

Activities of Overseas Taiwanese during Japanese Colonization —Taiwanese Physicians in Manchuria

Hsueh-chi Hsu

ABSTRACT

During the Japanese colonial period, Taiwanese people had realized that they were left with very limited opportunities and social resources at home for career development. As a result, many of them had sought new opportunities abroad within the “Great Empire” of Japan, and most landed in the State of Manchuria or the Manzhouguo (滿洲國)—a state in northeastern China nominally declared independent by Japan in 1932. Unlike in other parts of China, Taiwanese residents in Manchuria did not have to conceal their true identities, and Jian Guo (建國) University was the only institution offering admissions to the Taiwanese students for higher education. Therefore, migrants to Manchuria had increased since the 1930’s. During the 50 years of Japanese colonial rule, there were approximately 5000 people from Taiwan settled in Manchuria, either for a short-term employment or long-term residence. Besides those who worked as lower-middle administrative bureaucrats, physicians were among the most noteworthy professions taken up by the Taiwanese in Manchuria.

The topnotch Manzhou (滿洲) Medical University in Manchuria, together with institutions such as the Xingjin (新京) Medical University, Harbin (哈爾濱) Medical University, and the Kaituo (開拓) Hospital, had attracted a remarkable number of Taiwanese to receive medical training there. Many of these Taiwanese even stayed on to practice medicine after graduation. In addition, there were a significant number of qualified physicians coming from Taiwan, Japan and Korea, providing medical services of their profession in this region. These physicians lectured in medical universities, practiced medicine in either public or private hospitals, or worked in the government public health departments, all showing remarkable performance and achievement. Two Taiwanese clinical professionals Xie Qiu-tao (謝秋濤) and Wang Luo (王洛) were even awarded the Annual Mukden (盛京) Prize of Science.

Another distinct medical professional was the Taiwanese physician Huang Zi-zheng (黃子正), who had served as the personal doctor of Manzhouguo’s Emperor, Pu

Yi. Huang was also one of the nine entourage who fled with Pu Yi. Together, they were captured by the Soviet Russians and were released after being imprisoned for 12 years.

This paper focuses on the life and work of Taiwanese physicians in Manchuria. The fact that they had family connections in the Northeast was a great incentive for these physicians to head there. The relationships between these physicians and their family background are also discussed.

Keywords: Taiwanese physician, Manchuria, Manzhou Medical University