CROSS-CURRENTS
EAST ASIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE REVIEW

Mapping Economic Development: The South Seas Government and Sugar Production in Japan's South Pacific Mandate, 1919–1941

Ti Ngo, University of California, Berkeley

Abstract

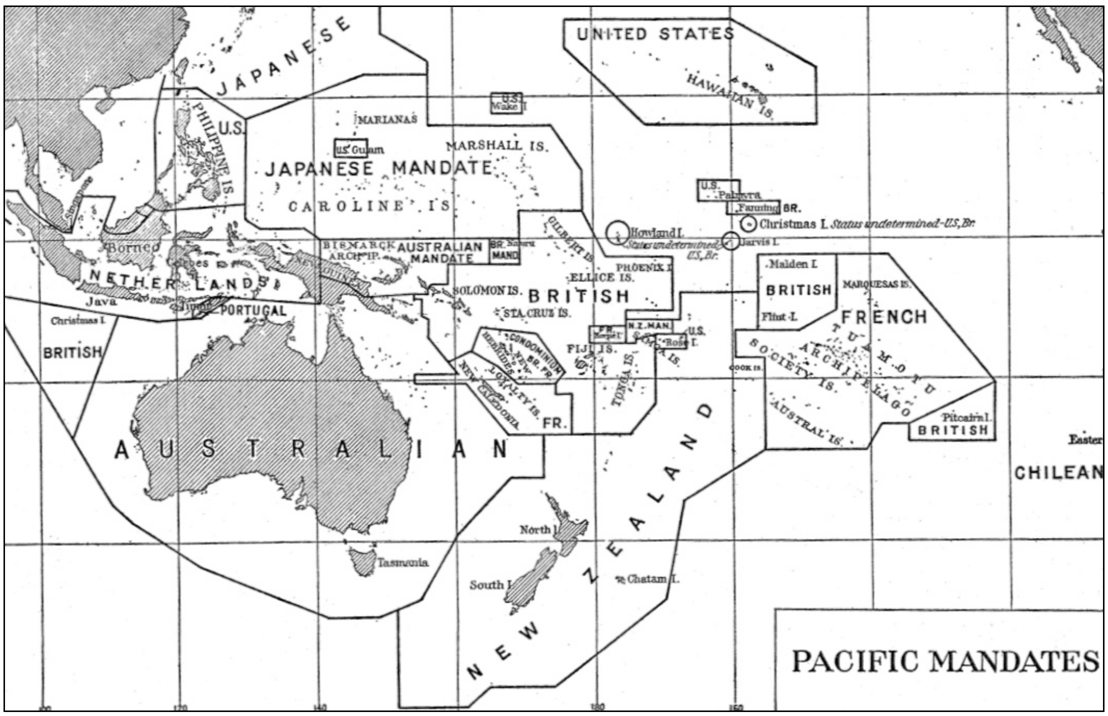
Japan acquired the Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall Island chains as a League of Nations mandate following World War I. Why did the local administration (the South Seas Government or Nanyōchō) heavily subsidize the establishment of a sugar industry? While the South Seas Government did not explicitly state why it chose to support the sugar industry despite the wealth of oceanic resources surrounding the islands, imperial maps of the South Pacific produced by the Japanese navy and the South Seas Government provide a window into how both parties envisioned and planned for the economic future of the mandate. These maps included information regarding the available natural resources, land, and culture level of the Micronesian population. The author argues that in depicting the islands as spaces where a "primitive" nonagricultural population failed to take advantage of the islands' resources, mapmakers and officials planned for the mass migration of Japanese labor to the mandate in order to support a newly established sugar industry.

Introduction

At the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, Japan acquired Germany's former colonies north of the equator as a League of Nations Class C Mandate. This consisted of the Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall Island chains, comprising two thousand islands with a land area of 687 square miles (see figure 1). Under the terms of the mandate, the Japanese government was charged with guiding and preparing a population of forty thousand Micronesians along a perceived unilinear path of development toward a stage when eventual self-rule would be possible (South Seas Government 1930, 1). Prior to the incorporation of the islands into Japan's burgeoning overseas empire, however, these islands had not received much attention since the middle of the 1880s, when naval officers such as Enomoto Takeaki and writers such as Shiga Shigetaka stirred the public imagination about the possibilities of Japanese expansion into the Southern Pacific

(Peattie 1988, 7–9). In 1882 and 1883 expeditions, Enomoto Takeaki had sought to explore the region around the Caroline Islands in the hopes of finding unclaimed islands for Japan to colonize. Enomoto disappointingly found that the islands in the South Pacific had already been claimed by European powers, such as Germany. The failure to find unclaimed land, the relatively long distance between Micronesia and the Japanese archipelago, and the increasing focus on Korea as a strategic interest precluded the South Pacific as a site for Meiji expansion.

Figure 1. Map of Japan's South Pacific mandate. This comprised the former German colonies north of the equator. Source: Blakeslee (1922, 102).



Yet, by virtue of participating in World War I on the side of the Allied Powers, Japan serendipitously acquired the Micronesian islands north of the equator as a League of Nations mandate in 1919. The acquisition of the islands posed issues for Tokyo and the new local administration, the South Seas Government, or Nanyōchō. How should Japan govern this territory, given that it was not legally a colony? How could these islands serve Japanese national interests?

Because the South Pacific had become a peripheral interest to Japanese leaders following the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) over Chinese influence in Korea, maps of the region remained scant prior to World War I.[i] One of the first tasks of the South Seas Government was to systematically map the new territories under Japanese jurisdiction. An extensive cartographic and cadastral survey was conducted with results published in 1922.

Maps, as Thongchai Winichakul and others have pointed out, function as political instruments in concretizing the imagined nation-state into a geographical and physical projection on the earth's surface. Thongchai writes, "The geo-body of a nation is a man-made territorial definition which create effects—by classifying, communicating, and enforcement [sic]—on people, things, and relationships" (1994, 17). Maps, however, are not only useful historical sources in portraying claims about territoriality and the content of the national body. Maps, Thongchai argues, also represent "a kind of knowledge, a conceptual abstraction of a supposedly objective reality, a systematic set of signs, a discourse" (1994, 18).

Maps of the South Pacific produced by the South Seas Government in conjunction with the Japanese navy were necessary at the outset for logistical reasons. Only through making the space knowable could the South Seas Government begin to plan for the future of the islands, particularly regarding how land should be used, what type of infrastructure to build and where, as well as how the islands could serve the geopolitical interests of the empire. Mapmakers, however, did not simply limit themselves to cartographic representation of the islands. Within the maps, the South Seas Government and the Japanese navy assessed the economic viability of the islands. They discussed the islands' natural resources and climate, along with the culture of the native Micronesian population. Despite the guise of an objective presentation, the description of the natural resources and human capital of the islands reflects how the South Seas Government was considering what type of policies could be implemented in the mandate. In addition, maps were used as tools to gather information about available land while ignoring Micronesian claims over communal land used by villages. By erasing the territory inhabited by the native Micronesian population, these maps depicted the islands as empty tracts of undeveloped land that could be exploited by Japanese immigrant labor and capital investment in sugar production. Moreover, mapmakers and the South Seas Government portrayed the native Micronesian population as lacking the agricultural skills to supply the future labor force for the islands. Instead, the South Seas Government and the South Seas Developmental Company chose to exclusively hire Japanese famers. Imperial maps thus functioned not only as repositories of knowledge about the islands but also as documents that showed how the South Seas Government believed the islands could be economically developed, given the available resources.

Developmental Choices and International Regulations

In 1914, Britain called on Japan to help rid the waters around Asia of German U-boats. Under the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, Japan was able to enter World War I on the side of the Allied Powers.[ii] The Japanese navy went beyond Britain's request and quickly occupied the German colonies of the Marshall, Caroline, and Mariana Islands. Because German U-boats and personnel had already been recalled to the European theater, the Japanese navy faced no resistance upon landing on the islands. At Versailles, Japan's proximity to the South Pacific allowed Tokyo to press demands for the islands to be transferred to Japan as a result of its role in the war. Yet the nascent League of Nations' mandate system precluded the direct transfer of territory from losers to victors. According to Article 22 of the League of Nations' covenant, territories were to be prepared for future political independence by "advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility" (1921). After much diplomatic wrangling between Japan, Australia, the Netherlands, and the United States about how to divide Germany's former colonies in the Pacific, Tokyo eventually procured the islands as a League of Nations Class C mandate.

Class C mandates were reserved for territories that were deemed by the league to lack the history of economic and political development that would enable their people to establish self-rule. In comparison to Class A or B mandates, Class C mandates allowed for greater control of the territory by the mandate power, to the point that these mandates could be governed as "integral portions of its [the mandate power's] territory" (League of Nations Covenant 1921).[iii] In 1921, Viscount Uchida, the foreign minister to the league, grandly proclaimed, "It is the determination of the Japanese government to spare no efforts in the discharge of this noble mission of civilization, in promoting the welfare and development of the people of this territory" (Decker 1940, 46).

Yet the mechanism by which mandate powers such as Japan were to prepare those living in the mandates for future independence remained unclear. Moreover, while Japan had to submit annual reports to the League of Nations' Permanent Mandate Commission (PMC) regarding economic production, taxes, native population, and the like, the league lacked any concrete enforcement mechanism to measure progress or punish mandate powers for the lack thereof. In her work on the PMC, Susan Pedersen has aptly pointed out that the PMC was virtually "toothless." Although ostensibly staffed by ten members who were known for their competence and were outside of government employ, in reality, the members were former colonial officials with close ties to their respective national governments. Pedersen noted that they "behaved less as international watchdogs than as government mouthpieces, defending their own nation's colonial record and trying to expose the failings of other powers" (2005, 115). Furthermore, complaints regarding a mandate power's negligence would have to be reported to the Council of the League for further deliberation.[iv] The inefficiency of the PMC and the league essentially gave the mandate power the ability to stall or silence any complaint by the native population or observers. Regarding the mandate system, the anti-imperialist George Padmore in 1937 castigated the PMC as a "huge fraud" that was devised by the imperial powers to expand their empires while "creating the illusion that they were really annexing these territories as spoils of war" (Pedersen 2005, 113–115).

With the lack of serious oversight by the PMC, Tokyo and the South Seas Government were given a free hand to operate in the South Pacific. Yet stipulations against building fortifications on the islands meant that Japan could not use the islands as strategic bases for naval warfare.[v] Moreover, because Japan was dependent on the international loan market in London for financing its expenditures, it could ill afford to alienate the United States and the great European powers by transgressing the prohibition on base construction (Metzler 2006). Thus, Tokyo and the South Seas Government had to find another means to make the islands useful.

The history of economic development by colonial powers in the Marshall, Caroline, and Mariana Islands prior to Japanese rule is characterized by a lack of investment or involvement. The islands were first brought to the attention of Europeans in the late 1600s by Spanish sailors who claimed them as colonies for Spain. Geographically distant from Spain's colonies in South America, the islands were left to missionaries, whalers, and traders without the presence of a local administration. The lack of a strong colonial government continued when Spain sold the islands to Germany in 1899 for 25 million pesetas (Hexel 1995, 6). For Germany, the islands were more a source of prestige to bolster the state's credentials as an imperial power than a possession of economic or strategic importance. The paucity of German government personnel on the islands was such that when the Japanese navy landed on the islands in 1917, its sailors simply accepted the surrender of the territories from a handful of missionaries without a single shot being fired.

Given the location of the islands and the relatively small amount of available land, it was not inconceivable that Tokyo and the South Seas Government would inject funds to economically develop the islands. After all, the islands were *de jure* international mandates rather than outright colonial possessions. In addition, there had been discussion in the National Diet in the aftermath of Japan's acquisition of Taiwan about selling the islands to France for 100 million yen because of the potential cost to the Japanese treasury of funding their administration and subduing the remaining anti-Japanese resistance (Chang and Meyers 1963, 435). In 1920, there was a distinct possibility that the Micronesian mandate would not attract intense Japanese capital investment.

As for Japanese industry on the islands, prior to 1919, the Japanese presence was minimal. Japanese workers on the islands were either short-term contractual labors working in mines owned by Western companies or small-time traders who sold Japanese goods to native Micronesians in exchange for copra. For example, in 1891, the Paris Nickel Company hired the Nippon Yoshisha Company to recruit six hundred Japanese laborers to work at a nickel mine in New Caledonia (Purcell 1967, 16–24). Trading companies, on the other hand, focused on selling Japanese goods and buying what was locally produced in the area. Within Micronesia, this type of business model was exemplified by the South Seas Trading Company. Established in 1908 through the merging of the Hiki South Seas Trading Company and Murayama South Seas Trading Company (Nanyō Bōeki Kabushiki Kaisha) continued the model of small-scale trade through branch stores. According to Mark Peattie, these stores usually consisted of a house, store, and warehouse with a customs office and bath in the rear. The company sold Japanese goods to the natives and imported items such as copra, seashells, and tortoise shells (Peattie 1988, 101–102; Yanaihara 1940, 26).

While the islands would be known for intense sugarcane cultivation in the 1920s, before formal acquisition by Japan, the history of Japanese sugar production was beset by failures. In 1914, Nishimura Ichimatsu sought to take advantage of the high price of sugar brought about by

World War I by establishing a sugar plantation on Saipan. Recruiting laborers from his father's factories in Yamaguchi and Nagasaki along with four hundred Korean workers, Nishimura gathered 300,000 yen to purchase the land and build a refinery, forming the Nishimura Development Company (Nishimura Takushoku Kaisha) in the process. However, Nishimura's and the workers' lack of expertise doomed the project. His laborers, both Japanese and Korean, had difficulty clearing the land since many had expertise and experience in the fishing industry rather than in agriculture. Moreover, their lack of knowledge about the refining process meant that most of the cane sugar rotted and had to be poured into the sea. Further weakened by quarrels between the Japanese and Korean laborers, Nishimura's enterprise flopped after a year and was abandoned. The other company operating on the island was the South Seas Industrial Development Company (Nanyō Shokusan Kabushiki Kaisha). It brought three hundred individuals from the Ogasawara Islands to begin farming sugarcane on Saipan. Plagued by disease among the farmers as well as the crop, this venture also quickly failed. David Purcell notes that established sugar companies on Taiwan, such as the Greater Japan Sugar Company and Meiji Sugar Company, initially considered the possibility of developing sugar in Micronesia but eventually decided that the size of the islands made the profits not worth the risk (Purcell 1967, 26–29).

Tezuka Toshiro, the first head of the South Seas Government, pondered what to do with the new territories in 1920 (Peattie 1988, 126–127).[vi] Introduced to Matsue Haruji,[vii] an entrepreneur who believed that the islands had the requisite climate to make sugarcane production profitable, Tezuka and the South Seas Government decided to subsidize Matsue's plans to lay the groundwork for a sugar industry in the South Pacific. With the financial aid of the South Seas Government, Matsue established the South Seas Development Company (Nanyō Kōhatsu Kabushiki Kaisha, or Nankō) in 1922. The South Seas Development Company received significant aid from the local administration. After conducting a land survey, which categorized 223,295 acres as government land, 74,431 acres was leased to private firms, with the South Seas Development Company being the main beneficiary.[viii] Financially, the subsidies given to the South Seas Development Company were substantial, amounting to an average of 260,660 yen per year over a ten-year period (1922–1931). In light of the South Seas Government's average annual budget of 4.76 million yen over the same period, sugar subsidies represented a significant

5.47 percent of its total expenditures (Nanyōchō 1932, 305). Sugar, not surprisingly, became the leading industry on the islands. From 71,930 yen in 1922, the value of the sugar industry grew exponentially, to 6,784,853 yen in 1930 and 12,994,322 yen in 1936. In 1926 and 1930, sugar alone accounted for over 50 percent of the total value of exports from Micronesia, surpassing the value of phosphate, bonito, and copra exports combined (Nanyōchō 1936).

Why did the South Seas Government decide to support sugar production on the islands given the history of failure?[ix] Tezuka Toshiro and the South Seas Government never explicitly explained why they decided on using the islands to uniquely produce sugar. However, an analysis of maps of the South Pacific produced by the Japanese navy in conjunction with the South Seas Government sheds light on the reasons behind the policies the South Seas Government implemented. The portrayal of the South Pacific mandate in maps as a region with an amenable climate and ample land engendered a belief that, with investment, the islands could become a lucrative source of sugar production and Japanese settlement.

Mapping Economic Development in the South Pacific

Prior to the occupation of the South Pacific by the Japanese navy in 1914, serious cartographic surveys of the islands had not been undertaken. A series of maps was made by the navy in conjunction with the South Seas Government by 1922. These maps were subsequently reproduced in 1938.[x] Many of these maps were topographical, showing the elevation of the various mountains on the islands while detailing the sea level around the islands. They also highlighted the administrative area that fell under the South Seas Government's jurisdiction in contrast to the islands farther south, which comprised the Australian government's mandate (see figures 2 and 3). These maps also contained accompanying texts describing the geography, peoples, economy, and climate of the islands.[xi] Maps of the South Pacific not only provided the South Seas Government with knowledge of the physical environment but also presented a window into how the islands' potential—in terms of natural resources, human capital, and climate—were viewed. The maps of the South Pacific provide a unique case study for understanding how mapping and subsequent policy making occurred.

Figure 2. Map of Ponape Island in the Caroline Islands chain. Source: Nihon rikuchi sokuryō (1938).

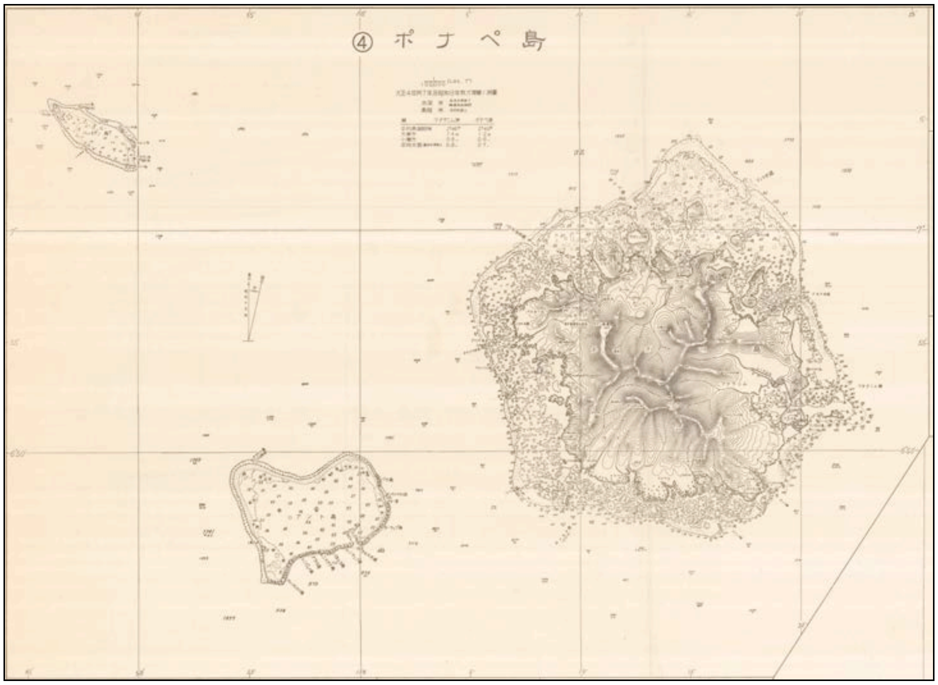
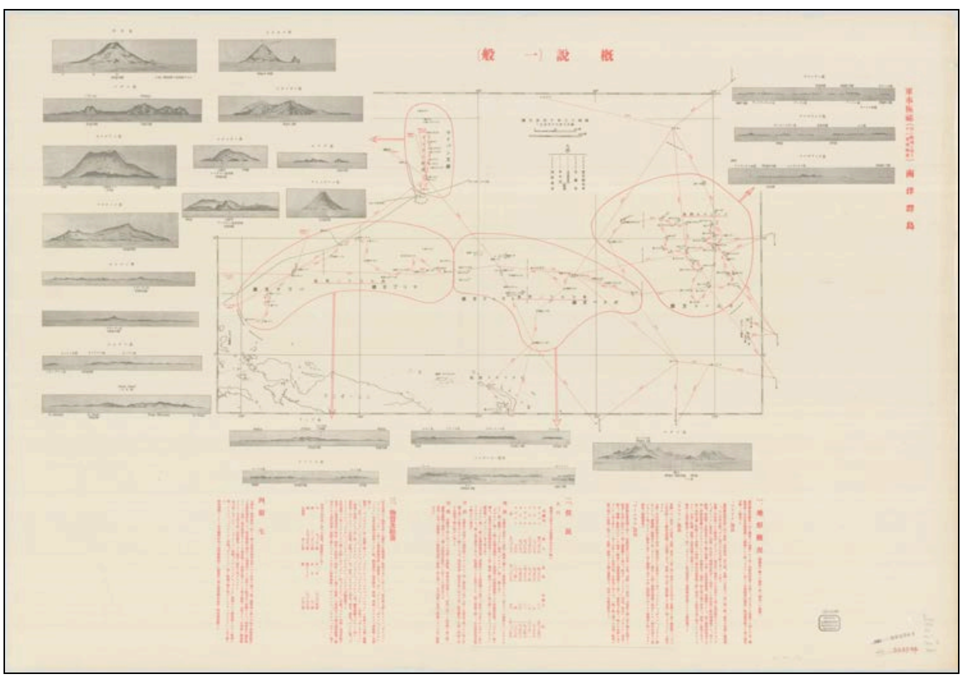


Figure 3. Map of the South Pacific mandate with accompanying sketches of views of the islands from the sea. Source: Nihon rikuchi sokuryō (1938).



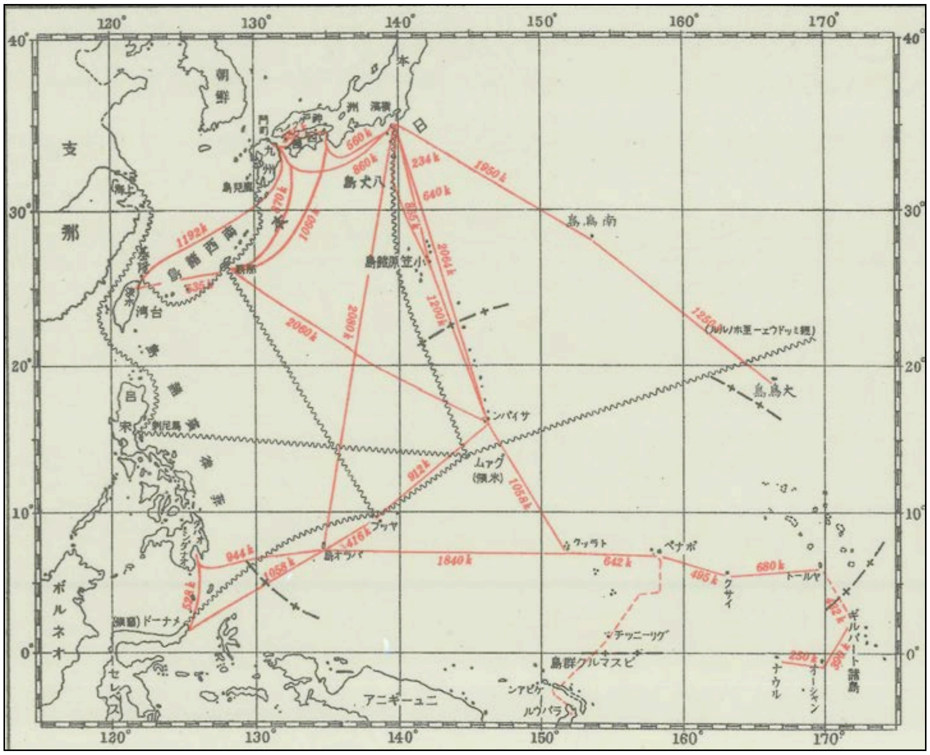
Imperial maps reoriented viewers toward expanding southward rather than into Northeast Asia. Within the history of Japanese imperial expansion, the army and navy debated the merits of northern expansion (*hokushin*) into Northeast Asia versus southern expansion (*nanshin*) into Southeast Asia and the South Pacific.[xii] Favoring a policy of southern expansion, the navy saw Taiwan and the South Pacific mandate as a stepping-stone for Japanese expansion into Southeast Asia. Maps of the South Pacific supported these views (figure 4). In a 1938 map featuring the South Pacific mandate, the viewer's perspective is shifted from locating Japan near continental Asia to locating it as an island empire within the Pacific. Red shipping lines on the map highlighted the connection between the mandate and major ports within the empire, from Yokohoma to Taipei. The map also included shipping lines to the Philippines and Papua New Guinea, a feature not found in 1922 maps. In reframing the mandate and Japan to show connections to Southeast Asia, the South Seas Government and navy supported arguments for southern advancement. Advocates of *nanshin* referred to the islands as Japan's "southern lifeline" (*minami no seimeisen*).[xiii] Matsue Haruji, the founder of the South Seas Development Company, shared their views:

> Ever since Japan was given the mandate over the Nanyō Islands...Japan's relation with the greater South Seas (Dai Nanyō) has fundamentally changed, and our country is currently in a most favorable position with regard to our interests in the New Guinea region, which lies in those expansive reaches. (1932, 3)

In his use of the term "Dai Nanyō," Matsue was referring to Southeast Asia, which offered potential areas for further colonization and development.[xiv]

In the accompanying textual descriptions of natural resources, imperial maps of the South Pacific also provide a window into how the South Seas Government viewed the economic possibilities of the region based on its current state. For Tezuka and other planners in the South Seas Government, Taiwan served as a model from which to compare and plan the economic future of the islands. From a drain on the imperial treasury in its first years, colonial Taiwan had become financially self-sufficient in 1905 (Chang and Myers 1963, 446). By developing the cultivation of sugarcane and rice, which together comprised roughly 60 percent of the total value of Taiwanese exports from 1920 to 1930, the colonial government was able to improve the economic productivity of the island while securing its operating revenue through taxes (Ka 1995,

Figure 4. Enlarged portion of a 1938 map of the South Pacific depicting the shipping lines from the mandate to other ports in the empire and Southeast Asia (Nihon rikuchi sokuryō 1938). Red lines indicate shipping routes; wavy lines represent underwater telegraph lines.

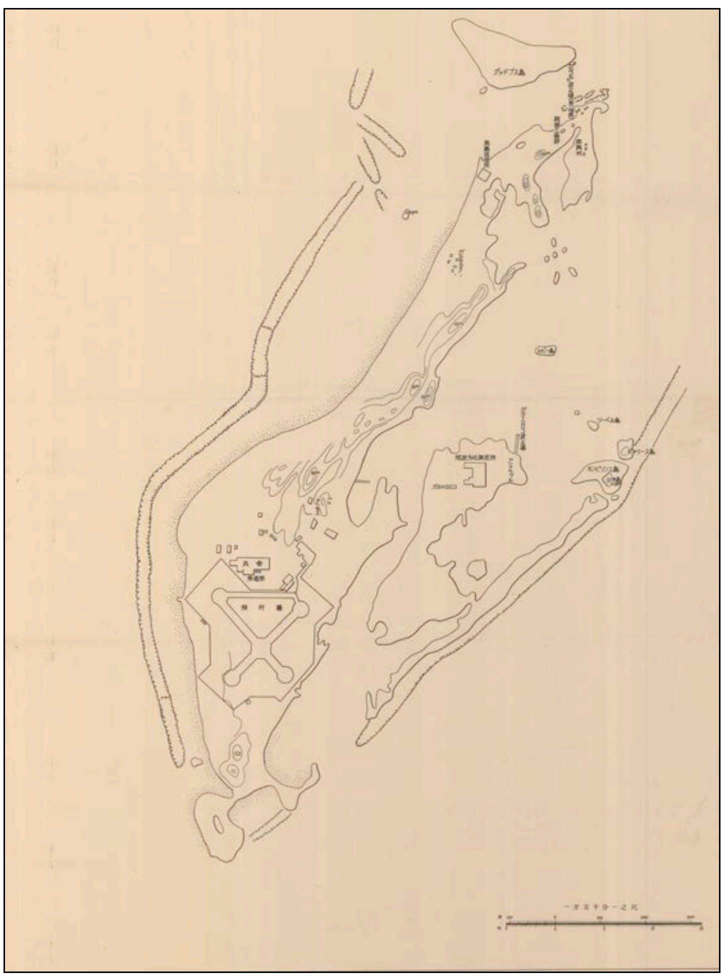


64). In particular, sugarcane cultivation and sugar production increased dramatically under Japanese investment.[xv] The colonial government in Taiwan pushed for the monopolization of sugar production under Japanese hands. In 1905, it divided sugarcane fields into districts based upon their proximity to a sugar-processing plant. These procurement districts were under the purview of a government-favored sugar company. Farmers were required to sell all of their sugarcane to the company to which the district was assigned. In return, the colonial government and sugar companies would set a price at which all sugarcane grown for the year would have to be purchased by the assigned company. This effectively created a state-sponsored sugar monopoly in the hands of the Mitsui, Mitsubishi, and Nitō conglomerates (*zaibatsu*). Interestingly, in contrast to sugar production in Western colonies, the Japanese colonial government in Taiwan eschewed the establishment of sugar plantations in which the company owned the land and controlled the growing, harvesting, and processing of the sugar.[xvi] Instead, the colonial government allowed for small families to own land while securing supplies of sugarcane by contracts and laws requiring land designated for sugarcane cultivation to grow the necessary sugarcane to supply factories. As Yanaihara Tadao, economist and expert on Japan's colonies, wrote in 1929, "The development of Japanese imperialism in Taiwan centered on sugar production" (Ka 1995, 64–65, 74, 110).

In reflecting on colonial policies in Taiwan, the South Seas Government believed that a similar approach could be adopted in the South Pacific mandate. In fact, the description of the islands on maps of the mandate suggest that the South Seas Government thought that they presented even more ideal conditions for sugar production than Taiwan. In a set of 1938 maps, the South Pacific was portrayed as a tropical region that was more temperate and suffered from fewer ailments than other regions near the equator. Mapmakers wrote that "the climate in the [South Pacific] islands is comparatively good," while the number of diseases is few (Nihon rikuchi sokuryō 1938). Moreover, the record prices of sugar on the world market provided an incentive to invest in sugar production on the islands. In 1920, the price of sugar reached a high of 0.20 yen per kilogram in comparison to the average price of 0.06 yen per kilogram during the early 1910s and throughout the 1920s (Ka 1995, 117). In addition, in contrast to Taiwan, where farmers had clearly delineated plots of lands and a complicated system of land tenure, the native Micronesian population did not farm in the conventional manner recognizable to Japanese and Western observers at the time.[xvii] Rather than clearing and delineating plots of land, Micronesians engaged in small-scale agriculture, particularly the cultivation of fruit trees at varied locations in the communal land near their villages. In their land survey, the South Seas Government perceived the islands' land as being unclaimed as well as wastefully underutilized by the native population. The high price of sugar, hospitable climate, and unclaimed land provided incentives for developing a sugar industry on the islands following the Taiwanese model. This entailed close cooperation between the local administration and a state-sponsored company (in this case the South Seas Development Company). However, economic development in the South Pacific mandate was not simply a replica of the colonial Taiwanese economy. The perceived lack of conventional agriculture on the islands and views regarding the adequacy of the Micronesian population to farm fundamentally shaped how the South Seas Government and the South Seas Development Company developed the islands.

Maps and land surveys played a large role in the economic planning for the islands by determining the amount of land available for use. Through maps and land surveys, the South Seas Government acquired ownership over the majority of land on the islands. Maps produced in 1922, 1938, and 1940 demarcated land owned by private firms or the government. Notably, within these numerous maps, the lands on which the native Micronesian population lived were not represented. However, land used by the South Seas Government or the South Seas Development Company was included. For example, a map of Pelelieu Island in 1940 delineated land leased to the South Seas Development Company as well as that of the military barracks and airfield (see figure 5). The Micronesian population living on the island at the time, however, is omitted.

Figure 5. Image of Pelelieu Island in the Caroline Islands. Source: Nihon rikuchi sokuryō (1938).



The effect of this erasure was twofold. First, because the Micronesian population used communal lands that were not documented, the initial cartographic surveys in 1923 by the South Seas Government registered these lands as unclaimed and unused. As mentioned above, the Class C status of the mandate enabled the South Seas Government to govern the territory as if it were contiguous with the laws within the empire. The Natural Resources Law in place in Japan at the time divided land into domains for public use, government use, forestry, and miscellaneous use. The law also stipulated that "all real property without owners now belonged to the state" (South Seas Government 1924, 92–94). When applied to the South Pacific mandate, this law enabled the South Seas Government to secure 223,295 acres (273,948,093 *tsubo*) as government land. The native population and Japanese farmers owned 53,197 acres (65,265,143 *tsubo*) and 6,074 acres (7,452,201 *tsubo*) of the land, respectively. The South Seas Government leased 74,431 acres to private firms, with the South Seas Development Company being the main beneficiary of rent-free land for development (Nanyōchō 1932, 333–334).[xviii] The erasure of a large portion of communal land used by Micronesian villages in both the land survey and maps effectively disenfranchised the population and allowed for subsequent immigration of large numbers of Japanese farmers.

In addition, the maps depicted empty and unused lands that the South Seas Development Company could offer to potential Japanese immigrants. Like Manchuria, the South Pacific mandate was portrayed as a frontier, containing vast undeveloped tracts of land for Japanese farmers to move into (Young 1998, 327). The South Seas Development Company offered farmers who immigrated with their families 12.25 acres of land to farm sugarcane, with all the products to be sold to the company. Twenty percent of the sugarcane would be paid as a leasing fee (Decker 1940, 181).[xix] This promise of undeveloped land enticed Japanese immigrants, many of whom were impoverished Okinawan farmers.

The power of land surveys and maps to wrest land and redivide it for the benefit of the empire supported plans for overseas migration. The industrialization of cities and the growing number of factories in the countryside created income inequality in the Japanese countryside. Imperial Diet members and others, however, believed that this unequal distribution of wealth was due to overpopulation. In her research on Japanese emigration to Korea, Hyung Gu Lynn notes that from 1887 onward, there was a belief in Japan that the home islands were overcrowded and that emigration was necessary (2005, 26–27).[xx] This fear that a Malthusian crisis was responsible for unemployment in the countryside led Foreign Minister Komura Jutarō in 1909 to present a plan of sending one million Japanese immigrants to Manchuria within twenty years. Expansion and emigration, as Louise Young argues, was also seen as a cure for the economic inequality in the countryside through the opening up of land overseas for impoverished Japanese farmers (1998, 308–316).

Among the various destinations available for Japanese immigrants, the South Pacific offered advantages over other sites. Because the islands were under Japanese jurisdiction, immigrants were not subjected to racial discrimination, immigration quotas, or rule by a foreign government. In addition, the amount of land offered in contracts by the South Seas Development Company surpassed those of Taiwanese sugar companies. In colonial Taiwan, the amount of available land for migrants was limited by the large number of Taiwanese farmers already on the island and the history of land tenure there. The erasure of communal land used by the Micronesian population offered the local administration and the South Seas Development Company the bulk of arable land on the islands. Furthermore, whereas in Manchuria and Taiwan Japanese settlers would have to compete with Chinese labor, which was cheaper than Japanese labor, Japanese migrants to the South Pacific did not face competition from Micronesian workers because the South Seas Development Company exclusively hired Japanese workers to farm sugarcane.

Many of the farmers who moved to the South Pacific mandate were Okinawans. Despite a boom in sugar prices during World War I, the depressed prices of sugar on the international market during the 1920s hurt the sugar industry on Okinawa, leading many Okinawans to look for better economic opportunities elsewhere. Chōdō Matsujirō, a farmer who emigrated from Okinawa to Saipan in 1922, said: “At the time, my family was poor and I couldn’t enter the upper school so my ambition was to set off to seek my fortune [*hitohata*] in an undeveloped [*mikai*] land” (Tomiyama 1993, 55–56). In his interview with Japanese who had settled in the Nanyō, Abe Goe notes that one informant mentioned that “many talked about going north or south as it would become difficult to live in Japan” (1986, 172). Many of the early Okinawan immigrants to the South Pacific were men who came with dreams of making a fortune. Many thought of settling in the South Pacific only temporally. After the Great Depression, however, the number of Japanese immigrants increased, with a majority taking their families along, thereby creating a more settled community on the islands.

Although wages for immigrant farmers in the South Pacific were only 40 to 50 percent of that of their counterparts in Tokyo, the contracts between the South Seas Development Company (Nankō) and immigrant farmers provided a better economic prospect than those found on Okinawa. Nankō's workers can be divided into three categories. According to John Decker, all agreed to pay the company back for the 30-yen moving expense. Those engaged in the sugar mill were given free lodging and a rent-free plot of land. They were paid twice a month at the average rate of 1.88 yen per day. The second class of workers consisted of farmers who were provided with 3.65 acres. They were also called upon periodically to work in the sugar-processing plant, thereby providing a floating pool of labor for the mill. The last group consisted of farmers who came with their families. Referred to as 5-*cho* farmers, these individuals were assigned 12.25 acres. Twenty percent of their crop would have to be paid to Nankō as a leasing fee (Decker 1940, 29–31). While the working conditions and wages in the sugar industry were not high, they were supplemented by government subsidies given to farmers for growing sugarcane. For example, this included 30 yen for every newly cleared hectare that was planted with sugarcane. In 1929, 1,121 Japanese workers were given subsidies in the amount of 513,664 yen. The resulting package of subsidies and stable work enticed farmers from Okinawa to emigrate despite the exploitative terms offered by the South Seas Development Company. As a result, the number of Japanese immigrants to the South Pacific grew exponentially over the next two decades. Whereas in 1920, 3,671 Japanese lived on the islands, by 1941, this number had risen to 90,072 persons, almost double the native population of 51,089 persons (Nanyōchō 1932, 332–333).[xxi]

Why did the South Seas Government and Nankō preferentially hire Japanese to farm sugarcane on the islands when Micronesian labor offered a cheaper alternative? Once again, maps suggest an answer. The description of Micronesians, particularly the Kanaka, in maps reflected a belief by the navy and South Seas Government that Micronesians were inherently less advanced than Japanese or other colonial subjects. Maps published in 1938 included texts describing the native population as lacking industry. Dividing Micronesians into two groups, the Kanaka and the Chamorro, the maps characterized the Kanaka as being dark skinned and "disliking normal work." The writer goes on to state that "the majority of the Kanaka have not been able to advance beyond a primitive state" (Nihon rikuchi sokuryō 1938). Although the Chamorros were deemed to be relatively more "advanced" than the Kanaka, they were nevertheless criticized for having religious practices that focused on animism (literally the worship of "plants and animals").

In order to develop the productive potential of the islands, Micronesians could not be depended on to provide the workforce.[xxii] This perception pushed the South Seas Government to solicit Japanese to immigrate to the islands. In its official history, the South Seas Government stated:

> With regard to the aforementioned idea of islanders engaged in agricultural production, it is not possible to improve their current low level overnight. Rather, the island's development has been concretely tried through the immigration of Japanese farmers. This has been one enlightened [*keihatsu*] method. In 1924, more land has been set aside and Japanese immigrants have been invited [to work on said land]. (1932, 290)

Matsue, the president of the South Seas Development Company, viewed Micronesians in the same light. Reflecting in 1932, he argued that "looking among the islands, there were no individuals who had experience [growing or working in the sugarcane industry]" (1932, 80). In addition to Micronesians' unsuitability for farming, Matsue wrote, "within Japan, the most overcrowded region was Okinawa so that hiring them for work on Saipan was the appropriate measure" (1932, 82). For Matsue, preferentially hiring Okinawans conferred various advantages. First, Okinawan labor was cheaper than that of Japanese on the main islands. Moreover, Okinawans had experience in sugar cultivation. Lastly, hiring Okinawans allowed Matsue to claim a role in alleviating the perceived problem of overpopulation on the main islands. As a result, contractual sugarcane cultivators hired by Nankō were predominantly Japanese. According to official government statistics, in 1930, 37,761 acres of land had been leased to Japanese in contrast to the 239 acres leased to Micronesians (Nanyōchō 1932, 334). In 1929, 1,121 Japanese workers were given subsidies totaling 513,664 yen, compared to 1,266 yen spread among 27 Micronesians. Unlike colonial subjects in Taiwan and Korea, Micronesians were never fully mobilized in the economy of the mandate until their labor was required in the desperate days of preparing for the U.S. invasion.

With their descriptions of the resources and people of the region, maps of the South Pacific were tools of power to make the space of the mandate both knowable and controllable.

The land was quantified and requisitioned for the development of a sugar monopoly by the South Seas Government and Nankō. In addition, the texts included on these maps reveal how the South Seas Government and navy viewed the economic possibilities of the islands through an analysis of climate, geography, and the culture of the native Micronesian population. By depicting Micronesians as primitive and lacking industry, these maps contained justifications for the South Seas Government and Nankō's policy of encouraging Japanese migration to the islands.

Conclusion

As historical sources, Japanese imperial maps have often been overlooked by historians and other scholars as potential sources for understanding the Japanese empire. As tools for the expression of state power, imperial maps make a space knowable not only through cartographic representation but by imparting views about what resources are available and how they can be utilized. In the case of the South Pacific, these maps reflected a regime that sought to utilize land in order to make the mandate economically productive. Maps helped further these aims in designating ownership of land and how space could be divided. The enforcement of the Natural Resources Law increased the amount of land available for the South Seas Government while ignoring communal lands used by Micronesians. Maps and land surveys paved the way for the establishment of a successful sugar industry on the islands. By 1930, sugar accounted for over 50 percent of the total value of exports and provided over 60 percent of the tax revenue collected by the South Seas Government (Nanyōchō 1932, 50). Not surprisingly, the mapmakers claimed that sugar production on the islands would have a long future (Nihon rikuchi sokuryō 1938).

In their erasure of Micronesian rights over communal land, imperial maps of the South Pacific served as tools for the South Seas Government to assert control over a geographic area. In this sense, they facilitated what Peter Vandergeest and Nancy Peluso called the "internal territorialization of state power" (1995, 3). In contrast to claims over borders and what constitutes the nation-state, internal territorialization designates the allocation of resources within recognized state boundaries. Imperial maps of the South Pacific functioned as a means of internal territorialization while acting as a report on the utility of resources on the islands. They thus serve as a useful window into understanding the relationship between mapping and economic planning of overseas territories.

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Notes

1. In the voyages Enomoto sponsored in 1882 and 1883, maps of the ocean and islands in South Pacific were made. However, systematic mapping of the islands themselves did not occur.
2. The British quickly retracted this request upon learning that German submarines had been recalled to the Atlantic theater. Nevertheless, Tokyo used this opportunity as a means of entering World War I on the side of the Allies, citing their obligation to uphold the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. In the official declaration of war, Japan stated that Germany, from their leased territory in China, had "infested East Asia with their ships." The Japanese government and navy quickly moved beyond the confines of Britain's request and occupied the German colonies in the South Pacific, namely the Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall Islands, by 1915. They, once again, cited the need to rid the menace of German U-Boats from Asia (Yamada 1997, 156)
3. The other Class C mandates were German West Africa (present day Namibia), the Union of South Africa, New Guinea, and Western Samoa.
4. Writing in 1944, Huntington Gilchrist noted that the request by the PMC for more information than what was in the annual report would have to be sent to the home government. The reply would not come back for another year (Gilchrist 1944, 638). This meant that pressing issues and criticisms of the mandate power's actions could not be addressed in a timely or efficient manner. Moreover, the league sought to limit the PMC's power by refusing fact-finding missions to the mandates. The council even ruled in 1923 at the behest of the British Colonial Office that complaints about a mandate power must be made by petitioners to the mandate power, which then would forward them to the PMC.
5. During the 1920s, the United States in particular was concerned about whether Japan was illegally building bases in Micronesia. After looking at the available documents, I come to the same conclusion as Mark Peattie—namely that Tokyo did not sanction the construction of fortifications on the islands until after Japan had left the League of Nations in 1933. The construction of fortifications increased when relations with the United States deteriorated due to the ongoing war in China after 1937 (Peattie 1988, 248).
6. The South Seas Government was in an ambiguous position in 1920. While the navy was ostensibly in charge of the islands, civilian control had already been established. Although the South Seas Government had to report to the naval ministry, civilian bureaucrats had been dispatched in 1918 to oversee the daily administration of the island. The South Seas Government would be formally established and placed under the oversight of the cabinet in 1922.
7. Matsue Haruji, on the other hand, was the instrumental entrepreneur whose collaboration with the Nanyōchō would fundamentally shape the decision to utilize Japanese labor on the islands.

Born in Aizuwakamatsu City in Fukushima Prefecture in 1876, Matsue graduated from Tokyo Industrial College in 1899 and studied abroad at Louisiana State University, then known for its work in sugar cultivation. He first gained experience in the sugar industry by working as a factory manager for the Greater Japan Sugar Company's refinery in Osaka. He left the company in 1907 to search for opportunities to start his own business. In 1920, he visited Saipan and thought that, despite the jungle foliage covering the ground, the soil would be amenable for growing sugarcane. He was further encouraged by the lucrative international market for sugar at the time. In 1919, sugar prices remained high, buoyed by the demand created by belligerent nations during World War I. Moreover, as Shioya Shichijuro in his biography of Matsue noted, Matsue believed that sugar production on Saipan and the Marianas could compete with and potentially outstrip that of Taiwan. In his 1932 account of developing the islands, entitled *Nanyō Kaitaku Jūnenshi* (Ten years of development in the South Pacific), Matsue writes that he had a firm conviction in the eventual success of his enterprise even before it materialized (Matsue 1932, 80; Shioya 2005, 73, 77).

8. In addition to the South Seas Development Company, the other main Japanese company on the island was the South Seas Trading Company (Nanyō Bōeki Kabushiki Kaisha). Because the latter's activities were concentrated primarily on coastal trade, it did not require much land to carry out its operation. As a result, most of the government-leased land was utilized by Nankō. On Saipan, Nankō's center of production, the South Seas Government wrote that most of the land used to grow sugarcane was actually leased by it. Moreover, it did not begin to collect rent on these lands until October 1930 (Nanyōchō 1932, 333–334).

9. The South Seas Government was not fiscally self-sufficient until 1935. From 1922 to 1935, it required an average of 4.76 million yen annually from the cabinet in Tokyo (Nanyōchō 1932, 79–89).

10. These maps were labeled as "top secret." The U.S. Army Maps Service acquired these maps following World War II. They can be found at various library collections in the United States, particularly the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

11. The map showing monthly temperature averages in the South Pacific is not included in this paper (Nihon rikuchi sokuryō 1938).

12. For an excellent history of the debate on the policy of southern expansion, see Yano (2009).

13. Other advocates of southern expansion included Nitobe Inazo, Japan's representative at the League of Nations and former professor of colonial studies at Tokyo University, and Goto Shimpei. In an essay in 1907, Nitobe wrote, "I believe that the folklore of Momotarō's overseas expedition represents correct Japanese interest in the outside world, and their marching spirit. The Island of Ogres is the general name for the south seas islands.... With the southward advance of the Japanese, what is signified by the Island of Ogres moves southward too. In 1895, Taiwan was the Island of Ogres.... In five or ten years...Momotarō of today will expand to conquer toward [sic] the Island of Ogres further south" (Kimitada 1995, 128).

14. The term *nanyō* was used ambiguously during the prewar period. Literally translated as the "south seas," depending on the context, *nanyō* could refer to either the South Seas mandate or Southeast Asia.

15. According to Chih-Ming Ka, Japanese sugar companies established large-scale sugar mills after 1906 and used their access to capital from Japanese banks to advance lower interest rate loans to sugarcane farmers. They were aided by the colonial government, which promoted the farming of sugarcane through irrigation and land reclamation projects. In addition, by 1921, over

25 million yen of subsidies to purchase machinery and seedlings had been given to Japanese sugar companies to offset the price of foreign sugar.
16. For an examination of sugar plantations, see Mintz (1985, 19–73).
17. The system of land tenure in Taiwan meant that Japanese sugar companies and the colonial government could not simply confiscate property to build factories or plantations. Sugar companies instead were obligated to purchase land to build factories and contract Taiwanese farmers to grow sugarcane. For more information on the land tenure system in Taiwan, see Ka's description (1995, 27–34).
18. The other company operating on the island at the time was the South Seas Trading Company (Nanyō Bōeki Kaisha). Because the South Seas Trading Company served as local merchants who sold Japanese goods to Micronesians in exchange for copra, their operations only required storage facilities near the major ports on the islands. As a result, the South Seas Development Company became the main beneficiary of land grants from the South Seas Government.
19. Farmers who came without their families were given 3.25 acres (Decker 1940, 181).
20. Takekoshi Yosaburō triumphantly proclaimed that "now Korea has room for ten million immigrants and Formosa [Taiwan] two million" (Peattie 1988, 89).
21. The rate of migration to the South Pacific mandate grew exponentially following 1929.
22. Jun Uchida has pointed out that the colonial government in Korea and Japanese business interests both encouraged and fostered ties with Korean business elites. In Taiwan, collaboration between Japanese entrepreneurs and Chinese elites occurred in the suppression campaigns against aborigines. They continued in the establishment of a salt monopoly and other enterprises (Chang and Meyers 1963, 440–444; Uchida 2005, 159–160).

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