

At the end of the nineteenth century, there was a veritable compulsion towards ›whiteness‹. The federation of the Australian colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia was the endpoint of more than a hundred years of legitimization of British land taking and more than a decade of evocation of the ›white‹ community.

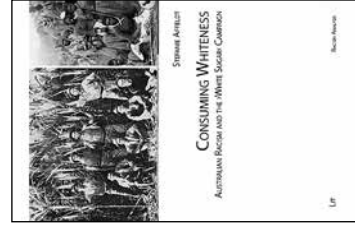
The racism imported from Europe was specified and fortified by the alleged ›yellow peril‹, which was springing from the geographical location of the Australian continent. The ensuing ›white Australia policy‹ has so far largely been discussed with regard only to the political-ideological perspective. No account was taken of the central problem of racist societalization, that is the everyday production and reproduction of ›race‹ as a social relation (›doing race‹) which was supported by broad sections of the population.

In her comprehensive study of Australian racism and the ›white sugar‹ campaign, Stefanie Affeldt shows that the latter was only able to achieve success be-

cause it was embedded in a widespread ›white Australia culture‹ that found expression in all spheres of life. Literature, music, theatre, museums and the sciences contributed to the dissemination of racist stereotypes and the stabilization of ›white‹ identity.

In this context, the consumption of sugar became, quite literally, the consumption of ›whiteness‹: the colour of its crystals melted with the skin colour ascribed to its producers to the trope of doubly ›white‹ sugar. Its consumption was at the same time personal affirmation of the consumers' membership in the ›white race‹ and pledge to the ›white‹ nation; its purchase was supposedly a contribution to the ›racial‹ homogenization and defence of the country, and was meant to overall serve the preservation of ›white‹ supremacy.

»Consuming Whiteness is an important new contribution to the Australian history of race. [...] It exposes anew the tight hold that white racism maintained upon the entire history of Australian development and self-regard«, ›Cropping it sweet‹, review by Raymond Evans, *History Australia*, 12, 2015, 2



Stefanie Affeldt

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