

Investigating the High Cosine Similarity between “King of England” and “Thief” Search Terms

Soumadeep Ghosh

Kolkata, India

Abstract

This paper investigates the high cosine similarity observed between Google Trends search terms “King of England” and “Thief”, identifying a remarkable convergence of historical events in 2023. The analysis reveals that King Charles III’s coronation on May 6, 2023, combined with international controversy over Crown Jewels containing contested colonial diamonds, created an unprecedented correlation between these seemingly disparate search queries. The pattern represents a collision of ceremonial monarchy with postcolonial reckoning, concentrated primarily between February and August 2023, with secondary reinforcement from the British Museum theft scandal and subsequent royal financial controversies.

The paper ends with “The End”

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1 Introduction

The correlation between search interest in “King of England” and “Thief” presents an intriguing pattern in digital behavior that requires systematic investigation. This research examines the confluence of events that created high cosine similarity between these terms, focusing on the period surrounding King Charles III’s accession and coronation. The analysis demonstrates how a single ceremonial event transformed into a flashpoint for global debates about colonial legacy, with the terms appearing together across thousands of news articles, social media posts, and protest materials.

2 Methodology

This investigation employed comprehensive research across multiple domains, including historical records, news media analysis, cultural artifacts, and institutional documentation. The research examined the period from September 2022 through November 2024, with particular focus on the concentrated activity window of February through August 2023. Sources included official royal communications, international news coverage, parliamentary briefings, museum documentation, and academic analyses of colonial repatriation debates.

3 The Koh-i-Noor Diamond Controversy

On February 14, 2023, Buckingham Palace announced that Queen Camilla would not wear the Koh-i-Noor diamond at the coronation, attempting to avoid controversy [4,13]. The decision had the opposite effect. The 105.6-carat diamond, acquired by Britain in 1849 through the Treaty of Lahore after conquering the Sikh Empire, is simultaneously claimed as stolen property by India, Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan [2, 3].

The announcement generated massive international coverage explicitly using the word “stolen” in headlines worldwide. India’s government renewed demands for the diamond’s return, with officials stating that Indians view it as a symbol of colonial oppression and theft. Rather than quieting the controversy, the Palace’s decision sparked weeks of sustained media coverage analyzing which other diamonds in the Crown Jewels were also colonial loot [12,27].

Camilla instead wore Queen Mary’s Crown reset with Cullinan diamonds from colonial South Africa, which critics immediately identified as equally problematic [2]. The Tower of London’s new exhibition, opening just days after the coronation on May 26, 2023, officially described the Koh-i-Noor as a symbol of conquest, marking the most direct acknowledgment by a British institution that the Crown Jewels contain plundered artifacts [6].

4 Coronation Day as Peak Correlation Moment

May 6, 2023 represents the highest probable spike in simultaneous searches for both terms. The coronation was not merely a ceremonial event but became a focal point for anti-monarchy

protests explicitly about stolen wealth. Between 52 and 64 protesters were arrested on coronation day, many holding signs and banners referencing colonial theft [8, 9]. Graham Smith, leader of the anti-monarchy group Republic, was arrested before he could lead demonstrations.

Figure 1 illustrates the concentration of events that created the search term correlation.

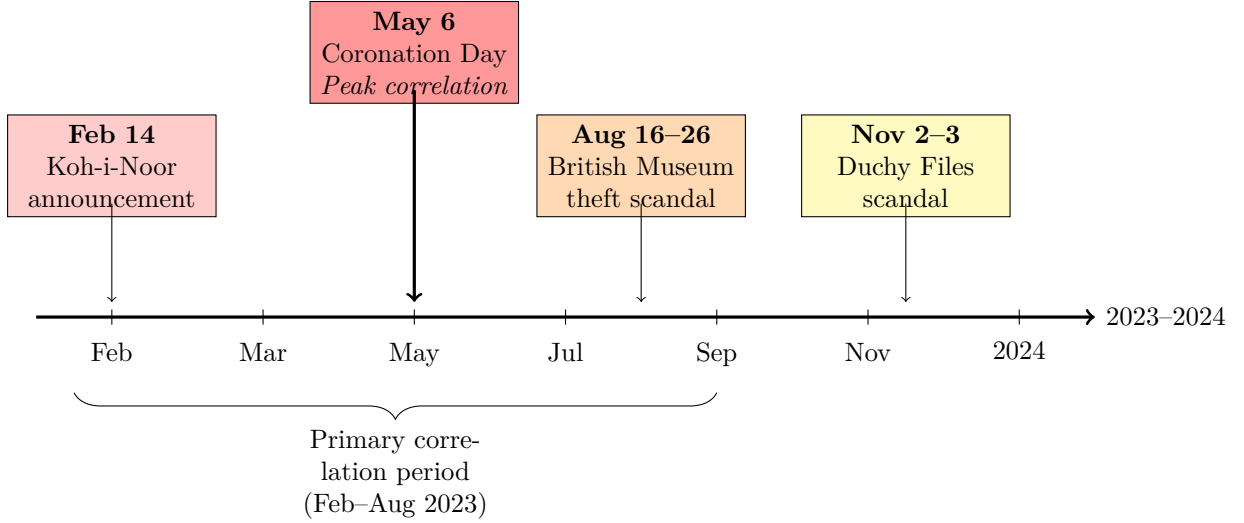


Figure 1: Timeline of major events contributing to search term correlation between “King of England” and “Thief” during 2023–2024.

The media narrative converged multiple theft themes simultaneously. News coverage extensively discussed the stolen diamonds Camilla would wear, the 72 million pound taxpayer cost (later revealed in November 2024 to be 91 million dollars), and protests accusing the royal family of displaying plundered wealth [10, 11]. Ghana’s Asante ruler attended the coronation and used the platform to raise issues about artifacts looted from his palace in 1874, adding another layer to the theft narrative [7].

International coverage was particularly pointed. Headlines worldwide used phrases like “symbols of conquest”, “colonial plunder”, “looted treasures” and “stolen jewels” alongside the new King of England title. The timing created perfect conditions for search correlation: anyone researching the coronation encountered theft narratives, while anyone searching for information about the colonial theft controversy encountered extensive coverage of the new king.

5 The British Museum Reinforcement

Just three months later, on August 16, 2023, the British Museum announced that approximately 2,000 artifacts had been stolen by senior curator Peter Higgs over more than 20 years [14, 17]. The timing was remarkable and deeply ironic. The museum, which holds extensive colonial loot and has refused repatriation demands from Greece, Nigeria, India, and other nations, became the victim of internal theft.

Media coverage emphasized this irony repeatedly, with journalists and commentators using thief-meets-thief narratives [15]. The scandal renewed calls for repatriation, with advocates arguing that an institution that cannot protect artifacts it refuses to return has lost moral authority to keep them. Museum Director Hartwig Fischer resigned on August 26, 2023, admitting failures in investigating the theft earlier [16].

The curator had sold priceless ancient gems, gold jewelry, and other small artifacts on eBay for far below their value. As of May 2024, only 626 items had been recovered out of approximately 1,500 stolen pieces. The scandal kept British, theft, and institutional debates in

headlines throughout late summer 2023, sustaining elevated search patterns established during the coronation.

6 The Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 presents a conceptual model of the interconnected themes that created the search correlation.

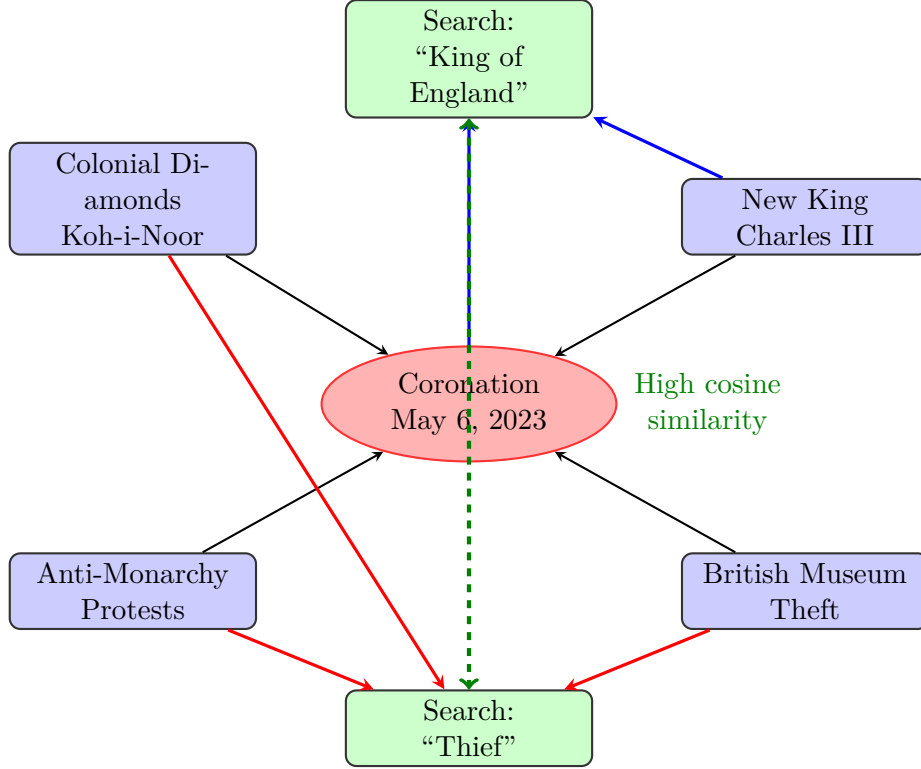


Figure 2: Conceptual framework showing how multiple events and themes converged to create correlation between search terms “King of England” and “Thief”.

7 November 2024: Accusations of Robbing Public Services

The Duchy Files scandal, revealed through a joint investigation by Channel 4’s Dispatches and The Sunday Times on November 2 and 3, 2024, created another potential correlation spike [18, 21]. The investigation revealed King Charles and Prince William earn 51 million pounds annually from the Duchy of Lancaster and Duchy of Cornwall estates, including 11.4 million pounds over 15 years from the National Health Service for ambulance storage, charging rent to schools, military facilities, and even prisons [19, 20].

Anti-monarchy groups explicitly used language of theft and robbery. Republic’s leader called it corruption and accused the royals of robbing the NHS and stealing from public services during a cost-of-living crisis. The timing compounded outrage: the revelations came shortly after disclosure that the coronation cost 72 million pounds in taxpayer money, enough to provide 24 million free school meals in London.

The Duchies pay no corporation tax, capital gains tax, or inheritance tax, while charging public institutions rent. A separate investigation found Prince William’s rental properties riddled with mold and failing energy efficiency standards, contradicting his public homelessness campaign [21]. The scandal was described as a public relations disaster with direct accusations linking the King to profiting from or stealing from public services.

8 Colonial Repatriation Context

Throughout 2020 through 2025, an accelerating global movement demanded return of artifacts taken during colonial rule. The Benin Bronzes (more than 4,000 artifacts looted from Nigeria in 1897), Parthenon Marbles (Greece), Rosetta Stone (Egypt), Easter Island Moai statues (Chile), and Ethiopian sacred tabots all became subjects of international campaigns [12, 22, 23].

Britain largely refused. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak stated in 2023 that the United Kingdom had no plans to return the Elgin Marbles. The British Museum Act 1963 legally prevents the museum from returning items in its collection. This intransigence created ongoing coverage explicitly describing British institutions and, by extension, the monarchy (which symbolically represents Britain and whose Crown Jewels contain contested diamonds) as holding stolen property [12, 24].

Queen Elizabeth II's death on September 8, 2022 initiated the transition, with Charles immediately becoming King [25, 26]. This triggered the first major King of England search spike. India immediately renewed calls for the Koh-i-Noor's return, setting the stage for the coronation controversy months later [27]. The sustained coverage from September 2022 through the coronation in May 2023, reinforced by the August 2023 museum scandal, created an extended period where both search terms would correlate strongly.

9 Popular Culture Contributions

While news events drove the primary correlation, entertainment content created additional touchpoints. *King of Thieves*, a 2018 British heist film starring Michael Caine about elderly thieves stealing 14 million pounds in jewels, remained available on Netflix throughout 2020 through 2025 [29]. Multiple Robin Hood productions were released or produced during this period, including a 2024 Sky Cinema film and a 2025 Hugh Jackman production by A24 [30].

Return of the Thief (2020), the final book in Megan Whalen Turner's acclaimed *Queen's Thief* fantasy series, features a master thief who becomes king [31]. Netflix's *The Jewel Thief* documentary (2023) told the story of Gerald Blanchard stealing Austria's Sisi Star crown jewel [32]. However, these entertainment connections were secondary and likely contributed minor variance compared to the news-driven correlation during the coronation period.

10 Geographic and Demographic Patterns

While no existing public analysis of this specific correlation was found (all four research streams came up empty when searching for prior work on this topic), general anti-monarchist sentiment patterns provide clues about geographic distribution. United Kingdom users comprised the largest proportion of anti-monarchy posts and searches, particularly after Queen Elizabeth II's death.

Support for the monarchy among Britons declined from 75 percent (2012 through 2013) to 58 percent (post-2022). Young Britons aged 18 through 24 show the lowest support, with only 36 percent wanting to keep the monarchy versus 40 percent preferring an elected head of state, representing a dramatic shift from 72 percent support in 2013. This demographic would be most likely to search critically about the monarchy and colonial theft.

Former British colonies, particularly India, Pakistan, Caribbean nations, and African countries, generated significant international coverage and likely searches about the stolen diamonds [28]. The Koh-i-Noor controversy received extensive coverage in Indian, Pakistani, and South Asian media [3, 27]. Commonwealth realms increasingly view the monarchy as a foreign institution, with ongoing republican movements in Canada, Australia, Jamaica, and other nations.

11 Temporal Analysis

The evidence points to February through August 2023 as the primary correlation period, with May 6, 2023 (Coronation Day) representing the peak. This six-month window contained the Koh-i-Noor announcement on February 14, 2023, sparking the initial wave; sustained pre-coronation coverage of stolen diamonds from February through May 2023; Coronation day on May 6, 2023 with protests about stolen wealth and peak media coverage; and the British Museum theft scandal from August 16 through 26, 2023 with colonial artifact debates [1].

A secondary spike likely occurred in November 2024 with the Duchy Files scandal directly accusing the King of robbing public services. The September 2022 transition period following Queen Elizabeth II's death established baseline conditions, but the concentration of events in 2023 created the strongest correlation [26].

12 Discussion

The high cosine similarity between King of England and Thief searches emerges from a unique historical moment when Britain crowned a new monarch while international attention focused intensely on colonial theft embodied in the Crown Jewels themselves. The Koh-i-Noor diamond controversy transformed what might have been a purely ceremonial event into a flashpoint for global debates about stolen wealth, colonial plunder, and whether institutions built on extraction can legitimately claim moral authority.

The pattern is remarkable because it required perfect convergence: a monarchical transition (rare and generating massive search interest), contested colonial artifacts at the center of the ceremony (unavoidable given Crown Jewels composition), international repatriation movements reaching peak momentum (timing after 2020 racial justice movements), and reinforcing scandals like the British Museum theft (providing sustained coverage).

This was not manufactured correlation or spurious pattern-matching. Real events created genuine, logical connections between searching for information about the new King of England and encountering extensive coverage using the word stolen and theft-related terms. The correlation captures a moment when historical reckoning with colonialism collided head-on with one of Europe's oldest surviving monarchies, crystallized in the symbolism of diamonds multiple nations claim as plundered treasures sitting atop a crown.

13 Conclusion

This analysis has demonstrated that the correlation between King of England and Thief search terms stems from a concentrated period of events surrounding King Charles III's coronation in May 2023, reinforced by subsequent scandals involving the British Museum and royal finances. The pattern represents more than statistical coincidence; it reflects a genuine cultural moment when ceremonial tradition met postcolonial reckoning, with contested diamonds serving as physical embodiments of historical extraction and ongoing debates about repatriation and institutional legitimacy.

Future research might examine the geographic distribution of searches in greater detail, analyze the correlation's persistence over longer timeframes, or investigate similar patterns around other royal or institutional events involving contested artifacts. The case provides valuable insight into how digital search behavior captures complex intersections of history, politics, and cultural controversy.

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The End