed, for example, to the formation of an imperial national identity: "Unlike the images in men's and boy's literature, those of empire in the women's press were more subtle and diffuse, yet nonetheless effective in (re)defining

[5] For example: "Imperial Differences and Culture Clashes in Victorian Periodicals' Visuals: The Case of *Punch*" (vol. 39, no. 4, 2006), "'We Could Be of Service to Other Suffering People': Representations of India in the Irish Nationalist Press, c. 1857-1887" (vol. 41, no. 1, 2008), "Representations of Ahmed Urabi: Hegemony, Imperialism, and the British Press, 1881–1882" (vol. 45, no. 4, 2012), "Audience Participation: Advertisements, Readers, and Anglo-Indian Newspapers" (vol. 49, no. 2, 2016), "Laughing at the Mahdi: The British Comic Press and Empire, 1882–85" (vol. 52, no. 3, 2019).

[6] There is also Antoinette Burton's *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (1994). This book explores the link between imperialism and feminism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and includes a chapter on feminist periodicals, but leaves more mainstream women's magazines out of the discussion.

Englishwomen's national identity within what Mrinhalini Sinha has called an 'imperial social formation'" (Quirk 167). So far, the presence of imperial ideology in Victorian women's magazines and its link to women's imperial mission has largely been neglected by literary scholars and historians. Nevertheless, Victorian women's magazines incorporate valuable information about women's attitudes towards empire and had a central role in involving British women in Britain's imperial project. Therefore, this thesis will contribute to filling this gap by focusing on the use of colonial discourse in the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (hereafter *EDM*), a monthly magazine aimed at middle-class women that was published from May 1852 to December 1879.

As India was considered to be "the crown jewel of the British empire" (Chaudhuri, 'Issues of Race' 51) and served as the main target of women's imperial mission, I decided to limit my investigation to colonial discourse related to this colony. More specifically, I will examine how women's imperial mission towards India was shaped by and evident in the *EDM* through its use of colonial discourse. With what image(s) of British India were readers of the *EDM* confronted, and how did the magazine encourage or prepare women to travel to the colony? An essential aspect in this investigation is the insight from periodical studies that magazines are characterised by heterogeneity, such as multiple authorship and generic variety, which entails that readers of Victorian periodicals were often confronted with conflicting opinions and images – either side by side, within a single issue or across issues. Therefore, this thesis will also investigate to what extent the different authors and textual genres of the *EDM* present a variety of attitudes towards British India rather than a consistent ideological view of the colony. How do different textual genres make use of colonial discourse and are there any conflicting images of British India present in the *EDM* that potentially undermine the idea of women's imperial mission? For reasons of feasibility, I will mainly focus on three textual genres, namely literary fiction, educational articles and the *EDM*'s correspondence column. However, some other genres, such as advertisements or editorials, will also be brought into the discussion. Chapter 1 offers a theoretical discussion of the concepts 'colonial discourse', 'heterogeneity of the periodical' and 'women's imperial mission', while chapter 2 focuses on the textual analysis of the *EDM*.

While other Victorian women's magazines aimed at a middle-class audience could also have been relevant to my investigation, for example the *Ladies' Treasury* (1858-1895) or the *Queen* (1861-1967), I decided to select the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* because of the imperial dimension already apparent in its title. In Victorian times, the view of imperialism as a civilising mission was underpinned by "the conviction that Britain's national character, its national institutions, and its national culture were, by virtue of being British, the most progressive and most civilized in the world" (Burton 35). Apart from being convinced of Britain's national supremacy, most Victorians also saw themselves as a morally superior race (Burton 38). Although this moral superiority applied to all members of the British race because of being British, British women enjoyed a special moral status because of being women: Victorian women – although seen as physically and intellectually inferior – were considered to be morally superior to men by nature (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 62–63). Their moral superiority provided women with distinguished maternal, caretaking qualities, which made them best suited to the domestic sphere. This relation between moral superiority and domesticity is also apparent in the address to the reader on the very first page of the *EDM*, which states that "If there is one thing of which an Englishman has just reason to be proud, it is of the moral and domestic character of his countrywomen" (*EDM* 1 May 1852: 1). The Englishwoman addressed in the title is thus defined as a woman worthy of national pride. Although the terms 'British' and 'English' were often used interchangeably in the Victorian era, many Victorians saw 'Englishness' as a privileged identity that incorporated "the so-called best qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race" (Burton 6). Additionally, the word 'domestic' in the magazine's title should not only be considered as a reference to women's ability to run the household, but can also be related to the idea of the nation as a domestic space:

> *domestic* has a double meaning that not only links the familial household to the nation but also imagines both in opposition to everything outside the geographic and conceptual border of the home. […] The border between the domestic and foreign, however, also deconstructs when we think of domesticity not as a static condition but as the process of domestication, which entails conquering and taming the wild, the natural, and the alien. Domestic in this sense is related to the imperial project of civilizing, and the conditions of domesticity often become markers that distinguish civilization from savagery.

> […] If domesticity plays a key role in imagining the nation as home, then women, positioned at the center of the home, play a major role in defining the contours of the nation and its shifting borders with the foreign. (Kaplan 581–82)

Thus, the title of the *EDM* incorporated implicit notions of national pride and imperial ideology; Englishwomen were seen as representatives of a superior race and stood in clear contrast with presumed colonial identities such as 'Indian womanhood', which was "a trope for sexual difference, primitive society, and colonial backwardness" (Burton 7). However, the Englishwoman addressed by the magazine did not always reside in Britain. As British periodicals were quite easily available in the colonies and "by 1843 India was the single largest colonial export market for British publishers" (Finkelstein and Peers 11), the *EDM* also possessed a large overseas readership. Likewise, Anglo-Indian[7] women could – and did – make contributions to British women's magazines, which is evident in the *EDM*'s correspondence column "The Englishwoman's Conversazione". In this way, the *EDM* created "a virtual community of participants and readers that linked – and paradoxically distinguished – colonial society in India and Victorian society in England as it produced a shared national (imperial) identity" (Quirk 167).

My investigation of colonial discourse in the *EDM* builds on the earlier work by Chaudhuri and Quirk. Chaudhuri's essay "Issues of Race, Gender and Nation in *Englishwomen's Domestic Magazine* and *Queen*, 1850-1900" includes an interesting analysis of descriptions of Indian dress in the *EDM*, with which I will engage in this thesis. Secondly, Quirk's essay ""True Englishwomen' and 'Anglo-Indians'" explores how women's magazines, including the *EDM*, shaped and disseminated notions of gender, nation and identity in an imperial context, which lies quite close the aim of this thesis. However, these two essays focus primarily on the analysis of the *Queen* rather than the *EDM* and only take into account the magazines' role in the construction of an imperial identity, while leaving other aspects of women's imperial mission out of the discussion. By studying the *EDM*'s use of colonial discourse in relation to women's imperial mission, this thesis will thus add a new contribution to the extensive amount of research that has already been done on colonial discourse and British imperialism.

[7] In this thesis, the term 'Anglo-Indian' is used to refer to British people living in India during the period of British rule, and not in its contemporary sense that denotes people of mixed British and Indian parentage.

As colonial discourse is quite contentious matter, given that it deals with manifestations of racial domination, I have endeavoured to adopt an objective stance towards the material in point and provide a nuanced textual analysis in this thesis. However, as I was born and raised in a West-European country, it seems unavoidable that my European education and environment has had an influence on the questions I posed and my interpretation of the material. Although I have striven to familiarise myself with the culture and history of India as well as Victorian British society, it is still possible that I have overinterpreted certain aspects of colonial discourse or missed other nuances that were obvious to the contemporary reader, considering that the *EDM* was published about 150 years ago. Finally, I would like to emphasise that the goal of this thesis is to uncover the mechanisms underlying woman's involvement in the British imperial project, and by no means to support or reinvigorate the ideological notions that underpinned colonial rule in India or elsewhere.

Methodology

Initially, the scope of this thesis was limited to the first series of the *EDM* (1852-1860). As this scope included a relatively small corpus, my research method consisted of browsing through the individual digitised volumes of the first series as well as singling out relevant items through a full-text search of keywords.[8] However, I later on decided to narrow down my focus from colonial discourse in general to colonial discourse related to women's imperial mission in India. As this imperial mission was most evident in the 1860s and 1870s, I decided to broaden the scope of my thesis to the whole run of the *EDM* (1852-1879). This significantly larger corpus consequently demanded a different methodological approach. Instead of browsing through the individual copies, I examined the *EDM* through the search function of Gale's *Nineteenth Century UK Periodicals* database. The Gale database provides a quite complete run of the *EDM*, although the issues published between May 1854 and April 1860 are missing from the database. I was, however, able to consult these missing issues on the HathiTrust Digital Library. All of Gale's digital versions of the *EDM* are based on bound volumes held at the National Library of Scotland, except for the issues published in 1875 and 1877, which are digitisations of volumes held at the University of Cambridge Library. Although these digital issues do include some advertisements, much paratextual material is presumably missing. This seems to be

[8] I consulted these digital volumes on the HathiTrust Digital Library: https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000529907#.

particularly the case for the digitisations of the volumes from the National Library of Scotland, as they contain considerably less advertisements than the volumes from the University of Cambridge Library. Because this is a thesis in literary studies, I will primarily focus on the analysis of larger textual items in the *EDM,* but some advertisements as well as some relevant visual material will also be discussed.

I started my investigation by running a full-text search of the term *India** on the whole series of the *EDM*, which gave 1,150 hits. These results, however, contained many items that were irrelevant for my research question, for example obituaries of military men who served in India or items relating to Native Americans. Therefore, I decided to narrow down these results by filtering on text type, by trying more specific keywords, like *Anglo-Indian*, *Bengal, Indian Mutiny*, *zenana*, *memsahib* or *P&O steamer*, and by using a combination of search terms, for example *Empire + mission*, *India* + responsibility*, *India* + travel**, *India* + reform** and *India* + station*. After skimming through the results of these searches, the most relevant items were subjected to a close textual analysis.

The advantages that digital tools like Gale's search engine offer to researchers are obvious: "Keyword search engines are widely recognised as a time-saving device; a handy tool which helps researchers to find material quicker than by hand. So far, in other words, the mainstream profession has treated digitisation largely as a *practical revolution* – it has made research faster, easier, more convenient and more productive" (Nicholson 60). Besides these practical benefits, the digitisation of printed material also has important methodological implications: digital archives have the "ability to extend the boundaries of research and answer questions that were previously unanswerable" (Nicholson 62). However, there are some pitfalls and downsides to digital research as well. The process of transforming an image of text into a searchable body of text through optical character recognition (OCR), for example, is not always accurate, which entails that some keywords will not be recognised by a search engine even though they are present in the actual text. Additionally, relevant material may be left unnoticed by choosing the wrong keyword, as "[t]he absence of a particular word does not necessarily mean that a subject is not discussed, it may merely indicate that alternative terminology has been used" (Bingham 29–30). Thus, the choice of keywords has a major influence on the outcome of the research. Furthermore, there is the danger that keywords are

merely used to "cherry-pick material from newspapers with little regard to context" (Nicholson 71). Finally, digital archives are generally created by digitising bound volumes of periodicals instead of original single issues, but ephemera were usually discarded when creating bound volumes of periodicals (Brake 11). Thus, digital archives often lack the covers and advertisement pages of a periodical's original copies, as well as the unique cultural information embodied in such paratexts.

Although these are legitimate concerns, the fact that no original issues of the *EDM* were available in any library near me forced me to limit my investigation to digital versions. A quick look at the plain-text versions of some random digital articles from the *EDM* revealed that the OCR used to digitise the magazine has a high level of accuracy. This is corroborated by the fact that the OCR confidence percentages of the items I eventually selected varied between 86% and 100% with an estimated average of 95%. Through a well-considered choice of keywords and different keyword combinations, I tried to collect as much relevant material as possible. There is of course a possibility that I have missed relevant items, but this is also the case for non-digital research of periodicals. Before searching the Gale database via keywords, I also spent quite some time browsing through the separate volumes of the *EDM* First Series, which allowed me to familiarise myself with the *EDM*'s contents, structure and layout. Evidently, there is a sense of coherence over the three series of the *EDM* concerning its contents and layout, but there are also some important differences that I will describe in more detail in the next section.

Characteristics and Publication Context of the *EDM*

Samuel Orchart Beeton (1830- 1877) launched the *EDM* on 1 May 1852 and distinguished himself from rival publishers by targeting a new readership: the middle-class woman (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 62). Beeton's magazine was an immediate success and by 1857 it claimed a readership of "nearly 50,000 of our countrywomen" (Preface, *EDM* vol. VI 1857-58: iii). With its 7 x 4½ inches, 32 pages and several illustrations, Beeton's two pence monthly offered good value but differed greatly from the expensive ladies' magazines that flourished in the previous decades. This departure is also visible in the title of the magazine, which indicates that "The *EDM*'s readers were 'women' rather than 'ladies' but they were middle not working class" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 62). The title of the *EDM* is not

only explicitly linked to the gender and class of the target readership,[9] but also to their national identity – with the concomitant imperial connotations that I discussed earlier. Although the address to the reader on the magazine's very first page turns to all of "our countrywomen" (*EDM* 1 May 1852: 1), the Englishness claimed in the title of the magazine was in fact rather limited: the magazine's readership was primarily London-based and the femininity that the magazine assumed was likewise metropolitan (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 63). However, the *EDM* possessed a significant overseas readership as well. In his address to the reader, the editor additionally describes the direct function of his magazine, which was twofold: to guide middle-class women in the management of their home trough practical advice, and "to brighten the intellect and add to the general information and instruction of our readers" (*EDM* 1 May 1852: 1) by providing a wide range of educational articles alongside poetry and fictional tales.

On 1 May 1860, Beeton relaunched the *EDM* as a 48-page-long monthly at the raised price of sixpence (a shilling with supplement), in a slightly larger format (8 x 5 inches), with more attractive illustrations and better quality paper (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 73). This remodelling of the magazine's form was accompanied by a change in its content: "While the visual and fashion elements were improved, the domestic and practical information was down-graded, with the exception of the needlework patterns" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 73). Relaunching the magazine was, however, not without risk. The more sophisticated femininity presented in the New Series involved a change in the magazine's readership. While the title still targeted the middle-class English*woman*, the form and content of the restyled magazine clearly aimed to expand the readership upwards in terms of class. The risk, however, paid off: "By October, the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* boasted a circulation five times the number of copies needed to break even" (Van Remoortel 48).

An integral aspect of the New Series *EDM* was the deal that the Beeton couple established with *Le Moniteur de la Mode*, a Paris-based fashion magazine run by Adolphe Goubaud and his wife Louise. This deal involved that the Goubauds supplied fashion plates, paper patterns and fashion copy, which formed the basis of the *EDM*'s fashion column, while the Beetons in return

[9] The actual readership of the *EDM* probably also included domestic servants (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 63) and the occasional "illegitimate voyeur" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 86) in the form of a male reader.

provided English outlets for *Le Moniteur de la Mode* and advertised the Goubauds' business and services on the pages of the *EDM* (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 76; Freeman 164–65). In 1862, the Beeton-Goubaud deal further developed into "a mail-order business operating from the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* offices, catering even more efficiently to the needs of the magazine's readership" (Van Remoortel 51). This service reached out to the *EDM*'s empire-wide readership, too, and offered to send paper patterns and dressmaking materials as well as complete articles of dress out to the colonies upon the readers' request. Thus, it served as another way in which the overseas reader became evident on the pages of the *EDM*.

In January 1865, another new series of the *EDM* was launched. This time, the new series did not involve a significant shift in the magazine's form or contents. In May 1866 Beeton was, however, forced to sell his titles to his rivals Ward, Lock, and Tyler because the house of Overend and Gurney, in which Beeton had considerable investments, went bankrupt (Beetham, 'Beeton, Samuel Orchart'). The new owners did not make any substantial changes to the *EDM*, apart from extending the "Conversazione" column, and retained Samuel Beeton as salaried editor. Mr Beeton was not the sole editor of the *EDM*, though. Between 1857 and 1865 his wife Isabella Beeton (1836-1865) had been co-editor of the magazine, although her role had remained hidden until she appeared as 'the Editress' in the correspondence column of the Second Series. After Isabella's death in February 1865, her editorship passed over to Matilda Browne (1836-1936), who started the column "Spinnings in Town" and developed under the pseudonym 'the Silkworm' a persona "which was manifestly feminine and quite distinct from that of the editor" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 79). Browne stayed on as editor of the *EDM* until 1875, when she started her own magazine titled *Myra's Journal of Dress and Fashion* (1875-1912) in collaboration with Samuel Beeton (Brake and Demoor 434). After Mr Beeton's death on 6 June 1877, the *EDM* survived another two years until it ceased publication in December 1879.

1. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I will discuss three theoretical concepts, namely 'colonial discourse', 'the heterogeneity of the periodical' and 'women's imperial mission', and outline the relevance of these concepts to this thesis. In chapter 2, the concepts will be applied to the textual analysis of the *EDM*.

1.1. Colonial Discourse

The study of colonial discourse is a central subdiscipline of postcolonial studies and has been subjected to much scholarly research. As different scholars have defined the term 'colonial discourse' in various ways, the use of 'colonial discourse' in this thesis demands some further explanation. To start with, it is important to note that colonial discourse is not only something from the past but can also refer to discourse(s) used in the present by both formerly colonial powers and in decolonised societies, as the legacy of colonial rule still manifests itself today in numerous ways. This thesis is, however, limited to the investigation of colonial discourse in a historical sense.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1878) can be seen as the first study about colonial discourse, although Said adopts the alternative term 'Orientalist discourse'. Said states that Orientalist discourse "is, above all, a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power" (Said 12), which can be linked to Michel Foucault's concept of discourse that he established in the 1960s. Although Foucault's understanding of discourse(s) is quite abstract, Chris Weedon provides a relatively straightforward articulation of Foucault's ideas:

> Discourses, in Foucault's work, are ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and the relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern. Neither the body nor thoughts and feelings have meaning outside their discursive articulation, but the ways in which discourse

> constitutes the minds and bodies of individuals is always part of a wider network of power relations, often with institutional bases. (Weedon 108)

Without going into too much detail about Foucault's ideas, one of his most important insights is the interdependent relation between discourse, power and knowledge. According to Foucault, "power does not manifest itself in a downward flow from the top of the social hierarchy to those below but extends itself laterally in a capillary fashion – it is part of daily action, speech and everyday life" (Loomba 47). This view of power makes the investigation of colonial discourse in Victorian periodicals particularly relevant as they were omnipresent in Victorian society: "periodicals informed, instructed, and amused virtually all of the people in the many segments of Victorian life" (Vann and VanArsdel, 'Victorian Periodicals' 3). Both Said and Foucault thus argue that discourse is rooted in various power relations (such as cultural, intellectual, economic and political power) and produces a certain way of thinking.

In the case of colonial discourse, the way in which the colonies were portrayed by colonising powers produced a stereotypical way of thinking about the colonies and 'the colonial other': "Orientalism becomes a discourse at the point at which it starts systematically to produce stereotypes about Orientals and the Orient" (Gandhi 77). The stereotypes produced by Orientalist discourse were, according to Said, both underpinned by and confirmations of the ideological idea of an "absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior" (Said 300). Through the use of Orientalist/colonial discourse, 'the colonial other' was seen and thought of as "a subject race, dominated by a race that knows them and what is good for them better than they could possibly know themselves" (Said 38). Colonial discourse was thus not only rooted in certain power relations but was also used as a tool to exert power and control. Due to its preeminent industrial, technological and economic power, the West succeeded to colonise the East, which enabled the existence of colonial discourse. Colonial discourse was in turn used to support the imposition of political, intellectual and cultural power on the East, such as the establishment of the British Raj and English education in India or the abolition of indigenous religious practices. Hence, colonial power relied on both material and ideological structures as it was exerted through institutions, language, literature and culture (Loomba 51).

Although Said's study of Orientalist discourse certainly contains valuable insights, his "insistence that the Orientalist stereotype invariably presupposes and confirms a totalising and unified imperialist discourse" (Gandhi 77) was subjected to much criticism in the final decades of the twentieth century. Many scholars have argued that colonial discourse also included affirmative stereotypes of the East that were, for instance, used by British anti-colonial movements, in homosexual nineteenth-century literature or by the colonised themselves "in fashioning the 'East' as a utopian alternative to Europe" (Gandhi 78).[10] Examples of such affirmative stereotypes are the "Orientalist image of India as inherently spiritual, consensual, and corporate" (Fox 151), the "tendency to treat certain [colonial] subjects as having inherently aesthetic value" (Spurr 46), or the image of colonised territory as "the site of a return to a simpler, nobler way of life" (Spurr 41). As colonial discourse is not limited to pejorative images and was also adopted by antagonists of the British empire, a more ambivalent and dynamic view of Orientalist discourse is desirable: "Discursive practices make it difficult for individuals to think outside them – hence they are also exercises in power and control. This element of control should not be taken to mean that a discourse as a domain of utterance is either static or cannot admit of contradictions" (Loomba 38).

In this thesis, I chose to adopt the term 'colonial discourse' instead of 'Orientalist discourse' to make clear the distinction with Said's rather one-sided view on colonial discourse. The term 'colonial discourse' here denotes the language, tropes and images used in the *EDM* to portray the Indian culture and people as well as Anglo-Indian society, with attention to pejorative, affirmative and ambivalent forms of stereotypical language and imagery. Although all material published in the *EDM* was written by members of the colonising power Britain, as I could not find any contributions on the part of the colonised to the magazine, this does not mean that colonial discourse in the *EDM* was univocal. On the contrary, ambivalence in the depiction of British India was encouraged by the heterogeneous form of the magazine, which is the focus of the next section.

[10] Examples of studies which pay attention to affirmative stereotypes are Homi K. Bhabha's essay "Difference, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism" (1984), Dennis Porter's "*Orientalism* and its Problems" (1983) and Richard Fox's "East of Said" (1992).

1.2. Heterogeneity of the Periodical

One of the leading scholars in the field of periodical studies, and one of the few who has ventured to theorise the periodical as a publishing genre, is Margaret Beetham. According to Beetham, a major characteristic of the periodical genre is its "heterogeneity and blurred boundaries" (Beetham, 'Towards a Theory' 25). Periodicals are heterogeneous in that they do not only mix textual and visual material, but are also characterised by a variety of authorial voices: one issue of a Victorian magazine typically included the work of several authors as well as contributions of the readers themselves. Even more characteristic for periodicals or magazines is their generic variety, as a plethora of genres can be found on their pages: the *EDM*, for example, incorporated fiction, poetry, recipes, advertisements, household advice, competitions, fashion news, dress-making patterns, jokes, book reviews, biographies, reader correspondence, and educational articles on a wide range of topics.

In relation to this variety of genres, the periodical form invites a variety of readings: "The form invites us to flip through, read in any order, omit some sections altogether and read others carefully" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 13). In this way, the periodical "openly offers readers the chance to construct their own text" (Beetham, 'Towards a Theory' 26). Thus, the reader can and should be included in the complex set of power relations that forms a periodical: "Writers are powerful in relation to language and the reader but less so in relation to the editor, the publisher or the advertiser. Editorial power is itself limited, discursively and economically, by pressure from advertisers and from readers. Moreover the balance of power between these different groups varies historically and is constantly in process" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 2). Apart from the reader, editor, publisher and advertiser, other people also had a potential influence on a periodical's form and contents, such as the artist, printer or bookseller. As a periodical is regulated by a variety of people and powers, it is particularly prone to change – which can though be considered as one of its strengths: from the eighteenth century until today, the periodical has proved to be one of the most resilient and self-renewing genres (Beetham, 'Towards a Theory' 19).

Due to the multiplicity of authors, genres and regulating powers involved in the making of a periodical, the periodical genre is especially susceptible to the expression of conflicting ideas: "The heterogeneous form of the magazine had always allowed contradictory discourses to

coexist" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 136). Although the publication of a Victorian periodical was usually motivated by certain ideological viewpoint and the desire "to make one's meanings stick" (Beetham, 'Towards a Theory' 21), it is unlikely that the opinions of the numerous authors and other persons involved in the production of the periodical coincided with each other in every respect. The correspondence column of the *EDM,* for instance, was a typical place where contradictory opinions were expressed and where intense debate took place.[11] Variety in the expression of ideological opinions is also encouraged by the fact that a periodical contains a multitude of genres, each with its own characteristics and conventions. An article on religion in India (*EDM* 1 August 1858: 118-22) and a reader's request for advice on where to obtain Indian curry powder in Britain (*EDM* 1 February 1872: 128), for instance, have both an imperial dimension – which is why I consider both as instances of colonial discourse – but differ greatly from each other concerning their form and function. Thus, each genre has its own way of dealing with British India and women's imperial mission, and while an end-stopped single text item in the *EDM* may express a certain ideological view, the next page may say the complete opposite.

Although it is true that Victorian periodicals were often saturated with imperial ideology, Deidre David's statement that "Victorian attitudes toward empire are almost always unambiguously racist" (David 8) is a step too far. On the contrary, imperial ideology was highly ambiguous matter: "British attitudes toward India were of course never a monolithic orthodoxy" (Hutchins xii) and the way in which Britain ruled or treated this colony gave often rise to intense public debate. The *EDM* is a case in point. As I will demonstrate in this thesis, several contradictory discourses relating to British India and women's imperial mission coexisted on the pages of the *EDM*.

1.3. Women's Imperial Mission

As the main focus of this thesis is the investigation of colonial discourse related to women's imperial mission, a description of what that mission actually included is fundamental. Although a number of British women also travelled to other British colonies during the age of empire in order to carry out an imperial mission, they were most intensely involved in the

[11] See, for example, the debate on tight-lacing that took place on the pages of the *EDM*'s "Conversazione" column and the national controversy in which this debate erupted (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 81–84).

imperial project in India (Chaudhuri and Strobel 5). Some women had already ventured to undertake the seven-month voyage to India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Sen, *Gendered Transactions* 16), but "[t]he number of British women travelling to India increased considerably in the second half of the nineteenth century" (Thompson 99). This increase was partly due to the reduced travel time to India, but there were other factors too that caused the growing influx of British women. The women who travelled to India can be divided into three categories, of which each can moreover be linked to a distinct type of imperial mission.

1.3.1. Memsahibs

The largest group of female travellers were middle-class women who followed their husbands to India. The professions of these husbands were, however, various: "About half of the men worked for the Government, as judges, administrators, teachers, doctors, engineers, foresters, agricultural experts, or as officers in the Indian Army" (Macmillan 10), but there were also the so-called non-officials who worked as "planters (as those who ran plantations were called), businessmen, or lawyers" (Macmillan 10–11). After the Indian Mutiny or Indian Rebellion of 1857-58, the East India Company – at that time in charge of governing British India – was dissolved and the colony was placed under direct Crown Rule, which involved changes in policy and organisation. This installation of the British Raj in 1858 entailed a growth in the influx of British men that "was caused partly by an increase in the British military garrison in India, partly by growth in the bureaucracy, and partly by an expansion in the commercial and service sectors" (Chaudhuri, 'Issues of Race' 53). Additionally, the provision of steamer services from the 1840s onwards had made the journey to India much safer and faster for the British men travelling out and for their wives, who usually accompanied them. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 further shortened the trip to four weeks and even less (Macmillan 21). Apart from attracting the wives of men working in India, many young unmarried girls, who often had relatives or friends that already lived in India, also made the journey out in the hope of finding a good match among the British bachelors working in India (Sen, 'Between Power and "Purdah"' 365).

Even though all white women in India automatically enjoyed a special status because they belonged to the ruling race, Anglo-Indian society itself was characterised by a strict social hierarchy and the Anglo-Indian woman "like her counterpart in Britain, commonly derived

her status from her husband's occupation" (Chaudhuri, 'Memsahibs and Motherhood' 519). At the top of Anglo-Indian society stood those married to members of the Indian Civil Service (ICS), followed by the wives of military officers, and with the wives of non-officials much lower in the hierarchy (Macmillan 47–48). Other women fell even completely outside the middle-class Anglo-Indian society. Those married to lower-class soldiers, commonly called "barrack wives" (Sen, *Gendered Transactions* 9), or the wives of missionaries were looked at with disdain by the *memsahibs* – a term rooted in the words 'ma'am sahib' or 'lady master' that was reserved for the married, middle-class, white woman (Sen, 'Memsahib' 206–07). Although the term theoretically applied to all middle-class women in India who were married to both officials and non-officials, the word *memsahib* is most commonly associated with the wives of civil administrators and military officers who lived together in upcountry stations and formed a close-knit community that was usually characterised by "imperial and class hauteur" (Sen, 'Memsahib' 206).

Although the main inducement for British women to travel to India was their marriage, or the prospect of it, they also had an essential role in the civilising mission. Especially the *memsahibs* were entrusted with an important imperial task:

> It was the role of the *memsahibs* to represent the moral values of the European household, in the same way as their husbands represented the economic and political superiority of Europe in the public sphere. British women in India were assigned a political function as the keepers of the superior morality of the Anglo-Saxon race, and the permanence of the British Empire depended greatly on their ability to perform this task successfully. (López 188)

Thus, the clichéd "image of the typical 'memsahib' as a frivolous, snobbish and selfish creature who flitted from bridge to tennis parties 'in the hills' while her poor husband slaved 'on the plains'" (Barr 1), which often appeared in Victorian novels and periodicals, disregarded *memsahibs*' imperial role: it was their duty to represent Britain's moral superiority and create a British-style domestic environment that "reflected, preserved, and promoted imperialist attitudes" (Chaudhuri, 'Memsahibs and Motherhood' 532). Additionally, "analogies often came to be drawn between the running of a home and the management of an empire" (Sen, *Woman*

and Empire 33) in housekeeping manuals written by experienced *memsahibs,* and the British press, too, featured imagery of the *memsahib* as the domestic administrator of "her miniature empire" (Macmillan 142). Thus, *memsahibs* were entrusted with the cultural imperial task to "help in furthering an 'imperial identity' that was increasingly considered necessary in the ruling race" (Sen, *Woman and Empire* 10).

1.3.2. Female Missionaries

Even though most British women sailed out to India in following of their husband, not all of them made the journey for matrimonial reasons. A second group of female travellers were the missionaries, who went to British India because of religious aspirations:

> In the initial years evangelical activity was perceived to be a male activity and female missionaries were generally the wives of missionaries. From the 1860s, however, following a shift in evangelical policies, unmarried female missionaries from the more educated middle classes started to be sent out to India primarily on zenana work. From this period onwards, evangelical activities in India became feminised; so much so, that by the end of the century, there was a predominance of female over male evangelicals in India. (Sen, *Gendered Transactions* 7)

This change in evangelical policies can again be related to the Mutiny of 1857-58, which was a pivotal event in the history of British India. The British government changed its policy on religious reform drastically after the Indian Mutiny, a revolt in which *sepoys* or Indian soldiers who served in the army of the East India Company rebelled against their British officers and in which not only British military men but also large numbers of British missionaries, women and children were killed (Hyam 222–25). The Mutiny was met with an equally, if not exceedingly, violent counterattack from the British side, which eventually lead to the defeat of the Indian rebels in June 1858 (Metcalf and Metcalf 103). Because fear of religious interference was seen as one of the Mutiny's main causes, the British government decided to cease its financial support of missionary schools and stop Bible classes in government schools after the rebellion (Hyam 227). However, the "concern with 'improving' the people, with changing their habits and once and for all making India safe for Europeans" (Forbes 8) only

increased after the Mutiny as the event was seen as evidence of the cruel and uncivilised character of the Indian race. Among missionaries, "[t]here was the belief that conversion to Christianity would bring about not only the moral improvement of the Indians, regarded as heathens submerged in the darkness of cruel and licentious religions, but also, and specifically in the case of Indian women, an educational improvement" (López 190).

Before 1857, missionaries had endeavoured to realise their objective of spreading the gospel in India by establishing English education for Indian men and demanding legal and social reforms from the government (Kannabiran 63). After the cruelties of the Indian Mutiny, radical reform schemes were, however, abandoned and the focus shifted towards reform through gradual change. As "it was more or less axiomatic in the Victorian period that the condition of women was the index of any civilization" (Burton 11), female education had a central role in this objective to gradually improve Indian society. The main concern of missionary work thus came to be *zenana* education. *Zenana* "refers to the separate women's quarters in certain Hindu and Muslim homes" (Nair 26), as segregation of the sexes was a common practice among "the upper and middle classes of north, northwestern, and eastern India" (Nair 11). *Zenana* was part of the larger practice of *purdah* in certain Muslim and Hindu communities that regulated the interaction between men and women, although with some differences between the two religions, and consisted of "the physical segregation of living space, and the covering of the female face and body" (Papanek 294). In the Victorian periodical press, the *zenana* quarters were generally presented as "dark, evil, dirty, confining, prisonlike, even though women's spaces did include the roof areas of houses and the inner courtyards" (Grewal 51). Additionally, confinement in the *zenana* – although limited to certain classes and regions in India – became a central aspect in Victorians' stereotypical image of 'the Indian woman', who was "represented almost invariably as a helpless, degraded victim of religious custom and uncivilized cultural practices, [and] signified a burden for whose sake many white women left Britain and devoted their lives in the empire" (Burton 8).

As Indian women confined in the *zenanas* were considered to be "pure heathens" (Forbes 2), the conversion of these women was deemed the most urgent. Conveniently, mid-nineteenth-century British society was characterised by a 'surplus' of single, middle-class women (Rowbotham 88), who were often recruited as missionaries to bring the word of God to the

women in the *zenanas* – places inaccessible to male missionaries. The ultimate goal of *zenana* education, which "involved house-to-house visiting by the teacher, thereby preserving the sanctity of the inner compartments, permitting married women to study and allowing heads of households to supervise the education delivered" (Forbes 3), was conversion to Christianity. However, the success rate of this endeavour proved to be quite low: "While missionary women were welcomed into Indian homes as teachers of reading, arithmetic, and needle-work, they were thrown out when they went too far with religion" (Forbes 6).

Because *zenana* education was heavily reliant upon Indian males allowing the missionaries into their homes, the education was limited to the wives of Indian men belonging mainly to the elite, and sometimes to the middle classes, who were "interested in having their wives adopt a style of life that the husbands had already accepted" (Forbes 7). Thus, the main task of *zenana* teachers shifted to "fostering the ideology of Victorian domesticity in India" (Grewal 52), albeit with mixed success, and the missionaries "contented themselves with sowing the 'seed' that might yield a future convert" (Forbes 7). As *zenana* education was solely based on British values, the missionaries also "supported the notion of England as civilized and civilizing country" (Grewal 74). Over the course of the nineteenth century, *zenana* missions were furthermore extended towards the medical field: "Towards the end of the century, as part of a new evangelical strategy, missionaries who were trained physicians started to be sent out to provide medical care to purdah women (women in seclusion) who refused to be treated by foreign, male doctors" (Sen, *Gendered Transactions* 7).

1.3.3. Female Social Reformers

A third category of women travelling to the India were social reformers – often unmarried but educated women from the (upper) middle classes whose imperial purpose can be linked to the feminist movement in Britain, although not all reformers accepted the label 'feminist' (Burton 21). As early as the 1830s, British women were encouraged by Indian male reformers to undertake the voyage to India in order to improve the condition of Indian women (López 190). Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), "the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, a rationalist Hindu reform group in Bengal" (Ramusack 310) and Keshub Chandra Sen (1838-1884), Roy's successor, for example, were two influential Indian social reformers who visited Britain in order to advocate their belief in Indian reform based on western models. Although British

women travelling to India as social reformers were always much smaller in number than the missionaries or *memsahibs* (Ramusack 309), the influx of British female reformers did receive an extra impetus in 1870 because of two reasons. In response to a request from Chandra Sen, Mary Carpenter (1807-1877), a social reformer in Britain who had also travelled to India in 1866, founded the National Indian Association in September 1870 with the objective "to spread knowledge of India in England" (Ramusack 312). Additionally, Chandra Sen himself had given an influential speech at a meeting of the Victoria Discussion Society in London on 1 August 1870. In this speech, he urged British women "to effect the elevation of the Hindu women," which they could accomplish by travelling to India in order to provide an "unsectarian, liberal, sound, useful education […] calculated to make Indian women good wives, mothers, sisters and daughters" (qtd. in Beveridge 84–85).

In accordance with the imperial purpose of evangelical missionaries, social reformers focused on the education of Indian women, but in this case not with the goal of converting them to Christianity. Both Indian male reformers and British female reformers, such as Carpenter in the 1860s and Annette Akroyd Beveridge (1842–1929) in the 1870s, established their own schools in India that provided secular, English education to Indian girls and women but differed in their organisation and curriculum (Ramusack 310–13). Additionally, female social reformers tried to encourage British women to teach at their schools through "publications, speaking tours, and London-based organizations" (Ramusack 316). Even though the education provided at the schools of female social reformers was not aimed at religious conversion, this does not mean that it was free from Christian values or imperial ideology:

> Although they were not overtly working to convert Indian women to Christianity, Carpenter and Akroyd sought to mold the lifestyle of Indian women according to Victorian ideals that reflected Christian influence such as their campaign for modest dress. Furthermore, all of these women thought that Indian women would profit from models, principles, and techniques derived from European experience. (Ramusack 319)

Like *zenana* education, the schools of social reformers were primarily aimed at the wives and daughters of elite, western-oriented Indian men and failed to attain women of the lower castes.

Additionally, the success of these schools was quite low due to financial difficulties (Amin 146). However, "Victorian women did an important job in promoting female education in Bengal, for their schools set a precedent in the creation of educational institutions for Bengali girls and served as an inspiration for the first Indian liberal colleges for women founded in Bengal" (López 191).

Two other objectives of social reformers, which they also sought to attain trough female education, were "raising the minimum age of marriage for women, and improving the situation of Hindu widows" (Ramusack 319). One of the most controversial Hindu practices that generated much indignation in Britain, primarily through the periodical press, was *sati*; a practice that involved "the self-immolation of widows in the funeral pyres of their husbands" (López 185) and that "was believed passionately by Hindus to be a road to heavenly bliss – a religious duty of high spiritual merit" (Hyam 217). Together with *zenana* confinement, *sati* had become axiomatic of Indian women's abject condition and was a central aspect in the ideology of the civilising mission. While female social reformers travelled to India out of genuine "concern about the condition of Indian women" (Ramusack 309) and were "passionately involved in the social uplift of 'native' women" (Sen, 'Between Power and "Purdah"' 375), their work and writings also drew on and contributed to the stereotypical image of Indian women "as helpless victims awaiting the representation of their plight and the redress of their condition at the hands of their sisters in the metropole" (Burton 7).

In short, British women were increasingly involved in the Indian colonial project after the Mutiny of 1857-58 and the subsequent installation of the British Raj. In this thesis, the term 'women's imperial mission' does not denote one specific imperial task but rather refers to an abstraction of several imperial purposes. In general, there are two dimensions to women's imperial mission. First, there is the cultural imperial task of the 'English white woman' to represent the superior morality of the British race and construct an imperial Anglo-Indian identity which promoted a British lifestyle and British values. This task rested especially on the shoulders of the *memsahibs,* the most prestigious among British women in India, who were responsible for creating a British-style domestic space that reflected imperialist attitudes and who were expected to show behaviour that was marked by a "defensive racial aloofness and a simultaneous cultivation of an 'English' colonial identity" (Sen, *Woman and Empire* 10).

Secondly, there was the imperial aspiration of British women to improve the condition of Indian women by providing religious education and medical aid to women in the *zenanas* as well as secular education to Indian girls and women. These two dimensions were, however, not strictly separated. British female missionaries, social reformers, teachers and doctors were also "incorporated into the process of cultural imperialism by being projected as a role model for the Indian woman who was emerging from the veil" (Sen, 'Between Power and "Purdah"' 373) and generally "believed that colonial rule was essential for any improvements in education and medicine" (Grewal 74). Likewise, there were *memsahibs* who committed themselves to social reform in India, although they were small in number, but the improvement of Indian women was also considered to be dependent on the exemplary character, behaviour and lifestyle of the *memsahibs*. Additionally, the portrayal of India's culture and Anglo-Indian society in the writings and numerous contributions to Victorian periodicals of *memsahibs,* missionaries and social reformers played an essential role in shaping and disseminating the idea of women's imperial mission in Britain.

As the use of stereotypical tropes and imagery is characteristic of colonial discourse, the next chapter will investigate the presence of stereotypes linked to woman's imperial mission in the *EDM*, such as the image of the helpless Indian woman as victim of uncivilised religious practices like *zenana* or *sati*, or the *memsahib* as a morally superior domestic administrator. Because the heterogeneous form of the magazine facilitates the coexistence of conflicting discourses, I will also demonstrate how the *EDM* juxtaposes various depictions of colonial India. Thus, the analysis in the next chapter focuses on the *EDM*'s use of pejorative, affirmative and ambivalent images of India that both propagate and contradict the idea of woman's imperial mission.

2. Analysis: Colonial Discourse and Women's Imperial Mission in the *EDM*

In this chapter, I will concentrate on the textual analysis of colonial discourse in the *EDM*. I will first discuss some early aspects of women's imperial mission that are discernible in the First Series of the *EDM* (1852-1859), which covers the period before, during and shortly after the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58. As the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny generated the rise of women's imperial mission in the 1860s and 1870s, the Second and Third Series *EDM* (1860-1879) contain more direct references to British women's involvement in the imperial project, which will be discussed in section 2.2. Although the *EDM*'s role in shaping and disseminating the concept of this mission is evident in all three series, the magazine includes various images of India that undermine certain aspects of this mission as well.

2.1. First Series (1852-1859): Early Aspects of Women's Imperial Mission

The First Series of the *EDM* contained multiple references to British India that appeared in various genres, but direct encouragements to undertake an imperial mission are scarce in this series – which is quite logical as the concept of this mission was mainly established after the Indian Mutiny. This does, however, not mean that women's imperial mission is entirely absent on the pages of the First Series. British women had already been travelling to India before the Mutiny, albeit in smaller numbers than after it, and the term '*memsahib*' already emerged in the Bengal Presidency during Company rule of India (Chaudhuri, 'Memsahibs and Motherhood' 517). Thus, many aspects of what later came to be associated with this mission can already be detected in the *EDM*'s First Series in an elementary form, although the series includes some images of India that conflict with the rationale behind this mission, too.

2.1.1. Depictions of India in 1853: Treacherous Savages and Luxurious Refinement

One of the first references to British India in the *EDM* was featured in the short story "Destiny: A Tale" by Sarah Symonds, which was published in two parts on 1 March and 1 April 1853. The tale tells the story of the marriage quest – a popular topic in women's magazines – of the well-off sisters Alice, Marian and Frances. The story starts with Marian's statement that she plans to follow her fiancé Ernest Wentworth to India if his duty dictates him to go. Her sister Alice is, however, opposed to the idea of Marian going to "that abominable land, where you will lose

your lovely complexion, and come back to us the colour of my brown self" (*EDM* 1 March 1853: 323). Indeed, Alice hopes fiercely that she herself will be spared of the burdensome task of following her future suitor to India: "Oh, the fates deliver me from having a lover who thinks it necessary to broil himself and me under an Indian sun" (*EDM* 1 March 1853: 323). Thus, the story describes the duty of a British woman to accompany her husband even to the remote colony of India, and expresses the common belief that "the [Indian] climate was inhospitable to the 'English race'" (Quirk 172) as the broiling Indian sun had disastrous effects on British women's complexion. Indeed, "a clear skin and blooming complexion" (*EDM* 1 July 1852: 74) were promoted by the *EDM*'s beauty column as characteristics of health, fairness and moral excellence.

Eventually, Ernest decides to travel alone to India to fulfil his duty as military officer, although he is sad to leave Marian at home and fears the dangers which India poses: "To say nothing of the uncertainties of an Indian climate and campaign, it will be at least two years before I can offer Miss Campbell such a home as would in any measure compensate for the sacrifices she must make in leaving England; and I may be mouldering under the sands of India long before then" (*EDM* 1 March 1853: 325-26). Ernest's fears are not unfounded; after his letters have ceased abruptly, Marian reads in the paper "the news of a sanguinary engagement which had recently taken place, and a long list of killed and wounded. Ernest's regiment had been engaged and suffered severely, only two officers having escaped; and alas! the name of Wentworth was not borne by either" (*EDM* 1 April 1853: 357). Although it turns out that Ernest's name is included among the missing, Marion's father states that "it is very improbable that he should have met with any other than a prisoner's fate – and that, among so savage and treacherous a race as the Sikhs, is almost certain death" (*EDM* 1 April 1853: 358). The "sanguinary engagement" Marian reads about possibly refers to a battle from the First or Second Anglo-Sikh War (1845–46; 1848–49), given that the annexation of the Sikh kingdom in 1849 formally ended the conflict between the English and the Sikhs (Bhardwaj and Manmohan Singh). This would entail that the story is set at an earlier point in time than 1853 and thus has a historical dimension to the Victorian reader. In any case, the image of India painted in the story deteriorates from a colony with a broiling hot climate to a place inhabited by treacherous savages where death lurks around the corner. Miraculously, Ernest manages to escape from Sikh prison and turns up in England at the day Alice's and Frances's double wedding. As a true

happy ending befits, Marian and Ernest soon get married, too, and the three sisters live happily ever after.

A whole other image of British India is portrayed in a biographical article on Mrs Caroline Chisholm, which was published on 1 July 1853 and part of the "Notable Women" series. Caroline Chisholm, born in 1808, is one of the British women who followed her husband, a captain in the East India Company's service, to India before the Mutiny took place. Her stay in the colony of India is described in the following way:

> How gratifying would this change of scene and society have been to most females in the heyday of their youth and beauty – the softening influence of the luxuries of the East, the glitter and enchantment of military life, the 'gay and festive' scenes, the charms of polished society, the continued round of pleasure, the change of excitement, and a life of ease, elegance and refinement. (*EDM* 1 July 1853: 66)

In contrast to the negative portrayal of India in "Destiny: A Tale", this passage sounds almost like a commercial of a travel agency trying to persuade as many British women as possible to travel to India. Life in India is described in an idealised way and the affirmative stereotype of (Anglo-)Indian society as a utopian way of life is adopted. No reference is made to the difficulties or dangers that living in India posed for British men and women, and the colony is associated with refinement rather than uncivilisation. Additionally, the use of phrases like "glitter and enchantment" and "gay and festive scenes" articulates the stereotypical idea of *memsahibs*' vain and carefree lifestyle. Furthermore, the article prefigures women's missionary work in the second half of the century, as the pious Mrs Chisholm had "a mission to perform" (*EDM* 1 July 1853: 66). Her calling was, however, not directed at the improvement of Indian women but towards the girls and orphans of European soldiers who grew up in military barracks, places that were associated with ignorance, vice and unhygienic conditions (*EDM* 1 July 1853: 67). Therefore, Mrs Chisholm opened a 'school of industry' to educate these girls and to teach them domestic duties – which aligns with the later *zenana* missions and the schools opened by social reformers, although Mrs Chisholm's school was intended for the education of European and not Indian girls. Thus, the idea of civilising the Indian people is not expressed

directly in this article, although the notion of British superiority is, for instance, visible in the statement that "The great commercial fleet of Great Britain, [is] unequalled by any other power" (*EDM* 1 July 1853: 66).

2.1.2. Educational Articles: Acquainting the Englishwoman with the Culture of India

In the First Series of the *EDM*, depictions of British India appeared most commonly in educational essays. These essays served the *EDM*'s purpose to "add to the general information and instruction of our readers" (*EDM* 1 May 1852: 1) by expanding the Englishwoman's knowledge about the colony of India, its inhabitants and its culture. In this section, I will limit my discussion to the articles "The Costumes of the World: India", "Woman in Barbarism" and "Religions of the Worlds: India", as they discuss the colony of India most extensively, but references to India were also present in articles such as "About Cotton", "People of the Philippines" and "The Wolf in the Nursery".

On 1 May 1854, the article "The Costumes of the World: India" was published as first part of a series on the dress of foreign peoples. The article provides an elaborate description of Indian dress and distinguishes between the clothes of different groups within Indian society based on their religion, class and geographical region. Like the article on Caroline Chisholm, this article adopts the positive stereotype of India as a luxurious and refined culture:

> Runjeet Singh, their [the Sikhs'] celebrated chief, like Hyder Ali [a Muslim sultan in India] had a great taste for the adornments of fashion, and was imitated in his love for fine clothes by his whole court, which was in this respect unequalled in all the East. [...] The glowing descriptions in the 'Arabian Nights' are not more gorgeous than the realities often met with in India. (*EDM* 1 May 1854: 21)

The luxury of the East is also visible in the description of Hindu and Mogul women, who are, according to the article, richly perfumed and abundantly adorned with jewellery: "their ears are bored in many places, and loaded with pearls; a variety of gold chains, strings of pearl, and precious stones, fall from the neck over the bosom, and the arms are covered with bracelets from the wrist to the elbow. They also have gold and silver chains round the ankles, and

abundance of rings on their fingers and toes" (*EDM* 1 May 1854: 20). Additionally, Hindu women "make use of henna and antimony, like most other Eastern nations, to heighten their beauty" (*EDM* 1 May 1854: 20). This description of Indian women's elaborate use of jewellery and adornments contrasts, however, with the illustrations accompanying the text, in which the women are dressed in a more modest way. Most likely, these illustrations were reprints from other publications and, in order to save time or money, the editors may have picked images that were somewhat relevant to the article on Indian dress rather than going for the perfect fit.

Although these descriptions of Indians' luxurious dress adopt a positive attitude towards Indian fashion and are "seemingly benign," they also emphasise "the 'otherness' of the Indian woman" (Chaudhuri, 'Issues of Race' 56). The "tendency to treat certain subjects as having inherently aesthetic value" (Spurr 46) was indeed quite a common feature of colonial discourse, but this aesthetic value depends primarily on the exotic appearance of 'the colonial other' that contrasts with European standards. This idea of 'otherness' or deviation from European norms is expressed explicitly in the article's statement that "Her ear-rings were large and handsome – the ring worn in her nose, according to our idea of ornament, less becoming" (*EDM* 1 May 1854: 20). Furthermore, the article asserts that "When the Hindoos and Mohammedans are

baptised into the Christian faith, the women lay aside their Eastern dress, and put on a jacket and petticoat; and the men wear as much of the European apparel as they can, with the exception of a coat and stockings, which are only worn on festivals and days of ceremony" (*EDM* 1 May 1854: 20). Here, reference is made to the aspirations of evangelical missionaries to spread Christianity, and the passage implicitly expresses the ideological conviction that conversion to a 'civil' religion translates itself into a more 'civil', European way of dressing (Tarlo 35). Although the article at first sight adopts a positive attitude towards Indian fashion and culture, a deeper analysis shows that "Indian clothing became yet another indicator of the hierarchy to be found in the relationships between British rulers and Indian subjects in this period" (Chaudhuri, 'Issues of Race' 57).

To conclude this section on the *EDM* First Series, I will discuss two additional educational articles on British India that were written under the signature of M.S.R. – the initials of Maria Susan Rye (1829-1903). Rye, a feminist and social reformer, made numerous contributions to the *EDM* between 1856 and 1863, both on women's issues and on more general historical or educational topics (Diamond 8). From 1861, she actively encouraged British women to emigrate to the colonies, including India, and helped founding the Female Middle Class Emigration Society in 1862 (Diamond 12).

The *EDM* issue of 1 May 1856 includes Rye's article "Woman in Barbarism", which describes the barbaric ways in which women are treated "in lands where the Gospel light has never shone" (*EDM* 1 May 1856: 23), such as India. Clearly, this article's depiction of Indian women contrasts strongly with the more positive tone of the article on Indian dress. According to Rye, "no people in Asia have legislated for woman with greater care than the Hindus, yet by no people, legally speaking, is her individuality more entirely ignored; nor is the slavery in which she lives at once so systematic and so complete as it is in India" (*EDM* 1 May 1856: 25). Instead of depicting the Indian woman as a pinnacle of exotic beauty and Eastern luxury, she is portrayed here as a helpless creature subjected to "complete self-abdication, and the most degrading submission to the will of her lord [her husband]" (*EDM* 1 May 1856: 25). Additionally, Rye makes reference to the much criticised practice of *sati*:

> But the duties of this admirable slave do not end with life; if her husband die before her, she is summoned to attend him to the next world. Should she, however, not have strength to surmount the flames of a funeral pile, she must linger out a lonely existence, until death conveys her to her lord. (*EDM* 1 May 1856: 25)

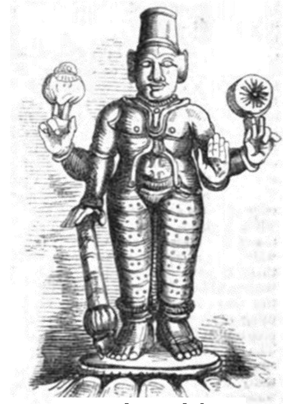
Rye does not differentiate between different religious communities in India but presents 'the Indian woman' as a homogeneous entity that invariably falls victim to barbaric Hindu customs. More importantly, she argues that it is the European woman's duty to improve the condition of Indian women:

> nor while the education of women in the East still merely consists of vocal and instrumental music, dancing, embroidery, and such a smattering of reading as only enables them to master some trifling love tale, or romantic song, can we see much hope for her real improvement, to give woman moral instruction, or to improve their natural faculties can indeed never be expected from men whose ideas of subjection extend even to the minutest particulars of the household regulations. (*EDM* 1 May 1856: 25)

Although the men referred to in this passage primarily denote Indian men who treat their wives, according to Rye, as household slaves, the general belief that "man is vile" (*EDM* 1 May 1856: 25) runs through the whole article and produces the idea that real improvement of these women's barbaric condition can only be achieved through education provided by European women. Thus, the educationist mission of female missionaries and social reformers can be traced back to the depiction of Indian women's abject condition in articles like this one.

A similar attitude towards India is expressed in Rye's article "The Religions of the World: India", which was published on 1 August 1858. Again, Rye presents Hinduism as the sole religion in India, thus disregarding the presence of a significant number of Muslims, Sikhs and

Buddhists besides other religious minorities. After providing an extensive description of Hindu beliefs, gods, idols, temples and ceremonies, accompanied by engravings, Rye ends her article with a reference to the Indian Mutiny – one of the few included in the *EDM* – by mentioning Sir Henry Havelock, a British general who helped suppressing the Mutiny (Blunt 420). Subsequently, she adds the following conclusion:



"Indian Idol"

> What will be the effect of this mighty convulsion and upheaving in India, it is impossible to foresee; that there remains yet very much to *conquer* in the highest sense of the word is quite certain; that our conduct as professors of Christianity has been cowardly in the extreme cannot be denied; that the Gospel is committed into our hands as stewards of its mysteries is equally true; and woe will be to us, indeed, if we preach not to those perishing millions the Gospel of Peace. (*EDM* 1 August 1858: 122)

Rye presents the spread of Christianity as an essential step in avoiding cruelties like the Mutiny in the future. Although Rye does not refer to women's role in spreading the gospel, she does emphasise the sense of urgency in converting the Indians, which illustrates the new impetus that the civilising mission received after the rebellion of 1857-58.

Thus, the First Series *EDM* contains contradictory descriptions of British India that were expressed by different authors and in different genres – although mainly in educational articles. The portrayal of India as a luxurious and refined culture that does not seem in dire need of a civilising mission, for example, conflicts with depictions of the colony as a land characterised by savage inhabitants and uncivilised religious practices. Likewise, some items present India as a place that offers British women the opportunity to live a carefree life, which could serve as an encouragement for British women to travel to India, while the emphasis of the colony's dangers and hot climate in other items rather discourages such an undertaking. These conflicting voices "were kept separate on the pages of the magazine and not allowed to interrogate each other directly. Readers, however, were free to ask themselves how they related to each other" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 137) and in this way the magazine

enabled them to construct their own image of India. Opinions about India voiced through fictional characters in stories had perhaps less influence on the contemporary reader than educational articles, which often had a more authoritative status – such as the articles written by "our talented contributor, M.S.R., whose initials are always suggestive of something interesting and instructive" (*Preface*, *EDM* vol. VI 1857-58: iv).

Through the portrayal of women who went to India or were planning to do so, like Caroline Chisholm or the fictional character of Marian Campbell, the First Series communicates early aspects of British women's imperial mission, such as her duty to follow her husband or the opportunity to carry out a religious mission in India. The importance of creating an imperial identity that reflects British values is, however, less visible in the First Series, although notions of British superiority are present in references to dress and religion. Additionally, Rye's article "Woman in Barbarism" directly encourages the Englishwoman to undertake an imperial mission by stating that the improvement of Indian women's condition rests on her shoulders. The urgency of this civilising mission is further emphasised in Rye's article on Indian religion that was published shortly after the Mutiny. Upon the installation of the British Raj, British women came to be increasingly involved in the imperial project in India, which is evident in the Second and Third Series of the *EDM*.

2.2. Second & Third Series (1860-1879): The Rise of Women's Imperial Mission

After 1858, a growing number of British women travelled to India and direct references to women's imperial mission are consequently more numerous in the *EDM*'s Second and Third Series than in the First Series. In 1876, Queen Victoria, the "fair-complexioned Queen of the North, the symbol in the eyes of the world of the richest development of Western civilisation" (1 March 1876: 121), took the title of Empress of India. For this occasion, the *EDM* published the following notice to the readers:

> There is a great destiny to be accomplished, and there is great responsibility on us. It may not be that a future monarch of the country may add to the title 'Emperor of India' the words 'and of Australasia,' for the colonies may be constitutionally independent, but they will be 'of us,' if not 'ours,' and the history

> of the world in the twentieth century will be really the history of the English-speaking people of the globe. (1 March 1876: 121)

Here, the conviction of Britain's extraordinary position in the world is underscored and the power relation between the coloniser and colonised that is intertwined with colonial discourse is manifested. Furthermore, the female reader is explicitly made aware of the "great responsibility" she has in Britain's imperial project. But also before 1876 the *EDM* demonstrates that women were increasingly involved in the imperial mission, as the correspondence column, for instance, contains evidence of the magazine's growing Anglo-Indian readership (see section 2.2.3). As *memsahibs* were the largest group of British women in India, their imperial task is most conspicuous in the *EDM* Second and Third Series, but the magazine includes allusions to the aspirations of British female missionaries and social reformers as well.

2.2.1. Ambivalence in the Depiction of Indian Women's Condition

The stereotypical image of the Indian woman as helpless victim of an uncivilised culture that was conveyed in Rye's article "Woman in Barbarism" is also present in later issues of the *EDM*. In the article "Woman: Past, Present and Future", Eastern women are, for instance, described as "mere machines, puppets moved as the wires are pulled, beings without will or feeling of their own" (*EDM* 1 September 1870: 143). Likewise, Indian women's abject condition is denounced in the following passage from the fictional story "Forgotten Lives":

> Man is too often the enemy of woman. In all heathen lands she is his prey, his prisoner, his slave. For him she is shut up in harems and zenanas, for him she is denied freedom, education, wealth, profession, and means of bread. [...] In India and China there does not live a single human voice which would dare to speak out aloud the horrors and the sufferings inflicted on girls, wives, and mothers. (*EDM* 1 August 1875: 68)

Both passages can be linked to the goal of British female missionaries and social reformers to improve the condition of Indian women by providing education and healthcare to women inside and outside the *zenanas*. However, direct encouragements to undertake such a religious or reformist mission are not expressed here. Additionally, the conviction that men were

responsible for Indian women's abominable condition can be linked to the growing feminist movement in late-nineteenth-century Britain, as imperial rhetoric and the idea of Indian women's abject condition were often adopted by feminists to justify their cause (Burton 7).

Not all descriptions of British India adopted, however, such pejorative stereotypes. Like in the First Series, idealised portrayals of India were featured in later issues of the *EDM* as well. The article "A History of Perfumery and the Toilet", for example, displays an engraving of an idyllic Eastern landscape and describes India as a "fairy-land of the ancients," where "the arts of civilisation have been known and practised by those nations from a very remote period" (*EDM* 1 August 1864: 160). In the article, the Indian woman is not depicted as a degraded victim but she is adorned with flowers, jewels and sweet perfumes. The description of her appearance is accompanied by an illustration titled "Indian Headdress" that is included to "convey some idea of the appearance of an Indian beauty, who may lay claim here to the same appellation, were it not for the nose-ring, which may be thought objectionable, and which must decidedly be inconvenient" (*EDM* 1 August 1864: 160). Like in the article on Indian dress, the nose-ring serves as an object that illustrates the Indian women's exotic appearance and underscores the European idea of Indian people's 'otherness'.

"Indian Headdress"

2.2.2. British India in Serialised Fiction

The colony of India regularly featured as backdrop in serialised fiction published in the *EDM*, for example in *The Story of Aunt Justine* (serialised from January 1867 to November 1867) or in *Godwyn's Ordeal* (serialised from January 1878 to June 1879) – which both present a largely stereotypical image of Anglo-Indian society with "the typical 'memsahib' as a frivolous, snobbish and selfish creature who flitted from bridge to tennis parties 'in the hills' while her

poor husband slaved 'on the plains'" (Barr 1). A more interesting image of British India is portrayed in *Thrice Wedded, and Never a Wife*, an anonymously published story that was serialised from November 1873 to October 1874.

The story revolves around Anastasia Marcella Tilt, the daughter of a clergyman, who gets caught up in three unsuccessful weddings. After her first, clandestine marriage to Adolphus Gascoyne, a member of the aristocracy, she is kindly requested by the boy's father to go to India until she finds herself a more suitable husband. Thus, Anastasia is sent off to her uncle who owns an indigo plantation in North India. Interestingly, the story is set at a point in time before the Indian Mutiny, namely somewhere between 1848 and 1856 as Lord Dalhousie is mentioned as Governor-General of British India in the story (Riddick 50). The extensive description of Anastasia's journey to India provides another indication of the time frame: she travelled on board a P&O steamer from Southampton to Alexandria, then via canal boat and horse-drawn van to Suez, after which she boarded the *Hindostan* steamship and went via the Red Sea to Calcutta. Thus, the story is set before 1854, as a railway line was opened in that year in Egypt that accelerated the 'overland route' to Suez (Abu-Lughod 99). Although the idea of women's imperial mission was not yet established in the early 1850s, the story nevertheless contains aspects that can be linked to this mission.

First, the story illustrates the importance of wearing British-style clothes in India and shows Anglo-Indian women's desire to keep up with European fashion. While packing for her trip to India, Anastasia notes that "One might have fancied that I was bound for a barbarous land where European clothing was unprocurable, and that nothing short of three years' supplies could possibly suffice," but adds that these preliminaries were "at length adjusted" (*EDM* 1 March 1874: 124). After her arrival, Anastasia has to stay until the end of the raining season in Calcutta, where she lives with some friends of her uncle. In the city, Anastasia is confronted with the curious clothing style of Anglo-Indian women:

> One soon gets accustomed to anything, but at first I had some difficulty in restraining my mirth at the expenses of the queer hats, bonnets, and novelties in headgear that the Mall [i.e. the main thoroughfare in Calcutta] presented at evening-tide. Antiquities, perhaps, would be a better term than novelties, for

> most of these oddities were only odd from having passed out of wear. In an unguarded moment a remark to that effect contrived to baffle my habitual prudence, but I saw at once that I was treading upon unsafe ground, Mrs Roberts assuring me, in a dry, distant manner, that the latest Parisian fashions were introduced into Calcutta a season earlier than into London. If so, I must have dreamt prophetically of the dresses I now saw, or else have beheld them in some former cycle of existence, for they were as familiar to me as apples to a schoolboy. However, I ever after held my peace, and gradually fell into the pleasantly deceptive local belief. (*EDM* 1 May 1874: 238-39)

Wearing British clothes had always been an important way to connect with the home country and "a visible symbol that women were not going native" (Macmillan 68) – although these clothes were not always as fashionable the Anglo-Indian woman herself believed. After the Indian Mutiny, the active creation of an imperial Anglo-Indian identity became a principal task of British women in India and wearing British-style clothes, together with creating a British-style domestic space, are presented as essential components of this identity in the *EDM*, as I will discuss in the next sections.

Secondly, the story presents a unique view of Anglo-Indian society in that it juxtaposes different ways of living in India, namely in an upcountry station, in the large city of Calcutta and on a remote plantation. The stereotypical lifestyle of a *memsahib* in the close community of an upcountry station is illustrated by the character of Mrs Snoresby, a snobbish woman who embraces the high status she has acquired in India through the position of her husband, a military officer, although she herself is actually of quite low decent. Mrs Snoreby is Anastasia's cabin companion on the voyage out and introduces her to the particulars of Anglo-Indian society while inundating her with Anglo-Indian vocabulary. When she, however, discovers the profession of Anastasia's uncle, she haughtily notes that "You have hitherto been accustomed to good society, and no doubt you expect you will be received in similar circles in India; but I assure you that as a planter's niece you will not be recognised by the [Civil and Military] Services" (*EDM* 1 May 1874: 236). This statement demonstrates the hierarchical structure of Anglo-Indian society, with planters belonging to the lower ranks. Additionally, Padre Pook, an obnoxious missionary going out to India on the same steamship, accuses

planters of abusing their servants: "What chiefly provoked me was his habit of running down and abusing the indigo planters without exception, and especially my uncle, against whom he was savagely bitter. He told me the most dreadful stories of their oppressive conduct towards the poor, timid, helpless natives" (*EDM* 1 April 1874: 181). However, Anastasia's uncle turns out to be a kind-hearted gentleman who treats his labourers with respect and even sponsors the construction of hospital wards and schoolrooms for Indians and run by Indians: "The good he did was incalculable" (*EDM* 1 June 1874: 297).

Anastasia's uncle is a complex character who provides a critical view on British imperialism that often conflicts with the opinions of other characters. Her uncles states, for example, that "Englishmen who are known to be just and considerate have no difficulty in obtaining honest and faithful servitors," which elicits Anastasia's incredulous response "But are not the lower classes of natives dreadful cheats and liars? Mrs. Snoresby used to horrify me by the tales she told of the treachery, falsehood, and duplicity of the natives, high and low" (*EDM* 1 June 1874: 293). Additionally, her uncle denounces Company rule as "the reign of incompetency and favouritism," and notes that the British government of India is infested by "assumed arrogance and self-assurance" (*EDM* 1 June 1874: 297). Furthermore, the following passage contains a clear foreshadowing of the Indian Mutiny:

> There is a storm brewing on the horizon which will certainly burst over us before long. The sepoys are in a state of unhealthy fermentation, and their officers cannot or will not see it. There is something very 'rotten in the state of Denmark,' and our Bengal civilians, who, in fact, constitute the Government, shut their eyes to it and close their ears to those who really know something of the natives. (*EDM* 1 June 1874: 293)

Here, her uncle argues that the Indian Mutiny is caused by the incompetent Company rule of India, which contradicts the more general opinion that the rebellion is to be seen as an outburst of the Indians' savage nature. Nonetheless, the fact Anastasia's uncle sensed the upcoming *sepoy* rebellion lends his opinions a sense of authority, and the reference to *Hamlet* signals that he is an educated man. As the Indian Mutiny was already fifteen years ago at the time of publication, this passage can be read as a warning to not make the same mistakes as in the

past. In this way, the story can be seen as a critique on the current imperial policy of "social distance and imperial aloofness" (Sen, *Gendered Transactions* 4) and a plea for closer contact between Britons and Indians in order to elicit mutual respect, or at least to listen to those who really know something about Indian culture.

Furthermore, Anastasia's uncle is very sceptical of missionary work, judging that "There are some, and not a few, missionaries in this country who are doing irreparable mischief by creating an ill feeling between planters and ryots [i.e. hired labourers]" (*EDM* 1 June 1874: 293), and expresses deep mistrust in the civilising mission:

> Until quite recently Englishmen in India led such immoral, irreligious lives, that no respectable native cared to adopt a faith that produced such vile fruit. Even now there is too much drunkenness, too much laxity of principle, too much neglect of the outward and visible forms of divine worship, to impress the natives with a very favourable notion of the truth and purity of Christian teachings. The facts is, Christianity is not adapted to Eastern peoples, and will never strike deep root in India. (*EDM* 1 June 1874: 297)

In this passage, the superiority of the British race is questioned directly and the spread of Christianity is deemed impossible. This is quite a daring opinion and exceptional in the *EDM* as it directly opposes the government's imperial policy of the civilising mission – which is probably why it was voiced by a fictional character in an anonymously published story rather than in an essay or article signed by the author. A similar but more nuanced attitude towards missionary work is expressed by Captain Ormiston, another passenger travelling out to India together with Anastasia:

> 'Now tell me what you think of the missionaries.'
>
> 'H'm! Of the missionaries as a body I have a very high opinion. I respect their motives, I admire their self-denial, I admit their conscientiousness, I recognise their courage, I do homage to the purity of their lives. Again, of the missionaries as a body I have a very low opinion. I detest their narrow-mindedness, I abominate their intolerance, I dread the effects of their zeal without knowledge,

> I abhor their uncharitableness, I don't in the least believe in any good they will ever do, and I distrust their Exeter Hall 'experiences'. (*EDM* 1 April 1874: 181)

Captain Ormiston gives expression to two conflicting opinions in this passage, which perfectly captures the ambivalent attitude towards British India that runs throughout the whole story and through the *EDM* at large. In any case, a whole other attitude towards missionary work is expressed in the fragments above than, for instance, in Rye's article on Indian religion.

Thus, the fictional genre presents the opportunity to juxtapose different images of India and conflicting imperial attitudes through various characters. In this way, *Thrice Wedded, and Never a Wife* "presented a more complex – and ambivalent – depiction of Anglo-Indian society [...] In this tale, readers are thus given a familiar picture of the hierarchies of colonial society and a critique of those societies" (Quirk 75). While Mrs Snoresby represents the familiar imperialist attitude towards India of the typical *memsahib*, Anastasia's uncle, a planter, provides a critical view on the imperial project. Although the story is set before the Indian Mutiny, the uncle's opinions can be read as critique on contemporary aspects of women's imperial mission, such as the aloofness and superior self-image of *memsahibs* and the religious aspirations of missionaries, as well as the educationist or medical mission of female social reformers given that her uncle promotes education and healthcare provided by the Indians themselves. Out of the various images of India expressed by the different characters, the readers are free to create their own impression of India, although some characters are depicted as more trustworthy and favourable than others. Apart from having a purely entertaining role, the omnipresence of Anglo-Indian vocabulary, the elaborate descriptions of the journey out and the history of India, and the numerous question about the colony posed by the ignorant Anastasia give the story an educational tone as well.

2.2.3. "The Englishwoman's Conversazione": Evidence of the Anglo-Indian Reader

The growing number of British women present in India was also evident in "The Englishwoman's Conversazione", the *EDM*'s correspondence column that featured snippets of letters sent in by readers of the magazine as well as short answers or comments to these letters provided by the editor. This column not only contains various contributions by Anglo-Indian women themselves, but the increasing number of Anglo-Indian readers is also visible in other

ways. Between 1865 and 1875, the "Conversazione" column was, for instance, regularly closed with the following advertisement titled "India and the Colonies":

> Madame Goubaud has received many inquiries about dresses, bonnets, hats, trimmings, and various articles of apparel, from the subscribers to the ENGLISHWOMAN'S DOMESTIC MAGAZINE residing in India, Canada, and other of our Possessions and Colonies. The difficulties in the way of obtaining the more important articles of dress *in good style* appear to be very great, and Madame Goubaud has received remittances from many ladies with requests to purchase and forward to various parts of the globe certain stated items. [...] The conveniences, however, would seem to be considerable that would accrue from ladies in India, Canada, and in other parts *remote from shops and fashion*, being able to correspond with some one in Europe capable of comprehending and executing commissions for ladies. And in the belief that she may be useful to many correspondents, Madame Goubaud has made arrangements which will enable her to execute any commands for the manufactures and articles of London and Paris. (*EDM* 1 July 1865: 223; my emphasis)

This advertisement gives expression to the ideological notion that clothes indigenous to the colonies fall outside the realm of "fashion" or "good style" and illustrates the great importance that overseas readers of the magazine attach to European fashion. As noted in the introduction, fashion content was given a more prominent place in the New Series *EDM* starting in 1860, which consequently presented a reworked concept of middle-class femininity that produced "both a 'pleasing' appearance *and* dedication to the home as duties of prime importance" (Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own* 78). Living up to this double-sided feminine ideal was arguably even more important to the Englishwoman residing in India than the Englishwoman at home, as the former was entrusted with the imperial task of furthering an imperial identity that reflected the superiority of the British race. This identity depended not only on conduct, but also on appearance: the British woman in India was supposed to furnish her home according to British taste and to wear fashionable clothes that reflected the 'ideal Englishwoman' as produced by Victorian women's magazines.

Constructing such an imperial identity was, however, challenged by the unavailability of European clothes or dressmaking materials in the colony, as 'Alexandra' notes that "A lady coming out to India for the first time, and likely to be in a station up country, must remember that she will be able to purchase very few articles of dress, for even in the large towns European shops are most ill supplied, and their prices ruinous" (*EDM* 1 March 1869: 168). Thus, the Beeton-Goubaud network set up a thriving postal service to cater for this need. The following remark sent in by 'Ida', however, suggests that this service did not always operate as smoothly as suggested in the advertisement: "How is it that Madame Goubaud, when written to on the subject of the fancy work appearing in the pages of the ENGLISHWOMAN, in many cases does not reply, although a stamped addressed envelope is inclosed?" (*EDM*: 1 June 1875: 332). After the transfer of Madame Goubaud's partnership to *Myra's Journal Myra's Journal of Dress and Fashion* in 1875, her service was in the *EDM* replaced by a similar one provided by Madame Adèle Letellier, who offered to execute orders from women in the colonies so that they could procure "the many luxuries of the wardrobe, dressing-room, and the cuisine, which to those who live at home have almost become necessaries" (*EDM* 1 November 1875: 280).

Contrarily, the "Conversazione" column also features requests from Anglo-Indian women who, upon their return, wonder where in Britain they can find items like those they purchased in India. 'Leona' asks, for example, "where she can procure in London real Indian curry powder and pickles, sent direct from India […] LEONA has tried Crosse and Blackwell's, but they are differently made to Manockjee Poojeeajee's, of Bombay, and which she thinks nothing can equal" (*EDM* 1 February 1872: 128). Likewise, 'An Anglo-Indian Subscriber' wonders "where I can procure a Corset like one I purchased some time ago in Calcutta, but have not been able to find at home? I have since had one of Thomson's and a French one, but neither suited me so perfectly or gave me so much support as the old" (*EDM* 1 May 1868: 277). Although the second request concerns an item of European dress instead of an indigenous product, both passages depict the colony of India as a place where products of superior quality to those in Britain can be obtained – thus opposing the view of India as a place remote from all objects desirable to an Englishwoman.

Besides requests by Anglo-Indian women who have returned home, the correspondence column also featured contributions from British women still residing in India. 'E.B.' writes, for

instance, that "The postage charged for the ENGLISHWOMAN'S DOMESTIC MAGAZINE to India is eightpence. Can the Editor suggest a less expensive mode of sending it, perhaps through a bookseller?" (*EDM* 1 July 1871: 63). Furthermore, the magazine features the following criticism sent in by 'An Anglo-Indian':

> I dare say others besides myself have felt the inconvenience arising from the scanty instructions you now give for copying your full-sized patterns. It might by easy for people in England, who constantly see the fashions in vogue, to copy them, but for those who, like myself, are in upcountry stations in the colonies, never visiting a shop for years, they are quite impracticable. (*EDM* 1 July 1872: 64)

Thus, the *EDM* served as an instrument "that linked – and paradoxically distinguished – colonial society in India and Victorian society in England" (Quirk 167). Through magazines like the *EDM*, the Anglo-Indian woman could keep in touch with her home country, and an English magazine on the side table immediately granted an Indian house a more British appearance. However, as this passage shows, the magazine also confronted Anglo-Indian readers with the distance that separated them from developments at home: although they tried hard to adopt a British lifestyle, Anglo-Indian society could never be Britain in miniature.

Although they were rare, the column also contained some direct encouragements to travel to India, for instance to a non-married British woman looking for a husband:

> If EMMELINE thinks less on the subject she is much more likely to obtain what she desires, *although she has arrived at the age of thirty-one*, and is still unmarried. We would recommend her to go to one of our colonies; she will there find plenty of the sterner sex ready and willing to take to themselves partners, provided these be *sensible* and *domesticated* women. (*EDM* 1 December 1862: 95)

Direct references to the aspirations of female missionaries or social reformers are, however, not discernible in the "Conversazione" column, although it is possible that some of the letters

that I discussed in this section were sent in by missionaries or social reformers. The Anglo-Indian woman most visible in this column is, nevertheless, the married *memsahib* who poses questions about the "necessary articles of dress for the Presidencies" (*EDM* 1 July 1869: 56) or "what kind of house linen is required for a young married couple going to India" (*EDM* 1 March 1876: 167). As answer to such questions, the editor regularly advised the reader to purchase the book *Indian Outfits* (*EDM* 1 July 1869: 56). Because inquiries concerning British India kept being sent in, the *EDM* additionally launched an article series intended specifically to prepare the soon-to-be *memsahib* for her voyage out.

2.2.4. Eliot James's Article Series: Preparing the Memsahib for Anglo-Indian Society

On 1 February 1878, a new article series was started in the *EDM*, for which the editor gave the following reason: "We have received so many letters asking for information on the subject of outfits for India, and regarding the necessaries for housekeeping to be taken out to that country, that we have arranged with a lady, qualified by residence in India to be an authority, to contribute a series of articles which, we feel assured, will be found useful" (*EDM* 1 February 1878: 90). This series ran from February to August 1878 and consisted of seven articles written under the signature of E.J. – the initials of Mrs Eliot James, who published the book *A Guide to Indian Household Management* in 1879 that included the articles featured in the *EDM* (James 9).

The articles are primarily directed towards "young married women going out to settle in India for a few years" (*EDM* 1 April 1878: 189). These women are clearly supposed to possess a certain amount of wealth given the numerous articles of dress and pieces of furniture listed by James to be taken out to India or to be purchased in the colony itself. The targeted reader thus is the soon to be middle-class *memsahib*, a term which is featured a few times in the articles themselves, and the hierarchical distinction between *memsahibs* and lower-class soldier's wives is made clear by James when she notes that "if you have old linen by you, by all means wear it on the voyage instead of your new stock. You can either throw it away when you land, or give it to one of the poor soldier's wives to wash and keep for herself; many of the poorer privates' wives would consider such a gift quite a boon, and be very thankful for it" (*EDM* 1 April 1878: 188).

First, the article series prepares British women for the trip to India by reassuring the reader that "With books, work, and pleasant company, a sea voyage – unless you are an exceptionally bad sailor – is by no means unpleasant, often quite the reverse" (*EDM* 1 April 1878: 188). Again, special attention is devoted towards the subject of fashion. James provides an extensive packing list and also gives the readers advice on how to keep their closet up-to-date after arrival in India:

> The Indian tailors (*dorzees*) are a very intelligent race, work well, and make any garment you like *if* they have a patters, but they have no powers of origination. It is comparatively easy to get patterns (paper) sent out from home, and this is the only plan to follow if you do not wish to become Gothic-looking. Your own milliner in England will procure patterns for you, or any of the fashion magazines that you take in. This reminds me to advise those going to India on no account to drop taking their pet magazine or paper, be it THE ENGLISHWOMAN'S DOMESTIC MAGAZINE or any of the numerous journals published in these days for helps to ladies in these matters. The cost of postage is not much, and two or three ladies in a station could easily join together in taking some magazine or paper which would be an assistance to them. (*EDM* 1 March 1878: 132)

This passage reassures women that it is possible to stay fashionable in India and thus contrasts with the views on fashion expressed in *Thrice Wedded, and Never a Wife,* in which the protagonist states that the dress of Anglo-Indian women has since long "passed out of wear at home" (*EDM* 1 May 1874: 239). The serialised novel is, however, set at a point in time before the Mutiny and at this time British women's magazines or paper patterns were probably not as easily available in India as described in the passage above, which could explain the novel's statement about Anglo-Indians' old-fashioned style of dress. However, even when an Anglo-Indian woman had access to paper patterns, transforming them into a fashionable piece of dress was not always as straightforward as James describes here – given the previously discussed remark on paper patterns of 'An Anglo-Indian' in the "Conversazione" column. In any case, James's advice illustrates the desire of *memsahibs* to keep up with European trends and the important role of women's magazines in this endeavour, as "[w]omen's periodicals

constructed the possibility that the fashionable middle-class white Englishwoman was transferable to a colonial landscape" (Quirk 173). To what extent such a transfer was successful, is, nonetheless, debatable. Additionally, it is important to note that this passage is, like the rest of James's advice, directed towards the more typical *memsahibs* living together in upcountry stations, and overall the article series pays little attention to British women living in large Indian cities or on plantations. The lifestyle expressed in the series is thus not representative of all British women who resided in India.

After having dealt with the preparatory aspect of the trip, the articles describe *memsahibs'* imperial role in the colony. They are entrusted with the task of creating a homelike environment in India: "Home can be made home everywhere; it is a women's *rôle* to make a home for herself, her husband, and family if she has one, but this is not performed by idly folding hand and looking on, sleeping away the precious hours" (*EDM* 1 May 1878: 276). Creating a domestic space is "a serious business" (*EDM* 1 May 1878: 273) and requires real devotion: the home should be furnished tastefully according to the contemporary British style, as James notes that "The articles which you have bought in England, and brought out with you, you will find most useful. If you are handy and tasteful yourself, you will, with the help of the native *durzees* (tailors), soon make your rooms look comfortable and cosy" (*EDM* 1 May 1787: 274). Furthermore, the *memsahib* is not only responsible for the decoration of the domestic space but also for the management of the household, which is described as "the rule of your establishment" (*EDM* 1 July 1878: 48). Indeed, *memsahibs* were often considered to be domestic administrators of their "miniature empire" (Macmillan 142), which correlates with the imperial task of their husbands who often worked as civil administrators.

However, the living conditions in India complicated the *memsahibs'* job of 'proper' housekeeping: "In India it is not possible to exercise your housekeeping qualities to the full. True that you hold *the reins of government* in your own hands, but you cannot inquire too closely into minute details, or personally supervise. Why? you naturally ask. For many reasons, the first and foremost being that the kitchen is not in the bungalow, but outside in the compound" (*EDM* 1 June 1878: 287; my emphasis). James further admits that managing the house is not easy in a land plagued by insects, heat and dust storms, but British women should nevertheless serve as a role model for the Indian servants, who are in dire need of righting:

"Natives have no idea of time, this is one of their greatest faults. You must therefore *insist* on punctuality, and set them a good example in that respect yourself. […] By dint of keeping your servants up to *your* time you will gradually get them to be more punctual and less lazy" (*EDM* 1 July 1878: 49). Thus, James urges the reader to behave as an exemplary housekeeper in India:

> Perform your household duties, keep as nearly as you can English hours, fill up your time, and you will not find it so hard to get rid of. And if there is not scope for your energies in your own house and its various requirements, look afield and see if there are not some who would be glad of your help, or at all events of your sympathy, around you. (*EDM* 1 May 1878: 276)

In this way, *memsahibs* should not only promote a British lifestyle and the Victorian ideals of domesticity in India, but should also represent the superior morality of the British race. They are advised to defy laziness, to help others and to value honesty and respectability:

> Avoid listening as much as you can to petty tales and gossip – what this lady said! what that one did! If you are perforce made a *confidante*, avoid siding with either party. Keep your own line as much as you can without degenerating into selfishness, but be ready to help any one if your help can be of any us. (*EDM* 1 April 1878: 189)

This advice can be linked to the stereotypical image of the memsahib as a "frivolous, snobbish and selfish creature" (Barr 1) that often appeared in Victorian literature. James seems to encourage the reader to serve as a counterexample to this stereotypical image, but emphasises at the same time that a certain amount of luxury is necessary to Anglo-Indian life:

> There are many expensive necessaries in India which you cannot do without, though in England they would be looked on in the light of luxuries. The pay is certainly greater, but not adequate to the increased rate of expenditure. You *must* have a much larger establishment, keep a horse or horses, entertain more than you would at home – it is a duty out there for married people to do so. (*EDM* 1 May 1878: 275)

Thus, the article series challenges "the view that memsahibs were passive, lazy, self-centered social butterflies" (Chaudhuri, 'Memsahibs and Motherhood' 518) by drawing attention to their imperial duties as house manager and role model for Indians, but also corroborates the stereotype by describing *memsahibs'* social responsibility to organise and attend picnics, afternoon parties, dinner parties, evening lounges and the occasional ball (*EDM* 1 August 1878: 65).

Similarly, the articles' portrayal of Indian culture is quite ambiguous and on certain occasions contradictory. On the one hand, James adopts the pejorative stereotype of India as a primitive culture: "It may be of interest to you to know the Indian method of washing. It is primitive, as many of their ways are" (*EDM* 1 February 1878: 90). The ideological notion of Britain as civilised and civilising country is also visible in the assertion that it is only thanks to "'parcel post' [that] India is far less isolated from the world of fashion than it used to be" (*EDM* 1 February 1878: 90). Additionally, she portrays India as a tasteless country, stating that the "*solar topee*, or regular Indian sun-hat, made of pith, [is] hideous in shape" (*EDM* 1 March 1878: 132) and that "Punkahs [i.e. frilled boards that are suspended from the ceiling and function as fans] are very hideous, and entirely spoil the look of any room" (*EDM* 1 May 1787: 274). Despite their ugly look, these Indian objects do, however, prove their utility. James notes that "you cannot do without them [punkahs], and forget their ugliness very soon in the relief of the air they give affords" (*EDM* 1 May 1787: 274). Likewise, the *solar topee* is "an immense comfort for morning rides or lounging about your compound" (*EDM* 1 March 1878: 132).

Other aspects of Indian culture are, on the other hand, explicitly praised in the articles, in particular Indian cuisine: "The way they manage on the march is worthy of all praise: where an English cook would stand aghast at the lack of everything, an Indian *khánsámán* soon produces some really tasty and eatable dishes" (*EDM* 1 June 1878: 287). But even at these instances of appreciation, a check seems to be necessary. The use of the word "eatable" after "tasty" makes the statement less powerful, and James's praise is not really directed at inherent values of Indian cuisine but rather at the fact that Indian cooks can produce something tasty *despite* their primitive kitchen gear. Similarly, when James communicates to the reader that the end of her article includes "a few recipes for dishes in which Indian cooks excel," she quickly adds that "*Meat* in India is not good, and the longing for a cut out of a good English

joint is great" (*EDM* 1 June 1878: 289) – implying that although Indian cuisine contains some nice dishes, it takes by no means precedence of English food. The same sentiment of British pre-eminence is present in the assertion that "though the 'natives' are born cooks, still in many little ways they are not over-nice, at least to fastidious English tastes; they have a strong predilection for the use of 'feet v. hands' and will hold a joint deftly between the former members while cutting it up" (*EDM* 1 June 1878: 287).

Although the articles do contain the stereotypical idea of Westerns superiority, the article series also denounces the abuse of Indian servants, stating that "the treatment some natives endure from the hands of their superiors is both scandalous and shameful" (*EDM* 1 July 1878: 49). Furthermore, James draws attention to the existence of unfair prejudices towards servants:

> In India people are inclined, I think, to trust too much to hearsay. They are told so many stories of the deceitfulness of the natives that they, not having as yet gained much knowledge for themselves, are apt to say, 'Oh! So-and-so says all the Indian servants are equally bad, and that we should be very foolish to expect to find good ones; that they all tell stories, all thieve, and are all deceitful.' To all this I say, Listen if you like, but do not rely entirely on such sweeping assertions. In time you will be able to form an opinion of them for yourself, and you must here, as elsewhere, buy your experience. It is far better to do so than allow your own judgment to be too strongly biassed. (*EDM* 1 July 1878: 50)

This passage can be read as a meta-comment on colonial discourse, as James is aware of the stereotypes that are frequently used when talking or writing about the colonies and their inhabitants. Her own experience demonstrates, however, that these prejudices are unjustified, as she emphasis that "The whole time we were in India we did not lose the value of a pin's head" (*EDM* 1 July 1878: 49). At the same time, she does not completely deny the preconception about the deceitfulness of Indian servants but rather corroborates the stereotype in her description of the Indian caste system: "Considering this state of things, and the weight their caste bears on all their action, it is small wonder that, knowing no better, they do 'pick and steal' and tell untruths, as such actions in no way affect the opinion of their own particular community. It is, indeed, wonderful to find so many among them fairly upright and

trustworthy" (*EDM* 1 July 1878: 49). In James's eyes, the caste system is primitive and absurd, but she nevertheless urges the reader to pay respect to servants' caste – albeit primarily for the *memsahibs'* own benefit: "you are bound to respect their caste too, absurd as their rules may be, if you wish to retain them in your service" (*EDM*: 1 July 1878: 49). Overall, James advises the British reader to treat Indian servants with "courtesy, and kindness, and firmness," instead of adopting "a hard and haughty bearing," but she does add that "By courtesy I do not mean undue familiarity – far from it; self-respect must always be observed" (*EDM* 1 July 1878: 48).

Thus, the article series – although written by one author – adopts an ambiguous attitude towards British India and makes use of both pejorative and affirmative stereotypes. This ambiguity can be related to two features specific of the genre. Like other article series on British India written by experienced Anglo-Indian women, a type of content that appeared quite often in contemporary women's magazines, James's articles "not only provided an impression of British daily life in India, but also prepared readers for life in a distant land" (Chaudhuri, 'Issues of Race' 59). Thus, the articles served a double purpose: they both functioned as an advice column for those intending to travel to India and served the more educational purpose of expanding the London-based Englishwoman's knowledge about the "the crown jewel of the British empire" (Chaudhuri, 'Issues of Race' 51). As the series transcends the genre of the personal travelogue, the articles are characterised by a combination of the individual and the general. Thus, their ambivalent nature can be explained by the fact that James is entrusted with the complex task of combining her personal experience, which learns her that most Indians are trustworthy servants who do not deserve a harsh treatment and that Indian culture contains certain elements worthy of praise, with the general Anglo-Indian policy to be wary of the 'natives', to keep aloof from them and to represent an imperial identity that reflects British superiority.

In short, the growing number of British women present in India, or preparing to travel there, is clearly evident in Eliot James's article series as well as the "Conversazione" column. Both present having a fashionable appearance that reflects the latest European trends and creating a British-style domestic space as essential aspects of *memsahib*s' task to construct an imperial identity. Thus, the *EDM* has an active role in shaping the idea of women's imperial mission as it makes concrete what the task of constructing an imperial identity that promotes 'British

superiority' and 'British values' actually involves. However, the Second and Third Series also contain conflicting images of the *memsahib* and Anglo-Indian society that undermine certain aspects of *memsahibs*' imperial mission. Various voices express, for example, the difficulty of keeping up with European fashion trends in India, and the stereotypical image of the snobbish, selfish *memsahib*, which is conveyed in multiple items, contrasts with her task to serve as a respectable role model for Indians.

The aspiration of British female missionaries and social reformers to improve the condition of Indian women is also evident in the *EDM*'s depictions of Indian women as degraded, helpless victims of a savage culture. In this way, the *EDM* helped in producing and propagating the ideas that underpinned missionaries' and social reformers' purpose in India – although the magazine features no direct references to the initiatives of Mary Carpenter, Annette Akroyd Beveridge or the Brahmo Samaj movement. However, these negative depictions of Indian womanhood in the *EDM* are offset by affirmative images of the Indian woman as an exotic beauty belonging to a refined culture – even though the notion of British superiority is not wholly absent in this view on India, too. In the story *Thrice Wedded, and Never a Wife*, on the other hand, Anastasia's uncle directly questions the superiority of the British nation and criticises the idea of the civilising mission. Additionally, James seems to struggle in her article series on British India to combine the notion of British superiority with the unfair prejudices towards Indians and the abuse of Indian servants at the hand of their British masters. Although the official policy of the Raj government was characterised by "increasing British racism, censorship, and anxiety" (Codell 107), it is important to note that there were always Britons who opposed these views.

Conclusion

After the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58, British women were increasingly involved in the Indian imperial project. The installation of the British Raj created more employment opportunities for British men, which entailed a growth in the influx of British women who accompanied their husbands to the colony. The largest group of British women present in India were *memsahibs*: married, middle-class, white women. Although the term '*memsahib*' is most commonly associated with the wives of civil administrators and military officers, who belonged to the top of the hierarchically ordered Anglo-Indian society, *memsahibs*' husbands could have other official and non-official professions as well. Additionally, there were British women who travelled to India not for matrimonial reasons but as Christian missionary or social reformer, although they were considerably smaller in number than the *memsahibs*. The female missionaries' purpose was to spread the gospel by educating Indian women in *zenanas*, while social reformers aspired to improve the condition of Indian girls and women by providing non-religious education. All of the British women present in India, but in particular the *memsahibs*, were moreover entrusted with the task of "furthering an 'imperial identity' that was increasingly considered necessary in the ruling race" (Sen, *Woman and Empire* 10). One of the main channels through which this concept of women's imperial mission was produced and disseminated were Victorian women's magazines. Hitherto, this function of women's magazines has, however, been largely neglected by literary scholars and historians.

In this thesis, I have made a start at filling this lacuna by examining how women's imperial mission towards India was shaped by and evident in the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1852-1879) through its use of colonial discourse. The term 'colonial discourse' here denotes the language, tropes and images used to represent the Indian culture and people as well as Anglo-Indian society in the *EDM*, with attention to pejorative, affirmative and ambivalent forms of stereotypical language and imagery. An essential aspect in this investigation of colonial discourse is the insight from periodical studies that the heterogeneous form of the magazine facilitates the coexistence of conflicting images, which entails that the *EDM* confronts the reader with a multiplicity of attitudes towards British India. The magazine not only combines textual and visual material, but also accommodates various textual genres, each with their own conventions, in which several authors express their own views towards imperialism – which is in itself was highly debatable matter. Thus, this thesis has also aimed to demonstrate how

different textual genres make use of colonial discourse and how the *EDM* juxtaposes several contradictory discourses relating to British India that both encouraged and undermined the idea of women's imperial mission. I started my investigation by running a keyword search on the *EDM*'s issues available in Gale's *Nineteenth Century UK Periodicals* database, as well as browsing through the digital volumes of the First Series that were available in the HathiTrust Digital Library. Subsequently, the most relevant items were subjected to a close reading.

The First, Second and Third Series of the *EDM* all contain articles and other text items that contribute to the production and dissemination of the concept 'women's imperial mission'. The notion of British superiority, which is a typical feature of colonial discourse and formed an essential aspect of Britons' imperial identity, runs throughout the magazine in descriptions of dress, fashion and 'primitive' Indian customs. Early aspects of what later came to be associated with women's imperial mission can already be found in issues of the First Series (1852-59) that were published before the Mutiny, such as the idea that it is a woman's duty to follow her husband to India or even a direct appeal to British women to improve the abject condition of Indian women expressed in the article "Woman in Barbarism" (1 May 1856). In the Second and Third Series of the *EDM* (1860-79), the idea of women's imperial mission takes shape more distinctly, in particular *memsahibs'* task to further an imperial identity in India. Both Eliot James's article series, intended to prepare British women for Anglo-Indian society, and the "Conversazione" column present wearing fashionable European clothes as well as creating a British-style domestic space and successfully managing the household in India as essential components of a female Anglo-Indian identity – which aligns with the image that the magazine presents of the ideal Englishwoman at home. Additionally, multiple items of the *EDM* contain depictions of the Indian woman as a helpless victim of savage Hindu practices like *sati* and *zenana*, which can be linked to the aspirations of British female missionaries and social reformers. Thus, the *EDM* not only disseminated the idea of women's imperial mission but also had an active role in producing and shaping it.

However, all three of the *EDM*'s series contain images of British India that contrast with the concept of woman's imperial mission as well. The clichéd image of the *memsahib* as a vain, gossiping and selfish creature, for example, is expressed on multiple occasions and conflicts with her a task to serve as role model for the indigenous population. Furthermore, the idea of

Indian women's abject condition is contradicted by depictions of the Indian woman as an exotic beauty belonging to a refined, civilised culture – although the luxury of Indian society in such depictions could also serve as an encouragement for the soon-to-be *memsahib* to travel to India. Furthermore, the notion of British superiority is directly undermined in the fictional story *Thrice Wedded, and Never a Wife*, in which Anastasia's uncle openly criticises Britain's civilising mission. Nevertheless, in this story as well, the reader is presented with a variety of attitudes towards India expressed by the different characters.

Thus, readers of the *EDM* were confronted with numerous images of India, both affirmative, pejorative and ambivalent, that appeared in various genres. Educational articles that aimed to expand the Englishwoman's knowledge provided elaborate, but often contradictory descriptions of British India, its culture and inhabitants. In the "Conversazione" column, multiple voices and topics are condensed on one page and only occasionally a contribution by an Anglo-Indian woman was featured in this column. These short snippets of text usually voiced a request or complaint and thus did not serve a direct didactic purpose. Nevertheless, contributions by Anglo-Indian women to the "Conversazione" column allowed the Englishwoman to get a glimpse of these women's lives in India and their various attitudes towards empire. Furthermore, contradictory discourses coexisted within texts written by the same author as well. Fictional stories give the author the opportunity to juxtapose various attitudes towards India by creating characters with conflicting opinions, as is evident in *Thrice Wedded, and Never a Wife.* Additionally, ambiguity arises in Eliot James's article series, which served both as an advice column and as an educational series and in which she struggles to combine her own experience of India with the general policy of the Raj government. Out of this multiplicity of images that coexisted across issues of the *EDM*, within one issue, or within one text item, readers were free to construct their own impression of British India, relate it to other knowledge or experience they had of the colony and decide whether or not they were encouraged to undertake an imperial mission.

For reasons of feasibility, I limited my investigation to a small number of genres present in the *EDM*. Thus, in future research, my thesis could be expanded by taking into account other genres included in the magazine, such as Indian recipes or poetry on British India. This additional research would presumably add further complexity to the analysis presented here,

as poetry lends itself perfectly to the expression of the various emotions that imperial questions often elicited, while Indian recipes generally advocate a more positive attitude towards Indian culture because they present the Indian cuisine as worthy to be introduced into the Englishwoman's kitchen – although recipes may also contain notions of cultural assimilation to British norms. Of course, the *EDM* is only one of the numerous women's magazines that circulated at the time of women's involvement in the Indian imperial project, roughly from the mid nineteenth century until the early twentieth century. Thus, further research on other women's magazines published in this time period, such as the *Ladies' Treasury* (1858-1895), the *Queen* (1861-1967) or *Myra's Journal of Dress and Fashion* (1875-1912), is required in order to gain a deeper understanding of these magazines' role in producing, shaping and disseminating the concept of women's imperial mission.

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