

“THE SOCIAL LIFE OF OPIUM IN CHINA” BY ZHENGYANWEN

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“The Social Life of Opium in China” by ZhengYanwen; is enriched source of wide range narrative on rise of opium, broad range from 1483 to late twentieth century history of opium trade and the trade route as well. The story open with the dynastic system of Ming era, when opium was one of the most appreciated gift by the vassal state. Etymologically, Opium derived from poppy, which is known to China for 12 centuries, just a stimulating agent, which has been sowed and imported for medicinal purpose mainly. Tobacco very quickly got integrated and welcomed in the smoking and tea cultures without facing any hardship of class patronage in the habit, made the way smother for opium, which was at first smoked as tobacco soaked in opium, in south East Asian continent during 17th century. We got both awareness and negative impact of Opium by introducing the smoking habits within the system. It’s difficult to say the exact time, when the opium was smoked for the first time in China, but historians they think, it was entered in to china with foreign imports; at the point when the remote imports were around 200-240 mid-sections, the head Yung Ching issued the first hostile to opium smoking dialog and in1796 opium smoking was again restricted and in 1800 the importation of outside opium was again declared it illicit.

So opium was in contraband stage and the reality had no effect on the quality, which introduced within the country, which rose to 5000 chest in 1820, 16,000 in 1830, 20,000 in 1835 and finally 70,000 in 1858. So opium went out of control, as more and more drug was smuggled in, more and more people were victimized under the opium wheel through the habit of smoking.

This book not merely opens with the culture around the consumption and transformation of habit over the period of decades, but also provides a minute details, how opium was being injected in human life since Ming dynasty till late 20th century China. Opium never pays any special attention towards the classified orthodox Chinese society, rather embraced rich, and poor equally as an alternative perspective of life. This book seeks to highlight opium from an intra cultural phenomenon of life, because it is a social icon, it’s a symbol, towards Tran’s cultural phenomena as a luxury, as a necessary, and it’s opium. Opium on its journey sometimes changed its own colour, way as per people’s demand, and people also motivated opium on their own demand sometimes as a medicine, as a commodity, as a luxury item. Diversion is very often a function of uncommon diseases and novel demands. This fortunate or unfortunate motivation re mapped the historiography of opium and china relation for near about six hundred years to come. Not only that, but also helpful to o into much more detail opium trade-consumption with the clarification and a complete view of that cultural and social atmosphere of Ming dynasty; how the society is transforming on time to time.

This Book basically deals with fundamental questions on opium-China, purpose of opium, who were the people to smoke opium, what was the driving force for taking opium and the reason behind the popularity of opium beyond centuries. How attitude of China towards opium and consumption of Opium, how it broke through all around the mainland?

FIRST CHAPTER tells about the relation between social life and opium; how opium was projected in China and why so. Opium has its other name, 'Spring Drug', which used to symbolize lust and regeneration. Though Taoism got coincided with features of opium as an art, but also advocates with science, which attracted Taoist herbalists and as an enterprise that coated eunuchs and court officials. Lastly this habit of opium consumption caused the destruction of Ming Empire.

Centers round the entire 17th century, where Opium is regarded as a sister of Chinese culture, which played an important role in Ming maritime trade, as one of the major driving forces for the economic growth rate in China. China could have been slaved by Opium, if the habit of tobacco smoking was not faced with an adverse situation and found its own way in Chinese mind.

Therefore, the socio-political life of tobacco and tobacco smoking is enough to speak for the social life of Opium. This is just a cycle nothing else, previously it was tea, which fitted within the tempo of life of working class, then it was substituted by tobacco in 17th century and above. In later period opium got its esteem, 'simulative of all simulative' and got enlisted among the seventh necessity of Chinese house hold as an eighth necessity, with a new method, where opium paste is used to have better smoking experience, which aims just as quickened the work schedules and accelerated their movement and also a distinguished gesture the Chinese way of post dinner entertainment in the late nineteenth century, and gave an account of opium evolution, gradually turned into a revolution. In later period people injected their own brain and ideas to have orchid and silk experience of smoking to their pipes, while others would become addicted to it. So in other words it epitomizes the Chinese philosophy, cherish the medicinal-recreational values as a most justified, man and nature dose complement to each other. They were Arabian Maritime traders during 17th century, and this is the first time entry of opium in China main land via two major trade routes; which were mainly meant for spice trade with East- south East Asia, Asian sub continent, west and it's neighbor; the practice of opium smoking with tobacco was introduced in china; and the consumption of Opium became so popular as a panacea against physical sufferings and also used as a general tonic, having the ability to cure the urological disorders, hypertension, got popularity among mens' world. Chewing outcome was a distinct red colored lair on one's tooth, which many on. Here it proved that, history repeats, when opium received its social label, in its capacity, started dominating each and every aspect of life, rich- poor every one became a so called slave towards a small puff of opium.

CONCLUSIONS

There is an implicit in the ritual of tea and the culture of consumption. Because, it turned into a necessity rather than a tradition, opium was everywhere. There British East India Company also tried their best to freeze their silver account, and got success. Opium was mainly auctioned in Bombay and Calcutta, because Calcutta and Bombay were the most prominent head quarters of British Empire and that opium was dumped at Canton, today's Guang dong, as a distribution box for Java and Malaysian peninsula. Perhaps in a nut shell it is more about the evidence and primary sources, and final destination of opium which we have gone through in this book.