

COMPLETION REPORT

The Role of Vietnam and Indonesia in Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: A Comparative Study of the Japanese Economic Policies in Vietnam and Indonesia during the World War II

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This research project discusses the role of Vietnam and Indonesia in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, an imperialist propaganda concept created and promulgated by the Japanese for occupied territories in the Asia Pacific during the World War II. The core of the research focuses on comparing the economic policies implemented by the Japanese military authorities in Indonesia and Vietnam during the occupation. Under the financial support by the Sumitomo Foundation, between April 2015 and April 2016, I and the research team conducted research in Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan and we have obtained results as follows:

1. Archival research: In April and May 2015, I visited three archival centers, including the Vietnam National Archive, No. II in Hochiminh City, Vietnam, the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI), and the archive of Bank of Indonesia in Jakarta, Indonesia. The extensive collection of materials acquired from these archives together with the documents which I previously collected during my study in the Netherlands provide various new insights into the economic activities of the Japanese in Vietnam and Indonesia during the Second World War.

2. Field-works: In October 2015, I and the research team carried out field-works in the provinces of Ha Nam, Nam Dinh, Ninh Binh, Thai Binh, and Nghe An. These are places that suffered most seriously from the Japanese war economic policies. We visited local museums, memorials to the famine of 1945 and made interviews with a number of persons who were victims of the famine.

3. Conferences: Preliminary finding of this project have been presented in four international conferences, including the 2015 International NGO Conference on History and Peace, Seoul (South Korea), July 10-12, 2015; Vietnam-Indochina-Japan Relations during the Second World War - Documents and Interpretations, Hanoi (Vietnam), September 18-19, 2015; the 20th Anniversary of SEASREP and Southeast Asian Studies, Jogjakarta (Indonesia), October 3-6, 2015; and the Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia, Kyoto (Japan), December 12-14, 2015.

4. Research findings: Based on the above-mentioned activities and following the questions asked in the research proposal, I and the research team have reached some conclusions:

First, the short period of the Japanese occupation (five years in Vietnam and three years and a half in Indonesia) can be considered as a watershed in the histories of Vietnam and Indonesia. During this period, the two countries were plunged into the destructive war to satisfy the desire for imperial power by the Japanese. Millions of people died in addition to severe physical damages. But this is also the period of transition from colonial rule to national independence in the two countries. Many fundamental changes occurred in this period. In the surface, it is easy to realize the political dimension of changes from European colonialism to the Japanese imperialism. The transformation in social and economic aspects was more invisible, though vitally important.

Second, in pursuing their dream of an autarkic Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the Japanese adopted different strategies in Vietnam and Indonesia. Rice was the main product they required from Vietnam, although there was also quite an interest in textiles and vegetable oils. The products of overriding interest to the Japanese in Indonesia were raw materials, notably oil, bauxite and rubber. This caused great imbalance in the structure of the economy, for which only sectors necessary for the Japanese war efforts were encouraged.

Third, the Japanese occupation, for better or worse, stimulated the process of economic decolonization in

Vietnam and Indonesia. There was a shift in economic power away from Western companies and the Chinese to the Japanese. Except for the take-overs of the Haiphong Cement Factory and two distilleries in Saigon-Cholon in early 1944, the Japanese did not try to control French businesses during the occupation. The French companies continued to operate in Vietnam under Japanese command until 9 March 1945. In contrast, the operation of Dutch enterprises in the Netherlands Indies was immediately taken over by the Japanese military authorities. European managers were detained and to fill in the personnel vacuum, the Japanese appointed Indonesian senior staff to manage the companies. This trend was also followed in the state administration. A relatively large number of Indonesians were given responsibility in economic administration during the Japanese occupation and these people would become principal leaders of the Republic of Indonesia after independence.

Four, the embargo by the Allies and the Japanese policy for a self-sufficient Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere stimulated development of new industries and local handicrafts and the cultivation of new crops in Vietnam. In Indonesia, there was a shift away from perennial export crops to the cultivation of cotton and food crops made the country less dependent on the world market. Nevertheless, for an export-led country, as colonial Indonesia was, the conversion to self-sufficiency entailed the almost complete disruption of the economic system.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

1. Pham Van Thuy, "History education in Vietnam"- Presentation at the 2015 international NGO conference on History and Peace, Seoul (South Korea), July 10-12, 2015.
2. Pham Van Thuy, "For Better or For Worse: The Japanese Occupation and Economic Decolonization in Vietnam and Indonesia, 1940 -1945"- Presentation at the Vietnam-Indochina-Japan Relations during Second World War-Documents and Interpretations, Hanoi (Vietnam), September 18-19, 2015.
3. Pham Van Thuy, "Same Fate, Different Choices: Decolonization in Indonesia and Vietnam"- Presentation at international Conference "20th Anniversary of SEASREP and Southeast Asian Studies", Jogjakarta (Indonesia), October 3-6, 2015.
4. Pham Van Thuy, "Chinese business in Indonesia and Vietnam during decolonization, 1930s-1960s"- Presentation at International Conference "The Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia", Kyoto, Japan, December 12-14, 2015.

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

1. Pham Van Thuy, "For Better or For Worse: The Japanese Occupation and Economic Decolonization in Vietnam and Indonesia, 1940 -1945", Conference Proceedings: Vietnam-Indochina-Japan Relations during Second World War-Documents and Interpretations. Tokyo: Waseda University Press (in process of publication).
2. Pham Van Thuy, "Same Fate, Different Choices: Decolonization in Indonesia and Vietnam", (intended for *Lembaran Sejarah* (Indonesia)).
3. Pham Van Thuy, "The constraints of economic nationalism in early independent Indonesia", in: Alicia Schrikker and Jeroen Touwen, *Promises and predicaments: Trade and entrepreneurship in colonial and independent Indonesia in the 19th and 20th centuries*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2015, pp. 227-243.

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Pham Van Thuy, *Beyond political skin: Colonial to national economies in Vietnam and Indonesia, 1900s-1960s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (in process of publication)