

Japanese Prostitutes in French Indochina

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Abstract:

This research aimed to clarify the actual situations of Japanese prostitutes in French Indochina (limited to today's Vietnam). Japanese overseas prostitutes in Singapore and nearby areas were notorious as revealed in plenty of previous studies. However, the situation in French Indochina was almost concealed. The main materials of this research derived from such as books, magazines and newspapers published in Japan from the 1880s to the 1930s.

The first Japanese prostitutes in French Indochina were stated in the 1880s. They developed their business at important locations of military and industry under the public prostitution system of the authorities in French Indochina. We confirmed they were at 25 locations. They also functioned as "Comfort agency" for French forces. Some prostitutes were patterned with Japanese appearance. It is pointed out that the French despised the Japanese because of the prostitution. Nevertheless, Japanese prostitutes looked popular.

"Rui Borese", today's Yersin Street, was the Japanese brothel street in Saigon. There were at least 60 brothels and over 120 prostitutes in this area during the early 20th century.

In the 1920s, Japanese consulates in French Indochina progressed the prostitution abandonment. According to the official data in 1923, such abandonment was completed in French Indochina.

Keywords:

Japanese overseas prostitutes, French Indochina, Public prostitution system, Colony.