

Activism with resilience, solidarity, and joy

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Asian Voices Europe

resistant theatre. queering resistance

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**Württembergischer
Kunstverein
Stuttgart**



1 Why activism?

2 Why we built AVE?

3 The problem

4 What is our approach?

5 Learnings and limitations

Why do we need activism?

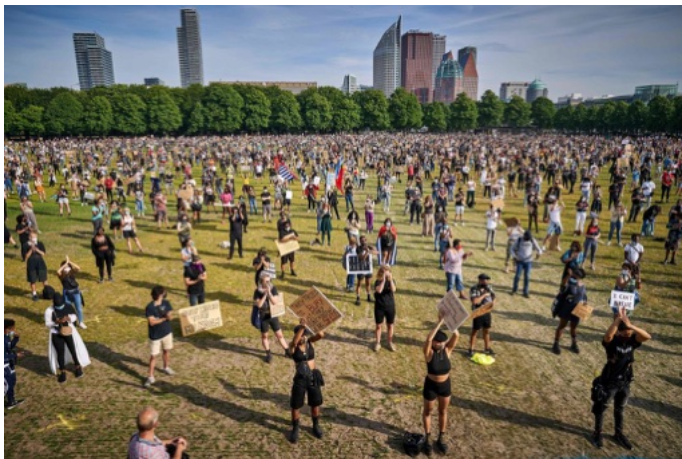


Figure 1: Black Lives Matter protest, The Netherlands, 2020



Figure 2: Fridays for Future protest, Germany, 2025



Figure 3: Geef Tegengas (Extinction Rebellion), The Netherlands, 2026



Figure 4: Flamingo Revolution, Albania, 2026

Why do we need Asian activism?

Forever foreigners or honorary white?

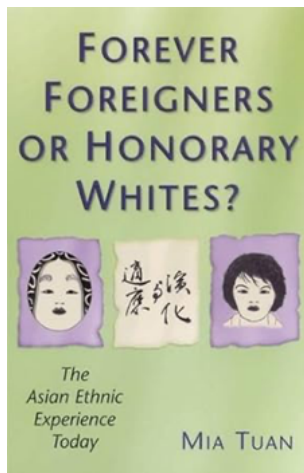


Figure 5: Mia Tuan, 1999

Forever foreigners or honorary white?

When I hear the phrase “Asians are next in line to be White,” I replace the word “White” with “disappear.” Asians are next in line to disappear. We are reputed to be so accomplished, and so law-abiding, we will disappear into this country’s amnesiac fog. We will not be the power but become absorbed by power, [...] we’re often listed as “Other” in polls and why we’re hard to find in racial breakdowns on reported rape or workplace discrimination or domestic abuse. (Hong 2021: 35)



Figure 6: Leh Hwang, Berlin, DE, 2021

Nicht sichtbar heißt nicht nicht existiert, 'Not visible does not mean not existing'.

Anti-Asian Racism: a “black box”?

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Our start

Since March 2020: online orientation meet up



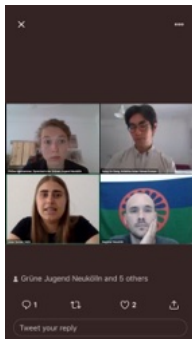
Our start

In September 2021, AVE was registered at KVK, NL



Our journey

In 2022 (online, panel discussion) & 2023 (Spain, anti-racism conference)



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Anti-Asian racism as a case of epistemic lag



- ★ In 2020, the European Commission (EC) launched its first Action Plan Against Racism.
- ★ However, anti-Asian racism was not even a hate crime category in this Action Plan (European Commission 2020, 2022).

5 years after the Action Plan



- ★ AAR data is missing **after 5-year** action plan
- ★ Recognized this failure, still excuse with the price

Structural roots

- ★ 'Yellow Peril', since the 1890s (Keevak 2011).



„Völker Europas, wahret eure heiligsten Güter!“

“Peoples of Europe, preserve your most sacred goods!”

Colonial legacies

- ★ European colonialism in Asia invaded and colonized vast Asian nations through the use of **military force, land acquisition, enslavement, exploitation of human and economic resources, and the imposition of political domination** (Chatterjee and Eaton (2006), a.o.).
- ★ Britain exploited vast colonies including India, the Middle East (including present-day Oman, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine), and Southeast Asia (Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka (Ceylon), the Maldives, Singapore, Malaysia (Malaya), Brunei, Sarawak, and North Borneo, and Hong Kong) (Johnson 2003, Veevers 2020, Marshall 2001, Keller 2001, Fieldhouse 2006). France stretched its colonization to Zhanjiang in China, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia (then called French Indochina) (Hale 2008, Daughton 2006, Brocheux and Hémery 2011). While The Netherlands built their imperialism through the Indian Ocean trade routes, especially Indonesia (Aryodiguno 2020, Oostindie and Paasman 1998, Laarman 2013), Germany colonized Jiaozhou in China as well as in the Pacific islands (Knoll and Hiery 2010, Mueller 2022, Conrad 2011). Portugal, once invaded India and Southeast Asia, colonized Goa, Macau, and East Timor until the mid-20th century (Anderson 1962, Feldman-Bianco 2001). Spain engaged in colonization, extending invasion to areas such as what is now the Philippines, and northern Taiwan (Boxer 2022, Schmidt-Nowara 2008).

Post-colonial labor migration



In health, nursing, industry sectors, etc

Good immigrant?

- ★ The 'model minority myth' which is used to stereotype (Toupin and Son 1991, Daniels and Kitano 1988, Hsia 1988, Takagi 1992, Wei 2010, Hartlep and Bui 2020).



The children of immigrants from Vietnam stand out with their brilliant school grades. Their success refutes clichés in the integration debate (Spiewak 2009).

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How do we work together?

Projects around common values and interests

1. Defining the problem



- ★ Defining the problem: Surveys (2020, 2024) / Publications (2026)
- ★ Germany-US exchange research through the DAAD-partnership (2024, 2025, 2026-2028) (Asian Voices Europe 2020, 2024, Lee et al. nd)
- ★ How does **intersectionality** show up in the data?

2. Finding remedies



- ★ Evidence-based policy recommendation and advocacy
- ★ Consult European Commission for their Action plan Against Racism (2022-2025); Anti-Racism Strategy (2026-2030); UNESCO for their flagship project *Addressing Anti-Racism through Education*

2. Finding remedies



- ★ Legal research (2021, 2023, 2026)
- ★ What are our rights? Which systems are available for us to take advantage of?

2. Finding remedies

Nutrition Facts	
Servings Per Society: Unlimited	
Serving Size: 1 Microaggression	
Amount Per Serving	
	% Daily Value*
Daily Stereotypes	500%
Microaggressions	
Ignorance	
Denial	
Othering	
Exoticization	300%
Model Minority Myth	250%
Fetishization	200%
Cultural Appropriation	150%
Historical prejudice	
Tolerance	0%
Self-Awareness	0%
Basic Human Decency	0%
*Warning: Long term consumption may lead to: - Perpetual foreigner syndrome, Internalized racism, Emotional exhaustion, A society that never learns	
Ingredients: Colonial mindset, yellow peril tropes, willful ignorance, entitlement. May contain traces of "I'm not racist but—" and "No offense."	
Manufactured by: WESTERN *400 Years of Imperialism LLC Packed in Privilege	
Best Before: Never	



- ★ Stop Asian Hate Campaign (2025)
- ★ Open letter (2025), *Amsterdam, this is not just about one book.*

3. Building community

AVE quarterly [newsletter](#) (and it's free!)

let's talk about
**Art and
Postcolonialism**



→ READ THE FULL LETTER



3. Building community

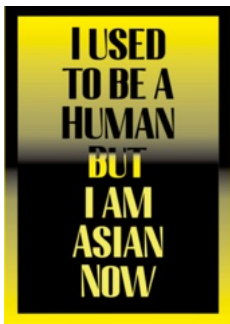


Figure 7: Leiden, 2026

- ★ Who is Asian?
- ★ Asian (diasporic) identity is not static, rather **fluid, intersectional, and dynamic**.
- ★ Contestation of identity should shift from White to diaspora

3. Building community



The very first in-person empowering workshop through poster drawing, Berlin, 2026

The RISE grant from the filia.frauenstiftung makes this possible!

3. Building community



- ★ Ongoing digital picture book for readers of all ages
- ★ Digital publication planned for the end of 2027. Stay tuned!

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Change IS possible

- ★ Individual/community change: **Refusing** stereotypes, Naming racism, Building movements & **counter narratives**
- ★ But racism is a **structural** problem: Structural racism → Structural change
- ★ Within 6 years, we made anti-Asian racism a **standalone hate crime category** in EU anti-racism strategy and action plan. What else is possible?

Our demands

- ★ Make anti-Asian racism part of anti-racism and [social policy](#)
- ★ Fund grassroots organizations run [by Asian diasporas](#), for Asian diasporas

How to continue sustainable operations?



- ★ Volunteering has its **limits**: how much work can we do? Who can afford to work for free?
- ★ Building a **network**... **in progress**...

Thank you!

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of the respondents for sharing their opinions and experiences with us, to all volunteers for their amazing works and to AVE supports for their support and solidarity.

hello@asianvoiceseurope.org



Your support helps us cover **small but essential costs** like mailbox, monthly maintenance for banking accounts, domain hosting, so we can stay **independent, sustainable, and community-driven**.

AVE club

Together, we are stronger. We need you.



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