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***Module D***

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**Title**

**The conflict of interests within the French imperial biopolitical logistics and its  
impact on the recruitment of Vietnamese labours to Pacific Island**

***Abstract:***

This article tracks conflicts of interest among parties in Vietnamese labours' recruitment working in mines and plantations in New Caledonia and New Hebrides from the late nineteenth to the end of the twentieth century. These conflicts were manifested in the triadic relationship: the French institutions in Metropole, the colonial government within Indochina, and the colonial authorities on the Pacific Islands. Furthermore, it occurred between the public administration and private sectors represented by employers and the intermediary organizations involved in the recruitment process. Besides, the local government and the workers themselves were significant parts of these conflicts.

These conflicts departed partly due to competition among parties in exploiting cheap labour resources in Indochina, partly because of different goals in the economic and political development in the Far East. Whereas Colonies' Minister considered Indochina a possible substitute for the Metropolis to contribute to the "development" of Pacific establishments, the Indochina colonial authorities did not appreciate the South Pacific's role in the French

Empire's political-economic system. Thus, they did not encourage or give preference to the colons to recruit workers.

When the competitions were harder and harder, the colonial authorities became the intermediary to control, manage, reconcile conflicts and general standards for the human recruitment process. These labour policies focused on interrelated issues: First, the legal system's development to ensure a certain supply of labour and continual influx from Vietnam to the Pacific Islands. Second, to examine the implementation of regulations and prevent the excessive abuse of many colons at risk of reducing the paid workforce's overall capacity and efficiency because of illness, injury, and premature death. The third is to standardize the force and make them become docile bodies.

Consequently, Indochina's governor-general enacted a series of decisions related to labour contracts, migration law, labour inspections, and regulations on living conditions, working, and salaries for workers to ensure the legal basis for recruitment and employment of Vietnamese workers. These regulations also harmonize the relationship between the parties in recruiting, using and monitoring Vietnam labours. Although these regulations also gave Vietnamese workers few rights, the policies served the colonial ambitions, as they allowed them to exploit subjects in an optimal way and with fewer legal problems. Especially, regardless of workers' rights, it does not help them lead a better life, achieve their dreams, or preserve their life and health. Instead, it's a way to give colonists more time and workers e in the production process without problems or low productivity loss.

This article is divided into three parts. Firstly, the paper will analyze the labor demand in the Far East and the conflicts of interest among the parties in recruiting labours in Indochina. Secondly, the article focuses on the system of laws, regulations, circulars related to migrant workers, and standardization of migrant workers. Thirdly, it analyzes the impacts

of this legal system on migrants, individuals, organizations employing migrant workers, and the state in managing human resources. This article may contribute to a better understanding of the colonial government's art of object management over its subjects.