The Compilation of Records of the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia

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1.

The compilation of records of the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia was developed by the grants of the Toyota Foundation, especially Insular Southeast Asia including Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore, and East Timor. The forum of Burma was also granted, but not successful so far. The forums of Thailand and Indochina were not organized. These forums collected testimonies, compiled and edited bibliographies of unpublished documents, and published books and articles, made chronological tables, and discovered documents and reprinted them with annotations.

In *The Toyota Foundation 30 Years of History 1974–2004* published in 2007 the activities of these forums were summarized as follows:

**Forums for the Compilation of Records of the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia**

A series of forums organized to compile records of the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia were representative of the Foundation Initiative Grant Program projects carried out by the International Division.

The impetus for the project came at the end of 1985 when Soemartini, director of the National Archives of Indonesia, approached Foundation staff member Toichi Makita with a request for assistance. At the time, the Archives had an ongoing project devoted to collecting oral histories of Indonesia, and local people had been interviewed regarding their experiences under the Japanese occupation of 1942–45. There was a need to interview Japanese who had resided in Indonesia during the occupation, but the project had neither the funds to go to Japan nor the staff to conduct the necessary interviews. The Archives wanted to know if the Toyota Foundation could help.

Not only did the Foundation consider this an important project, but it began to explore the possibilities for providing more systematic support for such activities. The Foundation consulted University of Tokyo Professor Akira Nagazumi, an authority on Indonesian history who had advised the Foundation in many of its international endeavors. Japanese schools were acutely aware of the dearth of historical materials on the Japanese side and the inadequacy of the research being conducted on the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia during the war years. This time, Professor Nagazumi did more than just give advice; on his own initiative, he organized a Foundation-fund-
ed forum for a joint effort by Japanese historians and their Indonesian counterparts to compile and organize records of the Japanese occupation of Indonesia. The project began with interviews of 17 Japanese who had been involved in the military government during the occupation. Efforts were also made to collect and compile the Japanese historical documents that were essential for a thorough study of military rule. The interviews were later compiled in a book titled *Shogenshu: Nihongun senryoka no Indonesia* (Testimonies: Indonesia under Japanese Military Rule).


In 1995, at the behest of Assistant Program Officer Yumiko Himemoto, a symposium titled “The Japanese Occupation in the Context of Southeast Asian History: Evaluation and Interpretation” was held at the Shonan Village Center in Hayama, Kanagawa Prefecture to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. The three forums for Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia and Singapore all participated in this symposium. A similar symposium was held around the same time in Singapore at the National University of Singapore. The proceedings of the Shonan symposium were later published as a book titled *Tonan Asia shi no naka no Nihon senryo* (The Japanese Occupation in the Context of Southeast Asian History; Waseda University Press, 1997), edited by Professor Aiko Kurasawa of Nagoya University.

Professor Kurasawa participated in both the symposiums. “There has been dramatic progress over the past twenty years in research on the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia,” she observed. “Although Japan was directly involved, comprehensive research on this period started relatively late in Japan…But the grants awarded by the Toyota Foundation…encouraged researchers with wide-ranging topics working in varied disciplines to participate in research, and as a result breathed new life into the field.” (Symposium “The Japanese Occupation in the Context of Southeast Asian History: Evaluation and Interpretation,” *Occasional Report No. 22, June 1996*)

The names of forums, grantees, titles of projects, years and amounts granted by the foundation were as follows:

**Forum Grant Program of the Toyota Foundation**

- Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia (Akira Nagazumi), “The Compilation and Use of Contemporary Written and Oral Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia During World War II” 1985: ¥ 2,800,000; 1986: ¥ 3,700,000
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- Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia (Mitsuo Nakamura), “The Compilation and Use of Contemporary Written and Oral Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia During World War II” 1988: ¥2,600,000

**Foundation Initiative Grant Program of the Toyota Foundation**
- Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines (Setsuo Ikehata), “The Compilation and Use of Historical Materials and Oral Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines During World War II, as well as the Preceding and Following Years” 1990: ¥3,000,000; 1991: ¥3,500,000; 1992: ¥3,500,000; 1993: ¥800,000
- Kei Nemoto, “Historical Studies of the Japanese Military Occupation of Burma, 1942–45” 2001: ¥4,800,000; 2002: ¥6,800,000; 2003: ¥2,040,000
- Yoji Akashi, “Publication Based on a Survey of Historical Materials and Oral Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 1941–1945” 2003: ¥5,000

2.

One of the forums, The Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines mentioned its aims as follows in the Newsletter No. 1 (August 1991):

**Rationale and Objectives of the Forum**

The Japanese occupation in Southeast Asia during World War II lasted less than four years, but its impact on the Southeast Asian countries was great. Human and material destruction was devastating. It was particularly so in the Philippines, since she was then occupied by the United States of America, the strongest allied power. However, the Japanese occupation of the Philippines had a
different impact compared with other Southeast Asian countries, especially in the field of politics.

First, the United States even before the Japanese occupation of the Philippines had promised
that independence would be granted in 1946. Therefore, the justification that the Japanese inva-
sion intended “to liberate the Philippines from the European-American colonial oppression” was
not significant. That is why it was considered to be unpatriotic as well as anti-American to collab-
orate with the Japanese forces.

How to deal with this “collaboration” issue became the greatest political problem immediately
after the war. However, the issue was not pursued any further within the Philippine political arena
due to the onset of the cold war period. The United States had already “forgiven” Japan, as mani-
fested by the reconstruction aid, in her drive to secure allies against communism; it would there-
fore be awkward to insist upon punishment for the so-called Filipino collaborators.

Second, members of an anti-Japanese guerrilla organization, the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa
Hapon (Hukbalahap), became anti-government guerrillas who waged an armed struggle that was
the forerunner of the resistance movement of the New People’s Army.

Third, confusion over the old order of social classes as well as moral sense accelerated social dis-
persion.

Unlike in Myanmar and Indonesia, wherein the Japanese occupation contributed in one way or
the other to their respective independence, in the Philippines the occupation left a rather negative
and dark imprint beyond the war problems.

Forty-five years have passed since the war, and a generation who could look into these issues
rather more objectively has been forming. At the same time, global circumstances have changed,
encouraging inquiry into the subject matter. With this as background, the Forum aims to form the
base which in the future will spur on a deeper research.

The primary problem in conducting research on the Japanese occupation period is historical
sources. As of now, the materials pertinent to the subject matter, whether they be in Japan, the
Philippines, or the United States, are not yet categorically arranged even for bibliographical guid-
ance.

Incidentally, there were approximately 30,000 Japanese, the highest number among the South-
east Asian countries, living in the Philippines during the pre-war period. Yet there has not yet
been any in-depth study on the development of the society, especially Philippine local society, on
which such Japanese migration made some impact, if any, before, during and after the war.

Aside from the problem mentioned above, the immediate problems that should be tackled are:
(1) locating historical materials and sources, and supplying information to the researchers; and (2)
collecting oral accounts of the remaining survivors.

3.

The research tools, reprinted documents and other related books published by these forums are as
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follows. One of them, *The Report of the Research Commission on the Philippines* was published with the following annotation in English:

**The Reprinting of the Complete Report of the Research Commission on the Philippines**

Nakano Satoshi

It was in December of 1942 that the Japanese Military Administration set up the Research Commission on the Philippines under the chairmanship of its chief civil advisor Murata Shōzō. In addition to Murata, the core of the Commission consisted of six members, Rōyama Masamichi, Suekawa Hiroshi, Ōshima Masanori, Tōbata Seiichi, Sugimura Kōzō and Itō Choji, and one deputy member for each. The Commission’s four volume report, which has now been reprinted in its entirety, was presented to the Japanese Military Administration one month before the establishment of the “Republic of the Philippines” under Japanese military occupation in October, 1943.

The existence of the Commission was covered both in the media at the time and in the memoirs of Chairman Murata and commission member Tōbata after the War. However, the 800 some odd page Report itself, which the Japanese Military Administration printed in Manila, remained unpublished as a “top secret” military document. It is also thought that most of the copies of the Report were destroyed when the Japanese Military Headquarters abandoned Manila in January, 1945. Moreover, following the War the copies that remained in the hands of the Commission members were scattered, making the Report literally a “rare book.”

The content of the Report began to come out little by little within the research published by commission members and staff after their return to Japan. In 1967 Takeuchi Tatsuji, the deputy to Rōyama Masamichi, published his English translation of part two of the report dealing with politics and administration and relevant portions of his personal diary through Yale University under the title *The Philippine Polity: A Japanese View* (Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1967). This marked the first time that either text of the Report itself or the whys and hows of the Commission's research methodology was made public. At the time of the English translation of part two, it was still not certain among even the experts in the field that the Report existed anywhere in its original entirety, for no one had any idea of the whereabouts of part four dealing with the economy.

Finally, Yoshihisa Akihiro of the National Diet Library was able to locate the only place in Japan where the Report had been preserved in toto, the Suekawa Hiroshi Collection in the Ritsumeikan University Library in Kyoto. It is this copy that has been reprinted as the complete *Report of the Research Commission on the Philippines*. As to why up until today no one thought of looking through the Suekawa Collection for a complete version of the Report, we can cite the fact that Suekawa himself returned to Japan without writing a survey report of his own, and he showed very little interest after the War in talking or writing about the Commission’s activities. Be that as it may, the discovery and publication of the complete four part set of the original Report has pro-
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duced a source material revealing a little known effort by the Japanese leading scholars in the field during the Asian/Pacific War era. It is also hoped that this work will be studied and analyzed from not only the perspective of the history of Japan-Philippine relations, but also in terms of Asian studies in Japan and the history of the disciplines of political science and economics.

The reprint of Report of the Research Commission on the Philippines is a two volume work containing parts one (peoples), two (politics and administration) and three (education and religion) of the original text in volume one and part four (economy) in volume two. The reader will also find introductory remarks and commentary on all four parts written by Nakano Satoshi, Hayase Shinzo, Terada Takefumi and Nagano Yoshiko.

The work of finding the entire Report and interviewing persons related to the original compilation was carried out as one part of the Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines sponsored by the Toyota Foundation and headed in its research activities by Ikehata Setsuho. And finally, the Ritsumeikan University library should be most graciously applauded for opening up its archives so that the Report could be photographed in its entirety.

It is expected for the Indochina specialists to make the research tools such as a bibliography and a chronological table, to reprint primary documents and records, and to collect oral histories which will be more difficult than when these forums did. When we can use them, we can discuss Southeast Asian under Japan more comprehensively and deeply.

In addition, on the history of Southeast Asian historical studies in Japan, see Japan Society for Southeast Asian Studies, supervised, Development of Southeast Asian Historical Studies (Yamakawa-shuppan, 2009), especially Kaori Maekawa, “History on Studies of Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation” and Kan’ichi Goto, “History on Studies of Modern Japan and Southeast Asia Relations.”

4.

Publications by forums

(1) インドネシア日本占領期史料フォーラム編 Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia

・関連史料 Reprinted Documents and others

ジャワ軍政監部 Java Military Government 発行, 編集復刻版 Reprinted, 倉沢愛子 Aiko Kurasawa ed. & anno. 編集解題「治官報・ KANPO Official Gazette」龍渓書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1989, 8 volumes


ジャワ新聞社発行 Java Newspaper Company, 復刻版 Reprinted, 倉沢愛子解題 Aiko Kurasawa anno. 『新ジャワ New Java』龍渓書

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- Ryukei-shosha, 1990, 2 volumes
- ジャワ新聞社発行ジャワ文集 Java Newspaper Company, Gravure, 復刻版 Reprinted, 倉沢愛子解題 Aiko Kurasawa anno. 『ジャワ・パル Diwata Baroe (新ジャワ New Java)』龍溪書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1992, 5 volumes (1943年1月1日号～1945年8月1日号計63号) All 63 issues from 1 January 1943 to 1 August 1945
- 木村一信編集解題 Kazunobu Kimura ed. & anno. 『南方従軍作家叢書 [第1期 ジャワ篇] Collection of Enlisted Writers in the South: 1 Java』龍溪書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1996, 15 volumes
- ◎関連書籍 Related Books

(2) 日本のフィリピン占領期に関する史料調査フォーラム編 Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines

- 関連史料 Reprinted Documents and others
- 有山輝雄解説 Teruo Ariyama anno., 復刻版 Reprinted 『マニラ新聞 Manila Newspaper』(昭和17年11月～昭和20年11月) 1942年1月1945年 図書センター—Nihon Tosho Center, 1991, 5 volumes
- 小野豊明・寺田勇男編集解題 Toyoaki Ono and Takefumi Terada eds. & annos., 復刻版 Reprinted 『比島宗教関係史料集 Documents Related to Religious Corps in the Occupied Philippines』龍溪書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1999, 2 volumes
- 比律賓協会発行 The Philippine Society of Japan, 早瀬晋三解題 Shinzo Hayase anno. 『比律賓情報 The Philippine Information Bulletin』龍溪書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 2003, 21 volumes
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(4) 東ティモール日本占領期史料フォーラム編 Forum of East Timor

(5) 日本占領地ビルマ (1942–1945) に関する総合的文献研究会 Forum of Burma

(6) 南方全般 Southeast Asia in General
関連資料 Related Books
明石康之・石井孝則『戦争期のビルマ』編集後藤桂『東亜戦争期間の資料(参謀)』龍泉書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 2003, 4 volumes

関連資料 Related Books


明石陽至編集解読 Yoji Akashi ed. & anno., 編集復刻版 Reprinted Definition 関東地方軍政関係史・資料 Wataru Watanabe’s Documents on Military Administration}龍泉書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1998, 5 volumes

明石陽至編集解読 Yoji Akashi ed. & anno., 編集復刻版 Reprinted Definition 政府におけるマラヤ・シンガポール教育事情史・資料 (1941–45) Documents on Education in Malaya and Singapore under Military Administration 1941–45』龍泉書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1999, 2 volumes

明石陽至・宮脇弘幸解読 Yoji Akashi and Hiroyuki Miyawaki annos., 編集復刻版 Reprinted Definition 日本語教科書—日本の英字マラヤ・シンガポール占領期 (1941–45) — Japanese Textbooks in Malaya and Singapore under Japanese Occupation』龍泉書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 2002, 6 volumes

関連資料 Related Books

関連資料 Related Books
木村信雄編 Kazunobu Kimura ed. & anno.『南方文芸作家叢書 [第 2 期 ビルマ篇] Collection of Enlisted Writers in the South 2: Burma』龍泉書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 2009, 14 volumes

関連資料 Related Books

関連資料 Related Books
明石陽至・石井孝則 Yoji Akashi and Hitoshi Ishii annos., 編集復刻版 Reprinted 定義『東亜戦争期間の資料(参謀)』Documents on Council for the Great East Asia』龍泉書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1995, 4 volumes

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Government of South Army』龍渕書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 2004, 9 volumes
南方開発金融調査課発行 South Development Bank, 編集復刻版 Reprinted, 早瀬晋三編集・解説 Shinzo Hayase ed. & anno. 『南方開発金融調査資料 Research Reports of South Development Bank』龍渕書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 2012–, 17 volumes

◎関連書籍 Related Books
江上芳郎著 Yoshio Egami 『南方特別留学生招へい事業の研究 A Study of Special Students from the South』龍渕書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 1997, 384 p.
早稲田大学アジア太平洋研究センター（後藤乾一代表）編 Waseda University Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies ed. 『戦後日本・東南アジア関係史総合年表 Chronological Table of Postwar Relations between Japan and Southeast Asia』龍渕書舎 Ryukei-shosha, 2003, 300 p.