

## MALARIA AND VICTORIAN FICTIONS OF EMPIRE

The impact of malaria on humankind has been profound. Focusing on depictions of this iconic “disease of empire” in nineteenth-century and postcolonial fiction, Jessica Howell shows that authors such as Charles Dickens, Henry James, H. Rider Haggard, Olive Schreiner, and Rudyard Kipling did not simply adopt the discourses of malarial containment and cure offered by colonial medicine. Instead, these authors adapted and rewrote some common associations with malarial images such as swamps, ruins, mosquitoes, blood, and fever. They also made use of the unique potential of fiction by incorporating chronic, cyclical illness; bodily transformation; and adaptation within the very structures of their novels. Howell’s study also examines the postcolonial literature of Amitav Ghosh and Derek Walcott, arguing that these authors use the multivalent and subversive potential of malaria in order to rewrite the legacies of colonial medicine.

JESSICA HOWELL is Associate Professor of English at Texas A&M University. Her previous publications include *Exploring Victorian Travel Literature: Disease, Race and Climate* (2014), as well as numerous articles that have appeared in *Literature and Medicine*, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, *Studies in Travel Writing*, and *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*.

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JESSICA HOWELL  
*Texas A&M University*



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