

## **PROGRAM**

September 30, 2009

### **Opening Session**

- 09:15 – 09:20 Opening Remarks  
Mr. Shuichi Yoneoka (President, NIDS)
- 09:20 – 09:25 Welcoming Remarks
- 09:25 – 09:35 Chairman’s Summary Statement  
Maj.Gen(Ret.). Tadashi Kagatani (Director, Military History Department,  
NIDS)
- 09:35 – 10:05 Special Address  
“Grand Strategy and the Byzantine ‘Operational Code’”  
Dr. Edward Luttwak (Senior Associate, Center for Strategic and International  
Studies)
- 10:05– 10:35 Keynote Address  
“Comparative Analysis of Japan and U.S. Global Strategy 1941-43”  
Dr. Ikuhiko Hata (Professor Emeritus, Nihon University)
- 10:35 – 10:45 Coffee Break

### **Session 1: Outbreak of the Pacific War**

- 10:45 – 11:15 “Japanese Strategy in the First Phase of the Pacific War”  
Dr. Kiyoshi Aizawa (Chief of the Second Research Office, Military History  
Department, NIDS)
- 11:15 – 11:45 “Allied Strategy in the First Phase of the Pacific War: Pearl Harbor and  
the U.S. Reaction”  
Dr. Williamson Murray (Senior Fellow, Institute for Defense Analysis /  
Professor Emeritus, Ohio State University)
- 11:45 – 12:15 “By the Seat of the Pants? Allied Strategy and the Japanese Onslaught  
in Southeast Asia December 1941-May 1942”  
Dr. Brian Farrell (Associate Professor, National University of Singapore)

12:15 – 12:45 Comment and Discussion  
Discussant: Dr. Haruo Tohmatsu (Professor, Tamagawa University)

12:45 – 13:50 Lunch

### **Session 2: Fighting in the Pacific**

13:50 – 14:20 “Japanese Strategy in the Second Phase of the Pacific War:Consequences of Operation Strategies in Main Battlefield, the Pacific Ocean”

Col. Noriaki Yashiro (Senior Fellow, Military History Department, NIDS)

14:20 – 14:50 “American Strategy in the Pacific after Midway:From Parity to Supremacy”

Dr. Phillips O'Brien ( Director, Scottish Centre for War Studies, University of Glasgow )

14:50 – 15:20 Comment and Discussion

Discussant: Mr. Hiroyuki Shindo (Senior Fellow, Military History Department, NIDS)

15:20 – 15:30 Coffee Break

### **Session 3: End of the Pacific War**

15:30 – 16:00 “Japanese Strategy in the Final Phase of the Pacific War”

Mr. Junichiro Shoji (Deputy Director, Military History Department, NIDS)

16:00 – 16:30 “Politics as Strategy: The United States and the End of the Pacific War, 1944-45”

Dr. John Ferris (Professor, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, Calgary University)

16:30 – 17:00 Comment and Discussion

Discussant: Dr. Kanji Akagi (Professor, Keio University)

17:00 – 17:15 Coffee Break

### **General Discussion**

17:15 – 18:15 General Discussion

**Closing Session**

18:15 – 18:20 Closing Remarks

Maj. Gen. Seiichi Takeuchi (Vice President, NIDS)

## PARTICIPANTS

### Chairman

#### **Mr. Tadashi Kagatani**

Director, Military History Department, NIDS

Major General, JGSDF, Retired.

B.S., National Defense Academy (1972). Commissioned by JGSDF (1972) and retired (2006).

### Special Speaker

#### **Dr. Edward Luttwak**

Senior Associate, Center for Strategic and International Studies

*The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (1976-2005); *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace* (2002); others.

### Keynote Speaker

#### **Dr. Ikuhiko Hata**

Professor Emeritus, Nihon University/Lecturer, Nihon University

B.A. and Ph.D., Tokyo University

Was on the research staff of the Military History Department, NIDS, before becoming a chief historian at Ministry of Finance, a visiting professor at Princeton University, a professor at Takushoku University, Chiba University, and Nihon University.

*Nicchu Senso Shi* (A History of the Japanese Chinese War, 1937-1941) (Tokyo, 1961); *Nippon Rikukaigun Sogo Ziten 1868-1945* (Comprehensive Encyclopedia of the Japanese Army and Navy 1868-1945) (Tokyo, 1991); *Nanking Ziken* (The Nanking Incident of 1937) (Tokyo, 2007), *Hirohito : The Showa Emperor in War and Peace* (Global Oriental, 2007); and others.

### Speakers

#### **Dr. Kiyoshi Aizawa**

Chief, Military History Department, NIDS

B.A., National Defense Academy

M.A. and Ph.D., Sophia University

*Nicchu Senso no Shoso* (Aspects of the Sino-Japanese War) (co-authored, 1997); *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1600-2000; vol.3, The Military Dimension* (co-authored, 2003); *Kaigun no Sentaku* (Japanese Navy's Road to Pearl Harbor) (2002); others.

**Dr. Williamson Murray**

Senior Fellow, Institute of Defense Analysis / Professor Emeritus, Ohio State University

B.A. and Ph.D., Yale University

*Luftwaffe; Military Effectiveness* (co-authored, 1985); *The Making of Strategy, Rulers, States, and War* (co-authored, 1994); *The Dynamics of Military Revolution, 1300-2050* (co-authored, 2001); others.

**Dr. Brian Farrell**

Associate Professor, National University of Singapore

B.A. and M.A., Carleton University Ph.D., McGill University

*Between Two Oceans: A Military History of Singapore from First Settlement to Final British Withdrawal* (co-authored, 1999); *The Defense and Fall of Singapore 1940-1942* (2005); others.

**Col. Noriaki Yashiro**

Senior Fellow, Military History Department, NIDS

B.A., National Defense Academy

Has also served as a Military History Instructor, JGSDF Staff College.

“Zettai Kokubo Ken Ka ni okeru Nihon Riku-Kai Gun no Togo”(Integration of the Japanese Army and Navy in the Absolute National Defense Area), *Senshi Kenkyu Nenpo* (NIDS Military History Studies Annual) (vol.4)

**Dr. Phillips O'Brien**

Director, Scottish Centre for War Studies, University of Glasgow

B.A., Trinity College Ph.D., Cambridge University

*British and American Naval Power: Politics and Policies 1900-1936* (1998); *Technology and Naval Combat in the Twentieth Century and Beyond: The Future of Naval Warfare* (edited, 2001); others.

**Mr. Junichiro Shoji**

Deputy Director, Military History Department, NIDS.

M.A., University of Tsukuba.

*Hendoki no Nihon Gaiko to Gunji* (Japan at the Crossroads: Crisis Diplomacy and the Role of Military) (co-authored, 1987); *Taishoki Nippon no Amerika Ninshiki* (Japanese Perception of the United States in the Taisho Era) (2001); *Nichibei Senryaku Shisoshi: Nichibei-kankei no atarashii Shiten* (History of American and Japanese Strategic Thought) (2005); others.

**Dr. John Ferris**

Director, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, Calgary University

B.A., University of Alberta

M.A. and Ph.D., King's College, University of London

*The Evolution of British Strategic Policy, 1919-1926* (1989); *Intelligence and Strategy, Selected Essays* (2005); others.

**Discussants**

**Dr. Haruo Tohmatsu**

Professor, Tamagawa University

B.A., Tsukuba University. M.A., Waseda University D.Phil., Oxford University

*Peal Harbor* (co-authored; 2001); *A Gathering Darkness: The Coming of War to the Far East and Pacific, 1921-1942* (co-authored, 2004); *Nihon Teikoku to Inin Tochi: Nanyo Gunto wo meguru Kokusai Seiji 1914-1947* (Japanese Empire and Mandate: International Politics over South Seas 1914-1947) (forthcoming 2010); others.

**Mr. Hiroyuki Shindo**

Senior Researcher, Military History Department, NIDS.

B.A., Kyoto University. M.A., Kobe University.

“Japanese air operations over New Guinea during the Second World War” in *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, June 2001; “Japanese operations against the Australian mainland in the Second World War: A survey of Japanese historical sources,” for the Australia-Japan Research Project (2001); others.

**Dr. Kanji Akagi**

Professor, Faculty of Law, Keio University.

B.A. Political Science, Keio University, 1977; M.A. International Relations, Keio University, 1980; LL.D. Keio University, 1989.

Was on the research staff of the Military History Department, NIDS, before becoming an associate professor at Keio University.

*Betonamu Senso no Kigen* (The Origins of the Vietnam War) (Keio University Press, 1991);

*Dainiji Sekai Taisen no Seiji to Senryaku* (Politics and Strategy of the Second World War) (Keio University Press, 1997); *Chosen Senso: Kyusen Gojyunen no Kensho Hanto no Uchi to Soto kara* (The Korean War: Revisiting the War from International and Domestic Perspectives) (edited and authored, Keio University Press, 2003); others.

## Special Address

### **Grand Strategy and the Byzantine “Operational Code”**

Edward Luttwak

All states have a grand strategy, whether they know it or not. That is inevitable because grand strategy is simply the *level* at which knowledge and persuasion, or in modern terms intelligence and diplomacy, interact with military strength to determine outcomes in a world of other states, with their own “grand strategies.”

All states must have a grand strategy, but not all grand strategies are equal. There is coherence and effectiveness when persuasion and force are each well guided by accurate intelligence, and then combine synergistically to generate maximum power from the available resources. More often, perhaps, there is incoherence so that the fruits of persuasion are undone by misguided force, or the hard-won results of force are spoiled by clumsy diplomacy that antagonizes neutrals, emboldens enemies, and disheartens allies.

The Byzantines had no central planning staffs to produce documents in the modern manner, including the recent innovation of formal statements of “national strategy” that attempt to define “interests,” the means to protect and enhance them, and the alignment of the two in rational or at least rationalized terms. The Byzantines never called it that—even “strategy” is only a Greek-sounding word not used by ancient or Byzantine Greeks. But they assuredly had a grand strategy, even if it was never stated explicitly—that is a *very* modern and indeed rather dubious habit—but certainly it was applied so repetitively that one may even extract a Byzantine “operational code.”

First, however, two matters must be defined. The identity of the protagonists and the nature of strategy, or rather of the paradoxical logic of strategy.

The Byzantine “operational code” can be summarized as follows;

- I. Avoid war by every possible means in all possible circumstances, but always act as if it might start at any time.
- II. Gather intelligence on the enemy and his mentality, and monitor his movements continuously.
- III. Campaign vigorously, both offensively and defensively, but attack mostly with small units; emphasize patrolling, raiding, and skirmishing rather than all-out attacks.

IV. Replace the battle of attrition with the “nonbattle” of maneuver.

V. Strive to end wars successfully by recruiting allies to change the overall balance of power.

VI. Subversion is the best path to victory.

VII. When diplomacy and subversion are not enough and there must be fighting, it should be done with “relational” operational methods and tactics that circumvent the most pronounced enemy strengths and exploit enemy weaknesses.

## **Keynote Address**

### **Comparative Analysis of Japan and U.S. Global Strategy 1941-43**

Ikuhiko Hata

In this speech, I will compare two important policy documents that both Japan and the United States prepared for the coming war prior to the outbreak of war between Japan and the United States. I will also focus on reviewing the subsequent modifications and transitions of the war situation.

The document of Japanese side was “Draft Proposal for Hastening the End of the War against the United States, Britain, Holland, and China” (approved by Imperial General Headquarters(IGHQ) and Government Liaison Conference on Nov. 15, 1941; abbreviated hereafter as “Liaison Conference” and “Draft Proposal”). This proposal was accompanied with “Guidelines for Implementing National Policy” (approved by the Liaison Conference on Nov. 1, 1941).

The corresponding document of the United States side was “Victory Plan or Program” (September, 1941), and it was accompanied with the Lend Lease Act (March, 1941), Rainbow No. 5 (May, 1941), and Plan Dog (November, 1940).

The background of creating these long-range strategic plans by Japan and the United States originated from changing power relationships in the world. Decisive turning point came in June 1941 when Germany entered into war with U.S.S.R and the final structure of WW2, war between “have nations” bloc (U.S., U.S.S.R. UK and China) vs. “have not nations” bloc (Japan, Germany and Italy) was almost established..

In comparison, those two documents of Japan and the United States have the following features:

	Japan (Draft Proposal)	U.S. (Victory Plan)
Immediate main enemy	Great Britain (Use of Germany)	Germany (Use of U.S.S.R.)
Basic Posture	protracted endurance	from protracted endurance to major offensive
Main battle area	Army: East Asia Navy: Pacific Ocean	Europe
Prediction of victory or defeat	Unclear	Assumed to win
Vision for ending	drawn game	Downing Japan
Designer	Col. Ishii(41)	Major Wedemeyer(44)

Furthermore, I like to review how those visions of both Japan and the United States were modified by 1943 and how the war situation underwent the change afterwards.

## Session 1

### **Japanese Strategy in the First Phase of the Pacific War**

Kiyoshi Aizawa

At the Imperial Headquarters-Government Liaison Conference, which could be considered as the highest Japanese organization in 1941 for conducting a war, a document titled “Draft Proposal for Hastening the End of the War against the United States, Britain, Holland, and Chiang” was adopted on November 15, 1941. At that time, it had been four years since the Sino-Japanese War, which was an undeclared but de facto state of war. This Draft Proposal was the only agreement, however, which could be called a war plan or grand strategy at the start of the war against the United States, Great Britain, and Holland, which began on December 8, less than one month after the Draft Proposal had been adopted.

The first article of the “Guidelines” for conducting the war, described in the Draft Proposal, was as follows:

1. The Empire will engage in a quick war, and will annihilate American and British bases in East Asia and the Southwest Pacific region. At the same time that it secures a strategically advantageous position, it will control those areas producing vital materials, as well as important lines of communication, and thereby establish a state of long-term self-sufficiency.

We will make efforts to use all measures to draw out the main force of the U.S. Navy at an advantageous moment and destroy it.

As shown in this excerpt, Japan expected that the coming Pacific War would be a battle of “long-term self-sufficiency.” They were also fully aware that the country’s collective effort or national capability would be important in that kind of war. Therefore, Japan had repeatedly evaluated its own national capability from around the summer of 1940. However, it was impossible for Japan at that time to rely solely on its limited national capability to fight a long, protracted war, and it was absolutely necessary to “secure control of those areas producing vital materials” in the south. In terms of geography, it would conceivably be possible to secure those vital material-producing areas through a war limited solely with Great Britain and the Netherlands. Furthermore, these two countries had been exhausted due to the war which had already started in

Europe (World War Two). Japan was not a participant in this war yet. Japan took the plunge, however, and took up arms simultaneously not only against Great Britain and the Netherlands, but also the United States, which had the highest potential military (war waging) capability. At that time, the U.S. government could not even enter the war against Germany in order to aid the British, which the American government wanted to do but could not because of the strength of U.S. public opinion favoring neutrality. If Japan had limited its attack only to Great Britain and the Netherlands, and had not directly attacked the United States, the Roosevelt administration would certainly have found itself in a more difficult situation. On the other hand, Japan could have limited both the scope of its war and the number of its adversaries, at least in the initial phase of the war.

The second half of the excerpt given above outlines the guideline for conducting the war against the United States. Operations which would “draw out the main force of the U.S. Navy at an advantageous moment and destroy it” were exactly in line with the operations plan for war against the United States which had been traditionally studied and planned for by the Japanese Navy, which would be the main force in such a war. However, in the actual war, this sort of “defensive” operational stance was not followed. Instead, an “offensive” operation was selected, which involved a surprise attack on the U.S. Navy’s main fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii in the opening moments of the war. As a result, American public sentiment was inflamed and intense resentment was aroused towards Japan, the enemy and the “sneak attacking nation.” The question of why the Japanese Navy shifted from a “defensive” to an “offensive” operational stance then needs to be answered.

This report seeks to explore the issues and questions noted above, and focuses on the Japanese war plan for the Pacific War, especially on the guidelines at the outbreak of war for conducting the war against the United States and Great Britain at the outbreak of war, in accordance with the awareness of the above issues. In addition, it reviews how those war plans were decided upon and the ideas which formed the basis of those decisions.

## Session 1

### **Allied Strategy in the First Phase of the Pacific War: Pearl Harbor and the U.S. Reaction**

Williamson Murray

In the eleven months after Pearl Harbor, the United States pursued an aggressive, defensive strategy aimed at protecting the Hawaiian Islands, the sea lines of communications to Australia, and projecting its naval power to insure those two goals while inflicting the maximum damage possible on the Japanese military. But crucial to this period was the use of combat operations by the U.S. Navy's senior leaders to purge those peacetime commanders incapable of adapting to the terrifying responsibilities of combat. In the end it was to take the U.S. Navy this entire period to manage this process, but it was to provide it with a major advantage over its Japanese opponents who did not go through a similar process.

## Session 1

### **By the Seat of the Pants? Allied Strategy and the Japanese Onslaught in Southeast Asia December 1941-May 1942**

Brian Farrell

Napoleon would have approved. The Japanese strategic offensive in December 1941 charged into the central position, dividing the main concentrations of American, British and Dutch forces and exposing them to defeat in detail. The Allies failed to turn agreements on technical matters into an agreed grand strategy for defending Southeast Asia before the Japanese onslaught hit them. This forced them to try to pull such a grand strategy together, even as they struggled to cope with the Japanese offensives from the Central Pacific to southern Burma. This paper will revisit the Allied effort to forge a coordinated grand strategy to prevent the Japanese from driving them out of Southeast Asia. It will zoom in on three main themes: the organization and operations of ABDA Command; the 'Malay Barrier' concept; naval strategy. It will address the following question: did the Allies identify a realistic grand strategy to defend Southeast Asia after they were attacked; if so how, if not why not? And it will argue that earlier strategies shaped by narrow national goals compromised the attempt to pull together a coalition grand strategy every bit as much as Japanese military pressure.

## Session 2

### **Japanese Strategy in the Second Phase of the Pacific War: Consequences of Operation Strategies in Main Battlefield, the Pacific Ocean**

Noriaki Yashiro

1. The strategy for the next phase following the conclusion of the southward offensive operation
  - (1) The basic strategy at the beginning of war in the Pacific: “Draft Proposal for Hastening the End of the War against the U.S., U.K., Netherlands and Chiang”
    - Policy: To make the Chiang Kai-shek regime submit, to make U.K. submit in cooperation with Germany and Italy, To force the U.S. to lose its will to fight
    - Alliance with the Axis Powers, and maintenance of peaceful relations with the Soviet Union
  - (2) Continuation of an offensive strategy: Adoption of the first version of “The fundamental principles of future war leadership”
    - Rivalry of mutual insistence between the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) and Navy (IJN): Establishment of long-term undefeatable conditions (the Army’s preference) and expansion of military achievements (the Navy’s preference); the order of priority undetermined.
  - (3) The emergence of operation plans going beyond culminating points of victory
    - The outline of IJA’s Future Operation Plan The war against the U.S. and the U.K. to be entrusted to the IJN, while the Army prepares for of the war against the Soviet Union and aims at a resolution of the Second Sino-Japanese War
    - The drafting of the “IJN’s 2nd Stage Operation Plan” Adoption of the preference of the Japanese Combined Fleet(CJF)
  - (4) The impact of the first American air raid on the Japanese mainland
    - Adoption of immediate countermeasures, and acceleration of the offensive operations into the Pacific Ocean
2. The confusion in strategy during the reversal of the military situation: summer of 1942 - spring of 1943
  - (1) Optimistic estimate of the situation

- Signs of reversal of the military situation: The Battle of the Coral Sea, The Battle of Midway and the Allied invasion of Guadalcanal
  - Estimate of the Allied counteroffensive: Changed “from 1943 onward” to “from end of 1943 onward”
- (2) Decreasing possibility for a combined Axis strategy: Increased need for a self-reliant Japanese strategy
  - (3) Increasing disparities between “The Fundamental Principles of Future War Guidance” and operations guidelines: Non-revision of “The Principles”
    - Abandonment of efforts to recapture Guadalcanal and cancellation of the Chungking operation
  - (4) The adoption of “IJA’s Comprehensive Operation Plan for Fiscal 1943 ( the 18th year of Showa ) ” and “IJN’s 3rd Stage Operation Plan”
    - Defensive operation plan given priority over an offensive strategy
3. Revisions of strategy in accordance with the pressing military situation in the Pacific
    - (1) The differing assertions of the IJA and IJN in studies on withdrawing the front
    - (2) Conversion to a defensive strategy: The second version of “The Fundamental Principles of Future War Leadership”
      - Establishment of an area which must absolutely be held (Absolute National Defense Sphere): Inclusion of differences between the operational thinking of the IJA and IJN
      - IJA’s anxiety about IJN’s ability as the principal player in any decisive battle and IJN’s doctrine of a forward decisive battle
  4. Misgivings about the new strategy in the face of the Allies’ full-scale counteroffensive
    - (1) Counteroffensive from two different directions by the Allied Powers and the CJF’s countermeasures
      - Battles for control of the Northern Solomon Islands      Attrition of the CJF’s airpower
      - Attack on the Gilbert Islands by the U.S. task force      The CJF’s interception operations and estimate of the situation
    - (2) The impact of the first air-raid on Taiwan by U.S. airplanes based in China
    - (3) Efforts by the Army General Staff to reverse the increasingly unfavorable military situation
      - Planning of offensive operations in China and Burma
        - Change in the source of army troops sent to the Pacific area: the China Expeditionary Army      the Kwantung Army

- Deployment of Army ground forces to the key forward areas as desired by the IJN
    - Delay of deployment of army ground forces to the key rearward areas as required by the “Absolute National Defense Sphere” concept
  - (4) Loss of the operational initiative in the face of successive American assaults into the Central Pacific area
    - Loss of the Marshall Islands and retreat from Truk      Revision of “CJF’s 3rd Stage Operations Order”
5. Concluding Remarks: lack of unification in Japanese strategy against the U.S.
- (1) Indefinite order of priority in each “Fundamental Principles of Future War Leadership”
    - Collapse of the basic strategy in force at the outbreak of war in the Pacific
      - The failure of a joint strategy with the other Axis powers
      - The uncertainty of the maintenance of peaceful conditions with the Soviet Union
  - (2) Immaturity of joint operations between IJA and IJN on the Pacific front
    - The problem of combining the IJN and IJA’s air forces
    - Birth of a doctrine for the defense of islands
    - The problems involving the foundations of operations: organization, transportation, etc.
  - (3) Gloomy prospects of war termination
    - The target of peace negotiations (the question of who to negotiate with)
    - The conclusion of a “Sino-Japanese Alliance Treaty” with the Wang Jing-Wei regime
    - The Joint Declaration made at the Greater East Asia Conference

## Session 2

### **American Strategy in the Pacific after Midway: From Parity to Supremacy**

Phillips O'Brien

Taken as a whole, the first phase of the naval struggle in the Pacific which began with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor continued through the Battle of Coral Sea and ended with the Battle of Midway, witnessed approximately equal losses for the United States and Japan. The navy's of both experienced sinkings in their carrier forces so severe that their commanders were reluctant to expose surviving units to further harm. Also, for a while at least, capital ships were used sparingly in front line combat, irregularly deployed only when and if it was believed they could play a decisive role.

What this meant was that in the first period after the Battle of Midway (lasting from the summer of 1942 until the summer of 1943) a situation of approximate parity existed in the main theaters of combat in the Pacific. This was particularly the case during the crucial struggle over Guadalcanal (August 1942 to February 1943). For the American Navy the greatest dilemma was how to support a maritime advance without sea supremacy, and in the face of an enemy with certain tactical advantages, such as superior nighttime capabilities. For the United States strategists it was a learning experience, particularly in the coordination of sea, land and airpower. In the end only the coordination of these elements was sufficient to provide victory in what was the most difficult campaign fought by the United States during the entire Pacific War.

After Guadalcanal a different period an important shift occurred, albeit slowly at first. American production, which was always going to be crucial in ending the war, allowed American strategy makers to contemplate a number of different roads to eventual victory. This was particularly the case once a significant number of newer, faster aircraft carriers (the Essex Class) entered service in the second half of 1943. Earlier American strategic plans, often worked out in consultation with the British, were usually conservative. Methodical advances aiming towards objectives such as Hong Kong were proposed.

By 1943, however, the prospect of bypassing large Japanese fortifications to speed up the eventual attack on the Japanese mainland was being considered. For the United States Navy the question was how to confront the Japanese bases of Rabaul and Truk. The first, which blocked access along the coast of Papua New Guinea and the latter in the Carolines seemingly blocking

access from the Gilbert and Marshall Islands, stood astride the two most obvious routes towards Japan.

Some American naval strategists, including most interestingly Admiral Chester Nimitz the commander of American naval forces in the Central Pacific, began debating plans that included the bypassing of not only Rabaul and Truk, but thousands of miles of Japanese-held territory and launching attacks on islands much closer to Japan. However more conservative (or sensible depending on your point of view) still opted for a more staged approach (including General MacArthur with his obsession of returning to the Philippines).

In the end American naval strategy, responding to the tactical experiences of the campaigns opted for the measured Island-hopping campaign. Whilst Rabaul and Truk were bypassed other heavily fortified areas were assaulted. From a naval point of view this strategy was mostly successful, as relatively few surface warships were sunk during the string of campaigns that went up until the summer of 1944. However land force casualties were significant as was aircraft wastage. American superiority in equipment (both numerically and usually but not always technologically) meant that victory was almost certainly going to be achieved even with such losses. This lecture will discuss whether it was worth it.

### Session 3

## **Japanese Strategy in the Final Phase of the Pacific War**

Junichiro Shoji

After the Pacific War began with Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 8, 1941, allied countries, Germany and Italy, which were Japan's allies, also declared war on the United States. On the other hand, the Soviet Union participated in a Declaration by the United Nations in January, 1942, and fought against Germany as well. As a result, Japan and the Soviet Union respectively belonged to the opposing camps of the Axis powers and the United Nations. At the same time, Japan and the Soviet Union had concluded the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact, and they maintained official diplomatic relations. As a result of these developments, an extremely "ambiguous" relationship was formed. Therefore, Japan's diplomacy towards the Soviet Union had a critical significance for Japanese strategy during the war period. As Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo pointed out at the outbreak of war, "the diplomatic contest in this war is to embrace the Soviet Union, and this will be the 'Sekigahara' of our diplomacy<sup>1</sup>."

In the first phase of the war, Japan explored the possibility of drawing the Soviet Union into the Axis camp by brokering a peace settlement between Germany and the Soviet Union, which was a concept for leading the war in a favorable way to the conclusion of peace. Later, in the final phase of the war, when Germany's defeat became obvious and when the war situation became disadvantageous for Japan, Japan pursued several plans aimed at the Soviet Union, the purpose of which was to prevent the Soviet Union from participating in the war against Japan and to secure a Soviet neutrality which would be friendly towards Japan. This reflected the Army's situation and needs. To prepare for the Battle of Leyte Island (Sho-I Operation) and the expected American invasion of the Japanese Home Islands, which were to be the decisive battles against the United States, elite troops of the Kwantung Army were transferred to the south and other areas. This resulted in a shift to an emphasis on an attritional defense in the operation plans of the Kwantung Army. In addition, the Japanese Army could not fight simultaneously in both the Pacific Ocean and Manchuria while the Soviet Far Eastern forces were being reinforced. There was some wishful thinking behind this situation. In other words, Japan assumed that

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<sup>1</sup> A large-scale (for the period) battle fought on September 15, 1600 between the Tokugawa clan and a coalition led by the Toyotomi clan, which ended in a decisive victory for the former and led to the creation of the Tokugawa *bakufu* or shogunate, which would last approximately 260 years.

differences between the Anglo-Americans and the Soviets would surface in the near future, in which case it was hoped that the Soviet Union would accept Japanese requests if Japan would offer a major compromise.

Moreover, after Okinawa fell, Japan explored the possibility of a peace with Great Britain and the United States which would be mediated by the Soviet Union, regardless of the Soviet Union's notification that it would not extend the neutrality treaty, even to the point where Japan asked that it be allowed to send an envoy. However, in August 1945, the Soviet Union opened hostilities against Japan, and this was a breaking point which brought Japan to end the war. Even after the Soviet Union commenced its military offensive against Japan, the Army's guideline for conducting the war stipulated that "we will take advantage of a favorable opportunity and, using the Soviet Union, make an effort to end the war." This shows that the plans involving the Soviet Union which were developed in relation to the termination of the war were indeed a "diplomacy of illusion."

In this presentation, I would like to analyze the Japanese strategy for terminating the war, and in particular would like to focus on their plans vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in order to highlight issues of Japan's war guidance at that time. In addition, I would like to touch upon the relationship between Japan's plans for the Soviet Union and the Kwantung Army's situation and circumstances.

### Session 3

## **Politics as Strategy: The United States and the End of the Pacific War, 1944-45**

John Ferris

By 1944, after two years of high intensity attrition and the mobilization of industry to the production of munitions, the United States finally acquired overwhelming superiority over Japanese forces. American commanders took time to understand the scale of their opportunities—during 1944-45, their forces regularly achieved greater successes than were expected. These advantages also were constrained by the power of Japanese forces ( strong enough to disrupt allied strategy and operations during 1944 and to challenge them in 1945), by the sheer size of the Pacific theater, and particularly by problems of politics. These problems included relations with Britain, China and the USSR, allies which pursued aims that challenged the postwar order American authorities hoped to establish in the Pacific Ocean and across the world. The greatest of these problems, however, were rivalries between the United States Army and Navy, which increasingly viewed operations and strategy in the Pacific Theater from the perspective of strengthening their postwar positions, especially against each other, in Washington. All of these matters turned on a question which combined strategy and politics: how could the United States occupy Japan itself and change its socio-political system so that it no longer would threaten the United States, or the world order which Washington hoped to establish after the war? The combination of these operational, strategic and political processes worked in favor of Douglas MacArthur, with great consequences for the nature of American victory and Japanese defeat in 1945, and afterward.