

## Japanese colonial education in Taiwan 1895-1922: precepts and practices of control

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### Introduction

Did Japanese and British imperialism have similar functions? The answer to this question will contribute not only to research into Japanese colonialism but also to the comparative study of imperialism. It is briefly considered here.<sup>1</sup> However, the main focus of this paper is Japanese imperialism itself.

Mark Peattie has located two contrasting attitudes toward colonialism: the exclusionist based on cultural and ethnic dissimilarities, and the integrationalist based on cultural and ethnic similarities. The Japanese, he argues, demonstrated 'the worst and most contradictory racial assumptions of both patterns', which led neither to the granting of independence nor to the extension of political rights and civil liberties.<sup>2</sup> His observation may well be said to contain a large measure of truth, but why did the Japanese embrace the worst and most contradictory assumptions of both patterns in their relations to the colonized?

This paper will consider Japanese imperialism in the colony of Taiwan from its annexation in 1895 until 1922, because the model of Japanese colonial rule, later applied to other colonies, was developed in Taiwan in this period by trial and error. The paper will focus on the basic assumptions and structures associated with this model.<sup>3</sup> The first three parts will deal with three dimensions of Japanese imperialism at the turn of the century; the religious, ideological and cultural systems in Japan, the legal and political relationships between the metropolis and the colony, and associated educational policy in the colony of Taiwan. The fourth part will concentrate on the imperial educational reforms circa 1910, their causes and consequences.

1 This issue will be the concern of forthcoming papers by the authors.

2 Mark R. Peattie, 'Introduction', in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds, *The Japanese Colonial Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 14-15. See also Mark R. Peattie, 'Japanese Attitudes toward Colonialism, 1895-1945' in the same volume.

3 For detailed descriptions of colonial education in Taiwan, see E. Patricia Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan, 1895-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), and E. Patricia Tsurumi, 'Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan' in *The Japanese Colonial Empire*. Tsurumi's research is well balanced and on the whole accurate, but lacks insight into the 'racialized' national culture of Japanese imperialism. For a better general analysis, see Michael Weiner, 'Discourse of race, nation and empire in pre-1945 Japan', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 18 3(1995).

### The invention of the Emperor Cult

Goto Simpei (1857–1929), arguably the most influential and outstanding Japanese colonial administrator in Taiwan, reported in 1909 to an English speaking world on the success of the Japanese colonial government in bringing industrial development and law and order to Taiwan. His purpose was to ensure that the Japanese would be acknowledged by his Western readers as efficient colonial rulers. However, he reluctantly admitted to some 'manifestly weak points' of Japanese colonialism, in particular, the absence of a religious rationale for imperialism: 'How far religion affects colonisation it is needless to conjecture here... The question therefore arises whether Japan had any such religion to rely upon. To this the answer, I am sorry to say, must be in the negative. ... As regards education in Formosa, it is as yet a matter of study and consideration what course may be the best to adopt [sic].'<sup>4</sup>

Why his concern for the religious and educational weaknesses of Japanese rule in Taiwan? There are two linked reasons; the relatively feeble religious tradition and, ironically, the emergence of the potent quasi-religion of the Emperor worship in Japan which Goto thought would not be effective in Taiwan as a means of colonial subordination.

In pre-Meiji Japan, Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity and Shinto coexisted, but not always amiably. The Tokugawa Shogunate regime (1603–1868) gave Confucianism the status of an official doctrine. In China Confucianism was customarily merged with the folk worship of Confucius and numerous gods; it was imported into Japan only as a means of instruction and scholarship. The secularism of the regime considerably reduced the influence of Buddhism. Christianity, introduced by the Jesuits in the sixteenth century, was harshly oppressed. Shinto, an indigenous religion with an animistic and syncretistic character, furnished the ideological basis of the Meiji Restoration in 1868, and an official attempt to make it the established religion took place in the early Meiji era but this policy was premature, and was rescinded after a few years. It was all too new.

However, post 1877, after the quelling of a major restorationist uprising, the defining characteristics of a Meiji era of modernization became clear. These were: the invention of the Emperor Cult; the construction of a national educational system; the formation of a national army; the imitation of European colonialism; the creation of an industrial society. Modern Japan was born.

From the 1880s the oligarchic government introduced a quasi-religion to unite and mobilize the people in the face of the overwhelming influence of Western Christianity and culture. The outcome was the utilization of the Emperor as a sacred symbol manifesting political authority through his involvement in Shinto rituals. The Emperor was now at the centre of national unity. He became, in the words of Robert Harvey, 'the unifying symbol of his country'.<sup>5</sup> It proved a brilliantly successful innovation ensuring, in a country previously riven with internal factional rivalries, order, stability and unity.

One purpose of this oriental 'invention of tradition' was no different from that of similar occidental inventions of the time – the forging of a strong, united modern nation. Another purpose was very different – to ensure the capacity to resist occidental imperialism.

<sup>4</sup> Goto Simpei, 'The Administration of Formosa (Taiwan)', in Okuma Shigenobu, ed., *Fifty Years of New Japan* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1909), vol. 2, 531, 551.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Harvey, *The Undefeated: The Rise, Fall and Rise of Greater Japan*, (London: Macmillan, 1994), 88.

The main locations for disseminating Emperor worship were not Shinto shrines but schools. Of huge importance was a school ceremony on festivals and holidays, instituted in 1891, which involved 'religious' practices; obeisance before the photographs of the Emperor, reading of the *Imperial Rescript on Education* issued in 1890 by the Meiji Emperor, patriotic speeches by principals and singing of the national anthem and adulatory songs related to the theme of the festivals, for instance, the birthday of the Emperor.<sup>6</sup> Since it had not been the custom for organized groups to gather to worship, these school ceremonies provided a new experience for most Japanese.

A terrifying degree of formality was inculcated into Japanese school life: the emperor's birthday, the ceremonial assemblies surrounding the reading of the imperial rescript on education (which had to be carried reverently in white gloved hands and read to perfection), the display of imperial portraits, the raising and lowering of the flag – all were carried out in the manner of sacred ritual.<sup>7</sup>

The idea of the emperor ceremonies originated with Mori Arinori (1847–89), the first Minister of Education, who in his youth studied at the University of London and later belonged to a Christian community in the United States. Through his experiences in the West he became well aware of the importance of ritualistic religious practices, and decided to utilize rituals with photography and songs as a means of fostering loyalty to the state. However, he resisted any attempts to impose, in the name of the Emperor, an official doctrine, which would violate religious freedom.

Mori was considered by many as far too liberal. After his assassination in 1889 by a reactionary nationalist, the *Imperial Rescript on Education* was issued. It was a response to his 'excessive' liberalism. It consisted of two parts; the declaration that ideals of education should be derived from a Japanese national polity (*kokutai*), and an ethical mandate. It stressed strongly the supposed notion of the continuity of the Imperial line. This supposed fact that the monarchic line was unbroken, unlike that of China and the Western nations, was interpreted as proof of the superior stability of the Japanese political system and the uniqueness of its history and culture. The Emperor personified national unity, uniqueness and superiority.

The second part was an amalgam of various desirable virtues: Confucian qualities such as obedience, loyalty and filial piety, and civic virtues such as respect for the Constitution and acceptance of military service. It is worthwhile producing below brief extracts from the *Rescript* to capture the tone of assertive nationalism and racial confidence.

Know ye, Our Subjects:

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The ceremony itself resembled Empire Day in Britain advocated by Reginald, twelfth Earl of Meath, who was inspired by the Japanese 'Bushido', a code of honour extolling the virtues of loyalty, masculinity and self-sacrifice, although there existed significant difference in the point that the Empire Day movement was run on voluntary lines, and lacked the specific national dogma published by the state. See Anne Bloomfield, 'Drill and dance as symbols of imperialism', in J. A. Mangan, ed., *Making Imperial Mentalities: Socialisation and British Imperialism* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) and John M. Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion 1880–1960* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1984), 228–36.

<sup>7</sup> Harvey, *The Undefeated*, 101.

<sup>8</sup> Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 121. See pages 102–27 for fuller versions of the Rescript and events associated with its promulgation.

The *Rescript* became the Japanese 'Bible' – a sacred text. Its authority was demonstrated in an incident involving the famous Christian, Uchimura Kanzo (1861–1930), who, in 1891, was forced to resign his teaching position because of his reluctance to bow before the *Rescript* in a school ceremony. It became eventually an *exclusive* credo. The Order No. 12 of the Ministry of Education in 1898 prohibited religious instruction in school, and forced private schools founded by religious organizations to adopt as the basis of moral education the *Rescript* instead of the Bible or the Buddhist Scriptures. From 1904 all elementary schools had to use the textbooks published by the Ministry of Education, which were replete with interpretations of the *Rescript*, praise for the Emperor and tales about martial and patriotic heroes.

Thus, ruthless and effective socialization into Emperor worship in schools was systematized by the turn of the century. Through the careful construction of linked doctrines and ceremonies with schools as the main agencies of indoctrination, Emperor worship was rationalized, promulgated and perpetuated, while the influence of other religious groups became increasingly limited. The official rhetoric was that Emperor worship was non-religious in spite of obvious religious practices associated with it. In reality, Emperor worship became a sacred cult.

When Taiwan was occupied, colonial administrators deliberated about whether they should and could export to the colonies the 'Emperor Cult', which was specifically recognized as Japan's quasi-religion. Goto Simpei for one was sceptical about its exportation. For him, as we shall see, the cult was useful as the source of the rulers' conviction and confidence rather than as an instrument for influencing the ruled.

#### Boundaries of the state: problems of colonial control

Japanese imperialism had four major motives: economic, defensive, paternalistic and emulative. Japan quickly realized that a successful nineteenth century industrial economy required raw materials and captive markets. In short, imperial expansion was the means of economic survival. In turn, industrial success meant successful resistance, by force if necessary, to Western imperialism. At the same time, Japan had no problem with the idea of its colonial domination of other Asian countries. This was in the nature of a paternalistic relationship based on the 'national' superiority of the Japanese in Asia. Japan, in essence, saw itself as the 'father' of its Asian 'children', who should guide their modernization. Finally, and as a corollary, Japan convinced itself that its power in the East justified an empire in the same way that power in the West justified the empires of Britain, France and other western nations. Thus, in the late nineteenth century, for these four reasons Japan began to acquire a modern empire.

When Japan annexed Taiwan as an outcome of the successful Sino-Japanese war (1894–5), the first thing she had to do was to determine the legal status of possession. Soon after the end of the war the Bureau of Taiwan Affairs was organized under the supervision of Prime Minister Ito Hirofumi (1841–1909) to solve the problem. There existed two options: to integrate Taiwan into the Japanese state, extending to the native people citizens' rights and duties set out in the Constitution, or to entrust the colonial government with power free from all constitutional limitations.

An eager supporter of the first option was Hara Takashi (1856–1921). He insisted in a statement to Prime Minister Ito that Japan should regard Taiwan not as a so-called 'colony' but as an integral part of the mother country in the same fashion as Alsace and Lorraine were parts of Germany and Algeria was part of

France, offering as his reasons the relative contiguity and the ethnic affinities of Japan and Taiwan.<sup>9</sup>

An alternative option was recommended to Ito by a British lawyer, Montague Kirkwood, at that time an adviser to the Ministry of Law, who declared the necessity of making the new territory wholly distinct and separate from the homeland.<sup>10</sup> His advice was highly valued by Goto Simpei, who in 1898 was to become the Director of Civil Administration of the colonial government of Taiwan.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, the eventual structure of Japanese colonial rule not only in Taiwan but also in Korea lay somewhere between the two options. Without entering into detail, two main features will be briefly outlined below.

First, as one British observer noted, the legal status of Taiwan was comparable to that of a British Crown Colony. After a short visit to Taiwan, he explained to his European readers in his report *The Japanese in Formosa* that Japanese rule was 'based on the model of our Crown Colony administration'.<sup>12</sup> There was no representative institution. The supreme authority was vested in the Governor-General, who was answerable to the Emperor through the Minister of the Home Office. This view was confirmed in *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, which was published in 1907 in London with a Preface by Goto Simpei. The author, Takekoshi Yosaburo (1865–1950), a politician and historian, pointed out similarities to the British Crown Colonies, including such facts as the introduction of the legislative council appointed by the Governor-General, adding, however, the careful and important caveat that with regard to military matters French colonies should be thought of as the model.<sup>13</sup>

Second, the Japanese government was reluctant to admit to any similarities to British colonial practice. Japanese official statements often asserted that Japan had every intention of bringing about integration, using the term *doca* (assimilation). And indeed the law which granted the Governor-General exceptional legislative power had to be renewed every three years by the sanction of the Imperial Diet. When Goto became the Director of Civil Administration, he planned, with the support of the Governor-General Kodama Gentaro (1852–1906), to abandon insistence on integration and to remove the three-year renewal requirement by the revision of the Constitution, but he did not succeed. After the First World War, on the strong initiative of Hara Takashi, the Prime Minister of the period, efforts were made to restrict the power of the Governor-General. However, as far as the political rights of the ruled were concerned, it was only in 1945 that the right to vote as

9 Hara Takashi, 'Taiwan mondai ni an' [Two Views on Taiwan Affairs], in Ito Hirofumi, ed., *Hisho ruisan* [Classified Collection of the Private Documents], *Volume on Taiwan shiryō* [Sources Related to Taiwan], (Tokyo, 1936), 32. Hara joined the Bureau as a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He became the Prime Minister in 1918 and was assassinated in 1921.

10 Montague Kirkwood, 'Taiwan seido, Tenno no taiken oyobi teikoku gikai ni kansuru ikensho' [Opinion about the Taiwan Administration, Supreme Power of the Emperor and the Imperial Diet], *ibid.*, 81–2.

11 For Goto's activities as a colonial administrator, see Chang Han-yu and Ramon H. Myers, 'Japanese Colonial Development Policy in Taiwan, 1895–1906: A Case of Bureaucratic Entrepreneurship', *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXII 2 (1986).

12 Keane, Captain Sir John, Bart, 'The Japanese in Formosa', *Blackwood's Magazine*, MLXVI (1904), 169.

13 Takekoshi Yosaburo, *Japanese Rule in Formosa* (London: Longman, 1907), 37. The intention of publishing this book is in itself worthy of defence. First, it was an excuse for Japanese colonial rule against criticisms by the Europeans. Second, the book was also published in a Japanese version and thus was intended to make the Japanese embrace self-pride as bearers of the 'great and glorious work' of the Empire. Takekoshi in his preface expressed his ambitious desire that his book would have similar effects to those of J. A. Froude, J. Chamberlain and C. Rhodes upon the youth of the British Empire.

Japanese was extended to the better off section of the inhabitants of Taiwan. Consequently, in spite of the constant rhetoric in favour of integration, in reality 'temporary' arrangements remained essentially until the collapse of the Japanese Empire, and, roughly speaking, Japan followed the British style of colonial rule, but in a more militaristic and autocratic way.

What were the motives underlying the political process in Taiwan? For Goto, colonial rule was regarded as a means of international diplomacy. His concern was to present the Japanese to Europeans as efficient and benevolent colonial rulers in order to raise the status of Japan in the world. Furthermore, a simplistic belief in Social Darwinism was his theoretical credo. In contrast, the impact on domestic politics in the homeland was the concern of Hara. From his point of view, to allow exceptional powers to the Governor-General represented a crucial constitutional crisis, which made the effectiveness of the Constitution in the homeland merely tokenism.<sup>14</sup> His political thought certainly included an element of democratic idealism, but it cannot be regarded as the only reason why the government officially and explicitly refused to support Goto's plan. At least two additional related reasons can be found.

First, for most Japanese politicians, as Edward I-te Chen has pointed out, 'the British view of "colony" carried an unfavourable connotation of white people exploiting the black and yellow peoples in the remote lands of Africa and Asia'.<sup>15</sup> After concluding so-called unequal treaties with Western countries in the mid-nineteenth century, priority was given by the Japanese to avoiding being colonized by the West, and to becoming a signatory to equal treaties. Thus to have a 'colony' was an unfortunate irony, which demanded justification. In the case of Britain, of course, the ideology of white supremacy, which carried with it the idea that 'uncivilized' people were unsuited to self-government, was so prevalent that discriminatory treatment of the colonized did not demand legitimization.

Second, the policy of integration Hara advocated was consistent with the image of a benevolent and impartial Emperor and explicit discrimination against the colonized would smear this image. Ume Kenjiro, the Minister of the Law Council, for example, argued in 1897 that Japan should gradually extend citizens' duties and rights to Taiwan, because the extreme virtue of the Emperor lay in impartiality (*isshi dojin*).<sup>16</sup> Consequently, to endorse the official rhetoric of the impartiality of the Emperor, the government had to propose and preach integration. In reality, however, the Emperor Cult was fundamentally linked with 'racial' exclusiveness. Here was the political paradox.

The authority of the Emperor, as mentioned above, was derived from the supposed notion of the continuity of the Imperial line descending from Amaterasu, the sun goddess. The ancestors of the Japanese people were supposed to be linked to the Imperial Family by blood. Thus, the sharing of the same ancestors and blood was emphasized as a 'natural' criterion of the Japanese 'race'. Generally speaking, nationalism and racism have common features. They categorize peoples into

'imagined communities' as 'natural' divisions, with the attachment of positive or negative evaluations. If the criterion of 'race' is limited to phenotypical features, it has little relevance to Japanese colonial rule. On the other hand, if the notion of the same 'blood' or 'breed' is admitted as the criterion, the Emperor Cult should be regarded as a variant of racism. In this sense, the Emperor Cult was the expression of racism as well as nationalism, which legitimized discrimination against other 'races'.<sup>17</sup>

In short, the administrative structure of colonial rule in Taiwan was similar to that of British Crown Colonies in Asia and Africa, but the motives and the legitimizing logic underlying colonial policy were quite different. In the case of Japan, the cult of the Emperor functioned as an effective agent of discrimination. There was a huge gap between pervasive propaganda about his impartiality and the fundamental racist role of his symbolic image.

### Confrontation between Chinese and Japanese culture

The lack of eagerness for political integration did not necessarily mean an equal lack of eagerness for cultural integration. Though the effectiveness of the latter was certainly restricted by the former, nevertheless it has its own realities and demands consideration. How did Japan attempt to create cultural bonds which would serve the purpose of colonial subordination, through the inculcation of new political ideologies, cultural values and social attitudes? What were the Japanese practices of 'political socialization'?<sup>18</sup> The situation was complicated. There were at least four distinct groups with their own approaches.

When Japan obtained Taiwan, there existed, broadly speaking, two kinds of inhabitants – those of Chinese origin whose ancestors had immigrated from the Chinese mainland from the seventeenth century, and the aborigines who were referred to in historical documents as 'savages' or 'barbarians'. By 1904, those of Chinese origin (hereafter referred to as 'Taiwanese') numbered over 2,800,000, the aborigines about 135,000, and the Japanese officials and colonists, excluding the military, some 50,000. In addition, there were Western missionaries. Scottish Presbyterians arrived in the 1860s and Canadian Presbyterians in the 1870s. They were few in number, but exerted considerable religious influence.

While the aborigines in the island possessed no written language, the Taiwanese and Japanese shared Chinese characters and Chinese classical literature. The Japanese had developed their own character system (*kana*), but regarded it as suitable only for females and children. The Taiwanese were without their own character system despite the fact their vernacular speech was quite different from Mandarin. As Benedict Anderson has pointed out, Mandarin in the East was the equivalent of Church Latin in the West and Qur'anic Arabic in the Middle East. Through this it was possible to create communities, the existence of which depended on the idea of the non-arbitrariness of symbols. Chinese remained, until well into the latter half of the nineteenth century, 'the medium of a sacred language and written script', through which 'ontological reality was apprehensible'.<sup>19</sup> The Western assumption

14 This paper owes the understanding of Hara and Goto's policies to Haruyama Meitetsu, 'Meiji kenpo taisei to shokuminchi totai' [The Meiji Constitutional Regime and Colonial Rule] in *Iwanami koza kindai nihon to shokuminchi* [Studies in Modern Japan and Colonies], vol. 4 (Tokyo, 1993).

15 Edward I-te Chen, 'The Attempt To Integrate the Empire', in *The Japanese Colonial Empire*, 251.

16 Ume Kenjiro, 'Taiwan ni kansuru hiken' [Some Statements about Taiwan], *Goto Simpei Monjo* [Documents Related to Goto Simpei], dated 1897 (Microfilm), Reel 23, 7-5, National Library of Congress in Japan. Hereafter GSM.

17 As for the general theory of racism and its relation with nationalism, see Robert Miles, *Racism after 'Race Relations'* (Routledge: London, 1993), especially Ch. 2.

18 For the notion of 'political socialization', see J. A. Mangan, 'Making Imperial Mentalities' in *Making Imperial Mentalities*.

19 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991, revised version), 13-14.

that the spoken was superior to the written word, the vernacular to the classical, gradually brought about revolutionary change in this belief. The Presbyterian missionary M. Douglas in the 1860s, for example, developed a writing system with Romanized script to express the vernacular in Amoy Province in China directly facing the island of Taiwan. The missionaries thought that through a Romanized system they could make the vast majority of illiterate Chinese literate, and ultimately understand the word of God. This conviction, as we shall see, had significance for Taiwan.

The Japanese colonial government, of course, exerted pressure for modernization, but in a different way from the Christian missionaries. In the case of the educational policy, Isawa Shuji (1851–1917), the first Chief of the Education Bureau of the colonial government, and Goto Simpei both had significant roles in this regard.

Isawa, on the basis of studies in the United States, was an expert in music education and gymnastics, which traditional schools in Japan and Taiwan completely lacked.<sup>20</sup> In 1895, he volunteered to go to Taiwan to modernize the education system. Under his direction the Japanese Language School was built in Taihoku, the new capital, and sixteen schools for Taiwanese were built throughout the island during his first two years there.

In 1898 the sixteen schools were transformed into elementary schools financed by the local communities, common schools (*kogakko*). The curriculum in the Common School Regulations (CSR) of 1898 owed much to Isawa. In order to fully understand the nature of the CSR, it is important to understand Isawa's thinking before and after arrival in Taiwan. Before undertaking his work in Taiwan, he declared that his ambition was to assimilate the Taiwanese fully into Japanese culture to the extent that they felt themselves to be wholeheartedly 'Japanese'. He would do this by establishing schools in which Japanese would be taught as a main subject, complicated Chinese characters would be replaced with Japanese phonetic *kana* and Confucian textbooks would be excluded as impractical.<sup>21</sup>

However, in a speech in 1897 on the curriculum of the forthcoming common school, his standpoint had clearly shifted. He now acclaimed the Confucian tradition as indispensable to the Taiwanese. School texts included Confucian classics as well as Japanese classics.<sup>22</sup> The inclusion of a mixture of Chinese and Japanese cultures now characterized his approach to Taiwanese education.

What were the reasons for his conversion from a commitment to a cultural assimilation policy to, in his words, a 'policy of fusion'?<sup>23</sup> First, he had great difficulty in attracting Taiwanese pupils to his schools not only because of the widespread Taiwanese hatred of the brutal activities of the Japanese military and police but also because of their hostility to the absence of Confucian textbooks in the curriculum. The source of pupils were families of literati, most of whom were from the influential and wealthy gentry. He found the Confucian influence among

20 Isawa became the chief of the textbook bureau of the Ministry of Education under Mori Arinori and served as superintendent of the Physical Training Institute during the 1880s. In 1890 he became principle of both the Tokyo School for the Blind and Deaf and the Tokyo Music School.

21 Isawa Shuji, 'Taiwan kyouiku dan' [The Argument about Taiwanese Education] in *Isawa Shuji Senshu* [Selected Writings of Isawa Shuji], (Tokyo, 1958), 570–1.

22 Isawa Shuji, 'Taiwan kogakko setti ni kansuru iken' [The Argument about the Establishment of Common Schools in Taiwan], *ibid.*, 612–18.

23 Isawa Shuji, 'Shin hanto jinmin kyoka no hoshin' [The Precept for Educating the Native People in the New Territory], *ibid.*, 632–3.

them much stronger than he had anticipated, and their ability to write Chinese-style poems much more sophisticated than the ordinary Japanese.<sup>24</sup>

Second, in fact, the 'Japanese language' did not exist at that time, in another words, there was a huge gap between the literary language and the colloquial language. It was not until the turn of the century that official efforts to create a standard written language began. Japanese traditional writings in reality, therefore, were similar to those in 'Taiwanese'.

Third, there were the Christian missionaries. In 1895 Isawa visited the Presbyterian missionary T. Barclay and discussed the principles and methods of educating Taiwanese. Rejecting Barclay's assertion about the merits of the Romanized vernacular, Isawa argued for utilizing Chinese characters for reasons of cultural heritage and association, and for teaching the Japanese language.<sup>25</sup> While it is not wholly clear, it is probable that his concern was over the fact that the Romanized vernacular would restrict reading to the Bible if the missionaries failed to produce other translations, while the Japanese language could be both the gateway to Japanese culture and to a wide range of Western knowledge with relatively abundant Japanese translations of Western literature.

Isawa's policy of fusion was a compromise, an attempt to create the cultural integration of the Japanese Empire, while preserving selected traditional values of the Chinese Empire. However, it had one crucial weakness. As far as language was concerned, it was relatively easy to fuse the components of the Chinese and Japanese culture. To produce a truly mixed ideological content was another matter. Confucianism and the Emperor Cult were irreconcilable ideological perspectives.

The CSR of 1898 gave the Governor-General the power to determine and censor textbooks. Most of the orthodox Confucian classics were admitted, but, following Isawa's suggestion, the *Book of Mencius* was proscribed. The book included relatively radical democratic thoughts, asserting that the Emperor, if judged by the people to lack righteousness, should lose his 'Heavenly Mandate' and be executed. The will of the Heaven was equated with the will of the people, and 'revolution' was legitimized. Such a doctrine was clearly antipathetic to the cult of the Japanese Emperor, whose legitimacy lay in the supposed notion of a continuous and stable Imperial line unbroken by the disaster of revolution.

Isawa also tried to make *The Imperial Rescript on Education* the core of Taiwanese education. However, those ethical mandates in the *Rescript* such as 'respect the Constitution' and 'should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the state' were not only absent from Confucian teaching, but also inconsistent with the fact that Taiwanese had no citizens' rights and duties. In addition, phrases like 'Our Imperial Ancestors' had the distinct possibility of arousing hostility in the Taiwanese toward the clearly implied exclusiveness of the 'same blood' community. Although the *Rescript* contained some Confucian terminology, there was a vast hiatus between the imperialistic *Rescript* and the cosmopolitan Confucian classics. Thus, from an ideological perspective, Isawa's policy of fusion can be considered as a confused and contradictory amalgam.

In 1897 Isawa also proposed a plan to establish a more clearly articulated school system, but the colonial government opposed it, mainly on financial grounds, and

24 Isawa Shuji, 'Taiwan kogakko setti ni kansuru iken', *ibid.*, 620.

25 Kokufu Tanetake, *Taiwan ni okeru kokugo kyoiku no tenkai* [The Development of Japanese Language Teaching in Taiwan] (Taipei, 1931), 39–41.

forced him to resign. Although his plan for secondary schools was rejected, the common schools were created after his resignation for reasons that will become clear in due course.

The CSR of 1898 was drastically revised in 1904 under the Kodama-Goto regime after lengthy discussion among Japanese officials and teachers. In the revised CSR the reading of Japanese classical writings and the teaching of its colloquial language usage, which hitherto had been separate, were integrated into one subject, National Language, to which one third of the whole schooltime was assigned, while the Confucian classics were now excluded as school textbooks. All subjects, except Chinese Literature, were now to be taught in Japanese. In short, the policy of fusion was largely done away with. What was the motive underlying this change? Was Goto Simpei, who was reluctant to promote political integration, willing to promote cultural assimilation through 'National Language' teaching? Possibly. The situation is not wholly clear. On the one hand Goto certainly advocated the 'policy of esteeming traditional customs'. He founded Yobunkai [The Assembly for Promoting Literature] in 1900 for honouring and sponsoring poetry parties consisting of Taiwanese literati. He also declared in a speech to Japanese teachers in 1903 that assimilation of the Taiwanese should be the ultimate aim, but that it would take more than one hundred years to accomplish.<sup>26</sup>

On the other hand, it is important to be aware of the fact that Japanese administrators as a whole were far from eager to educate the Taiwanese. In fact, there is a good reason to believe that there was a secret agreement against it among administrators. For example, in a confidential statement to Goto, Mochiji Rokusaburo (1867-1923), the Chief of the Education Bureau from 1903 to 1910, asserted his opposition to seeking political and cultural assimilation, offering the opinion that the colony existed not for the welfare of the colonized but for the economic advantage of the homeland in a competitive world.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, his successor Kumamoto Sigekichi (1862-1928) secretly noted in 1910 that the Japanese should seem to be eager to promote Taiwanese education so as to avoid criticism by the Western Powers, but for no other reason.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, in reality, it appears that the revision of the CSR had the purpose of establishing the supremacy of Japanese culture and language. Goto suggested that the larger the gap between 'civilized' and 'uncivilized', the easier it was to control a colony, and that because a wide gap between the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' did not exist between Japanese and Chinese, the Japanese had to make strenuous efforts to establish political distance as rulers by imposing their own language and culture on the colonized.<sup>29</sup>

Goto's motives may be reasonably interpreted as follows: if the dominance of Japanese language was established, on the one hand, ambitious Taiwanese would have to learn it in order to get good jobs, and, on the other hand, Japanese people would be in an advantageous position because they could read and speak it from

26 'Goto chokan no kunji' [Speech of Chief Civil Administrator Goto], *Taiwan kyoiku kai zasshi* [Bulletin of the Teachers Association of Taiwan], 27(1904).

27 Mochiji Rokusaburo, 'Kenchi kanken' [Opinion about Prefecture Administration], in GSM, Reel 31, 7-73.

28 Kumamoto Sigekichi, 'Taiwan ni okeru kyoiku ni taisuru hiken no ichini narabini gimon' [Some Opinions and Doubts about Education in Taiwan], in *Kumamoto Sigekichi Monjo* [Documents Related to Kumamoto Sigekichi], 0102, The Library of University of Tokyo (Komaba campus). Hereafter KSM.

29 Goto Simpei, *Nihon shokumin seisaku ippan* (Tokyo, 1921), 18.

birth. In this way the political socialization of the Taiwanese would be successfully achieved. From his point of view, political control through language control was the way forward. An attempt to disseminate Emperor worship was a contradictory nonsense, and Isawa's policy of fusion was dangerous because the Japanese were less familiar with Chinese literature than the Taiwanese and thus prone 'to lose face' as the ruling 'race'. As for his overt policy of 'esteeming traditional customs', it was useful to achieve hegemonic control. It is very likely that he believed that he could tolerate indigenous traditional customs until the gradual progress of material development and language assertion undermined and replaced them.

In all probability, therefore, the truth of the matter was that, as in the case of political integration, Goto was ill-disposed towards cultural integration. Separatism was his guiding principle, not only in the administrative structure but also in the content of education. He was inspired and influenced by British colonialism and its policy of 'The Dual Mandate'. Nonetheless, there was one thing he could do nothing about - philanthropic activities. Under the Kodama-Goto regime, a well-equipped medical school and a school for blind children were established (the latter was erected in response to a petition by the Presbyterian mission). It is doubtful, of course, whether these activities gave the Taiwanese more than the impression of benevolent 'tokenism'. The 'manifestly weak points' of Japanese colonialism, mentioned earlier, were to remain blatant.

#### Reformation circa 1910: reinforcement of a racial hierarchy

The opening years of the twentieth century were a critical period, in which the colonial government, to some extent, was forced to modify its administrative structure. Although Goto Simpei wrote confidently in 1909: 'there are no more *dohi* [insurgent] disturbances, except occasional menaces by some aboriginal tribes',<sup>30</sup> his successors had to face upheavals both on and off the island. On the Chinese mainland, the 1911 Revolution succeeded in overthrowing the Manchu regime (Qing Dynasty, 1644-1911). The Republic of China was established. This encouraged some Taiwanese to seek re-unity with their motherland. Furthermore, on the island, from 1910 the colonial government, with large amount of subsidies from the treasury, launched a campaign to occupy the mountainous areas, in order to exploit their rich resources of timber and camphor. The resistance of the aborigines, taking full advantage of territory familiar to them, was so effective that Japanese military and Taiwanese coolie casualties were far higher than expected.

Resistance to the regime gradually surfaced in the urban area. Luo Fu-shin (1885-1914), for instance, abandoned his post as an elementary teacher, and crossed the Taiwan Strait to join the 1911 revolutionary movement. After returning to the island in 1912 he secretly recruited opponents to Japanese colonial rule, hoping for military assistance from his mainland. In his statement urging the people to join the rebellion, he sternly criticized the colonial government, *inter alia*, for levying heavy taxes, maintaining monopolies, granting the police excessive powers and compelling the poorer Taiwanese to be coolies in the war against the aborigines, and thus jeopardizing their lives in return for a financial pittance.<sup>31</sup>

30 Goto Simpei, 'The Administration of Formosa(Taiwan)', op cit., 553.

31 Taiwan sotokuhu homubu, 'Taiwan hiran shoshi' [A Brief History of Bandit Disturbance in Taiwan], dated 1920, in Yamabe Kentaro, ed., *Gendaishi Siryo* [Documents on Modern History] (Tokyo, 1971), vol. XXI, 33-5.



His revolt failed. In 1913, he was arrested. His nationalism became well known through the newspaper reports of his trial, some surprisingly sympathetic.<sup>32</sup> After being sentenced to death, Luo Fu-shin noted in his defence that even if he had violated the Japanese law he had only done what the Heaven commanded, and that he was willing to make his sacrifice for the emancipation of the 'Taiwanese' – one of the earliest uses of the term which implied the people sharing the same destiny – from a 'barbarous country like Japan'.<sup>33</sup> Prior to execution, he stated, 'I have only tried to realize the human rights of liberty and equality'.<sup>34</sup> As these words demonstrate, he had usefully absorbed Western political ideals by means of which he could denounce as 'barbarians' the rulers who thought themselves as the only 'civilized race' in the East, while equally usefully his belief in the 'Heavenly Mandate' was based on Confucian ideas. His support for ancient folk worship is also apparent from the fact that he swore revenge on Japanese officials through his ghost. This 'traditionalism' wedded to modernism ensured that he gained wide support among fellow Taiwanese.

Five rebellions aimed at the overturn of the colonial regime occurred between 1912 and 1916, though in these cases nationalism was not as explicit a motive as in the case of Luo Fu-shin. It became necessary for the colonial government to pay close attention to the interests of the colonized and undertake selective reforms so as to minimize criticism, not only from the Europeans but now from the Taiwanese.

In an attempt to ingratiate itself with the influential Taiwanese and strengthen its political position, the government now collaborated with the Taiwanese middle classes, but limited the extent of compromise to educational policy, leaving the political structure as it was. Before 1910, racial segregation in schools was rigid. Now it was relaxed. Well equipped primary schools (*shogakko*) were erected for Japanese children, less well resourced schools were created for Taiwanese, and clearly inferior education centres (*kyoikujo*) established for the now conquered aborigines. Pressured by the gentry, in 1913 the government gave tacit consent to 'racial coeducation', which had been prohibited by Goto Simpei, and thereafter sons of the wealthy gentry were admitted into the primary schools. Common schools were also expanded in number to the extent that the enrolment rate increased from about 7% in 1910 to 25% in 1920.<sup>35</sup>

With regard to post-elementary education, there existed a few middle schools, to which only Japanese were admitted. Secondary schools available to other 'races' were the Japanese Language School, the medical school and vocational training institutions. There was an unequivocal unwillingness on the part of the colonial government to provide liberal education. This was partly due to the fact that Japan filled most administrative posts with her own people and native civil servants were regarded as an anomaly, and also partly due to apprehension about the subversive influence of post-elementary liberal education. In some regards the Japanese followed the British. Mochiji Rokusaburo, after investigating British colonial education in India in 1907, justified Japanese educational policy by citing the arguments in

J. Chailley's *Administrative Problems of British India*, which highlighted British mistakes in educating the natives in liberal values in British-style universities, resulting in the fostering of discontented Indian patriots.<sup>36</sup>

Despite government reforms the wealthy Taiwanese were so frustrated with the limited opportunities for study and employment that they petitioned the Governor-General to establish a middle school specifically for the Taiwanese. Since this plea was made as a request for a reward for their collaboration in the war against the aborigines, the Governor-General had no choice but to accept it.<sup>37</sup> Without the help of the gentry it would have been difficult to gather and supervise coolie labour, necessary for 'the Mountain Campaign'. In addition, concern that the sons of the wealthy gentry might be 'infected' with 'dangerous' political thoughts circulating in China and Japan prevailed among the authorities. Thus, the Taichu Middle School was founded in 1915, symbolically speaking, at the expense of the lives of Taiwanese coolies and island aborigines.

Then through the Education Ordinances of 1919 and 1922, the colonial government promoted 'racial coeducation' at the post-elementary level and an integrated school system for Japanese and Taiwanese. Educational competition between the rulers and the ruled was allowed, though it was far more advantageous to the Japanese – examinations were in Japanese and few Taiwanese could afford secondary schooling.

The extension of educational opportunities accompanied the reinforcement of political socialization. The school ceremonies in common schools were systematized in 1912. Now Taiwanese children had to join the ritual of Emperor Worship. However, the administrators were not confident of the outcome. This was apparent from the fact that before systematizing school ceremonies they secretly attempted to revise the *Imperial Rescript on Education* in order to make it appropriate to colonial rule.<sup>38</sup> Their attempt was in vain. The central government in Japan was uneasy about this action and failed to support it. In its view the sacredness of the *Rescript* was threatened by revision.

However, the colonial government was of the view that a successful political socialization through schooling involving the careful linking of indigenous cultural folklore and the concept of 'civilization' was possible, with the result that the government purposefully transformed a Taiwanese folktale into a moving tale of self-sacrifice in pursuit of the 'civilising mission'. This propaganda tale found its way into school textbooks, plays and even a film. It is a fascinating illustration of the use of myth in Japanese colonialism.

In 1904, Goto Simpei, during his inspection of Mt Ari, noticed a humble shrine dedicated to Wu Feng, a Chinese officer of the Qing Dynasty, and composed a Chinese-style poem paying homage to him. Later, circa 1910, the authorities decided that Wu Feng would serve the purposes of the colonial authorities, and a series of honorary events took place: the publication of his official biography, a splendid rebuilding of the shrine, the establishment of a monument to him with an inscription

32 *Taiwan nichu nichu simpo* [Taiwan Daily News], dated 13–16 February 1914. After 17 February the newspaper became filled with insulting abuses of Luo and his comrades – a fact which implied intervention by the colonial government.

33 *Taiwan sotokuhu homubu*, 'Taiwan hiran shoshi', 42.

34 *Ibid.*, 47.

35 *Taiwan kyoiku kai*, ed., *Taiwan kyoiku enkaku shi* [A Record of the Development of Education in Taiwan] (Taipei, 1939), 408–9.

36 Mochiji Rokusaburo, *Taiwan shokumin seisaku* [The Colonial Policy in Taiwan] (Tokyo, 1912), 293–300.

37 Kumamoto Sigekichi, *Taiwan kyoikurei seitei yurai* [The Derivation of the Education Ordinance], dated 1922, the former part 3, in KSM, 0401.

38 The drafts for the new Rescript of Education are included in KSM, 0601–1608. For details, see Komagome Takeshi, *Shokuminchi teikoku Nihon no bunka togo* [Cultural Integration of the Japanese Colonial Empire] (Tokyo, 1996), 153–66.

by Goto and a magnificent ceremony in 1913 for the renewal of the shrine held in the presence of the Governor-General and other high government officials.

The aim underlying these actions was to raise morale among the Taiwanese in the war against the aborigines. In the renewal ceremony, the Chief of the Bureau of Aborigine Affairs praised Wu Feng for civilizing the head-hunting aborigines, and thus making the rich resources of Mt Ari accessible.<sup>39</sup>

The official biography was written in Chinese as well as in Japanese, with almost a hundred poems honouring Wu Feng, composed mainly by the Taiwanese gentry. The story of his life was transformed into a moving tale of purposeful self-sacrifice as follows. Wu Feng, as a supervisor of native affairs of the mountain district, tried to eliminate the cruel custom of head-hunting, and succeeded in its suspension by making the tribe use skulls as a substitute for human sacrifice at their annual festival. After some forty years, the tribe could no longer tolerate this substitution. Wu Feng realized bitterly the failure of his efforts, and said to the tribe, 'Tomorrow you will see a man clothed in a red robe, with a red hat upon his head. When you see him, strike.' He instructed his family 'After my death, burn these papers depicting myself and a horse'. On the following day the tribe saw the man with a red robe and hat, and struck at him. Then they were frightened to see that it was no other than Wu Feng himself whom they had killed. Simultaneously, many of them were seized with illness and death by the power of Wu Feng's ghost emerging from the burnt papers. The tribe was so filled with remorse and fear that they resolved never again to take another human head.<sup>40</sup>

This official story was a fabrication. There is no evidence in fact for the story. No stories about Wu Feng prior to 1910 were in any way similar, including a biography written by a Chinese writer before the Japanese occupation and biographical details recounted in various folktales. All that they had in common was his death brought about by the aborigines, and the magical powers of his ghost for taking revenge.

When his story appeared in the school textbooks published by the colonial government after 1910, however, his 'pure' spirit of self-sacrifice was stressed.<sup>41</sup> Also utilized, both in the official biography and in the textbooks, was a dictum in the *Book of Confucius*: 'A man of the highest virtue sometimes dares make himself a sacrifice to bring about goodness'. Ironically this maxim was also used by Luo Fu-shin, executed in the very year the textbook story was first published, to illustrate his patriotic self-sacrificial motivation. He was, of course, on the side of those forced to make unwilling sacrifices. Thus the same dictum was used in bitterly contrasting contexts.

The notion of a civilizing mission typified by self-sacrifice, of course, could to some extent resolve the conflicting ambitions of the Japanese and the Taiwanese, and thus be a useful instrument of political socialization. In the transformed story, the Taiwanese, with their Confucian tradition, were represented as a 'civilizing' force and could identify themselves with the latest civilized rulers. At the same time the aborigines became 'savages' mad with blood-lust. Head-hunting was portrayed as atavistic arbitrary murder, not as part and parcel of a guerrilla war against invaders

such as the Chinese and the Japanese. Thus, a belief in Chinese and Japanese racial superiority was strengthened by a simplistic dichotomy between 'civilized' and 'uncivilized', which resulted in the reinforcement of a racial hierarchy – at the 'bottom', aborigines, in the 'middle' Chinese, at the 'top' Japanese and Europeans, with Europeans slightly above the Japanese.<sup>42</sup>

Amusingly, the story was welcomed by Taiwanese children for the wrong reasons: irritation at, and boredom with stories about Japanese patriots and soldiers.<sup>43</sup> The story of Wu Feng appeared also in textbooks for Japanese children published by the Ministry of Education in Japan, together with details of rich timber resources on Mt Ari used to build the shrine for the Meiji Emperor.<sup>44</sup> In this way, Japanese children were encouraged to adopt an imperialistic world view, at one and the same time appreciating the economic value of the colonies and enjoying exotic and exciting stories about 'savages'. The use of such tales as imperial propaganda were, of course, by no means unique to Japanese colonialism. In fact, the Japanese story of Wu Feng may be viewed as a weak imitation of Western Christian practice in Taiwan. A book by the Scottish Presbyterian, W. Campbell, for instance, *Sketches from Formosa*, was filled with sensational descriptions of head-hunting and the cannibalism of the 'heathen' aborigines in order to justify religious proselytism and to ensure a Christian readership and support in Britain!<sup>45</sup>

### Conclusion

Japanese imperialism was not unique. Some similarities to British imperialism certainly existed – in particular the utilization of a simplistic dichotomy between 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' as a rationalization for imperial rule. International imperial discourses were similarly stereotypical with the result that the empires of the West and the East could rely upon similar rationalizations in spite of the differences between them. Thus, Japanese imperialism was similar in some respects to British imperialism.

Nevertheless, as a colonial power Japan faced idiosyncratic and particular problems. In the first instance, immaturity as a nation state required the invention of a powerful 'tradition' – the Emperor Cult – to promote Japanese unity, identity and stability. This Cult, as indicated, played a significant part in determining Japanese colonial policy and practice, and greatly influenced the nature of those formal agents and agencies of imperial political socialization – educationists, schools and curriculum – in her colonies.

In addition, the fact that most of the territories which came under Japanese colonial rule once belonged to the same cultural community as herself, the ancient Chinese Empire, made it difficult for the Japanese to make a successful case for

39 Taiwan sotokuhu banmukyoku, *Riban Shiko* [The History of Taming Aborigines in Taiwan] (Taipei, 1921), vol. 3, 367.

40 Nakada Naohisa, *Sassin Jōjin Tuji Goho* [A Man of Self-Sacrifice: Goho] (Tokyo, 1912), 13–20.

41 For example, Taiwan sotokufu, *Kogakkōyō kokumin tokuhon* [Common School National Reader] (Taipei, 1914), vol. 11, 66–8.

42 This action of strengthening a racial hierarchy by a simplistic dichotomy between 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' can be regarded as comparable to the propaganda strategy in the textbook for the Irish issued by the Board of Commissioners in 1861, in which the overt racist images of the Irish were carefully eliminated and instead the backwardness of the 'uncivilized' nomadic peoples, with no schools and no churches, was emphasized. See John Coolahan, 'The Irish and Others in Irish nineteenth-century textbooks' in J. A. Mangan ed. *The Imperial Curriculum*, (London: Routledge, 1993), 58.

43 Okabe Matagoro, 'Kokumin tokuhon zairyo ni okeru jido no koo chosa' [The Result of the Investigation among Children about their Preferences for Materials in the National Reader], in *Taiwan Kyoiku*, 155 (1915).

44 For example, see Monbusho, *Jinjo shogaku tokuhon* [Primary School Reader], (Tokyo, 1926), vol. 8.

45 W. Campbell, *Sketches from Formosa* (London, Marshall Brothers, 1915), 122.



cultural superiority. Consequently, ruthless military and educational control was utilized to ensure subscription of the colonized to Japanese demands.

These two facts – national newness and cultural contiguity – were peculiar to Japanese imperialism. The contradictory racial assumptions of Japanese imperialism originated in these facts – and they explain, in large measure, the negative features noted earlier by Mark Peattie.



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# HISTORY OF EDUCATION

Journal of the History of Education Society  
published by Taylor & Francis Ltd

VOLUME 26  
NUMBER 3  
SEPTEMBER 1997

ISSN 0046-760X

