

## The problem of representation in popular culture

“Yes, they're a mysterious lot, the Chinese. Enigmatic”: How does the representation of Chinese people/culture change across 2 eras of

Doctor Who?

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## **Introduction: Is Doctor Who Improving?**

Doctor Who is a 1963 British sci-fi television program by the BBC, featuring The Doctor's adventures across time/space, containing 2 eras: the Classic/Old Who from 1963 to 1996 and New Who from 2005 to present, the eras the question refers to.

Doctor Who scholarship exists because it is an unusual popular cultural text, enduring and adaptable to its social-cultural context. First, it encompasses vast genres: action drama, science fiction, gothic horror, etc. For example, the 2005 season contains science fiction story *Aliens of London*, horror story *The Empty Child*, etc. This enables Doctor Who to reflect and reproduce social values. Additionally, Doctor Who is a multi-media text: television, novels (notably TARGET novelizations of original episodes), audio dramas, etc. Canonicity thus becomes significant, for example, debates over whether Joe Martin's Doctor is canonical. Thus, the analysis of Doctor Who can provide insight in contemporary culture from an often-neglected dimension.

This conviction leads to interests in the representation of different social groups in Doctor Who, including *Doctor Who and Race*, *Doctor Who: A British Alien*, etc. There are existing studies on the representation of Chinese people/culture: Stephanie Guerdan attempted to resolve "Asian under-representation" in New Who (74-75). George Ivanoff revealed how a lack of knowledge of China caused the ignorance of racism in Doctor Who (79). Kate Orman criticized the representation of China in the Talons of Weng-Chiang (83). Daniel Nicol analyzed how the show constructs Britishness by representing non-white races (48). However, these studies are either not supported by detailed textual criticism (Guerdan and Ivanoff) or focused on individual stories thus not systemic (Orman).

As a Chinese person and a Doctor Who fan, I intended to undertake this study. I can understand how Western cultures conceive China and provide new perspectives on wider representation issues in Doctor Who, contributing to the scholarship.

This essay argues that although New Who self-proclaims as progressive, the representation of Chinese people/culture remains problematic, caused by articulating self-referential discourses in texts and among the audience. Doctor Who adopts tropes that are essentially British-cultural constructions of China and disconnected to the reality.

### **Methodology**

This essay approaches the issue from stories with significant Chinese elements. The stories and their abbreviations that will be used in the essay are appended. The televisual texts and the Target novelizations are treated as homogeneous and examined together. To understand the change, Old Who and New Who are examined separately before being compared with each other.

I adopted “external” approaches, interpreting “the end product with less emphasis on authorial intention” (Nicol 21), because I do not have resources to conduct relevant interviews, and internal approaches have problems of “retrospective falsification, [...], [unable to deal with] the show’s multi-authored nature” (Nicol 21-22). I will use postcolonialism/orientalism to deconstruct the representations. Furthermore, since audiences contribute to cultural products, an analysis of audience responses, collected from Doctor Who fandoms, mainly Gallifrey Base and Chinese fandoms, will further illustrate my conclusion.

Finally, I based the periodization on chronology and social-cultural conditions. New Who seems to adopt more diverse representations. As Orthia observed, the new series has “assertive engagement[s] with a cosmopolitan Britain” (3), self-claiming as socially progressive. Non-diegetically, for example, Russel T Davies fought for representing LGBTQ+ groups adequately; Jodie Whittaker, the actor of the 13<sup>th</sup> Doctor, protested on environmental issues. Diegetically, more ethnic minorities, empowered females, and LGBTQ+ individuals are encompassed. It also consciously criticizes Old Who. In *Twice Upon a Time*, juxtaposing the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> Doctor parodies sexism and racism in Old Who; The leader of UNIT was re-presented as a female, Kate Lethbridge Stuart, rejecting male dominations in Old Who. These features justify such periodization and allow me to challenge this image since the representation of Chinese people does not change fundamentally.

## **Old Who: The Genesis**

### **3.1 Imperialism**

In Old Who, China is an imaginary place that reveals British imperial dominance. Despite of its “pedagogic discourse” and that directors “spent a lot of time and trouble making sure [historical accuracy]” (Tulloch and Alvarado 39), MP relies on Western accounts of China. The Doctor and his companions engaged with China through Marco Polo, showed by Susan’s claim: “[Polo] told stories of his journeys and all the marvellous things he’d seen” (Lucarotti 11), thus only validating Polo’s account. The same control occurs when John Bennet, a white actor, casted Li H’sen Chang in *Talons*. Some interpret that “[BBC followed] a so far unbroken tradition: no Asian actor has ever taken [the role]” (Orman 93), thus a “blatant racism” (Ivanoff 81). I argue that by depriving Chinese people’s ability to represent themselves and imposing features on them, Old Who dominates them conceptually.

Dominance became internalized in language too. In ME, Captain Chin Lee was coded as “Chinese girl”, rather than military commander, thus subjected to discrimination. Chinese people in Talons was coded as “inscrutable Chinks”, subject to imperial control.

### **3.2 “Yellow peril”**

Doctor Who utilizes literary traditions: Doctor Who “allow[s] both the strong sense of narrative [...] and the ‘intellectual suggestiveness’” through “[...] intertextuality” (Tulloch and Alvarado 149-150). Understanding literary origins of Old Who enables its representation.

“Yellow Peril” is pervasive across 20<sup>th</sup> century Britain. “Yellow Peril” is the “racial paranoia” (Orman 87) of “a dystopic civilization dominated by evil Orientals” and “Oriental hordes invading Western nations” (Sashagiri 162&163), externalized by evil Asian characters. A typical manifestation is Dr. Fu Manchu, an evil Chinese trying to control Britain, constructed by Sax Rohmer, see Figure 1. Fu is “tall, lean and feline, high-shouldered, [with] a face like Satan, a close-shaven skull, [...] Invest him with all the cruel cunning of an entire Eastern race” (Rohmer 241), associated with the “superscience, hypnosis, fanatical cults, secret lairs, exotic drugs and poisons, and white women in peril” (Orman 86). In the early 20th century, “the UK press ran baseless stories that Chinese men were kinky sexual predators on the lookout for white women to dope, seduce and/or sell into ‘white slavery’” (Orman 87). Similarly, “the practice of opium-smoking began to be associated [...] with [...] the Chinese” (Frayling 122).

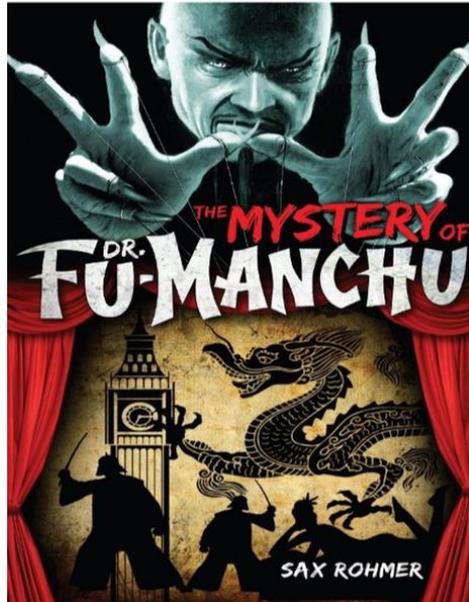


Figure 1 Title page of *Mystery of Dr. Fu Manchu* (Rohmer, Title Page)

Christopher Frayling traces these images back to Victorian literature (16 & 102). Comparing Charles Dickens' *Edwin Drood* and Rohmer's *Dr. Fu Manchu* illuminates this influence.

*Edwin Drood* begins with an opium den:

“Lying, [...], are a Chinaman, a Lascar, and a haggard woman. And as she blows, and shading it with her lean hand, concentrates its red spark of light, it serves in the dim morning as a lamp to show him what he sees of her.”

“The woman has opium-smoked herself into a strange likeness of the Chinaman. [...] Said Chinaman convulsively wrestles with one of his many Gods, or Devils, perhaps, and snarls horribly.” (Dickens 7-8)

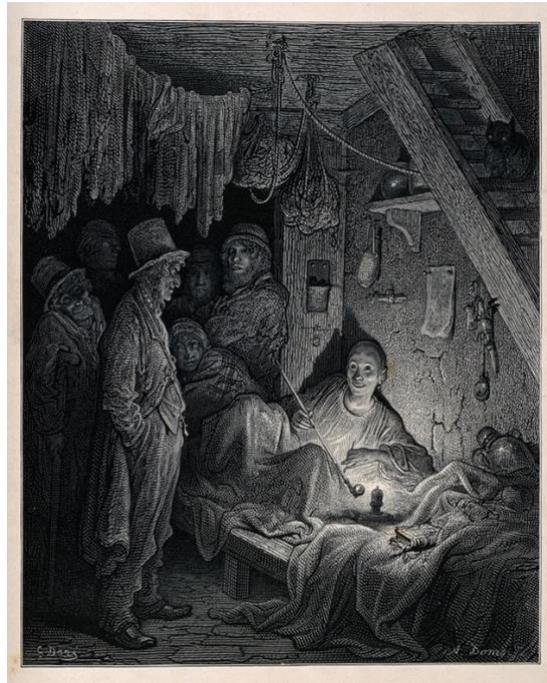
Not dissimilarly, Rohmer described the den as:

“It was all but unbreathable, being loaded with opium fumes. [...] A tin oil-lamp on a box in the middle of the floor dimly illuminated the horrible place, about the walls of which ten or twelve bunks were ranged and all of them occupied. Most of the occupants were lying motionless but one or two were squatting in their bunks noisily sucking at the little metal pipes.” (Rohmer 50-51)

Gustave Dore visualized this scene, see Figure 2. Thus, Frayling correctly concluded that

“Dickens’ description of an opium den had a profound influence on the ways in which such

dwellings were to be described by novelists, storytellers, and journalists in the future [including Rohmer]” (117). Similarly, Old Who merely adopted these traditions.



*Figure 2 Dore's Painting (Dore)*

First, Chinese characters and dwellings are presented as evil and degrading. In *Talons*, set in Victorian London, the policeman Kyle’s comment that “we get a lot of those in [prison/custody], Limehouse being so close” links the “Limehouse” with Chinese and associated stereotypes. The villains are a Chinese magician Li H’sen Chang and other Chinese men. Figure 3&4 illustrate Chang’s appearance, which adopts Fu’s image, “rubber eyelids, the eponymous moustache and [...] ornate Chinese costume” (Orman 87), invoking British audience’s “Yellow Peril”. Chang’s “Machiavellian machinations” developed this sinisterness: he captured white young women for Greel, whom he served, whose need for women’s “life essence” alludes to “white slavery”. Chang’s end scene fits such narrative (Figure 5) Chang smoked opium after fatally attacked by a giant rat, which draws on Dore’s painting. The motionless and twisted figure of Chang resembles Dickens and Rohmer’s description. Such stereotypes reappeared in *TVM*, set in a Chinatown in San Francisco.

While the Chinatown is more modern, it merely modernized the negative conceptions. Figure 6 shows a dirty Chinatown with gang conflicts, echoing the Limehouse stereotype. The main Chinese character Lee is unreliable (taking away the Doctor's possessions) and villainous (assisting the Master), exquisitely substantiating the "Yellow Peril".



*Figure 3 Li H'sen Chang*



*Figure 4 Poster of Chang*



*Figure 5 Chang approaching his death*



*Figure 6 Gang-fight in the Chinatown*

Second, Chinese females are demonized. In MP, the Doctor claimed firmly that "[Ping-Cho] makes me nervous" without substantial reason (Lucarotti 63). Chinese females become untrustworthy. In ME, Captain Chin Lee underwent similar demonization, see Figure 7. Her makeup, darkened eyebrows, generates sinisterness, resembling Fu's image. In fact, Chin Lee was controlled by the Master to murder the US delegate. While this is the character's

unfortunate experience diegetically, portraying a villainious Chinese female shows traces of demonization. However, Chinese females are also alluring. Pin-Cho's entrance is described as "a pretty Chinese girl, of Susan's age, came out." The prettiness is emphasized over all other qualities. Similarly, from Brigadier's perspective, Chin Lee "would be a remarkably attractive girl. She was still in her mid- twenties, and [...] was undeniably beautiful." (19) "Mid-twenties" which carries sexual connotation and her "attractive" and "beautiful" quality coded her as appealing. The alluringness and the peril suggest that "Yellow Peril" is inherently heterosexual and male. Signified by "the man"'s command of Ping-Cho, a male perspective suitably subject Oriental people due to its domination in Western world.



*Figure 7 Captain Chin Lee*

### **3.3 Orientalism**

A subtler discourse, orientalism, are also functioning. Edward Said observed that "The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (1). The Orient becomes "a set of values attached, not to its modern realities, but to a series of valorized contacts it had had with a distant European past" (Said 85). The Orient becomes "the other": "The West is "rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion [; the Orient is] none of these things" (Said 49). The representation of the Orient consolidates

this dichotomy: “‘bizarre jouissances’ of Orientals serve to highlight the sobriety and rationality of Occidental habits” (Said 87). Consequently, the West must “restore a region from its present barbarism to its former classical greatness [and] instruct [...] the Orient in the ways of the modern West” (Said 85). Said’s analysis conceptually maps the representations in *Old Who well*.

First, presenting Chinese people/culture as mysterious and manufacturing “otherness” are prevalent. In *MP*, the performance of Ping-Cho is revealing:

When Ping-Cho returned, Susan didn’t recognize her at first. She was wearing a long robe in blue silk with a high collar that came up to her jaw line. Over the robe she wore a knee-length red silk jacket with narrow lapels and billowing sleeves [...] Her face was powdered white, her cheeks rose, her lips a soft red and her eyes thinly lined in black up to her temples. (Lucarotti 45)

“Long robe”, “blue silk”, “yellow sash”, and Ping-Cho’s “powdered white” face, “soft red” lips have exoticizing qualities, emphasized by Susan’s failure to “recognize her.”

Furthermore, Lucarotti’s writing diverges from the original televisual representation.

In *Figure 8&9*, Pin-Cho lacks the exoticizing qualities from a Chinese perspective, revealing the intentional exoticizing. Similarly, in *Talons*, Chang is a magician, skilled for mesmerism.

The Chinese irrationally worshiped the God Weng-Chang. Lifefoot’s commentary that

“they’re a mysterious lot, the Chinese. Enigmatic” typically presented China as “the other”.

He subsequently denounced Chinese fireworks as “odd custom. odd sort of people”.

Presented in a common-sensical way, these comments naturalize the otherness.



*Figure 8 Ping-Cho*



*Figure 9 Ping-Cho performing*

Second, *Old Who* presents China as single, fixed, and degrading. In *MP*, Kubla Khan's palace is described as:

There was a high, red lacquered wall with a golden trelliswork along the top with a golden dragon at each corner. [...] In the middle of it, facing them, was a golden double gate and behind the wall they could see a central dome of gold, flanked by golden spires which towered above it. (Lucarotti 97)

The high-backed throne was of gold, studded with precious stones on the arms, legs and the canopy. On the side walls were golden double doors. (Lucarotti 99)

While these passages demonstrated the prosperity of Yuan dynasty, the repeated usage of “gold” suggests a lack of informed understanding of that prosperity since it erases Yuan's diversity and liveliness. These descriptions and the contrast between Khan's physical weakness and his title “Mighty” suggest a degradation: Chinese people's weakness without improvement. This alludes to Macartney's visit to Qing Dynasty who condemned Qing's corrosion and orientalizes China as “valorized contacts [...] with a distant European past” (Said 85). This vision recurs in representation of modern China. In *ME*, the Doctor and the Brigadier had the following conversation:

‘To see the new Chinese Delegate – Fu Peng.’

‘Fu Peng?’ said the Doctor thoughtfully. ‘He must be Hokkien.’  
The Brigadier paused in the doorway. ‘No, no, Doctor, he’s Chinese! Come along!’

That Brigadier coded Fu Peng with “Chinese” and rejected the Doctor’s more specific coding demonstrates the ignorance of a diverse China. While this could be an authorial intention to establish the Doctor’s knowledge over Brigadier, that this is the only piece in *Old Who* showcasing such knowledge diminishes this justification.<sup>1</sup> This holds true for *Talons*, in which Chinese people are typified by Chang. As Said claimed, “[there] will appear figures whose role it is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate” (63). Chinese people is presented as “peril” and sharing the same characteristics, their individuality perfectly erased by their black clothes and subject to Greel.

Third, the triumph of Western ration/science over Chinese irrationality/backwardness connects previous features. In *MP*, Susan and Barbara condemn Ping-Cho’s arranged marriage. While this is seemingly a progressive idea, it condemns the backwardness of Chinese culture by imposing a British modern standard, committing anachronism and ignoring similarities in feudal England. In *Talons*, the Doctor denounced Chang’s alleged action of “[blewing] poisonous fumes from his mouth [and killing] men with a white light that shone from his eyes” as “superstitious rubbish.” He then uncovered that the God Chinese people worship is fake, announcing Chinese people’s ignorance. Also, Chinese people’s inability to solve their problems foregrounded the triumph, enabling The Doctor as “the white savior.” In *MP*, The Doctor saved Kubla Khan from War Lord Tegana. In *ME*, when the Master controlled Chin Lee and thus damaged Chinese reputation, the Doctor saved them

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<sup>1</sup> Contacting with scholar Lindy Orthia, I learned that Don Houghton, who wrote the story, married Pik-Sen Lim who played Chin Lee. This explains why a non-Chinese actor was not casted in a Chinese role. That the Doctor understands a diverse China is probably because Pik-Sen Lim cowrote the story. Thus, it is an aberration in *Old Who*.

using science. In *Talons*, the Doctor saved Victoria London from Chang and Greel's evil plot. Similarly, in *TVM*, the Doctor saved the city and redeemed the villainous Lee. Deeply embedded in the narrative, these subtly reveals the superiority of Western reason over Chinese backwardness.

### **3.4 Constructing Britishness**

Focusing on Chinese elements enables examinations of roles of Chinese people/culture in constructing Britishness. Tulloch and Alvarado observed that "all Doctors and companions have either been English or outer space English (until Nathan-Turner brought in an Australian actress to play Tegan)" (206). However, the role of Chinese people/culture is ignored or synthesized into discussions of non-white races. For *Old Who*, I argue that Chinese people/culture constructs the British identity by its "otherness" and "perilness". By presenting Chinese people/culture as mysterious or dangerous, *Old Who* distinguishes Britain as a relatable culture. Chinese delegates in *ME* are demanding, establishing the tolerance of UNIT, a British institution. In *TVM*, the gang fight in US Chinatown is juxtaposed with the poster behind the TARDIS (Figure 10&11). The message "Visit London" and glorious images of Household Guards and the Buckingham Palace forcefully satirize the chaotic US, establishing Britain's orderliness. Similarly, "Yellow Peril" belongs to a diffused "Victoriana" discourse (reference to Dickens, the Doctor's Sherlock Holmes' dressing, etc) that defines British culture. Clearly, *Old Who* pursued race-centered and British-nation-centered discourse.



*Figure 10 The poster behind Lee*



*Figure 11 The poster behind the TARDIS*

However, demonstrating that Old Who had informed representation may marginalize these problems. First, many 3<sup>rd</sup>-Doctor stories (1970-1974) were aware of a modern China. In ME, Chinese delegates are from People's Republic of China; Chin Lee is from People's Army. Chinese delegates in *The Day of the Daleks* shared similar traits. However, the characterization counters this. In ME, that Fu Peng is inflexible and Chin Lee is “touchy” returns to the stereotypes. Similarly, Chinese delegates in *The Day of the Daleks* are also demanding. The overall picture is negative.

Second, Old Who seemingly criticized racism. In *Talons*, the Doctor and Leela came to “see how [Leela's] ancestors enjoyed themselves”. The Doctor's ironic tone when saying “enjoyed” satirizes Victorian culture. Thus, *Talons* may be satirizing Victorian racism and imperialism. When the Doctor said that he has seen Chang somewhere, Chang responded with “I understand we all look the same”, a satire of the “single Chinaman” assumption. Additionally, when Lifefoot denounced Chinese fireworks as “odd”, the Doctor responded by “they use fireworks to frighten off evil spirits”, rejecting Lifefoot's judgement and respecting Chinese culture. Similarly, that the Doctor called Chinese people “little men” may be that the Doctor was mocking Victorian attitudes. However, other elements in the story undermined

these satires. Casting a white actor as Chang diminishes the satire primarily. Similarly, Chang, as the story developed, accepted his labels with no resistance. Thus, these satires are passing moments failing to marginalize the problems.

## **New Who: A New Start?**

### **4.1 Reduction in representation**

New Who significantly reduces the Chinese elements: no Asian companions or main characters. The lack of representation becomes important. The problem is whether this is an actual improvement. The disproportionality between increased occurrences of other ethnic minorities and the lack of appearances of Asian characters seemingly signifies the lack of the capability or unwillingness of the BBC to improve the problematic representation of Asian culture<sup>2</sup>. The BBC did not set any stories in China, although it already presented diverse historical periods: Elizabethan England, India-Bakistan conflict, etc. This is further proved by misrepresentations of Chinese artworks. In ATM, the china was apparently blue and white porcelain, pervasive in Ming and Qing dynasty (Figure 12). However, in the dialogue, River Song misattributed it to Qin dynasty. This mistake, while not extensive, reveals BBC's inability to obtain historical accuracy. These all leans toward an unchanged representation.

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<sup>2</sup> This idea came from Kate Orman.



*Figure 12 Blue and white porcelain*

## **4.2 Orientalism**

Otherness are still attached to Chinese people/culture. In TL, the Chinatown that Doctor and Donna arrived, although without sinisterness, is mysterious, a place where the Doctor and Donna experience exotic things, shown in Figure 13, 14, and 15. The architectural style of the Chinatown resembles those in Ming and Qing Dynasty (Figure 16). This shows unchanged conceptions of China as an ancient dynastical world. The otherness is reinforced by the mysterious fortuneteller (Figure 17&18). Her silk clothes and long fingernails allude to Li H'sen Chang' image. Her makeup and her attempt to control Donna adds to this sinisterness. These features correspond to “the Orient as insinuating danger. Rationality is undermined by Eastern excesses” (Said 57). Also, her attractiveness and sinisterness refer back to the male-heterosexual perspective in “Yellow Peril”. Orientalist discourses reoccurs in conversations between River Song and a collector, showed interest in china, in ATM.. However, his interest is to display, categorize and control china, not an appreciation of them. The triumph of Western reason and emotion is also apparent. In TL, Donna overcame the fortuneteller's illusion by UNIT's technology and her sacrifice. The fortuneteller escaped confirming Donna was “so strong”.



*Figure 13 The Doctor trying something new.*



*Figure 14 Fruits and vegetables*



*Figure 15 The Doctor holding an unknown fruit*



*Figure 16 Shan Shen*



*Figure 17 The fortune teller*



*Figure 18 The fortune teller*

### **4.3 Constructing Britishness**

While Nicol argues “new Who has persistently tried to portray Britain [...] as one which relishes its racial diversity” (53), Chinese people fail to be included. Chinese people/culture perform the same function as they did in Old Who. As demonstrated in previous paragraphs,

Chinese people/culture are presented as exoticized or sinister. The Britishness is constructed without accuracy.

### **Comparison and Contrast: Regeneration or Reiteration?**

Examining Old and New Who respectively enables the comparison. First, the representation of Chinese people/culture does not improve in New Who. New Who avoids the blatant racism yet still imposes similar stereotypes. Second, the mechanism of the unchanged representation is constructing representations with self-referential discourses. Writers refer to discourses not the reality. For example, “producer Philip Hinchcliffe remarked, ‘I’d never read any of the Sax Rohmer stories, but I sort of vaguely knew that it must be Chinese, Limehouse, and skullduggery, opium dens and things’” (Orman 86), showing such reliance. Third, gender is connected to the problematic representation. Both eras demonize and sexualize Chinese females, suggesting a male-heterosexual “Yellow Peril”. However, examining the representation of females in Doctor Who is, though worthy of further research, beyond this essay.

### **The Audience: Praises and Criticism**

An examination of fandoms also illustrate my conclusion. First, fandoms have strong tendencies to justify, or ignore, the problematic representation of Chinese people. As Vasquez pointed out, “this love [of Doctor Who] can [...] work to symbolically blind [fans]” (234). “Fans allow themselves to be programmed by that text because their fascination allows for a particular kind of forgiving receptivity” (Vasquez 235) and justifications. Many fans simply ignored Talons, “it is what it is and is of its time” (Red ripper), “the best thing to do is accept it for what it is” (Killbot) or “it stands in effect as a historical document of the time it

was made” (Rathbone), while still confirming its goodness: “deeply flawed masterpiece” (Killbot), “one of the greatest Doctor Who stories ever made” (Red ripper). Other fans push further. Kris Wright argued that “Holmes [did not have] anything negative in particular he wanted to say about Chinese people”; Dorkjackson argued that “Chang was written as a sympathetic character”; Sutekh's Bum Hand rejected Chang’s Chinese identity and argued that “Chang is actually a white British magician who's taken on a Chinese persona”. As a fan, I appreciate such arguments; as a literary critic, I cannot agree with them. They ignored that “Fu Manchu [...] was criticised as racist in 1932!” (Culfy), rendering the “historical” argument vulnerable and ignored Chinese people’s comments. A Chinese fan pointed out many historical inaccuracies in Doctor Who that make other Chinese fans uncomfortable. He told me that when introducing *The Day of Daleks* to Chinese fandom, the translation group omitted parts of the episode that have negative portrayal of Chinese people. These demonstrate the problematic representation receptively. Nevertheless, pseudo-justifications persist. This explained the unchanged representation: the fandom failed to press the writers to initiate changes in adopted discourses because “this programming is the result of [...] professional production strategies and fan expectations” (Vasquez 234).

Second, many non-Chinese audience were ignorant of the problems when watching these stories due to their ignorance of Chinese people/culture. For example, Mr. P, growing up in the UK in 1980s, said that his contemporaries did not have any conception of China other than its being a distant exotic place. Major encounterings with China is Chinese food, which is merely a name for all East Asian food. He admitted that “China became real when I started to work alongside Chinese colleagues”. This lack of understanding leads to his agreement with Talons’ representation when he first watched it: Shanghai is a dangerous place, he thought. Similar situations happen to Mr. M, growing up in Britain in the 1970s. He said that

“few people had any really sense of the country’s history or geography, beyond knowing the capital city was called (at the time) ‘Peking’.” He shared similar experience: “As a child, I loved “Talons” - it was exciting!”, acknowledging that he did not understand its problems until he came to China. Similar situations occur to Johnny 1989, who said that “it was a favourite of mine for a while.” The lack of awareness is pervasive. While Mr. P and Mr. M had come to China, others did not. This explains the unchanged representation: since most audience and scriptwriters do not know Chinese people/culture accurately, they can only refer to existing discourses.

### **Conclusion: Toward a better Doctor Who**

In conclusion, the representation of Chinese people remained unchanged in New Who. This conclusion is foregrounded by detailed textual criticism. Both eras rely on self-referential discourses, pursuing similar tropes, undermining the self-proclaimed progressive values of New Who. The status quo is due to a lack of pressure from audiences and an ignorance of means of improvement. These conclusions shows how popular televisions pursue self-circulating ideas disconnected from the reality and that the BBC, especially Doctor Who producers/writers, still needs to improve by distancing themselves from those discourses and based their writing on the real China.

## Appendix

### 1. Stories and their abbreviations

Story name	Era	Premier Year	Abbreviation
Marco Polo	Classic	1964	MP
The Mind of Evil	Classic	1971	ME
The Talons of Weng-Chiang	Classic	1977	Talons
The TV Movie	Classic	1996	TVM
Turn Left	New	2008	TL
The Angels Take Manhattan	New	2012	ATM

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