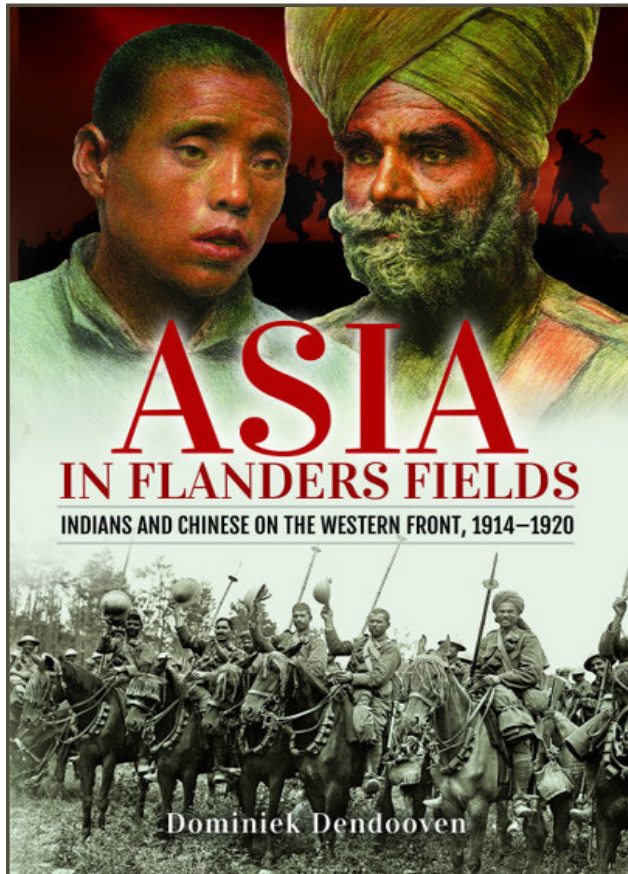




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Topic: Indian and Chinese labour in Europe in the First World War, Social, Culture and Political Impact

Asia in Flanders Fields

Indians and Chinese on the Western Front,
1914-1920

By Dominiek Dendooven

REVIEWS

Dominiek Dendooven's fascinating study reveals how the First World War turned west Flanders and north-eastern France into a global crossroads. In this minutely researched work, he examines the way cultures intersected and the depth of legacy inspired by these meetings. He shows how the people of France and Flanders viewed detachments from India and China and examines the perspectives of those of who travelled across the globe to serve in an entirely novel environment.

– Mark Connelly,
Professor of Modern History,
University of Kent

Dominiek Dendooven is a scholar and curator and the book shows this dual culture which is nowadays a demand in writing a history of the Great War, especially for colonial people: in particular he makes us understand a lot about racism and European superiority in time of colonialism and also of the desires and fears of people who came from the other side of the earth and wanted to be actors of their own destiny.

– Annette Becker,
Professor Emeritus of Contemporary History,
University of Paris Nanterre

ABOUT THE BOOK

The First World War brought peoples from five continents to support the British and French Allies on the Western Front. Many were from colonial territories in the British and French empires, and the largest contingents were Indians and Chinese - some 140,000. It is a story of the encounter with the European 'other', including the civilian European local populations, often marred by racism, discrimination and xenophobia both inside and outside the military command, but also lightened by moving and enduring 'human' social relationships. The vital contribution to the Allies and the huge sacrifices involved were scarcely recognised at the Paris Peace Conference in 1918 or the post-war victory celebrations and this led to resentment - see huge media coverage in 2021. The effect of the European 'other' experience enhanced Asian political awareness and self-confidence, and stimulated anti-imperialism and proto-nationalism. This is a vivid and original contribution to imperial decline from the First World War. and the originality of the work is enhanced by rare sources culled from original documents and 'local' European fieldwork -in French, German and Flemish.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Dominiek Dendooven is an historian of the First World War and brings a unique European and Asian perspective to the study of the lived experiences of Indian and Chinese who served with the Allies and played vital combat and support roles in the European Great Power conflict. He is Curator and Researcher for the Flanders Fields Museum and is Associate Lecturer and Researcher at the University of Antwerp and University of Louvain. His PhD - basis of the book - is from University of Kent. He is an established author in English and French with over ten publications including works for English-speaking readers.

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CHENNAI	G Srinivasan	Mobile: +91 9003047502	Email: gshrinivasan@feelbooks.in
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