

INTRODUCTION

The appearance in print of the five essays contained in this issue of *Asian Studies* has been made possible, first by the conveners of the Fourth International Conference on Asian History, held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, between 5 and 10 August, 1968, and, second, by the generous initiative of Professor Josefa M. Saniel and her colleagues at the Asian Center in the University of the Philippines, who offered to set aside a whole number of the excellent journal published by that institution for early publication. As the organizer and chairman of the session at which these papers had been originally presented, I was subsequently asked to write a few prefatory lines for this issue. To all the above, but most of all to the authors who kindly responded to my invitation to participate in the panel, I should like to express my sincere thanks. Given the relative paucity of published materials on wartime Southern Asia, historians of the region will appreciate the convenience of having these five important contributions to the field appear in one short volume, thus being saved the trouble of tracking them down individually in a variety of learned journals.

To all intents and purposes, we are still in the opening, "ingathering" stages, of the historiography of this short though tremendously important era in Asian History.¹ Our areas of ignorance are still so vast, and the available resources so far flung and often in such problematically short supply, that it may take years before a reasonably comprehensive picture of Southern Asia between 1942 and 1945 will emerge. The more gratifying, then, that the number of serious studies has been slowly yet perceptibly increasing, especially so in the countries so deeply affected by the Japanese interregnum. Thus Dr. Nugroho Notokusanto's ongoing research on the anti-Japanese rebellion of the *PETA* battalion at Blitar, of which the paper here printed constitutes a tantalizingly small installment, augurs well for the study of wartime Indonesia, a field hitherto preempted by a few Western and Japanese scholars.

In fact, most of the contributors to this issue of *Asian Studies* have already authored, or are about to author, full-length studies, which, together, will immensely enrich the as yet so scanty literature. This is especially true with regard to India, whose history in the years of the "Rising Sun" Professor Lebra and Dr. Ghosh have profoundly studied from the Jap-

¹ For earlier symposia, see Josef Silverstein, ed., *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, Monograph Series #7, 1966), and Grant K. Goodman, ed., *Imperial Japan and Asia: A Reassessment* (New York: East Asian Institute, Columbia University, 1967).

anese and Indian angles, respectively, as is shown in their valuable, complementary contributions to this symposium.² Dr. Guyot's doctoral dissertation at Yale, with which I was personally associated, is to be published shortly; her present article may serve as a fine indication of the riches which her research-in-depth in Burmese sources, combined with interviews on the spot, have unearthed.³ Professor Akashi, a Japanese-born scholar now resident in the United States, here demonstrates some of the results of his equally rewarding labors, especially in the Tokugawa Papers deposited in the National Defense Agency in Tokyo, a veritable goldmine on occupied Malaya which should ere long yield fascinating new insights into Japanese policies from his pen.⁴

It would be hard to extract from the present collection any general insights, and I shall not attempt such a fruitless task.⁵ Let me, rather, make a few more or less random comments inspired by our present authors. First, as the twin articles by Lebra and Ghosh show, a truly comprehensive picture of any single situation requires intensive work in indigenous Southern Asian and Japanese—and of course also Western—sources. Since very few students of Asian history possess the requisite linguistic skills, let alone the time, to do justice to such an assignment, we are most fortunate that these two scholars, though unbeknown to each other for quite some time, have been able to accomplish so much; the absence, until now, of adequate works on the Indian National Army makes their labors the more welcome and indeed indispensable. What does clearly emerge from their studies is, that however peripheral a place India may have occupied in the eyes of Japanese policy makers, the Indian National Army and its brilliant leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, had a profound—and, as Dr. Ghosh has argued, a decisive—effect on India's ultimate independence from Britain.

Second, I am increasingly intrigued by the importance of individual Japanese in the making of Southern Asian history, of men like Colonel Suzuki Keiji who played such a dominant role in Burma, and Major

² Already published is K. K. Ghosh, *The Indian National Army: Second Front of the Indian Independence Movement* (Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan, 1969). Professor Lebra's *Japan and the Indian National Army* is scheduled for publication in late 1969 by Donald Moore Ltd. in Singapore; a Japanese translation is to appear in Tokyo shortly.

³ An earlier essay by Dr. Guyot, "The Burma Independence Army: A Political Movement in Military Garb," appeared in Silverstein, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 51-65.

⁴ On the Tokugawa Papers, see Lea E. Williams, "Some Japanese Sources on Malayan History," *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. IV #3 (September, 1963), especially pp. 102-04.

⁵ I have endeavored to present brief and highly tentative syntheses concerning the occupation of Southeast Asia in a short essay, "The Japanese Interregnum in Southeast Asia," in Goodman, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 65-79, and, somewhat more extensively, in John Bastin and Harry J. Benda, *A History of Modern Southeast Asia: Colonialism, Nationalism and Decolonization* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968 and Singapore: Federal Publishers, 1969), pp. 123-52.

Fujiwara Iwaichi, who not only loomed large in the development of the Indian National Army, but who is also prominently mentioned in connection with the Japanese invasion of Aceh in northern Sumatra.⁶ Both, if we are to believe Drs. Guyot and Lebra, were men of very considerable skill and stature, to say the least, but both also wanted to achieve more for their Southern Asian "protégé's" than higher Japanese authorities proved ultimately willing to grant. Isn't it high time for someone to devote himself (or herself) to the study of such highly individualistic policy "entrepreneurs" and the organizations (*kikan*) they headed? Included in such a study might be others, like the ubiquitous Shimizu Hitoshi of *Sendenbu* fame in wartime Djakarta.⁷

Third and last, Drs. Nugroho's essay makes me wonder whether we will ever be able to fathom the full extent, and for that matter the motivations, of the numerous rebellions directed against the occupying power in so many parts of the *Nampo*. For, though even occupation policies and practices are far from adequately documented, there appears to be literally nothing in the printed records to guide us. Lest this "hidden" but essential part of occupation history be lost forever, one would wish for concerted efforts along the lines so patiently pioneered by our Indonesian colleagues: interviewing the survivors of these rebellions as quickly as possible. How strange that the technological revolution, with its many-faceted, and often disastrous, effects on part of Southern Asia, has not yet given rise to a wide distribution of that little miracle, the cassette tape recorder, to research institutions in the region! Wish that scores of them could be made available to "catch" the fading memories of the quickly diminishing number of the actors, and sufferers, of this poignant phase in the region's modern history!⁸

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⁶ See A. J. Piekaar, *Atjèh en de Oorlog met Japan* (Aceh and the War with Japan), (Bandung and The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1949).

⁷ For brief but perceptive comments on Shimizu, see Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "Japan: 'The Light of Asia,'" in Silverstein, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 16. Cf. also I. J. Brugmans, ed., *Nederlandsch-Indië onder Japanse bezetting* (Netherlands India under Japanese Occupation), (Franke: T. Wever, 1960), pp. 195-96.

⁸ As work on several aspects of the Second World War in Asia proceeds in different quarters, it would seem that the time has come for some coordinated efforts. We are as yet without major bibliographical surveys, and without systematized knowledge of who is working where on what country or field. Readers may therefore welcome to be told of efforts recently launched in France by a newly-created International Committee on the History of the Second World War (Comité International d'Histoire de la 2ème guerre mondiale), of which Mr. H. Michel has been appointed Secretary-General. The Committee's address is 32 rue de Leningrad, Paris VIIIe, France. It is contemplating the publication of a special issue of its *Revue d'Histoire*, to be devoted to "Japan's Greater East Asia."