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007 versus the Darker Races: The Black and Yellow Peril in *Dr. No*

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007 versus the Darker Races: The Black and Yellow Peril in *Dr. No*

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In any case, the modern world must remember that in this age when the ends of the world are being brought so near together the millions of black men in Africa, America and the Islands of the Sea, not to speak of the brown and yellow myriads elsewhere, are bound to have a great influence upon the world in the future, by reason of sheer numbers and physical contact.
--W.E.B. Du Bois, "To the Nations of the World"

[A] veritable octopus had fastened upon England—a yellow octopus whose head was that of Dr. Fu-Manchu, whose tentacles were dacoity, thuggee, modes of death, secret and swift, which in the darkness plucked men from life and left no clew behind.
--Sax Rohmer's *The Insidious Dr. Fu-Manchu*

A cultural icon, British secret agent James Bond is *the* sex symbol of the Cold War. A debonair action hero with sophisticated wit, charm, and sartorial grace, Bond represents the face of the clandestine inner-workings of British imperial power at a time when Britain was losing grasp on its colonies. If identification is, as Diana Fuss defines it, the process by which identity forms out of "the detour through the other that defines the self," in the sixth novel of the James Bond series, *Dr. No*, the Cold War hero takes a detour through Jamaica to define and restore his sense of identity and self. Bond's identity as a virile masculine hero is constituted by his identification through others: Bond girls, the countless women he lustily beds, and Bond villains, the scores of criminals he singlehandedly defeats. *Dr. No* becomes part of Ian Fleming's evolving response, in the form of popular fiction, to the crisis of decolonization and the dismantling of the British Empire. Written in 1958, *Dr. No*, is a fantasy of British masculinity and power asserted against anticolonial uprisings across Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. *Dr. No* attempts to digest the fear of Afro-Asian power and alliances, such as the Asian-African conferences at Bandung in 1955, by demonizing a different type of Afro-Asian intimacy.

As well as being a spy novel, *Dr. No* provides an intimate pre-independence portrait of Fleming's home away from home, Jamaica. In 1946, just as Bond was drawn from Britain to Jamaica, so was Fleming. He had an estate built on the island's North Coast. Goldeneye, named after an Allied contingency plan Fleming designed during World War II as a British Naval Intelligence Officer, was Fleming's refuge. A "constant visitor," Fleming spent a few months at Goldeneye every year from 1946 until he died in 1964, and it was there that James Bond was born. Fleming openly declared his affection for Jamaica out of all "the blessed corners of the British Empire" in a 1947 essay, but he was also conflicted about the postwar changes that were taking place on the island (350).

He bemoans that there are few sacred places left where the white elite class can socialize undisturbed.

Though *Dr. No* portrays Jamaica as a tropical corner of the empire that represents escape and refuge, it is also a place where turmoil seethes beneath the surface precisely for this reason. The periphery also offers the perfect climate for criminal elements to go unnoticed and ungoverned. M says to Bond before sending him off to Kingston, “It’s a quiet station down there. Same routines every month—an occasional communist trying to get into the island from Cuba, crooks from England thinking they can hide away just because Jamaica’s so far from London” (226). *Dr. No* begins with a rupture in these routines with a break in the radio waves between Jamaica and England. The routine transmission made daily by a British Secret Service agent from Jamaica to England has been mysteriously disrupted, so Bond is sent from the metropole, London, to the periphery, Kingston, to investigate. We later learn the break is reason for panic because Doctor No and his Afro-Chinese henchmen have killed the British Secret Service agent responsible for sending the transmission. The rupture in signal foreshadows the imminent severing of the umbilical cord connecting Mother Country to colony. Jamaica became independent from Britain in 1962, only four years after the publication of *Dr. No*. Fleming predicts this upheaval and laments the changes it represents.

Characters with hybrid identities, like the villain Doctor No, born to a Chinese mother and a German missionary father in Peking, and his army of “Chigroes,” Afro-Jamaican Chinese henchmen, pose a symbolic threat to English purity and dominance, so Bond must conquer them. As a manifestation of the “Yellow Peril,” Doctor No is the embodiment of evil, and the grotesque “Chinese Negroes,” or “Chigroes” as Fleming calls them, carry out his evil bidding in Jamaica. What cultural critic Lisa Lowe describes as the “intimacies of four continents”—Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas—in the Caribbean poses a threat to the Anglo-Saxon purity of Britain, even though these intimacies are a byproduct of British imperialism. Fleming hones in on unions between Africans and Asians brought together by the plantation labor of slavery and indenture in the Caribbean. After World War II, as the uniting of the Darker Nations threatened to decenter Europe, James Bond brings England back into focus in the tortuous detour that is *Dr. No*.

Both *Dr. No*, the novel and the film, are scripted in the codes of Yellow Peril orientalism and tropicalization. The novel’s narrator casts suspicion on mixed-race characters as unknowns of obscure origins. Fleming renders them with an unstable sense of identity and full of resentment towards the racial groups that have rejected them. To be mixed-race in the imaginary of *Dr. No* is to be abject and bitter. It is to be “illegitimate” and a “bastard,” tortured like Caliban. Indeed, cultural critic Umberto Eco identifies obscure origins as one of the

hallmark characteristics of Bond villains. There is a dichotomy of “Anglo-Saxon Moderation opposed to the excess of the half-breeds” (Eco 43). Eco identifies Bond villains as usually of “mixed blood and [with] origins ... complex and obscure” (40). The mixed-race villains in *Dr. No* represent the spectre and threat of miscegenation. Doctor No is a mercenary, without political or national allegiances, yet his ethnic makeup suggests he represents a combination of the evilness of Nazi Germany and Communist China. He is characterized as a malevolent yellow octopus like Sax Rohmer’s Doctor Fu Manchu whose tentacles were fastened around England and the Free World, in opposition to the cultural purity and virility that Bond symbolizes. Doctor No and his coterie of Afro-Jamaican Chinese henchmen are articulated in the familiar tropes of the “Yellow Peril” and stereotypes of blackness. Defined as “a danger to Western civilization held to arise from expansion of the power and influence of eastern Asian peoples,” the idea of the Yellow Peril originated in the 1890s. Part of a reaction to “coolie” labor, the Yellow Peril was imagined as a sinister amalgamation of invading hoards of Asians from various countries.

In the film, the orientalist suggestion of the East is most apparent in the yellowface—coded sartorially and cosmetically. As far as the sartorial representation, while some characters in the book are described as wearing kimonos, which are Japanese, in the film, some women wear qipaos, which are Chinese. Instead of kimonos, male characters wear jackets with mandarin collars, commonly known as Nehru jackets, named after the first Prime Minister of India. To some degree, that Doctor No wears a Nehru jacket, instead of a Western suit and tie, perhaps signifies the anticolonial. The fact that Bond is clothed in a Nehru jacket once prisoner in Doctor No’s underground lair carries this significance too. As much as these items of clothing were popular and a part of the Mod lifestyle fashion of the 1960s, they also clearly denote Asianness – an orientalized conflation of Japanese, Indian, and Chinese culture. The most obvious coded performance of orientalism in the film is the casting of white actors to play Asian characters, or yellowface (when White actors are cosmetically altered to look “Asian”). Jewish Canadian actor Joseph Wiseman plays the role of Doctor No, and white British actress Zena Marshall portrays one of his agents, Miss Taro, who is Afro-Jamaican Chinese in the novel.¹ As a practice, yellowface allowed filmmakers to avoid the depiction of miscegenation on the screen, which was one of the many things banned under the Motion Picture Production Code or Hays Code that lasted from 1930 to 1968. A number of the extras, or background

¹ In the behind the scene documentary *The Making of Dr. No* (2000) the narrator states, “The part requires the actor to wear cumbersome metallic gloves and bothersome makeup applications to simulate an Asian heritage.” Zena Marshall “who like Joseph Wiseman must wear makeup application to look Asian.”

actors, in the film are Asian, so the casting choice also represents preference in giving significant, weighty roles to white actors.

As author Christopher Hitchens describes him in the Penguin Classics edition introduction, James Bond is the “Hero of the West” and it is his mission to quash this Yellow Peril threat. Hitchens writes, “The West was coterminous with the Free World and that was—with a few very occasional moments of chivalrous doubt—that. Every line that [Fleming] composed was either overt or subliminal propaganda for the great contest with Communism, and all of the subordinate themes, from racism to sadism, were ancillary to it” (vii). When it was published in 1958, *Dr. No* garnered many negative reviews because of its sadism. Writing for *New Statesman*, English journalist and historian Paul Johnson denounced the novel for championing the thoroughly English “sadism of a school boy bully.” The entanglement of violence and sexuality was far too racy for many at the time. Bond girl Honeychile Rider functions to fuel what cultural historian Michael Denning describes as the “pornographic imagination” that is alive in each of the Bond books. Bond and Honeychile do not have sex until the end of the book, so Bond’s pleasure, like the audience’s, is largely scopophilic, derived from looking at Honeychile’s creolized, tropicalized tanned body. Though Honeychile is eager to have sex with Bond, and he finds her tempting, the consummation of their relationship hinges on Bond defeating the black and yellow hybrid villains.

While the themes of racism and sadism may be subordinate to the central narrative of *Dr. No*, the ethnographic details that Fleming provides as context reveal his anxieties about a shifting world order and decolonization. In accord with the visual coding and performance of race in *Dr. No*, the significance of the Afro-Asian conferences in Bandung and Cairo cannot be underestimated as the context of Fleming’s world. In 1900, during the beginnings of the anticolonial movement, W.E.B. Du Bois addressed the Pan-African Conference in London, speaking of “the darker races of mankind” and their potential to unite against Europe. He talked of the inevitability of “the millions of black men in Africa, America and the Islands of the Sea, not to speak of the brown and yellow myriads elsewhere,” to have great influence on the future of the modern world. After World War II, with the losses of African and Asian nations, such as, the independence of India in 1947 and of Ghana in 1957, it was clear that England was losing its grasp on its colonies. As much as the drama of the Cold War and the threat of Soviet power defined the postwar moment, there was also a fear of internationalist revolution, an uprising of the Darker Nations. Pan-Africanism and Pan-Asianism threatened to render Europe irrelevant as the delineation of the “global color line” came into focus. As cultural historian Vijay Prashad outlines in *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World*, the anticolonial movement developed the alignment of a proto-global South in the early twentieth-century. The 1955 Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, the 1957 Afro-Asian

People's Solidarity Conference in Cairo, and the 1961 Afro-Asian Women's Conference in Cairo were decisive moments symbolic of decentering the role of Europe in determining global affairs.

Dr. No is a cultural product that reacts against decentering Europe, but it also centers the periphery, the Caribbean, as the site where Bond's vitality is fully restored. It at once centers and decenters Britain. As Michael Denning writes of the context of Fleming's novels, "The loss of British world economic and political hegemony was accompanied by the loss of a cultural centrality; the obverse of imaginary centrality to the world of the British agent Bond is the marginality of Britain as a place of adventure" (65). In the novel, Jamaica is the place of adventure. Though British agent Bond is the hero, Britain is marginalized. It is in Jamaica that Bond is able to singlehandedly defeat the villains and save the damsel in distress, though in the book *Honeychile* hardly needs saving. Thus Jamaica becomes a destination of a type of sex tourism for Bond, especially considering what Denning identifies as the pornographic and touristic lenses through which the Bond novels are narrated. Bond regains his mojo through his sexual and sexualized adventures in the Caribbean.

THE CHIGROES "AMIDST THE ALIEN CANE"

The film version of *Dr. No*, which was the first James Bond major motion picture, begins not with Bond but the Jamaican henchmen, the Three Blind Mice. They feign blindness, holding onto each other as they feel their way around downtown Kingston using white canes. They approach the fictional Queen's Club, one of the last bastions of colonial white leisure and authority, a members-only club. The soundtrack of "Kingston Calypso," a playful 1963 West Indian twist on the English nursery rhyme "Three Blind Mice," sung by the famous Jamaican mento band Byron Lee and the Dragonaires, accompanies the scene. Written for the film, the song is an anticolonial nursery rhyme, and it sets a sinister yet playful tone for the spy thriller,

Three blind mice in a row
 Three blind mice there they go
 Marching down the street single file
 To a calypso beat all the while
 They're looking for the cat
 The cat that swallowed the rat
 They want to show that cat the attitude
 of the Three Blind Mice

While in the traditional nursery rhyme the blind mice run after the farmer's wife and she cuts off their tails with a carving knife, Fleming's Three Blind Mice seek out the cat walking in a type of anticolonial carnival procession.² The "attitude" and intention of the Three Blind Mice soon becomes clear as the three men suddenly drop their canes, draw silencers, and shoot British Secret Service agent Commander Strangways. In the dramatic beginning to the film, they throw his dead body into a hearse, their getaway car. The power dynamic of the English nursery rhyme is inverted. "Three Blind Mice" transformed into "Kingston Calypso," becomes a subversive song in which the empire strikes back.

What is not apparent in this striking scene, full of anticolonial potential, is that in *Dr. No* the novel, Fleming racializes the Three Blind Mice as more than just Jamaican, but as Jamaican Chinese. The narrator renders them as even more sinister because of their mixed racial background. The three actors in the film appear to be of African descent, but so-called Chigroes are not discussed in the film. Though the film version of *Dr. No* functions on various visual codes of orientalism—qipaos and yellowface—there is a distinct erasure of the racialization of Doctor No's agents, the Chigroes. With the exception of the cameo of the performer of "Kingston Calypso," Byron Lee who was Afro-Jamaican Chinese, it does not appear that there was an explicit effort to cast Jamaican Chinese actors in *Dr. No*. Some of the henchmen appear to be Asian, some appear to be black, but in the film it is not explicitly stated. Though most of the background actors are not credited, one of them, Anthony Chinn, who plays a decontamination technician, was born in Guyana of Chinese and Brazilian parents. For the most part, though, it is unclear how much the casting director James Liggat was influenced by the detailed characterizations in the novel.

In the novel, the narrator explains, "The three blind men would not have been incongruous in Kingston, where there are many diseased people on the streets, but, in this quiet rich empty street, they made an unpleasant impression. And it was odd that they should all be Chinese Negroes. This is not a common mixture of bloods" (Fleming 215). The uncommon mixture of their blood signals something is awry at the members-only club. The Chigroes represent the intermingling and union of Africa and Asia in one body, and Fleming later describes them as a "tough, forgotten race" (257). Indeed, they are forgotten in the film and thus the adaptation loses some of the essence of the Afro-Asian intersections Fleming explores in his book. Yet both the novel and the film feature a curious interplay between codes of Asianness and Africanness.

Fleming characterizes the "Chigroes" as fantastical, as chimeras, as oddities. A master of keen observation, just as he details the migratory patterns of the Guanay coromant birds in Peru, Fleming writes an ethnography of the

² The English Nursery rhyme "Three Blind Mice" is said to have been written about three blind Protestants who were ordered to be burned at the stake by Queen Mary.

Jamaican Chinese, by placing an anthropological case study in the middle of his Cold War spy novel. Though Fleming puts the Chigroes under the microscope, few scholars or critics have paid attention to them. In the 1950s when Fleming wrote *Dr. No*, there was indeed a significant population of Afro-Jamaican Chinese people in Jamaica. A portmanteau of Chinese and “Negro,” Chigro is a term that was entirely Fleming’s. Terms used to describe people of Afro-Jamaican and Chinese ancestry included Chiney Royal and Eleven o’clock, which denoted their supposed incompleteness. The 1943 Jamaican census was the first to distinguish between the “pure Chinese” and “Chinese Coloureds” (Lind 151). The data shows so-called “concubinage” between Chinese males and “native” Jamaican females produced 5,508 “Chinese Coloureds” by 1943. The number of Afro-Chinese almost equaled the number of “pure Chinese” on the island. This statistic shows the extent to which there was interaction and sexual intimacies between Chinese and Afro-Jamaicans. The migration of Chinese to the Caribbean was primarily male and so the colonial authority saw this as the root of the Afro-Asian intermarriage “problem.” Historian Patrick Bryan, who has written extensively on the creolization of the Chinese in Jamaica, quotes a colonial official advocating for the immigration of more Chinese women. “It is, I think, desirable that bona fide wives and fiancées should be allowed to join their husbands and prospective husbands in Jamaica thereby reducing to a small extent cohabitation with native women” (16). The official emphasizes that these relationships were mostly forming out of wedlock by using the term ‘cohabitation’ with respect to black Jamaican women, and bona fide wives and fiancées with Chinese women. The British colonial authority was perhaps concerned by this “improper” intermarriage because it sought to contain the growth and influence of the Chinese population in Jamaica. Chinese laborers were initially imported to the Caribbean in the early nineteenth-century as a “buffer race” between Africans and Europeans. However, the potential growth and financial success of the Chinese came to represent the threat of the Yellow Peril. By the early twentieth century, the Caribbean and especially Jamaica saw a new wave of Hakka migrants from southern China who were primarily merchants. It is not clear why exactly this intermarriage in the 1940s and 1950s would have been of concern to the colonial authority except that these sorts of Afro-Asian intimacies were not intended to take place. The insidious way in which Afro-Jamaican Chinese are cast as “half-caste” villains in *Dr. No* typifies this British colonial sentiment.

The Three Blind Mice are only the first instance of numerous Jamaican Chinese minions and agents described in great detail throughout *Dr. No*, the novel. Far from incidental to the plot, the Chigroes are the labor force that enables Doctor No to be so powerful. Doctor No employs them as overseers, as a “buffer race” between him and the mass of black Jamaican and Cuban workers on his guano mine, where feces of the Roseate spoonbill birds are converted into

valuable fertilizer. On his private island Crab Key, located off the coast of Jamaica's North Shore, Doctor No creates a divided, racialized labor force that echoes post-Emancipation Jamaica, over a hundred years prior.

Each mention of a Jamaican Chinese worker details the shape of their faces, the texture of their hair, or the color of their eyes. In one such instance, a prison guard is described as having a "broad yellow face below the crinkly hair. There was hint of curiosity and pleasure in the liquid brown eyes" (Fleming 362). The narrator continues, describing his mouth as "spread in a wide grin to show brownish teeth worn to uneven points by years of chewing sugar-cane" (Fleming 362). Here, the effect of the sugar cane on the worker's body is significant; it makes him ugly. In an effort to demonize the character, Fleming perhaps unwittingly gestures towards the history of the sugar industry in the West Indies and the toll it took on the racialized bodies that fueled this economy that brought wealth to Britain.

The labor structure Fleming devises on Crab Key echoes the institutions of African slavery and Asian indenture in the British West Indies. Doctor No attracts workers to the island by paying a fixed rate, protected from inflation. His currency is impervious to the fluctuations of the global market during World War II, since his capital is derived from large sums of money he stole from the Tongs who he used to work for in Shanghai and New York. Moreover, Doctor No operates outside of the conventions of the global economy because his currency is guano. However, guano mining is a cover for his actual industry, toppling American rockets for whichever country is the highest bidder. Whether or not Fleming intended it, the significance of Doctor No's involvement in the guano trade resonates with the racialized labor of Chinese indentured workers in Peru, recruited to toil on coastal guano mines from the 1850s.³ While Doctor No's laborers technically work for him of their own volition, it is also made clear that no one ever leaves Crab Key alive, so the consent of the Chigroes is, by nature, contested.

Fleming describes the male Chigroes in terms of their strength, often as brutish. In one instance he describes some of them as "pale skinned Negroes." In another, the narrator states, "He was another Chinese Negro, from the same stable as the others. The yellow eyes examined [Bond] curiously" (Fleming 319). Using the word "stable" signifies the animalistic way they are characterized, almost a breed of racehorses. Describing another group of Chigroes, the narrator says, "Hate shone redly in their eyes" (Fleming 319). Fleming further animalizes Doctor No's Jamaican Chinese minions later in the narrative, as "Bond felt a movement behind him. He looked over his shoulder. A short man, a Chinese Negro, with the build of a wrestler, stood at the drink tray. He was dressed in

³ See Gregory T. Cushman's *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World: A Global Ecological History*

black trousers and a smart white jacket. Black almond eyes in a wide moon face met his and slid incuriously away” (339). That the Chigro slides away suggests something reptilian and sinister or non-human about him. Bond finds the Chigroes to be detestable and unnatural, and yet he is intrigued by their physical appearance.

Describing the lascivious gaze of a Chigro looking at Honeychile Rider the narrator says, “He looked past Bond at the girl. The eyes became mouths that licked their lips. He wiped his hands down the sides of his trousers. The tip of his tongue showed pinkly between his purple lips” (Fleming 349), once again both animalizing the Chigroes and sexualizing the creole body of Honeychile. The sexuality of the Chigroes is highly racialized as the narrator describes their mating practices and how the population propagates itself on the private island: “They too would have their drinking and dancing, and there would be a new monthly batch of girls from ‘inside.’ Some ‘marriages’ from the last lot would continue for further months or weeks according to the taste of the husband...older girls had their babies in a crèche—well disciplined surface life” (Fleming 362). The quotation marks Fleming places around marriage indicate the impossibility of Jamaican Chinese and Afro-Jamaican intimacy from the position of the metropolitan construction of proper sexuality.

While the male Chigroes, like the prison guard, tend to be described as one of a larger group of minions, Jamaican Chinese women are presented in more depth and detail. There are two significant female agents of Chinese background, Annabel Chung who is Chinese, and Miss Taro who is a Chigro. They both interact with Bond in Kingston at Doctor No’s behest. Working under the cover of being a freelance photographer for the *Daily Gleaner*, Annabel Chung snaps photos of Bond as soon as he arrives at the airport in Kingston. Cast as a sneaky Chinese woman, she tails Bond to a nightclub where he meets with his trusty black Cayman Islander sidekick Quarrel. Quarrel apprehends her and Annabel cuts his face with the shards of a broken flashbulb. Her aggression sparks a flame of intense desire in Quarrel for Annabel. He is attracted to her feistiness and exotic Chinese beauty. Bond reads Chung’s fortitude as an indication of just how ruthless Doctor No is. In the film, the role of Annabel Chung is played by a black woman – the reigning Miss Jamaica 1961, Marguerite LeWars, who is of African and European ancestry. While it doesn’t appear that she is in yellowface like Zena Marshall, the white British actress who plays Miss Taro, LeWars wears a pink qipao, orientaling her, signifying her association with Chineseness and Doctor No.

The other significant Chinese female character, Miss Taro, is a secretary at King’s House, the government offices. Bond describes her as an efficient worker, which is credited to her being an industrious, deferent Chigro woman. In the film, the role of Miss Taro is embellished and expanded far beyond the depiction in the

novel. Miss Taro's character is developed to add more sexual appeal and intrigue to the plot. It is telling that the women Chigroes are installed as insiders in powerful institutions of Jamaican society, the government and the press, while the male Chigroes such as the Three Blind Mice are trespassers. There is yet another class of gendered and racialized workers inside Doctor No's subterranean lair, represented by two Chinese women, Sister Lily and Sister Rose. They are described as having pale, delicate skin due to only working indoors and having enchanting "flowerlike" faces. They are also described as "efficient-looking Chinese girls" and as looking "bright, helpful, inquisitive" (Fleming 321). As in the novel, in the film these two characters are obviously stereotypical Lotus Blossoms named for flowers and described as having delicate "flowerlike" faces. They are portrayed by Asian actresses who do not appear to be mixed-race.

The Jamaican Chinese are discussed as a community in the most detail midway through the novel when one of James Bond's informants, the Jamaican Colonial Secretary Mr. Pleydell-Smith, a white Englishman, explains the racialized intricacies of Jamaican society. He talks about the black masses, the Syrians, the Portuguese Jews, the expatriate Britons, and other groups, saving the Chinese for last. He says,

"Finally there are the Chinese, solid, compact, discreet – the most powerful clique in Jamaica. They've got bakeries and the laundries and the best food stores. They keep to themselves and keep their strain pure." Pleydell-Smith laughed, "Not that they don't take the black girls when they want them. You can see the result all over Kingston—Chigroes—Chinese Negroes and Negresses. The Chigroes are a tough, forgotten race. They look down on the Negroes and the Chinese look down on them. One day they may become a nuisance. They've got some of the intelligence of the Chinese and most of the vices of the black man. The police have a lot of trouble with them." (Fleming 257)

Pleydell-Smith is a foil for Fleming to note his observations about the various racial groups in Jamaican society. He describes the Chinese as "solid, compact, discreet." These terms imply the ways in which the Chinese community in Jamaica had loyal ethnic allegiances and helped each other in business ventures.⁴ Fleming was correct in noting the Jamaican Chinese success in the bakery business and with food stores. Their discreetness is an oblique way of referring to the privacy and the clannish behavior of the Chinese in Jamaica through the familiar "Yellow Peril" stereotypes as perpetual foreigners who refuse to integrate

⁴ See Orlando Patterson. "Context and Choice in Ethnic Allegiance: A Theoretical Framework and Caribbean Case Study" in *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*.

into the broader society. Pleydell-Smith contradicts his former comments about how the Chinese community “keep to themselves and keep their strain pure” through their sexual intimacy with “the black girls.” The Chigroes are described as the evidence of the “concubinage” between Chinese men and black women. Pleydell-Smith reflects the British colonial authority and their concern that the Chigroes could prove to be a future nuisance because they have “*some* of the intelligence of the Chinese” and “*most* of the vices of the black man” (my emphasis). The Chigroes pose an insidious threat, and their Afro-Asianness is described as a dangerous combination, because they have the potential to be smart criminals.

That the police have a lot of trouble with the Chigroes according to Pleydell-Smith is a curious detail. As much as the Chinese were characterized as industrious, they were also associated with immoral behavior in the Jamaican press. In his study, which was published the same year as *Dr. No* in 1958, “Adjustment Patterns among the Jamaican Chinese,” sociologist Andrew Lind describes the feeling in Jamaica towards the Chinese in the mid-twentieth century by black Jamaicans and white Jamaicans alike based on newspaper coverage. Lind notes,

the only reference to the Chinese in the press of Jamaica were the accounts of alleged infractions of the law—gambling, the serving of rum on a Sunday, the use of incorrect weights and measures, falsification of accounts and records, particularly in connection with bankruptcy proceedings, and the smuggling of both persons and goods. The natural disposition of the aggrieved natives, coloured and white, was to interpret the behaviour as willful and sinister lawlessness, although the newspaper accounts frequently suggest that unfamiliarity with Western law and custom was the determining factor. (157)

This description of the public perception of the Chinese differs starkly from Pleydell-Smith’s account of the Chinese as intelligent and successful in business. As much as the Chinese community in Jamaica was associated with upward mobility and success in the small retail grocery trade, they were alternately viewed as heathens and exploiters. Literary critic Anne-Marie Lee-Loy points to the reductive figure of the Chinese shopkeeper in the West Indies, Mr. Chin, as the embodiment of alienation. The negative public perception of the Chinese underscores the duality and instability of supposedly fixed stereotypes about racialized groups. The two portraits of the Chinese are connected and as antagonism grew towards the Chinese their success in business was perceived as due to immoral practices, such as using incorrect weights and measures,

smuggling, and unethically filing for bankruptcy. While Pleydell-Smith associates the criminality of the Chigroes with the vices natural to black Jamaicans, it could equally have been attributed to the Chinese according to prevalent stereotypes of the time in Jamaica. Through Pleydell-Smith, Fleming positions the Chinese and Afro-Jamaicans as diametrically opposed groups when the reality was far more complex.

Finally, Bond asks of the Chigroes, “Are they organized, these people? Is there some head of the Chinese negro community?” Pleydell-Smith replies, “Not yet. But someone’ll get hold of them one of these days. They’d be a useful little pressure group” (Fleming 257). This fear of an Afro-Asian “pressure group” shows just how large the spectre of miscegenation loomed in the British colonial imaginary at this time. Of course, it is Doctor No who has gotten a hold of the Chigroes. On a macro-global level, evidence of African and Asian union could be seen at the meeting of 25 countries during the Bandung Conference in 1955, many of them newly independent. While the Afro-Jamaican Chinese may not have been organized politically in the way that Bond imagines, they were a sizeable population and were typically aligned with the Chinese community, as can be seen in the participation and representation of Afro-Chinese people in some Jamaican Chinese publications from the 1950s and 1960s. However, it is also clear that the Afro-Jamaican Chinese were stigmatized by the Chinese community, as it was common for them to be called *ban lao shi*, meaning “half brain,” because they were not considered to be educated, “pure,” or complete (Shibata 370). Fleming was correct in noting that some Chinese looked down on the Afro-Chinese.

Interestingly, in the film Bond foils Doctor No’s plans by disguising himself as one of the grotesque Chigro workers. Bond fights one of the henchmen, renders him unconscious, and then dons his decontamination suit. Bond’s disguise is so convincing— it obscures most of his face—that he is able to meddle with the machinery in Doctor No’s power plant causing a meltdown. In the end, Bond is triumphant over the Yellow and Black Peril represented by Doctor No and the Chigroes, and this is a victory for England. A defeat of the Third World was a victory for the Free World. In vanquishing the villains and saving the girl, Bond’s masculinity and virility are restored. His purity and power as an English man is defined against the hybrid identities of the Bond villains and the Bond girl. Thus *Dr. No* is the journey, the detour, of Bond’s identification through the racial and sexual difference of the *other* so that he can assert his masculinity as a heteronormative English man and as a sex symbol.

DOCTOR NO THE YELLOW OCTOPUS

The eponymous Doctor No does not appear until about two thirds of the way through the narrative of the book and the film, creating suspense about just who he is and what his motives are. Before Bond leaves for his mission in Jamaica, M tells him that Doctor No is a “Chinaman, or rather half Chinese and half German. Got a daft name. Calls himself Doctor No—Doctor Julius No.’ ‘No? Spelt like Yes?’ ‘That’s right.’ ‘Any facts about him?’” (Fleming 225). From the very beginning, Doctor No is cast as an inscrutable Asian. All that anyone really seems to know for certain is that he is very private. While as Umberto Eco points out his name represents, in a very simple way, that he is evil, it also represents a rejection of his German father, who was named Julius. The rejection of Julius is, Doctor No says, a rejection of “all authority.” Doctor No’s defiant stance towards the circumstances of his birth and his illegitimacy render him resentful, a Caliban on his secluded island.

Doctor Julius No has a complex, lengthy backstory, which isn’t revealed until he sits face to face with Bond as his captive dinner guest in his subterranean lair. As a Chinese diasporic subject, the circuits of migrations that he has travelled from China to Jamaica highlight the intersecting channels of the Overseas Chinese in the Americas. The Tong networks lead him from Shanghai to New York’s Chinatown where he works as a treasurer for the crime syndicate. After stealing their money and narrowly escaping execution, Doctor No flees to the Midwest, to Milwaukee, where he says there are no Asians. Recovering there and hiding away in academia, he adopts the identity of a doctor before finding refuge in the tropics, Jamaica, when he buys Crab Key in 1943.

Doctor No relishes telling Bond his origin story. He is a self-made man and his narrative speaks to his exceptionalism and resourcefulness against all odds. Doctor No says, “I was the only son of a German Methodist missionary and a Chinese girl of good family. I was born in Peking, but on what is known as ‘the wrong side of the blanket.’ I was an encumbrance. An aunt of my mother was paid to bring me up.’ Doctor No paused, ‘No love you see Mister Bond. Lack of parental care” (Fleming 344). That his aunt was paid to bring him up shows that Doctor No is very aware of the role of money and the lack of intimacy in his life. Doctor No blames his unstable childhood for why he sought a life of criminality in Shanghai with the Tongs. In what is the beginning of a very long monologue, Doctor No says, “I enjoyed the conspiracies, the burglaries, the murders, the arson of insured properties. They represented revolt against the father figure who had betrayed me. I love the death and destruction of people and things. I became adept in the technique of criminality—if you wish to call it that” (Fleming 345). He feels rejected, abject, and betrayed, and thus turns to a life of crime in order to

reject the bourgeois morality of his missionary father and his mother's good family.

Though he enjoys the criminality of being associated with the Hip Sing Tongs in New York, ultimately Doctor No prefers not to be loyal to any tribe. During what he describes as the great Tong wars of the late 1920s, Doctor No took advantage of the havoc and stole all the gold, absconding to Harlem. The Tong find him and torture him, cutting off his hands as punishment for his thievery. This is why his hands have been replaced by metal pincers. The Tong shoot him in the chest, but he survives because, as he proudly tells Bond, "But they did not know something about me. I am the one man in a million who has his heart on the right side of his body. Those are the odds against it, one in a million. I lived" (Fleming 352). Doctor No survives because his abnormal physiology, his dextrocardia, his otherness.

Doctor No is portrayed as other Asian villains typically have been in British and American culture, as a despot. He bears an uncanny resemblance to the mixed-race European, Chinese villain Henry Chang, in Josef von Sternberg's 1932 film *Shanghai Express*. Like Henry Chang, Doctor No comes of age in Shanghai, a hybridized Western-Eastern city. We are not given much information about the relationship between Henry Chang's parents or Doctor No's parents, but one could imagine them as the protagonists of Richard Mason's 1957 novel *The World of Suzie Wong*. A romance story between an Englishman and a Chinese sex worker with a "heart of gold," *Suzie Wong* portrays European and Chinese interracial intimacy in a happy marriage, in sharp contrast to the characterization of Henry Chang and Doctor No.

Just as the Chigroes are described as having yellow eyes or red eyes, demonizing them, Doctor No's physical features are described as non-human, as a villainous manifestation of the "Yellow Peril." As Sax Rohmer describes Doctor Fu Manchu, Doctor No is "the yellow peril incarnate in one man" (7). His skin is described as having "a deep almost translucent yellow" hue (Fleming 338). In much of the narrative description, Doctor No is described not only as an alienated but an alien figure. The narrator says,

It was impossible to tell Doctor No's age: as far as Bond could see there were no lines on his face....Even the cavernous indrawn cheeks below the prominent cheek-bones looked as smooth as fine ivory. There was something Dali-esque about the eyebrows, which were fine and black and sharply upswept as if they had been painted on as make-up for a conjurer. Below them, slanting jet black eyes stared out of the skull. They were without eyelashes. They looked like the mouths of two small revolvers, direct and unblinking and totally devoid of expression. (Fleming 343)

The narrator makes strange references to ivory and surrealist art in a way that conjures up the image of Doctor Fu Manchu. As John Kuo Tchen and Dylan Yeats show in their archiving of “Yellow Peril” imagery, the octopus was a common trope for demonizing China and Japan. According to Tchen and Yeats, “Octopuses had long been the icons of top-down authoritarian power in Europe” (4). Authoritarian rule is precisely Doctor No’s design for Crab Key. This is manifest towards the end of the narrative of *Dr. No*, the novel, Bond battles a fifty-foot squid, symbolic of Doctor No. The imagery of the squid hearkens back to *The Insidious Dr. Fu-Manchu*. Sax Rohmer describes the Chinese villain as, “[A] veritable octopus had fastened upon England—a yellow octopus whose head was that of Dr. Fu-Manchu, whose tentacles were dacoity, thuggee, modes of death, secret and swift, which in the darkness plucked men from life and left no clew behind.” An Anglo-Indian word, dacoity is “an act of armed robbery committed by a gang in India or Burma.” So is thuggee, the “robbery and murder practiced by the Thugs in accordance with their ritual.” Here, Rohmer conflates the Asianness of India and China to describe the vicious villain in a fashion typical of Yellow Peril rhetoric.

Moreover, cultural theorist Mel Chen writes about the way in which Fu Manchu is rendered animalistic and non-human saying, “Fu Manchu is not just animal, not just queer: he is porous along many axes of difference” (120). Doctor No is also characterized as porous and this instability makes him threatening. Though Doctor No is powerful, he is not portrayed as particularly virile, especially compared to Bond. Though Bond fears Doctor No will want to take Honeychile Rider as a wife or concubine, Doctor No seems to be asexual, or unconcerned with sex. This is common to the way Eco describes Bond villain characterization: “He is asexual or homosexual, or at any rate not sexually normal” (40). Doctor No’s interest in Honeychile Rider is to use her as a subject in his sadistic experimentation, modeled on experiments Nazis performed in concentration camps during World War II. He wants to see how long it will take a white woman to be eaten alive by hungry crabs, because he has performed a similar experiment on a black woman who died of fright.⁵ Though Doctor No is a mixed-race character, his perverse eugenics experiments align him with Germanness, the Nazis, and their racial theories about purity.

Doctor No is a megalomaniac, but what makes him so threatening is that he is also a savvy businessman. Indeed in the 1950s, Chinese businessmen in Jamaica were often portrayed in negative terms as successful because they practiced predatory business tactics. According to Andrew Lind, “legislative

⁵ Gina Marchetti writes about the trope of the rape fantasy with regard to stereotypes of Asian villains in relation to white women in *Romance and the ‘Yellow Peril’: Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction*.

agitation, supported by both native and British members of the Council whose business control was characterized as ‘an octopus, sapping the life of the island’” (161). According to Lind, the Chinese in Jamaica were regarded as a “mercenary minority, engaged in exploiting the country’s wealth” (161). In his study, Lind cites the article “Occidental Chinese Wall,” as evidence reflecting hostility towards the Chinese in the postwar period for what was perceived as their clannishness. In 1952, the editor of a popular Jamaican newspaper, *Spotlight*, says, “If the Chinese keep piling up wealth and hate behind that wall, giving back nothing to the community they may find it expedient to go back ‘home’ sooner than they hope” (162). These xenophobic reactions match the way Fleming characterizes Doctor No as a Bond villain. A mercenary, Doctor No piles up wealth and hate behind the metaphoric “Chinese wall,” akin to the Great Wall of China, that is his private island, Crab Key.

Significantly, Doctor No purchases Crab Key from the British government in 1943, the year considered the end of the Chinese Exclusion period in the United States, which began officially in 1882 with the *Chinese Exclusion Act*. Chinese brides and wives were now allowed to migrate to the United States because of the military alliance between the two nations. Thus 1943 presents a moment of opportunity for Doctor No in America as well. In 1943 in Jamaica, too, anti-Chinese sentiment was quelling. Lind explains the shift in Jamaican perception of the Chinese community during World War II, arguing, “The period of the second World War brought a temporary cessation of public expressions adverse to the Chinese, partly as a consequence of the military alliance between the two nations” (161). While Doctor No does not desire a Chinese bride, he finds safety in Jamaica where the Tong networks of New York and Shanghai apparently do not extend.

While in the novel and film, Doctor No does not align himself with a conception of the Darker Nations or of anticolonial movements; he represents the threat of the other and unity amongst marginalized people. He has no patriotic or political affiliation to any nation-state. Though he is in the employ of the Soviet Union, he says to Bond, “Perhaps Communist China will pay more. Who knows? I already have my feelers out” (356). Doctor No’s allegiance is to the highest bidder. He is a capitalist who enjoys wreaking havoc and discord as much as he loves profit. It renders him powerful in contrast to the way he has lived much of his life in abjection. Doctor No is purely driven by capital and his desire for absolute control as sovereign of Crab Key. His position in the periphery, in America’s Caribbean backyard, renders Doctor No a liminal figure in an advantageous liminal location during the Cold War.

CONCLUSION

The publication of *Dr. No* in 1958 and the release of the Hollywood film in 1962 frame a pivotal moment in Jamaican history and more broadly the period of decolonization. Jamaica achieved independence from Britain on August 6, 1962, and while it became part of the Commonwealth and did not sever all ties, the mood in the country towards whites shifted considerably. Cold War tensions were high in Jamaica because of revolution in neighboring Cuba, followed by the Bay of Pigs Invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis. The world premiere of *Dr. No* took place in London in October 1962, a week before the events of Cuban Missile Crisis unfolded. It had a much smaller release in the United States in May 1963, perhaps because it depicts nuclear weapons in ways that echo the crisis. As uncanny as this similarity was, in the book Fleming was concerned with portraying another sort of crisis, the loss of European power in the colonies. He foreshadows this transition of power and hones in on the consequences independence will have on spaces of white upper class privilege that he enjoyed, like the Liguanea Club, the basis of the fictional Queen's Club.

Indeed, Jamaica represented a place of refuge to Fleming and to many other Britons. Most notably in 1956, after his failed handling of the Suez crisis, British Prime Minister Anthony Eden spent a month recuperating at Fleming's estate Goldeneye. In the periphery, away from the public eye, Jamaica was a site of restoration for Eden and Fleming just as it was for Bond. Fleming knew that many English foolishly feared the "moral dégringolade," or rapid decline and deterioration, caused by the tropics, when the climate actually seemed to offer the opposite, revitalization (350). While English men like Eden and Fleming were making the journey away from London to Jamaica, seeking refuge, there was at the same time a mass migration of Caribbean people taking place in the other direction. Thousands of Jamaicans were migrating to Britain encouraged by the *British Nationality Act* of 1948, which gave subjects of the Crown in the Commonwealth entry to Britain. It was the period that the famous Jamaican poet Louise Bennett, or Miss Lou, refers to in her witty, perceptive 1966 poem "Colonization in Reverse." In Jamaican patois, she says with glee,

Jamaica people colonizin
Englan in Reverse

By de hundred, by de tousan
From country and from town,
By de ship-load by de plane load
Jamaica is Englan boun.

Creolizing the Queen's English, Miss Lou relishes the way in which the world was being turned upside down for those who represented the English establishment and patriarchy like Fleming. By the hundreds and thousands, the migration of West Indians to Britain was viewed in xenophobic racialized terms, not dissimilar to the age-old perception of the invading hordes of the "Yellow Peril." This postwar Black Peril was no doubt viewed as a conundrum because while West Indian labor was desperately needed to restore war torn Britain, Caribbean bodies were not wanted in the metropole. Thus the tropical fantasy of James Bond, which mediates a desire and repulsion for the tropics, offered a way to assert at least some semblance of control over the decolonization of the Darker Nations.

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