

# [So for this reason, installing colonial administration did](https://assignbuster.com/so-for-this-reason-installing-colonial-administration-did/)

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So what are the reasons for this predominantlypositive portrayal of Japan in contemporary Taiwan? Does the favorable image ofJapan corresponds in any way with the historical facts? To some extent this iscertainly the case; compared with other regions under the control of Japan inthe first half of the 20th century, Taiwan was treated relativelywell.

Undoubtedly, the intensity of coercive actions in Taiwan was clearlylower than in Korea or China. Why, then, did Taiwan enjoy such a privilege? Oneof the reasons may be the composition of the Japanese management staff inTaiwan. In 1945 27% of military personnel in Taiwan were owned by the imperialnavy. In China and Korea this ratio added up to 6% and 10% respectively.

Thismight be crucial since the navy enjoyed the reputation of an institution ofmore liberal and open-minded people, compared to other branches of the JapaneseImperial Army1. However, the impact of the military staff’sopen-mindedness is practically unmeasurable and as such it is pure speculation. In addition, unlike China and Korea, at the time of attempt to establishJapanese power in Taiwan, there was arguably no such thing as Taiwaneseidentity. For this reason, installing colonial administration did not encounteras much resistance as in Korea or China. The undeveloped national identity alsoresulted in less reluctance towards the aggressor. Japan intended to turn Taiwan into a “ model colony” 2. It was supposed to help Japan to join the elite clubof colonial powers.

Good treatment may also have its origins in the originalpurpose of the colony. In contrast to Korea, which was only supposed to providea corridor to Manchuria and deeper into China, Taiwan was planned to be thedemonstration of Japan’s potential, and also in a broader perspective/later abridgehead for the Japanese southbound expansion3. On the other hand, the Japanese administration oftenbrutally (murders, tortures and imprisonments without convictions) used theapparatus of coercion to enforce power. There is a long list malpractices, oppressivemeasures and pure discrimination against Taiwanese carried out by Japanese.

Theseactions distort the image of lenient and cooperative Japanese. In point offact, even though considered to be relatively good, Japanese treatment ofTaiwanese was by no means objectively good. 1 S. Denney, Taiwan’s Collective Memory of Japan: Around the Horn, http://www. shanghai1937.

com/the-japanese-on-taiwan/(retrieved 14. 1. 2018).

2 N. Heé, Taiwan under Japanese Rule. Showpiece of a Model Colony? Historiographical Tendencies in Narrating Colonialism, “ History Compass”, 8/2014. 3