

The Colonial Life of Pharmaceuticals

Situated at the crossroads between the history of colonialism, of modern Southeast Asia, and of medical pluralism, this history of medicine and health traces the life of pharmaceuticals in Vietnam under French rule. Laurence Monnais examines the globalization of the pharmaceutical industry, looking at both circulation and consumption, considering access to drugs and the existence of multiple therapeutic options in a colonial context. She argues that colonialism was crucial to the worldwide diffusion of modern medicines and speaks to contemporary concerns regarding overreliance on pharmaceuticals, drug toxicity, self-medication, and the accessibility of effective medicines. Retracing the steps by which pharmaceuticals were produced and distributed, readers meet the many players in the process – from colonial doctors to private pharmacists, from consumers to various drug traders and healers. Yet this is not primarily a history of medicines as objects of colonial science, but rather a history of medicines as tools of social change.

Laurence Monnais is Professor of History and Director of the Center for Asian Studies (CETASE) at Université de Montréal, Canada. She specializes in the history of medicine in Southeast Asia, global histories of health, and the history of alternative medicines. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, she is also co-founder and president of HOMSEA (History of Medicine in Southeast Asia).

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-108-46653-0 — The Colonial Life of Pharmaceuticals
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Université de Montréal

Translated by Noémi Tousignant



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108466530

DOI: 10.1017/9781108567152

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This edition is a revised, expanded and updated translation of *Médicaments coloniaux. L'expérience vietnamienne, 1905–1940* (Paris: Les Indes savants, 2014) by Laurence Monnais. It was translated by Noémi Tousignant.

First paperback edition 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Names: Monnais-Rousselot, Laurence, author. | Tousignant, Noemi, translator.

Title: The colonial life of pharmaceuticals : medicines and modernity in Vietnam / Laurence Monnais ; translated by Noemi Tousignant.

Other titles: Médicaments coloniaux. English | Global health histories (Series)

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge

University Press, [2019] | Series: Global health histories | "This edition is a revised, expanded and updated translation of Medicaments coloniaux.

L'expérience Vietnamienne, 1905–1940 (Paris: Les Indes savants, 2014)" |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019008530 | ISBN 9781108474665 (hardback)

Subjects: | MESH: Pharmaceutical Preparations – history | Drug Therapy – history | Colonialism – history | Social Change – history | History, 19th Century | History, 20th Century | Vietnam | France

Classification: LCC RM47.V5 | NLM QV 11 JV6 | DDC 615.109597–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019008530>

ISBN 978-1-108-47466-5 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-46653-0 Paperback

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Acknowledgments

This history of medicines in colonial Vietnam has led many lives. It was born in 2001 out of a research project funded by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) as I was joining the Université de Montréal as an assistant professor in history and working with a team of wonderful researchers in social sciences and humanities looking at medicines as social objects.

Since then, it has given birth to several articles, in both French and English, and a book, *Médicaments coloniaux. L'expérience vietnamienne, 1905–1940* (Paris: Les Indes savantes) in 2014. It ends now, with this second book. Yet this does not mean that my interest in both the history and anthropology of pharmaceuticals and Vietnamese health practices is going to die.

The Colonial Life of Pharmaceuticals is not merely a translation of *Médicaments coloniaux*. In fact, it is a different book that has grown out of new thoughts, comments, and criticisms that I have received over the past few years; it is a much more mature (and lighter) work.

I do not want to reiterate the thanks I put on paper in 2014. This being said, Noémi Tousignant deserves that I mention her a second time as she has served, once again, as a trustworthy, hardworking, insightful translator, who is never afraid of challenging my ideas and my (very French) pompous style.

I would also like to thank Cambridge University Press and especially senior editor Lucy Rhymer, who happens to commission books in Asian studies, history of Asia, and history of medicine (lucky me!), and the Global Health Histories series editor Sanjoy Bhattacharya. Thank you both for believing in this rebirth and for putting the history of medicine and health in Vietnam on the map.

Abbreviations

Aff po	Fonds des affaires politiques
AFOM	Agence de la France d'outre-mer
AHMC	<i>Annales d'hygiène et de médecine coloniale</i>
AIPI	<i>Archives des Instituts Pasteur d'Indochine</i>
AMG	Assistance médicale gratuite
AMI	Assistance médicale indigène
Amiraux	Fonds des Amiraux
AMPC	<i>Annales de médecine et de pharmacie coloniales</i>
ANOM	Archives nationales d'outre-mer
APPIC	Association professionnelle des pharmaciens de l'Indochine
ARV	antiretroviral drug
BAYB	<i>Bao an y báo</i>
BDP	<i>Báo đông pháp</i>
BSMI	<i>Bulletin de la Société médico-chirurgicale de l'Indochine</i>
BSPE	<i>Bulletin de la Société de pathologie exotique</i>
CG	Fonds de la Commission Guernut
DC	Fonds de la Direction du contrôle
DLS	Fonds de la Direction locale de la santé
EFEO	École française d'Extrême-Orient
FEATM	Far Eastern Association for Tropical Medicine
Goucoch	Fonds du Gouvernement de la Cochinchine
Gougal	Fonds du Gouvernement général
Gougal SE	Fonds du Gouvernement général, service économique
IDEO	Imprimerie d'Extrême-Orient
IGHSP	Inspection générale de l'hygiène et de la santé publique
Indo AF	Indochine ancien fonds
Indo NF	Indochine nouveau fonds
PNTV	<i>Phụ nữ tân van</i>
OTC	over-the-counter
QE	quinine d'état
RMFEO	<i>Revue médicale française d'Extrême-Orient</i>

x List of Abbreviations

RSA	Fonds de la Résidence supérieure d'Annam
RST	Fonds de la Résidence supérieure du Tonkin
RST NF	Résidence supérieure du Tonkin nouveau fonds
SDN	Société des nations
STI	sexually-transmitted infection
TC	Troupes coloniales
TKVSCN	<i>Trung Kỳ vệ sinh chỉ nam</i>
VNA	Vietnam National Archives
VSB	<i>Vệ sinh báo</i>
WHO	World Health Organization