

*The Imperial Japanese Navy and the
Constructed Consciousness of a South Seas
Destiny, 1872–1921*

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Similar to the romanticized images that Manchuria would evoke with Japanese citizens looking for a better life in the 1930s,¹ but on a larger geographical scale and over a longer chronological period, the *Nan'yô*, or South Seas, conjured up a multiple of idyllic visions within the imaginations of many Japanese.² In Japanese perception over the course of the Meiji and Taishô periods, the *Nan'yô* became a region as diverse and as expansive as the interests and energies of those who directed their attention toward it. To disenfranchised ex-samurai, it was a warm tropical paradise, a territory in which to gain personal achievements and fulfill a sense of adventure. Politicians, journalists, and patriots hoping to plant the Japanese flag for national glory mistakenly viewed the South Seas as the one area untouched by Western imperialists and thus the optimal place for the new nation of Japan to acquire territories. On the other hand, certain entrepreneurs came to view the South Seas as a resource-rich economic treasure house, an area waiting to be exploited through commerce and industry.³ Malthusian-influenced economists saw it as a relatively empty region, one ripe for Japanese emigration. To members of the Japanese navy who worked to construct such notions, however, the

¹ For a recent essay on Japanese Americans who emigrated to Manchuria in search of economic and political opportunities, see John J. Stephan, 'Hijacked by Utopia: American Nikkei in Manchuria', *Amerasia Journal* 23:3 (1997):1–42.

² Initially, in the first years of the Meiji period, the term *Nan'yô* referred to the islands of the central Pacific that were located to the southeast of Japan, specifically the territories of the Mariana, Caroline, Marshall, and Gilbert islands. Over the course of the Meiji, Taishô, and early Shôwa era, the *Nan'yô* expanded to include the Pacific islands south of the equator, New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, the Hawaiian Islands, the Dutch East Indies, and the colonies of Southeast Asia.

³ Some Japanese entrepreneurs at this time were already beginning to conceptualize the potential wealth that could be gained with greater trade in what could be classified as a proto-Pacific Rim Economy. See Peter F. Kornicki, 'Japan at the Australian Exhibitions', *Australian Studies* 8 (July 1994):15–59.

Nan'yô encompassed all of these perceptions and more. As early as the first decade of the Meiji era, certain navy leaders realized that it was an area if developed, populated by Japanese, or successfully linked to Japan's economy in perception or reality, that could serve as an important justification for the navy in its political, budgetary, and institutional pursuits.

Unfortunately, the navy's role in the formulation and dissemination of a southern advance, or *nanshin*, ideology in the Meiji and Taishô eras has received scant attention from scholars. Historians Kobayashi Tatsuo, Hatano Sumio, Gotô Ken'ichi, Asada Sadao, and Tsunoda Jun have illustrated that at the highest levels of government, the Japanese navy was the most ardent proponent for southern advance in decade of the 1930s.⁴ In a similar fashion, Mark R. Peattie and Asada Sadao have persuasively concluded that narrow institutional interests played an important role in shaping the navy's policy vis-à-vis southern advance in the 1930s⁵ with Peattie astutely concluding that 'southward advance and the expansion of the Japanese fleet had attained an almost symbiotic relationship in the minds of the navy's aggressive middle echelon'.⁶ In Japan, the leading experts on *nanshin* ideology, historians Yano Tôru and Shimizu Hajime, have emphasized the civilians involved with the creation of Japan's southern advance school of thought.⁷ Shimizu, in fact, stated that Meiji-

⁴ Kobayashi Tatsuo, 'The London Naval Treaty, 1930', in James W. Morley (ed.), *Japan Erupts: The London Naval Conference and the Manchurian Incident, 1928-1932* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); Hatano Sumio, 'Shôwa kaigun no nanshinron' [The southward advance concept and the Shôwa navy], *Rekishi to jimbutsu*, December 1984; Gotô Ken'ichi, 'Kaigun nanshinron to Indonesia mondai' [The navy's southward advance arguments and the Indonesia problem], *Ajia yû* 31 (July 1984); Hatano Sumio and Asada Sadao, 'The Japanese Decision to Move South (1939-1941)', in Robert Boyce and Edmund Robertson (eds), *Paths to War: New Essays on the Origins of the Second World War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989); Tsunoda Jun, 'The Navy's Role in the Southern Strategy', in James W. Morley (ed.), *The Fateful Choice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980):241-96.

⁵ See Mark R. Peattie, 'Nanshin: The Southward Advance, 1931-1941 as a Prelude to Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia', in Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie (eds), *The Japanese Wartime Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 218-19, and Asada Sadao, 'The Japanese Navy and the United States', in Dorothy Borg and Okamoto Shumpei (eds), *Pearl Harbor as History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 225-59.

⁶ Peattie, 'Nanshin: The Southward Advance, 1931-1941', 218-19.

⁷ See Yano Tôru, *Nanshin no keifu* [A genealogy of southern advance] (Tokyo: Chûô shinsho, 1993), 9-47 and Shimizu Hajime, 'Nanshinron: Its Turning Point in World War I', *Developing Economies* 25:4 (December 1987): 386-8. Other important works by Yano Tôru include: *Nihon no Nan'yô shikan* [Japan's historical view of the South Seas] (Tokyo: Chûô shinsho, 1979), and 'Taishô ki nanshinron no tokushitsu'

era *nanshin* thinking was the by-product of men with ‘outstanding intellects’, namely Shiga Shigetaka, Taguchi Ukichi, Enomoto Takeaki, Suganuma Teifû, and Sugiura Jûgô.⁸ While it is true that these individuals were instrumental in forging the ideology of southern advance in Meiji Japan, all of these *nanshin* advocates, *nanshinronsha*, received direct or indirect assistance from the Imperial Japanese Navy.

This article examines the important role played by the Japanese navy in both the creation and propagation of the ideology of southern advance in the Meiji and Taishô periods and suggests that parochial institutional concerns significantly influenced the navy’s efforts to construct the notion of Japan’s South Seas destiny. Both within and outside the government bureaucracy, the navy sought to increase interest in, and expansion into the South Seas in large part to facilitate naval expansion. Furthermore, this paper will illustrate that in conjunction with the navy’s ideological efforts, its leaders were also willing to use traditional military means to secure territorial holdings in the Pacific, even if such actions were in direct contradiction to the civilian government’s stated policy. However dissimilar the navy’s sophisticated intellectual efforts and brazen military exploits were, each was motivated by a desire to strengthen the institutional and budgetary well-being of the navy.

That the navy was closely connected to the creation of a *nanshin* ideology and the development of a Pacific, or South Seas, consciousness in Meiji–Taishô Japan illuminates many important, yet overlooked, points concerning the navy and the rise of modern Japan. For one, the navy’s efforts both to construct an ideology of southern advance as well as to recruit and assist civilians to champion this cause indicate that this service was led by a thoughtful, intellectually and ideologically sophisticated elite who understood the importance of perception and public participation in the Meiji and Taishô periods. Moreover, working closely with civilians, namely journalists, writers, entrepreneurs, and Diet politicians as well as other groups and societies interested in encouraging Japanese expansion, illustrates that the Japanese navy was far from an exclusive military elite whose leaders resisted the increased role that civilians and political pressure groups would eventually secure in government. On the con-

[Views on southward advance during the Taishô period] in *Tônanajia kenkyû* [Research on southeast Asia] 16:1, (January 1978):5–31.

⁸ See Shimizu, ‘*Nanshinron*: Its Turning Point in World War I’, 388.

trary, as politics become more pluralistic, the navy reached out to groups within and outside the government to help weave an imperial tapestry of supporters for a South Seas empire. Indeed, as my article will illustrate, the Imperial Japanese Navy was, from the 1870s onward, a strong and consistent voice for southern expansion and thus, an important ideological and political agent of empire in Meiji–Taishō Japan.

Members of Japan's navy first looked to the South Seas in the early 1870s. After obtaining administrative independence from the Japanese army in 1872, the few navy officers with maritime training quickly realized that if the navy was to secure the degree of funding necessary to provide for the construction or purchase of a modern, western-style navy, it would need to develop a strategic identity separate from the army. Drawing from the obvious realization that only a navy could promote expansion and protect Japanese interests in the vast Pacific Ocean, navy officers slowly formulated a strategic doctrine that emphasized Japanese expansion into the South Seas. Similar to the army's formulation of a northern advance policy for Japanese security, *hokushin*, the southern advance ideology in time became a convincing justification for the navy's ever increasing budgetary requests.

In the early 1870s, few Japanese knew much about the Pacific islands that dotted the ocean to the southeast of Japan or the territories of insular and peninsular Southeast Asia that also fell under the rubric of the *Nan'yō*. While not the first time that Japanese had looked to the Southern regions, as between 7,000 and 10,000 went abroad, engaged in trade, and established overseas Japanese communities in the early seventeenth century, sustained contact with the southern regions, as with the outside world, became heavily restricted after 1639.⁹ In the early years of the Meiji state, therefore, the navy was required to undertake operations that would expand Japan's awareness of the South Seas.

To accomplish such exposure, beginning in 1875 and continuing throughout the 1880s and 1890s, the navy launched numerous train-

⁹ For a detailed overview of Japanese trade, see Robert L. Innes, 'The Door Ajar: Japan's Foreign Trade in the Seventeenth Century', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1980, 58–62. For a well-rounded and balanced study on overseas settlement communities, see Iwao Sei'ichi, *Nan'yō nihonmachi no kenkyū* [A Study of Japanese settlements in the South Seas] (Tokyo: Chijin Shokan, 1940 and reprinted by Iwanami shoten, 1966).

ing cruises for its cadets in the *Nan'yô*.¹⁰ These training voyages provided Japan's cadets with their first exposure to naval operations in the open expanses of the Pacific Ocean.¹¹ Owing to the creative imagination and foresight of a few high-level officials, however, the cruises became more than purely technical and educational exercises, for such expeditions were well-publicized events that aroused great interest in the Pacific area. Indeed, the most important form of *nanshin* publicity in the early 1880s emanated from expansion-minded journalists, writers, and intellectuals whom navy officials had invited to accompany such training cruises.

One such writer who became a strong voice for southern expansion in the 1870s was Shiga Shigetaka. From his youth, Shiga possessed a keen interest in maritime affairs, enrolling in a private school with a tradition of serving as a preparatory school for Japan's fledgling maritime service.¹² Under the guidance of master Kondô Makoto, who served in the *bakufu* navy, Shiga studied maritime science, although he never enrolled in the Japanese navy. Rather, Shiga, with his access to the *Nan'yô* opened by the navy, sought to awaken Japan to all that the South Seas had to offer.

Fulfilling the unwritten expectations of his navy sponsors, upon returning to Japan, Shiga published works based on his voyages. Reflecting the concerns of the navy officials, Shiga expressed reservations that Japan knew little of the South Seas and believed that without such knowledge his country would never become an active maritime power. 'At present', he lamented, 'only a few books exist on the South Seas'.¹³ Shiga, therefore, pronounced himself the first individual to discuss the South Seas: 'What is the *Nan'yô*? It is the area to which the public have not given attention at all as of yet . . . I am proud of the fact that I am the first to propose the new subject and substance called *Nan'yô*'.¹⁴

¹⁰ The first of these took place in 1875. This voyage took cadets to Hawaii and San Francisco. Later voyages sailed to Guam, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, the Caroline Islands, New Caledonia, New Guinea, New Britain, and the Philippines.

¹¹ For a description of the types of training, see Peter Cornwall, 'The Meiji Navy: Training in an Era of Change', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1970.

¹² For insight into the early works and years of Shiga's life, see *Shiga Shigetaka zenshu* [Collected works of Shiga Shigetaka] edited by Shiga Fujio, 8 vols (Tokyo: Shiga Shigetaka kankôkai, 1929), volumes I and II.

¹³ Shiga Shigetaka, *Nan'yô jiji* [current conditions in the South Seas] (Tokyo: Maruzen shôsha shoten, 1887), 4.

¹⁴ Text taken from *Shiga Shigetaka zenshu*, III:105.

Aside from general ignorance of the South Seas, Shiga worried that many Japanese would, once made aware of the *Nan'yô*, view these territories as of no consequences to Japan. To Shiga, the South Seas was the most important area for future Japanese expansion, and a major theme which ran through nearly all of his early works was that affairs of the Pacific mattered as much to Japan as those on continental Asia. In *Nan'yô jiji* Shiga declared:

Our Japan lives in solitude in the Pacific Ocean and borders on the South Sea Islands . . . We should be aware that when whales and crocodiles in the South Seas wave their tails, the waves surge to the foot of Mount Fuji and shake the mountain.¹⁵

While Shiga may have been the first of a new generation of *nanshin* writers who benefited from navy support, he certainly was not the last. Writer Hattori Tôru also took part in a number of naval training cruises. His books, *Nihon no Nan'yô* [Japan's South Seas], written in 1888, and *Nan'yô seisaku* [Japan's policy towards the South Seas], completed in 1891, echoed many of Shiga's earlier themes. Similarly, the free trade economist, Taguchi Ukichi, who established the *Nan'yô shôkai* [South Seas Trading Company], more explicitly called for a larger navy and merchant marine to develop and protect Japan's interest in the South Seas, declaring that 'The navy is the main factor in our national defence . . . expansion of the commercial fleet should also be achieved by promotion of trade and settlement in the South Seas'.¹⁶ Others such as Miyake Setsurei, Fukumoto Nichinan, Sugiura Jûgô, and Suganuma Teifû eventually all endorsed the *minami-e* [Southward-ho!] ideology and wrote prodigiously on the South Seas.¹⁷

Well-publicized training cruises were just one means by which the navy hoped to popularize the *Nan'yô*. Certain navy leaders such as Enomoto Takeaki pressed the government to adopt more aggressive measures to this end. Prior to his appointment to the Navy Ministry, Enomoto had earned the reputation as a fire-brand hard-liner with a sharp tongue and quick temper. In the War of Restoration, Enomoto served the *bakufu* and commanded one of its largest maritime units. He also commanded the renegade naval force that launched

¹⁵ Shiga, *Nan'yô jiji*, 2-3.

¹⁶ Taguchi Ukichi, 'Nan'yô keiryaku ron' [How to expand into the South Seas], *Tokyo keizai zasshi* [Tokyo Economic Journal] (1890), No. 513, 353.

¹⁷ For a good English-language description of Miyake, Fukumoto, and Sugiura, see Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969).

a rebellion in 1869. Owing to his naval expertise, however, once defeated, Enomoto was brought into the Meiji government and over the next twenty-five years, he served as Navy Minister, Deputy Foreign Minister, Foreign Minister, Minister of Education, Minister of Communications and Minister of Agriculture and Commerce.

Throughout his political career, Enomoto never let his dream for expansion into the South Seas evaporate. When, in 1876 at St Petersburg, Enomoto learned of the government's plan to crack down on a rebellious group of disenfranchised samurai, he suggested instead that the government should purchase certain Spanish-held islands in the South Seas to which the rebels could be exiled.¹⁸ On various Pacific Islands, Enomoto figured, the ex-samurai would no longer pose a threat to the government and moreover could channel their energies into establishing permanent overseas Japanese communities in the Pacific.

This was not the only instance when Enomoto sought to acquire territory in the Pacific. While in the Navy Ministry, Enomoto himself initiated unauthorized inquiries to the Spanish government concerning their willingness to sell the Marinas Islands and Palau.¹⁹ Later, in 1887 as Minister of Communications, Enomoto placed one of his ministry's survey ships, normally assigned to lighthouse duty, at the disposal of a group of amateur explorers including the governor of Tokyo Prefecture.²⁰ After weeks of exploration, the group discovered a barren island southwest of the Bonin islands and placed into motion procedures that led to the annexation of this island, now known as Iwo Jima, two years later.

Apart from training cruises geared towards building popular interest in the south seas and clandestine operations to secure information about territory, the navy also assisted with the formation and development of various societies that encouraged overseas expansion and which would later serve as political pressure organizations. While ostensibly run by civilians, navy men held important positions in nearly every society. For instance, Admiral Enomoto Takeaki was a prominent founding member of the *Tokyo Chigaku Kyôkai* [Tokyo Geographical Society]. During his tenure as President of the Society,

¹⁸ See letters dated 12 September 1876 and 1 January 1877 regarding the request to government officials to purchase islands, Enomoto Takeaki, *Shiberia nikki* [Siberia diary], 3 vols (Tokyo: Kaigun yûshûkai, 1935), volume I.

¹⁹ For this endeavour, see Mark R. Peattie, *Nan'yô: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia 1885–1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 6–7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6–8.

he encouraged close cooperation with the Navy and made Shiga Shigetaka an honorary permanent member for his work on the South Seas. Another organization in which Enomoto was a founding member was the *Shokumin Kyōkai* [Colonization Society]. Not surprisingly, by the turn of the century, this group had become one of the most outspoken societies supporting *nanshin* and naval expansion. As the society's prospectus read,

The navy is useful not only in times of war but during times of peace as well . . . the navy helps emigrants and protects ships. Therefore, with flourishing emigration and navigation, Japan should enlarge its navy.²¹

Other societies endorsed these ideas and echoed similar rhetoric. The *Tōhō Kyōkai* [Oriental Society], founded by Miyake Setsurei and Fukumoto Nichinan in 1890, is a good example. Both Miyake and Fukumoto had travelled to the South Seas with the navy and both believed that southern expansion was indispensable for Japanese prosperity. Moreover, both suggested that colonization and emigration could help achieve national unity. The stated objectives of the society—to 'produce reference material for emigration and navigation enterprises' on the *Nan'yō* in order to 'help carry out the nation's duty'—reflected their opinions.²²

Indeed during the later half of the 1880s and early 1890s *Nan'yō netsu* [South Sea Fever] gripped a wide cross-section of Japanese society. As Miyake Setsurei reminisced, 'At that time the desire for colonies, especially in the South Pacific, was strong . . . We felt Japan had to acquire territory'.²³ Sharing this dream, Shiga Shigetaka wrote that:

Every year on the anniversary of Emperor Jimmu's accession, February 11, and on the anniversary of his passing, April 3 . . . we should ceremonially increase the territory of the Japanese empire even if only it is by a small measure. On each of these days our navy vessels should sail to a still unclaimed island, occupy it, and hoist the Japanese flag . . . Not only would such a programme have direct value as practical experience for our navy,

²¹ For the full text, see 'Shokumin Kyōkai setchi no shushi' [The aims of the Colonisation Society], in *Shokumin Kyōkai hōkoku* [Transactions of the Colonisation Society], I:109–11.

²² The stated objectives were published in the journal *Tōhō Kyōkai hōkoku* [Transactions of the Oriental Society]. See also Henry Frei, *Japan's Southern Advance and Australia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), 44.

²³ Miyake Setsurei, *Daigaku konjaku tan* [A talk on the universities past and present] (Tokyo: Gakkansha, 1946), 142–3. Cited in Frei, *Japan's Southward Advance and Australia*, 45.

but it would excite an expeditionary spirit in the demoralised Japanese race.²⁴

By the late 1880s the navy had artfully recruited civilians to champion the cause of South Seas exploration and expansion. While both the navy and their civilian counterparts had differing motives behind their involvement in the *Nan'yô*, both saw the advantage of working with one another. Most importantly for the navy, however, was the fact that nearly all of these allied groups realized that a strong navy and merchant marine was a fundamental prerequisite for successful Japanese expansion whether it was economic, military, or commercial.

By the mid to late 1880s, increased interest in the South Seas had begun to pay budgetary dividends to the navy. Greater acceptance and support for the South Seas exploration and expansion coupled with a strengthened economy allowed the navy to secure funds for a limited fleet expansion.²⁵ Obtaining over seventeen million yen from a public loan, the first of its kind specifically earmarked for defence expenditures, and another one million yen from a naval defence fund established by the Emperor, the navy began to establish the foundations for a blue-water navy modeled on the Royal Navy.²⁶

While the navy successfully used an increased interest in the South Seas in part to gain greater appropriations, its leaders were less successful in actually acquiring territory in the Pacific and establishing the foundations for a South Seas empire. Territorial expansion as advocated by Shiga Shigetaka and Enomoto Takeaki was an unrealistic proposition for Meiji Japan. Despite rhetoric, the Pacific was neither awash with uncharted islands nor was it the one area untouched by Western imperialism. In fact, by 1900 all island territories in the Pacific were under either direct or indirect colonial rule. Five years earlier, conquest of any island territory other than Taiwan would have likely required direct diplomatic or military confrontation with a western power, something the Meiji leaders had consistently attempted to avoid in the first twenty years of the Meiji state.

When the opportunity to acquire territory presented itself during the Sino-Japanese War, however, the navy was strongly desirous of

²⁴ Shiga Shigetaka, *Nihonjin* [The Japanese people], 3 April 1890, 12. Also printed in Frei, *Japan's Southward Advance and Australia*, 45.

²⁵ For an overview of navy growth in this decade, see Matsushita Yoshio, *Meiji gunsei shiron* [A treatise of the history of the Meiji Military establishment], 2 vols (Tokyo: Yûhikaku, 1956), II:185–95.

²⁶ Kobayashi Ushisaburô, *War and Armament Loans of Japan*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1922), 34.

securing a foothold in the Pacific.²⁷ As with Japan's earlier expedition to Taiwan in 1874, the navy played a critical role in the Taiwan operation of 1895. From the beginning of hostilities, navy officials, particularly Navy Minister Saigō Tsugumichi and Admiral and former Navy Minister Kabayama Sukenori, were the strongest advocates for a military move against Taiwan and the neighbouring Pescadores Islands.²⁸ Having participated in the 1874 expedition, both were desirous to bring those territories under Japanese control.²⁹ During the final months of the conflict, after successfully supporting the army and eliminating the most important combatants of the Chinese navy, navy officials began to influence the direction and nature of Japan's final push against China. Specifically, navy leaders wanted to undertake the occupation of Taiwan while General Yamagata, architect of Japan's modern army and commander of the First Army during the war, supported a policy best described as 'advance in the north, hold in the south'. Fearing the possibility of foreign intervention if Japanese troops occupied Peking, however, Premier Itō Hirobumi supported the policy favoured by the navy, of 'advance in the south, hold in the north'. Believing that Yamagata would likely protest any decision that kept his forces from advancing on Peking, on 29 November Itō obtained an Imperial Ordinance recalling Yamagata from the front. With Yamagata back in Japan, the government attempted to forge a clear policy for the remaining military activities of the war. Five days later at an Imperial Conference, it was agreed that the army would hold in the north while the navy, with army support, would invade the Shantung Peninsula and the Pescadores Islands as a precursor to an invasion of Taiwan.³⁰ Hence, Japanese forces landed on Taiwan on 25 March 1895, five days before Japan and China agreed to a cease fire. During the ensuing peace negotiations, the navy made clear its determination to retain Taiwan, a territory which its leaders considered even more vital than the Liaotung Peninsula.³¹ At the end of the negotiations, the navy received

²⁷ For an overview of the factors that motivated the Itō government to occupy Taiwan see Edward I-Te Chen, 'Japan's Decision to Annex Taiwan: A Study of Itō-Mutsu Diplomacy, 1894-95', *Journal of Asian Studies* 35:1 (November 1977):61-72.

²⁸ Chen, 'Japan's Decision to Annex Taiwan', 62-7.

²⁹ For an English overview of the 1874 expedition, see E. H. House, *Japanese Expedition to Formosa in 1874* (London, 1874).

³⁰ Shunbokō tsuishōkai, *Itō Hirobumi den* [Biography of Itō Hirobumi], (Tokyo: Shunbokō tsuishōkai, 1940-41), 3 volumes, III:134-8.

³¹ Mutsu Munemitsu, *Kenkenroku: A Diplomatic Record of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-1895*, edited and translated by Gordon M. Berger (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 144.

what it wanted in the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which granted Japan formal rights to the island, whereupon Itô appointed Admiral Kabayama as Japan's first Governor General of Taiwan.

While Itô's own motives for occupying Taiwan may not have been to gain a stepping stone for further expansion, this was precisely how certain military and political leaders viewed the island, as a springboard for subsequent Japanese penetration in the South Seas. Indeed, besides giving the navy an overseas territory that it later used to justify greater naval expansion, the occupation of Taiwan altered perceptions over what constituted the geographical boundary of the *Nan'yô* and led to substantial increases in maritime trade and shipping with Southeast Asia.³² Moreover, successful occupation of Taiwan now encouraged politicians, entrepreneurs, intellectuals, and military leaders from the army to conceptualize the South China Coast as part of the nebulously-expansive South Seas where Japanese economic and territorial interests might be pursued. Both Katsura Tarô, the second Governor General of Taiwan, and Kodama Gentarô, the fourth Governor General of Taiwan, typified this sentiment. In 1896 Katsura declared: '... the development of Taiwan should not be confined to the island, but should be planned in terms of an advance into a wider area'.³³ In an official report to Itô that summer, he elaborated: 'We must make Southern China, the Fukien zone, ours, and establish a close connection with Amoy'.³⁴ Katsura, moreover, hoped that Japan would make haste to command the China Sea as well as the coastal region of southern China.³⁵ Later the same year he stated: 'The urgent business of the day is for us to command South China as if it were the Korean Peninsula'.³⁶ Three years later Kodama drafted a formal proposal concerning what he hoped would be the future priority of Japanese expansion. In his 'Fourteen-point Memorandum on the Past and Future Administration of Taiwan of 1899', Kodama asserted that 'In order to accomplish *nanshin* . . . we should make it our policy to gain a predominant commercial influence in South China and the South Seas'.³⁷

³² Yano, *Nanshin no keifu* 148–9 and Katayama Kunio, 'The Expansion of Japanese Shipping into Southeast Asia before World War I: The Case of O.S.K.', *The Great Circle*, 8:1 (April 1986):1–13.

³³ Tsurumi Yûsuke, *Gotô Shimpei den* [Biography of Gotô Shimpei], 2 vols, (Tokyo: Gotô Shimpei denki hensankai, 1937–38), II:414.

³⁴ Tokutomi Ichirô, *Katsura Tarô den* [Biography of Katsura Tarô] (Tokyo: Hara shobô, 1967), 2 vols, I:705.

³⁵ Tsurumi, *Gotô Shimpei den*, II:414.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, II:417.

³⁷ Kodama's Fourteen Point Memorandum is documented in Tsurumi, *Gotô Shimpei den*, II:418.

While certain navy leaders agreed that further expansion southward from Taiwan was a desirable policy to follow, they became concerned with the army's interest in Southern China. Just how protective its leaders became with safeguarding their institution's preeminent role in any further southern expansion can be seen in the events surrounding a dispute that erupted in southern China during the Boxer Rebellion. In July and August 1900, concern surfaced over which service would take the initiative and retain operational control in dealing with the anti-foreign demonstrations that occurred in southern China. In cabinet debates over whether to land troops near Amoy, to protect Japanese nationals,³⁸ Yamamoto was the most vociferous proponent of this proposed course of action, arguing that it would be prudent to land marines [rikusentai] in order to safeguard Japanese residents and their economic interests.³⁹

Earlier in August, Vice Navy Minister Saitô Makoto had pressed upon his superior the importance of having contingency plans drawn up in case a landing became necessary. He stated: 'We should place two or three large warships in Amoy . . . and when the time arrives, have them [Marines on board] occupy the vital point of Amoy'.⁴⁰ In fact, Saitô envisioned landing approximately 300 marines with the intention of gaining greater concessions. Yamamoto had agreed and told Saitô: 'When the time comes for joint action with the foreign nations [in the south], ensure that you do not lag behind . . . if some opportunity arises, work with our consul and, on the pretext of defending local Japanese residents, land marines'.⁴¹ Thus, on 14 August the navy commander at Amoy received permission to land marines from naval warships at his discretion.⁴²

In late August, a pretext was provided when, on the 24th, a Japanese temple was razed. In response, Japanese marines were immediately landed to protect Japanese residents from further acts of violence.⁴³ This, however, provoked greater local unrest and on 27 August Army Minister Katsura, without consulting Yamamoto,

³⁸ For an overview see Marius Jansen, 'Opportunists in South China During the Boxer Rebellion', *Pacific Historical Review* 20:3, (August 1951):241-50, Ian Nish, 'Japan and the Boxer Disturbances', 449-61, and Saitô Seiji, 'Amoy jiken saikô', *Nihon kenkyû* 305:1, (January 1988), 31-46.

³⁹ Tsurumi, *Gotô Shimpei den*, II:457. Cited in Jansen, 246.

⁴⁰ Saitô, 'Amoy jiken saikô', 32-3.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Nihon gaikô bunshô*, 33/1 No. 889, Yamamoto to Aoki, 911. See also Nish, 'Japan and the Boxer Disturbance', 452.

⁴³ Jansen, 'South China and the Boxer Rebellion', 246.

ordered Kodama to dispatch from Taiwan one army infantry battalion, two artillery battalions, and one engineering battalion via transport ships for operation in Amoy.⁴⁴ Once informed, Yamamoto vigorously protested and on 28 August, the army transport ships were recalled, leaving only the navy ships in close proximity to Amoy.⁴⁵

At an ensuing cabinet meeting held at the Foreign Minister's residence, Yamamoto again challenged Katsura's aborted manoeuvre.⁴⁶ He argued pointedly that operations in southern China fell under the jurisdiction of the navy and that army involvement amounted to nothing more than 'meddling'. A heated argument with Katsura ensued during which Yamamoto warned that, in accordance with international law, any troop-laden ships [intimating that this included transports contracted by the Imperial Army.⁴⁷] loitering near Amoy would be viewed by the navy as pirate ships [*kai-zokusen*] and attacked.⁴⁸ The meeting ended on this acrimonious note, and there was no further discussion concerning a future army landing in southern China. More importantly to Yamamoto, the army would not again seriously contemplate further activity in south China within the navy's sphere of jurisdiction during the last years of the Meiji period.

By the turn of the century, the navy had become closely tied to the ideology of southern advance in both public perception and reality. Given the navy's active role in working closely with journalists,

⁴⁴ Saitô 'Amoy jiken saikô', 37.

⁴⁵ Tsurumi, *Gotô Shimpei den*, II:469–71 and Jansen, 'South China and the Boxer Rebellion', 246–8. In his article, Marius Jansen claims that it was Itô, in his position as Privy Councillor, who led the fight against a large-scale army landing at Amoy. He does not mention the tension and rivalry that developed between Katsura and Yamamoto over which service had jurisdiction in Southern China. Indeed, Foreign Ministry archives in Japan illustrate that Yamamoto was influential at the cabinet level in blocking an army landing at Amoy.

⁴⁶ A transcript of this meeting, as recorded by Yamamoto Gombei, is located within a larger file contained within *Nihon gaikô bunshô*, 33/3, No. 2369, 940–53.

⁴⁷ During both the Sino-Japanese War and during the Boxer Rebellion, the army relied on vessels from the *Nippon Yûsen Kaisha* to transport troops and goods. In fact, the N.Y.K. was responsible for transporting 59% of the requisitioned tonnage and 83% of military personnel during the Sino-Japanese war. See William D. Wray, *Mitsubishi and the N.Y.K., 1870–1914* (Cambridge: Harvard Press, 1984), 355–72.

⁴⁸ The Japanese naval historian, Itô Masanori, cites this quote but gives no reference to its location in the Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives. Itô states that Yamamoto declared, 'Army troop-laden ships on the high seas without cause will be sunk as pirates by the Japanese navy. Please understand that this is in accord to international law'. See Itô Masanori, *The End of the Imperial Japanese Navy*, translated by Roger Pineau (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1962.), 206.

writers, entrepreneurs, and other civilian groups, it is not surprising that greater numbers of individuals, within and outside government, eventually supported, or expressed interest in further advance to the south. More importantly to the navy, calls for further southern expansion were often followed by support for greater naval increases.

Greater interest in the South Seas did not result in institutional complacency, however, with the navy. From Japan's occupation of Taiwan to the opening of the First World War, the navy continued to support activities that generated greater interest in, and awareness of the South Seas. Worried by renewed requests for army expansion after the Russo-Japanese War, the attention that Japan's interests in Manchuria had received during the war, and the precarious post-war financial position of Japan, the navy took every opportunity to illustrate the utility of the South Seas to Japan's position in East Asia and the Pacific. For one, *nanshin* played an important role in the navy's attempts to devise a navalist ideology or doctrine similar to Alfred Thayer Mahan's in the West, but one tailored to Japan's particular geographic and economic situation. The most influential officer in this pursuit was Lt. Commander Satô Tetsutarô,⁴⁹ who, under the orders of Navy Minister Yamamoto Gombei, published five notable works between 1902 and 1911 which espoused virtually the same themes: one, it was not in Japan's interest to have continental holdings and certainly not to expand them; two, the navy was the first line of defence; and three, Japan should look to expand into the South Seas.⁵⁰

While Satô's works were being distributed amongst Japan's oligarchs, Diet politicians, and military leaders, the navy also continued to support civilian *nanshin* activists in their efforts aimed at expanding the average citizens' interest in the South Seas.⁵¹ As during the early Meiji period, the navy provided transportation to and from the *Nan'yô* for select authors, adventurers, and *nanshinronsha*. One such voyage was that undertaken by Yamada Ki'ichi in 1910. After travelling extensively throughout the South Seas,

⁴⁹ For greater biographical information concerning Satô Tetsutarô, see David C. Evans and Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887-1941* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 135-41.

⁵⁰ See *Teikoku kokubô ron* [On imperial defense] (Tokyo: Suikôsha, 1902); *Teikoku kokubô shiron* [On the history of imperial defense], 2 volumes (Tokyo: Suikôsha, 1907); *Kaibô shiron* [On naval defence] (Tokyo: Kaigun Daigakkô, 1907); *Kokubô sakugi* [A proposal for national defence] (Tokyo: n.p., 1912); and *Kokubô mondai no kenkyû* [A study of the national defence problem] (Tokyo: n.p., 1913).

⁵¹ Yano Tôru, *Nanshin no keifu*, 55-75.

Yamada published a collection of essays under the rather strange title *Nan'yô angyashi* [A walking tour in the South Seas].⁵² In his chapter on overseas development, Yamada urged his fellow countrymen to look to the south. 'The future of our nations lies not in the north but in the south, not on the continent but the archipelagoes and seas'.⁵³ Moreover, Yamada boldly asserted that '... we should attempt to acquire the South Sea Islands'.⁵⁴

Along with Yamada, other writers also took up the mantle of 'minami-e' in the late Meiji Period. Included amongst this group who all published works in 1913 were: Inoue Kiyoshi, author of *Nan'yô to Nihon* [Japan and the South Seas]; Kajiwara Yasuto, who published *Tonan yûki* [Travel sketches of the south]; Egawa Kaoru, author of *Nan'yô o mokuteki ni* [Aiming at the South Seas]; and Sano Minoru, author of *Nan'yô shotô junkôki* [A cruising tour of the South Seas]. Similar to Yamada, all of these writers urged Japan to avoid further expansion on the continent and to direct its attention towards the tropical paradises of the South Seas.

Perhaps the most vocal and animated proponent of southern expansion during this period who, with the assistance of the navy hoped to encourage further southern expansion of the Japanese empire, was Takekoshi Yosaburô. Having written an earlier book on Japanese rule in Formosa, Takekoshi gained the reputation as a committed *nanshinronsha* and pro-navy activist, two causes he advanced as a Seiyûkai Diet Representative. In many ways the first two sentences of his 400 page travel account of the South Seas, *Nankokuki* [The southern countries], sum up the entire rationale behind the work: on the opening page Takekoshi declares, 'Minami-e! Minami-e!' [Southward-ho!].⁵⁵ Throughout his monograph, Takekoshi rarely missed an opportunity to enlighten his fellow Japanese of the riches that awaited them in the South Seas. He also insisted that it would be folly to expand towards to the north with such opportunities in the south.⁵⁶ In 1907, after a visit to Taiwan, Takekoshi wrote: 'The thought also of the future fills my heart with joy, because, as the Southern Cross seems to invite the mariner to investigate the

⁵² Yamada Ki'ichi, *Nan'yô angyashi* [A walking tour in the South Seas], (Tokyo: Kôdôken, 1910).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 209.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 210.

⁵⁵ Takekoshi Yosaburô, *Nankokuki* [The southern countries] (Tokyo: Niyûsha, 1910), 1.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 6–9.

wonders of the Southern Seas, so our successes in Formosa beckon us on to fulfil the great destiny that lies before us, and make our country “Queen of the Pacific”.⁵⁷ Ever hopeful, four years later in the July 1911 *Taiyô* [Sun] magazine, Takekoshi wrote: ‘It would be an auspicious occasion if a wise statesman would realize the error of over-commitment to the mainland of China and the policy of northern advance and if he would turn to a policy of advancing into the southern tropical archipelagoes and lead the nation in that direction’.⁵⁸

While Japan had not secured its position as Queen of the Pacific by 1911, greater numbers of Japanese traders and entrepreneurs had begun to make their presence felt both with the native islanders as well as other Europeans living in the South Seas. Although most Japanese traders faced enormous obstacles ranging from internecine warfare among the native inhabitants and restraints placed upon Japanese activities by Spanish and later German Colonial administrators, the share of commerce that Japanese eventually secured was impressive. In the Marianas island group, for instance, of the 57,787 Mk. worth of imports in 1902, Japan’s share was valued at 54,502 Mk. Moreover, nearly all of the islands’ exports went to Japan.⁵⁹ Observers on American-held Guam also noted the tenacity of Japanese entrepreneurs. In 1908, the Governor General wrote to his superiors in Washington, D.C. that ‘. . . practically all the trade of Guam is in the hands of the Japanese, who are gradually acquiring commercial mastery and buying up all the choice lands’.⁶⁰

While commercial successes encouraged more Japanese to consider the economic prospects of southern expansion, it was military action that again gave the ideology of southern advance greater legitimacy. As in 1895, a handful of navy officials openly contemplated territorial acquisition in 1914 which would have enormous consequences both for the navy’s later budgetary well-being and Japan’s future advance. Specifically, in the late summer and early autumn of 1914, while most Japanese politicians including the Foreign Minister, Katô Takeaki, and Prime Minister Ôkuma Shigenobu, looked to take advantage of the First World War to expand Japan’s interests

⁵⁷ Takekoshi Yosaburô, *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, translated by George Braithwaite (London: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1907), 11.

⁵⁸ Takekoshi Yosaburo, *Taiyô* [Sun], vol. 17–18 (June 11, 1911): 82–3.

⁵⁹ Purcell, ‘Japanese Expansion into the South Seas, 1890–1935’, 23.

⁶⁰ *Annual Report of the Naval Station, Guam* (U.S. Department of Navy, 1908), 23. Quoted in Purcell, ‘Japanese Expansion into the South Seas, 1890–1935’, 24.

in China, the navy sought to chart its own course in the Pacific. Unlike their predecessors during the Sino-Japanese War, however, naval officers in 1914 would initiate their own policy without the initial consent of the cabinet.

The opportunity to enlarge Japanese naval operations in the Pacific arose when, at Britain's request, Japan agreed to locate and destroy the remaining nucleus of Germany's East Asiatic Squadron under the command of Admiral Maximilian von Spee. Believing that von Spee's vessels lurked somewhere in the vast waters adjacent to Germany's Pacific island territories, the Japanese navy formed two separate task forces to commence operations in the Pacific. It was at this juncture that the possibility of occupying the islands of German Micronesia, while ostensibly searching for von Spee's squadron, firmly took hold within naval circles in Japan.⁶¹

Few, if any leaders in Japan's civilian government, however, shared the navy's overriding concern with German territory in the Pacific.⁶² Indeed, because Premier Ôkuma and Foreign Minister Katô were preoccupied with expanding Japanese interests on the continent, Katô explicitly warned Navy Minister Yashiro against aggressive operations in the Pacific. Consequently, before the second task force was preparing for deployment in late September, Yashiro cautioned its commander, Commander Matsumura Tatsuo, *not* to occupy German territory, stating:

The Foreign Minister feels that occupation of any German territory in the Pacific would lead to an extremely unfavourable diplomatic situation. Therefore, even if by chance you stop and must land military personnel, do not acquire the islands and hoist the Japanese flag. If Marines [*rikusentai*] become necessary, you must recall them expeditiously.⁶³

Others within the navy did not support this cautious stance. Upon receiving these restrictive orders, Commander Matsumura met with Admiral Akiyama Saneyuki of the Naval Affairs Division of the Navy Ministry.⁶⁴ Akiyama boldly suggested that perhaps Matsumura did

⁶¹ Peattie, *Nan'yô*, 41–3.

⁶² For an expanded discussion on the disagreement that developed between certain navy officers and the cabinet over military operations in the Pacific, see J. Charles Schencking, 'Bureaucratic Politics, Military Budgets, and Japan's Southern Advance: The Imperial Navy's Seizure of German Micronesia in the First World War', *War in History* 5:3 (July 1998):308–26.

⁶³ Orders quoted in Gô Takashi, *Nan'yô bôeki go-jûnenshi* [Fifty years of commerce in the South Seas] (Tokyo: Nan'yô bôeki kabushiki kaisha, 1942), 219.

⁶⁴ Because Yashiro's orders were somewhat unexpected, Matsumura proceeded to the Naval Affairs Division and the Navy General Staff Offices. He wrote what

not have to pay close attention to the Minister's orders. He argued that it would be impossible to locate the small number of German vessels in the vast Pacific without occupying potential German bases. Akiyama further declared that 'if you do a job that expends large sums of money, at least get some profits. It is because of this that I approved of your dispatch'.⁶⁵ He then lamented that the First South Seas Task Force, dispatched on 14 September under Admiral Yamaya Tanin, had accomplished nothing and, moreover, wasted valuable resources.⁶⁶ Akiyama therefore said that it might be profitable if Matsumura occupied phosphate-rich Angaur Island. Akiyama clearly did not want this opportunity for Japan to gain a foothold in the South Seas to slip away. Well before 1914, in fact, he had shown a keen interest in naval expansion in the South Seas.⁶⁷ As many navy officers in the navy including Akiyama presumed, occupation of territory in Micronesia could serve as a stepping stone to greater penetration in the South Seas and in so doing facilitate greater fleet expansion.⁶⁸

As Matsumura subsequently put to sea with his force of one battleship and two cruisers, Admiral Yamaya, Commander of the First South Seas Task Force, implemented his own policy. On 30 September 1914, Yamaya violated his orders, dispatched a landing force to Jaliut Atoll, and thereby seized what was Germany's commercial headquarters in the central Pacific.⁶⁹ Upon notification, naval head-

transpired at these meetings in his own diary, which in 1942 was located at Navy General Staff Offices. Unfortunately, the diary itself did not survive the Second World War but Gô Takashi has used Matsumura's notes and other staff documents to reconstruct the events that took place in late September and early October 1914 concerning Japan's occupation of Micronesia. See Gô, *Nan'yô bôeki go-jûnenshi*, 219–40. I would like to thank Admiral Hiram Yôichi (retired) of the Maritime Self Defence Academy at Yokosuka and Mark R. Peattie of the Hoover Institute, Stanford University, for bringing this source to my attention.

⁶⁵ Gô, *Nan'yô bôeki go-jûnenshi*, 220.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 219–20.

⁶⁷ Akiyama was also one of the brightest naval strategists in the Japanese navy at that time. For more information concerning him as well as for a further discussion concerning his role in the development of Japanese naval doctrine, see Peattie and Evans, *Kaigun*, 69–74.

⁶⁸ 'Hirama Yôichi, 'Akiyama Saneyuki: Nan'yô guntô senryô no suishinsha' [Akiyama Saneyuki: Promoter behind the occupation of the South Sea islands], *Taiheiyô shakai zasshi* [Journal of the Pacific Society] 50:14 (April 1991): 190–1.

⁶⁹ A highly detailed account of Admiral Yamaya's movements, as well as those of the Second South Seas task force under Admiral Matsumura Tatsuo is given in Kaigun Gunreibu [Naval General Staff], *Taishô san-yonnen kaigun senshi* [History of navy operations 1914–1915], 5:5 (Tokyo: Kaigun Gunreibu, n.d.), 625–50. Hereafter cited as Kaigun Gunreibu, *Kaigun senshi*.

quarters, at the request of the Navy Ministry, ordered a complete withdrawal of the landed forces. Yamaya complied and recalled his troops.⁷⁰

This retreat did not signal the end of the navy's activities in the Pacific. Both Yamaya's actions and Matsumura's earlier discussions brought about debate with the navy and cabinet over what course of action to follow over the next four days.⁷¹ On 3 October a policy favoured by more assertive and independent-minded officers who saw the Micronesian Islands as Japan's for the taking was endorsed by the cabinet. Almost immediately orders were relayed to Yamaya and Matsumura's task forces that military activities, including the 'temporary occupation' of enemy territory, could be commenced immediately.⁷² That day, Admiral Yamaya complied and returned to Jaliut on board the battle cruiser *Kurama*. Once there, he landed a party of three officers and nearly one-hundred marines and reoccupied the German administrative headquarters on the islands.⁷³ Similar to his 30 September landing, Yamaya and his men faced virtually no resistance from either the Germans or the islanders that had been trained by the Germans for military defence. Fearful that German troops might arrive from von Spee's squadron and also wishing to keep Australian forces from landing there, Yamaya left his landing party on the island to establish a military garrison.

Having secured the most valuable island of the Marshall Islands group, Yamaya proceeded quickly to occupy other important islands in Micronesia still under the administration of Germany. Moving from east to west, Yamaya steamed into the Caroline Island group and landed a small contingent of marines on Kusaie on 5 October.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ German Colonial archives also document the navy's occupation, withdrawal, and reoccupation of German Micronesia. See Report by *Stationsleiter* [Held of station], Merz, 7 November to the German Colonial Office, *Bundesarchiv*, Potsdam, *Reichskolonialamt*, no. 2631. This source is cited in Herman J. Hiery, *The Neglected War: The German South Pacific and the Influence of World War I* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), 29.

⁷¹ See Hirama Yōichi, 'Kaigunshiteki ni mita nanshin no ichi dammen: Nihon kaigun o Mikuronesia senryō ni fumikirasetta haikai', [One aspect of Japan's southern advance from the viewpoint of naval history: background of the Japanese navy's occupation of Micronesia], *Seiji keizai shigaku* [Politics, economics, and history] 250 (February 1987):95.

⁷² Kaigun Yūshūkai (eds), *Kinsei teikoku kaigun shiyō* [An outline history of the modern Imperial Japanese Navy] (Tokyo: Maruzen, 1938), 672 and Gaimushō, *Inin tōchiryō Nan'yō guntō* [South Seas islands mandated territory], 2 vols (Tokyo: Gaimushō, 1962), I:17.

⁷³ Kaigun Gunreibu, *Kaigun senshi*, 5:5, 640–59.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 659–73.

The following day, he sent marines ashore on Ponape, and within a week he had anchored his warships in the immense deep-water lagoon of Truk.⁷⁵ With this last military operation, Yamaya had, with great efficiency and no bloodshed, completed the occupation of the Marshall and Caroline islands for the Japanese empire.

While Yamaya successfully operated in the eastern part of German Micronesia, Commander Matsumura Tatsuo's forces mirrored Yamaya's successes in the western third of Micronesia. Having left Sasebo on 1 October with the battleship *Satsuma* and two escort cruisers, Matsumura steamed in the direction of Yap and completed the occupation on 7 October.⁷⁶ As marines made their way ashore, the Germans destroyed a partially rebuilt wireless telegraph station that had been attacked by the *HMS Hampshire* on 12 August. Despite this initial act of militancy, the Germans offered no resistance. After securing Yap, the cruiser *Ibuki* left behind the other vessels and proceeded to the islands of Palau and Anguar where, on both islands, marines were landed.⁷⁷ The final act of this 'temporary occupation' occurred on 14 October when the battleship *Katori*, the vessel which had left Yakosuka on 19 September to serve as a communications relay ship for orders transferred from Tokyo to Yamaya's task force, landed troops on Saipan. In just over two weeks, forces under the command of two naval officers had infused the navy's long-standing rhetoric of southern advance with substantial territorial gains.

While the successful occupation of Micronesia was a source of pride and optimism for most navy officials, the civilian government remained publicly indifferent to Japan's territorial acquisition. In contrast to the government's proclamation after the victorious seizure of Tsingtao, no laudatory 'official statement' was forthcoming concerning Germany's Pacific territories. Indeed, as one foreign newspaper correspondent wrote on 10 October, the 'most noteworthy feature in the official report is to be seen in its phraseology, any word conveying the sense of seizure, occupation, or taking possession of the place is carefully avoided'.⁷⁸

Indifference from civilian politicians aside, many journalists, businessmen, and entrepreneurs—the very people the navy had actively courted from the 1870s onwards—strongly supported the navy's actions and made their opinions known to the government. As a for-

⁷⁵ For his operations on Ponape, see *ibid.*, 675–718, for Truk, see pages 719–40.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 575–72 and Gô, *Nan'yô bôeki go-jûnenshi*, 224–7.

⁷⁷ Kaigun Gunreibu, *Kaigun senshi*, 5:5, 773–97.

⁷⁸ *Japan Weekly Mail*, 10 October 1914, 339.

eign observer noted, ‘The news of landing of forces by the Imperial Navy at Jaliut Island in the Marshall Group, has proved to be a source of eminent satisfaction on the part of the public here . . .’.⁷⁹ Moreover, in the days immediately after the navy seized the islands, Japanese newspapers ran numerous stories and articles stating that Japan must retain control over the islands once hostilities ended. For instance, the *Nichi Nichi* stated on 7 October, ‘As British forces have occupied German possessions South of the equator . . . The islands [north of the equator] naturally should become our possession’.⁸⁰

Strategic, as well as economic concerns, also encouraged private individuals to call for the occupation of the islands even before the navy had initiated military operations in the Pacific. In early September, Matsumoto Masazumi, the Director of Operations for the *Nan'yô Kôgyô Kaisha* [South Seas Mining Company] sent a nineteen-page pamphlet entitled ‘*Taiheiyô dokuryô shokuminchi shobun iken*’ [Thoughts Concerning the Disposition of Germany’s Pacific Colonial Possessions] to representatives in the Diet, cabinet members, and newspapers.⁸¹ Not only did Matsumoto urge retention and development of the islands on economic grounds, but he also argued that if the islands fell under American control, they could be used by the US Navy as a staging area to attack Japan’s home islands in any future Japanese–American war in the Pacific.⁸² A later editorial in the Japanese newspaper *Yorozu* echoed this concern, stating that Japan would have no defence against an attack from the south unless it took advantage of the wartime situation and pushed for permanent retention of the newly acquired islands.⁸³

Within the cabinet, disagreement over the merits of the navy’s actions and the disposition of the islands came to the forefront of cabinet politics when, on 18 November, the Australian government announced its intention to ‘relieve the Japanese occupation forces on Yap and other islands north of the equator’.⁸⁴ Prior to this announcement, the cabinet had not agreed to pursue permanent

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Nichi Nichi* 7 October 1914, 1.

⁸¹ Full document can be found in Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives, *Gaimushô*. MT 5. 2. 6. 22–2; Reel 515, 457–76.

⁸² *Gaimushô*, MT 5. 2. 6. 22–2; Reel 515, 465.

⁸³ *Yorozu*, 7 October 1914, 1.

⁸⁴ For a discussion of Australia’s plan, see Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, 144. For documents concerning discussions at the cabinet level in Japan, see *NGB*, T.3/III., No. 645–51.

retention of the islands after the war nor had it informed Britain of any such desire.⁸⁵ But now, prompted by the Australian initiative, during the last week of November, the government seriously debated the future of the islands. Intense lobbying by the navy and their pro-*nanshin* civilian advocates certainly played on Katô and Ôkuma's political sensibilities. Notwithstanding the navy's operational defiance of the government, each abandoned his former indifference to territorial gains in the Pacific and on 1 December the cabinet reversed its decision and requested that Australian forces avoid all former German islands under the occupation of Japanese naval forces, including Yap.⁸⁶ Coupled with this announcement, the Foreign Minister sought assurances from Britain that it would support Japan's retention of the north Pacific islands after the war.⁸⁷ Stating that Japan had given considerable assistance to the Entente early in the war and that its citizens felt that Japan was entitled to the islands as spoils of war, Katô asked for the initiation of formal discussions concerning Japan's post-war territorial claims. Katô correctly asserted to Grey that the Japanese people, press, and not to mention the navy felt that retention of the islands was not only natural, given the present set of circumstances, but essential. Moreover, he intimated that any other course of action would likely result in the collapse of his government. While Grey answered with a *aide memoire* to the effect that Japan's position would be considered in the postwar settlement, in early 1917 Japan secured Britain's support for its claims in the Pacific in exchange for further Japanese naval participation in the Mediterranean theatre.⁸⁸

Well before 1917, however, the navy had made clear its intention to remain an important military and administrative force in the islands. On 28 December 1914, the navy unified all of the loosely organized occupation garrisons under the Provisional South Seas Defence Force [*Rinji Nan'yô Guntô Bôbitai*], from which all policies and regulations were approved by the navy.⁸⁹ Despite the fact that the territories were divided into five civilian districts, the civilian administrators appointed by Tokyo held little authority and, for the

⁸⁵ *NGB*, T.3/III, No. 637.

⁸⁶ *NGB*, T.3/III, No. 647-551.

⁸⁷ Kajima Morinosuke, *Nichi-Ei gaikôshi* [A history of Anglo-Japanese diplomacy] (Tokyo: Sanshusha, 1957), 405-6.

⁸⁸ Gaimushô, PVM 19-1 (1-130), Reel P53, 101.

⁸⁹ Gaimushô [Japanese Foreign Ministry], *Inin tôchiryô nan'yô guntô* [The South Seas archipelago mandated territory], 2 vols (Tokyo: Gaimushô 1962), I:19-21.

most part, worked as assistants to the military government.⁹⁰ Moreover, under a thick veil of secrecy, the navy undertook numerous commercial, military, and administrative projects in the islands.⁹¹ Aside from harbour improvements and administrative buildings, the US naval attaché in Tokyo, G. W. Guthrie, had also heard numerous rumours from traders turned away by the Japanese and missionaries stationed in the islands, that the Japanese navy was constructing subterranean gun emplacements and military repair facilities in the islands.⁹² Even after civilians became more prominent within the South Seas government after 1918, every plan devised by the navy to shift governance over to civilians contained provisions for the navy to retain its garrisons and warships in Micronesia.⁹³

Aside from consolidating control in Micronesia, the navy looked to further develop and stir public interest in southern expansion. Beginning in December and continuing into the early months of 1915, the navy sponsored a well publicized fact-finding mission to the South Seas composed of journalists, writers, scholars and government officials.⁹⁴ While dispatched to investigate conditions in the newly acquired territories, the mission was part of the navy's effort to encourage greater Japanese emigration to the islands. As one member of the mission, Yamamoto Miono, a professor of economics at Kyoto Imperial University would later write in the popular journal *Taiyô*:

They [islands of Micronesia] are important to us for several reasons. First, they can serve as a stepping-stone in the event of the southward advance of the Japanese people. Second, in the event of a future crisis in the Pacific,

⁹⁰ For a document concerning administration in the islands which illustrates military supremacy, see *Gaimushô*, MT 5. 2. 6. 22–2: Reel 515, 10–17.

⁹¹ Concerning secrecy in the islands, see a letter from the US Navy Aid for Information Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to the Office of US Naval Intelligence, Washington, D.C. dated 27 May 1918. In this letter, the unnamed officer states: 'For some reason best known to themselves, the Japanese have cast a veil over everything now happening on these islands. It is extremely difficult to get letters in or out and practically impossible to land there . . .'. See Office of Naval Intelligence Archives, National Archives, Washington D.C., Record Group 45, Subject file 1911–1927, WA 5, Box 702, Folder #8. Hereinafter cited as O.N.I. Archives, Washington, D.C. [N.A.], RG 45.

⁹² See report from US Navy Attaché, G. W. Guthrie, dated 8 December 1916. Located in O.N.I. Archives, Washington, D.C. [N.A.], RG 45, Subject File 1911–1927, WA 5, Box 702, Folder#8.

⁹³ Peattie, *Nan'yô* 67–8.

⁹⁴ The 278-page report can be found in Japanese Foreign Ministry Files, M.T. 5.2.6. 22–2, Reel 515, pp. 164–442.

possession of the Islands, situated as they are between Hawaii and the Philippines, may be of critical importance to our nation.⁹⁵

This conclusion was reiterated in a document prepared by the navy in secret and given to the Japanese delegation that attended the Paris Peace Conference. It read, in part, ‘Even if our occupation brings no immediate advantage, the South Sea islands must be kept in our possession [and used] as a stepping-stone to the treasure houses of the south seas region’.⁹⁶

As the war continued and Japan’s trade with the South Seas region, which at this time grew to include insular and peninsular Southeast Asia, expanded, another wave of popular *nanshin netsu* [South Seas fever] swept Japan.⁹⁷ The navy’s occupation of territory coupled with the increasing price of natural commodities such as copra and rubber, not to mention Japan’s growing commercial dominance in the South Seas, renewed calls for greater expansion, with the primary ideological thrust of the World War I era ‘*minami-e*’ propaganda being economic and commercial in nature.⁹⁸ After 1914, it became commonplace to see the South Seas portrayed as a resource-rich area waiting for Japanese development and the newly acquired islands of the Pacific as a gate-way to greater riches for Japan. The *Nan’yô Kyôkai* [South Seas Association] founded in January 1915 with the support of the navy, stated in its prospectus:

A boundless treasure house which exists in the vast South Seas as wide as a million square miles if confined to Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, the Malay peninsula, and the Philippines, is awaiting development . . . Japan has [the benefit] of a close relationship with the South Seas in terms of history, economy, and geographic proximity.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Yamamoto Miono, ‘Nan’yô shinsenryôchi jijô’ [Conditions in the newly acquired territories of the South Seas], *Taiyô* 21 (September–October 1915):115. Also quoted in Peattie, *Nan’yô*, 51.

⁹⁶ The document written by Captain Matsuoka Shizuo, entitled ‘*Nan’yô shin senryô chi no shôai*’, can be found in the Japanese collection catalogued by John Young, in his work, *Japanese Army, Navy, and other Agencies, 1868–1945*. The document is contained in T282. (R73 F94313) *Nan’yô guntô kankei 3, gyôsei kankei* [Documents related to administration of the South Seas islands], Navy: 1914–1920; Taishô sen’eki senji shorui [Wartime documents of Taishô campaigns], vol 18; kaigun daijin [Navy Ministry], National Archives, 94369–78.

⁹⁷ Yano Tôru, *Nanshin no keifu*, 68–78.

⁹⁸ For a good overall discussion on *nanshin* thinking in the First World War era, see Shimizu Hajime, ‘*Nanshinron*: Its Turning Point in World War I’, *Developing Economies* 25:4, (December 1987):386–402.

⁹⁹ Nan’yô kyôkai, *Nan’yô kyôkai ni-jûnenshi* [Twenty-year history of the South Seas Association] (Tokyo: Nan’yô kyôkai, 1935), 5.

Moreover, other journals took up the cause of selling the South Seas. The trade journal *Jitsugyô no Nihon* [Business and industry in Japan] devoted an entire issue in March 1915 on the South Seas, listing travel and trade opportunities as well as discussing living conditions and investment possibilities.¹⁰⁰ The magazine *Taiyô* [The Sun], *Shokumin zasshi* [Journal of colonization], and the *Tokyo chigaku kyôkai zasshi* [Journal of the Tokyo Geographical Society] all followed suit, publishing numerous articles on the South Seas and *nanshin*.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, a wide array of books were published to rouse public interest in the South Seas and to encourage Japanese emigration into the *Nan'yô*. Among the most notable were Soejima Yasoroku's 1916 work, *Teikoku nanshin saku* [Policy of Imperial Southern advance], Tada Kei'ichi's *Nan'yô tokô an'nai* [A guide to South Seas voyages] written in 1917, Yamato Mionô's 1917 monograph, *Waga kokumin kaigai hatten to Nan'yô shinsenryôchi* [Overseas development of our country and the newly occupied territory of the South Seas], and Tsurumi Yûsuke's *Nan'yô Yuki* [Travel sketches of the South Seas], published in the same year. In this last work, Tsurumi urged Japanese entrepreneurs and labourers to establish themselves in the South Seas to develop the region for the benefit of Japanese economic growth.¹⁰²

To the delight of the navy administrators, the South Seas euphoria that the occupation of Micronesia brought about coupled with Japan's growing commercial ties to the Southern region as a result of the First World War significantly contributed to further Japanese emigration. In Micronesia alone, the Japanese population increased from under one-hundred in 1914 to over 3,000 in 1920. By 1930, this figure had expanded to over 20,000.¹⁰³ Not surprisingly to navy officials who had long desired southern advance, territorial acquisitions, the emigrants it inspired, and the naval race that developed as a result of the First World War all led to a substantial increase in

¹⁰⁰ See *Jitsugyô no Nihon* 18:3, 28 March, 1915.

¹⁰¹ One year before the Japanese occupation of Micronesia, the *Taiyô* dedicated its November issue to the theme 'Nanshin ka, hokushin ka' [Should we advance south or north?], with a majority of the articles urging southern expansion. For example, see Kusao Masahikô, 'Nanshin oyobi hokushin kankei' [Relationship between armaments and southward or northward advance], Hekirakukaku-shujin [pseud.], 'Hoppô hatten to nanpô hatten tonô rigai kan' [Advantages and disadvantages of northward development and southward development], and Yasui Shôtarô, 'Nanshin sakutei no ki' [An opportunity for formulating southern advance], *Taiyô* 19:15 (November, 1913).

¹⁰² Tsurumi Yûsuke, *Nan'yô yûki* [Travel sketches of the South Seas] (Tokyo: Dai Nippon yûbenkai kôdansha, 1917), 640–7.

¹⁰³ Peattie, *Nan'yô*, 154–7.

naval appropriations. Using all three phenomena to legitimate naval increases in Parliament, Diet representatives responded positively to the navy's requests and naval appropriations increased from 83,067,236 yen in 1914 to 502,063,829 yen in 1921, a figure that was nearly one-third of Japan's total budget.¹⁰⁴

Both the navy's military actions in 1895 and 1914, coupled with its long-standing ideological pursuit in shaping and supporting the cause of *nanshin* in the Meiji and Taishō periods forever altered the nature and extent of Japan's further southern advance. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s Japanese entrepreneurs, journalists, and economists looked to the opportunity that the resource-rich areas of Southeast Asia presented for Japan. Moreover, a sense that expansion into the southern region was predestined for Japan began to slowly seep its way into *nanshin* thinking, antecedents of which can be seen in Soejima's book *Teikoku nanshin saku*.¹⁰⁵ Writing in 1916, Soejima suggested that it was no longer a question of 'if' Japan would take advantage of the resources of the South Seas, but how Japan was going to secure access to these new areas.¹⁰⁶ Later, in the 1930s, the famous writer and nationalist, Murobuse Kōshin, best known for his ideological about-face concerning Japan's war responsibility in the autumn of 1945, took up the mantle of Japan's preordained *minami-e* with a zeal rarely matched by others in the 1930s. Aside from numerous articles espousing southern expansion, his most famous work was the book *Nanshinron* [On the southward advance], in which he declared 'Towards the south . . . The mission of the Japanese nation lies in the south . . . The direction of Japanese advance is predestined . . . Towards the south'.¹⁰⁷

Popular jingoism aside, of greater significance to the navy was the fact that by the middle part of the 1930s, the rhetoric of southern advance was given greater legitimacy by the government. In April 1936, members of the 'Research Committee on Plans Concerning the South Seas' [*Tai-Nan'yō Hōsaku Kenkyūkai Inkai*], an organization

¹⁰⁴ *Sōrifu teikoku kyoku* [Statistical bureau, Prime Minister's office], *Nihon teikoku tôkei nenkan* [Statistical yearbook of Japan] vol 43 (1924), 508–9. Also cited in Schencking, 'Bureaucratic Politics, Military Budgets, and Japan's Southern Advance', *War in History*, 324–5.

¹⁰⁵ Shimizu, 'Nanshinron and Its Turning Point in World War I', 396–400.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 387.

¹⁰⁷ Murobuse Kōshin, *Nanshinron* [On the southward advance] (Tokyo: Nihon hyōronsha, 1936), 254–6.

composed of twenty-one naval officers from the Navy General Staff who were *nanshin* enthusiasts, concluded a position paper that stated: ‘The Southern countries are the areas we should regard as most important for strengthening our national defence and solving the population problem and economic development . . . That means it is our country’s inevitable mission to expand our power . . . in the Southern area . . .’¹⁰⁸ After lobbying by the navy, three months later, at a Five Ministers’ Conference [a policy-approving body consisting of the Premier and the Minister from the Army, Navy, Foreign and Finance Ministries], the Hirota Kôki cabinet agreed to pursue a navy-supported policy of southern advance. In the policy document entitled ‘The Fundamentals of National Policy’, the five representatives agreed that Japan would ‘plan to develop nationally and economically vis-à-vis the Southern Area’.¹⁰⁹

While endorsement of this policy did not make Japan’s eventual military advance into Southeast Asia and beyond in the late summer of 1940 inevitable, by the mid to late 1930s the navy’s long-term effort to cast expansion into the southern region as a vital component for Japan’s future well-being had succeeded. Within the navy, planners saw the oil-rich nations of the southern regions, particularly the Dutch East Indies, as vital to the navy’s continued operational and developmental needs. Moreover, as many of their counterparts had in the past, naval strategists in the late 1930s saw *nanshin* as a way to legitimate fleet expansion in an era when the army was requesting ever larger increases to prosecute their efforts on the continent. Asked by Army Colonel Suzuki Tei’ichi in 1934 whether the Japanese navy seriously contemplated war with the US Navy and a subsequent southern advance of the Japanese empire, ‘Certainly’, Admiral Suestugu Nobumasa replied, ‘even this is acceptable if it will get us a budget’.¹¹⁰

More impressive, however, was the fact that aside from the navy, other important governmental bodies followed the navy’s lead in espousing the benefits of southern expansion. The Commercial Bureau of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs assisted with the creation and publication of tracts

¹⁰⁸ Joyce C. Lebra, *Japan’s Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Readings and Documents* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 59–60.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹¹⁰ Michael Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919–1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 39.

devoted to the subject of opportunities in the South Seas.¹¹¹ The Colonial Affairs Bureau of the Colonial Ministry, the Bank of Taiwan, the Yokohama Specie Bank as well as entrepreneurs such as Matsue Haruji, Inoue Masaji, and Ishihara Hiroichirô all urged greater Japanese penetration into the South Seas. By the late 1930s, moreover, even the Imperial Japanese Army supported southern expansion as a means by which to facilitate a favourable settlement in the China theatre. Indeed, by 1939 the navy and civilian *nanshin* proponents, many of whom had been assisted by the navy, had successfully constructed the perception that expansion into the southern region would serve as a panacea for Japan's economic and strategic insecurities.¹¹²

Unfortunately for the inhabitants of the South Seas area, the Japanese who had established themselves as entrepreneurs and successful economic agents of empire, and the allies that fought back the Japanese military offensive, the navy's aggressive strike south in 1941 solved none of Japan's problems that naval planners suggested it would. Rather, it led to hardship, suffering, and economic calamity. It is, perhaps, the greatest irony surrounding the rise of the Japanese navy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the ideology which its leaders helped create from 1870s onward, in no small part to justify its independent existence and budgetary expansion, eventually led the navy on a ruinous course that took with it the very empire and domestic security for which much of its vessels and sailors had been developed and trained to protect.

¹¹¹ Peattie, 'Nanshin: The Southward Advance, 1931-1941', 206-12 and Yano Tôru, *Nanshin no keifu* [a genealogy of southern advance] (Tokyo: Chûô shinsho, 1975), 166-72.

¹¹² For two excellent studies on a related attempt by the army, other governmental organizations, and industrialists to create an 'imagined empire' in Manchuria during the 1930s see Louise Young, 'Imagined Empire: The Cultural Construction of Manchukuo', in Duus, Myers, and Peattie (eds), *The Japanese Wartime Empire*, 71-96 and her recent monograph, *Japan's Total Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).