

Industries of Military Supplies and Changes in Frontier Immigration Policy: Immigration Coordinated by Taiwan Development Company in Eastern Taiwan during Wartime

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ABSTRACT

'Japanization' has always been the focus of discussion on Japanese rule in eastern Taiwan. However, after 1937, the Taiwan Development Company (TDC), a government body, became involved in immigration of Han Taiwanese on the island, rather than citizens from Japan, indicating a change in immigration policy in eastern Taiwan during wartime. Two reasons accounted for such change. One was the failure of immigration ventures launched by the Japanese colonial government, which rendered the goal of Japanization impossible. The other was the development of military supply industries such as cotton and ramie as well as the need for territorial expansion in Southeast Asia.

In the immigration history of eastern Taiwan, the TDC were responsible for the Han Taiwanese immigration of the largest scale. The TDC not only sparked a wave of migration of Han Taiwanese to eastern Taiwan, but also served as a stepping stone for their migration to Southeast Asia.

Changes in the planning and implementation of immigration policy in eastern Taiwan reflect the gap between the colonial aspirations of an imperial empire and its colonial rule in practice. Taiwan was the first colony of the Japanese Empire. Without any prior experience in colonial governance, Japan had all along deemed Japanese immigration necessary for the empire's political benefits. The Office of Governor-General in Taiwan served dual roles in realizing the goals of the Japanese empire and carrying out sensible colonial Japanese rule. Playing its first role, the Office of Governor-General implemented Japanization of eastern Taiwan. With the failure of such plan, it then switched its emphasis and eventually had to abandon this venture at the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. It was under the urge of the Office of Governor-General that the TDC began to foster Han Taiwanese immigration to eastern Taiwan in order to meet the need for development of military supply

industries in that region.

Keywords: Taiwan Development Company, eastern Taiwan, Taiwanese Immigrant, Military Supply Industries, Colonial Governmentality, Colonial Imagination

