

Contextualizing Colonial Connections: Reevaluating Takekoshi Yosaburō's *Japanese Rule in Formosa*

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In 1907, *Japanese Rule in Formosa* was published in London. It was the English translation of *Taiwan tōchi shi* (1905), a book about Japan's colonization of Taiwan by Japanese popular historian and liberal politician Takekoshi Yosaburō. *Japanese Rule in Formosa* proved remarkably influential, both at the time and in postwar historiography. Although isolated quotes from the 1907 work are frequently used by present-day historians, little attention has been granted to the political context in which it was published or the accuracy of the translation. The fact that Takekoshi advocated an unambiguous form of colonial rule in which the Japanese constitution would not apply in Taiwan placed him at odds with other leaders of his liberal Seiyūkai party who wanted Taiwan to be merged into Japan's administrative and legal structures. Takekoshi's stance reveals that colonial debates did not always match up with other political or philosophical fault lines. His ideas were, however, consistent with his liberal worldview, and engaged in global, trans-imperial dialogue about assimilation and association in a colonial administration. This article will position Takekoshi's work within the contemporaneous Japanese debate over Taiwan's legal status and argue that, although the timing of its publication meant that it had little influence in Japan, it had a significant effect on the attitudes of colonialist scholars in Europe and America towards Japanese imperialism.

Keywords: Taiwan, trans-imperial history, colonial administration, assimilation, association, indirect rule, liberalism

Introduction

In October 1906, the French journal *La revue diplomatique* published a detailed report on the efforts of liberal Japanese parliamentarian Takekoshi Yosaburō 竹越與三郎 (1865–1950) to establish an *entente* between France and Japan for the purpose of the development (*mise en valeur*) of China. The report quoted Takekoshi's remarks at the 1906 London conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in detail, and concluded:

In the treaties, contracts, unions, *ententes* ... between modern peoples, it is always necessary to look for the element of economic interest without which contemporary politics would be aimless policy, and it is exactly economic interests that Mr. Takekoshi does not speak of. He admits, however, that the dream of a “greater Japan” [*plus grand Japon*] is the cherished dream. We cannot deign to make this a crime since, in France, we have numerous supporters of a greater France and German colonialists do not hide their desire to see a greater Germany.¹

This passage reflects how, in the years following the Russo-Japanese War, Japan’s colonial empire was often seen in a favorable light in the West, as an example of “modern” imperialism analogous to that of the Western “great powers.” While Takekoshi participated in a number of international fora, his most influential contribution by far to this favorable turn in Western public opinion was *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, the 1907 English translation of his 1905 book *Taiwan tōchi shi* 台湾統治志, in which he presented Taiwan as a miracle colony.

Japanese Rule in Formosa is in many ways an unusual book. Published in London, it is long, almost encyclopedic, and surprisingly chauvinistic in tone for a Japanese work published abroad. In the preface, Takekoshi states that he hopes to galvanize a new generation of Japanese to become enthusiastic colonizers, much as he believes James Anthony Froude to have done in Britain with his book, *The English in the West Indies*.² While the original Japanese book seems to have had little impact on Japanese colonial consciousness, the translation became surprisingly influential in the West, both at the time and in postwar historiography.

Today *Japanese Rule in Formosa* is widely quoted in Western scholarship, thanks both to Takekoshi’s vivid prose and the dearth of other English-language primary sources on Japanese imperialism from this period.³ Nevertheless, the book itself has not received any systematic study, with the result that its political significance has generally been overlooked. Scholars have failed to notice that *Japanese Rule in Formosa* is not in fact a verbatim translation of *Taiwan tōchi shi*. A close comparison of both books reveals that the translation leaves out several key explanations of Takekoshi’s view of imperialism. Through a careful contextualization of both the original and the translation, this article will argue that *Japanese Rule in Formosa* is in fact more interesting and of greater significance than has previously been recognized for understanding the ideology and politics of colonial administration during the period circa 1850–1930.⁴

To begin with, placing the book in the context of domestic politics sheds light on its original purpose: preventing the application of the Meiji Constitution to Taiwan and its administrative incorporation into Japan. Moreover, the publication in English of Takekoshi’s colonial theories serves as a significant example of the involvement of the Japanese elite in

1 Meulemans 1906 ; translation by the author.

2 Takekoshi 1907, pp. vii–viii; Froude 1888.

3 For example, see Hirano, Veracini, and Roy 2018; Clulow 2010; Allen 2007; Ho 2005.

4 Historians of Western empire often distinguish between an early modern, mercantilist imperialism and a modern imperialism that relied on new technologies and discourses. This division coincides with the beginning of a new intense period of European colonization from the mid-nineteenth century.

a global, trans-imperial knowledge infrastructure.⁵ I argue that one important instance of trans-imperial exchange that can be usefully studied through Takekoshi's writings is a global conversation regarding the assimilation of colonized peoples that took place during this period.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, theories of assimilation, whether cultural or institutional, became increasingly discredited among the colonial policy elite worldwide. These were replaced with new notions of how best to rule a colonial territory based on social Darwinism and British and Dutch experiments in indirect rule, later collectively referred to as the "association" of colonizer and colonized with minimal cultural interchange.⁶ Associationists advanced several concrete proposals for improved colonial administration: conserving resources by allowing indigenous laws and customs to be maintained as much as possible, making colonies financially self-sufficient, and endowing a largely autonomous colonial administration with vast discretionary power. Raymond Betts' classic study of French colonial theory argues that association was a coherent philosophy decades before it was commonly referred to by this name in the twentieth century.⁷ Like Betts, I believe that it is analytically useful to use this label retrospectively in the absence of a contemporaneous term. Although historians have only commonly applied the term when discussing the French empire, "association" can arguably be applied outside of a French context, as the French thinkers that Betts studies were widely influential in other empires. Tellingly, Takekoshi's and Betts' bibliographies have a great degree of overlap.

Colonial theories of assimilation, like rival theories of association, were not as straightforward during this period as it might seem, but they are indispensable for understanding the colonial administration of this period. While there were proponents of the assimilation of subject peoples through education and the extension of partial or complete citizenship rights, only after World War I did this rhetoric become widespread and arguably begin to have a major influence on colonial policy. As I have argued elsewhere, during the period circa 1870–1914, "assimilation" was typically used to refer to the incorporation of a colonial territory into the laws and governing structures of the home country.⁸ This is reflected in the incorporation of territories like Hokkaido and Okinawa into "Japan proper." Japanese at the time often employed the term *naichi enchō shugi* 内地延長主義 [lit. metropole-extension-ism], even if contemporaneous writers also used the more generic term for assimilation, *dōka* 同化. Similarly, even though no one today would argue that French Algeria was not a "colony," at the time, the coastal regions were technically incorporated as several French *départements*, constituting an integral part of "France," at least in theory. Likewise, as we shall see, the Japanese debate over Taiwan often hinged on whether or not the island should be considered a "colony," or merely Japan's newest home island, like Hokkaido. The latter is precisely the position that associationists argued against, contending that there were good reasons not to treat very diverse territories the same legally. In all empires, ideas varied on the treatment of local inhabitants of incorporated territories,

5 The new field of trans-imperial history studies instances of border-crossing cooperation and exchange between different modern empires. See, for example, Mizutani 2019; Hedinger and Hée 2018; Potter and Saha 2015; Barth and Cvetkovski 2015.

6 Betts 2005.

7 Betts 2005.

8 Hennessey 2019.



Figure 1. Takekoshi Yosaburō. Hosoi 1916. Courtesy of National Diet Library, *Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures* website, 2013. <http://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/287.html>.

but in practice full citizenship rights were only extended to settlers from the colonizing country, even if opponents of assimilation often exploited xenophobic fears of full legal equality for colonized subjects in their arguments.

Although assimilation and association are frequently treated as fixed traits of specific empires (with France and Japan typically identified as assimilationist and Britain and the Netherlands as associationist), there was in fact significant variation over time and between the different colonial territories of all modern empires. Moreover, theories of association interacted in complex ways with the primary global ideology that molded Takekoshi's worldview: liberalism. Takekoshi's book and its reception in the West provide a significant example of how Japanese colonial elites engaged with these ideas concurrently and in discussion with their counterparts in Western empires.

The next section will briefly introduce Takekoshi Yosaburō and his position in Japanese politics around the turn of the twentieth century. The following sections demonstrate how *Taiwan tōchi shi* advanced globally-influenced theories of both liberalism and association and highlight its role in a debate over Taiwan's status that roiled Japanese politics. Finally, I will discuss the translation and reception of Takekoshi's text abroad, and show that it was not only inspired by, but actively engaged with, and influenced prominent Western colonial theorists.

A Japanese Liberal's Rise to Prominence and the Debate on Taiwan

Takekoshi Yosaburō was born late in 1865, on the eve of the Meiji Restoration. He studied at Keio University under Fukuzawa Yukichi 福沢諭吉 (1835–1901), who was to have a profound influence on his worldview and writing. He worked first as a teacher and then as a journalist and popular historian. In 1898, he entered politics, becoming an assistant to the statesman Saionji Kinmochi 西園寺公望 (1849–1940). Although Saionji came from a noble family with close ties to the emperor, he was probably the most liberally-minded of the top Meiji leaders. He was a founding member of the Seiyūkai 政友会 political party, and worked closely with future Prime Minister Hara Takashi 原敬 (1856–1921) to advance parliamentary principles. In 1902, Takekoshi was elected to the Diet for the first time.

He served in various government posts of increasingly elevated status until purged by the American occupation forces after the Second World War.⁹

Although both Takekoshi and Hara were newspapermen and members of the Seiyūkai, Takekoshi was generally more aggressively liberal than Hara. In his early writings, he leveled severe criticism at the conservative, military-dominated *hanbatsu* 藩閥 ruling clique. In the first years of the twentieth century, he belonged to the “hard faction” in the Seiyūkai that opposed leaders like Hara who advocated a greater degree of compromise with this conservative clique.¹⁰ Despite his more liberal track record, Takekoshi wholeheartedly embraced *hanbatsu* colonial policy in *Taiwan tōchi shi*, lavishing praise on two of its protégés assigned to Taiwan, Governor General Kodama Gentarō 児玉源太郎 (1852–1906) and Chief of Civil Administration Gotō Shinpei 後藤新平 (1857–1929). Indeed, Gotō wrote a preface to *Taiwan tōchi shi*.¹¹

As I have described elsewhere, Japan's governance of Taiwan had become a key political battleground between the *hanbatsu* and liberals, particularly Hara, immediately after Japan acquired the island in 1895.¹² Inspired by associationist theories and British models of indirect rule, conservative military leaders wanted Taiwan to be governed separately as a “colony” like Jamaica or Hong Kong, with a strong governor general and colonial council or token legislative body. Hara and his liberal allies, on the other hand, were eager to extend Japanese parliamentary control and constitutional jurisdiction over Taiwan to prevent it from becoming an extrajudicial fief of the military. They therefore advocated making Taiwan an extension of metropolitan Japan, assimilating the island into Japan's institutions and structures, pointing to French Algeria as a comparable example.¹³ In the context of this discussion, the very term “colony” was a point of dispute. Hara and other assimilationists were loath to use the word, whereas proponents of association made a point of referring to Taiwan as a “colony” (*shokuminchi* 植民地 or 殖民地), as we shall see. The debate over assimilation and association raged for well over a decade and was still ongoing when Takekoshi published *Taiwan tōchi shi* in 1905. Taiwan's legal status remained ambiguous and its governor general ruled with “temporary” extraordinary powers that were repeatedly renewed.¹⁴ As the following section will demonstrate, however, the colonial theories which Takekoshi expounds in *Taiwan tōchi shi* did not represent a rejection of his liberal background, despite his alignment with *hanbatsu* figures like Kodama on colonial questions; rather they were firmly grounded in a liberal worldview.¹⁵ Moreover, even though he opposed Hara's ostensibly “French” assimilationist position, Takekoshi was strongly influenced by contemporaneous colonial French theories of colonial association that rejected France's earlier assimilatory experiments during the first part of the nineteenth century.¹⁶ *Taiwan tōchi shi* illustrates how the debate over colonial theories in turn-of-the-century

9 For biographical details, see the timeline in Takekoshi 1985.

10 Takekoshi 1891–1892; Takekoshi 1896; Duus 1974, p. 434; Najita 1967, p. 105.

11 Gotō would later “switch sides,” becoming a supporter of the Seiyūkai after the death of his *hanbatsu* patron Katsura Tarō. Najita 1967, p. 204; Duus 1968, pp. 43–45.

12 Hennessey 2019.

13 Hennessey 2019. For the original source material, see Itō and Hiratsuka 1970.

14 For the debate and its legal ramifications, see Wang 2000; Ōe 1993; Haruyama 1993.

15 Many of Takekoshi's viewpoints were also endorsed by later Japanese imperialist liberals. For a detailed account of liberalism and imperialism in Taishō and early Shōwa Japan, see Han 2012.

16 See Betts 2005.

Japan was complex and transcended binary divisions like *hanbatsu*-Seiyūkai, French-British, and liberal-conservative.

Takekoshi's Liberal Theories of Colonialism

Takekoshi Yosaburō had become famous in Japan for his historical works *Shin Nihonshi* 新日本史 (New Japanese history; 1891–1892) and *Nisen gohyakunenshi* 二千五百年史 (2,500 years of history; 1896). Both books constitute what Peter Duus has labeled a liberal, Whig-style history.¹⁷ They reflected the teleological notion of nations progressing from barbarism to increasing degrees of civilization. Takekoshi rejected the idea of golden ages in Japan's past and argued that the Meiji Restoration had been *the* major turning point in the course of Japan's history.¹⁸ In his account, the demise of the backward Tokugawa regime was more or less inevitable, but conservative Meiji oligarchs were now betraying the promise of the Restoration by impeding the “natural” progression of history.¹⁹ Bold and dramatic, Takekoshi's books became bestsellers, so much so that in one contemporary's hyperbolic account, *Nisen gohyakunenshi* “was more popular reading among some ladies than the latest novels, and it was printed in so many copies that it forced up the price of paper.”²⁰

A decade later, Takekoshi's reputation as an influential, respected author led the government general of Taiwan, under the leadership of Kodama and Gotō, to invite him to tour the island. *Taiwan tōchi shi* was the product of two relatively short visits during 1904 and 1905.²¹ This official invitation in fact presaged a common publicity strategy of the South Manchuria Railway Company (also presided over by Gotō) over the ensuing decades. A veritable parade of respected names from the Japanese literary establishment, including Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石 (1867–1916), Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介 (1892–1927), and Yosano Akiko 与謝野晶子 (1878–1942) were invited on colonial tours sponsored by the company in exchange for writing travelogues that helped to root the Asian continent in the metropolitan public's imagination.²² Details are unfortunately sparse, but the memoranda of the government general of Taiwan reveal that Takekoshi was even granted a part-time job at the Office of the Governor General during this period.²³ Despite Takekoshi's earlier criticism of the *hanbatsu*, *Taiwan tōchi shi* paints a rosy picture of Taiwan's development. Even if this reflects a sense of indebtedness for his employment, his enthusiasm also had

17 Takekoshi 1891–1892; Takekoshi 1896; Duus 1974. The Whig interpretation of history is characterized by “historical grand narratives in which the expansion of personal liberty and of parliamentary authority relative to the Crown served as the organizing principles of [typically] English national history from the 17th century forward.” Cronon 2010, n.p.

18 Duus 1974, pp. 416–418, 425.

19 Duus 1974, p. 434. This same interpretation of Japanese history would be advanced by liberal Tokyo Imperial University professor Yoshino Sakuzō 吉野作造 (1878–1933) two decades later in his writings on *minponshugi* 民本主義. Han 2012, p. 80.

20 Quoted in Duus 1974, pp. 424–425.

21 Takekoshi departed from Japan in May 1904 and began his visit to Taiwan in June (Takekoshi 1905, pp. 24, 468). He was employed by the government general of Taiwan from 30 May 1904 (*Sōtokufu kōbun ruisan*, 1904, case nr. 23 [30 May 1904]). He returned to Tokyo on 12 July 1904, and presented the results of his trip to his party colleagues on 1 August 1904 (*Asahi shinbun* 1904; *Yomiuri shinbun* 1904). He visited Taiwan again in June 1905 (Takekoshi 1905, p. 53). Takekoshi wrote the preface to *Taiwan tōchi shi* in Tokyo in July 1905, so apparently he had returned to Honshu by then (Takekoshi 1905, p. ii).

22 Fogel 2001, p. 5.

23 *Sōtokufu kōbun ruisan*, 1904, case nr. 23 (30 May 1904); *Sōtokufu kōbun ruisan* 1905, case nr. 31 (25 November 1905).

much to do with trans-imperial theories of association. While contemporary scholars generally treat Takekoshi *either* as a liberal historian *or* as a spokesperson of colonialism, in fact his views on history, politics, and colonialism were inextricably linked.

To begin with, the Whig notion of progressive human advancement that underpinned Takekoshi's popular histories was also central to his colonial worldview. The need for more "advanced" peoples to guide "uncivilized barbarians" was of course a classic justification for Western imperialism. More interesting is that just as Western colonial discourse conflated geography and time to explain the non-West as stagnant and backward, Takekoshi classified the various Western empires in terms of different developmental phases.²⁴ In the first chapter of *Taiwan tōchi shi*, Takekoshi paints a dramatic picture of the history of colonial development in terms of natural selection: Portugal explores the world, Spain replaces Portugal, Holland replaces Spain, and finally a combination of Britain and France replaces the Dutch as the masters of the world.²⁵ Spain and the Netherlands, backward and stagnant, are surpassed now by newer, more dynamic empires, just as less-developed species coexist with more evolved ones. This view is consistent with Takekoshi's theory, expressed in many of his writings, that human societies or countries "operate according to biological principles."²⁶

Although very much aware of Japan's recent admission to the "colonial club," and its need to prove itself to numerous skeptics (he names French statesman Gabriel Hanotaux [1853–1944]), Takekoshi boldly asserts that Japan has already reached the highest rung of this imperial hierarchy: "Our colonial policy, having already passed through the French, has now entered the English era."²⁷ On numerous occasions, Takekoshi contends that France has been less successful a colonizer in Indochina than Japan has been in Taiwan because Indochina took far longer to reach financial independence from the metropole.²⁸ In a section of *Taiwan tōchi shi* that was excised from *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, Takekoshi even argues that Japanese are biologically more fit as colonizers than "white people," since they have a higher rate of population growth, can propagate in tropical environments that are hostile to whites, and can withstand more difficult working conditions.²⁹

Takekoshi's classification of various Western colonial powers was not merely historical and informed by pseudo-biological theories; it was also built on a detailed understanding of contemporaneous empires' methods and principles of rule. Takekoshi believed that an understanding of Western empires' different administrative systems could help Japan choose the type best suited to its own needs. This was not a uniquely Japanese outlook, either; many late-nineteenth-century French colonial theorists looked to Britain and the

24 Relegating colonized nations to "the waiting room of history" was a common discursive strategy in both Japan and the West; see Chakrabarty 2008. Tessa Morris-Suzuki has famously argued that the colonial discourse surrounding Japan's peripheral territories "allowed difference to be transposed from the realm of space to the realm of time." Morris-Suzuki 1998, p. 28.

25 Takekoshi 1905, p. 3.

26 Takekoshi 1905, p. 1; Takekoshi 1906, p. 3; Takekoshi Yosaburō, "Japan's Colonial Policy," in *Japan to America*, ed. Masaoka Naoichi. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1915, p. 97, quoted in Ching 2001, p. 101. This biological approach was shared by other Japanese colonialists, notably Gotō.

27 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 16, 35. Takekoshi 1907, p. 10. Throughout the article, I use George Braithwaite's 1907 English translation of *Taiwan tōchi shi* when quoting passages; see Takekoshi 1907. In cases where the Japanese original text was omitted from the English version, the translations are my own.

28 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 33–38, 219–220.

29 Takekoshi 1905, p. 21.

Netherlands for inspiration.³⁰ As we shall see below, Takekoshi's colonial worldview was strongly tied to these French theorists' viewpoints. Takekoshi shared his zeal for detailed study of different colonialisms with the *hanbatsu* and its allies. While in Taiwan, Takekoshi was impressed by Gotō's collection of books on colonial theory. He quotes Gotō as boasting that, "We look upon the Governor-General's office as a sort of university where we may study the theories and principles of colonization.... This room we are now in is the library of this Colonization University."³¹ Gotō strongly endorsed Takekoshi's *Taiwan tōchi shi*, writing a preface in which he emphasizes that Takekoshi's firsthand observations of Taiwan make him a trustworthy source.

In addition to subscribing to a teleological view of historical progress, Japanese "Whig" historians were characterized by a desire to write "ordinary" Japanese back into their country's history. Takekoshi is no exception and his 1890s historical works emphasize democratic precedents in Japanese history.³² While minimizing the importance of colonized peoples' agency and role in the colonial project, *Taiwan tōchi shi* foregrounds the important task of all Japanese people in Japan's empire-building. Quite unlike the classic colonial trope of *terra nullius*, Takekoshi makes it very clear that he envisions colonialism primarily in human rather than geographical terms. His definition of colonialism is "one people entering another people's territory and placing it under [their] national rule."³³ He is quite explicit about the role of the very lowest classes in the Japanese nation's "great task."³⁴ He reads the flow of Japanese emigrants into North and South America as a sign of Japan's "expansive power." He even argues that Japanese physical laborers in Hawai'i undertake tasks too strenuous for "white people," and that this demonstrates the Japanese people's superior aptitude for colonizing the tropics.³⁵ Colonialism for Takekoshi was therefore not an elitist project but rather a democratic one that engaged the Japanese nation as a whole, including overseas Japanese. Takekoshi had argued for this kind of liberal folk imperialism several years earlier in a 1900 editorial in *Sekai to Nihon* 世界と日本 (The world and Japan). "Liberal imperialism," he proposed, involves "the people, politicizing the power of people and reforming the authoritarian, clique-dominated political system."³⁶ While Takekoshi had tempered his fierce opposition to the *hanbatsu* clique by the time he wrote *Taiwan tōchi shi*, this earlier article shows that his conception of a "liberal imperialism" had remained essentially the same.

Contextualizing *Taiwan tōchi shi* in the Debate over Taiwan's Status

Taiwan tōchi shi appeared in the midst of a deadlocked debate over Taiwan's status that had started in 1895. Unable to decide whether the island should be considered a "colony" separate from Japan or folded into Japan's laws and institutions, the divided Imperial Diet had put off the question by repeatedly granting the governor general temporary

30 Betts 2005, p. 33.

31 Takekoshi 1905, p. 53; Takekoshi 1907, p. 22. In 1900, Japan in fact officially founded a "Colonization University" in Tokyo, Takushoku University.

32 Duus 1974, pp. 420, 427.

33 Takekoshi 1905, p. 2.

34 Takekoshi 1905, p. 6.

35 Takekoshi 1905, p. 19.

36 Takekoshi Yosaburō, "Jiyū teikokushugi" 自由帝國主義, *Sekai to Nihon* 48 (6 January 1900), quoted in Han 2012, p. 47.

extraordinary powers. This unresolved problem greatly bothered Takekoshi, who feared that Taiwan's ambiguous status was like a ticking time bomb:

The writer ... hopes that Japan will soon come to look upon Formosa as a pure colony, and that the day may speedily dawn when the results obtained by such observation may be embodied in a policy regulating its relations with the mother-country.³⁷

Takekoshi devotes a sizable portion of *Taiwan tōchi shi* to arguing for Taiwan as a colony, through a close consideration of different Western colonial forms. For example, he refers with admiration to Dutch colonial administrative methods on Java, in which the governor is "invested with an authority resembling that of a despotic monarch."³⁸ Autonomy from the metropolitan government is one key to colonial success, since colonial governments possess a knowledge of local conditions necessary for effective rule. In Takekoshi's opinion, officials in the Japanese central government generally show an "ignorance of colonial matters."³⁹

These opinions are consistent with the views of European proponents of what became known as the association theory of colonialism. Takekoshi was obviously well-acquainted with this administrative theory, and expresses his unqualified support:

From the colonial history of European powers, it is clear that those nations, which have considered their colonies as a part and parcel of the home country, have almost always failed ... while, as a rule, those nations have succeeded which have looked upon their colonies as a special kind of body politic quite distinct from the mother country.⁴⁰

This explains Britain's success as an imperial power: it governs its colonies separately from the metropole, and uses a variety of systems tailored to each individual colonial situation. Takekoshi duly devotes several pages to a classification of Britain's colonial possessions into five categories based on administrative form.⁴¹ In contrast, Takekoshi disparages traditionally assimilationist France and its frequent administrative reforms:

In her attitude to her colonies France has been vacillating, not having pursued a definite and constant policy. At one time, she adopted such an extremely liberal policy towards them as to allow them the right to send representatives to the Chamber of Deputies at Paris; at another, this liberality was suddenly transformed into interference and suspicion...⁴²

Takekoshi is also critical of France's claim that its colonies are represented in the National Assembly. For example, he argues that the few *députés* from Algeria with seats in the

37 Takekoshi 1905, p. 76; Takekoshi 1907, p. 37.

38 Takekoshi 1905, p. 66; Takekoshi 1907, p. 31.

39 Takekoshi 1905, p. 57; Takekoshi 1907, p. 25.

40 Takekoshi 1905, p. 57; Takekoshi 1907, p. 25.

41 These were crown colonies, such as Hong Kong; "semi-responsible colonies," with limited settler voting rights, such as Natal; "responsible colonies," with a large degree of autonomy, such as Canada; chartered companies, like Rhodesia; and, finally, protectorates (Takekoshi 1905, pp. 57–63; Takekoshi 1907, pp. 25–27). *Japanese Rule in Formosa* omits the final category of protectorate.

42 Takekoshi 1905, p. 56; Takekoshi 1907, p. 24.

assembly merely represented metropolitan French settlers instead of the local residents, an untenable situation that was quickly abandoned.⁴³ In his view, a local governor general is a much better judge of the needs of the people than representatives in the metropole, and should therefore be granted wide-ranging powers.

For Takekoshi, granting colonial subjects constitutional rights is downright dangerous:

Under the Constitution, Japanese and Formosans would enjoy equal civic and political rights, and it would be impossible to discriminate between the ruling and the conquered races.... The spread of Japanese influence and immigration would be checked. Summary measures of repression such as are resorted to in case of need would be impossible; the savages could not be placed under restrictions as they are now, and the authorities would be greatly hampered in the maintenance of order ... the Chinese in Formosa are as foreign to us Japanese, as are the savages themselves, and the Formosan Chinese have no more love for Japan than some of the foreigners residing in Tokyo. To give them the privileges of our Constitution would be to teach them to rise up in revolt against us.⁴⁴

Here Takekoshi's argument is both blunt and pressing: applying the constitution to Taiwan and rejecting colonial status for Taiwan would represent a direct threat to Japanese rule. Rather, Japan should be like the United States, which has no intention to make the Philippines an American State "on an equal footing with the other States," until "American residents are superior to the Philippines [*sic*] either in influence or number."⁴⁵

Not only is assimilation dangerous, it is also unrealizable. Reflecting Western colonial discourse, Takekoshi sees the residents of Taiwan as intrinsically different than Japanese: "The proximity to the home country ... in no way lessens the fundamental differences which exist in matters of race, traditions, history, and spiritual features [*fūdo* 風土]."⁴⁶ In Takekoshi's eyes, the wide gap separating the Japanese from Taiwanese of Chinese extraction, to say nothing of the Taiwanese aboriginal "savages," calls for separate laws, a hallmark of association.⁴⁷ In a book on Korea published the following year, Takekoshi criticizes Japanese assimilationists for their hubris in thinking that they can change "a people with more than 2,300 years of history" in a short span of time; this is akin to trying to fight the forces of nature.⁴⁸

Taiwanese, whether of Chinese or aboriginal descent, are noticeably absent from the grand colonial theories that Takekoshi lays out in *Taiwan tōchi shi*'s initial chapters. In the first two chapters, Takekoshi explains why the Japanese nation is both ready for and requires the acquisition of colonies. Nowhere does he deploy the classic colonial trope of "uplifting the natives"; nor does he argue that the Taiwanese are in particular need of Japan's helping hand. Indeed, he implies that Japan could have settled for any colony with a complementary

43 Takekoshi 1905, p. 65.

44 Takekoshi 1905, p. 72; Takekoshi 1907, p. 34.

45 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 70–71; Takekoshi 1907, p. 33.

46 Takekoshi 1905, p. 70. Translation based on Takekoshi 1907, p. 33, with minor discrepancies corrected.

47 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 75–76; Takekoshi 1907, p. 36.

48 Takekoshi 1906, p. 3.

economy and climate.⁴⁹ Japan did not have much choice over where to colonize, but Taiwan was nevertheless “just about an ideal colony.”⁵⁰ It seems clear enough that Takekoshi conceives of colonies as existing to serve the needs of the metropole, even though he directly denies this in his book on Korea published the following year.⁵¹

While Takekoshi depicts Taiwanese aboriginals at times almost as “noble savages” in *Taiwan tōchi shi*, he makes it brutally clear that the Japanese should not let them stand in the way of “progress”:

Almost everybody who has come in contact with the savages declares that they are all quite capable of being raised from their present state of barbarism, and I am very strongly of the same opinion. But it is a question how much longer the Japanese authorities will be willing to pursue their present policy of moderation and goodwill, and leave nearly half the island in their hands. If there were a prospect of their becoming more manageable in ten or even in twenty years, the present policy might possibly be continued for that length of time, but if the process should require a century or so, it is quite out of the question, as we have not that length of time to spare. This does not mean that we have no sympathy for the savages. It simply means that we have to think more about our 45,000,000 sons and daughters than about the 104,000 savages. We cannot afford to wait patiently until they throw off barbarism... It is far better and very necessary for us to force our way into the midst of their territories and bring all the waste land under cultivation.⁵²

Thus, for Takekoshi, assimilationist policies will not enable Japan to exploit the lands of the Taiwanese aboriginals in the foreseeable future, since the laws of nature make “civilizing” the indigenous population an extremely slow process. This harsh reality justifies the violent expropriation of aboriginal land. He even recommends that the Japanese government contract private companies to remove the indigenous population, as the British had done in Rhodesia and North Borneo.⁵³ This serves as a reminder that far from being a mere philosophical debate, assimilationist and associationist discourses often underpinned concrete practices that had a major impact on the lives of colonized people.

Taiwan tōchi shi demonstrates that Takekoshi was very well-read in contemporaneous French colonial scholarship. He cites major colonial theorists who advocated association, including Frenchmen Georges Blondel and Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, and British colonialist J. B. Seeley, whose work was highly influential in France.⁵⁴ This tempers what at first glance appears to be Francophobia on the part of Takekoshi; his condemnation of French assimilationism is remarkably consistent with that of the reformist French colonial theorists in question. For example, he shares Leroy-Beaulieu’s belief that assimilation was possible, but only over the course of many decades or even centuries.⁵⁵ Moreover, the French fear of

49 Takekoshi 1905, p. 18.

50 Takekoshi 1905, p. 18.

51 Takekoshi 1906, p. 5.

52 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 374–375; Takekoshi 1907, p. 230.

53 Takekoshi 1905, p. 375.

54 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 6, 8, 18, 22; Betts 2005, p. 42.

55 Betts 2005, p. 81; Takekoshi 1905, pp. 374–375.



Figure 2. Exploring Party on Mount Ari in the Savage District. Photo from a surveying expedition undertaken by Gotō Shinpei in the fall of 1904, apparently provided to Takekoshi Yosaburō to illustrate his book. Like the term “savage,” the colonial dress of the Japanese served to accentuate the sense of difference between the colonizers and the indigenous population. Takekoshi 1907, p. 215.

being left behind after their defeat in the Franco-Prussian War was acute. The Japanese too feared being left behind, which perhaps made certain Japanese elites more receptive to the French colonialists’ literature. Takekoshi’s frequent boasting in *Taiwan tōchi shi* of Taiwan’s financial independence echoes another major theme in the work of such French theorists as Joseph Chailley-Bert.⁵⁶ Colonies, according to this new line of thinking, were to be run like businesses and generate profits, rather than draw metropolitan subsidies. Similar views were also prevalent in the British colonial establishment, and had been espoused by Montague Kirkwood, a prominent British advisor to the Japanese government at the time of Taiwan’s acquisition.⁵⁷

Takekoshi’s associationist arguments, his lavish praise for Kodama and Gotō, and the timing of the publication of *Taiwan tōchi shi* give strong clues as to his original political agenda. Gotō, another opponent of colonial assimilation, had introduced a bill to the Japanese Diet in 1905 that would permanently grant Taiwan the status of a colony, institutionally and legally separated from the metropole. This bill came to the floor before the three-year emergency powers granted to the government general of Taiwan were up for renewal in February 1905. Despite the support of *hanbatsu* Prime Minister Katsura Tarō 桂太郎 (1848–1913), Hara Takashi and other liberal parliamentarians managed to kill it. Instead, they agreed on a one-year compromise bill extending the government general’s powers.⁵⁸ This question inflamed passions in the assembly, and Katsura and Takekoshi reportedly “attracted heavy criticism from other representatives for calling Taiwan a ‘colony.’”⁵⁹ Gotō and the *hanbatsu* faction nevertheless believed that they could pass the

56 Betts 2005, p. 50.

57 See Hennessey 2019.

58 Matsuzaki 2011, pp. 94–96.

59 Nomura 2010, p. 69.

Figure 3. Governor General Kodama Gentarō. Like the description in the text, this impressive photograph, printed at the beginning of both *Taiwan tōchi shi* and *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, was clearly intended to enhance Kodama's prestige and contribute to the sense of Taiwan as a model colony. Takekoshi 1907, frontispiece.



bill if Kodama—widely respected as an able negotiator—were present to plead its case. In February 1905, however, he was away fighting in the Russo-Japanese War. Gotō and others therefore prepared for a concerted campaign to pass the bill the following year, in February 1906 on Kodama's return.⁶⁰

Taiwan tōchi shi appeared in September 1905, just in time to influence public opinion and sway fellow parliamentarians to support Gotō's bill. Further evidence that this was Takekoshi's original motivation can be found in the book itself:

It is entirely due to the personal abilities of the authorities now in office [Kodama and Gotō], that in spite of the ambiguous relations existing between Formosa and Japan, no special difficulty has yet arisen. This happy state of affairs cannot however go on forever. Many difficulties will unquestionably arise when the present able officials bid farewell to the island, unless before that time the constitutional status of the country has been definitely determined.⁶¹

Clearly, Takekoshi was lobbying for Gotō's law. The fact that the government general of Taiwan had obtained an unofficial spokesperson in a liberal Seiyūkai MP who was known for his criticism of the *hanbatsu* could only have proven a boon for Gotō's cause. Takekoshi's employment of cutting-edge Western colonial theories doubtless made his position even more persuasive.

In the event, however, unexpected developments ended up derailing Gotō's plans. In September, the month *Taiwan tōchi shi* was published, popular outrage at the peace treaty concluding the Russo-Japanese War touched off the Hibiya Incendiary Incident in Tokyo, a riot so destructive that martial law had to be declared. The Katsura government fell, giving way to a Seiyūkai government headed by Saionji Kinmochi. When the law empowering the government general of Taiwan again came up for review, Hara tried to have his own bill passed that would subordinate the governor general to the cabinet, but this effort was repulsed by *hanbatsu* supporters in the House of Peers. In the end, a compromise prolonging the status quo was effected. Gotō and Kodama moved on to new posts (and Kodama died

⁶⁰ Matsuzaki 2011, pp. 94–96.

⁶¹ Takekoshi 1905, p. 76; Takekoshi 1907, p. 37.

shortly thereafter), and the status of Taiwan remained ambiguous but effectively “colonial” under a powerful governor general until Hara’s premiership after World War I.⁶² The publication of *Taiwan tōchi shi* concurrently with a major political crisis, along with the fact that it does not appear to have been reprinted, suggests that it had little influence in Japan. It certainly did not make Takekoshi a Japanese Froude. Nevertheless, the publication of the English translation two years later gave the work a new lease of life.

Going International: Japanese Rule in Formosa

Reports of Japanese “successes” in Taiwan were not unprecedented in the West at this time. Notably, in 1904 both the *London Times* and the *New York Times* ran the same lengthy article entitled “Savage Island of Formosa Transformed by Japanese: Wonders Worked in a Few Years With a People That Others Had Failed to Subdue—A Lesson for Other Colonizing Nations.” The article deployed abundant statistics to demonstrate the success of Japan’s civilizing mission, comparing Japanese colonialism favorably with German overseas expansion.⁶³ Also in 1907, Japanese propagandist Hishida Seiji 菱田静治 (1874–?) published an article entitled “Formosa: Japan’s First Colony” that compared Taiwan’s administrative system to that in French and British colonies, and praised the island’s development under Kodama and Gotō, albeit in considerably less vivid terms than Takekoshi.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, *Japanese Rule in Formosa* was one of the first book-length treatises in a Western language on Taiwan since its annexation, and it was for some time arguably the best source of information on the island available in a Western language.⁶⁵

A comparison of *Japanese Rule in Formosa* with *Taiwan tōchi shi* reveals that they are not entirely the same: the English version omits the first chapter and about half of the second chapter of the Japanese original. This is significant because the initial chapters of *Taiwan tōchi shi* are where Takekoshi lays out his main views on colonialism. The first of these presents a strong case for Japan investing in maritime trade and developing “colonial power.”⁶⁶ For Takekoshi, colonies provide an outlet for excess population and energy in Japan proper, thereby helping to bring about domestic peace and stability and stimulate industry and maritime trade.⁶⁷ The chapter also presents the reader with historical precedents and traits of Japan’s national character that he believes make the Japanese especially suitable as colonizers. Finally, Takekoshi develops here his Darwinist theory of competition for global hegemony. He argues that newly-discovered natural resources and the construction of the Suez and Panama canals will soon make the Pacific the center of this struggle.⁶⁸ Japan’s position in the middle of this new theater is “nothing other than a blessing from heaven,” and the successful colonization of Taiwan is a first “stepping stone” towards it becoming the “Queen of the Pacific.”⁶⁹

62 Matsuzaki 2011, pp. 96–97.

63 *New York Times* 1904a.

64 Hishida 1907.

65 Several years earlier, experts had complained about the dearth of literature on Taiwan. Cordier 1903, p. 353; Davidson 1903, p. i.

66 Takekoshi 1905, p. 9.

67 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 3–7.

68 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 10–14.

69 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 14–16.

The section omitted from chapter 2 of *Taiwan tōchi shi* (chapter 1 in *Japanese Rule in Formosa*) continues along very similar lines. After describing Taiwan as “an almost ideal colony,” Takekoshi names three requirements for a colonizing people: (1) “expansive power,” (2) “individual vigor” and adaptability to new environments, and (3) a “political genius” for ruling other peoples.⁷⁰ The Japanese, in his view, are even better-suited to tropical colonization than white people, who have disparaged Japan’s colonial ventures out of ignorance and envy.⁷¹ He illustrates this with an anecdote of Japanese entrepreneurs who successfully developed a pearl-gathering industry in Australia, only to be expelled by envious whites, who were nonetheless unable to take over the trade themselves.⁷² Takekoshi believes in the principle of the civilizational/racial typology of Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, but criticizes him for lacking a proper “understanding of the Japanese,” and for classifying them as only semi-civilized.⁷³

It is easy to explain the omission from *Japanese Rule in Formosa* of assertions of Japanese racial superiority over white people, but it is less clear why the rest of the first two chapters were excised. It does not seem to be because of the chapters’ other triumphalist, highly nationalistic passages, for *Japanese Rule in Formosa* is filled with almost identical examples. Apart from the missing chapters, the translation by George Braithwaite, a Quaker missionary in Japan, is quite complete and accurate. All this seems to indicate that Braithwaite’s translation was not scrupulously censored before its publication abroad. The tone and style of *Taiwan tōchi shi* also strongly suggest that it was never intended for Western audiences from the beginning. The preparation of an English translation of *Taiwan tōchi shi* was apparently a hasty affair, decided after the publication of the original in 1905. The apparent rapidity with which it was published and the failure to carefully adapt *Taiwan tōchi shi* to a Western audience make it all the more remarkable that the translation was published at all and had such a large influence in Europe and America.

Japanese Rule in Formosa was reviewed by the influential British weekly magazine, the *Spectator*, an achievement that was celebrated in the Japanese press as a propaganda coup.⁷⁴ The review in the *Spectator* is on the whole positive, but raises a few objections. It labels Japanese colonialism in Taiwan a success, citing its financial independence from the metropole, and accepts most of Takekoshi’s evaluation at face-value. Introducing Takekoshi as “a member of the Japanese Diet,” the reviewer describes his book as a welcome resource that has “almost the value of a Blue-book” [official government report].⁷⁵ The author criticizes Takekoshi for assuming that the British view Japanese colonialism negatively (“our opinion is simply in suspense”) and for his harsh condemnation of French colonialism.⁷⁶ Most notably, however, he objects to Takekoshi’s ruthless plan to outsource the forcible removal of Formosan aborigines from resource-laden areas:

70 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 18–19.

71 Takekoshi 1905, pp. 19–21.

72 Takekoshi 1905, p. 21.

73 Takekoshi 1905, p. 22.

74 *Yomiuri shinbun* 1907.

75 *Spectator* 1907, p. 7.

76 *Spectator* 1907, p. 7.

How can the savages be made to yield their territory to civilisation except by war? And war in this case might mean something unpleasantly like extermination. We hope that whatever plan the authorities adopt, it will not be that proposed by Mr. Takekoshi. He suggests a chartered company. This may be admissible where it is only a question of commercial pioneering, but in a case where the great difficulty is admittedly the resistance of the natives, a chartered company would simply be an instrument deprived of all the checks which are at present saving the Governor-General, to his credit, from inhumanity. Mr. Takekoshi makes his proposal in all good faith. It is not less the duty of those who have had first-hand experience of chartered companies to say that in these circumstances the transference of power from a highly responsible body to a much less responsible body would be a hideous mistake.⁷⁷

This criticism notwithstanding, the *Spectator* did Takekoshi the same service as it did numerous British, French, and American authors of colonialist works, granting *Japanese Rule in Formosa* a great deal of publicity and a quite favorable review, in which even the book's baldest example of colonial greed is portrayed as being misguided but "in good faith."

Reviews in scholarly journals reveal that Western specialists also valued *Japanese Rule in Formosa*. One reviewer for the British Royal Geographical Society's *Geographical Journal*, F.H.H.G., holds Takekoshi's insider knowledge of Taiwan in high regard:

The present volume may ... be said to be especially useful, for even now books treating of Formosa are exceedingly limited in number, and not many of their authors have had such opportunities as Mr. Takekoshi, who, in addition to making extensive journeys about the country, has had access to most sources of official information in his capacity of member of the Japanese Diet.⁷⁸

Although derisive of Takekoshi's book's "rather bizarre English" and bibliographical errors, the reviewer almost begrudgingly allows that the Japanese seem to have done a first-rate job surveying and developing their new colony. F.H.H.G. approvingly notes that "Mr. Takekoshi has a strong admiration for the British and their methods of rule."⁷⁹ A German-language review by diplomat Max von Brandt is more technical, summarizing key statistics from Takekoshi's book, suggesting that much of the information was new to Western readers.⁸⁰ Von Brandt, author of numerous books on East Asia, had earlier written a treatise on British colonial administration for a German audience.⁸¹ The French periodical *Annales de géographie* mentioned Takekoshi's book in its annual list of new books in 1907, but did not include a review of its own, referring interested readers to F.H.H.G.'s and von Brandt's appraisals.⁸² These reviews in academic journals demonstrate that Takekoshi's work had a trans-imperial readership.

77 *Spectator* 1908, p. 8.

78 F.H.H.G. 1907, p. 324.

79 F.H.H.G. 1907, p. 324.

80 Von Brandt 1908.

81 Von Brandt 1906.

82 Raveneau 1908, p. 195.

Japanese Rule in Formosa was also reviewed in at least three prominent American scholarly journals.⁸³ Two of the reviewers, Alleyne Ireland and Chester Lloyd Jones, were academics who themselves wrote books, which like *Japanese Rule in Formosa* endeavored to make Americans enthusiastic colonizers who embraced associationist ideas. Ireland was hired by the University of Chicago in 1901 to tour Western countries' tropical colonies in Asia and conduct a comparative investigation of their different colonial systems with an eye to improving American administration in the Philippines.⁸⁴ A similarly-minded proponent of the association theory of colonization, he had published a survey of Western colonialisms in Southeast Asia the same year Takekoshi's book was published in Japanese, which Takekoshi cites.⁸⁵ Two decades later, Ireland would write a book praising Japanese colonialism in Korea.⁸⁶ Similarly, a decade after reviewing Takekoshi's book, Jones published a work on American interests in the Caribbean, including a description of the different colonialisms present there, aimed at raising the awareness of the American general public.⁸⁷ The third reviewer, Henry Jones Ford, was an eminent American political scientist. These examples demonstrate that Takekoshi was part of an interconnected, trans-imperial group of colonial experts who sought to educate the public of their home countries about colonialism and advocate a certain mode of administration. Like Takekoshi, these writers were nationalistic but also shared a similar intellectual approach and a strong sense of common purpose in pursuing a global colonial project.

Thanks to laudatory texts like Takekoshi's, Japanese colonial methods were occasionally a source of inspiration for Western administrators. Ireland was particularly impressed by the opium monopoly in Taiwan as described in *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, writing that, "The Japanese in Formosa had come nearer to a successful handling of the problem than any other of the great powers having dependencies in the Far East." Ireland thought that this would be of great interest to the American administration of the Philippines.⁸⁸ Ford's review is even more complimentary, and expresses admiration for Takekoshi's associationist stance, apparently missing that Takekoshi is not describing the Japanese government's actual position but rather his opinion on how it should be reformed:

Instead of doing as we have done in our colonies—impose our own institutions and then try to make over the character of the people so that they can work such institutions—the Japanese have suited colonial institutions to the character of the people. If one may judge institutions of government by their fruits, the showing made in this book presents a strong case to the effect that the Japanese have chosen the better way.⁸⁹

83 Ireland 1907; Jones 1907; Ford 1909.

84 F.H.H.G. 1905.

85 Ireland 1905; Takekoshi 1905, p. 9. Ireland was irked by Takekoshi (or, more likely, Braithwaite) misspelling his first name. Ireland 1907, p. 158.

86 Ireland 1926.

87 Jones 1916, pp. vii–viii.

88 Ireland 1907, pp. 157–158. An American delegation that studied the Japanese opium monopoly and other Southeast Asian colonies' methods of handling opium is the subject of Foster 2003.

89 Ford 1909.



Figure 4. Light Hand Railway across the Taian River. Just like contemporaneous Western colonial propaganda, both versions of Takekoshi's book included illustrations of infrastructure projects to show how Japanese rule was "improving" the country. Takekoshi 1907, p. 240.

All of the reviews are generally positive about Takekoshi's contribution to the field of colonial studies, even if they are all critical of the bias arising from his "avow[ed] ... patriotic purpose."⁹⁰ As Ireland put it, "This is admirable as patriotism; but it inflicts the student with an uncomfortable sense of special pleading."⁹¹ These reservations aside, none of the reviewers seriously question the accuracy of Takekoshi's reports on the "civilization and progress" that the Japanese had brought to the island.

In addition to these reviews of *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, contemporaneous articles in the *New York Times* suggest that American admiration for Japanese governance in Taiwan had become commonplace around this time even in the popular press, with the island widely viewed as a model for American rule in the Philippines. An adulatory article from October 1904 asserted that, "The proofs of efficiency given by Japan in her war with Russia are so convincing and impressive that we are apt to ... overlook the remarkable work she has been doing in Formosa." Praising the "splendid" and "unprecedented" successes in creating infrastructure, education, sanitation, and industry, the author notes that Japan's rule over Taiwan, "was in some important regards so like that we have assumed in the Philippines that it is well worth considering."⁹² Similarly, an article entitled "Japanese Colonial Experience" from January 1907 summarizes the impressive trade statistics from the government general of Taiwan's 1905 annual report, writing that this document "is of peculiar [particular] interest to Americans, for the reason that the Japanese have had to meet and solve in Formosa not a few of the political, industrial, and commercial questions which have been presented to us through our possession of the Philippine Islands."⁹³ The *New York Times* had previously reported extensively on the guerilla warfare in Taiwan in the years immediately following its acquisition by Japan in 1895. It did not neglect to cover the dispatch of a large force to "subjugate" the "savage region" of Taiwan in 1907, which Takekoshi had called for in his book.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the recurring theme that the United States had much to learn from Japan when it came to colonial rule is striking. Japanese propaganda about its successes

90 Ford 1909, p. 113.

91 Ireland 1907, p. 157.

92 *New York Times* 1904b.

93 *New York Times* 1907a.

94 *New York Times* 1907b.

in Taiwan seems to have made a strong impression in the United States. Even though Japan had only acquired Taiwan three years before the American annexation of the Philippines, it was seen as an experienced, model colonial power worthy of emulation, a view which *Japanese Rule in Formosa* was instrumental in shaping.

Conclusion

Although it is frequently cited in English-language studies of Japanese imperialism, *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, the 1907 translation of Takekoshi Yosaburō's 1905 book *Taiwan tōchi shi*, has never been properly contextualized. This article has sought to show that a close investigation of the two books in context reveals much about the contours of the Japanese debate over Taiwan's status and the global, trans-imperial exchange of colonial theories around the turn of the twentieth century. In particular, it illustrates the complex interweaving of different ideologies and theories of colonial administration that characterized these discussions.

Takekoshi was unquestionably a liberal, writing Whiggish histories critical of the *hanbatsu* establishment and representing the Seiyūkai in the Japanese Diet, but he diverged sharply from party leader Hara Takashi and many other colleagues on the question of extending the Meiji Constitution to Taiwan. Drawing on contemporaneous French colonial theories of association, Takekoshi forcefully advocated that Taiwan should be ruled as a "pure colony" outside the purview of Japanese domestic politics. *Taiwan tōchi shi* was intended to undermine support for Hara's plan to place Taiwan under the authority of the Diet and assimilate it to metropolitan governmental structures. Indeed, it celebrated the *hanbatsu* leaders of the Taiwan colonial administration for their associationist approach. Despite this dramatic rejection of the Seiyūkai party line, Takekoshi's opinions about Taiwan are unquestionably liberal and largely consistent with the worldview reflected in his earlier writings.

Taiwan tōchi shi also reveals much about Meiji-era attitudes toward Japan's colonized subjects, which are often oversimplified by historians who view this period through the lens of the radical assimilation movement of the 1930s and 1940s. It likewise serves as a corrective to global historians who oversimplify "French colonialism" and "Japanese colonialism" as assimilationist, ignoring internal debates and major differences across time and space. Leading colonialists in both France and Japan, as well as elsewhere, were concurrently influenced by new, opposing ideas of association. *Taiwan tōchi shi* therefore offers a fascinating window into the multifaceted debates over colonial governance in late-Meiji Japan, even if its publication at the end of the Russo-Japanese War meant that it did not achieve its end of winning support in the Diet for cementing an associationist approach to colonial rule in Taiwan.

It is important to remember that the theories and ideologies that shaped Takekoshi's worldview also underpinned concrete colonial practices, notably violence. A confluence of theories of association, Social Darwinist ideas according to which it would take centuries for "primitive" peoples to reach civilization, and older Western colonial notions about the moral imperative of exploiting natural resources led Japan to wage extermination campaigns against groups of Taiwanese aborigines who occupied forest areas rich in camphor and other valuable resources. As we have seen, Takekoshi used such arguments to make the case that Japan could not wait for the aborigines to develop but needed to exploit Taiwan's

resources as soon as possible to fuel its industrial and commercial expansion. Empowering the government general of Taiwan to pass decrees carrying the weight of legislation, even temporarily, also had significant effects. Among other things, the placement of *de facto* legislative power in the hands of the governor general of Taiwan made it possible for the colonial government to issue a harsh, sweeping decree in 1898 allowing for the execution or killing of individuals labeled as “bandits.” By Gotō’s estimations, nearly twelve thousand such “bandits” were killed between 1898 and 1902.⁹⁵

Moreover, *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, the abridged, but otherwise largely faithful translation of *Taiwan tōchi shi*, is valuable as a source for the study of trans-imperial history. As its reception in the West suggests, the publication of Takekoshi’s book in English seems to have succeeded in linking Japan into the trans-imperial academic matrix of the global colonial elite. *Japanese Rule in Formosa* was one of very few English-language books on the subject, and appears to have colored the way Japanese colonialism was perceived abroad. Despite only representing one side of a heated domestic debate, Takekoshi became an important international representative for Japanese colonialism in the years following the Russo-Japanese War, spreading a view of Taiwan as a kind of prewar “Japanese economic miracle.”

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95 Nomura 2010, p. 74.

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