

"The Nan'you Gakuin: A Japanese Institute in Saigon from 1942-1945"

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The Nan'yô Gakuin (Institute of the Southern Ocean) was established in Saigon (Vietnam) in 1942, the year following the outbreak of the Pacific War, for the purpose of training young Japanese as leading businessmen to work in Southeast Asia. The Institute was run by the Nan'yô Kyôkai (Association of Southern Ocean). It was first sponsored by the Gaimu-shô (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and later by the Daitôa-shô (Ministry of Greater East Asia). It admitted thirty to fifty Japanese students every year, and was staffed by approximately twenty teachers invited from Japan, as well as a few Vietnamese and one French instructor, who were recruited locally. The Institute ceased its activities in 1945, when Japan lost the war.

The Institute was rather small in scale, and only existed for a short period of time. However, it was a unique Japanese educational institution of the *kôtô-senmon gakkô* (prewar college) standard, the first and only to be established in Southeast Asia. This paper mainly discusses how the Institute was established, managed and devitalized, with the hope of contributing to the further understanding of Japanese relations with Southeast Asia and especially Indochina during the Pacific War period.

I. Inauguration of the Institute

Beginning in the Meiji Period, Japan's expansionist concerns had been mainly directed toward the Korean Peninsula, Manchuria, and mainland China. In most cases, Southeast Asia was out of their scope, as the region (except for Thailand) was under Western colonial domination.

It was only in 1936 that Japan for the first time expressed an intention toward southward expansion in an official national policy document. However, it still placed priority on Mongolia, mainland China and Siberia over Southeast Asia. It was only after the outbreak of the war in Europe in September 1939 that a majority of Japanese leaders came to agree with the idea that the opportunity had come to place Southeast Asia under its direct control.¹

The Nan'yô Kyôkai (Association of the Southern Ocean) was established in 1915, much earlier than Japanese official policy started seeing Southeast Asia as a primary target of economic and

¹ Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai ed.(1963); and Bôeichô Senshishitsu ed.(1975). The government's decisions in August 1936 are reprinted in Gaimushô ed.(1966) pp. 344-347. The July 1940 decisions are in *ibid.*, pp. 436-438.

even military expansion. The purpose of the Association was to promote Japanese business and cultural activities in Southeast Asia. The Gaimu-shô (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and Takumu-shô (Ministry of Colonial Affairs) granted subsidiaries to it. ²

In 1929, as part of its activities, to "develop Japanese economic activities" ³ and "expand Japanese commercial gains" ⁴ the Association started an in-service training system for young Japanese who wanted to work in Southeast Asia. By 1943 it had sent about 1,000 young people as *shôgyô jissûsei* (commercial trainees), *jitsugyô renshûsei* (business trainees) and *nanpô jitsumu yôin* (in-service trainees for the southern region) to various parts of Southeast Asia. ⁵

Nevertheless, the status given to those who had been trained under this system was not equivalent to regular schooling. In the meantime, Japanese interests in Southeast Asia grew after the mid-1930s, and especially after the outbreak of the war in Europe (1939). Japan increasingly sought natural resources and business opportunities in Southeast Asia. ⁶ These growing economic needs, however, could not be smoothly met without human resources equipped

² For a historical overview of the Nan'yô Association, see Yano (1975), pp.76-78. Incidentally, Inoue Masaji, who later became a key member of the Nan'yô Association, for example, presented the Gaimu-shô with a draft plan for establishing a dormitory for Japanese students in Singapore as early as February 1913. Japanese Diplomatic Archives, 3.10.4.1.

³ Documents (a-10) p.12; and (b-3) p.1.

⁴ Document (b-15) p.35.

⁵ Documents (1-10) p.12; (b-3) p.1; and (b-15) p.35. Also see various documents related to the Nan'yô Association in the Japanese Diplomatic Archives, I,1,10,0,2-4.

⁶ See, for instance, Shiraiishi (1986).

with adequate knowledge of local affairs and languages. In order to recruit young and qualified people for this purpose, it became necessary to introduce a formal system of higher education.⁷

The promoter of the new system was the Cultural Section of the Gaimu-shô as well as the Nan'yô Association. While they were drawing up a more concrete plan, the situation in Southeast Asia changed drastically, with the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941. This development further added an impetus for the establishment of an institute for the promotion of economic activities in the *Nan'yô* (south seas) area.⁸

⁷ Documents (a-10) p.12 and (b-3) p.1 explicitly mention that in view of the “changing international situation” for a few years preceding the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Nan'yô Association established the Nan'yô Institute, while “simultaneously” maintaining the existing trainee system. As mentioned in note 8, a number of documents written by the Nan'yô Association during the 1940s regard the establishment of the Nan'yô Institute as the extension of the existing trainee system. However, it is noteworthy that those documents also refer to the difference between the Institute and the earlier system: while the earlier training system aimed to create “people to take part in the forefront of the development of Japanese economic activities,” the purpose of the Nan'yô Institute was to create “the leading personnel” [(a-10) p.12 ; (a-12) p.1] and “core members” [(b-15) p.35] in those activities.

⁸ According to Mr. Andô Toranojô (e-4) pp.121-125 and (e-8), who, as the employee of the Nan'yô Association, engaged in the management of its trainee system and the establishment of the Nan'yô Institute, and later assumed the post of the Institute's teacher cum assistant inspector of students, the Institute was established at the initiative of the Cultural Affairs Section (Bunka-ka, whose chief was Tôkô 東光) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was in charge of international cultural exchanges. Due to the wartime conditions, it became increasingly difficult to send university and college professors and students abroad; therefore, the Section intended to create a new system to train and cultivate “*kokusai-jin*” (people whose mind is open to the international community), in the place of the previous systems. In this regard, the Institute did not necessarily have to be located in Southeast Asia. In actuality, however, the wartime conditions obliged the Institute to situate itself in French Indochinese territory. In other words, the original idea of establishing the Nan'yô Institute, i.e. to train and cultivate “*kokusai-jin*,” was quite different from that of the preceding trainee system managed by the Nan'yô Association, which constituted a part of Japanese efforts to enhance and exploit business chances in the Southern Area (*nanpô-kaitaku jigyô*). As a matter of fact, the Association's trainee system had been carried out under the auspices of the Southern Ocean Section (Nan'yô-ka) of the Ministry of Foreign

As for the location of the institute, most of Southeast Asia was placed under Japanese military administration with the exception of Indochina and Thailand. The Gaimu-shô, as a diplomatic agent, had little room to act independently in the area under military control. Therefore, the Ministry naturally excluded the occupied areas from the list of proposed sites for the new institute. Thus, Saigon became the most suitable location, as it was one of the most important commercial centers in Southeast Asia and was a French colony, where a Japanese diplomatic delegation was still functioning.⁹

In order to make the new institute a regular college within the Japanese higher education system, the Gaimu-shô and the Nan'yô

Affairs, while the Institute was created and administered mainly under the control of the Cultural Affairs Section. Even after the management of the Institute was transferred to the newly born Daitôa-shô (Ministry of Greater East Asia, established in November 1942), it was still under the auspices of the cultural section of the new ministry. In the meantime, the Nan'yô Association itself had two different departments to deal with business and cultural activities respectively. While the business department was in charge of the management of business trainees as a part of "*nanpô-kaitaku jigyô*" mentioned above, the cultural department was in charge of the management of the Nan'yô Institute as a part of international cultural exchange activities.

On the other hand, a number of documents written by the Nan'yô Association during the 1940s, such as documents (a-10) p.12; (b-3) p.1; (b-4); (b-6);(b-14) p.154; and (b-15) p.33, regard the establishment of the Nan'yô Institute as nothing but the extension of its earlier training programs. According to them, the existing system of sending trainees aimed to create "people to take part in the forefront of the development of Japanese economic activities" in the Southern region (*nanpô*), and the purpose of the Nan'yô Institute was to create "excellent people to take part in the forefront of the development of Japanese activities" in French Indochina.

If one tries to interpret Mr.Andô's testimony favorably, a possible argument would be as follows: when the Gaimu-shô Cultural Affairs Section drafted its original plan, the main purpose was to create "*kokusai-jin*." However, during the process of realizing the plan, because of the interventions by different Gaimu-shô sections and due to the increased wartime demands, the original idea was transformed and finally replaced (or at least overshadowed) by the conventional idea of the development of Japanese business activities in Southeast Asia (especially Indochina).

⁹ The bureaucratic rivalry between the Japanese diplomatic corps and the military was an important element in the formation and implementation of various Japanese wartime policies concerning Indochina. See for example Shiraishi and Furuta(1977) and Shiraishi (1984).

Association had to obtain consent from the Monbu-shô (Ministry of Education). The outbreak of the World War worked favorably in this regard. The Monbu-shô could no longer send university and college professors to the United States or Europe, due to the increasing difficulty in transportation, the worsening war situation in Europe, and Japan's entry into a state of war with the major Western powers outside of France, Italy and Germany. Under these circumstances, the establishment of a new college in a Francophone area close to Japan and within the sphere of Japanese influence seems naturally to have been welcomed by the Monbu-shô, for the institute would be able to accept Japanese professors as visiting teachers for long periods of time.¹⁰

The new institute was to be located in Saigon, a colonial city in French Indochina. This meant that the Gaimu-shô had to obtain permission from the French authorities. After a series of diplomatic negotiations, the Governor-General of Indochina issued an order granting the permission on January 5, 1942, and relayed this to the Japanese Ambassador in Hanoi on January 20.¹¹

II. Organization, Curriculum and Staff

The Nan'yô Institute was a college of *kôtô-senmon gakkô* (prewar

¹⁰ Mr. Andô's recollection cited in note 8 suggests the Monbu-shô's favorable attitude toward the establishment of the Nan'yô Institute.

¹¹ Official telegrams (a-2) and (a-5).

college) level, aiming to train leading personnel for the development of Japanese activities in Southeast Asia, and especially French Indochina. The Institute was managed (*keiei*) by the Nan'yô Kyôkai, being placed under the jurisdiction (*shokan*) of the Gaimu-shô and guided and supervised (*shidô-kantoku*) by both the Gaimu-shô and Monbu-shô. When the Daitôa-shô (Ministry of Greater East Asia) was established in November 1942, the Institute was placed under the jurisdiction of this new ministry, instead of the Gaimu-shô.¹²

The budget for FY1942 was 278,752 yen, which was enough to cover the eight months of activities of the Institute in that year. This total amount was defrayed by the Gaimu-shô. The Gaimu-shô persuaded the Ôkura-shô (Ministry of Finance) to use a portion of the government's reserve fund. The Gaimu-shô's proposed budget was authorized at a Cabinet meeting in Tôkyô on June 30, 1942.¹³ This was half a year after the issuance of the official decision made by the French Indochinese authorities to let Japan open the Institute in Saigon.

The budget for FY1943 was 523,288 yen, including salaries for the increased number of teachers, expenses for the first- and second-year students, expenditures for new equipment and facilities, etc. The Daitôa-shô shouldered two thirds (345,556 yen) of the total. In the meantime, the parents of each student paid an annual fee of

¹² Documents (a-12); (b-3) pp.2-4; (b-4); and (b-14) p.154.

¹³ Documents (a-5) p.7; (a-10) pp.12-13; (b-2) pp.1-2; and (b-3) pp.4 and 10.

just 360 yen.¹⁴ As there were 60 students, the total of the payment by parents must have been 21,600 yen. The deficit (156,132 yen) seems to have been filled using the Nan'yô Association's own funds.

According to an Association document in October 1943, the Institute's budget for FY1944, i.e. the year when the Institute first had a full complement of students from the first- to third-year levels, was estimated to be more than 1,100,000 yen, considering that more students and additional teachers were scheduled to arrive in Saigon.¹⁵ Nevertheless, no documents remained to suggest the actual amount of the authorized and executed budget for that year.

The Nan'yô Association offered various services. Its Saigon Office undertook the Institute's administrative work. Its tasks included those to find school buildings, purchase necessary equipment, send its employees to the Institute as managers and hire domestic servants (cooks and boys). In Japan, the Association held entrance examinations for the Institute and organized preparatory courses in Tôkyô and Nara for new students. Some members of the Association also accompanied the students on their boat trip to Saigon.¹⁶

On July 5, 1942, shortly after the Cabinet meeting that authorized the yearly budget, the Institute announced that it was recruiting candidates for the first batch of students, with

¹⁴ Documents (b-2) pp.1-2; (b-3) pp.3 and 10; (b-11).

¹⁵ Documents(b-3)p.10.

¹⁶ Official telegrams (a-3), (a-4), (a-5); documents (b-3) p.4, (b-12) no.1, p.3; interviews (e-6), (e-8).

enrollment set at 30. A total of 546 candidates applied. The entrance examination was held in August, and the names of the thirty successful candidates (who lived in various parts of Japan) were announced on September 12. They were summoned to Tôkyô in late September. Before their departure for Saigon, they began taking part in courses in the Nihon Seinen Kaikan (Japan Youth Hall) located in the Jingû Gaien (Outer Garden of the Meiji Shrine in Tôkyô), where they also attended a ceremony on October 24 celebrating both the Institute's inauguration and the first students' entrance. Thereafter, they went to Nara Prefecture to receive mental training at a *dôjô* (drill hall) of Kashihara Shrine, a famous spiritual center of Shintôism. They departed Kôbe Port on November 28 and arrived in Saigon on December 17. This became the day that would be celebrated as the Institute's annual festival (*ryôsai*) by students boarding in Saigon. The first classes were held there on December 25. ¹⁷

The Institute was to offer three-year courses. According to an earlier plan, the curriculum was to consist of business/economic, agricultural and medical fields. ¹⁸ It turned out, however, that the available facilities and teaching staff were not adequate for providing medical courses. Therefore, the final plan projected that the Institute was to mainly offer courses in business/economics and agriculture. ¹⁹

¹⁷ Documents (a-10) pp.12-16; (b-2) pp.2-3; (b-3) pp.4-5; (b-14) p.153; and (e-4) p.141.

¹⁸ Document (e-8).

¹⁹ Documents (b-3) p.2; (b-4); and (b-14) p.154.

Table 1 shows the prescribed curriculum for the three-year course of study, as printed in 1943. It shows that many hours were to be devoted to the teaching of economics and agriculture, particularly tropical agriculture, as well as the French and Vietnamese languages. In other words, the credit structure clearly reveals a pragmatism aiming to produce students who could be of practical use for business activities in Southeast Asia, and particularly French Indochina.

The actual offering of courses was not, however, identical to the prescribed curriculum. Tables 2 and 3 show the actual schedule for the first-year students in 1942 and 1943 respectively. Table 4 is a total of the number of hours devoted to each subject, as calculated from Tables 2 and 3. A comparison of Tables 1 and 4 reveals that far more emphasis was actually put on Vietnamese teaching than had been originally planned; whereas hours devoted to French classes were rather reduced. Another thing to note is that the hour assignment for 1942 was much closer than 1943 to the prescribed curriculum. Such a difference can only be explained by analyzing changes in the teaching staff.

Table 5 shows the prescribed and/or actual numbers of teaching and administrative staff from the year of inauguration (1942) to the year of completion (1944).

According to the authorized plan, the staff for the first year was to consist of a rector, four full professors, two associate professors, a teaching associate, a student inspector, an assistant

student inspector, and a secretary as well as a few part-time lecturers. ²⁰ As of 1942, the actual staff satisfied this prescription, except for the fact that the two inspector posts were held concurrently by teachers, as shown by Table 6.

Rector Nomura Junji taught morals and an introduction to law. Inoue Chôyô was responsible for biology and biological laboratory work. Watanabe Kiichi taught geopolitics/economic geography and French Indochinese economy. Miura Taiei taught tropical hygienics. Fujii Yûkichi taught introduction to commercial science and bookkeeping. Andô Toranojô taught national (i.e. Japanese) language/literature and national history. Kondô Seiichi taught physical exercise and drills. Futami Munechika seems to have assisted Inoue. ²¹

There were two types of Japanese teachers with regard to status. The first group included Nomura, Fujii, Andô, Kondô and Futami, who were permanently attached (*sennin*) to the Institute. The second group included Inoue, Watanabe and Miura, who came to Saigon as visiting professors on two-year terms. As has been mentioned earlier, the teachers of the second group were sent by the Monbu-shô, as a substitute for sabbatical leaves to Western countries, where the wartime conditions hindered them from going. They were to return to their home universities or colleges after the expiration of the

²⁰ Documents (a-10) p.17; and (b-2) p.5.

²¹ Concerning Futami's assignment, see note of Table 6.

term.²²

The Institute also assigned a few Vietnamese and a French teacher of languages. For the appointment of the French instructor, it was necessary to get official permission from the Governor-General of Indochina.²³

Rector Nomura soon ran into some unexpected problems, however, and on February 1, 1943, left Saigon permanently. A new rector was not appointed. Instead, Tashiro Shigenori, and then Tsukamoto Takeshi, both Ministers at the Saigon Office of the Japanese Embassy to Indochina, became acting rectors. The courses which Nomura had offered were taken over by Inoue (morals) and Andô (law) until the end of the 1942 academic year (i.e. March 1943).²⁴

Miura also returned to Japan on September 14, 1943, probably for a different reason than Nomura. After his departure, Doctor Hayasaka of the Saigon Embassy Office's clinic took over his duties.²⁵

The changes in the schedule of the timetable for the first-year students as of June 1943 (Tables 3 and 4) can be mainly attributed to the departure of these two teachers. Introductory courses in law

²² Document (b-3) p.6; and interview (e-8).

²³ Official telegram (a-2).

²⁴ Documents (b-3) pp.6-7; and (c-2) no.1, pp.3-4; interviews (e-2) pp.15-16; (e-4) p.133; and (e-8). No documents or interviewees reveal the exact reason why Rector Nomura was obliged to leave Saigon.

²⁵ Document (b-12) no.5, p.1. The author does not know the reason why Miura left Saigon after one year. There are two possibilities: he had a contract from the outset to teach in Saigon for just a year, or he was obliged to leave Saigon despite his original plan being to stay there for two years. However, the first possibility is inconceivable, considering the fact that so many hours were devoted to his teaching in the few months before his departure, as will be mentioned below.

were not offered because of Nomura's departure. By contrast, many hours were devoted to tropical hygienics in the few months before Miura left Saigon, presumably so that the students could gain the necessary credits in advance. In the second half of academic 1943, the timetable must have radically changed with Miura's departure.

In the meantime, new teachers arrived. According to the original plan for 1943, the Institute was to have two new professors, in economics and horticulture, and a new associate professor of animal husbandry. Professor Shigefuji Takao of Nagasaki Commercial College and Professor Hosaka Hachirô of Chiba Horticulture College were actually appointed in May, and arrived in Saigon in July. The third person, Kiuchi Rintarô, also came to Saigon in July. However, he was not an associate professor of animal husbandry, as had been scheduled, but rather a full-time lecturer of French. He was concurrently assigned to be a teacher at the attached Japanese language school. For animal husbandry, Nakada Goichi, a young researcher staying in Saigon on an exchange scholarship, was invited to join the Institute as a part-time lecturer.

Another person, Matsuo Shigeru (bachelor of laws as well as agriculture), was appointed in the same year. After resigning as student inspector of Tôhoku Imperial University, he arrived in Saigon on October 8 as a professor of tropical forestry cum student inspector of the Institute. He also taught morals, which Rector Nomura had previously offered. Furthermore, as the Institute expanded its facilities to include experimental farms, Yamato Kaoru was newly

employed as teaching associate of agriculture.

Several part-time lecturers were also invited in 1943. Aoki Tokio, Head of the Saigon Office of the Yokohama Marine and Fire Insurance Co., taught insurance, and Consul Minowa Saburô taught law. Two Associate Professors Kawano Shigeto and Fukui Shinji from Tôkyô Imperial University, who happened to stay in Saigon, were also asked to offer special courses (from late April to late May) on French Indochinese agriculture and laws respectively. Professor Tanaka Chôzaburô of Taihoku (Taipei) Imperial University arrived in Saigon by late July or early August as a special lecturer. He started teaching in Saigon and then moved to Dalat, where the Institute held summer school. He taught tropical agriculture and guided the students' experimental exercises. ²⁶

Table 7 shows the teaching staff of the Institute as of October 1943.

III. Buildings and Other Facilities

The Nan'yô Association staff in Saigon, probably with the assistance of Embassy staff, sought a suitable building for the Nan'yô Institute, which was a boarding school. Initially, they expected that they would be able to find one among the buildings that had been requisitioned for military purposes by the Nanpô Sôgun (General Headquarters of

²⁶ Documents (b-3) p.7; (b-12) no.2. p.3; no.3, p.1; no.4, pp.1-3; no.5, pp.1-2, and interview (e-4).

the Southern Army, established in Saigon at the outbreak of the Pacific War), but in vain. They finally managed to borrow a three-story ferroconcrete building with a basement, which was owned by a Cochinchinese cultural and sports organization. The group was at first unwilling to surrender its main building, but ended up accepting the Japanese request, probably for fear of the retaliation that a rejection might lead to.²⁷

The building faced Gallieni Boulevard (present-day Tran Hung Dao Street), a main street where a tramway ran between Saigon and Cholon. The Institute also borrowed an adjacent open space of about 500 *tsubo* (1,650 m²) for an athletic field. However, drills were practiced on a nearby drill ground of Japanese troops that were stationed there.²⁸

For the first year, the building was large enough to hold both student bedrooms and classrooms as well as a lecture hall, library, laboratory, specimen room, professors' offices, etc. However, as new students and teachers arrived, the Institute had to find other buildings. In February 1943, the trade representation of the Nankin government was persuaded to surrender a two-story ferroconcrete building (about 600 *tsubo*) located opposite the Institute on Gallieni Boulevard. This building was used for the student dormitory; and by its side, an annex was newly constructed to serve as the dining

²⁷ Official telegram (a-4); documents (b-3) pp.11-12; and (b-12) no.1, p.3. The Official telegram (a-4) frankly reported that they forced the Cochinchinese organization in consent to their "fairly exorbitant demands."

²⁸ Document (b-3) pp.16-17; interview (e-5).

hall and bathroom. The first batch of students moved into this new dormitory in March, so that the Institute's main building could be fully used for teaching and other activities. After the arrival of the second batch of students, the Institute further borrowed a row of twelve two-story houses, next to the new dormitory, in order to house the newcomers. The teachers lived in separate houses outside the Institute. ²⁹

The Institute borrowed a tract of land of about 400 *tsubo* (1,320 m²) near the new dormitory to have students plant vegetables for practice. It also established an experimental farm of about 2 *chôbu* (19,334 m²), where various tropical fruits were grown. This farm was located in Lai Thieu, 18 km outside of Saigon. It could be easily reached by tram. Both the vegetable and experimental farms were first used in September 1943, after the arrival of Prof. Hosaka and Guest Prof. Tanaka. ³⁰

Another important facility was the summer school in Dalat, a resort town on the central plateau. The 1943 summer courses (tropical agriculture and others) were held in a temporary borrowed house. In late 1943, the Institute rented a three-story brick building with a tiled roof, as a Dalat rest house (or a Dalat drill hall for health preservation). But the Institute could not hold a summer course there in 1944, due to the worsening war situation.

²⁹ Documents (b-3) pp.12-17; (b-12) no.1, p.3; no.2, p.3; no.4, pp.3-6; interviews (e-2) p.17; and (e-8).

³⁰ Documents (b-3) p.17; (b-12) no.2, p.3; no.4, pp.3-4.

The Institute also opened a Japanese language school as an affiliated facility. It was located in Dakao, a French residential quarter in the east of Saigon. The school began offering classes on June 1, 1943, with Inoue Chôyô, Acting Rector of the Institute, as the school's principal and Watanabe Kiichi, the Institute professor of economics, as Japanese teacher. Watanabe was soon replaced by Kiuchi Rinrarô, who arrived in Saigon in late July. The Nan'yô Association staff in the Saigon office also served as instructors. A total of sixty Vietnamese and Chinese students were admitted, and divided into two classes. Lessons were given every day for three months, from six to seven o'clock in the evening. The first students completed the course at the end of August. Outstanding students were admitted to a higher course in September. ³²

IV. Until the Closing

As was mentioned above, the Japanese government financially authorized the establishment of the Institute in June 1942. The first students were enrolled in August and arrived in Saigon in December. Considering that the Japanese academic year usually starts in April, the Institute's activities were several months behind the normal schedule. However, in addition to preparatory courses held in Tôkyô

³¹ Documents (b-3) p.15; (b-12) no.4, pp.1-3, 6.

³² Documents (b-12) no.2, p.3; no.3, p.1; no.4, pp.4-5; interview (e-4) pp.128-129.

and Nara, the Institute also organized a summer course in Dalat in 1943, so that it could catch up with the required standard of teaching by the students' graduation.

The Institute began preparing to accept its second batch of students as early as in December 1942, when it announced the recruitment of new applicants. The entrance examination was held in February 1943. Thirty successful candidates were called to Tôkyô in March. They attended the opening ceremony on March 6, organized at the Nihon Seinen Kaikan (Japan Youth Hall) by President Kodama of the Nan'yô Association as a celebration for them. After receiving preparatory courses and training in Tôkyô as well as at the Kashihara Shrine, they left Moji Port on May 1. Tate Asajirô (the Nan'yô Association's councilor, and its former chief representative in Saigon) and Uoya Shôji (the Association's chief representative in Saigon cum the Institute's councilor) accompanied the students from Japan. They arrived in Saigon on May 14, and attended the entrance ceremony held at the Institute on May 25.³³

For the third year, 1944, the number of students was increased to 50. They left Japan in May, accompanied by Andô Toranojô, the Institute's Associate Student Inspector, who had temporarily returned home. But their voyage to Saigon was very long, because the worsening war conditions made safe and quick navigation very difficult. Their boat actually came under the threat of torpedo

³³ Documents (b-2) p.3; (b-3) pp.5-6; (b-4); (b-5); (b-6); (b-7); (b-8); (b-9); (b-10); and (b-12) no.2, pp.1-2.

attacks. They only arrived in Saigon in July 1944.³⁴

For the fourth year, 1945, 50 new students were selected and began preparatory courses and training in Japan. However, the end of the Pacific War deprived them of the chance to go to Saigon.³⁵

The students of the Institute did not have to pay anything for transportation, study, lodging and food, with the exception of a 360-yen annual payment that was actually returned to each student in the form of monthly personal expenses. In return, the students were obliged to work in an assigned office or company for at least three years following graduation.³⁶

The first students graduated in October 1944,³⁷ several months ahead of ordinary Japanese college students. In other words, they entered the Institute later and graduated earlier than the regular schedule, being enrolled for just a little bit more than two years instead of three. They were able to do this apparently by attending extra classes during the two summers of 1943 and 1944.

Graduates of the Institute were hired by Japanese companies in French Indochina (see Table 8). The majority entered trading and business firms, whose economic activities mostly involved serving the Japanese army and navy stationed in Southeast Asia. However, in December 1944, as the war situation deteriorated, most of them

³⁴ Interviews (e-4); and (e-8).

³⁵ Interviews (e-4) pp.136-137; and (e-8).

³⁶ Documents (b-4) and (b-14) prescribed that "The Institute shall assign working places to its graduates. They have the obligation to work at least for three years at the assigned office or company."

³⁷ Document (b-1) p.1; Interview (c-2) p.23.

were drafted by the Japanese army in Indochina. The second batch of students, who were admitted in 1943, were also eventually called up for military service as soldiers or civilian army employees, as were some of the teachers. After undergoing training, the new conscripts were attached to various units. They thus participated in the anti-French coup by Japanese troops on March 9, 1945.³⁸

In brief, the students of the 1942 enrollment had just a few months of business activities, while the students of the 1943 enrollment had to abruptly stop their studies due to the military conscription.

Japan was finally defeated in August 1945. The graduates, students and teachers were placed in camps along with other military and civilian Japanese. Except for a few who had been killed in battle or who wanted to remain in Vietnam voluntarily, they were repatriated from Indochina in late May 1946.³⁹

In the meantime, the Nan'yô Association, through Gaimu-shô channels, asked the Monbu-shô to authorize the graduation of the 1943 students on the grounds that they had spent more than two and a half years in school. The Monbu-shô agreed to do this in December 1945. It also permitted the members of the Institute's 1944 and 1945 classes to be transferred to any college (of agriculture/forestry, law/economy/business and foreign languages) in Japan. The Monbu-shô

³⁸ Interviews (e-2) pp.28, 27-29, 65-71; (e-3) pp.38-46; (e-4) pp.137-138. Among the teachers, for instance, Kiuchi who was fluent in French was called by the army to work as a civilian employee (*rikugun shokutaku*).

³⁹ Documents (b-1) p.2; interviews (e-2) pp.4, 30, 79-80; (e-3) pp.64-64; and (e-8).

also issued an instruction stating that the Institute' graduates should be treated equally with those of prewar college (*kôtôgakkô kôtôka*) and university preparatory courses (*daigaku yoka*)⁴⁰

Most of the 1944 students reentered universities or colleges after their arrival in Japan. The 1945 students who had not had the chance to travel to Saigon took the same path. On the other hand, among the graduates who had belonged to the generation of the 1942 and 1943 enrollment, very few seem to have reentered universities at home.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Yoshida Shigeru officially issued the closing of the Institute, in a letter to the Nan'yô Association dated February 2, 1946.⁴¹

Concluding Remarks

The Nan'yô Gakuin was founded at a conjunction of the intentions and expectations of several Japanese organizations: the Nan'yô Association, the Gaimu-shô and the Monbu-shô. It was established for the purpose of promoting Japanese business and other economic activities in wartime Southeast Asia. The first graduates actually entered Japanese companies in Indochina. However, the deteriorating war situation soon made it impossible for them to carry out their expected mission. They were called up for military service. Japan

⁴⁰ Documents (a-11), (a-13); (a-14); (a-15); and (a-18).

⁴¹ Documents (a-15); and (a-18).

lost the war shortly afterward, and the Institute was closed down.

The establishment and existence of the Institute were representative of Japan's ambition to control the Southeast Asian region, not only militarily and politically, but economically as well. The Institute's teachers and students came to Indochina probably for various reasons, but it is inconceivable that any opposed the Japanese leaders' intention of educating young Japanese to serve their country's southward expansion in business fields, even if their direct involvement in military actions in Indochina ran counter to their expectations.

However, it would also be unrealistic to think that nearly twenty teachers and two hundred students of the Institute were living in Saigon totally isolated from the local people and society. Even though it was wartime, they must have received various personal impressions and emotional experiences vis-à-vis the Vietnamese people and society. In particular, the teenage students (as well as young teachers) who spent their adolescence in Saigon have maintained a strong psychological attachment to Vietnam for several decades following the end of the Pacific War. Former teachers and students have occasionally held alumni meetings to share their common memories on Vietnam.

By the early 1990s, they were reaching retirement age, while Vietnamese society was changing rapidly under the Doi Moi policy, which was officially adopted in 1986. Under these circumstances, in April 1991, the former students decided to establish a

non-governmental organization, Nichi-Etsu Bunka Kyōkai (Hiep hoi Van hoa Nhat-Viet: Japan-Vietnam Cultural Association), to promote cultural exchanges between the two nations. The Association sponsored two Nangaku (Nam Hoc) Japanese Language Schools, one attached to National University of Hochiminh City, and the other to Hue University, offering two-year intensive language courses for young Vietnamese. The graduates have been hired by Japanese companies as well as by various Vietnamese organizations. Some have come to Japan with financial support from Association members to continue their studies.⁴²

Unfortunately, the Hue Nangaku school was closed down and the management of the Hochiminh City Nangaku school was handed over to another Japanese NGO concurrently in July 2001, due to the shortage of the Association's own budget and its members' advancing age.⁴³ However, through their efforts of running two schools which lasted almost a decade, the alumni of Nan'yō Gakuin tried, as a self-imposed "mission", to provide young Vietnamese with the chance to learn Japanese, thus repaying their psychological debts to Vietnamese society in one way or another. These debts seem to have stemmed partly from their involvement in Japan's southern expansionist movement, and partly from their regret that the wartime condition prevented them from working in Indochina, fully utilizing the knowledge and

⁴² Kameyama (1996); Hirata (2000); and interview (e-9).

⁴³ Information offered by Ms.Hirata Yoshimi (former instructor of the Hue Nangaku School), e-mail message dated May 4, 2004.

language skills which they had obtained through their coursework at the Institute.

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2, Documents

(a) Archival Documents in File I.1.5.0.18 housed in Gaimushô Bunsho-Ka (外務省文書課, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Documents Section)

(a-1) Telegram no.373 dated September 21, 1941 from Araki, Acting Consul-General in Hanoi to Toyoda, Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-2) Telegram no.144 "On the establishment of the Nan'yô Institute" dated January 30, 1942, from Yoshizawa, Ambassador in Hanoi to Tôgô, Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-3) Telegram no.243 "On the Nan'yô Institute" dated June 4, 1942 from Uchiyama, Minister in Saigon to Tôgô, Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-4) Telegram no.559 "On the building of the Nan'yô Institute" dated June 11, 1942 from Uchiyama, Minister in Saigon to Tôgô, Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-5) Telegram no.302 "On the Nan'yô Institute" dated June 30, 1942 from Tôgô, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Uchiyama, Minister in Saigon

(a-6) Telegram no.321 "On the Nan'yô Institute" dated July 6, 1942 from Tôgô, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Uchiyama, Minister in Saigon

(a-7) Telegram no.728 "A message to the Nan'yô Association on the establishment of the Nan'yô Institute" dated July 16, 1942 from Uchiyama, Minister in Saigon to Tôgô, Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-8) Telegram no.643 "On the Nan'yô Institute" dated October 6, 1942 from Tani, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Uchiyama, Minister in Saigon

(a-9) Letter dated October 8, 1942 from Kodama, President of the Nan'yô Association to Tomoda, Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-10) Nan'yô Kyôkai "Nan'yô Gakuin no Kaisetsu Yôryô" (南洋学院の開設要領, Summary Report on the Establishment of the Nan'yô Institute), no date (probably written in 1942)

(a-11) Circular Notice "On the Transfer of Students of the Dai Tôa Rensei Institute's Third School and the Nan'yô Institute" dated November 2, 1945, from the Director of Professional Education, Ministry of Education to principals of public and private professional high schools concerned

(a-12) Letter "On the closing of the Nan'yô Institute" dated November 7, 1945 from the Vice Minister of Education to the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-13) Letter "On the graduation of the Nan'yô Institute students ahead of the scheduled length of studies" dated November 21, 1945, from the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Vice Minister of Education

(a-14) Letter (with no title) dated December 13, 1945, from the Vice Minister of Education to the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-15) Letter "On the exemption of preparatory examinations for the former students of the Nan'yô Institute to enter high schools" dated December 4, 1946 from the Vice Minister of Education to the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

(a-16) Draft Instruction to Count Kodama Hideo, President

of the Nan'yô Association "On the closing of the Nan'yô Institute" presented by Mori Shigeru, Director of the Management Department (of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ?) on February 2, 1946

(a-17) Draft Instruction no.3 (with no title) dated February 2, 1946, from Yoshida, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Kodama, President of the Nan'yô Association

(a-18) Letter "On the Nan'yô Institute" dated February 2, 1946, drafted by Mori Shigeru, Director of the Management Department to be sent to Kodama, President of the Nan'yô Association

(b) Pamphlets and Notices distributed by the Nan'yô Association (南洋協会, Nan'yô Kyôkai) and the Nan'yô Institute (南洋学院, Nan'yô Gakuin)

(b-1) Nan'yô Kyôkai, "Nan'yô Gakuin Enkaku Gaiyô" (南洋学院沿革概要, Summary of the Profiles of the Nan'yô Institute), typewritten with no date (probably written in 1946)

(b-2) Nan'yô Kyôkai, "Nan'yô Gakuin no Kaisetsu Yôryô" (南洋学院の開設要領, Summary Report on the Establishment of the Nan'yô Institute), typewritten with no date (probably written in 1943, a different version from document a-10)

(b-3) Nan'yô Kyôkai, "Nan'yô Gakuin no Genkyô" (南洋学院の現況, Present Situation of the Nan'yô Institute), October 1943

(b-4) "Nan'yô Kyôkai Keiei Nan'yô Gakuin Seito Boshû Yôkô" (南洋協会経営南洋学院生徒募集要項, Essential Guidance for Applicants for Entrance to the Nan'yô Institute Run by the Nan'yô Association), with no date (for the applicants to be the second batch of students to be enrolled in 1943)

(b-5) "Gakkamoku Gakunen Haitô-hyô" (学科目学年配当表, Prescribed Curriculum for the Academic Year) (distributed to the students in the second batch enrolled in 1943)

(b-6) "Nan'yô Gakuin Gakusoku" (南洋学院学則, Regulations of the Nan'yô Institute) (distributed to the students in the second batch enrolled in 1943)

(b-7) Nan'yô Kyôkai, "Hikki Shiken Tsûchi" (筆記試験通知,

Notice on Written Entrance Examination) dated January 18, 1943 (distributed to the applicants for the second batch to be enrolled in 1943)

(b-8) Nan'yô Kyôkai, "Shintai Kensa, Kôjutsu Shiken Tsûchi, Dô Chûisho" (身体検査、口述試験通知、同注意書, Notice on Medical and Oral Examinations and Related Guidance) (distributed to the applicants for the second batch to be enrolled in 1943)

(b-9) "Nan'yô Gakuin dai-ni-kaisei Shôken-shiki Shidai" (南洋学院第2回生招見式次第, Program of the Opening Ceremony of the Preparatory Course in Japan for the Nan'yô Institutes's New Students in the Second Batch) at the Nihon Seinen Kaikan, Tôkyô, on March 6, 1943

(b-10) "Nan'yô Gakuin (dai-ni-kai Seito) Kashihara Rensei Nittei-hyô" (南洋学院(第2回生徒)榎原錬成日程表, Schedule of the Training Course in Kashihara for the Nan'yô Institute's New Students in the Second Batch), From March 9 to 22, 1943

(b-11) Nan'yô Kyôkai, Notice on the Payment to the Nan'yô Institute, September 1943

(b-12) Nan'yô Kyôkai, *Nan'yô Gakuin Tsûshin* (南洋学院通信, The Nan'yô Institute News), typewritten

No.1 (April 20, 1943)

No.2 (July 6, 1943)

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(b-13) Uoya Masaji (魚屋正次), Nan'yô Kyôkai Chief Representative to Saigon, "Nan'yô Gakuin dai-ni-kisei Saigon Tokô Nisshi Bassui" (南洋学院第2期生西貢渡航日誌抜粋, Selected Description from the Voyage Diary of the Second Batch of the Nan'yô Institute Students to Saigon), attached to the 2nd issue of Document b-12 (typewritten)

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(d-4) Kashiwagi Takuji (柏木卓司), Letter to Shiraishi Masaya (the author of this paper), dated July 11, 1976

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(e-3) Uryû Naomitsu (瓜生猶光), the Institute's Student in the First Batch, held in Hakodate, on November 21, 1979, printed in she same series of *Intabyû Kiroku* (Interview Records) no.C-3

(e-4) Andô Toranojô (安藤寅之丞) and Kiuchi Rintarô (木内林太郎), the Institute's teachers, held in Tôkyô, on February 13, 1980, printed in she same series of *Intabyû Kiroku* (Interview Records) no.C-6.

(e-5) Ôyama Iwao (大山巖), the Institute's instructor in military drill, held in Kagoshima, on May 1, 1971

(e-6) Nakano Gensuke (中野源助), commercial trainee and later employee of the Nan'yô Association, held in Tôkyô, on June 9, 1976

(e-7) Individual who wants to be anonymous, the Institute's student in the second batch, held in Tôkyô on July 14, 1976.

(e-8) Andô Toranojô (安藤寅之丞), the Institute's teacher, held in Tôkyô, on July 22, 1976

(e-9) Tokuda Katsunori (徳田勝紀), the Institute's Student in the Third Batch, held in Tokyo, on June 22, 2004