

# Venereal Disease, Prostitution, and the Politics of Colonial Difference: The Case of 'Lock Hospitals' in Colonial Taiwan

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## Abstract

In Taiwan, the state regulation of sexuality began with Japanese colonialism. A close look at the imperial logic of regulation will reveal that the political rationale was race protection in colonies. Behind the colonial social hygiene discourse were specific gender and racial priorities. Lock Hospital as colonial disciplinary institution thereby imposed regular inspection and juridical treatment on Japanese registered prostitute inpatients. For the resistance to genital examinations and the limits of institutional operation, there was once an alternate model to Taiwanese prostitute outpatients. What is more, to consider the venereal diseases as a politic economical issue, for the colonial authority, it had the economic loss of production and the price of medical expense. The colonial Lock Hospital supported by the official, the capital and the prostitute patients provides a reasonable institutional arrangement as a self-financing system. The specific financial framework elucidates why the medical inspection of prostitutes in colonial Taiwan workable but in Western colonies not.

Keywords: colonial medicine, medical inspection, Lock Hospital, venereal disease, prostitute.