

Bilingual Elites in Colonial Taiwan: Cases of Three Members From the Hung Clan in Caotun Township

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ABSTRACT

In the early days of Japanese rule, the colonial government on the one hand used force to suppress the local anti-Japanese militia, while on the other involved Taiwanese gentries in local administration. The education system was reformed and new public schools were established for the children of local gentries with the aim to cultivate 'bilingual elites' equipped with modern ideas who could contribute to colonial administration. In the case of Caotun Township, these educated elites well versed in both Chinese and Japanese had played important roles in both the colonial government and the local regional society during the Japanese rule for almost half a century.

This paper studies the anti-colonial movement led by Hung Yuan-huang at Caotun, focusing in particular on influential figures of his clan who sided with Hung and supported his cause. Like Hung Yuan-huan himself, many of his kinsmen in Caotun received both traditional Chinese learning and modern colonial education. After graduating from the Japanese Language School, the highest educational institute of the time, many of them served as teachers at local elementary schools. Tracing the teaching career of three Taiwanese young teachers, Hung Qing-jiang, Hung Shen-keng and Wu Wan-cheng, all from the Hung clan, this paper portrays the different strategies they adopted when caught up in their conflicting roles as agents implementing colonial policies and as local elites promoting social autonomy.

Keywords: Bilingual Elite, Yuan-huang Hung, Qing-jiang Hung, Shen-keng Hung, Wan-cheng Wu, Caotun Township, Japanese Language School