

ABSTRACTS

Migrants from Asia in French Indochina: plurality and diversity of status or the contingency of the law on foreigners

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In French Indochina, the classification “foreign Asians”, based on ethnic and cultural criteria, allowed the removal of immigrants and also indigenous populations from the jurisdiction of the protected states (Annam, Cambodia, Laos, Tonkin). It also served as a diplomatic tool (Japan, China). The colonial administration managed these foreigners on a community basis through the congregation or the company in the case of indentured foreigners and delegated some of the control and taxation tasks to intermediaries (head of congregation, employer). Its concern was to maintain a punctilious level of supervision, primarily for tax and security purposes.

The Yunnan railway construction company struggling with its intermediaries during the recruitment of Chinese “coolies” (1903-1908)

Éric GUERASSIMOFF, Professor of Modern Chinese History, Université Paris Cité, P.I. ANR Cooliebrokers (2020-2024)

This article examines the conditions of recruitment of the 45,000 Chinese workers employed on the construction sites of the Yunnan railway, a line linking Lào Cai in present-day northern Vietnam to Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, a neighboring Chinese province. At the time of the construction of the Yunnan railway, between 1903 and 1910, access to cheap labor in China was so essential that French operators feared the project would fail following poor recruitment results. Previous historical studies generally attribute these setbacks to a set of varied causes: geography (difficult climatic and topographical conditions), politics (rise of Chinese nationalism) and imperial rivalries (colonial competition). We would like to recall here that it is also necessary to consider the factors linked to the organization of these recruitments of Chinese “coolies”, particularly the place and role of the European or Chinese intermediaries, who acted as the Company’s partners.

The shuике carriers and correspondence of the Chinese migrant workers from the Chaoshan region in Southern China, 19th-20th century: emergence, rise, and disappearance of a necessary intermediary.

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During the nineteenth-to-twentieth-century migrations from southern China to Southeast Asia, the *shuике* 水客, or “carriers sailing on waters,” played a vital role as carriers of letters and funds known as *qiaoپی* 侨批. This private family correspondence, often accompanied by money, was sent by the Chinese diaspora to their families back home. Thanks to the reliability and efficiency of the *shuике*, these valuable messages preserved and strengthened family ties, provided financial support to many communities, and maintained a cultural connection between the migrants and their homeland. Their service was crucial in preserving these links between the two worlds. The article examines their multifaceted and pivotal role related to the *qiaoپی* phenomenon in the context of this Chinese migration.

From one consulate to another: Japanese migrants in Tonkin during the 1880s-1920s

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This article sketches a portrait of Japanese migrants living in Tonkin between the 1880s and the 1920s, highlighting the various relationships and circulations existing with Kyūshū, their region of origin. Using a multi-sited micro-history approach, we analyze the interpersonal links at different scales that structure the Japanese community, as well as individual or family trajectories. In doing so, we provide elements of understanding of the power relations within this community and, beyond, on some aspects of the migratory process which initiated this specific Japanese immigration into Indochinese colonial society. Finally, this approach allows us to consider these circulations not only in trans-imperial political structures – which did indeed exist – but also in a transnational social space linking two regions bordered by an “Asian Mediterranean”.

A history of family life among Tamil Muslims in Vietnam

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This study explores the private lives of Tamil Muslim traders who came to the Vietnamese territories of Indochina from the late nineteenth century. Behind the general belief that Indian traders arrived as single men or left families behind in India lies a more complex reality. Thanks to colonial civil

registers, inheritance cases, expulsion orders and other archival fragments, as well as interviews with descendants, family relationships within the Tamilo-Vietnamese community can be identified. These relationships produced mobile sons and marriageable daughters, children whose fathers went out of their way to legitimise them through registration with the French *état civil*. The Vietnamese women who partnered with Tamil traders often lived in longstanding and meaningful relationships where there was a high level of cultural tolerance; yet they also had little financial security because these unions were so infrequently endorsed as legal marriages. Tamil-Vietnamese relationships persisted throughout the colonial period although they were regulated by tenuous norms and subject to disapproval from many sides. The frictions and strains reached breaking point when the communist victory over South Vietnam in 1975 forced an exodus of Tamil Muslim men, and many Vietnamese women and Tamilo-Vietnamese children, to South India and elsewhere.

Social structures and geographical origins of Vietnamese workers under contract in New Caledonia (1935-1937): outline of a prosopographic study — research note.

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Between March 1891 and 1940, more than 14 000 Indochinese, mainly from Tonkin, were introduced into New Caledonia and the New Hebrides to work on chrome and nickel mining operations or on plantations. They called themselves « *Chân Đăng* ». They were mainly single men between twenty-one and twenty-five years old who signed employment contracts of a duration varying from six months to five years which they renewed several times during their sojourn in The Pacific. After staying on average for twenty-four years, they left New Caledonia, mainly in 1961, to return to Haiphong. The purpose of this contribution is to highlight the first results of a prosopographical study based on a serial source, namely reel no. 2 of 332 W allocation preserved in the archives collections of the Immigration Service stored in the Archives Service of New Caledonia (SANC).