



香江風月

EARLY PROSTITUTION IN HONG KONG

鄭寶鴻
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Romanisation of names

Throughout the book we have followed the Cantonese romanisation system used in Hong Kong since the early twentieth century. Hong Kong street and place names have been romanised according to current practice, while the *pinyin* of other place names and terms are given.

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The contents of this book are based on *Early Hong Kong Brothels* by Cheng Po Hung (University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong, 2005).

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前言

談到香港的早期歷史，便往往提到港島西區的發展。若談到這個話題，便自然地說及塘西妓寨，以及這些風月場所的阿姑。

風流韻事總是浪漫的。若發生在才子與佳人，則添多幾分畫意詩情。若是才子和妓女的愛情，便是艷情，又是悲情。中國古代女子有多少可以出人頭地，成名的女子每多出自青樓。名妓固然有很多浪漫故事，但其中的故事又怎會沒有淒愴呢！

早期的香港妓寨是合法經營的，政府規範它們在特定地區發展，石塘咀便是當時的高級風月區，客人和阿姑們的交往是有一套“制度”的。娼妓事業帶旺了飲食業，也促進了娛樂、美容、服裝，以至交通等行業的發展。這些娼妓場所顯然地對香港的早期社會產生不少影響。

因此關係，我們須要對這段歷史增加了解。不少人好奇地去問：風月場內怎樣滿園春色，歡場女子如何滿身姿色，豪華食肆又怎樣滿樓酒色，脂粉客們又如何滿臉急色。可惜關於這些方面的記載和相片都是貧乏的。

鄭寶鴻先生為研究這些歷史化費不少功夫，搜集不少珍貴相片。我館現將他的成果編訂成書，並組成展覽。對鄭先生的貢獻和熱誠幫忙，我們致以衷心感謝。

香港的早期風月區至今已紅燈熄滅，阿姑們的笑聲沒有了，她們的辛酸也不知往那裡去了。不過，這段歷史是沒有終結的。

歡場雖然沒有歡情，但香港的紅燈區沒有因此而成為歷史，香港人販賣的色情至今還在。

香港大學美術博物館
總監 楊春棠



Foreword

In discussing the early history of Hong Kong one often mentions the development of the western part of Hong Kong Island. The subject would naturally lead on to a discussion of the brothels and prostitutes that flourished in the west part of Shek Tong Tsui.

A love affair is always romantic, especially when it occurs between a scholar and a beauty. However, when it happens between a scholar and a prostitute, it would then be a romance as well as a tragedy. In ancient China, the few women who became celebrated figures were often originally prostitutes. Indeed there are many romantic stories about famous prostitutes. But among these, many contain melancholic strains.

In early Hong Kong, brothels were legal. The government allocated special areas in which they could operate. Shek Tong Tsui was at that time a high-class red-light district. Both customers and prostitutes had to follow a set of rules in their transactions. The brothel business brought prosperity to many businesses, such as that of food establishments, entertainment, beauty salons, fashion houses and transportation. Obviously, these brothels exerted a great influence on early Hong Kong society. To understand their significance, we must have a deeper insight into their history. Many people were curious and would ask why the brothels were always filled with such joyful and alluring scenes? How did the prostitutes have beauty and sex appeal? How did the luxurious eateries entertain customers with good cuisine and wine? How did these customers pursue their intimate relations with the prostitutes? It is regrettable that both written and photographic records are rare and hard to come by.

Mr. Cheng Po Hung has expended great effort in the study of this particular aspect of history, collecting many valuable photographs. Our museum has compiled the results of his research into a book and organized an exhibition to coincide with its publication. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks for his enthusiastic support.

The red-light district in old Hong Kong has now vanished along with the laughter of the prostitutes, with their grief and disappointment. Nonetheless this is an unending history. Although the days of legal prostitution are gone, the history of the red-light district goes on, for prostitution still exists in Hong Kong today.

YEUNG Chun Tong

Director

University Museum and Art Gallery

序言

香港最先在開埠不久的1846年發出妓寨牌照。隨後，發牌時斷時續，直到1879年起，才有一段較長時期，有更多妓寨營業。到了1930年代，政府實行禁娼，首先於1931年底禁止洋妓營業。而華洋妓女雜處的灣仔“大冧巴”妓寨於1932年6月30日後被飭令停止營業。以華籍妓女為主的港島石塘咀“塘西風月區”，以及九龍油麻地廟街一帶的“麻埭花園”，則延至1935年6月30日禁止。

最初的妓寨區位於港島擺花街，以洋妓為主。華人妓寨則設於華人麀集的太平山區，即由荷李活道至半山普慶坊一帶的“太平山娼院”。這區的妓寨先後遭1874年風災肆虐，以及1894年疫症影響，逐漸遷往皇后大道、荷李活道以及水坑口街為中心的“水坑口妓寨”區。由於這一帶接近富庶的華人商業區“南北行”，加上宵禁苛例於1897年放寬，瞬即成為繁盛的煙花之地。除秦樓楚館外，“配套”的酒樓食肆紛紛在這區設立。

不過，這一帶的樓宇結構殘舊，而人口密度和太平山區不遑多讓。為免疫症重生，同時原屬石礦場的石塘咀剛好平整完成，政府遂計劃發展此新區。於1903年飭令風月區遷往石塘咀，後來成為著名的“塘西風月”區。

塘西的大小妓寨和酒樓，集中在南里至干諾道西的一段山道，以及屈地街至堅尼地城海旁的皇后大道西。在最繁盛時期的1920年，大小妓寨共五十多間，酒樓約有二十家，妓女達二千多人，而妓寨及酒樓的職工共約四千人。

稱為“艷遊者”的塘西飲客，在美食當前，往往一擲千金無吝嗇，但他們仍不易一親香澤。除此之外，塘西其實是被認為最佳洽談生意的地方。至於對海的“麻埭花園”，妓寨數目與塘西相若，不過規模與格調則與塘西相去甚遠，高級飲客甚少光顧。因此，不少油麻地妓女爭相落籍塘西寨館。這些妓寨並無塘西的繁文縟節，也不須開筵邀請阿姑陪飲，所以油麻地風月區的大酒樓，只有寥寥數間。

1935年實行禁娼後，紅牌妓女的“身價”大跌。她們為了生活，變身做歌女、按摩女郎，但多數轉為導遊女郎，以這“合法”身份暗營醜業。當中不少則在住家當私娼。

戰後，私娼的主要活動地點轉由塘西遷往上環的德輔道中和干諾道中，以及灣仔的大佛口。而油麻地的私娼集中地仍為廟街一帶。不過娼妓最活躍的地方還是上環，近現今的西港城；每當華燈初上，這一帶瞬即成為廉價“人肉市場”。但自1960年起，私娼賴以棲身的上環區下級旅店和客棧陸續拆卸，這“市場”便逐漸消失了。

鄭寶鴻

Introduction

Shortly after Hong Kong had become a city in 1846, the government began to issue brothels with licenses. Subsequently, however, the process became intermittent until 1879 when there was a long period of uninterrupted licensing. This encouraged the establishment of more brothels. In 1930 the government prohibited prostitution first banning Western prostitutes in 1931. In the following year, "Big Number Brothels" in Wan Chai, where of Chinese and Western prostitutes, was also banned by a court order on 30th June. The prohibition of prostitution in the red-light districts of Shek Tong Tsui and Yau Ma Tei where the prostitutes were all Chinese, was extended until 30th June, 1935.

Prostitutes working in early brothels in and around Lyndhurst Terrace were mainly Westerners. Chinese brothels were established around the Tai Ping Shan area from Hollywood Road to Po Hing Fong in the Mid-levels where Chinese concentrated. The brothels in this area known as Tai Ping Shan brothels were devastated by a typhoon in 1874 and later again by an epidemic in 1894.

Gradually the brothels moved to Queen's Road, Hollywood Road and Possession Street - the Shui Hang Hau brothel area. Owing to its proximity to the Chinese commercial district (Nam Pak Hong) in the Bonham Strand West, and the relaxing of the night curfew in 1897, it quickly became a prosperous red-light district. Besides brothels, many restaurants and other eateries were established here.

The houses in this area were old and run down with a population density similar to that of Tai Ping Shan area. In 1903, the government ordered the brothels to move to Shek Tong Tsui in order to redevelop the Tai Ping Shan area and to prevent the outbreak of epidemic. This later became the well-known Shek Tong Tsui West red-light district.

Brothels and restaurants in Shek Tong Tsui West were concentrated along the section of Queen's Road West, Hill Road between South Lane and Connaught Road West. In its heyday in the 1920s, the area housed over fifty brothels with more than two thousand prostitutes and twenty restaurants with about four thousand workers.

To gain the favours of the girls, customers at the brothels and restaurants, would spend lavishly. Yet often, even after having spent thousands of dollars, they still might not foster intimacy with the prostitutes. Shek Tong Tsui West was also the best place for business transactions. On the opposite side of the harbour was "Ma Tei Fa Kwok" which had about the same number of brothels but they were smaller and much inferior to those in Shek Tong Tsui West. Few respectable customers would frequent them. For this reason many prostitutes in Yau Ma Tei competed for position in the brothels in Shek Tong Tsui West. Those in Yau Ma Tei were less sophisticated than their counterparts in Shek Tong Tsui West. Since they did not require prostitutes to dine with customers, there were only a few restaurants in the Yau Ma Tei red-light district.

After the prohibition of prostitution in 1935, the “price” of the once-favoured prostitutes dropped drastically. To make a living, some became singsong girls, or masseuses, but the majority became escort girls. They continued to practice prostitution surreptitiously with many operating as private individuals at home.

After the war, private prostitutes moved their area of activities from Shek Tong Tsui West to Des Voeux Road Central and Connaught Road Central in Sheung Wan, and Tai Fat Hau in Wan Chai. The private prostitutes of Yau Ma Tei remained active in Temple Street. But by far the most active area was Sheung Wan, near the present-day Western Market. At nightfall, the neighbourhood would instantly transform into a cheap “carnal market”. However, from 1960, with the demolition of low-cost guesthouses and inns where private prostitutes used to operate, the market gradually declined.

CHENG Po Hung





西洋妓寨

在開埠初期的1846年，港府已發出妓寨牌照。至1850年代，任政府總登記官及撫華道（即後來的華民政務司）的高和爾（Caldwell），曾被控告與海盜勾結，並且娶華籍妓女為妻。他與惡名遠播的“三號妓寨”扣上關係，指他本身“兼職”作妓寨及妓寨牌照的投機買賣。

早期的西洋妓寨，集中在中環的Lyndhurst Terrace及荷李活道一帶。洋鴿母以“蜜糖兒”（Honey）作為妓女的代名詞，在報章刊登廣告以作招徠，並要求尋芳客購備鮮花一紮，以表心意。由於這一帶繁榮“娼盛”，一時間花檔林立，Lyndhurst Terrace的中譯索性稱為“擺花街”。由於“狂蜂浪蝶”的增加，花檔的開設蔓延至香港會所及比照戲院所在的雲咸街。雲咸街因而被稱為“賣花街”。到了1930年，會所舊址及戲院被拆卸改建為娛樂戲院，這些花檔則遷往安慶台繼續經營。而擺花街的花檔後來被遷往近威靈頓街的一段德己立街。

由於輿論的壓力，妓寨牌照的發出，時斷時續。自1879年起，發牌才有一段較長的“穩定期”，西洋妓女維持至1931年底。華洋妓雜處的“大冧巴妓寨”則一直維持至1932年6月30日，華籍妓寨則維持至1935年6月30日。

西洋妓女的另一活動區是灣仔春園街，即為著名華洋妓雜處的“大冧巴妓寨”（Big Number Brothels）所在。春園街的部份地段是於1841年第一次土地拍賣中批出的，當時是著名的春園別墅區。在春園旁有兩座建築物，先後曾作港督行轅。到了1910年間，春園街連同軍部放棄而售出的三板街一帶，發展成為洋嫖客為主顧的“大冧巴”風月區，範圍包括汕頭街及廈門街。1924年，報載有“一人被控在灣仔汕頭里（街）毆打妓婦，又利用其漁利”的新聞。

在春園街鄰近的大王東、西街、交加街及石水渠街一帶，住有不少澳門、葡萄牙、菲律賓和日本人，加上英美水兵，他們均成為“大冧巴”的主要客源。西洋妓寨於1932年被飭令停業後，無地自容的洋妓便迫於在莊士敦道一帶流竄，暗營醜業。

Western Brothels

The colonial government of Hong Kong began to issue business licenses to brothels in 1846, during the early days of the British occupation. In the 1850s, however, the Registrar General and Protector of Chinese (later renamed Secretary for Chinese Affairs), Daniel Richard Caldwell, was accused of being involved with pirates and of marrying a Chinese prostitute. He was associated with an infamous brothel known as “Brothel Number 3”, and suspected of being a brothel owner and of trading business licenses to other brothels.

Western brothels were located mainly on Lyndhurst Terrace and Hollywood Road in Central. Foreign prostitutes were known as “Honey”, and their services publicised through newspaper advertisements. Men who wished to use these services had to bring flowers to indicate their interest. So Lyndhurst Terrace also became a market for flower sellers. The popularity of brothels resulted in a concomitant increase in the number of flower stalls from Lyndhurst Terrace as far as the Hong Kong Club and Bijou Scenic Theatre on Wyndham Street. Wyndham Street also became famous for its flower sellers. In 1930, the club and the theatre were demolished to make way for the King’s Theatre. These flower stalls on Wyndham Street relocated to On Hing Terrace, while those on Lyndhurst Terrace moved to D’Aguilar Street.

Pressure from the public forced a temporary embargo on the issuing of licenses to brothels in the 1930s. Brothels had enjoyed a long period of stability between 1879 and the 1930s when the government introduced laws to take prostitutes off the streets. Western brothels continued to operate until the end of 1931; “Big Number Brothels” with Chinese and Western prostitutes closed down on 30 June 1932; Chinese brothels were banned on 30 June 1935.

Western prostitutes were also active on Spring Garden Lane in Wan Chai, sections of which were sold in a land auction in 1841 to build the famous villa Spring Gardens. Two buildings on Spring Garden Lane were also used as the governor’s office. In 1910, the military sold a property it owned on Sampan Street. The area from Spring Garden Lane to Swatow and Amoy Streets were developed into the “Big Number Brothels” red-light district catering mainly to foreign customers. A 1924 newspaper article reported that someone was arrested for hitting prostitutes and using them for profit on Swatow Street.

The main customers of “Big Number Brothels” in Tai Wong Street East and West, Cross Street and Stone Nullah Lane were the many sailors that arrived from Macau, Portugal, the Philippines, Japan, Britain and America. Following the government order to close down all Western brothels in 1932, foreign prostitutes were forced to conduct their business illegally along Johnston Road.





由閣麟街向西望擺花街，街上遍綴節日的裝飾，約攝於1880年。圖左為一黑底白字的路牌，“倫核士街”四字依稀可見。
Cochrane Street looking west towards Lyndhurst Terrace, c.1880. Festive decorations fill the streets. A street marker for Lyndhurst Terrace is visible on the left.



灣仔皇后大道東，約攝於1905年。由大佛口望向大王東街一帶。
Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, c.1905. Tai Fat Hau looking towards Tai Wong Street East.



灣仔三板街大冧巴妓寨及阿姑的華服，約攝於1915年。
"Big Number Brothels" on Sampan Street, Wan Chai, c.1915. Splendid costumes of prostitutes are hung for drying.



灣仔春園街大靛巴妓寨，約攝於1915年。橫互的是交加街。
“Big Number Brothels” on Spring Garden Lane, c.1915. The street across on the right is Cross Street.



灣仔三板街大靛巴妓寨，約攝於1920年。
“Big Number Brothels” on Sampan Street, Wan Chai, c.1920.



春園街大蘇巴華洋妓寨及尋芳客，約攝於1925年。
The foreign brothel visitors and the "Big Number Brothels", Spring Garden Lane, Wan Chai, c.1925.



灣仔春園街大蘇巴妓寨，約攝於1925年。
"Big Number Brothels" on Spring Garden Lane, Wan Chai, c.1925.