



England's Yellow Peril: Sinophobia and the Great War

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TITLE

England's Yellow Peril: Sinophobia and the Great War

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ABSTRACT

As England suffered heavy casualties at the front during World War One, the nation closed ranks against outsiders at home. England sought to reaffirm its racial dominance at the heart of the empire, and the Chinese in London became the principal scapegoat for anti-foreign sentiment. A combination of propaganda and popular culture, from the daily paper to the latest theatre sensation, fanned the flames of national resentment into a raging Sinophobia. Opium smoking, gambling and interracial romance became synonymous with London's Limehouse Chinatown, which was exoticised by Sax Rohmer's evil mastermind Fu Manchu and Thomas Burke's tales of lowlife love. England's Yellow Peril exploded in the midst of a catastrophic war and defined the representation of Chinese abroad in the decades to come.

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England's Yellow Peril builds on Witchard's previous work, looking closely at British perceptions of China and the Chinese through literature and the arts in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. In England's Yellow Peril she looks at how the outbreak of war accentuated and intensified many feelings of English racial dominance, Empire, and notions of the Yellow Peril that had arisen before the conflict. She concentrates on London's old Chinatown of Limehouse in the East End, where swirling tales of opium smoking, gambling, and interracial romance had become synonymous with the pre-England's yellow peril: Sinophobia and the great war. New York: Penguin. Google Scholar. Wolfowitz, P. 2015. The Chinatown War: Chinese Los Angeles and the Massacre of 1871. Oxford: Oxford University Press. CrossRef Google Scholar. Zhang, C. 2008. From Sinophilia to Sinophobia: China, History, and Recognition. *Colloquia Germanica* 41(2): 97-110. Google Scholar. Copyright information.

The Yellow Peril (also the Yellow Terror and the Yellow Spectre) is a racist color-metaphor that the peoples of East Asia are an existential danger to the Western world. As a psycho-cultural perception of menace from the Eastern world, fear of the Yellow Peril was more racial than national, a fear derived, not from concern with a specific source of danger, from any one country or people, but from a vaguely ominous, existential fear of the faceless, nameless horde of yellow people opposite the Western