

Why in Taiwan? : The First Census in the Japanese Empire

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The first population census, except some experimental ones, within the territory of the Japanese Empire was taken in Taiwan in 1905 by the Japanese General Government of Taiwan (JGGT). It was 15 years earlier than the first census in mainland Japan. The year of 1905 was certainly not the peaceful year for the JGGT; they were devoting to suppress Taiwanese revolts, to set up their governing systems and even to manage the marshal law, which was declared at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. The aim of this paper is thus to clarify the reason why the census in Taiwan was taken in such an early difficult period, focusing on three social groups in the JGGT: the top leaders of the bureaucrats, the officers of the local governments and the statisticians.