

The Invasion of the South: Army Air Force Operations, and the Invasion of Northern and Central Sumatra

*Compiled by
The War History Office of the
National Defense College of Japan*

Edited and translated by Willem Rummelink

The Invasion of the South: Army Air Force Operations,
and the Invasion of Northern and Central Sumatra

War History Series, Volume 34 (Extract)

War History Series, Volume 5 (Extract)

The Invasion of the South:
Army Air Force Operations,
and the Invasion of Northern and
Central Sumatra

Compiled by

The War History Office of the National Defense College of Japan

Edited and translated by

Willem Rummelink

Leiden University Press

Advisory Board

Prof. Dr. Ken'ichi Gotō (Professor Emeritus, Waseda University)

Prof. Dr. Hisashi Takahashi (Professor Emeritus, Sophia University)

Prof. Dr. Ryōichi Tobe (Professor Emeritus, National Defense Academy of Japan)

Prof. Dr. Jirō Mizushima (Chiba University)

Dr. Petra Groen (Netherlands Institute for Military History)

Lt. Gen. (ret.) Dr. Dirk Starink (Royal Netherlands Air Force)

Lt. Gen. (ret.) Ad Herweijer (Royal Netherlands Army) (†)

Lt. Gen. (ret.) Jan Folmer (Royal Netherlands Army)

V. Adm. (ret.) Egmond van Rijn (Royal Netherlands Navy) (†)

V. Adm. (ret.) Matthieu Borsboom (Royal Netherlands Navy)

This publication is part of a project of the Corts Foundation (www.cortsfoundation.org) that aims to translate into English several volumes of the *Senshi Sōsho* series concerning the former Dutch East Indies.

The publication of this volume was made possible by grants from the Isaac Alfred Ailion Foundation, Prins Bernard Cultuurfonds: Engelbert van Bevervoorde-van Heyst Fonds, M.A.O.C. Gravin van Bylandt Stichting, the Stichting dr. Hendrik Muller's Vaderlands Fonds, and the Netherlands Institute of Military History (NIMH). Their logos may be found at the back of this volume.

Original title: 南方進攻陸軍航空作戦 [Nampō Shinkō Rikugun Kōkū Sakusen], published by Asagumo Shimbunsha [Asagumo Newspaper Inc.], Tokyo 1970

ビルマ攻略作戦、第四章 [Biruma Kōryaku Sakusen, Dai-yon shō], idem, Tokyo 1967

© National Defense College of Japan [National Institute for Defense Studies], 1970

English translation title: *The Invasion of the South: Army Air Force Operations, and the Invasion of Northern and Central Sumatra.*

© The Corts Foundation/Leiden University Press, 2021

Cover design: Geert de Koning

ISBN 978 90 8728 366 7

e-ISBN 978 94 0060 410 0 (e-pdf)

NUR 686

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the written permission of the publisher and the Corts Foundation, Secretariat, Mozartweg 3, 1323 AV Almere, The Netherlands.

This book is distributed in North America by the University of Chicago Press (www.press.uchicago.edu).

Contents [War History Series Vol. 34]*

Editor's Note	xix
About the <i>Senshi Sōsho</i> (War History Series)	xxiv
A Note on Japanese Military Aviation	xxix
Foreword	xxxv
Preface	xxxvi
Introduction: The Army's Strategy for the Areas to the South [of Japan] and the Changes in the Employment of Aviation (Until the Spring of 1941)	1
1. The First Initiatives for a Strategy Against the U.S. Forces in the Philippines and the Army Air Service	2
The Origin of the Southern Question as a Strategic Problem	2
The Birth of the Philippines Invasion Operation Plan	3
The Growth of the Army Air Service and Its Participation in the Philippines Invasion Operation	4
Very Heavy Bombers, Launching/Arresting Devices, etc.	7
2. Incorporating the Strategies Against Britain in Malaya and the Army Air Service	11
The First Initiatives for a Plan of Operations Against Britain	11
The Army Air Service's Long-Term Military Preparation Plan and the Employment [of Army Aviation] in the Philippines [Operation]	11
Partial Progress Made in the Plan of Operations Against Britain	14
3. Incorporating the Strategies Against France in French Indochina and the Army Air Service	16
Sudden Changes in the Situation of Eastern Europe, and [Japan's] Aspirations to [Achieve] a New Order in the South	16

* Although the full table of contents of Vol. 34 of the *Senshi Sōsho* is listed, only the chapters and sections with a page number have been translated.

The Plan of Operations Against Multiple Countries Including the Occupation of French Indochina	17
The Army Air Service's Revision of Its Preparations and Employment in the South	18
4. The Army Air Service and the Overall Strategy for the South Including the Invasion of the Dutch East Indies	20
Sudden Changes in the Situation in Western Europe and [Japan's] Judgment of the Situation to Employ Force of Arms Toward the South at a Favorable Opportunity	20
The Air Operation Accompanying the Stationing of Troops in Northern French Indochina	22
Assessment of the Preparations of the Air Arms in the Hostile Countries to the South	26
Subjects for Comprehensive Research in Employing the Air Arms Against the South	29
The Actual State of the Army Air Service and Its Assessment of the U.S. Air Force's Preparedness for War	32
Changes in the Aviation Fuel Situation of the Army	33
5. Acceleration of the [Army] Air Service's War Preparations for [the Operation in] the South	35
Extension of the Combat Range of the Army Fighter Planes and Adoption of the Type-1 Fighter Plane	35
Exercises to Study the Malaya Invasion Air Operation	37
Stepping Up the Air Service's Military Preparations and the Study of Operations in the Tropics in Taiwan	39
The Measures Taken to Advance Air Bases to Southern French Indochina and Thailand	40
The Formation and Training of a Paratrooper Unit	42
Changes in the Expectations About the Southern Advance — The Army and Navy's Outline of Policy Toward the South	43
6. The Composition and Equipment of the Army Air Service	44
The Outline of the Composition of the Military Units	44
Preparations for the Aeronautical Technology War	47
Aircraft Types, and Armaments and Munitions	48
Equipment for Intelligence, Communications and Other Purposes	49
Addendum: The Prewar Strategy of the Allies Against Japan and the Military Preparation of Their Air Forces	
Until the End of the First World War	
Around the Manchurian and China Incidents	
The Outbreak of the Second World War	
 Part I The Army Air Service's Preparations for the Southern Invasion Operation (May – November 1941)	 51
 Chapter 1 The War Preparedness of the Air Forces in the South Around the Opening of Hostilities Between Germany and the Soviet Union (May – August 1941)	 53

1. The Intelligence of the Opening of Hostilities Between Germany and the Soviet Union; the Worsening Situation in the South for the [Japanese] Air Forces	53
The Tightening of the Encirclement of Japan; the Buildup of Hostile Air Armaments in the South	53
The Question of an Air Force Alliance with French Indochina and Thailand	54
The Failure of Japan's Trade Negotiations with the Netherlands — The Critical Situation of the Aviation Fuel Reserves	54
2. The Army Air Service's War Preparation After the Opening of Hostilities Between Germany and the Soviet Union	55
The IGHQ [Army Department]'s Judgment of the Situation Around the Time of the Opening of Hostilities Between Germany and the Soviet Union	55
The Measures for Advancing the Southern Policy (Obtainment of Air Bases in Southern French Indochina)	55
The Order for the KANTOKUEN Exercise	57
3. The Stationing of Forces in Southern French Indochina	57
The Preparations for the Stationing	57
The Successful Stationing Without the Use of Force of Arms and the Total Oil Embargo Against Japan	60
4. The Shift in Focus to the South of the Preparations of the [Army] Air Service	61
The Assessment of the Situation of the Air Forces in the Manchuria Area and the Extraction of Some of the Air Units from Manchuria	61
The Information on the U.S., British, and Dutch Air Forces	62
The Outline of the Overall Southern Operation Roughly Decided	64
Chapter 2 The War Preparations of the Army Air Service After the Plan for the Southern Invasion Had Been Roughly Decided (August – October, 1941)	69
1. The Decision on a National Policy with the Determination Not to Flinch from War	69
The Main Points for the Implementation of Imperial National Policy of 6 September	69
The Assessment of the Situation by the Chiefs of the Navy General Staff and the Army General Staff	70
The Situation of the Hostile Air Forces in the South	71
2. A Comprehensive Study of the Employment of the Army and Navy Air Services	73
The General Completion of the Plan of Operations for the Southern Operation by IGHQ's Army Department and Its Prior Communication to the Front-Line Troops	73
The General Completion of the Navy's Plan of Operations	74
The Major Problems in the Employment of the Air Services in the South	77
3. The Army Air Service's Full-Scale Preparations for the Southern Operation	80
The Reformation of the Air Arm and the Formation of Special Units	80
Upgrading the Aircraft	83
The Special Trainings of the Units Scheduled for the Southern Operation	85
The Study and Training of the Paratrooper Unit	87
The Construction of Air Bases from Where to Launch the Operation	88

The Arrangements for Replenishment and Repair	92
The Collection and Distribution of Meteorological Data	96
Chapter 3 The Operational Preparations of the Army Air Service After the Determination to Open Hostilities (October – November 1941)	98
1. The Problems Facing the Air Service at the Time of the Reexamination of the National Policy	98
Reexamination of the Situation by IGHQ and the Government	98
IGHQ's Outlook on the Operations	98
The Judgment on the Changes in the Army Air Service's Material War Potential	101
2. The Dispositions of the IGHQ [Army Department] About the Operational Preparations Brought About by the Determination to Open the Hostilities	103
The Decision on the New Imperial National Policy of 5 November	103
The Plan for the Southern Operation and the Central Agreement Between the Army and the Navy	104
The Army-Navy Central Agreement on the Air [Operations] for the Southern Operation	114
The Issuance of Orders to Prepare for the Invasion of Key Areas in the South	120
3. The Southern Army Assuming Command and the Employment of Its Air Arm	124
The Chain of Command of the Air Arm of the Southern Army	124
The Agreements with the Combined Fleet and the Second Fleet	127
The Order to Prepare for Capture of Key Areas in the South	136
The Iwakuni Agreement — The Arrangement for the Philippines Operation Between the Army and Navy on Site	140
4. Concentration of the Army Air Service in the South	145
The Disposition of Forces Issued by the IGHQ [Army Department]	145
The Directives of the Southern Army	148
The Concentration of the Third Air Force	149
The Concentration of the Fifth Air Force	156
Part II The Operations of the Army Air Service at the Time of the Invasion of the Key Areas in the South (up to March 1942)	159
Chapter 1 Completion of the Preparation to Launch the Invasion [Operation] (Late November 1941 – The Opening of Hostilities)	
1. The General Dispositions for the Launch [of the Operation] to Invade the Key Areas in the South	
The IGHQ [Army Department]'s Disposition of Forces	
The Southern Army's Disposition of Forces	

- The Decision of the Day of Opening the Hostilities, with Reference to the Long-Range Weather Forecast
- 2. The [Numbered] Air Forces' Disposition of Their Forces for the Southern Invasion [Operation]
 - The Saigon Agreement – The Agreement Between the Army and Navy on Site for the Malaya Operation
 - The Plan of Operations of the Third Air Force
 - The Fifth Air Force's Disposition of Forces for the Invasion
- 3. The Operational Deployment of the Army Air Units (The Second Concentration)
 - Conditioning of the Air Bases in Southern French Indochina
 - Gathering Information on [Enemy] Air [Forces]: The Assessment of the Situation of the Air Forces in Malaya
 - The Third Air Force's Operational Deployment in Southern French Indochina
 - The Third Air Force's Disposition of Forces for the First Air Strike
 - The Departure of the Convoy of the Advance Landing [Troops] for the Malaya Area and the Bringing Down of a British Aircraft
 - The Fifth Air Force's Completion of Its Operational Deployment
- Addendum: The War Preparations of the British and U.S. Air Forces in the South Before the War
 - The Operational Preparations of the British Forces in Malaya Against the Japanese
 - The War Preparations of the U.S. Forces in the Philippines Against the Japanese
 - The American Volunteer Group in Burma

Chapter 2 The Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power Right at the Outset of the War – Gaining of the Air Supremacy (8 to 12 December 1941)

1. The Third Air Forces' Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power and Its Support for the Landing [Operation] in Malaya
 - The First Strike on 8 December
 - The 12th Air Division's Rapid Advance to Singora
 - The Arguments over the Air Support for the Kota Bharu [Operation]
 - The Situation on 9 December
 - The Situation Until 10 December
 - Addendum: The General Situation of the Operations, etc. of the British Air Forces in Malaya
2. The Advance of the Bases for the Air Operations to the Bangkok Area
 - The [Japanese] Negotiations with Thailand for Its Advance in Difficulties
 - The Support for the Fifteenth Army's Operation to Advance into Thailand
 - The 10th Air Division's Advance into Thailand and Its Preparation of Air Operations Against Burma
3. The Fifth Air Force's Initial Battles in the Philippines
 - The Air Campaign to Destroy the Enemy Air Power
 - The Support for the Landing [Operation] of the Advance Detachment
 - The Advance of Air Bases to the Northern Part of Luzon

Addendum: The U.S. Force's Air Operation in the Philippines

Chapter 3 The Charge Along Malaya and the Advance of the Range of Air Supremacy (Mid-December 1941 – Mid-January 1942)

1. The Southern Army's Operational Directives After the Success in the Initial Battles
 - The Assessment of the Military Gains and the Outline of Subsequent Operations
 - Replenishment and the Line of Communications, Particularly the Measures Against the Critical Fuel Supply Situation
 - The Disposition of Forces of the Newly Deployed Units (including the 47th Independent Air Squadron)
2. The Third Air Force's Neutralization of the [Enemy] Air Power in Northern Malaya and Its Direct Support of the Ground [Battles]
 - The Twenty-fifth Army's Disposition of Forces for Its Advance [Across] the Perak River
 - The [Third Air Force's] Disposition of Forces for Its Air Operations in Northern Malaya
 - The Initial Actions of the Direct Support for the Ground Battles
 - The Air Strikes on Penang
 - The Attacks on the Airfields in Northern Malaya and the Support of the Ground [Operations]
 - The Support for the Second Landing of the Twenty-fifth Army
3. The Main Force of the Third Air Force's Dash to Northern Malaya
 - The Twenty-fifth Army's Capture of British Air Bases in Northern Malaya
 - The [Third Air Force's] Preparations to Advance Its Air Bases to Northern Malaya
 - The Direct Support Air Units' Advance to the Kedah Province and Their Continuation of Attacks
 - The Question of [Temporarily] Putting the 3d Air Division under the Command of the Twenty-fifth Army
 - The Air Operation to Secure the Bridge over the Perak River
4. The Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power in Rangoon
 - The Decision on the Plan of Operations
 - The 7th and the 10th Air Divisions' Preparations for the Operation
 - The Progress of the Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power in Rangoon
5. The Plan of Capturing the East Coast of the Malay Peninsula from the Sea and the Difficulties in Advancing Air Bases
 - The Question of the Kuantan and Mersing Landing Operations
 - The Bases in Northern Malaya Bombed and the Night Air Raid on Singapore
 - The Problem of [Serious] Loss of the 3d Air Division and the Preservation of Its Strength
 - The Cancellation of the Heavy Bomber Air Division's Advance to Malaya and the Air Strikes on Singapore
6. The Third Air Force's Direct Support for the Ground [Operations] in Central Malaya
 - The Air Support in the Offensive at Kampar
 - The Air Support in the Pursuit Toward Slim
 - The Air Support in [the Operation to] Capture Kuala Lumpur

Addendum: The British Forces' Withdrawal from Central and Northern Malaya and Their Air Defense of Burma

- The Loss of Command of the Air
- The Withdrawal from Penang
- The Resistance at the Perak River
- The Defense of the Sky of Southern Burma
- The Reinforcements to [the Units in] Malaya
- The Abandonment of Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur

Chapter 4 The Invasion of the Philippines and Gaining Air Supremacy (December 1941 – February 1942)

1. Gaining Air Supremacy and the Dash [of the Main Force of the Fifth Air Force] to Luzon
 - The Fifth Air Force's Plan for Its Dash to Luzon
 - The Gaining of Air Supremacy
 - Addendum: The Defense of Luzon by the U.S. Air Forces in the Philippines
 - The Attack on the [Japanese] Convoy by B-17s
 - The Preservation of the Remaining Air Strength
2. The Support for the Main Force of the Fourteenth Army's Landings and Its [Operation] to Capture the Key Places on Luzon
 - The Assessment of the Situation of the [Enemy] Air [Forces]
 - The Air Operation in Support of the Landing of the Fourteenth Army
 - The Support for the Fourteenth Army's [Operation] to Capture Manila
3. The Extraction of [the Bulk of] the Fifth Air Force to the Thailand Area and the Organization of the Fourteenth Army Air Unit
 - The Shift of [the Main Force of] the Fifth Air Force
 - The Organization of the Fourteenth Army Air Unit
4. The Attack on the Bataan Peninsula and the Corregidor Stronghold
 - The First Air Strike on the Corregidor [Stronghold]
 - The Support for the Preparation to Capture the Bataan Peninsula
 - The Support for the Attack on the Bataan Peninsula
 - The Frustrated Attack on the Bataan Peninsula

Chapter 5 The Air Operations in Preparation of the Capture of Singapore and Palembang (January 1942)

161

1. The Speeding-up of the Invasion Operation of the South and the New Plan of Employment of the Air Arm
 - The Shortening of the Invasion Schedule of the South 161
 - Revision of the Southern Army's Air Operations Plan 161
 - Revision of the Distribution of Air Bases Between the Army and Navy 166
 - The Preparation for the Paratroop Operations: The Shipwreck of the 1st [Paratroop] Raiding Regiment 168
2. The Plan of the Air Operations Against Singapore and Palembang 169

The Relation Between the Singapore Operation and the Paratroop Operation in Palembang	169
The Singapore Air Operation Plan of the Third Air Force	170
The Army-Navy Arrangements on Site on the Air [Operations] for the Singapore Operation and Operation S	173
The 10th Air Division and Others Returned to Their Original [Numbered] Air Force	178
3. The Air Operations of the Third Air Force in Southern Malaya and Sumatra	178
The Disposition of Forces for the Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power in Singapore	178
The Hurried Conditioning of the Kuantan Airfield and the Deployment of Fighter Units There	181
The Launch of the Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power in Singapore	185
The Cancellation of the Landing Operations in Endau and Mersing (Operation S)	187
Direct Support of the Ground Operations in the Southern Malaya Area	189
The Intensification of the Air Strikes on Singapore and the Start of the Attacks on Palembang	193
4. The Third Air Force's Advance of Bases Toward Southern Malaya	198
The Seizure of the Airfields in Kluang and Kahang and the Advance of the Air Units	198
The Transport of Matériel to Mersing and the Air Combat Above the Town	199
The Accumulation of Fuel and Ammunition in the Kluang and Kahang Sectors	205
Addendum: The British Air Forces' Defense of Southern Malaya	208
The British Air Forces Expect Reinforcements	208
ABDA Command	211
The Sorties of the British Air Force Reinforcement Units	212
The Failed Attacks on the [Japanese] Convoy in the Endau and Mersing Area	214
Chapter 6 The Palembang Paratroop Operation and Support for the Capture of Singapore	216
1. Establishing the Conditions for Launching the Operations	216
Assessment of the Situation of the Air Forces Around the End of January	216
The Third Air Force's Deployment to Southern Malaya	217
The Southern Army's Operational Dispositions and the Arrangements of the Army and Navy on Site	217
The Third Air Force's Plans for Both Operations	225
The Third Air Force's Order to Implement Both Operations	238
2. The Execution of the Paratroop Raiding Operation Against Palembang	240
The Third Air Force's Disposition of Forces Committed to the Operation and the Decision on the Date of the Drop	240
The War Preparations of the 1st [Paratroop] Raiding Group	242
The Preliminary Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power	243
The Success of the [Paratroop] Raiding Operation	245
The Third Air Force's Dash to the Palembang [Airfield]	254
3. The Air Operation to Support the Singapore Operation	259

Preliminary Attacks on Key Places and the Air Campaign to Destroy the Enemy Air Power	259
The Direct Support for the Twenty-fifth Army's Offensive	264
The Fall of Singapore	269
Addendum: The Air Defense of Palembang and Singapore by the Dutch and British Air Forces	271
The Air Defense Battle in the Palembang Sector	271
The Air Battle in Support of the Defense of Singapore	273
Chapter 7 The Invasion of Java: The Success of the Stepping-Stone Tactics	275
1. Acceleration of the Preparations for the Java Invasion Operation	275
The Moving Up of the Invasion Operation Schedule	275
The Third Air Force's Plan for Supporting the Landing [Operation] on Western Java	279
The Plan of Operations of the Sixteenth Army	285
The Plan of the Third Air Force for the Constructing and Conditioning of Bases	287
The Employment [Plan] of the [Paratroop] Raiding Group Examined Right After the Capture of Palembang	288
The Third Air Force's Disposition of Forces for the Air Campaign to Destroy the Enemy Air Power in Western Java	291
2. Finishing the Preparations for the Java Invasion [Operation]	292
The Advance of the Air Bases	292
The Air Campaign to Destroy the Enemy Air Power in Western Java	296
Palembang Bombed	298
3. The Progress of the Java Invasion Operation	300
The Assessment of the Situation of the Air Forces over Java and the Question of Securing Command of the Air	300
The Cover of the Convoy	301
The Support for the Western Java Landing Operation	302
The End of the Java Operation	308
4. The General Situation in Malaya, Sumatra and Java After the Java Operation	313
The General Situation of the Third Air Force	313
The Support for Pacification Operations on Java and Lesser Sunda Islands	316
Addendum: The Allied Air Operation to Defend Java	316
The Allied Organization for the Defense of Java	316
The Loss of the Forward Airfields	316
The Last Effort in the Defense of Java (Early – Mid-February)	317
The Dissolution of ABDA Command — The Predicament of the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies	318
Chapter 8 Invasion of Southern Burma and Seizure of Air Supremacy [There] (January – March 1942)	

1. The Preparations to Invade Southern Burma	
The 10th Air Division's Strikes on Southern Burma	
The Fifth Air Force's Shift to Thailand	
The Preparations of Air Operations Against Southern Burma	
2. The Support for the [Fifteenth Army's] Charge Toward Moulmein	
The Support for the [Fifteenth Army's] Operation to Break Through the Border Between Thailand and Burma	
The Fifth Air Force's Strikes on the Mingaladon Airfield	
The Start of the Conditioning of the Moulmein and Other Airfields	
3. The Air Operations During the [Fifteenth Army's] Charge Toward Rangoon	
The [Fifth Air Force's] Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power in Southern Burma	
The Support for the [Fifteenth Army's] Operation to Cross the Salween River and the Continuation of the Air Campaign to Destroy the Enemy Air Power	
The Support for the Ground [Battles] near the Sittang River and the Continuation of the Air Campaign to Destroy the Enemy Air Power	
4. The Capture of the Airfields in Rangoon	
The Fall of Rangoon	
The Conditioning of the Airfields in Rangoon	
Addendum: The British Forces' Air Defense in Burma Focusing on Rangoon	
The Defense of Burma in the Initial Stages After the Opening of Hostilities	
The Loss of the Moulmein Airfield	
Part III	The Air Operations in the Final Period of the Invasion of Key Areas in the South (Until June 1942)
	320
Chapter 1	Evaluation of the [Military] Gains and Examination of a Policy for Subsequent Operations (March – April 1942)
	322
1. The Evaluation of the Situation from a Higher Strategic Perspective	322
The Prospect of Probable U.S. and British Counter Offensives Against Japan	322
The General Evaluation of Achievements in the Initial Operations	323
2. Air Strength's Wastage and Replenishment, and the Countermeasures	326
The Actual Situation of the Aircraft Wastage and Replenishment	326
The Actual Situation of the Losses and Replenishments of Personnel	336
The Operations of the Repair and Replenishment Units	343
The Operations of the Air Transport Units	351
The Army's Interest in the Buildup of Its Air Strength	352
3. The General Principles for Conducting the Future Operations	353
Coordination of the Army and Navy's Strategic Thinking:	
The General Principles for Conducting the War from Now on	353
The Outline of the IGHQ Army Department's Operational Directives	354
4. Preparation of the Air Defense Arrangements of the South	355
The Plan for the Disposition of Air Forces in Key Areas in the South After the Rough Completion of the Invasion Operation	355

The Formation of the 22d Air Division; Extraction of Part of the Air Arm of the Southern Army	358
Chief of the Army General Staff Sugiyama's Inspection Tour of the South	358
The General Plan for the Construction of Air Bases in Key Areas of the South	359
5. The Southern Army's Lessons of War Concerning Its Air Arm	362
The View [Held by Section 4 of the Southern Army Headquarters] on the Characteristics of the Air [Operation] of the Southern Invasion Operation	363
The Problems of Organization and Training	364
The Problems of Supply and Replenishment at the Rear	366
The Issue of Aeronautical Technology	368

Chapter 2 The Air Operations in the Pacification [Operation] of the Philippines (March – June 1942)

1. The Air Support in the Second Attack on the Bataan Peninsula
 - The Fourteenth Army Air Unit's Preparation for the Attack
 - The Air Strikes as a Preparation for the All-out Ground Attack:
 - Destruction of the [Enemy] Power
 - The 22d Air Division Assuming Command
 - The Air Strikes in Direct Support of the All-out Ground Attack
2. The Air Support for the Capture of the Corregidor Stronghold
 - The Fourteenth Army's Plan of Attack
 - The 22d Air Division's Disposition of Forces for the Operation
 - The Bombing of Corregidor Island
 - The Direct Support for the Corregidor Landing Operation
3. The [Fourteenth Army's] General Plan of Construction of Air Bases in the Philippines

Chapter 3 The Support for the Ground Battles in Central and Northern Burma — The Expansion of the Range of Air Superiority (March – June 1942)

1. The [Fifth Air Force's] Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power in
Central Burma and Its Support for the Charge of the Ground [Troops]
 - The Preparation for the Central Burma Operation
 - The Air Campaign to Destroy Enemy Air Power in Magwe and Akyab
 - The Cover for the Transport Convoy to Rangoon
 - The Support for the Capture of Toungoo and Prome
 - The Attacks on the Airfields in Magwe and the Shan Plateau
2. The Air Support for the Operation to Completely Destroy [the Enemy in]
Central and Northern Burma
 - The Southern Army and the Fifteenth Army's Preparations for the Battle in Mandalay
 - The Fifth Air Force's Preparations to Support the Ground Battle
 - The Cancellation of the Lashio Paratroop Raiding Operation
 - The Support for the Ground [Troops'] Charge Toward the Mandalay and Myitkyina Areas

- 3. The Plan of Bombing Calcutta
 - The Difficult Air Defense of Rangoon
 - The Preparations for the Air Strike on Calcutta
 - The Cancellation of the Bombing of Calcutta
- 4. The Rough Completion of the Air Operations in Burma
 - Securing the Stability of Burma and the Fifth Air Force's New Tasks
 - The Air Strikes on the Baoshan and Kunming Areas
 - Controlling the Air of Akyab; the Loss of [64th] Air Group Commander Katō
 - The Shift to the Positions for the Rainy Season
 - The Fifth Air Force During the Rainy Season
- Addendum: The Allied Loss of the Command of the Air of Burma
 - The Devastation of the Air Defense System of Magwe
 - The Withdrawal from Burma

Chapter 4 The Army Air Service After the [Japan's] Shift to the Defense of the Key Areas in the South (May – June 1942)

- 1. The Assessment of the Situation at the Time of the Completion of the Southern Invasion Operation
 - The Report of the Southern Army
 - The Southern Army's Comprehensive Observation About the Army Air Operation
 - The IGHQ Army Department's Plan for a Long Hold-out Operation
- 2. The Disposition of Forces for the Defensive Position of the South
 - The Change in the Primary Tasks of the Southern Army
 - The Southern Army's New Concept of Operations
 - The Change in the Chain of Command of the Air Arm of the Southern Army
 - The Deployment of the Air Arm in the South and the Recovery of Strength of the Air Units

Conclusion	371
Notes	375
List of Signs and Abbreviations (Chiefly Related to the Army Air Service)	386
[Attached Tables]	
List of Brief [Career] Histories of Key Air Service Personnel in the Army's Southern Air Operation	387
Specifications of the Japanese Army and Navy Aircraft [Employed in] the Southern Invasion Operation	402

Addendum: War History Series Volume 5, Chapter 4

Editor's note	406
Chapter 4 The Invasion Operations Against Both Central and Northern Sumatra and the Andaman Islands, as well as the Transport Operation to Burma	407
1. Circumstances and Preparations Until the Implementation of the Invasion Operations	407
Circumstances of the Implementation of the Invasion Operations	407
Forces to Be Employed in the Operation and the Preparations for the Operation	410
Preparations for the Andaman Operation	412
Preparations for the Sumatra Operation	412
The Army-Navy Agreement	413
2. Implementation of the Invasion Operation	421
Implementation of the Central and Northern Sumatra Invasion Operation	421
Situation of the Dutch East Indies Army	421
The Launch of the Invasion Operation	425
Implementation of the Operation to Capture the Andaman Islands	430
The British Forces' Defense of the Andaman Islands	430
The Capture of the Andaman Islands	431
3. The Operation to Transport Reinforcements to Burma (the 56th and the 18th Divisions, the Sakaguchi Detachment and the Units of the 33d Division Left Behind in Eastern China)	433
The Burma Operation and the Shipping Problems	433
Implementation of the Operation to Transport Reinforcements to Burma (Operation U)	439
Reinforcements to Be Sent by Sea	439
The Implementation of Operation U	442
[The Effort of] the Units of the 33d Division Left Behind in Eastern China to Catch Up by Land	443
Notes Volume 5, Chapter 4	445
Glossary	447
Index of Personal Names	460
Index of Place Names	469
List of Organizations that Supported this Publication	480

Editor's Note

The history of Japan's involvement in the Second World War is still a matter of great controversy, not least in Japan itself. There, scholars, the public and politicians cannot even agree on what to call the war, the Pacific War, the Greater East Asia War, the Fifteen Years War, the Asia-Pacific War, to name just a few examples, each with its dedicated partisan following. Successive Japanese governments have avoided the use of any of these names out of context, and the war is usually referred to as "The Late War" (*Saki/Konji no Sensō/Taisen*). Even though the Imperial Household Agency denies any specific intent, in practice the late Emperor, too, only referred to the war as "the late war," or used expressions such as "that unfortunate war" and "that unfortunate period," unless he was speaking in an international context about the "Second World War."¹

Not surprisingly, the same controversy affected the 102-volume War History Series (*Senshi Sōsho*), of which *The Invasion of the South: Army Air Force Operations* constitutes Volume 34, and the previously published *The Invasion of the Dutch East Indies*, and *The Operations of the Navy in the Dutch East Indies and the Bay of Bengal*, Volume 3, and Volume 26 respectively. Here, a compromise was finally found by allowing the use of the term "Greater East Asia War" in the main text, but avoiding it in titles, forewords and explanatory notes, although this did not prevent the publisher, Asagumo Newspaper Inc., from prominently putting the term on its flyers.² The foreign reader, who is mostly unaware of the enormous controversy still surrounding Japan's involvement in the Second World War and the vigorous, if not acrimonious, debate within Japan, is often left nonplussed by the vague official expressions used in Japan to refer to the war to paper over fundamental differences that all sides seem unable or unwilling to resolve. Moreover, to foreign readers, used to official war histories, as for example in the case of Britain and Australia, that are commissioned and endorsed by the government, or at least commissioned, even if the contents are left to the responsibility of the author, as in the case of the Netherlands, the Japanese example of a war history that is neither commissioned nor endorsed, but nevertheless compiled by a government agency, seems an anomaly and raises the question of whose view it represents.

The foreword to the present book is clear about it: the contents are the sole responsibility of the author and the head of the War History Office. But, as Professor Tobe shows in his introduction, it is not that simple. The text went through a great many study sessions and numerous revisions, and although great care was taken to present the facts and the oral testimonies as objectively as possible, the resulting text does to a large extent represent a view shared by Imperial Army and Navy veterans. But even here we should be careful. In the flyer supplied by the publisher for Volume 3, Major Okamura, a former staff officer of

¹ Shōji Jun'ichiro, 'What Should the 'Pacific War' be Named? A Study of the Debate in Japan,' *NIDS Journal of Defense and Security*, Vol. 13, No. 3, Mar. 2011, pp. 70-72.

² *Idem*, pp. 75-76.

Imperial General Headquarters sent out to Singapore to join the invasion of the Dutch East Indies, explicitly denies the claim made in all three volumes that the war was all about oil. For such a vulgar materialistic matter, the Imperial Army did not go to war. It went to war with the idealistic idea of establishing a new order in Asia and freeing the Western colonies of the Western colonizers. This, incidentally, is an argument often heard in Japan to justify Japan's entry into the war. In its most minimal form, it asserts that something good came out of something bad, after all.

When even the name of your subject is a matter of controversy, it becomes very hard to write an authoritative, let alone academically sound, historical narrative. Not being academically trained historians, the authors of the *Senshi Sōsho* may not be expected to handle their material with all the conventions of the historian's craft regarding primary sources, secondary sources, the literature, references, etc. But in these respects, the *Senshi Sōsho* do not differ much from most of the older Western military histories. In the official histories compiled by the Allied powers after the war almost simultaneously with the compilation of the *Senshi Sōsho*, the role of the home side is typically emphasized, and they serve to give an account of, if not to account for, the actions of their own forces. A certain bias and one-sidedness is inherent; the *Senshi Sōsho* are no exception.³ The professionalization of the field of military history is a comparatively recent phenomenon. Also the Dutch counterpart, *Nederlands-Indië contra Japan*,⁴ compiled by the War History Section of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL) and completed by the Military History Section of the Royal Netherlands Army, is a case in point. However, there is a difference. The Dutch narrative spends no less than two of its seven volumes on the events leading up to the war. The authors of *The Invasion of the Dutch East Indies*, *The Operations of the Navy in the Dutch East Indies and the Bay of Bengal*, and *The Invasion of the South: Army Air Force Operations* only need a few pages to hop, step and jump to the opening of hostilities. This seems to be a deliberate choice. Other volumes in the series — eventually no less than seven — would be dedicated to the circumstances that led to the opening of hostilities. Moreover, the authors' primary task was to provide educational and research material for the Japanese Self-Defense Forces, so not surprisingly they opted for the simplest explanation of the war, the quest for oil, and jumped as quickly as possible into the nitty-gritty details of the planning and execution of the operations.

It has been remarked that the *Senshi Sōsho* "... provide a great treasure of data and fact. Yet they often omit discussion of questions of primary interest to the Western historian."⁵ That the *Senshi Sōsho* and many other Japanese sources are often "maddeningly silent"⁶ on such matters, however, does not take away their immense value as a treasure trove of data and fact. As Professor Tobe remarks in his introduction: "It is virtually impossible to examine how Japanese forces fought in the Pacific War without referring to the *Senshi Sōsho* series."

For the student of the Japanese invasion of the Dutch East Indies, the present translations will fill a large gap in his knowledge, even though he may not find answers to some of his most fundamental questions. With the publication of this final volume, we have completed

³ See also: P. J. Dennis, 'Military History in Australia,' *Mededelingen Sectie Militaire Geschiedenis* (Vol. 14, 1991) 9-18, pp. 9-10; A. R. Millett, 'The Study of Military History in the United States Since World War II', *Idem*, 109-129, pp. 122-123.

⁴ *Sectie Krijgsgeschiedenis, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan*, 7 Vols., 's-Gravenhage, Staatsdrukkerij, 1949-1961.

⁵ David C. Evans, Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887-1941*, Annapolis, Naval Institute Press, 1997, p. xxiii.

⁶ *Idem*, p. xxiv.

the Imperial Army, Navy, and Army Air Force's account of their operations against the Dutch East Indies. Historians of military aviation will be disappointed that the present volume is not complete. The articles of association of the Corts Foundation, the initiator and main sponsor of the project, prevent it from subsidizing projects that exceed the boundaries of the former Dutch East Indies. So, regretfully we had to skip those parts of the book that specifically deal with the operations in the Philippines, Malaya, and Burma. Even so, we have retained enough of the general description to keep the argument understandable. The table of contents has been translated in full to allow the reader to see which parts have been skipped.

As an addendum, we have included chapter 4 of *Senshi Sōsho* volume 5, *The Invasion of Burma*, since it deals with the invasion of northern and central Sumatra, a subject that was not dealt with in *The Invasion of the Dutch East Indies*. The latter volume ends with the Dutch East Indies surrender at Kalijati on 8 March 1942. The invasion of northern and central Sumatra occurred after that date under the responsibility of the Japanese Twenty-fifth Army in Singapore which executed it as part of its Burma campaign.

The three translated volumes together provide an unparalleled insight into the Japanese military campaign against southeast Asia and the men who executed it. Moreover, we hope it will answer some of the questions of those who still wonder how it all could have happened, and who often still bear the scars of defeat and the subsequent years in prison or internment camps. A look over the hill, or the horizon, to see what was done and thought on the side of the former enemy, may not excuse anything, but it may explain many things.

The translation of military terms: Although the organization of the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA), including its Air Force, and the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) was similar to those of Western armies and navies, there is often no one-to-one correspondence in the names and functions of their constituent parts. Some translators have chosen to emphasize the differences by not translating specific military terms, while others prefer literal translations in some form or another. For example, we might find *hikō sentai* (飛行戦隊) simply as "*sentai*" or translated more literally as "air regiment." Others again try to find designations in Western armies and navies that most closely resemble their Japanese counterpart in function, resulting in translations such as "group," "air group," "air combat group," or even "wing." In this book, we have generally followed the third option without being too dogmatic. "*Gun*" (軍) as in "*daijūroku gun*" (第十六軍 [Sixteenth Army]) remains "army," even though "army corps" would be more correct in terms of size and function. At the same time, we have tried to avoid British or Commonwealth terminology and generally followed American usage common in the U.S. Army and Navy during World War II. This limitation precludes the use of terms such as "wing" in the example above because the term "wing" was not officially adopted in the U.S. (Army) Air Force until after the war. The same applies to the terms "*sentai*" (戦隊) and "*kōkū sentai*" (航空戦隊) in the IJN. Since American World War II usage reserves "squadron" for destroyer and submarine squadrons, we turned the other fleet "*sentai*" / "*kōkū sentai*" into "divisions," and the IJN land-based air "*sentai*" into air "flotillas." However, we did not try to reinvent the wheel and based our translations mainly on the 1944 U.S. Army manual "A Handbook on Japanese Military Forces" [<https://archive.org/details/TME30-480>] for the IJA, and Japanese Monograph No. 116 for the IJN [<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/Japan/Monos/JM-116/index.html>], and "Japanese Military and Technical Terms"

(CINCPAC • CINCPA Bulletin No. 18-45, 1945) for both. As not everyone may agree with our choices, we have made them explicit in the glossary at the end of the book.

Japanese names: The characters used in Japanese names can often be read in more than one way. In the text we have used the readings from the name lists of the IJA and IJN, if given and unless pointed out otherwise by later research. If no reading is given in these lists, we have used readings found in bibliographical dictionaries and other sources. In all other cases, we have adopted the most common reading. In the Index of Personal Names, we have added a question mark behind the family and/or personal name whenever the reading remains open to interpretation. In the translated text, Japanese names are given in Japanese order, i.e. the family name first, followed by the personal name without a comma in between.

Place names: In the Japanese text, foreign place names are either written in characters, as in the case of Chinese place names, or in the Japanese phonetic *katakana* script. Especially in the latter case, this has led to a great number of hard to identify place names. We think that we managed to identify most of them. With the exception of Hong Kong and Saigon, all place names are given in their modern, local readings, e.g. Guangdong instead of Canton, and Gaoxiong instead of Takao. An exception has been made for the names of Japanese naval air groups that take their name from their home bases outside Japan proper. These are given with their Japanese names, for example, Takao Air Group from Gaoxiong (Taiwan), Genzan Air Group from Wŏnsan (North Korea), and Tōkō Air Group from Donggang (Taiwan). In the case of the Dutch East Indies, colonial era names such as Batavia and Buitenzorg have been preserved, but their modern names, Jakarta and Bogor, have been added in the Index of Place Names. The spelling of Indonesian place names is rather inconsistent and differs from atlas to atlas. We have followed what seems to be the most commonly accepted spelling.

The Tohoku University Gaihozu Digital Archive (<http://chiri.es.tohoku.ac.jp/~gaihozu/index.php>) provided by the Tohoku University Library, Institute of Geography, Graduate School of Science, was a great source for hard to find maps and charts.

Maps: We have reproduced all the maps in the translated parts of the book and provided them with English legends. A list of the symbols and abbreviations used in the maps may be found on page 386. The separately attached maps of the original Japanese edition, however, proved too large for the confines of the English edition. Moreover, they did not add much to the understanding.

Editorial notes and emendations: Respecting the wishes of the copyright holder, the National Institute for Defense Studies of Japan (NIDS), the translation is full and unabridged, except that for this volume we received permission to skip the parts not directly dealing with the Dutch East Indies, as explained above. Although the text invites comparison with foreign sources, we have generally refrained from adding external material. The author himself, however, adds several addenda in which he summarizes some of his Western sources, mainly S. Woodburn Kirby, *The War Against Japan*. We have translated these summaries as they are in Japanese. Since the author cites neither the original titles nor page numbers, it proved virtually impossible to trace his sources. The editorial emendations and notes within brackets or in the form of footnotes are only meant to make the text more readable, to indicate misprints,

contradictory descriptions within the text itself, or occasionally differences with the descriptions in other volumes of the *Senshi Sōsho* series. Obvious misprints and errata pointed out in the list of errata compiled by NIDS in 2005 have been silently corrected. Parentheses are as used in the Japanese text.

The translation: The present translation is the joint effort of Willem Rummelink and Yumi Miyazaki. The latter also conducted almost all the background research in Japanese sources. We wish that more time could have been given to the solution of remaining problems. However, in the interest of making this translation quickly available to the public, we had to limit ourselves to the most obvious problems. We hope that other researchers will pick up the threads where we left off.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank the National Institute for Defense Studies for granting us the copyright to publish this translation. Many other institutions and persons helped us with the background research. I would especially like to thank the Military Archives of the National Institute for Defense Studies. The expanding website of JACAR [Japan Center for Asian Historical Records: <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp>] was of great help in quickly checking many of the underlying sources.

The advisory board read and commented upon the translation. I am grateful to the members of the board for their many helpful comments and suggestions. I would especially like to thank Lt. Gen. (ret.) Dr. Dirk Starink for his comments, corrections, and the short “Note on Japanese Military Aviation,” which he provided to put Japanese military aviation and the campaign described in international perspective. The final responsibility for the translation, however, rests solely with the editor.

This volume concludes the trilogy of the Japanese Imperial Army, Navy, and Army Air Force’s campaign against the former Dutch East Indies, a project we started about eight years ago. During these years, we enjoyed the unstinting support of Nick Elston of Asahi Media International Inc. in reproducing the complicated maps and fitting them with English legends. Leiden University Press generously allowed me to reproduce the basic layout of the Japanese originals and smoothed the production process. Last but not least, I would like to thank Kaoru Yanagisawa of the Leiden University Office Tokyo and Joan Snellen van Volleghoven of the Corts Foundation who kept the project on track in Japan and The Netherlands.

October 2020

Willem G. J. Rummelink