

# Anti-Asian Racism

*Myths, Stereotypes, and  
Catholic Social Teaching*

JOSEPH CHEAH

ORBIS  BOOKS  
Maryknoll, New York 10545

Founded in 1970, Orbis Books endeavors to publish works that enlighten the mind, nourish the spirit, and challenge the conscience. The publishing arm of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Orbis seeks to explore the global dimensions of the Christian faith and mission, to invite dialogue with diverse cultures and religious traditions, and to serve the cause of reconciliation and peace. The books published reflect the views of their authors and do not represent the official position of the Maryknoll Society. To learn more about Maryknoll and Orbis Books, please visit our website at [www.orbisbooks.com](http://www.orbisbooks.com)

---

Copyright © 2023 Joseph Cheah

Published by Orbis Books, Box 302, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Queries regarding rights and permissions should be addressed to: Orbis Books, P.O. Box 302, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302.

Manufactured in the United States of America

---

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Cheah, Joseph, author.

Title: Anti-Asian racism : myths, stereotypes, and Catholic social teaching / Joseph Cheah.

Description: Maryknoll, New York : Orbis Books, [2023] | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "An up-to-date analysis of anti-Asian racism, from a Catholic perspective" — Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022026625 (print) | LCCN 2022026626 (ebook) | ISBN 9781626984790 (trade paperback) | ISBN 9781608339419 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Asian Americans—Civil rights. | Racism--United States. | United States—Race relations. | Racism—Religious aspects—Catholic Church. | Christianity and culture—Moral and ethical aspects—United States.

Classification: LCC E184.A75 C483 2023 (print) | LCC E184.A75 (ebook) | DDC 305.895/073--dc23/eng/20220615

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022026625>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022026626>

# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	1
Race, Racism, and the Pastoral Letter	5
Catholic Social Teaching	9
Whiteness and White Supremacy	11
Other Terms and Their Uses When We Talk about Race and Racism	15
Organization of This Volume	17
<b>1. Yellow Peril</b>	21
Yellow Peril in the Nineteenth Century	24
Irish and Chinese Immigrants	29
Religion, Race, and Chinese Exclusion	32
Early Chinese American Civil Rights Activists	44
Yellow Peril Today	48
AAPI Health Care Workers	51
Stigmatized by the Actions of a Few	54
Conclusion and Theological Reflection	56
<b>2. Model Minority Myth</b>	63
A Model Based on a Fallacy	64
Racial Positioning	70
Case Study:	
Racial Positionings of Black and Asian Americans	74
Racism as “Powerless Defense”	81
Asian Americans in Danger	86
Confronting White Supremacy	88
Anti-Blackness and Colorism	102
Conclusion and Theological Reflection	108

<b>3. Perpetual Foreigner</b>	116
System of Racial Microaggressions	117
Autobiography of Jung Young Lee	121
Theology of Marginality	124
In-Between Stage	125
In-Both Stage	126
In-Beyond Stage	127
Lee's Critique of Centrist Thinking	129
System of Knowledge Dissemination	131
Connections between Black and Asian American Oppressions and Liberations	134
Normalization of Racial and Social Injustice	142
Conclusion and Theological Reflection	145
<b>Conclusion</b>	153
What We Know about Jesus	154
Theological Basis for the Good News for the Poor	160
Preferential Option for the Poor	162
Principles of Solidarity, the Common Good, and Subsidiarity	165
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	171
<i>Index</i>	173