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White Slavery Writing Contemplates China: Jean Turner Zimmermann's *The Social Menace of the Orient* *

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Abstract

This paper looks at Jean Turner Zimmermann's *The Social Menace of the Orient: White or Yellow* (1921), one of the very few white slavery tracts focusing on white prostitution in China, as an example of how the anti-vice activists of the Progressive Era injected a moralistic discourse into American expansionism, advocating cultural imperialism while deploring the operations of economic imperialism. Zimmermann elaborates the white slavery tropes of big business into transnational female-recycling corporations dealing in fatal diseases and compares forced prostitution to war-time rape, thus revealing the fears of Asiatic threats lurking beneath white supremacy. The intercontinental career of the white slaves and Zimmermann's mission, however, blur the demarcation between the domestic and the foreign. The intersection of race, class and gender in her writing enables the author to assert the social and political rights of white middleclass women and find her niche in the Social Purity Movement; yet the marginalization of Zimmermann and her branch of the anti-vice campaign implies that the American prostitutes in China, should they be rescued, could become a menace to the American mainstream.

Keywords: white slavery writing, cultural imperialism, race, social class, gender

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Introduction

The Progressive era in the United States saw social reformists vigorously campaigning against prostitution and launching anti-vice investigations in most major cities.[1] Between the 1890s and the 1910s, tales of young women abducted and sold into a life of shame, known as "white slaves," were sensationalized in related writings, causing so much alarm that some commentators came to call it a "White Slave Panic."[2] A small portion of these white slavery writings mention victims shipped to China, which inspired this study of Jean Turner Zimmermann's *The Social Menace of the Orient* as an example of the American supposition of the Chinese people's role in this public scandal. The booklet, representative of the progressivists' attitudes toward the East, builds on the literary formulas of white slavery tracts and sets up a cultural project to police racial and class borders and to elevate the status of women activists within the movement. The marginalization of this branch of the campaign, despite its adherence to mainstream agenda, provides an alternative glimpse at the anti-vice racial politics which possibly feared the returning white slaves from the Orient as a potential social menace. My paper starts with a brief introduction to the conventions of this subgenre and the socio-cultural issues involved to put into perspective Zimmermann's writing scheme before analyzing her pamphlet through a close reading of her innovative metaphors of international waste disposal and wartime rape.

1 Studies helpful for an understanding of the Anti-vice Movement and its publications include Frederick K. Grittner's *White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law*; Brian Donovan's *White Slave Crusades: Race, Gender, and Anti-vice Activism, 1887-1917*; Mara Laura Keire's *For Business and Pleasure: Red-Light Districts and the Regulation of Vice in the United States, 1890-1933*; and Barbara Meil Hobson's *Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition.*

2 Commentators speak of a "White Slave Panic" or "White Slave Scare" because the public's reaction was out of proportion to proven cases. One oft-quoted piece of evidence is the failure of the 1910 grand jury in New York City led by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to uncover any well-organized white slavery syndicate. Thus Grittner calls it a "cultural myth" (6) and Katherine Joslin an "urban myth" (Introduction x). However, Donovan argues that the Rockefeller probe nevertheless shows that coercion permeated the vice trade (93); nor was the public dissuaded, because they imagined the white slavery organizations too successful to be detected (Stange 85).

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1. White Slavery Writing and Its Hidden Agenda

The typical white slavery writing was a tract combining investigative reports, criticisms of inadequate governmental and legal actions, and accounts of supposedly real life cases. The last, which especially grabbed the public's attention, often eclipsed the argumentative parts of the writing as White Slave Narratives. These stories follow a formula which highlights the socio-cultural concerns of the Social Purity Movement: an innocent white girl is lured from the farm or the ghetto by promises of marriage or work in the city, sometimes by amusements, or she is drugged or kidnapped, then forced into prostitution by procurers of Southern or Eastern European origins. Jo Doezema, noting the stock elements of "The Maiden Sacrifice" and "Non-white Slavers" in these stories, explains that the white slave's image differs from the Pre-Victorian "fallen woman" and the Victorian "sexual deviant" so as to win public sympathy, while the foreign or ethnic slaver reflects the racist disbelief that white women might willingly engage in commercialized sex with a mixed-race clientele (28-29). True to the word "sacrifice," the white slave usually dies at the end of these stories after inhumane treatment. Death prevents the disgraced woman from reentering the community and undermining the respectability of normal society (Joslin, "Slum Angels" 113). If the white slave is rescued, it must happen before she loses her honor (Johnson 112).

As the plot summary shows, race plays a central role in the anti-vice crusades. Behind the campaign was the contemporary unease about the large influxes of immigrants from diverse cultural backgrounds which threatened the mainstream ideas of a homogenous WASP America. On the one hand, racial stereotypes in popular culture such as white slavery writings suggest mass sentiments of white superiority and xenophobia; on the other, these writings provide a program to assimilate foreign elements. Brian Donovan calls white slavery writings "racial projects … inextricably tied to sex and gender projects" (3) that helped to maintain the racial boundaries of American society. By defining white America in terms of moral and sexual behavior, these writers granted new immigrants who conformed to mainstream values American citizenship and racial whiteness, while deviant members were classified as racial Others. As Donovan concludes, race therefore becomes "not a designation of biological descent but a conception of group-belonging, predicated on ideologies of sexual purity and danger" (129).

The gender projects of the anti-vice campaign worked to similar ends, except that the social reformers took much more diversified stances. Conservatives used

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white slavery to reinforce traditional gender roles and warned against ventures into the city, the workplace, shopping districts and recreation areas, where procurers awaited at every turn. Other activists, meanwhile, combined their campaigns with those for equality, women's suffrage, working rights and education.[3] Frances E. Willard, president of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, blames the sex industry on immoral men and calls for the participation of virtuous women in political life. Elizabeth Andrew and Katharine Bushnell picked up the campaign's ethnic and class undertones when they argue: "We must realize what may happen to American women if almond-eyed citizens, bent on exploiting women for gain, obtain the ballot in advance of educated American women" (Chapter 18). Mary Ting Yi Lui also details the subtle struggle for dominance between upper- and middle-class suffrage leaders and working-class social workers in her study of their joint efforts to fight white slavery in Chinatown (412-413). Jane Addams, who operated the famous Hull House in Chicago, believes that economic independence, reasonable labor conditions and sex education will prevent impoverished immigrant women from seeking dishonest employment. She envisions more effective social control "if the entire body of conventional women, simply because they held the franchise, felt constrained to inform themselves concerning the social evil throughout the cities of America" (89). Activists of all ideological stripes joined the anti-vice campaign to forward their agenda; yet, while race was mostly an issue between advocates and those implicated in white slavery, differences due to gender and class lurked not only between the reformer and the reformed but also within the reformist ranks.

Asians appear in anti-vice writings in two varieties: one has earned the separate name of "yellow slavery writing," which depicts the plights of Chinese women sold to Chinatown brothels; the other tells the story of white slaves shipped to Asia. Both are at best supplements or footnotes to white slavery campaigns, and the former gained more attention than the latter.[4] Yellow slavery narratives also have a formula:

3 For a quick overview of the contribution of these women reformers, see Chapters 3 and 4 in Donovan (37-55; 64-71) and the section on "Reformers and Their Agendas" in Hobson (150-154).

4 Yellow slavery had its champions, the most famous of which was Donaldina Cameron (1869-1968), who operated a rescue mission in San Francisco. For details of her exploits, please see Carol Green Wilson's *Chinatown Quest: The Life Adventures of Donaldina Cameron* and Mildred Crowl Martin's *Chinatown's Angry Angel: The Story of Donaldina Cameron*. Well-known yellow slavery tracts include Andrew and Bushnell's book *Heathen Slaves and Christian Rulers*, and Ernest A. Bell's essay on "The Yellow Slave Trade." Zimmermann, however, is the only—and unsung—champion of white slaves in Asia, and her pamphlet is the only such tract in the archives. James Bronson Reynolds'

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a young girl purchased or kidnapped in China is brought to the American west coast by "tongs"—Chinese organized crime syndicates—where she is held in bondage to Chinese brothel owners until white women missionaries rescue and convert her to Christianity and sometimes marry her to another Christianized Chinese. Scholars acknowledge the historical truth of yellow slavery and attribute its cause to the disproportion between men and women in the Chinese American community.[5] The scarcity of Chinese women, due to a series of exclusion acts, created a high demand for prostitutes and made human trafficking and brothel keeping highly profitable businesses.[6] The unease about the "Yellow Peril" finds expression in yellow slavery writing, which served as arguments against Chinese immigration, although it also provided a reformist scheme to accommodate eligible Asian subjects (Donovan 128). More specifically, the trope of "yellow slavery" stigmatized Chinese women as (ex-)prostitutes, even as it heroized white missionary women. By contrasting an immoral, patriarchal, feudal China with post-emancipation America, these writings glossed over the historical causes of Chinese prostitution and focused instead on racial and cultural differences so as to construct it as a foreign problem imposed on an innocent land (Cho 40-44).

White slavery in Asia is an even lesser-noticed topic that most writings only

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essay on "The Nations and White Slave Traffic" deals with both varieties of forced prostitution, but he devotes more attention to yellow slavery. See also Notes 7 and 17.

5 For a historical overview of yellow slavery, please see Benson Tong's *Unsubmissive Women: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco*, and Judy Yung's *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*. Chen Chin-yu's *An Analysis of the History of 19th-Century Chinese Immigrant Prostitutes in California* is one of the very few Chinese publications documenting the phenomenon. Peggy Pascoe's *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* provides a social study of the woman reformers who sheltered Chinese prostitutes. On the other side of the story, Wu Zhou offers a study of Chinese documents recording the export of Chinese prostitutes to all corners of the world in *The Cultural History of Chinese Prostitutes* (283-293), and Christian Henriot touches upon the deceptive and defensive attitude of the Chinese government on this matter in *Prostitution and Sexuality in Shanghai: A Social History, 1849-1949* (316-320).

6 Few Chinese laborers brought their families with them, and the Page Law of 1875, prohibiting the immigration of Asian prostitutes, in effect restricted the entry of nearly all Chinese women. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 further denied Chinese laborers citizenship, thus blocking wives from joining their husbands, while anti-miscegenation laws prevented them from marrying outside their racial category. Chinatowns therefore became bachelor societies.

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mention in passing.[7] Besides Zimmermann's pamphlet, which this paper will examine closely below, James Bronson Reynolds gives a more comprehensive argument against American prostitution in the East in his article on "The Nations and the White Slave Traffic." He warns against the "local, interstate, national and international ramifications" of white slave traffic, "which has the complete outfit of a large business: large capital, representatives in various countries, well paid agents, and able, high salaried lawyers [sic]" (202). Reynolds' statement, on the one hand, echoes the comparison between the vice trade and big business that appears quite often in white slavery tracts. Mara Laura Keire attributes the analogy to the prevailing distrust toward monopoly capitalism, which reformers employed to arouse animosity towards white slavery and push for legislation. She further notices three prominent metaphors: "The first depicted the business of vice as a trust composed of allied interests. The second likened red-light districts to marketplaces where the Vice Trust—those who profited from and controlled the vice districts—bought and sold prostitutes to fill district brothels. In the third metaphor, contemporary writers correlated white slavery with the involuntary servitude of debt peonage" (70). Keire centers her analysis on the practices of domestic economy, but, as Reynolds' observations show, the metaphors apply well to international human trafficking too.

In addition to economic references, however, international trading in this period is inevitably bound up with imperialism. It is no coincidence that foreign prostitutes arrived on the heels of foreign explorers and traders, and later foreign soldiers; nor were their purposes less mercenary and exploitative than their male compatriots. Wu Zhou, commenting on the export and the import of prostitutes in China, calls it semi-colonialism and partition by capitalist powers (283). He sympathizes with these women whom he considers unwilling "merchandise" and victims of colonial powers eager to reap the riches of the Middle Kingdom. Yet their identity as citizens

7 Historical researches on the topic are also scarce compared to those on yellow slavery. Shao Yong mentions that Western prostitutes visited Shanghai in the early 19th century aboard brothel boats, later settling in the red-light districts of the International Settlement (89, 94-95). Wu Zhou further explains that most foreign prostitutes in China came from Japan, Europe, Korea, or Russia, but he includes "comfort women" in his account (293-306); he also suggests that the import of foreign prostitution modernized the management of Chinese brothels (307). Henriot and Gail Hershatter only give glimpses of foreign prostitution in their studies of Shanghai, and Hershatter documents a couple of specific cases in a lengthy footnote (479). As for related literary works, Katie N. Johnson discusses "harem white slave plays" in *Sisters in Sin: Brothel Drama in America, 1900-1920*, where sexual and imperialist fantasies are enacted and the rigid parameters of history, nation, race and gender are clouded (124-126).

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of the Great Powers complicated their status in the local community. Gail Hershatter investigates prostitution in Shanghai and discovers that the language of national power relations permeates Chinese guidebooks to the sex industry, recommending European and American women for their hygiene while disparaging White Russians.[8] Japanese prostitutes, declared disease-free, were even said to inspect their Chinese customers for signs of venereal disease, which would result in refusal of service. "This reversal of the conventional power relations between prostitute and customer," Hershatter elucidates, "mirrored the reversal of relations between Japan and China, one that rankled many intellectuals" (238). Paradoxically, the foreign prostitute was simultaneously the oppressor and the oppressed to the Chinese client. Most white slavery writers might not have been sensitive enough to the ambivalent position of these women, but Reynolds notes that the exterritoriality clause protects American prostitutes from Chinese prosecution, so that the U.S. government must take responsibility for the shameful conduct of its expatriates (206). Reynolds goes so far as to propose the withdrawal of immunity from immoral nationals, though not out of concern for China's sovereignty; he aims to stop white slave traffic and rescue the women through the collaborative action of both governments, for he realizes that these women are just the tools of unscrupulous capitalists who make no distinctions between the national origins of their profits.

2. Pamphlet, Prejudice and Propaganda

The above issues of sexuality, morality, race, gender and international power relations are all entangled in *The Social Menace of the Orient*, the only proper white slavery tract—complete with investigation, narration and polemic—dealing with white prostitution in East Asia that is still accessible in print and databases. Little information of Zimmermann is available, though. Her biography in her pamphlets introduces her as a medical doctor who was the president of the Chicago Rescue Mission, the founder and general superintendent of the Chicago Woman's Shelter, the superintendent of the Department of Purity and Heredity of the Cook County Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and a board member of the American Asiatic Association. Her writings include *Chicago's Black Traffic in White Girls* (1911), *America's Black Traffic in White Girls* (1912), *White or Yellow?: A Story of America's Great White Slave Trade with Asia* (1916), and *Vere, of Shanghai* (1925).

8 The earliest Russian prostitutes came with Russian soldiers to invade China, but a new flux of refugees entered the country after the Russian Revolution (Wu 303), which might explain the discrimination.

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Still available in print and databases are the first of these and a booklet titled *The Social Menace of the Orient: White or Yellow, Volume II* (1921), which appears to be a reissue of the 1916 work. *Black Traffic* quotes documents and statistics to expose the Chicago brothels "almost entirely under foreign control," whose owners either "go home to their South Europe or Turkish haunts with their blood and soul money, to lives of filth and idleness in their own lands," or stay and become American citizens (10). Zimmermann expresses her racial prejudices straightforwardly when she alarms her presumably WASP readers: "Remember, as you read this, that America is becoming more and more un-American every day" (8). In her pamphlet on the Orient, these prejudices also influence her descriptions of white prostitution in China but serve wider reformist agenda. Through literary techniques such as tropes and metaphors, her work creates a public impression of China's part not only in the white slave trade but also on the world stage, which exceeds assimilation projects within U.S. borders and supports cultural imperialism on other continents. Coming back to the Social Purity Movement at home, though, Zimmermann aims not so much to rescue the irredeemable migrant sex workers but to underline the contributions of women activists in the reformist movement. Even so, her marginalization in the campaign shows that the public takes little interest in her calling—possibly due to the complex reactions to the racial issues that her writing evokes but cannot solve.

The blurring between the foreign and the domestic in Zimmermann's mission supports Amy Kaplan's insights in *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*, where she argues that U.S. international relations shaped the popular consciousness of American society from mid-19th century onward. Her chapter on "Manifest Domesticity" shows how 19th-century women writers projected Victorian ideals of the family on newly annexed lands. Such writings effaced the violence of American imperialism and incorporated foreign elements into familiar discourses, at the same time guarding the homeland against alien subjects. Zimmermann writes in this tradition in the sense that, in action, she strives to exert moral influence beyond the domestic—not only the home but the nation—by locating an internal social movement in a web of transnational commercial operations and advocating the export of American values especially in the areas of gender relations. Ideologically, she also spends most of her booklet struggling to demarcate the foreign/racial Other from the domestic/white bourgeoisie. However, in comparison to earlier women writers who took advantage of gender roles to participate in the discussions of expansionism, Zimmermann stresses the distinction between social classes. Kaplan finds the ideology of "separate spheres" permeating earlier writings on foreign politics: men conquered territories while women tamed and/or expurgated the wild or alien, so that the global expansion of the values of domesticity made women

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"more effective imperialists" (41). Zimmermann occupies much of the same moral high ground and follows many of the same agenda as her predecessors—except that she preaches Victorian social morals to women of the lower classes, while she emulates her male counterparts, thanks to the broadening of women's sphere in the early 20th century. This class division brings to light the split roles of American women—the white lady as imperialist in her own right, and the white slave as victim of foreigners at home and abroad. The latter exposes the complicated power relations between white women and non-white men, which undermines the racial boundaries abroad and by inference at home. The threatened boundaries likely prompted Zimmermann's need to draw a line between the classes in the first place—for all her associations of white slavery with the infection and spread of disease, racialization is the real contagious malady that calls for quarantine. As Zimmermann leaves the white prostitutes in China with no plans to bring them home, she shows that hers is not a rescue mission. The true purpose of her investigative journey to the East is to confirm the whiteness of the American imperialists, to defend the racial and class borders, and, by contrasting her righteousness and independence with male corruption and brutality, to find a niche for herself in the Social Purity Movement.

Not that Zimmermann is a forceful, persuasive author with remarkable writing skills. As the following analysis will show, she is unconscious of the contradictions in her viewpoints and reasoning, yet willfully imposes, with problematic figures of speech, a narrative on facts that do not neatly fit into her writing scheme. Other than her own blind spots, part of the confusion could come from White Slavery writers' habit of borrowing from each other. *Black Traffic* quotes abundantly the works of "United States Attorney [Edwin] Sims, Rev. Ernest A. Bell and others" (5-6), and Bell does the same in his collection *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls.*[9] Zimmermann's booklet, which follows different lines of reasoning and reflects diverse opinions, is therefore likely a potpourri of popular arguments against white slavery in Asia. The tract must have addressed common concerns of the American public and conformed to its perceptions of the East to warrant a reissue even though the Anti-vice Movement declined in the early years of World War I (Donovan 133-139; Hobson 165-183). In fact, the publication date of the reissue suggests that the decision possibly had more to do with China than white slavery.

9 In his chapter on "The Yellow Slave Trade," for instance, Bell basically cites investigative findings and individual cases from Andrew and Bushnell's work. He also quotes Zimmermann (197-98, from her Chicago investigations) and Sims extensively throughout his book.

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The American people took a benevolent view toward China by the turn of the century due to increased missionary work supported by American Church donations, to the extent of taking, in the words of China expert Steven W. Mosher, “an almost proprietary interest” (43). On the one hand, the missionaries held and helped create an unfavorable view of Chinese moral character (Jones 99); yet on the other, they also became more diffident about the merits of Western civilization after the Great War (Mosher 44). Zimmermann, however, is quite adamant in her Christian faith and disapproves of Confucianism and Buddhism, especially because of the misogynous customs produced by the former, although, at the same time, she gives sparse praise to the civility, industry, and patience of the Chinese people. She mainly shares with her contemporaries the awareness of China’s potential. The prominent metaphor for China in the early 20th century is a country awakening under the reformist and revolutionary forces shaking it up (Jones 111). Zimmermann likewise calls China “the coming nation of the Orient” (25), except that her writing implies its rise depends on the eradication of vice. She thus adds a moralistic voice to the commentaries of Western political and social scholars who concentrate on political philosophy, public administration, economic system, and modernization. However, while she criticizes the operations of economic imperialism, ranking prostitution among imported evils along with opium and alcohol, she does not realize that the Christian moralities she advocates is actually a form of cultural imperialism that forces foreign values on colonized peoples. Moreover, her focus on the peculiar racial relation between white prostitutes and Chinese customers offers another glimpse into the American impression of China between the First World War and the 1920s. The reversal of racial power relations in the sex industry might foreshadow the future interaction between a thriving, “uncivilized” China and a challenged U.S. if the predictions of China’s rise come true before reformists like Zimmermann accomplish their mission.

To make her points, Zimmermann alters the stock elements of white slavery writings. *Social Menace* elaborates on the big business metaphor and highlights international collaboration in the white slave trade, which enables the writer to comment on not only racial but national politics. Her characterization of the Asian trade of white prostitutes as recycling or even waste disposal creates a hierarchy of markets, while her description of the exchange of disease reveals her repugnance to interracial contact and cultural exchange. Her unusual comparison between forced prostitution and rape further intensifies the tension between the races and the nations, at the same time drawing a distinction between lower-class victims and heroic missionary/imperialist women. These two motifs combine to represent Chinese men as anti-foreign, disease-ridden rapists and consumers of transnational female-recycling corporations, through which we sense the fears of Asiatic threats

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lurking beneath the convictions of white supremacy.

3. The International Recycling Industry of Disease

Zimmermann begins the booklet by casting herself as a detective. After retelling the typical story of the white slaves with their dysfunctional families and financial hardships, she dramatizes a conversation between herself and an officer about what eventually becomes of these girls, "too strong to die—yet" (10). Concerned about hundreds of Chicago prostitutes she knew personally who had left because of recent raids on red-light districts, Zimmermann leaves with her partner and companion Christine Kuppinger in search of their whereabouts. By way of New York and New Orleans, she passes through San Francisco and travels on to investigate the vice trade in Peking, Tientsin, and Shanghai. The search for missing persons—or, with the certainty of death, the solution of a mass murder case—is a typical storyline of what Margit Stange identifies as one of the traditions of White Slave Narratives: the detective story and the genre known as "mysteries and miseries of the city" (76). Zimmermann, however, does not stay with the plot because she fails to fulfill the purpose of her journey: she never mentions the Chicago women again in the latter half of the booklet, but instead launches a field investigation of the international white slave trade. Even so, the structure of the booklet leaves the impression that she indeed follows the fatal journey of her Chicago charges and solves the mystery.

As private eye and then investigative reporter, Zimmermann outlines the lifecycle of white slaves as product. The titles of the pamphlet's sections—"Chicago and New York," "The South," "The West," and "The Orient"—map their geographical movement while depicting the different markets. The young girls coming into Chicago are the raw material molded into prostitutes, who "[do] not stay here long" (11) after some initial use. Chicago is therefore the supplier of seasoned sex workers, and "the great wave of action against public vice in … Northern States" (13) ironically floods other parts of the country with "second-hand pollution." The complaints of the estranged girl in New Orleans about feeling "lonesome down here among all these niggers" (13), along with the contrast between a reformist, purified North and a South still holding white slaves on the ironically named Liberty Street, indicates that the Chicago women have even fallen geographically in their fortune. Zimmermann opens the section titled "The South" with a tour of the old auction block where her imagination of the antebellum slave trade reaches its climax with a picture of the auction of a young woman of

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ambiguous lineage: “I saw a girl in whose veins flowed the Aryan blood of old Virginia forced out on the block under the knout of a brutal driver. I saw her dress torn from her trembling limbs, I heard a voice that seemed to come from Hades hiss that they were straight, well-made—I heard another hiss ‘and she’s intact, what am I bid?’” (12) Zimmermann could have in mind a mulatto, a white slave, or indeed herself—“for [her] blood is Southern blood” (12)—as the past collapses into the present under “the shadow of the Cross … over a white market in my Southland” (13). The ambiguity successfully compares the horrors of white slavery to that of black slavery and emphasizes the oft-sounded warning that every woman regardless of race and class is a potential victim. It also attests, however, to the reformist mindset to racialize white slaves through the association of chattel slavery with commercial sexual exploitation. The anachronism further suggests that the South has not changed despite the Civil War—it has actually worsened, as Northern white women instead of blacks are now enslaved and Northern liberators bring only hometown gossip but no relief.

Another irony of the above quote is Zimmermann’s discovery elsewhere that the white slaves sold to the South are not “intact”; they are “used goods,” in fact “damaged goods,” as she repeatedly warns the readers of sexually transmitted diseases. The references to death in the earlier quotes come from this concern about public health issues, which the author highlights possibly because of her medical training. The prevalent death images complicate her mapping of the white slaves’ supply chain, though: on the one hand, Chicago ships out “contaminated goods” and spreads disease over the U.S. and the rest of the world; yet, at the same time, she depicts the underworld of these other cities and other continents as ridden with disease and death, so that the girls become casualties of their cosmopolitan sojourn. Thus the syntactically awkward sentence: “… in the western coast cities these girls come into direct touch with the vicious demands of all the Oriental world and are easily induced to go on and on to Siberia, Japan, China, the sea islands of all the south countries—raging death” (9). Though it is ambiguous whether “raging death” modifies “these girls” or “countries,” Zimmermann in her detective mode always casts the women as victims and never as Angels of Death. On the contrary, her favorite metaphor for the procurers and madams is the vampire, such as when she sees them on “the great street walking grounds” in New York, “where men and women go every night to hunt innocent, or ‘near innocent’ blood, blood of girls and boys to stir and mix it, to alloy it with frightful disease, and turn it finally into gold, gold for the slave master, gold that one day will sink … completely the health and vitality of the nation” (11). Zimmermann mixes not only the metaphors of vampire and alchemist, but also the images of the manufacturer and merchant. The disease comes from the production process, she suggests, while the American consumer

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turns out as much a victim as the white slaves. This notion supports Keire's observation that the customer is always faultless in the big business metaphor (77), here extended from the business operation to the public health threat of prostitution. Zimmermann's concern for national health and individual citizens disappears, however, when she turns her attention to the East. She cares little that the U.S. exports disease, like so many earlier colonists and imperialists, but, as we will see in her depictions of Chinese brothels, focuses instead on the health risks to the white women.[10]

In the international traffic of white prostitutes, Zimmermann envisions the Orient as the dumping ground of diseased girls. Chicago breaks them in, other U.S. cities consume them, and then Asian countries recycle them until the vice trade has no more use of them. The booklet recounts the stories of exported white prostitutes, under the control of a "great commercialized vice ring [that] reaches around the world, it is systematized, its organization is strength itself [*sic*]" (18). The only evidence it offers of such an organization, however, is Japan's "vast, government-taxed, government-upheld yoshiwaras [red-light districts] in every city in every country she has been allowed to enter," including the U.S. (15). If the Japanese, with government backing Zimmerman implies, indeed operated an international enterprise of such scale, the proper analogy, instead of the vice trust discussed by Keire, might be a multinational conglomerate under government sponsorship.[11]

Zimmermann's impression of the Japanese sex trade perhaps reflects the growing unease over the country's role in world politics and international commerce. White slavery authors often resort to patriotism, as does Zimmermann in shaming her readers into action:

> women of all the nations are congregated in these immense [Oriental] flesh markets, America leading all in exports to them. We fall behind in many ways in our trade with the Orient, but in the shipment of our young American girls by all the slimy traders in womanhood from all the world,

10 The European colonialists in the Americas, for instance, were unaware that they brought deadly diseases that killed huge numbers of indigenous people (Nash 49-50). Afflictions of the Americas such as syphilis and yaws also traveled back to Europe, though with milder consequences (Nash 52).

11 In spite of Zimmermann's claims, Reynolds reports that Japanese officials he approached expressed the wish to combine efforts with the U.S. government to suppress international traffic in women (206).

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> we at least lead the way, until the words "American woman" have become by-words in many parts of Asia. (17)[12]

It is worth noting that U.S.-Japan relations revolved around economic interests, especially in China, since the turn of the century, that Japan had emerged as a power since World War I, and that American leaders targeted Japan as the main threat to peace and stability in east Asia during the 1920s (Matray 457). Zimmermann appropriates the alarm about trailing American business interests in the East and opens the section on "The Orient" with the observation: "Japan practically controls the passenger shipping of the Pacific Ocean and certainly she controls the Asian Pacific Coast line from Vladivostock to Manila [*sic*]" (15). On the one hand, she mockingly congratulates the U.S. for catching up with the Japanese, since "the American girl [prostitute] leads in numbers those of any other race, barring always the Japanese" (26); yet, on the other, if Japan truly "rules the commercialized prostitution of the Western oceans" (15), then Japanese management receives the lion's share of the profits while Americans merely provide "goods" and labor. Though Zimmermann does not further clarify her position, her sarcasm could convey an aversion to a rival country in the Pacific Rim, or to the global expansion of big businesses, or both.

Much as Zimmermann dislikes Japan on moral and patriotic grounds, she nevertheless presents the Japanese in a more dignified light than the Chinese, which corresponds to American impressions of these two nations mentioned above. Once the white slaves arrive in the local market of China, they go through a mini-lifecycle similar to the larger one. Big cities such as Shanghai receive them and afterward ship them "to all the interior cities of Asia" (24). The women work for a "high class house" for a period of time and are then "sent to a lower class house, as soon as it is known she [has] … Oriental syphilis" (18). For all her medical expertise, Zimmermann obscures the origin of the women's illness. Though in the first section the Chicago officer makes the unchallenged claim that "practically all of [the prostitutes] are diseased" (9), in this later section Zimmermann intimates that the white slaves contract sexually transmitted disease in the Orient—inferably from the Orients.

In the most sensational instance of the booklet, a white girl in Tientsin,

12 Despite such claims by Zimmermann and Reynolds (204), studies of Chinese archives show that American women made up only a small portion of foreign prostitutes in China, far less in number and far less prominent than Japanese, Spanish and Russian women even before the Japanese invaded Manchuria and shipped comfort women into the land (Wu 294-306; Zhang 73).

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half-naked, half-blinded, with "limbs bent this way and that," is forced "by blood-yellow hands armed with hot metal chopsticks" to receive "one of her kind," a "gray lumpy leper"; the unwilling girl kills herself with a hidden knife and "down against the bamboo bars of that reeking Asiatic cellar, down at the feet of the rotting leper fell a scarred, huddled white American body" (19). Zimmermann suggests that China harbors diseases much more frightful than those back home. Moreover, even though the girl already shows symptoms similar to leprosy, the narrator dwells on the physical horror of the white woman who is forced to come in contact with the disease, as if reenacting the conditions under which she contracted her illness in the first place. Since the bizarre instruments of torture strongly hint that the scars on the girl came from torment rather than disease, the story ends with the contrast between the white, tortured body of the girl and the blood-yellow, grayish deformed bodies of the men.

Descriptions of whoremongers rarely reach such a level of grotesqueness in other white slavery writings, as seen, for instance, in the earlier quotations from Black Traffic. By targeting the Chinese clientele, Zimmermann indicates that the worst part of the white slave's fate in Asia is coming in touch with Chinese men. Ironically, archives show that foreigners and Chinese men actually blamed each other for the spread of venereal disease (Hershatter 56), which suggests that, taken as a metaphor, these contagious diseases represent the insecurity and the aversion felt by the individual and the society towards racial Others, whose alien qualities are seen as physical and social ills. Zimmermann's sensational story, therefore, possibly suggested itself to her as an appropriate expression of the physical, cultural and moral degradation suffered by the white slaves in China. By calling the customer "one of her kind," the author once again racializes the prostitute who has become by inference "one of their kind" as well.

4. Rape and Imperialism

The international recycling industry of diseased white slaves exploits the sexual appetite of Chinese men, which becomes the defining feature of Chinese culture in Zimmermann's journey to the East. She shows a dislike for "the lop-shouldered, smuggled-in, pig-tailed opium parched Chinese [*sic*]" in her earlier *Black Traffic*, where she enters "A Word of Protest" against furnishing white women for "unparalleled Asiatic debauchery" (29). *Social Menace* goes one step further and presents the Chinese as a subhuman race driven by animal instincts. The analogy between prostitution and rape in the booklet further complicates the power relation

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between American women and non-white men, which Zimmermann uses to opine on gender, racial and international politics.

Zimmermann's description of her first arrival with Kuppinger in Peking borders on mob rape:

> A thousand coolies pressed us to the wall, dirty, filthy hands snatched at our luggage, half-blinded eyes leered at us, close, a thousand struggling, fighting, coughing men were screaming at the top of their voices. … [There] remained but one thing to do, simply beat off the crowd with our walking sticks and defend as best we could our valuable cases. They were determined to carry them away to our hotel. … We stood our ground and slashed right and left. (18-19)

These rickshaw drivers are the only Chinese males that make a physical appearance in Zimmermann's own travel. By placing the incident immediately before the horrid tale of the leper, the author parallels her confrontation with the sickly, contagious, aggressive and unintelligible men with the white slave's struggle. Even though she knows the coolies are only desperate to earn a living by delivering the travelers safely to their destination, she uses the instance to illustrate the dangers of abduction in a foreign land: "The girl who once loses sight of a white face in the Orient … is lost forever. She might stand in the middle of the station at Peking in a crowd of a thousand and scream her head loose and not one soul would so much as look around to see what the matter was, unless it chanced a white man stood by" (19). The coolies are equated with procurers, and the white man counted on for his chivalry. Zimmermann possibly wants to win over her male readers with the last comment, following the example of earlier anti-vice activists such as Willard and Bushnell who appeal to the male sense of honor (Donovan 46; 115). She forgets, however, that she contradicts herself in the story preceding this one about a "Dr. Sargent of Seattle" who tried to abduct a female missionary. Nor does she ever mention that white men constitute a significant proportion of the patrons of white prostitutes in the East (Shao 101). In truth, however, the missionary friend who comes to Zimmermann's rescue in this case is Miss Fearon, and throughout the book she relies on other women to guide her through the Chinese rescue homes. If the lost girl seeks a white face in the crowd, another white woman looks like the safer bet. Even so, the white woman defending herself with the walking stick best represents Zimmermann's idea of how women should survive in China, at the same time better echoing the feminist agenda of Willard and Bushnell. The young missionary in the abduction tale, "a strong woman, a college girl," also escapes by fighting Dr. Sargent

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"with stout arms and a now thoroughly aroused stout heart" (17). Even the knife-wielding prostitute manages to find salvation through suicide, as her "tortured, twisted soul—a soul of tears and blood … went back to the God who gave it" (19).

These basic elements of Zimmermann's portrait of China recur in her imagination of the Boxer Rebellion of 1900. Just as she dramatizes the slave auction in New Orleans to recall the American South's slaveholding past and compare white slavery to black slavery, the author first inserts a long passage of her visit to the Peking Rescue Home for Chinese prostitutes to explain that "[the] position of a woman in China is exactly that of a chattel, a slave" (20).[13] Like the journalistic treatments of an earlier era, her impression of Chinese women collapses, as Yu-Fang Cho observes in her study of late 19th-century San Francisco newspapers, the three categories of Chinese women—prostitutes, slave girls, and wives—"into one sensational image of the helpless 'slave,' thereby … reducing all heterosexual relations of the Chinese to ruthless abuse and scandalous exploitation epitomized by prostitution" (44). The "struggling, swearing, filthy coolies" again gather to lead home one of the Chinese girls Zimmermann affectionately calls "'little dogs' of humanity" to become "wife, concubine or slave," whom they might return to the rescue home, further "bruised and bleeding," within three months if unsatisfied (20). The white slaves fare worse, as they are "less thought of by the Chinese themselves than the dog that haunts the outlying graveyard of the country and lives by gnawing the body and bones of the murdered baby left there for him" (21). The canine images echo each other, although the sentiments differ: in the former, Zimmermann looks benignly on "the little prisoners of the rescue home" and finds them "sweet and lovable, some like animals ruled by the slaver's knout" (20); yet the "murderous" Chinese in the latter instance abuse and transform the white prostitutes into monsters.

The reference to the "murdered baby" in the above quote perhaps implies accidental pregnancies, abortions, and illegitimate mixed-blood children—topics nearly all white slavery writings evade, possibly for fear of shocking their genteel audience. Yet sandwiched between the descriptions of the Chinese prostitutes and

13 The first such rescue home in Shanghai was established in 1896 by American missionary women who pitied Chinese prostitutes servicing American soldiers (Shao 101). Zimmermann, however, seems unaware of the composition of the clientele and merely emphasizes the abuse the Chinese women received at the hands of their Chinese masters, the "mixed" courts with one Western and one Chinese magistrate that rescue them, and acknowledges that Chinese donations help finance the homes (19-20). These homes were mainly run by western missionaries with the assistant of local workers, and, despite the family atmosphere, one could notice the cultural differences and hierarchy (Zhao 175).

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the white slaves is a passage on women's status in China, which leads Zimmermann to add that the white wife of a "mixed marriage," which is "utterly repellent, repulsive and impossible," is treated no different from Chinese women: she "loses her standing and caste both among whites and Chinese" (21). Zimmermann repeats the same mistake noted by Cho above, although this time she mixes up white wives and white prostitutes, imagining all alliances with Chinese men, even when legitimate and voluntary, to be white slavery. The white wives not only become "yellow" but pose a more serious threat to racial boundaries because of their willingness to cross them. Zimmermann therefore stresses their unhappy fate with no sympathy for them—compared to the white slaves, they are beyond the reach of her charity and possibly do not deserve it.

Zimmermann's next stop at the little English Church in the British legation compound of Peking combines the motifs of rape and misogyny with racial conflict to highlight her alarm about cross-cultural encounters. The spot is notable because during the Boxer Rebellion, all the foreigners gathered there: "men of every country on earth fought and dug and bled and died to save white women and children" (22) and "five hundred men armed with modern guns held [the compound walls] against fifty thousand cowards who clamored for their blood and wives and children" (23). At first one expects Zimmermann to mobilize her male readers to emulate these heroes and defend their white sisters in China, but instead she directs her pleas to "the club women and Church women" at home (24). The sole purpose of the episode is to draw an analogy: as her vision of the rescued women singing psalms on the wall morph into American prostitutes marching to death, Zimmermann by inference likens "the mad, frothing Boxers" (22) to the diseased Chinese whoremongers, and the white slaves to "women with the best blood of our nation in their veins, consecrated women of the Churches, … all women of all nations" (23). The analogy offers an unorthodox footnote to the Boxer Rebellion: in addition to being "a Chinese nationalistic backlash against Westerners," including imperialists and missionaries (Beall 85), the revolt, the author implies, arises partly from Chinese desire for white women. Zimmermann praises the white men for protecting "woman's honor" (23), which insinuates that the Boxers intended to rape the foreign ladies. In light of recent legal debates on rape as a hate crime, her hunch may carry truth, though unverifiable because the foreign legations prevailed. However, the analogy between wartime rape and prostitution suggests that sexual desire was a factor of the resistance movement. Whether or not she believes in the American white middleclass myth that colored men especially desire white women the text does not provide further evidence, although her suspicion of the Boxers' motives enables such a reading.

No other writer compares white slavery to rape, although their descriptions of

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the reluctance and resistance of the abducted girls suggest nothing less. Yet these descriptions usually occur at the procuring stage of the white slave's career. The veteran prostitute, on the other hand, is either resigned or despondent; rarely does she put up a fight like the leprous white slave. Therefore, by reviving this metaphor in the later stages of the white slave's story, Zimmermann reminds us of the violent nature of the vice trade, lest the slave herself and the reader grow desensitized. What is even more notable here is Zimmermann's application of the war metaphor to her analysis of white slavery in the East, through which she underscores the enmity between the peoples and turns commercial sex into an act of invasion. The white prostitutes are not alien workers soliciting local patronage but, by analogy, expatriates fending off local mobs after their life, property and virtue; and the Chinese men are not only rapists but also war criminals, who act out of xenophobia as well as lust.

Zimmermann in effect sides with what is today known as the biosocial theory of mass wartime rape. Jonathan Gottschall provides four explanations for this deviant behavior: the feminist theory, the cultural pathology theory, the strategic rape theory, and the biosocial theory. The feminist theory regards rape in war, like rape in peace, as a misogynistic expression of male desire to exert power over women. The cultural pathology theory blames it on cultural traits such as sado-masochistic tendencies in specific societies. The strategic rape theory, meanwhile, maintains that wartime rape is carried out for tactic purposes like demoralizing, humiliating and emasculating the enemy. These three theories differ in the sociocultural factors they emphasize, while the biosocial theory believes sexual desire as important a factor as sociocultural influences (Gottschall 134-135). Zimmermann's reference to wartime rape also attributes white slavery in China to both biosocial and sociocultural forces. The feminist and the cultural pathology views of rape match Zimmermann's impressions of an oppressively patriarchal, sexually perverted China. The strategic rape argument forwards her appeals to patriotism, but instead of self-examination she resorts to incitement here. Other white slavery writers such as Reynolds also acknowledge that in the Orient "the term 'American girl' was synonymous of a prostitute" (204), but he blames the white slavers and the American government's inaction (206). Zimmermann, on the contrary, finds fault with the Chinese—for harboring a desire for white flesh and thus creating a market for white slaves, and then for forcing themselves upon the reluctant girls, and finally for robbing white men who should enjoy a monopoly over their women. The strategic rape theorists partly agree with the feminists in that they see wartime rape as a desire for power too, though in this case power over the enemy men. The two camps disagree, however, because the strategic line of reasoning does

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not directly condemn the treatment of women as male property. As a writing strategy, Zimmermann's metaphor possibly calculates on the strategists' patriarchal reading, even if it contradicts her central image of the independent, self-preserving woman. By connecting white slavery with wartime rape, she characterizes the former as an intentional affront to white dignity, men and women alike.[14] The risk of adopting a war metaphor, though, is that the reader could easily advocate retaliation, which would defeat the purpose of her mission.

Perhaps due to this uneasiness with hidden racial hate, Zimmermann makes efforts to balance her negative description of China. She praises the Chinese charities for abused local slaves, claiming that "the Chinaman is nothing if not philanthropic" (19), and finds Asian hospitality toward visitors "beautiful" (20). She can barely sustain this admiration for Eastern culture, though, as she glorifies the women of the foreign legations during the Boxer Rebellion, who sang Psalm 95 "as only women can sing who have escaped the Great Curse, sang it up past Confucius, up past Buddha, … until the music … wafted back again to earth to cap the great already laid foundation for the salvation of China, and Chinese women for the Kingdom of Right" (23). Zimmermann claims to have "the highest regard and love for the Chinese," as potential Christians it seems, and she believes China to be "the coming nation of the Orient" (25)—as soon as it is "civilized," i.e. "westernized," one might add. Her acculturation project for the colonized people, on the other hand, possibly speaks to promoters of American exceptionalism. Imperialists thrust commercialized prostitution, along with opium, tobacco and whisky, upon China, she argues, whereas in fact "[the] people of China do not want opium, do not want prostitution, but these things are utterly forced upon them. … [The] great white slave syndicate of Asia and dealers all over Europe and America are forcing rapidly the open house of prostitution into China. She is helpless and must swallow the whole thing bait and hook" (25). Despite the naïve and self-contradictory notion that prostitution is a western invention, Zimmermann makes a good point in incorporating the Great Powers into the Big Business metaphor. Late 19th- and early 20th-century imperialists coveted the Chinese market, and the U.S. was no exception. Still, Americans assumed a moral guardianship over China due to its missionary activity, and the Open Door policy nevertheless reflected public support for the self-determination and sovereignty for weaker nations; this element of altruism even survived the Boxer Rebellion, prompting the U.S. to use the indemnity paid by the

14 Chinese archives claim that foreign prostitutes entered Peking after the Boxer Rebellion (Wu 299), suggesting a possible Chinese reading that the incident opened the door for the sexual invasion/exploitation of imperialist powers that contradicts Zimmermann's interpretation of the incident.

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Manchu regime for scholarships to Chinese students (Mosher 44; Beall 86). Zimmermann's reference to the unscrupulous exploitation of China thus mines this benevolent sentiment and adds white slavery to the long list of imperialist predation. It also unites China and the U.S. in their suffering at the hands of ruthless capitalists, with America losing her daughters and China losing everything. The association with opium underlines the physical, financial, social and moral harm done to China through the international sex trade, at the same time elevating the U.S. morally above other Western Powers such as England, whose government sanctions the sale of poison. In hindsight, it even foretells the progress of imperialism by sovereign states to that by multinational corporations, what we call today neocolonialism.

5. Racial Agenda of White Women Activists

The loosely-connected episodes of the booklet thus weave together a tale of the betrayal of innocent white women by western men eager to profit from foreign trade, their abuse by Chinese men driven by interracial desire and hate, and their doom as recycled goods contracting and spreading fatal diseases. Due to the complicated, sometimes conflicting, standpoints presented in the booklet, the title becomes quite ambiguous. In the opening chapter, a Chicago officer calls the prostitutes "the problem of the police, the menace of society" (9), by the hint of which the reader might presume the title refers to the white slaves in China who are likewise a problem to the local authorities and local society. Halfway through the pamphlet, however, the author calls Japan "the social menace of the Orient, the world" (15) for trading in its women and those of other nations. The culprit is then in fact the oriental operator of commercialized sex, who is a menace to both East and West. Yet Zimmermann only censures Japan in this single paragraph, which is out of proportion to its significance as the main focus of her tract. The latter half of the pamphlet, meanwhile, gives so unfavorable a description of Chinese men that the reader comes to see them as a menace to white prostitutes, to Chinese society, and to foreign legations and visitors.

The subtitle "White or Yellow" also encourages a mixed interpretation, as together the pamphlet title reads like a question: is the social menace of the Orient white or yellow? The question mark in the earlier 1916 title, *White or Yellow?*: *A Story of America's Great White Slave Trade with Asia*, proves that Zimmermann means to present the 1921 title as a query. Both titles emphasize the multiracial nature of international sex trafficking rings, but the 1921 question is more sophisticated, as it also tries to assign responsibility to a certain racial group, which

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other white slavery writers such as Reynolds, who stresses “Our Shame in the Orient” (204), do not attempt. Why Zimmermann felt the need to pose these questions she does not explain; are they rhetorical questions or corrections of some common misunderstanding of the white slave trade? Nevertheless, she clearly places equal, if not more, emphasis on the yellow culprits in the later title, since the manner in which the question is asked (“white—or yellow?”) implies that “white” is the more commonsensical answer but the author wishes to bring “yellow” to the reader’s attention.

The titles show that racial identity is foremost in Zimmermann’s mind as she discusses white slavery, and for that reason she defends the whiteness of the American prostitutes in China. At stake is not merely the purity of American women but their racial and cultural superiority, and by inference that of the American readers. What the author fights against with her walking stick, the white slave with her knife, and the women of the foreign legations with their psalms is therefore not only miscegenation but also degradation; but the downward pull is strong, and the numerous white prostitutes jumping off the Shanghai bridge “[slip] noiselessly into the yellow, muddy water and—Eternity” (26). The “yellow,” muddy water may well symbolize the demoralizing Asian environment, while the Eternity here is devoid of God’s Grace. The white slave loses along her migration from West to East her virtue, her health, her social position, her sanity, her life and finally her salvation. As the disease “settled in her brain” (25), Zimmermann does not claim her soul; except for the leprous white slave who showed resistance, death brings no redemption.

“We must leave you there,” Zimmermann says as she leaves the Peking legation grounds to seek the support of American charities, “Leave you there on a shoreless sea whose wreckage bumping into you is the awful beast-man of the world, the eyeless leaper, the blinded beggar, the hatchet-faced coolie, the bloated, bulging, festering body of your owner. …” (24). The phrase “beast-man” accentuates the subhuman qualities the author sees in the Chinese, and her abandonment of the white slaves shows that white women who come into contact with the heathens are irremediably damaged and contaminated. The white slave’s journey to the East is a road of no return, physically and spiritually: the great majority of them “never return to home or friends” but are “lost forever,” the author explains (26); the co-signed letter by a group of white slaves to the American club women further echoes her metaphor and surrender: “We are awash on a sea without a shore, you can do nothing for us, we are lost—dead, but won't you try to save our younger sisters?” (24). Zimmermann replies she will try to save both, but her major scheme is to stop the traffic in American girls; she gives no plans on how to bring those in Asia back, possibly because it is unimaginable for her and her readers. True to the White Slave Narrative formula, the lost girls cannot be reintroduced into respectable society.

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By leaving the white slaves in Asia to their dismal fate, Zimmermann acknowledges that her true agenda lies in the U.S. Her description of the Oriental prostitution district of San Francisco, in fact, hardly differs from that of the East, therefore showing that, in her perception, Chinatown is but an extension of China, and vice versa, while domestic problems with the Asians are identical to international problems, and vice versa: "We were surrounded on every side by hundreds, even thousands of Orientals. From one direction came the shrill call of a street 'hawker,' from another the shriek of a woman in distress, from all sides came the smirk of strange yellow faces" (14). The scene foreshadows her predicament at the Peking railway station, and the unspecified woman in distress is supposedly a prostitute, likely white since the Page Act of 1875 had long restricted the immigration of Chinese women. For certain the police officers coming to escort them admit "there's a lot of white girls in there [*sic*]" (14) and Zimmermann calls the scene "the festival of men's debauchery" where she envisioned "only yellow smirks as gold was exchanged for white flesh, only foreign damning oaths—women's screams—it was the Festival of Death" (15). The description roughly sums up her impression of China: a nation of perverse, lecherous men, a bachelor society devoid of normal families and healthy sexual relationships, a market consuming helpless women, a land of disease and death. The equation of the country with its expatriate community exposes a supremacist-imperialist mindset which, on the one hand, refuses to accept certain ethnic elements into the homeland, yet, on the other, mentally extends U.S. sovereignty to territories related to national interest.

The Chinatown scene further mirrors Zimmermann's account of her Asian travels in the treatment of unreliable white men and in the stress on female independence. Except in the retold stories of the white procurer and the defense of the Peking foreign legations, Zimmermann does not mention any male compatriots in her own adventures. She explores Peking with the assistance of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of China (19), includes pictures of the Chicago Women's shelter and missionary girls' schools in Samoa and Seoul, and features Catholic sisters working in Samoa and China. Women seem to carry out domestic and foreign good works on their own, and the best Zimmermann can do is gloss over white men's patronage of white slaves. In San Francisco, she and Kuppinger have a brush with the law. Besides the Chinatown descriptions above, the section on "The West" mainly relates their encounter with two easygoing police officers who try to stop them from passing through the neighborhood's red-light district. The ladies persist with demands for a reason, to which the men, reluctant to name the true nature of the zone, finally express concern for their safety in terms of their intrusion

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on the residents: “the Orientals and others interested do not like to have visitors, that is, women visitors, around too much” (14). Given Zimmermann’s mission, one might question whether the police want to protect the women activists or the Chinatown white slavers. In their few appearances in the booklet, the police force are indifferent and/or inactive, if not worse. The caption of the first picture, after the frontispiece of the author with her young wards, refers to an ex-policeman serving a sentence for the death of a white slave who, the text implies, was abducted by a “uniformed Negro officer” (6). Meanwhile, the Chicago officer who heatedly offers information of the prostitutes is but a knowledgeable onlooker, whereas the San Francisco policemen “leaned against the lamp post … and looked as official as possible” (14).

Zimmermann perhaps echoes allegations by other anti-vice reformers about political corruption and incompetent law enforcement; yet the San Francisco scene turns into playful banter, with the women teasing the officers to speak the unspeakable and the officers ineptly searching for a reply. Zimmermann and her companion finally leave with the triumphant announcement, “Only we’ve been through [the red-light district] already” (14). Foreshadowing her journey across the Pacific, it is as if the author were flaunting her investigative adventures in China in front of quizzical men who doubted her resolution. Zimmermann thus turns her abolitionist mission into an example of female empowerment. More specifically, she addresses the issue of women’s movement in public space. One item on the hidden agenda of the Social Purity Movement, many scholars point out, is the restriction of women’s consumption and recreation, enabled by the new freedom of mobility, which made them vulnerable to the wiles of procurers. Women’s increased visibility in the city worried mainstream society; as a result, many white slavery writings warned against migration to the city and participation in urban activities, while reformers and social workers patrolled recreation areas to detect the workings of the sex trade, in the hopes of regulating women’s conducts.[15] On a broader level, the White Slave Traffic Act of 1910 that prohibited the interstate transport of women for (ill-defined) “immoral” purposes, the controls on the immigration of Chinese women, and the alarms of the emigration of white women to Asia all infringe on mobility rights. Zimmermann speaks up for her individual rights here, but her paternalistic

15 Donovan details “The Dangers of the City” prominent in White Slave Narratives (22-29). Elizabeth Alice Clement explains how women’s presence in city spaces blurred the line between prostitution and courtship in *Love for Sale: Courting, Treating, and Prostitution in New York City, 1900-1945*. Kathy Peiss cites records of the reformist investigations extensively in *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York*.

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attitude towards less resourceful women echoes mainstream values: "Certainly the girl who sails away to a foreign country of any kind, anywhere, without fully recording herself with her own government is a simpleton, and deserves punishment, but not the kind she receives in Asia" (24). Zimmermann makes it very clear throughout her writings that the activists and the white slaves belong to different worlds. Class fault lines lurked beneath the Anti-vice Movement, with the white middle class dominating the discourse, which characterized immigrant, lower-class women as easy targets of white slavers, in need of rescue and reform. In the opening passage, for instance, Zimmermann relates the tragedy of a Kansas farm girl abducted on her arrival in Chicago (5-7), and the local policeman describes the prostitutes as girls from the slum who lack hereditary advantages, proper parental care, formal education, and supportive communities (7-9). The author shows her understanding and sympathy for the other classes, yet cannot help but impose her values, feelings of superiority and agenda on them. The pamphlet therefore serves the double duty of a tract on the social and political rights of white middleclass women who manifest intellectual abilities and action competence equal to men.

Although far from a great work of propaganda, *The Social Menace of the Orient* exemplifies how the Progressivists addressed the issues of race, gender and class in the white slavery campaign when the scope extends to include foreign lands and people. The self-contradictions in Zimmermann's reasoning and narration show the difficulties in treating the material in a fair-minded manner. By appropriating the trope of international trade, Zimmermann first compares white slave traffic to the exploitation of the Chinese market by imperialist powers with defective goods; yet the venereal disease that symbolizes commercial greed soon comes to represent Oriental barbarism as her unease towards racial Others overwhelms her. In consequence, the author sensationalizes the contact between white women and Chinese men, even evoking war-time enmity between the peoples, to the extent that the fear of forced prostitution pales beside the horrors of interracial rape. Ethnic and national stereotypes become easy devices to win sympathy for white slaves and admiration for women reformers, and the comparison of Chinatown with China divulges that domestic experiences and concerns limit Zimmermann's perspectives on the problem. Her racial prejudices, if more pronounced, do not differ from those of her fellow activists, but, focusing on foreign elements, she can advocate Americanization without bothering about assimilation.

Race is also class for Zimmermann, as shown in her comments on the white wives of Chinese men who lose standing and caste. China, a country of heathen, impoverished laborers, is thus triply different in culture, class and race, and the white slaves become the same—if not by nature, then by association. As

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Zimmermann coaxes her readers to pity them on the basis of gender, these differences are piled unfavorably on Chinese men to complete the contrast between white women missionaries and non-white procurers and lechers. Yet in the tug of war over the white slave, Zimmermann merely puts in a half-hearted effort. The racialized American prostitutes belong to the land of the Other. The white woman missionary who deplores the immoral operations of economic imperialism, meanwhile, follows in their wake as the agent of a cultural and moral imperialism.

Zimmermann's main purpose, finally, is to solicit support for her Chicago Woman's Shelter: five out of nineteen pictures in the pamphlet show the good works of this institution—with no relation to Asia or its peoples—not counting five more pictures in the four-page advertisement for the shelter at the back of the publication. Of the ten Chicago pictures, only one shows the later-abducted farm girl back in Kansas, while the rest mostly show girls from infant to school age. Perhaps Zimmermann wants to stress preventive measures to curb white slavery, which start at home with her young charges. It is possibly also easier for the American club women to commit themselves to saving these innocents, as the white prostitutes in China had pleaded in their letter, given all the complicated racial relations involved. Still, by cutting off the supply of white slaves, domestic moral campaigns can terminate imperialist exploitation—without leaving home. The expansion of woman's moral influence beyond national borders ironically brings her back to cultivate her own garden.

Besides promoting her charity, Zimmermann also finds a niche in the Social Purity Movement by devoting her energy to the oriental career of white slaves.[16] The Asian connection of white slavery appears to be the specialty of women writers. In an earlier example, Andrew and Bushnell investigated yellow slavery in California, travelled to Asia, and published two books on the exploitation of local women by the British government and the colonized peoples of India and Southern China, *The Queen's Daughters in India* and *Heathen Slaves and Christian Rulers*.

16 Even in Chicago, Jane Addams had already established the famous Hull House in 1889 and published her important white slavery tract *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil* (1912) one year after Zimmermann's *Black Traffic* and four years before the earlier version of *Social Menace*. Addams went on to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. Chicago Assistant Attorney General Clifford Roe, one of the stars of the Anti-vice Movement, handled 348 white slavery cases in 1909 and recorded his exploits in tracts such as *Panders and Their White Slaves* (1910) and three full-length books the same year *Black Traffic* came out: *The Prodigal Daughter: The White Slave Evil and the Remedy*, *Horrors of the White Slave Trade: The Mighty Crusade to Protect the Purity of Our Homes*, and *The Great War on White Slavery, or Fighting for the Protection of Our Girls*. Zimmermann possibly sought to make herself useful in other fields.

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The British authorities recognized their works (Bell 221-22) and they established themselves as experts in this variety of the international sex trade. Zimmermann chose a similar path, and the preservation of her writing in American archives as the only readily accessible title on white slavery in Asia proves that she has indeed become the authority on the subject. Possibly the intersection of race, class and gender gave the woman activists an advantage in the East not found at home—the field was less crowded, and the inconveniences due to gender may have been canceled out by the privileges of race and class. If Zimmermann received less credit than Bushnell, timing—the decline of the Anti-vice Movement and World War I—could be part of the reason.

The lack of interest in the white slaves exported to Asia, which gave Zimmermann an edge yet also a small following, nevertheless tells about the racial politics of the Social Purity campaign. Reynolds seems to be her only competitor,[17] but he merely touches on the subject in his essay on "The Nations and White Slave Traffic," where he urges for intergovernmental action on "The White Slave Traffic in Asia—Our Shame in the Orient" (204-208) and "The Yellow Slave Traffic in America—More Shameful Still" (208-12). As his section headings show, the presence of Chinese prostitutes in the U.S. actually agitated the reformers even more. Bell's collection of essays, which includes Reynolds' piece, devotes a chapter to yellow slavery (213-22), but only the few pages by Reynolds to their counterparts in Asia. Although yellow slavery was a problem geographically closer to home, one would expect the larger number of white slaves in China to more easily arouse public sympathy owing to compatriotism. The disproportioned attention to the two subcategories suggests, however, that rescuing and converting the totally different Other, compared to reclaiming a community member gone native, gives higher satisfaction and poses a lesser threat to mainstream society. Zimmermann's inability to work these racist sentiments into a well-rounded argument perhaps furthermore explains why her booklet failed to create a bigger impact. It is, nevertheless, a record of the discomfort underlying her own mission and this branch of the Anti-vice Movement that reveals larger patterns in the 20th-century American ethos.

17 Though a few "harem white slave plays" also reached a large audience, they provide entertainment that enacted sexual and imperialist fantasies void of any reformist purpose (Johnson 124-25).

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白奴書寫看中國
——齊墨曼的《東方社會威脅》

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摘 要

齊墨曼的《東方社會威脅》是極少數專門討論中國白奴問題的著述，顯示美國進步主義年代的除惡運動自詡道德，積極參與了當時美國擴張主義的論述，藉由批評經濟霸權支持文化帝國主義。本文細讀這本宣傳小冊，分析書中如何將白奴買賣描繪成跨國女性回收市場，並將異族的嫖妓行為類比為強暴，透露出作者交雜的白人優越意識與亞洲威脅恐慌。白奴的海外輸出與作者的跨國救援更模糊了內政與外事之分。作者最終藉由種族、階級與性別的交錯關係，護衛了美國中產階級白人女性的社會與政治權利，並在除惡運動中找到自己的利基。但是齊墨曼與中國白奴問題的邊緣化卻也透露出除惡運動對救援對象的取捨，謹防回歸的中國白奴威脅主流種族文化。

關鍵詞：白奴書寫　文化帝國主義　種族　階級　性別

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