

White Ghosts, Yellow Peril: China and New Zealand, 1790-1950

The relationship between China and New Zealand has been marked by a complex and evolving history. In the early days of European contact, China was seen as a source of exotic goods and a potential market for New Zealand's exports. However, as New Zealand became a predominantly European settler society, the relationship between the two countries became increasingly strained by issues of race and immigration.

The term "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" encapsulates the fear and prejudice that many New Zealanders felt towards the Chinese community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This fear was fueled by a number of factors, including the influx of Chinese immigrants during the gold rush era, the perceived threat of Chinese competition to white workers, and the rise of anti-Asian sentiment in the Western world.



White Ghosts, Yellow Peril: China and NZ 1790–1950

by Konden Smith Hansen

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 20568 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 384 pages
Lending : Enabled

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The "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" rhetoric had a profound impact on New Zealand society. It led to the passing of a number of discriminatory laws, including the Immigration Restriction Act of 1881, which effectively banned Chinese immigration for over 50 years. It also led to the establishment of ghettos, or "Chinatowns," in major New Zealand cities, where Chinese immigrants were forced to live and work.

In the mid-20th century, the relationship between China and New Zealand began to improve. The Chinese government played a key role in the defeat of Japan during World War II, and New Zealand was one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China in 1972. However, issues of race and immigration continued to strain the relationship between the two countries.

In the 1980s and 1990s, New Zealand began to move away from its discriminatory immigration policies. The Immigration Act of 1987 removed all racial restrictions on immigration, and the Chinese community in New Zealand has grown rapidly in recent years. However, the legacy of the "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" era continues to cast a shadow over the relationship between China and New Zealand.

Early Contact

The first contact between China and New Zealand occurred in the late 18th century. In 1790, a Chinese trading vessel was wrecked on the coast of New Zealand's North Island. The crew of the vessel were rescued by local Māori, and they remained in New Zealand for several months. During their stay, they taught the Māori a number of new skills, including the use of iron and sailing.

In the early 19th century, Chinese traders began to arrive in New Zealand on a regular basis. They established trading posts in major ports, such as Auckland and Wellington, and they traded a variety of goods, including tea, silk, and porcelain. The Chinese traders also played a role in the development of New Zealand's export economy. They purchased whale oil, wool, and other New Zealand products, and they exported them to China and other parts of Asia.

The Gold Rush

The discovery of gold in New Zealand in the 1860s led to a massive influx of Chinese immigrants. In the early years of the gold rush, the Chinese were welcomed by the New Zealand government. They were seen as a source of cheap labor, and they played a vital role in the development of the gold mining industry.

However, as the gold rush progressed, the relationship between the Chinese and the white miners became increasingly strained. The Chinese miners were often accused of cheating and stealing, and they were subjected to violence and harassment. In 1866, the New Zealand government passed the Immigration Restriction Act, which effectively banned Chinese immigration for over 50 years.

The "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" Era

The Immigration Restriction Act of 1881 marked the beginning of the "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" era in New Zealand. This era was characterized by a fear and prejudice towards the Chinese community. The Chinese were seen as a threat to white workers, and they were accused of spreading disease and crime.

The "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" rhetoric had a profound impact on New Zealand society. It led to the passing of a number of discriminatory laws, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1908, which prohibited Chinese immigrants from bringing their wives and families to New Zealand. It also led to the establishment of ghettos, or "Chinatowns," in major New Zealand cities, where Chinese immigrants were forced to live and work.

The "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" era lasted for over 50 years. It ended in the mid-20th century, as New Zealand began to move away from its discriminatory immigration policies. However, the legacy of this era continues to cast a shadow over the relationship between China and New Zealand.

The Post-War Period

The relationship between China and New Zealand began to improve in the mid-20th century. The Chinese government played a key role in the defeat of Japan during World War II, and New Zealand was one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China in 1972.

However, issues of race and immigration continued to strain the relationship between the two countries. In the 1980s and 1990s, New Zealand began to move away from its discriminatory immigration policies. The Immigration Act of 1987 removed all racial restrictions on immigration, and the Chinese community in New Zealand has grown rapidly in recent years.

Despite these changes, the legacy of the "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" era continues to cast a shadow over the relationship between China and New Zealand. The Chinese community in New Zealand still faces discrimination

and prejudice, and there is a lack of understanding between the two cultures.

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The term "White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" encapsulates the fear and prejudice that many New Zealanders felt towards the Chinese community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This fear led to the passing of a number of discriminatory laws, including the Immigration Restriction Act of 1881, which effectively banned Chinese immigration for over 50 years. It also led to the establishment of ghettos, or "Chinatowns," in major New Zealand cities, where Chinese immigrants were forced to live and work.

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"White Ghosts, Yellow Peril" era continues to cast a shadow over the relationship between China and New Zealand.

The relationship between China and New Zealand is a complex and evolving one. It is a relationship that has been marked by both cooperation and conflict. However, it is a relationship that has the potential to be a positive and mutually beneficial one.



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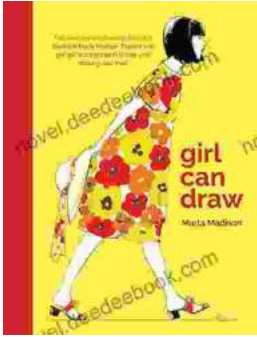
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