

第2次世界大戦下の鉄道をめぐるとタイ間の攻防

—— タイはいかに列車運行を奪還・維持したか ——

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Scramble for Thai Railways between Thailand and Japan during World War II: How Did Thailand Recapture and Maintain Its Train Operations?

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze how Thailand tried to recapture its railways from the Japanese army and maintain them during World War II. While many military trains went south toward Malaya after the outbreak of war, few returned to Bangkok. Thailand, therefore, took the hardline stance of refusing to allocate its rolling stock to the Japanese army unless its rolling stock in Malaya was returned. As a result, Japan proceeded to return Thai rolling stock from Malaya.

Thailand also said that more trains should be used to transport rice from the Northeast and East in order to satisfy Japanese demand, for which it requested a military train that was currently running on the Southern line. Although the negotiation ran into difficulties, the Japanese army finally accepted this reduction in the number of military trains.

Furthermore, there was a severe shortage of lubricating oil, which was indispensable for train operations, after the outbreak of war. Thailand wanted to buy lubricating oil from Japan, but Japan was reluctant. It agreed only after Thailand warned that it would curtail its loan of military trains to Japan.

In this way, Thailand succeeded in reclaiming and maintaining its railways. The main factors behind this were negotiation by bargaining points and the acquisition of concessions through sympathy. Thailand used bargaining points to negotiate with Japan; it insisted that Japan's demand could not be met unless Japan accepted its request. Furthermore, Thailand had to persuade Japan that it was incapable of accepting Japan's demands; it did so by presenting reasons for Japan to sympathize with it. Thailand's two-pronged strategy—presenting bargaining points and acquiring concessions by eliciting sympathy—functioned well to a certain extent.

Keywords: Thailand, Japanese army, railway, train operation, military train, rice transport, lubricating oil

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