

Taiwanese Cinema Development and Ruling over Indigenous Peoples in the Early Japanese Colonial Period

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Abstract

Taiwanese cinema began in the era of Japanese rule. In the early days of Japanese Colony, indigenous peoples fought fiercely against the Japanese colonial government and ruling the indigenous areas became the primary work of the colonial government. On the one hand, the colonial government used military force and pressure to force indigenous peoples to submit. On the other hand, the colonial government adopted a conciliatory approach to educate indigenous peoples so that they could submit to the concept of Japanese rule and become citizens of the Japanization. For the measures of education, the colonial government actively used films as a tool to civilize indigenous peoples who were unable to speak or write in the ruler's language, thus contributing to the origin of Taiwanese cinema. This study attempted to use the methods of historical data collection and literature analysis to re-examine Taiwan's early days of Japanese Colony when the colonial government introduced the then emerging film media to record the living conditions of indigenous peoples through film images, and to publicize the superiority of the international and Japanese social development at that time through the film's tour show mechanism in an attempt to deter indigenous peoples' resistance through these images and further carry out its ruling and educational purposes on indigenous peoples, and in this context, the development experience of Taiwanese cinema in colonial period was gradually initiated.

Keywords: Taiwanese cinema, Indigenous Peoples study, Japanese Colonial Period, Film history.

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I. Introduction

Taiwanese cinema was launched in the Japanese Colonial Period. During the early period, indigenous people resisted the Japanese colonial government strongly. Governance of indigenous people areas became the priority of the Japanese colonial government, which, on one hand, forced indigenous people to yield by armed suppression, and on the other hand, civilized them by conciliation. Thus, indigenous people became Kominka citizens under the Japanese governance. However, by political suppression or conciliation, when coping with illiterate indigenous people who spoke different language, Japanese colonial government used cinema as the tool to cultivate indigenous people and publicized governance outcomes. It resulted in the earliest format of Taiwanese cinema.

By collection of historical data and literature review, this study reorganizes how Japanese colonial government governed and controlled indigenous people by cinema in the policy to rule indigenous people (called “the Aboriginal Management” in the past) before Musha Incident in 1930 in Taiwan. Through three historic dimensions, origin of production of Taiwanese cinema, movies are tools of the civilization and movies are witnesses of colonizers’ armed suppression, it clarifies movie interaction and practice between colonizers and indigenous people in early Japanese Colonial Period of Taiwan to explore historic development of Taiwanese cinema.

II. Production of Taiwanese cinema was launched by filmmaking of indigenous people’s lives

In September 1899, cinema have appeared in Taiwan. Thus, development of film industry was associated with the Japanese Takamatsu Toyojiro. In 1901, he arrived in Taiwan with the negatives of 10,000 meters and was supported by the police department at the time. With five indigenous people of Alishan as guides, he approached the mountain areas and filmed indigenous people’s living situations (Tanikawa, S., Hayashi, K., 1915, pp. 12-13). These films not only launched the production of Taiwanese cinema, but also served for the colonizers to introduce indigenous people’s situations in Taiwan to the Japanese society.

In 1907, *Introduction of Taiwan* produced by Takamatsu Toyojiro upon the authorization of Government-General of Taiwan has been regarded as the first milestone of the production of Taiwanese cinema. The film was customized for Tokyo Expo in 1907. It was expected to be shown in Taiwan pavilion in the year. Afterwards, because of Takamatsu Toyojiro, it was shown not only around Taiwan, but also in several places of Japan with indigenous people. Production of this film relied on great amount of resources and it took nearly two months with the shots of 206 scenes. The negatives of 20,000 meters from Japan were all finished. The content of the film includes five parts: (1) Taipei; (2) Jinshan and Keelung; (3) railways and local visits; (4) “aboriginal area”; (5) armed suppression on the aborigines. Two of them are related to indigenous people. In addition, according to the report of the journalist in the filmmaking team, the most remarkable scene is “armed suppression” on indigenous people:

The police officers planned to advance the defense troop to the mountain and assembled and admonished the aborigines of Wulai tribe. The aborigines left with resent. The advancement began from the forest, cutting down the big trees to open the roads, passing dangerous bridge and climbing the rock; the aborigines hid in the forest along the road to attack the troop; after pursuit and the battle of shooting, the aborigines arrived in the mountain. The troop bombed the aboriginal tribes and the aborigines escaped everywhere and they got electric shock by touching the wire netting. Aboriginal women lamented the declination of aboriginal tribes and advised the able-bodied men to yield. After recognizing their sincerity, the police officers allowed them to surrender their arms and held serious submission ceremony. Women and men thus danced together (Yeh, 1998, pp. 74-76).

In this film, it shows that Japanese colonial government applied advanced equipment and advantageous force of police to occupy indigenous people's territory in order to expand political domain and enhance industry and profits of mountain forest. Finally, in order to survive, indigenous people could only yield to the Japanese. It seems that the film revealed that indigenous people in Taiwan were under control. However, in-depth meaning of images showed the extreme gap of power between colonizers and those colonized.

III. Cinema are tools for colonizers to show the authority and civilize indigenous peoples

For Japan, cinema are introduced from Europe and America and are important symbols of westernization. In order to govern indigenous peoples, Japanese colonial government demonstrated their power to the residents in aboriginal tribes with superiority by new invention of western cinema similar to powerful military strength. In governance strategy of Office of the Governor-General, early measure of civilization was to arrange the visits in Japan or Taipei for indigenous people. In 1900, Alishan indigenous students "Avari (アバリ)" visited Japan by the planning of Japanese colonial government. In this trip, they not only visited the latest political, economic and military facilities and drilling around Japan, but also watched the movies (Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan, 1901). Since then, the visits planned by Japanese colonial government have been associated with indigenous people's film watching experience. According to the report of *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpo* on February 4, 1905, after indigenous people tribes such as Sha Ying Ho tribe, Xiao Nan Shi tribe and Da Nan Shi tribe in Miaoli were submitted, the government arranged their visits of military exercises of the army and related movie watching in Miaoli in order to intimidate them and suppress their resistance (*Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpo*, February 4, 1905).

In 1907, Takamatsu Toyojiro promoted his accomplished film *An Introduction to the Actuality of Taiwan* in Japan with the trailer and arranged the company of five indigenous people from Da Bang tribe of Tsou in Alishan. At the time, *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpo* reported the indigenous people's visit in Japan:

In Yokosuka, they visited warship and shipyard and they were inexpressibly surprised. At the imperial residence of Aoyama, they visited the day of the emperor's royal progress and were amazed by the guarded foreign ambassadors and high officials in formation. They were frightened by the emperor's progress and attempted to show their respect. They still dreaded after returning to the hotel. They were speechless as being overwhelmed by the grandeur (Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō, December 26, 1907).

The previous report was the paper held by Japanese colonial government. During the visit in Japan, indigenous people were amazed by military force, imperial residence of Emperor of Japan and ceremony. They were speechless and it seemed that they were shocked by this “great” colonial mother country. In this trip, Takamatsu Toyojiro's *An Introduction to the Actuality of Taiwan* shown around Japan was authorized by Government-General of Taiwan for “Taiwan pavilion” of “Tokyo Expo” in the year. The purpose was to introduce political facility and customs of Taiwan which was claimed as “new model of colony of the around” (Yeh, 1998, pp. 72-73). Besides Tokyo Expo, it was shown in different places around Japan. The fellow indigenous people became not only the “exhibits” of Japanese colonial achievement, but also the witnesses of the advancement of the mother country.

These indigenous people who could participate in the visits held by Japanese colonial government were selected, examined and promoted by the government. They were the heads or powerful ones in the tribes. Although they witnessed the advancement of the mother country and were civilized, the influence was limited to these tribes. When the movies were prevailing, tourism activities combined the showing of the film and expanded the scope of promotion.

In April, 1912, Government-General of Taiwan held the third round of indigenous people's visit in Japan and authorized “Embade(エムバデ) corporation” of Japan to film the documentary (Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō, July 26, 1912). The film recorded indigenous people's visits of military installations and scenic spots in Tokyo, Akabanecho, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Hiroshima and Nara Prefecture and the film was published by Taiwan branch of Patriotic Women's Association. The preview was in the residence of high officials and afterwards, it was played around Taiwan (Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō, July 27, 1912). In February 1913, the film of the visits was shown in Ku Ba Bo tribe, Jin Yang tribe and Pi Ya Hao tribe of Nanao in Yilan and Liu Mao An tribe, Si Ji tribe and Pi Ya Nan tribe in Xitou. Besides, in the report of Miyazaki department of police of Sutayan (スタヤン), it presented the indigenous people's acquisition after watching the movie:

Except for the people who have visited Japan and Taipei, they were amazed by the visits which were incredible. After watching this movie, they believed that it was true and recognized the situations when visiting Japan and their popularity everywhere. In addition, as to the function of camera, they not only were impressed but also claimed it as the miracle. They were impressed by the great number of firearms in Japan and the grandeur of streets in Tokyo.

“In Japan, there are troops, warships and hydrogen balloons as

many as leaves. If we resist Japan and are immediately suppressed, our houses and fields will be destroyed, "They believed that movies were not manmade and they were the miracles (History of Aboriginal Governance of Taipei State: Old Yilan Government (IV), 2014, p. 1630).

Japanese colonial government invited the powerful ones in indigenous tribes to participate in the visits to introduce them the advancement of political, economic and military development in Japan. Thus, they were amazed and submitted to colonial governance and avoided the resistance. In addition, by cinema, Japanese colonial government expanded the limited effect of tourism to the tribes and it became important cultural measure to govern indigenous people. Through the images of these visits, it revealed the advantage of military force of Japan. Since indigenous people's knowledge of the cinema was limited and they even thought that movies were not manmade and they were miracles. Thus, the government showed the deification of legitimacy of their governance.

Department of Police of Government-General of Taiwan, in the ceremonies of shrines in Taiwan, in order to introduce current situation of Taipei governed by Japan to indigenous people, from October 26 to November 3, 1917, selected 30 indigenous people from the tribes in Xitou and Nanao to visit Taipei. In the following official report of Department of Police, it extracted two indigenous people's acquisition after watching the movie in the trip of Taipei:

We watched the movie in the school in the south of the city, ...then we saw the picture of Emperor of Japan in the military parade. It was impressive that the number of troops was as many as leaves or bees. In the picture of the attack on Qingdao, we saw the flying jets and Japanese army which won the foreign ones. We were glad. How can Japanese military be so tough? (History of Aboriginal Governance of Taipei State: Old Yilan Government (IV), 2014, pp. 1836-1839)

In the movie, indigenous people saw that the troops in military parade of Emperor of Japan were as many as leaves or bees. Through the attack on Qingdao with advanced jets, Japanese colonial government civilized indigenous people by visits in Japan and cities of Taiwan. Did it successfully impress the indigenous people?

The head of Seediq at the time, Mona Rudo, has participated in the second round of "visit in Japan" held by Japanese colonial government in 1911. The said government intended to civilize them by their witness of civilization of the city and impressive military force. Thus, indigenous people could be submitted to the Japanese governance. Certainly, in this visit, he realized that the number of the Japanese were as many as the stones in Jhuoshuei River and the soldiers were as many as leaves in the forest. Nevertheless, he also recognized the gentleness of the police in Japan. The colonial police in the hometown Wushe were rude and unreasonable. They beat up or arrested the people (Teng, 2000, pp. 106-107). Although he witnessed the power and advancement of Japan, with long-term inequality and oppression, in October 1930, he led the people to launch the internationally known resistance, "Musha Incident", which destroyed the colonial result of more than 30 years of governance on

indigenous people and smashed the exaggeration of the number one colony in the world.

IV. Cinema are witnesses of colonizers' armed suppression on indigenous people

In the strategies of indigenous people governance of Government-General of Taiwan, they civilized the obedient indigenous people with conciliation and adopted armed suppression on resistant indigenous people. Military suppression required funds and legitimacy. Japanese colonial government of Taiwan integrated "Taiwan Patriotic Women's Association" at the time and Takamatsu Toyojiro's "Tong Jen Society" to launch tour showing of cinema to collect the budget and rescue funds to suppress indigenous people. In 1904, Patriotic Women's Association requested the construction of three branches in Taipei, Taichung, and Tainan from the headquarters of Tokyo. In 1905, "Taiwan branch of Patriotic Women's Association" was established in Taipei and in 1909, it was named officially "Taiwan Patriotic Women's Association". Members of the said organization were mostly the wives of high officials of Japanese colonial government in Taiwan. Their early tasks were to provide aids to families of the deceased and injured in the suppression or prevention of the aborigines (Takenaka, 2007, p. 163). At the time, the Governor-General Sakuma Samata actively executed armed suppression on indigenous people. The said organization provided abundant budget and rescue funds and became one of the main financial support to suppress indigenous people.

As to fund raising, Patriotic Women's Association cooperated with Takamatsu Toyojiro's "Tong Jen Society" which owned showing system of the theaters around Taiwan. On the one hand, they collected related funds by tour showing of cinema and theaters owned by Tong Jen Society. On the other hand, it assisted with the police to shoot the films of military suppression in order to publicize military force action and collect the funds of suppression. In September 1909, Patriotic Women's Association cooperated with Tong Jen Society to raise rescue funds. It included 2 echelons and lasted for 7 months. The movies were shown in 18 theaters in Taiwan to collect rescue funds of suppression and the collection was significantly successful. Annual collection was thus fixed. Therefore, in 7 years from 1909 to 1915, it held 6 rounds of movie tour in Taiwan and collected a total of 43959 Yen (Oohashi, 1941, pp. 136-143).

In order to reveal the difficulty to manage the defense troops in Taipei and Yilan and severe situation of military suppression on indigenous people to raise rescue funds, from 1910, Tong Jen Society dispatched the cinematographer to shoot the situations in the battlefields. It included three rounds. The first round was launched on July 12 of the same year and finished on July 20. It invited Tsuchiya Hisaharu from Osaka as the cinematographer. Since the shooting time was summer in Taiwan with high temperature, the film base of the rolls of films from Japan could be easily melted which reduced and destroyed the rolls. After solving the problem, he shot 6000 meters of film (Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpo, September 28, 1910). The preview was in the residence of high officials on September 26. The film was shown in 3 days in Rong Zuo of Taipei from October 9 and was sensational. There were 3221 person-time of audiences. Subsequently, it was shown in school of mandarin, secondary school and police college and around Taiwan (Oohashi, 1941, p. 141). The second round was launched on October 13. Tsuchiya Hisaharu followed civil administration official to

inspect the submission of indigenous people and returned to Taipei on October 19 to continue the showing of the movie in different places.

The third round was in October 1912. Since the previous two rounds were sensational, with the recommendation of Takamatsu Toyojiro, they invited Nakazato Tarou to be battlefield cinematographer. Department of aboriginal affairs hired him with authorization. On October 31, the photographer followed the official Uchida and Commanding General Ohtsu to Lidongshan command center. When shooting the film at battlefield, he was abruptly shot by the indigenous people hiding in brushwood (Government-General of Taiwan, 1999, p. 311). Tamio Miyazaki and Changde Tsuchiya were thus dispatched to Lidongshan to continue the film shooting (Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō, December 20, 1912). In December 1916, Patriotic Women's Association was reorganized and terminated the documentary business with Tong Jen Society. Finally, the equipment and films were gifted to Taiwan Education Association. Since then, although tour showing system of the movies has continued, they were mostly "national policy movies" for civilization, aboriginal control policy or promotion of wars of Japanese colonial government. Related films were no longer produced. In 1921, aboriginal management section of Department of the Police founded the team of cinema. Office of the Governor-General established official movie making organization on governance of indigenous people. The task referred to not only cultivation of indigenous people, but also education and entertainment service for the Japanese working in indigenous areas.

V. Conclusion

Early production of Taiwanese cinema was controlled by the colonizers and the films mostly focused on indigenous people. It means the colonizers attempted to comprehend and approach the aboriginal tribes by cinema and introduce the evolution of the indigenous peoples by cinema to demonstrate their governance outcomes. These movies also recorded the colonizers' suppression of indigenous people by superior armed force. Thus, the earliest or the most essential images in development of Taiwanese cinema should refer to indigenous people. The images of indigenous people were focused by cameras through anthropology. They appeared as the exotic customs watched by people. They were the subjects controlled. Thus, from the colonizers' perspectives, various kinds of image productions related to indigenous people resulted in visual format of the earliest development of Taiwanese cinema.

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