

## Producing Colonial Difference at High Elevation: The Figure of the “Savage” during the Late Qing and Modern Japanese Regimes in Indigenous Taiwan

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Beginning in the 1870s, Taiwan’s mountain forests became a contested battleground between indigenous peoples and colonizers. At issue was the production of camphor, a crystalline substance derived from the *cinnamomum camphora* tree. Central to the expansion of imperial control in this strategic zone of resource extraction was the concept of indigenous Taiwanese as “savage.” Both Qing and Japanese colonizers employed this concept at great lengths to craft assimilation programs, and to carry out punishing military assaults. This essay revisits the figure of the savage and how it shaped the structures of late Qing and Japanese colonial governance in the Taiwan highlands. In doing so, it showcases not only how dehumanizing constructs shape the actions of colonizers, but also how these evolve across multiple empires.

**Keywords:** colonialism, empire, camphor, Frantz Fanon, Rosa Luxemburg

In his manifesto for decolonizing peoples, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon described how the rule of colonizers is founded upon the presumption that “the native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but the negation of values.”<sup>1</sup> To paint the native as the antithesis of “civilized” values is not enough, however. Fanon adds that the language used to describe the colonized must be nothing short of thoroughly dehumanizing: “... [T]he terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms. He speaks of the yellow man’s reptilian motions, of the stink of the native quarter, of breeding swarms, of foulness, of spawn, of

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1 Frantz Fanon (trans. by Constance Farrington), *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York: Grove Press, 1961, p. 41.

gesticulations. When the settler seeks to describe the native fully in exact terms he constantly refers to the bestiary.”<sup>2</sup>

Fanon wrote these observations as European empires were in the midst of collapse, but his statement applies even more to an earlier era of imperialist violence, that of the turn of the twentieth century, when colonial regimes were capturing the last holdouts of native resistance to predatory capitalist extraction around the world. Pacification campaigns or punitive expeditions were standard operating procedures during this period, as colonial troops inflicted destructive violence of genocidal proportions around the globe. This global infrastructure of violent expropriation was built on the premise that the colonized were savage or subhuman, and not worthy humane treatment, whether as subjects under occupation or as belligerents in a state of war. In Fanon though, it is not so much that the “native” fails to meet these criteria and therefore inspires revulsion; it is rather that the native’s very mode of existence is anathema, and as such must be violently brought to heel by whatever means necessary. The absence of “civilized” norms is not a sufficient condition for the employment of brute force; colonizers must frame the absence as a deliberate rejection of their dominant values. In insisting on preserving their rights to communally-held lands or ancestral villages, which will inevitably entail armed resistance, colonizers become convinced that their antagonists are barbarism incarnate.

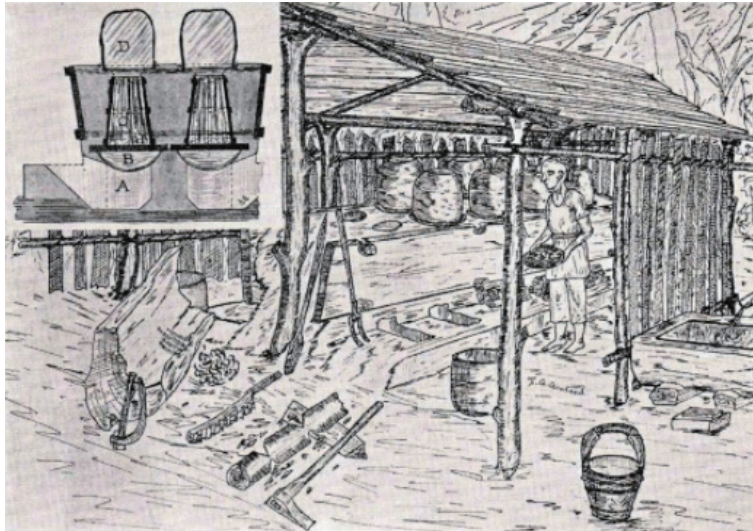
One area which experienced such patterns of dehumanizing colonial violence at the height of these global imperialist convulsions was the Taiwan highlands. Taiwan’s mountain forests and hillsides, which encompass the territories of indigenous groups like the Atayal 泰雅族, Truku 太魯閣族, and Seediq 賽德克族, became a contested imperialist battleground for decades under the late Qing and modern Japanese states.<sup>3</sup> Citing attacks on their remote frontier encampments by indigenous warriors as a pretext, both these empires launched punishing and indiscriminate assaults using troops and cannon fire in order to bring about the “surrender” of scattered mountain village communities.<sup>4</sup> Both empires’ objectives in capturing these mountain forests were the development of infrastructure (roads, telegraph wiring, police stations, etc.), as well as the production of camphor, a white crystalline substance derived from the vapors of cooked *cinnamomum camphora* tree wood. Camphor was a substance found in everything from basic plastics used in household objects to the first film reels ever produced. Camphor was also a vital ingredient for the manufacturing of smokeless gunpowder, which became a vital supply for troops fighting in the trenches during the First World War. Its contribution to consumer culture and the industrial age cannot be overstated. It helped fuel the growth of imperial modernities throughout the Euro-American and Japanese worlds.

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2 Ibid., p. 42.

3 Taiwan’s sixteen official indigenous groups are: Amis 阿美族, Atayal 泰雅族, Paiwan 排灣族, Bunun 布農族, Puyuma 卑南族, Rukai 魯凱族, Tsou 鄒族, Saisiyat 賽夏族, Yami 達悟族, Thao 邵族, Kavalan 噶瑪蘭族, Truku 太魯閣族, Sakizaya 撒奇萊雅族, Seediq 賽德克族, Hla'alua 拉阿魯哇族 and Kanakanavu 卡那卡那富族. Of Taiwan’s 546,700 aborigines, there are 14,500 within the overall aborigine population who do not recognize themselves as belonging to any of the official sixteen categories. See Executive Yuan Republic of China, *Republic of China Yearbook 2016*, Taipei: Executive Yuan Republic of China, 2016, pp. 45–46.

4 The specific term for surrender is *guihua* 歸化 or *guijun* 歸順 in Chinese, and *kijun* 歸順 in Japanese.



Camphor production manned by a Taiwanese worker. Source: Davidson, James W. *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present. History, People, Resources, and Commercial Prospects. Tea, Camphor, Sugar, Gold, Coal, Sulphur, Economical Plants, and Other Productions*, New York: Macmillan and Co, 1903, pp. 420–421.

In the lead up to these campaigns, Taiwan’s indigenous inhabitants were seen as savages existing “beyond the pale” (huawai 化外) of the Sino-centric system. The entry of western capitalists hoping to cash in on camphor products, followed by Japan’s punitive expedition in southeast Taiwan (1874), put pressure on the Qing to bring these mountain territories under its control. Under the short-lived Taiwan Province administration, the Qing concocted a series of paternalistic assimilation programs that fell flat, and soon gave way to violent suppression campaigns to avenge raids on lowlanders or camphor workers. The incoming Japanese soon after took a similar approach. They made initial promises to appease aborigines and promised gifts and benevolent government, only then to brutally shell and invade them in the face of endless attacks against camphor implements or other frontier installations.

For decades, both the late Qing and modern Japanese regimes inflicted brutal state repression on scores of village communities<sup>5</sup> under the pretext of subjugating what they deemed to be violent human beings who obstructed the progress of industries. At the heart of these policies was the

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5 I use the term “village community,” a translation of the Atayal word *qalang* proposed by the linguist scholar-translator of Tgadaya Seediq, Darryl Sterk, to refer to these particular highland non-state polities that dotted Taiwan’s northeast and central mountains during the late Qing and Japanese period. Sterk is basing his translation on the Seediq word *galang*, which is almost identical to the Atayal word (*qalang*). It is important to note, though, that while they share many underlying features, Atayal and Seediq are the two distinct languages of two distinct indigenous nations.

notion of savage (*fan* 番 in Chinese and *ban* 蕃 in Japanese).<sup>6</sup> In the Taiwan context, the savage represented both the administrative and cultural boundaries of empire as well as the basis for its expansion. Not subject to the formal structures of governance, yet targeted by the latter due to the presence of exploitable resources, the savage allows us to grasp the modern form of the colony itself. As Fanon famously put it: “In the colonial countries ... the policeman and the soldier, by their immediate presence and their frequent and direct action maintain contact with the native and advise him by means of rifle butts and napalm not to budge.”<sup>7</sup> The colony is a space “where the agents of government speak the language of pure force.”<sup>8</sup> It is a space where the rules of warfare, diplomacy, and civil society are in complete suspension. Therefore, all manner of horrific treatment can be used to enforce order, or initiate the creation of capitalistic enterprises. “Savages” can be freely expropriated from their lands, have their villages or crops burned, have their identities suppressed, and experience the full weight of the state’s unrestrained brutality. To put it simply, the figure of the savage allows the state to act with a level of brutality it otherwise wouldn’t employ in a metropolitan context.

This essay examines how the figure of the savage under the late Qing and modern Japanese regimes gave rise to patterns of state-bureaucratic violence which brought under control native sovereignties that had remained virtually untouched by colonizers for centuries. In the Taiwan highlands the notion of the savage was not merely a racist stereotype hurled at the island’s indigenous inhabitants; it served as a central organizing principle behind an entire mode of occupation. The savage provided a framework for making war upon the colonized—one that transmuted all acts of native resistance into senseless “killings” requiring brutal retaliation, no matter how real or imagined the harm done to colonizers. These relations of violence, in turn, not only helped coordinate troop and militia movements across a changing frontier, but also cemented the growth of the vital camphor industry, which was arguably one of the world’s most important resources at the time.

To elucidate further the interplay of capitalist accumulation and the violence of dehumanizing ideations, I wish to invoke briefly a seminal theoretician of Marxist thought, Rosa Luxemburg, whose writings in the opening decades of the twentieth century sought to address why the West (and by extension Japan) had sought to impose its system of industrial capitalism by force of arms. In her seminal 1913 work, *The Accumulation of Capital*, she writes: “Capital needs other races to exploit territories where the white man cannot work. It must be able to mobilize world labor power

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6 I am not the first to discuss the production of the savage in a Taiwan context. Scholars like Matsuda Kyōko, Robert Tierney, and Paul Barclay have done pioneering work on how Japan’s colonial rule depended on the production of a savage other across various domains (literary, popular, academic, or governmental). This article builds on their scholarship by examining the specific figure of the “savage,” and its pivotal role in organizing the forms of frontier violence needed to jumpstart and expand the process of capitalist accumulation. See Matsuda Kyōko 松田京子, *Teikoku no shikō: Nihon “teikoku” to Taiwan genjūmin* 帝国の思考：日本「帝国」と台湾原住民 [Imperial Thought: Japan’s ‘Empire’ and Taiwan’s aborigines], Tokyo: Yūshisha, 2014; Robert Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010; Paul Barclay, *Outcasts of Empire: Japan’s Rule on Taiwan’s ‘Savage Border,’ 1874–1895*, Oakland: University of California Press, 2017.

7 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 38.

8 Ibid.

without restriction in order to utilize all productive forces of the globe.”<sup>9</sup> In order to tap into non-capitalistic productive forces, however, capital first required the dismantlement and reconfiguration of social formations “rigidly-bound” to traditional non-capitalist forms of production, or what she called “natural economy.” She wrote:

Vast tracts of the globe’s surface are in the possession of social organizations that have no desire for commodity exchange or cannot, because of the entire social structure and the forms of ownership, offer for sale the productive forces in which capital is primarily interested.<sup>10</sup>

This led her to her groundbreaking thesis that “accumulation, with its spasmodic expansion, can no more wait for, and be content with, a natural internal disintegration of non-capitalist formations and their transition to commodity economy ... Force is the only solution open to capital; the accumulation of capital, seen as an historical process, employs force as a permanent weapon, not only at its genesis, but further on down to the present day.”<sup>11</sup> In the same section, she also gave crucial insight into how colonized peoples experience the violence of imperialism, noting that “permanent occupation by the military, native risings and punitive expeditions are the order of the day” when indigenous land and resources become the object of capitalist accumulation.<sup>12</sup> Situated on the fringes of the capitalist system, yet important for its reproduction, colonies were spaces where states were unshackled from conventional rules of war or inter-state relations, thereby allowing them to accelerate exploitation of untapped natural resources through brute extra-economic and extra-legal force. The sociologist Onur Ulas Ince, in a recent appraisal of Luxemburg’s theory, made this point, noting that: “Situated ‘beyond the line,’ colonies represented not only the abode of the ‘savage’ or ‘barbarian’ peoples but also spaces where European colonists could confront the indigenous people and each other with a savagery and barbarism unfettered by Europe’s ‘civilized’ manners.”<sup>13</sup> Luxemburg’s formulation, he noted, allows us in turn to understand “why colonial entrepreneurs had a much freer hand in establishing regimes of bonded labor, extirpating indigenous inhabitants, and wreaking havoc on the forms of land tenure they found in place.”<sup>14</sup>

A Luxemburgian reading of colonial occupation as “permanent” and ongoing violence directed at a social formation resisting either total or partial capitalization allows us to grasp better the brutal and extra-legal methods imperial conquerors have devised to pry open new frontiers and markets. “Natural economies” directly experience unvarnished capitalist violence due to their refusal to let industries transform their lands and resources—which are indissociable from social or

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9 Rosa Luxemburg (trans. by Agnes Schwarzschild), *The Accumulation of Capital*, London: Routledge, 2003, p. 351.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., pp. 350–351.

12 Ibid.

13 Onur Ulas Ince, “Primitive Accumulation, the New Enclosures, and Global Land Grabs: A Theoretical Intervention,” *Rural Sociology* vol. 79, no. 1, 2014, p. 112. The scholar of racial capitalism, Michael Dowson, invokes Ince’s formulation in a similar manner. See Michael Dowson, “Hidden in Plain Sight: A Note on Legitimation Crises and the Racial Order,” *Critical Historical Studies* vol. 3, no. 1, Spring 2016, pp. 143–161.

14 Onur Ulas Ince, “Primitive Accumulation, the New Enclosures, and Global Land Grabs,” p. 112.



cosmological systems—into export commodities. As Fanon would point out, this act of force cannot exist without the central assumption that the native is the “quintessence of evil,” who must be thoroughly reformed or simply removed.<sup>15</sup> Regimes of difference-making and regimes of accumulation work hand-in-glove to produce not only hyper-exploitative methods of extraction, but also an arsenal of repressive instruments. These instruments employ a kind of “surplus violence” that seems to map onto the anticipated surplus profits which colonizers hope to capture while erecting their industries on native lands. As Fanon famously put it:

In the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence, you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich. This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem.<sup>16</sup>

Bridging Luxemburg and Fanon’s insights, this essay attempts such a “stretch” by examining the pivotal role that constructions of Taiwan indigenes as “savages” played in shaping the epistemology of indigenous dispossession across two empires.

### **The Late Qing and Early Japanese Colonial Period: modes of occupation and difference-making**

Before Japan constructed its own savage frontier and mobilized its armies to capture indigenous forests, it was the late Qing state that first attempted this through its modernizing goals of transforming Taiwan Province into a secure commercial and military outpost. Though China was a victim of global imperialist aggression during the late nineteenth century, the Qing state itself engaged in behavior on its remote frontiers worthy of the same colonizers, who were busy carving out treaty ports and extraterritorial zones across China. With vast untapped resources in the Taiwan interior, Qing officials and their frontier garrisons set their sights on developing the booming camphor trade to finance their program of provincial “self-strengthening” during the 1870s and 1880s. Indigenous groups however stood in their path. Imperial Commissioner Shen Baozhen 沈葆楨 (1820–1879), who designed this policy of “opening the mountains,” put the situation at the time in rather plain language: “If we open up the mountains but do not first pacify the savages, then we will have no handle to open up the mountains; if we want to pacify the savages but do not first open up the mountains, then savage pacification will be merely empty talk.”<sup>17</sup>

The idea of the savage in the late Qing mindset predates the camphor boom, however. Concepts of human beings inhabiting geographically-distant places and lacking proper social order have existed ever since dynastic regimes in China faced nomadic, non-sedentary peoples on their

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15 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 40.

16 Ibid., p. 41.

17 Cited in Antonio Tavares, “Crystals from the Savage Forest: Imperialism and Capitalism in the Taiwan Camphor Industry, 1800–1945,” PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2004, p. 120.

borders.<sup>18</sup> Taiwan was no stranger to this pattern of imperial regimes establishing hierarchic differences to distinguish Han from non-Han. Even before Taiwan came under Qing control, notions of remote “barbarian” (*yi* 夷) peoples influenced perceptions of the island. This early mode of difference-making in Taiwan was one based not on revulsion, but rather a fascination with the primitive. The earliest records of Chinese perceptions of Taiwan aborigines date back to the Ming dynasty. In 1603, general Shen Yourong 沈有容 (1557–1628) launched a punitive expedition to eradicate Japanese pirate activities. The expedition spilled over onto the Taiwan coast, leading to contact with aborigines, who entertained Shen and his men with a feast of wine and deer meat. In the process, a military advisor to Shen, Chen Di 陳第 (1541–1617) stayed on the island for twenty-one days and recorded his observations of the local population in his 1603 text, *Dongfan ji* 東番記 (Record of Formosa). *Dongfan ji* opens with a description of the Formosa natives as “the naked and rope-tying people, who have neither calendars nor officials nor chiefs.”<sup>19</sup> Though Chen uses the term barbarian (*yi*) and mentions their headhunting activities, much of his account is largely sympathetic, attributing their difference to historical contingency, and not to any inherent backwardness.<sup>20</sup> This early fascination with a people lacking centralized rule and hierarchic social norms soon shifted as matters of colonial administration began taking precedence. Once Taiwan was incorporated into the empire in 1683, attempts at Sinicization quickly began to accompany land reclamation activities. An early eighteenth-century ethnography of plains aborigines in Taiwan’s north by scholar-official Huang Shu-Ching 黃叔敬 (1666–1742) reveals this assimilationist drive to transform aborigines into compliant subjects:

[T]aiwan is entirely a land of barbarians. Their foreheads tattooed, their locks shorn, [they are as hard to keep in order as] a mess of ants or a swarm of bees. For those in service overseas keeping the barbarians pacified must surely be considered difficult ... Lately, in their villages there are some who study the writings of the Four Philosophers (the Four Books of the Confucian canon), and learn one of the scriptures (the Five Classics). With encouragement and guidance can we not convert their uncouth ways to those of civilized men?<sup>21</sup>

By the early 1700s, indigenous peoples residing across Taiwan’s western plains became the object of assimilation policies which sought to eliminate their decentralized political structures, head-taking rituals, forms of dress, and other customs. Though the Qing had not expanded into the

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18 For ancient China and the peoples around its shifting imperial borders, see Nicola Di Cosmo, *Ancient China and its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asian History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

19 Leigh K. Jenco, “Chen Di’s *Record of Formosa* (1603) and an Alternative Chinese Imaginary of Otherness,” *The Historical Journal* vol. 64, Special Issue 1: Uses of the Past Between Europe and East Asia, February 2021, p. 18.

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 18–42.

21 Cited in Thompson, Laurence. “The Earliest Chinese Eyewitness Accounts of the Formosan aborigines.” *Monumenta Serica* 23 (3), 1964, pp. 48–49. Jenco also notes that Huang’s ethnography gave Taiwan aborigines a largely positive treatment, with passages highlighting their shared humanity with Chinese. His text though still stressed the practical political necessities of having them acculturated into Sinic ways. See Leigh K. Jenco, “Chen Di’s *Record of Formosa* (1603) and an alternative Chinese imaginary of otherness,” p. 37.

mountainous interior, images of wild and untamed peoples requiring the “civilizing” influence of Sinic culture had already been internalized by Taiwan’s rulers.

As settlement expanded to the foothills of the central Taiwan mountain range, skirmishes between settlers and natives on the edges of Qing-controlled areas in Taiwan forced the government to police a complex highland-lowland boundary permeated by various territorial, racial, and civilizational distinctions. In the early 1700s, the Qing government formally established a “savage boundary” (*fanjie* 番界) near the base of the foothills to prevent Han Chinese farmers from trespassing onto indigenous lands beyond Qing control. This border initially consisted of earth works and other rudimentary physical markers. Through the erection of the “savage boundary,” Qing statesmen also developed a system for classifying indigenous people. Pacified aborigines who paid taxes and performed military duties became known as “cooked savages” (*shou fan* 熟番) while those beyond the reach of government authority were dubbed “raw savages” (*sheng fan* 生番).<sup>22</sup> Later, an intermediary category of “savages in the process of transformation” (*hua fan* 化番) appeared. The terms “raw savage” (*seiban* 生蕃) and “cooked savage” (*jukuban* 熟蕃) were later also adopted by Japanese colonists to distinguish between plains and hill aborigines. Qing maps show a distinction between these zones, with clusters of village settlements and administrative centers dotting the plains, and mountain chains in the center showing the clear demarcation not only in terms of topography, but also political geography.



*Taiwan qian hou shan quan tu* 台灣前後山全圖, 1875–1880, Library of Congress (<https://lccn.loc.gov/gm71005066>)

In the above map, Chinese names labelling the different peaks connected to mountain roads mask a fictitious sovereignty where the Qing were not often present. Only “pacified” villages who

22 For a good overview of this system of classification, see Emma Teng, *Taiwan’s Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683–1895*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004, pp. 122–149.



paid taxes and performed frontier military service were technically under the empire's jurisdiction.<sup>23</sup>

This however did not preclude the Qing from depicting those outside its civilizational orbit as dangerous human beings intent on killing and slaughter. An illustrated ethnography of mountain aborigines from the late Qing period, for example, features an image titled "Illustration of indigenes prostrating on precipice and getting ready to kill" (*Shenfan fuyai zhensha tushuo* 生番伏崖偵殺圖說), which showcases two aboriginal warriors atop a cliff firing at unsuspecting Chinese passers-by. The description reads: "The indigenes are addicted to slaughtering, the one who beheads Han Chinese would be granted as the tribal leader. It is usually the case that the indigenes hide in the bushes of the side cliffs, await lonely Han Chinese travelers descending into the mountain, and then attack the Han Chinese with firearms, behead and take the head away with them."<sup>24</sup> Images of "wild" aborigines attacking Han Chinese from hillsides or consecrating severed heads were all part of the Qing's Sino-centric cultural imaginary. Though so-called raw or transforming savages existed outside the state's assimilatory grip, their existence was still deemed a threat to those living on the remote edges of state sovereignty. Even under the Qing's "quarantine" policy of limiting contact with the mountains, various forms of land reclamation or highland-lowland commerce (acquisition of wild game, animal parts used for medicinal purposes, etc.) still contributed to frontier violence. The transition to a new regime of accumulation centered on camphor would make these pre-existing forms of ethno-culturalist essentialization more vicious in their overall application in the closing years of Qing control.

After Japan's punitive expedition against the Qing in 1874, the Qing state initiated its policy of "open the mountains, pacify the savages" (*kaishan fufan* 開山撫番).<sup>25</sup> At the center of this policy was the capitalist transformation of the Taiwanese camphor forests, which by the 1860s and 1870s had reached record highs in terms of production, thanks to the lifting of trade regulations following conflicts with the British.<sup>26</sup> After an influx of Western companies that sought to cash in on deregulated camphor markets in the interior, the Qing state began putting in place monopolistic measures to monetize camphor production. Under Taiwan's first provincial governor, the decorated military official Liu Mingchuan 劉銘傳 (1836–1896), the state began a comprehensive indigene

23 For more on this system, see Robert Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier 1600–1800*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993, pp. 308–362.

24 Chen Zongren 陳宗仁, ed., *Wan Qing Taiwan fan tu su* 晚清臺灣番俗圖 [Illustrations of aborigines in Late Qing Taiwan], Taipei: Academia Sinica Institute of Taiwan History, 2013, p. 102. The translation of the passage is taken from Pei-Hsi Lin, "Firearms, Technology, and Culture: Resistance of Taiwan indigenes to Chinese, European, and Japanese Encroachment in a Global Context Circa 1860–1914." PhD dissertation, Nottingham Trent University, 2016, p. 293.

25 For an overview of this incident, see Robert Eskilden, "Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan's 1874 Expedition to Taiwan," *American Historical Review* vol. 107, no. 2, 2002, pp. 388–418.

26 For more on the *kaishan fufan* policy, see Chang Lung-chih, "From Frontier Island to Imperial Colony: Qing and Japanese Sovereignty Debates and Territorial Projects, 1874–1906." PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2003, pp. 95–101. For a source which mentions the relationship between violence and the free trade boom, see James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present. History, People, Resources, and Commercial Prospects. Tea, Camphor, Sugar, Gold, Coal, Sulphur, Economical Plants, and Other Productions*, New York: Macmillan and Co, 1903, p. 405.

pacification program. In 1886, the government established the Pacification-Reclamation Office (*fukenu* 撫墾局), which functioned as a collection of trade posts aiming to sinicize aborigines through a patchwork of farm education programs, instruction in the Confucian classics, and distribution of supplies (munitions, food, clothing, rifles) to “loyal” elders who showed a willingness to “submit.” These trade posts, combined with protective militia troops (known as *aiyong* 隘勇) clustered in camphor-rich areas, were meant to stabilize commercial forest activities and allow steady revenue streams.<sup>27</sup> While the Qing’s approach before the 1870s was to minimize ethnic tensions in the borderlands, the “open the mountains, pacify the savages” policy redefined aborigines as potential obstacles to a late imperial state seeking to bolster its administrative control of outlying areas and increase surplus revenues.<sup>28</sup> The Qing state of course promised compassionate care for those who allowed camphor workers, road builders and armed guards to move into their territories. Those who refused faced an all-out assault, meaning imperial armies and auxiliaries would incinerate their villages, shell them with cannons, and force unconditional surrender.

Late Qing expansion into the mountains cemented patterns of frontier warfare and dehumanization that would endure well into the later Japanese years. Campaigns by the Qing were launched in response to a combination of attacks on camphor stoves, headhunting raids on Han villages, or attacks on government outposts. At the center of Qing expansion into the mountains was the *aiyong* line, a perimeter of armed militias garrisoned along the savage boundary who kept watch over the frontier, and who were frequently the target of attacks by indigenous groups residing in the foothills. Raids on unsuspecting Han or Qing masked the complex epistemology of how mountain peoples managed political relations among themselves and with outsiders. Violence in the Taiwan highlands between indigenous groups never aimed to assert permanent relations between ruler and ruled, as these polities recognized no supreme political authority. Rather, conflict was cyclical and horizontal in nature, as village communities in the highlands often feuded over land or hunting, but made peace once hostilities ended. The ritualized head-taking element of indigenous warfare, perhaps the supreme mark of “savagery” for both late Qing and Japanese colonizers, was itself part of a vast complex of beliefs and practices which were far-ranging in scope, and included priorities like territorial defense, disease prevention or displaying one’s bravery as a rite of passage.<sup>29</sup>

The highpoint of Qing violence was the series of wars between 1886 and 1892, clustered in the Dakekan 大嵙崁 region (now largely Fuxing District 復興區, Taoyuan City 桃園市), an area

27 For an overview of the *fukenu* and its activities, see William Miller Speidel, “Liu Min Chu’an in Taiwan, 1884–1891,” PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1967, pp. 284–288.

28 For an overview of this transformation, see Chang Lung-chih, “From Frontier Island to Imperial Colony.”

29 For more on the subject of northeastern indigenous ethnography, specifically as it relates to the Seediq nation, see Scott Simon, “Politics and Headhunting among the Formosan Sejiq: Ethnohistorical Perspectives”, *Oceania* vol. 82, no. 2, July 2012. See also Scott Simon, *Sadyaq Balae! L’autochtonie formosane dans tous ses états* [Sediq Bale! Formosan indigeneity in all of its forms], Laval: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 2012. For Atayal practices and cosmology, I rely on Laysa Akyo 萊撒阿給佑, *Taiyaerzu chuantong wenhua: buluo, zhexue, shenhua, gushi yu xiandai yiyi* 泰雅爾族傳統文化：部落哲學，神話故事與現代意義 [Atayal Traditional Culture: village philosophy, mythology, and present-day significance], Taipei: Xinrui wen chuang chuban, 2012. On the subject of head-taking among the Atayal, see Yamada Hitoshi 山田仁史, *Kubikari no shūkyō minzokugaku* 首狩の宗教民族学 [Religious Ethnology of Headhunting], Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2015.

with strategic waterways that linked camphor-producing mountain forests with the port of Danshui 淡水. This region would also see heavy fighting between Japanese pacification armies and unconquered indigenes a few years later. After Liu's appointment as governor of Taiwan Province, the expansion of the camphor trade and a desire to strengthen the government presence uphill brought renewed friction on the frontier, all of which culminated in a series of frontier wars. The first of these took place between February and March 1886, when governor Liu ordered commander Liu Chaohu 劉朝祐 (1846–1888) to lead an expedition to subdue Atayal villages, who at the time had a reputation of being “fierce” peoples who resisted Han attempts to colonize their lands. Liu Chaohu assembled his forces, and descended on Dakekan villages. The chief elder of a confederation of thirteen northeastern Dakekan groups, Maray Yuri 馬來猶力, led these communities to accept surrender in February. Two communities, the Zhutoujiao 竹頭角社 and the Malikowan 馬里闊丸, continued to resist, but were attacked by troops and shelled with cannon fire until they backed down a month later.<sup>30</sup> Lin Zhaoming 林昭明, a descendant of the Dabao 大豹 Atayal group, recounts in an oral testimony how, when the Qing arrived in February, the Atayal had accepted surrender after the Qing promised through their interpreters what seemed like favorable peace terms. “At the time, the Atayal did not resist but were angry. The Qing sent their interpreters and said they would give them good things, so they agreed to do a surrender ceremony.”<sup>31</sup> Historian Fujii Shizue, however, describes how official accounts by Liu paint a different picture, with the governor's report highlighting that Maray's party demanded to surrender, and then received clothes and had their hair cut in the Qing-style queue. This contrasts with Lin's oral account, which makes this humiliating exchange seem like a negotiation.<sup>32</sup> Qing colonizers here likely misread Atayal “surrender” as acceptance of imperial dominance, instead of recognizing that these exchanges implied horizontal forms of diplomatic reciprocity which were common throughout mountain village communities. A year later in 1887, a local epidemic that ravaged a number of village communities in the Dakekan area led to a spike in head-taking raids—a likely indication for the Qing that the “surrender” of certain groups was not a permanent affair. A Qing official described how, between May and June an epidemic outbreak had caused Dakekan's “transforming savages to come out to kill people.”<sup>33</sup> The Qing discovered it was the Dabao that had committed the bulk of the killings, and so decided to go after them. In October, Governor Liu sent his forces to punish the seven Dabao settlements blamed for these incidents. The Qing used scorched earth attacks to incinerate their dwellings, forcing the Dabao to relocate.<sup>34</sup>

The final push to try and bring these mountain village communities to heel took place

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30 Fujii Shizue 藤井志津枝, *Dakekan Shijian, 1900–1910* 大崙崁事件, 1900–1910, [The Dakekan Incident, 1900–1910], Xinbeishi: Yuanzhuminzu Weiyuanhui, 2019, p. 73.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., p. 75.

34 Ibid.

between 1891–1892, following a succession of head-taking raids on the expanding *aiyong* line.<sup>35</sup> Between April and May of 1891 groups ranging from one to ten individuals were killed in head-taking attacks perpetrated by members of Masu village.<sup>36</sup> Shortly after, a militia force of *aiyong* paramilitaries sought revenge. They sent a force to deal with attackers, but it was routed. Twenty had their heads taken, along with a cache of guns and ammo. In response, the local Qing commander placed a bounty on every killed savage belonging to Masu village. This led Han Chinese to target innocent aborigines who had no connection to Masu village. Eventually the local garrison commander took charge of the mission to capture those responsible. When Masu village refused to hand over the perpetrators, Qing forces razed the village to the ground.<sup>37</sup> This spate of localized frontier violence expanded, and by 1892, the Qing had managed to extend their garrisons a little further, but not without “considerable loss of life.”<sup>38</sup> The Qing ultimately gave up on the idea of subduing Dakekan. The Japanese would complete that task close to two decades later.

As Qing troops vacated the mountains, the new Japanese colonial state and its leaders set their sights on this region and its vast, untapped forest resources. Initially, the Japanese hoped to distinguish themselves from the Qing by meeting with aboriginal elders and securing their loyalty to the newly-formed Taiwan Government-General. In the early years of their rule, Japanese colonizers were busy subjugating anti-Japanese guerilla forces in the plains. Of course, the primary focus of Japanese colonization efforts were Han Chinese people, who included sub-ethnic groups like the Hakka and Hoklo. Throughout the colonial period, Japanese rulers designed educational, hygiene, and security mechanisms to administer these populations, train up local elites, and also mobilize labor for production of such key agricultural crops as rice, and sugar.<sup>39</sup> Aboriginal peoples were treated as distinct from the Han population, especially given that the bulk of their territories remained unconquered when the Japanese took the island. Their territories over time would come under the control of police and indigenous affairs bureaucracies. During the initial years of Japanese rule, though, colonial officials reached out to prominent indigenous chiefs in order to secure access to strategic mountain districts, as well as to avoid a possible two-front war in the plains and in the mountains. These moments of first contact between Taiwan’s new rulers and indigenes were typically marked by Japanese officials reading proclamations aloud to via interpreters, announcing that the island had been taken over by a new imperial government, and that henceforth all aborigines would be governed in benevolent fashion. Strongly worded injunctions to obey the new government’s commands or face dire consequences accompanied these statements.

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35 Xu Yunliang 許毓良, *Guangxu shisnian (1888) Taiwan nei shan fan she di yu quan tu suo jian de xinbei shanqu: yi duan qing mo kaishan fufan de lishi zhuixun* 光緒十四年 (1888) 臺灣內山番社地輿全圖所見的新北山區：一段清末開山撫番的歷史追尋 [The Fourteenth Year of Guangxu (1888): A complete picture of New Taipei’s mountainous districts and Taiwan’s savage villages in the interior—the search for one story of the late Qing history of opening the mountains and pacifying the savages], New Taipei City: Yuanzu Wenhua, 2019, p. 111.

36 Fujii Shizue, *Dakekan Shijian*, p. 78.

37 Ibid., pp. 78–80. See also Xu Yunliang, *Guangxu shisnian (1888)*, p. 111.

38 William Miller Speidel, “Liu Min Chu’an in Taiwan, 1884–1891,” pp. 299–303.

39 For an overview of Japan’s colonial statecraft in Taiwan as it applied to Han people, a pioneering work is Hui-yu Caroline Ts’ai, *Taiwan in Japan’s Empire Building: an institutional approach to colonial engineering*, New York: Routledge, 2009.



Feasts and the exchange of gifts usually followed these declarations, acts that consecrated all forms of peace-making in northeast Taiwanese indigenous forms of diplomacy.<sup>40</sup> These symbolic meetings largely set the tone for the early Japanese period, as officials combined assimilatory programs with threats of punitive violence. However, large-scale military expeditions were not possible at this point given the lingering presence of armed partisans in the plains.

Within less than a year, the proclamations read aloud to elders were formalized into a new institutional structure designed to win the loyalty of village communities and gain their acceptance of Japan's new colonial government. In March 1896, Civilian Affairs Director Mizuno Jun 水野遵 (1850–1900), the second most senior position after the Governor-General, announced that the government would set up “offices of Pacification and Reclamation” (*bukonsho* 撫墾署) like Liu had done with the Qing-era *fukenuju*. These offices were to “assemble the savage chiefs to give them wine, cloth, and other products, all while striving to educate them.”<sup>41</sup> However, given the Japanese state's overarching goals of developing forest industries, Mizuno never left out the possibility of using force of arms against those resisting Japan's presence: “The promotion of [camphor, forestry, etc.] involves making the savages submit to our government, having them acquire proper living conditions, and have them emerge from their barbaric state. In order to conquer the savages, force as well as benevolent care must be practiced at the same time.”<sup>42</sup> By the summer, multiple *bukonsho* stations and substations were created with the above mandate in mind. Early Japanese governance under the *bukonsho* was marked by piecemeal attempts at assimilation that largely failed. Even though the government explicitly designed a program that stressed peaceful transformation through paternalistic “benevolence,” the new Japanese regime in Taiwan made the use of colonial brute force a core part of its approach. In a series of guidelines issued to *bukonsho* personnel, the colonial state instructed frontier officers to convey to indigenes that, “Our imperial government will reward those who uphold the principle of cultivating the land. Those who oppose this, and engage in killings, will receive severe punishments.”<sup>43</sup>

Much like the Qing, who devised plans to violently suppress savages just as forestry industries were expanding, the Japanese began shelving slow-moving assimilation policies just as camphor production resumed in the interior. In many ways, the rush to resume camphor production and deal with native insurgents perfectly captures Luxemburg's observation that “accumulation, with its spasmodic expansion, can no more wait for, and be content with, a natural internal disintegration of non-capitalist formations.”<sup>44</sup> How could a strategy of cultural assimilation across Taiwan's remote mountain forests keep pace with the development of forest industries, which were tied to

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40 Inō Kanori 伊能嘉矩, ed., *Riban shikō dai ichi-ni hen* 理蕃誌稿第1・2編 [A Record of aborigines Administration Volume One-Two], Taipei: Taiwan Keimukyoku, 1918, pp. 4–5. For a more detailed summary of these encounters, see Paul Barclay, *Outcasts of Empire*, pp. 82–88. See also Namikoshi Shigeyuki 波越重之, Takahashi Masakichi 高橋政吉, Matsumuro Kentarō 松室謙太郎, eds., *Taihokushū ribanshi* 臺北州理蕃誌 [The History of Savage Administration in Taihoku Prefecture], Taipei: Taiwan Sōtokufu Keimukyoku, 1924, pp. 1–2.

41 Inō Kanori, ed., *Riban shikō dai ichi-ni hen*, pp. 3–4. See also Antonio Tavares, “Crystals from the Savage Fores,” p. 181.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., pp. 14–15.

44 Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital*, p. 351.

the fast-moving pressures of global markets? This fundamental contradiction quickly surfaced as colonial officials hoped to cash in rapidly on export industries to overcome deficits accrued from the costly wars to subdue Qing forces. Camphor, an industry with a solid foundation from the late Qing years, was well suited to supply the government with steady revenue. The government took its first decisive step to jumpstart this pivotal industry on 31 October 1895, when it passed a series of camphor production regulations. Under these regulations, all “undeclared” aboriginal forestland without a valid certificate of ownership would become government property. While land could not be arbitrarily seized from aborigines, the resources on the land itself could be monetized by private companies. Given that camphor producers sought out the dense forests surrounding Taiwan’s indigenous foothills, permits could be issued to loggers for designated areas where they could fell trees, harvest camphor, and then sell it to wholesalers. (Starting in 1899 a Japanese monopoly collected all the camphor and revenues.) By the early 1900s, only a handful of Japanese-run camphor corporations could secure these permits. Camphor producers were encouraged to “make peace” with the groups whose land they were on by carrying large quantities of rice, liquor, and other supplies to give as offerings.<sup>45</sup> However, this hardly served as a recognition of aboriginal sovereignty; it was more an expedient measure to assuage hostilities inevitably provoked by the presence of loggers and armed security guards.

The destruction of camphor stills was often the prism through which the Government-General constructed its image of aborigines as either destructive vandals or cold-blooded killers. Given that aborigines were usually the first to strike, the colonial government found itself within its “rights” to retaliate with whatever measures it saw fit. Of course, at no point did it factor in indigenous motivations. As if to further decontextualize these attacks, most indigenous raids on Japanese or Chinese are euphemistically referred to as *bangai* 蕃害 (lit. damage caused by savages). Instances of *bangai* began to climb around 1897 and 1898, just as the *bukonsho* was slipping in irrelevance and camphor operations were beginning to resume. While aboriginal attacks in 1896 killed sixty-three and injured sixteen, the following year aborigines killed 151 and injured fifteen. In 1898, those numbers rose sharply to 557 killed and 134 injured, in some 303 individual assaults.<sup>46</sup> In response, the Government-General initiated a slow process of criminalizing aboriginal resistance to logging. While the *bukonsho* lacked effective policing powers, the agency did put in place legal measures that would later prove beneficial to Japanese security forces. Some of the more notable measures included the application of collective punishments in the event that a single member of a village community attacked lowlanders or destroyed camphor-producing equipment.<sup>47</sup> At this stage, full-scale military or police actions were rare; the cessation of trade and the termination of gifts to indigenes were typical responses.<sup>48</sup> The legal doctrine of collective responsibility became one of the core principles behind later Japanese military strategy, as pacification

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45 Saitō Kenji 齊藤賢治, “Taiwan no shōnō seizō” 台湾の樟腦製造 [Camphor Production in Taiwan], *Taiwan kyōkai kaihō* 台湾協會會報 3, December 1899, p. 32.

46 Fujii Shizue, *Li fan: Riben zhili Taiwan de jice* 理蕃：日本治理台灣的計策 [Savage Administration: Japan’s Policy of Governing Taiwan], Taipei: Wenyingtang chubanshe, 2001, p. 97. Davidson mentions 635 casualties for 1898, with 303 individually reported assaults. See James Wheeler Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, p. 428.

47 Inō Kanori, ed., *Riban shikō*, pp. 62–63.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57.

troops used the actions of a single tribe member as a justification to invade, shell, or set fire to an entire village.

The early Japanese colonial period was characterized not merely by frontier officials' production of reports detailing indigenous savagery, but also by the proliferation of ethnographic and anthropological research on Taiwan aborigines. Inō Kanori 伊能嘉矩 (1867–1925), an amateur ethno-historian trained in classical Chinese learning, was the first to put together a systematic taxonomy of Taiwan's aboriginal populations during the Japanese era. Inō's major contributions to the Japanese anthropological project was his *Taiwan banjin jijō* 台湾蕃人事情 (Conditions among Taiwan's Savages), a report published in conjunction with the Bureau of Industrial Development. Inō's *Taiwan banjin jijō* produced a system that internally differentiated the socio-cultural traits of each aboriginal group based on historical interactions with Han-Chinese settlers. The lowest rung, according to the text, was occupied by the Atayal, which Inō claimed were the most hostile and war-like due to their isolation from Han influences and their persistent use of head-taking customs.<sup>49</sup> Like the Qing-era literati and travelers who produced ethnographic accounts of Taiwan's first peoples, Japanese survey anthropologists in Taiwan were interested primarily in investigating physical or ethno-cultural markers of difference, headhunting customs, as well as acephalic political structures. They also maintained a somewhat sympathetic stance, through their exhaustive documenting of aboriginal social, cultural and religious life, as well as their contextualization of head-taking activities.<sup>50</sup> These images of native savages, though having a different lineage than those working along the savage boundary, would later find traction among colonial politicians, who singled out Atayal and other northeastern populations as completely uncivilized peoples, who could only be pacified through sustained military or police violence.

Within a brief span of time, late Qing and early Japanese constructions of “savagery” had created what the feminist scholar Silvia Federici calls an “accumulation of differences and divisions” across a contested imperial frontier.<sup>51</sup> Taiwan's foothills and highlands were traversed by distinctions between “cooked,” “transforming” and “raw” indigenes—all of which highlighted

49 Inō Kanori 伊能嘉矩 and Awano Dennojō 栗野伝之丞, *Taiwan banjin jijō* 台湾蕃人事情 [Conditions among Taiwan's Savages], Taipei: Ministry of Civil Affairs Division, 1900, p. 102. See also Paul Barclay, “Contending Centres of Calculation in Colonial Taiwan: The Rhetorics of Vindicationism and Privation in Japan's ‘aboriginal Policy’”, *Humanities Research* vol. 14, no. 1, 2007, p. 72.

50 Anthropological knowledge production in the Japanese empire, especially as it pertains to Japan's governing of its colonies, is beyond the scope of this paper. In Taiwan, voluminous reports compiled over decades have classified every major native group and their respective subdivisions. The ethnic labels used today come mainly from Japanese researchers. For representative works written by these researchers see Torii Ryūzō 鳥居龍藏, *Torii Ryūzō zenshū* 鳥居龍藏全集 [The Complete works of Torii Ryūzō], vol. 5, Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1975. For government-sponsored anthropologists, see Taiwan Sōtokufu Banzoku Chōsakai 臺灣總督府蕃族調查會, *Banzoku kanshū chōsa hōkokusho* 蕃族慣習調查報告書, Taipei: Taiwan Sōtokufu Banzoku Chōsakai, 1920–1922. For secondary scholarship which addresses the relationship between anthropology and colonialism in the Japanese empire, see Sakano Tōru 坂野徹, *Teikoku Nihon to jinrui gakusha 1884–1952 nen* 帝國日本と人類学者 1884–1952年 [Imperial Japan and anthropologists, 1884–1952], Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 2005.

51 See Sylvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation*, New York: Autonomedia, 2004, pp. 63–64. The full quote is “... [A]ccumulation of divisions and differences within the working class, whereby hierarchies built upon gender, as well as ‘race’ and age, became constitutive of class rule and the formation of the modern proletariat.”

varying degrees of “submission” to surplus-seeking regimes of extraction. Though the addition of social-scientific taxonomies supplemented the old Qing cultural markers of difference, the Japanese still maintained a colonial system which rewarded loyalty as well as a willingness to assimilate and shed ancestral practices. At every step, though, expansion of this system relied on the positing of its inhuman “other.” That “other” was represented by the figure of the shadowy matchlock and blade-wielding “raw” aborigine, who attacked unsuspecting camphor workers, militia guards, or lowlanders. Such a figure enabled both late Qing and Japanese colonizers to unleash the full weight of the state’s destructive power in response to attacks. While the Qing had engaged in this pattern of behavior during the early 1890s, the Japanese entered its own particular phase of brutal suppression by 1900, just as their colonial state camphor monopoly began eyeing new tracts of camphor forests with potentially high yields deep in indigenous territory.

### **Benevolence in the South, Suppression in the North: The Mochiji Doctrine and the Figure of the Savage during the Conquest Years**

In June of 1900, a major uprising by Atayal in the Dakekan region prompted Japanese forces to launch a major punitive expedition. This was the second time a colonial empire aimed to conquer this stretch of mountains and hillsides. This would be one of two major insurrections in the opening years of the twentieth century, which led the Japanese Government-General to emphasize an increasingly militarized approach in its handling of the “indigene question.” Like the Qing who had preceded them, Japanese colonizers wanted to capture this camphor-rich region to boost its monopoly’s growing profits. Production quotas from this particular locale indicate that the year 1900 had projected figures of over one million *kin* of camphor.<sup>52</sup> Camphor production in the preceding years had fallen increasingly into the hands of Japanese capitalists, especially the trading company Suzuki Shōten, which held a great deal of the permits in areas not yet fully conquered.<sup>53</sup> Here, concentrations of capital helped tip the scales in favor of a more interventionist strategy, as rampant attacks on isolated production outposts along the interstices of Japanese and aboriginal zones provided the colonial state with useful grounds for retaliation. Under these new conditions, “raw savages” were increasingly less the potential recipients of paternalistic benevolence, and more the targets of campaigns of terror meant to obliterate their village structures and induce their unconditional surrender.

In June of 1900, a string of attacks by Atayal warriors at Dakekan resulted in the cessation of production and the withdrawal of workers, prompting the government to assemble a pacification force, and attempt an invasion of the lands surrounding two of the Dakekan region’s major groups, the Dabao and Mawudu. Prior to the uprising, these two groups had also forged an alliance in

52 The year 1900 had 1,268,000 *kin* of anticipated total output for camphor listed in the Taipei region. This was in contrast to other regions that only had projected outputs in the six figures, the closest being Taizhong with 962,012 *kin*. See Taiwan shōnō kyoku 臺灣樟腦局, *Moto Taiwan shōnō senbai kyoku jigyo daini nenpō* 元臺灣樟腦專売局事業第二年報 [Second-Year Report of the former Taiwan Camphor Monopoly Bureau], Taipei: Taiwan shōnō kyoku, 1906, p. 4.

53 For more on Suzuki’s dominance of the camphor trade, see Saitō Naofumi 齋藤尚文, *Suzuki Shōten to Taiwan: Shōnō, satō o meguru hito to jigyo* 鈴木商店と台湾：樟腦・砂糖をめぐる人と事業 [Suzuki Shōten and Taiwan: A look at the people and industries surrounding camphor and sugar], Kyoto: Kōyō Shobō, 2017.



response to the presence of camphor workers.<sup>54</sup> Village leagues for mutual defense were a staple among Atayal peoples, who often formed close military and economic relations with one another to ward off threats from rival groups. However, the official government account takes none of these arrangements into consideration, treating the uprising as a “rebellion” against Japanese authorities, and not a defense of traditional territories.<sup>55</sup> Combat operations at Dakekan officially began on 30 August, 1900, but aboriginal warriors quickly repelled Japanese forces using superior guerilla tactics.

Fighting in Dakekan lasted for approximately two months, until Japanese forces found themselves unable to break through the Atayal’s defenses. This prompted the Taipei prefect to institute a blockade on these territories, depriving the aborigines of vital supplies like salt (used to preserve meat), rifles, and ammunition.<sup>56</sup>

As the fighting at Dakekan dwindled, the government faced another large-scale insurrection. In the frontier town of Nanzhuang 南庄, in the mountains of Miaoli 苗栗, a multi-ethnic coalition of Saisiyat 賽夏族 aborigines together with members of the Atayal and some local Taiwanese, fought the Japanese state and encroaching capitalists. This revolt was quickly suppressed, but the possibility of new anti-Japanese movements forming across ethnic lines and disrupting the camphor industry frightened an expanding frontier state.<sup>57</sup> With these concerns in mind, colonial leaders turned to the senior-ranking bureaucrat, Councilor Mochiji Rokusaburō 持地六三郎 (1867–1923), for a comprehensive new pacification strategy. Following a late 1902 tour of the guardline (*aiyūsen* 隘勇線, the Japanese version of the *aiyong*), Mochiji published a policy paper, “Regarding the handling of the savage question,” in December. His paper set the tone for the remainder of the pacification era. It also enshrined at the level of policy-making the assumed sub-humanity of aborigines, and the perceived necessity of systematic guidelines for the continued use of long-range shelling of indigenous settlements and troop invasions. At its core, the “Mochiji plan” called for “benevolence in the south, suppression in the north” (*nanbu hokutō* 南撫北討).<sup>58</sup> This strategy advocated targeted raids on aboriginal groups situated in the camphor beltway, while reinforcing assimilatory programs for indigenous groups south of Nantou.

In the opening pages of his plan, Mochiji warned that Japanese armies on the frontier faced an enemy whose ambiguous legal status placed them beyond the reach of the prevailing norms pertaining to warfare: “[T]he suppression of raw savages from the standpoint of international law cannot be called a war. As a result, although from a sociological point of view the savages are human, from the point of view of international law, they are much closer to animals.”<sup>59</sup> Mochiji believed the absence of anything resembling a modern nation-state or a system of law among the aborigines not only reduced them to the status of “animals,” but also exempted them from the regular modes of conduct that belligerents were expected to adhere to when military hostilities are

54 For a complete overview of the Dakekan war see Fujii Shizue, *Dakekan shijian*, pp. 91–93.

55 Inō Kanori, ed., *Riban shikō*, p. 160.

56 *Ibid.*, pp. 163–164.

57 For an authoritative overview of the Nanzhuang Incident and its ties to camphor, see Antonio Tavares, “Crystals from the Savage Forest.”

58 Paul Barclay in his *Outcasts of Empire* uses the term “Mochiji plan.”

59 Mochiji Rokusaburō 持地六三郎, *Bansei mondai ni kansuru torishirabe sho* 蕃政問題に関する取調書 [Report Concerning the Problem of Governing Savages], Taiwan Government-General, 1903, pp. 4–5.

exchanged.<sup>60</sup> Here, Mochiji parroted the theories of legal expert Okamatsu Santarō 岡松参太郎 (1871–1921), a Tokyo Imperial University graduate who worked for Gotō’s Investigative Committee for the Study of Old Customs, tasked with compiling Taiwan’s pre-Japanese customary laws to facilitate governance over the island’s Han population. Okamatsu based his interpretation of indigenes’ ambiguous status on the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895), which gave clear guidelines for handling the island’s Qing subjects, but little in terms of what to do with unincorporated indigenes. The treaty gave Chinese subjects of the Qing a two-year period of grace in which they could abandon their property and return to the mainland and remain a part of the Qing empire should they choose to. Those who would not move to the mainland would automatically become subjects of imperial Japan thereafter. Of course, aborigines did not have this option, given that they were never subject to the Qing, and were considered “beyond the pale” (*kegai* 化外) of its civilizational reach. Japan therefore could not use its own national laws to clarify the legal status of peoples who had no rights under preceding imperial formation. Conquest therefore was the only option that would allow Japan to bring a “non-national” people into its orbit, and eventually assimilate them into the Japanese imperial order. Affirming the view that all colonization is a violent struggle for supremacy, Mochiji appealed to the “laws” of history and its logic of “might makes right”: “When an inferior race encounters a superior one, a struggle for survival ensues, and history has demonstrated that the result is the superior overtaking or eradicating the inferior.”<sup>61</sup> For Mochiji, “savages” knew only intense competition in a state of nature, and therefore lacked the ability to build complex societies fit for existence in a modern industrialized setting. All they knew, Mochiji insisted, was violence, and so colonizers should respond accordingly.

Invoking international norms governing relations between “sovereign” nations, Mochiji stressed that “to be considered and recognized as a nation, there must be a fixed governing body, that is a society that possesses political organizations. Given that none of the *seiban* villages are of this order, we cannot recognize them as nations from the standpoint of international law.”<sup>62</sup> With the geopolitical mapping of the globe by nation-states and their colonies, there was little room for the fissured and dispersed mechanisms used by aboriginal Taiwanese highlanders to assert control over their lands. Taiwan’s northeastern mountain valleys and hillsides were traversed by scores of *qalang* (village communities), all of which asserted control over hunting grounds and cultivated fields using ritualized violence, oral traditions of peace-making, the organizing of village confederacies, and fluctuating alliances. In his *Bansei mondai*, Mochiji not only deprived the indigene of all legal protections from violence, but imposed the bounded form of territorial nation upon them, thereby denying them the ability to define in their own terms a viable system of politics, law, and inter-state relations.

In the years that followed the publication of the Mochiji report, campaigns to bring the

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60 This is not an unusual situation for colonial warfare involving confrontations with indigenous peoples. For a comparative piece which highlights these dynamics in different contexts, see Benjamin Madley, “Tactics of Nineteenth Century Massacre: Tasmania, California, and Beyond” in Philip Dwyer and Lyndall Ryan, eds., *Theatres of Violence: Massacre, Mass Killing, and Atrocity in History*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2012, pp. 110–123.

61 Mochiji Rokusaburō, *Bansei mondai ni kansuru torishirabe sho*, p. 2.

62 Ibid.

interior under Japanese control only intensified. These targeted mainly northeastern Atayalic groups like the Mnibu 溪頭, Nan'ao 南澳, Gaogan ガオガン, as well as the Truku and Sediq peoples. These campaigns resulted in the incineration of village structures, the mass confiscation of weapons, and forced relocation. Between 1910 and 1915, fighting reached a crescendo with Governor-General Sakuma Samata's 佐久間左馬太 (1844–1915) “Five-Year Plan of Savage Administration” 五年理蕃計畫, a plan which aimed to conquer the last remaining strongholds of indigenous defense. These campaigns had a stabilizing effect overall on the frontier. For example, the total number of deaths due to “damage inflicted by savages” declined steadily, with 531 in 1899 and only forty-two in 1910, just as Governor Sakuma's five-year plan was underway.<sup>63</sup> The militarization of the guardline and its militia forces proceeded apace. In 1899, there were 774 guards stationed along the revamped “savage boundary.”<sup>64</sup> By 1910, there were 4,502 guards along the line.<sup>65</sup> This roving perimeter of guard stations—linked by barbed wire fencing, the telegraph, and laid with mines and guarded by sentries—was meant to absorb indigenous territory slowly, not “defend” against it. Over time, the politics of “submission” shifted to that of permanent occupation, as virtually all indigenous areas were under Japanese rule by 1914. Though the government gradually moved away from violent suppression campaigns and began implementing assimilation programs, indigenous areas remained heavily policed enclaves that resembled more “protected villages” in the midst of a counter-insurgent operation than conventional native “reserves.” Violent repression was never abandoned, only postponed until the next major instance of native insubordination, a fact evidenced by the brutal suppression of the Sediq people following the rebellion at Musha in October 1930. Meanwhile, camphor profits remained steady in the years ahead, enduring as an important industry even though, over time, camphor was partially eclipsed by the growth of artificially-produced camphor.<sup>66</sup>

## Concluding remarks

In this essay, I have traced the ways in which patterns of dehumanization and subjugation by the late Qing and Japanese regimes were grounded in various constructions of indigenous aborigines as primitive or violent “savages.” This history teaches us that colonial dominance requires the multiplication of racial, ethnic, or civilizational differences at every step. Racism is not merely supplementary or subsidiary to other productive forces, nor does it conceal the colonizer's “naked” interests and intentions. If colonial encounters aim to capture labor, land and resources as part of an unequal system of economic exchange, then we must examine the reality that its epistemological premise is not only “derivative,” but directly productive of this larger apparatus of control. This

63 Taiwan sōtokufu 臺灣總督府, *Taiwan tōkei yōran* 臺灣統計要覽 [Handbook of Taiwan Statistics], Taipei: Taiwan Government-General, 1916, p. 186.

64 Taiwan sōtokufu senbaikyoku 臺灣總督府專賣局, *Taiwan shōnō kyōku jigyō dai ichi nenpō* 臺灣樟腦局事業第一年報 [The Taiwan Camphor Bureau's First Year Report on Production], Taipei: Taiwan Camphor Monopoly Bureau, 1903, p. 18. See also Matsushita Yosaburō, *Taiwan shōnō senbaishi*, p. 162.

65 Taiwan Government-General, *Taiwan tōkei yōran*, p. 185.

66 Walter Grunge, “Japanese Camphor and the American Market,” *Far Eastern Survey* vol. 8, no. 19, 27 September 1939, pp. 229–230.

means that “savagery,” whether in the aborigine case or elsewhere, can no longer be viewed as mere “justification” for plunder, but as the machinery of occupation in and of itself, with its own social relations, ideological framing, productive arrangements, and logic. This essay has sought to map out this particular machinery, and the ways in which it evolved across two empires. The earlier insights of Luxemburg and Fanon showcase the fact that at the heart of the capitalist system exists an inherent drive to produce unevenness, and the necessity of imposing upon the world new partitions and classifications that discipline and police individuals into accepting the regime of commodity production. That process of “naturalizing” and cultivating acceptance of capital’s expropriatory tendencies, of course, varies across time and space, but takes on its most overt brutality and nakedness in colonial settings. Perhaps here it may be wise to end with the thoughts of the Martiniquean poet and Négritude thinker, Aimé Césaire, in his *Discourse on Colonialism*. For Césaire, regardless of the rhetoric of the colonizers, their relations with the colonized are always those of “forced labor, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft, rape, compulsory crops, contempt, mistrust, arrogance, self-complacency, swinishness, brainless elites, degraded masses.”<sup>67</sup> Discussing the colonization and plunder of non-Western societies, a process he describes as “thingification,” Césaire makes clear precisely what is at stake when Europeans colonizers invoke the inferiority of the colonized: “I am talking about natural economies that have been disrupted—harmonious and economies adapted to the indigenous population—about food crops destroyed, malnutrition permanently introduced, agricultural development solely oriented towards the benefit of the metropolitan countries, about the looting of products, the looting of raw materials.”<sup>68</sup> As Césaire’s powerful words remind us, the study of imperial formations is first and foremost the study of a particular type of *relation*, one grounded in an uneven distribution of power aiming to entrench the economic, legal, social, and cultural superiority of one group over another. The horrors of colonialism, as the rich legacy of postcolonial thought teaches us, begins with a process of dehumanization. This process varies in accordance with productive regimes, degrees of resistance, pre-existing social relations, and a host of other overdetermined elements. As scholars of colonial (or postcolonial) history, thought, or culture, we should not lose sight of this complex interplay of forces.

### 高地で植民地の違いを生み出す

——清末と日本統治期の台湾原住民政策における「蕃人」の表象——

トゥールーズ = アントニン・ロイ\*

台湾の山林は、クスノキから採れる結晶性物質である樟腦の生産をめぐつ

67 Aimé Césaire (trans. by Joan Pinkham), *Discourse on Colonialism*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001, p. 42.

68 Ibid., p. 43.

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て1870年代から先住民と植民者の間の戦場になった。天然資源の出るこの戦略的地域における帝国支配の拡大の鍵は、台湾先住民族を「蕃人」とする概念だった。清と日本の植民者はどちらも、同化プログラム作成や懲罰的軍事攻撃のために、この概念を長期的に利用した。このエッセイでは、台湾の高地における「蕃人」の概念が、清末と日本の植民地統治の構造にどのように寄与したかを論じ、この非人間的構造が植民者の行為をいかに方向づけ、複数の帝国間で発展したか、その過程を示す。

キーワード：植民地主義、帝国、樟脳、フランツ・ファノン、ローザ・ルクセンブルク