Pleasures and Pains: Opium and the Orient in Nineteenth-Century British Culture

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Description
Throughout the nineteenth century, while Britons were taking their culture to the East, they were also bringing back exotic commodities and ideas, inviting the Orient to enter English terrain, bodies, and consciousness. This mixing is both mediated and mirrored by opium, an Oriental commodity that enters and alters the English body and mindset, thus confusing the direction of Anglo-Oriental power dynamics. Incorporating elements of literary criticism, cultural studies, and social history, Pleasures and Pains takes a new look at the complicated dynamics of empire as well as the development of still-prevalent perceptions of drugs as alien invaders responsible for the decay of national character.

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