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The Battlefield Experience of Japanese Soldiers in the Asia-Pacific War

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Preface and Translation by Bo Tao

Abstract: The total number of Japanese casualties in the Asia-Pacific War (1937-1945) is estimated to be around 3.1 million, with military fatalities accounting for 2.3 million. In contrast to the popular image in Japan of these war dead as "noble heroes" (*eirei*) who fought valiantly in service of the nation, however, the realities of war were quite different. Rather than being killed in combat, some sixty percent of soldiers (1.4 million) died away from the battlefield, succumbing to disease and starvation. Others suffered from the military's failure to secure dependable supply lines to provide food and equipment replenishments, resulting in a large number of otherwise preventable deaths. In this article, Professor Yoshida Yutaka focuses on the grim realities of war death as experienced by ordinary soldiers in the Imperial Japanese Army, a topic rarely touched upon by scholars. Combining a social historical approach with rigorous statistical analysis, Yoshida sheds light on the institutional issues and peculiarities of what was once proudly known as the "Emperor's military."

Keywords: Asia-Pacific War, Japan, China, Military History, Soldiers, Servicemen, Casualties, Disease, War Death, Battlefield, Frontline

Translator's Preface

The article translated below was written by Yoshida Yutaka, emeritus professor at Hitotsubashi University, for a 2006 edited volume on various aspects of the battlefield experience of Japanese soldiers during the Asia-Pacific War.[1] Since then, Yoshida has expanded his work on the topic into a full-length book, which was published in 2017 under the title, *Nihongun heishi: Ajia-Taiheiyō sensō no genjitsu* (Soldiers of the Japanese Military: The Reality of the Asia-Pacific War).[2] The book has attracted a great deal of attention in Japan. It was awarded the Asia-Pacific Special Award and the Shinsho Award in 2019 and has sold over 200,000 copies.[3] One of the key reasons the book has had such an impact is that there has been so little scholarly writing about the experiences of ordinary Japanese soldiers.

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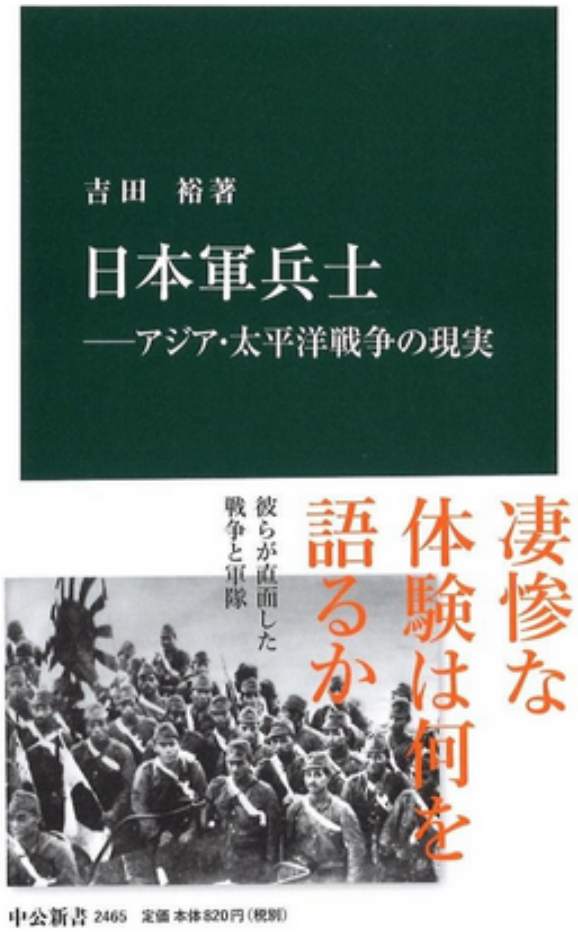

Yoshida's award-winning book, *Nihongun heishi* (2017)

As is well known, in the decades immediately following the war, the horrors of the battlefield were taken up with powerful effect in Japanese literature and film. Takeyama Michio's children's novel, *Biruma no tategoto* (*The Burmese Harp*), for example, was published beginning in 1947 and was made into a film by director Ichikawa Kon in 1956.[4] Ōoka Shōhei's *Nobi* (*Fires on the Plain*), loosely based on Ōoka's wartime experience as a military technician in the Philippines, was published in 1951 and was also made into a film by Ichikawa in 1959. Gomikawa Junpei's six-volume novel, *Ningen no jōken* (*The Human Condition*), which relates the journey of an idealistic Japanese youth who becomes embroiled in the war as an Imperial Army soldier in Manchuria, was published beginning in 1956 and became the basis of a film trilogy directed by Kobayashi Masaki in 1959-61.

Following such early depictions of the war in film and literature, Japanese historiography on the Second World War began to appear in the 1960s.[5] While the immediate postwar years saw many young people turn away entirely from military-related topics out of strongly-held antiwar beliefs, the Center for Military History at the National Institute for Defense Studies—a Ministry of Defense (Bōeichō)-operated think-tank founded in 1955—emerged as one of the few institutional hubs for war history research.[6] The Center, many of whose members were former officers of the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy, began publishing detailed studies on Japan's military campaigns in the mid-1960s, culminating in the massive 102-volume *Senshi sōsho* (1966-80). Written over the course of twenty-four years by a group of military officers-turned-officials who did not necessarily have historical training, the Bōeichō-commissioned project was meant to present an official version of the events of the war.[7] As one might imagine, however, the work narrowly focused on the strategies and tactics of individual campaigns, offering the perspective of central command to the exclusion of that of soldiers in the field.[8] Scholarly studies focusing on the experiences of the ordinary solider remained extremely rare, and military history (*gunji shi*) in general came to be seen as a highly specialized field populated mainly by those with prior military experience.[9]

There were also a number of professional historians who developed their own histories of World War II from within the academy. Fujiwara Akira (1922-2003), for example, used his experience as a former Imperial Army officer serving on the China front to produce Marxist-oriented studies influenced by the works of historians such as Inoue Kiyoshi

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(1913-2001) and Tōyama Shigeki (1914-2011).[10] Hata Ikuhiko (1932-), on the other hand, drew upon postwar oral history interviews conducted with former elite officers of the Imperial Army and Navy under detention in Sugamo Prison, which allowed him to develop a unique brand of neo-nationalist scholarship.[11] Ienaga Saburō (1913-2002), to take another example, recognized from early on the importance of the wartime experience of ordinary people, leading him to write the first historical overview of the Asia-Pacific War to take into account the perspectives of both soldiers and citizens.[12] Furthermore, in the 1970s, Ōe Shinobu (1928-2009), a former cadet of the Imperial Army Air Academy, began producing rigorously researched studies on military history.[13] The work of Ōe, who belonged to the group of scholars associated with Fujiwara Akira, helped to break down the barrier between Marxist and anti-Marxist historical scholarship.

While such scholars pioneered in developing new approaches to military history, soldiers' war experiences still received relatively little attention. It was not until the 1990s that a major shift occurred with applying the methodologies of social history (*shakaishi*), people's history (*minshūshi*), and local history (*chiikishi*) to the issues of war and the military. Notably, this was a movement led by a new generation of scholars who had no firsthand experience of war. Yoshida (b. 1954), who is among the senior members of this generation, views his main historiographical contribution as the reinterpretation (*yomikae*) of military history from the perspective of social history and people's history.[14] Through numerous works, he has sought to construct a bottom-up view of military history that takes into account not only the perspective of ordinary troops, but also their ties to broader society.[15] In this regard, his work might be compared to that of his colleague Yoshimi Yoshiaki (b. 1946), whose now classic, *Grassroots Fascism*—originally published in 1987 under the title, *Kusa no ne no fashizumu*—has recently been translated by Ethan Mark and introduced in the Asia-Pacific Journal.[16] Whereas Yoshida primarily focuses on the battlefield itself, Yoshimi combines the experience of ordinary soldiers with that of civilians on the home front. Both scholars highlight the day-to-day experiences of non-elite Japanese as active participants within the larger framework of the Asia-Pacific War and have helped to broaden the definition of both military history and social history.

Beyond the Japanese historiography, there have been a few attempts to describe the experience of Japanese commoners and ordinary soldiers in English. Among these, Haruko and Theodore Cook's *Japan at War: An Oral History* (1992) is especially noteworthy, both for its content and the timing of its publication.[17] Based on oral history interviews conducted in the late 1980s, the book offers a rare glimpse into how ordinary Japanese from different walks of life—military and civilian, men and women—perceived and remembered their wartime encounters in over sixty powerful individual vignettes. Writing at the end of the Shōwa period (1926-89), the Cooks benefited from a moment of national reflection about the bygone era that facilitated the collection of valuable firsthand testimonies about the war. Given the relatively unstructured manner of their sample selection, in which interviewees were solicited through newspaper ads and word-of-mouth, the voices represented are more diverse than the argument-driven examples chosen by Yoshimi in his *Grassroots Fascism*. Nevertheless, more than one third of the accounts describe the experiences of former soldiers who served on battlefields across China and the Pacific including several harrowing testimonies from the Battle of Okinawa. Because it is primarily a compilation of individual recollections rather than a sustained analysis of any single group, it is difficult to draw any systematic conclusions about the experience of Japanese soldiers as a whole.

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More recently, English-language work on the war has focused on the home front, rather than the battlefront. Kenneth Ruoff's *Imperial Japan at its Zenith* (2010), for example, highlights the importance of civic participation in sustaining the public fervor of the war years through the lens of tourism and consumerism.[18] In *Japan's Carnival War* (2019), Benjamin Uchiyama attempts to go beyond the familiar depictions of wartime Japan as a "dark valley" dominated by draconian state controls to emphasize the carnivalesque symbiosis (in the Bakhtinian sense) between official propaganda and actual cultural practice.[19] In making his argument, Uchiyama considers the figure of the youth aviator-turned-kamikaze pilot as one of his key groups, offering an updated perspective on the cultural construction of one of the better-studied subgroups in Japanese military history.[20] But the actual experience of the battlefield is not discussed. From the fields of theater and literary studies, James Brandon's *Kabuki's Forgotten War* (2009) and Sharalyn Orbaugh's *Propaganda Performed* (2015) add to our understanding of the role played by different forms of popular entertainment—respectively, *kabuki* stage drama and *kamishibai* street theater—in mobilizing the domestic populace for the total war effort.[21] The theme of popular mobilization is further echoed by Sabine Frühstück, whose *Playing War* (2017) explores the place of children in the ideological production of war, whether through the medium of war games or the exploitation of the "emotional capital" of images of children.[22] Although still a work in progress, Sheldon Garon's "transnational home front" project—to give another example—considers how the warring states of Japan, Germany, and Britain were actively investigating, emulating, and improving upon the defense and mobilization strategies of one another during World War II.[23] In short, we now have a more detailed and nuanced picture of how various social groups and organizations on the home front—e.g. actors, artists, children, reporters, businesses, and religious groups—responded to the calls to contribute and commit themselves to the national cause.[24]

Along with the focus on home front affairs, the transnational approach as exemplified by Garon is another area in which there has been notable advance in recent English-language scholarship. Takashi Fujitani's *Race for Empire* (2011), for example, engages in a transpacific comparative analysis of Japanese American soldiers who served in the U.S. army and Korean soldiers who were recruited or drafted into the Japanese army as imperial subjects during the Asia-Pacific War, highlighting the similarities between the ways in which the two regimes sought to manage their respective racialized minorities.[25] Jeremy Yellen's *The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere* (2019), on the other hand, places the development of the titular Co-Prosperity Sphere vision in dialogue with its reception by political elites in the Philippines and Burma, thereby shedding light on the contested and negotiated nature of wartime imperialism.[26] All of these works have situated Japan's wartime experiences within broader currents of global history, yet they do little to illuminate the perspective of ordinary soldiers.[27]

In recent English-writing on the topic, perhaps the work that comes closest to Yoshida's in terms of subject matter and sources is Lee Pennington's *Casualties of History* (2015). In it, Pennington examines the history of wounded soldiers and physically disabled veterans of the Japanese army, who were known by the term *shōi gunjin* ("injured and sick servicemen").[28] In particular, his detailed description of the logistics of Japan's field medicine operations—as told through the eyes of one combat amputee who was severely wounded during a "bandit suppression" campaign in north China in 1939—provides a compelling look at what ordinary Japanese soldiers experienced on the battlefield. Pennington pays close attention to the medical and societal treatment of the bodies of soldiers, as well as

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the institutional efforts to manage their physical and mental trauma through the creation of a state-sponsored welfare program for war-wounded veterans and their families.

Pennington's study challenges common misconceptions about the low standards of emergency medicine provided by the Imperial Japanese Army, convincingly showing the sophisticated system of medical treatment and evacuation that was in place for wounded servicemen. Also revealing is his account of the Japanese government's efforts to promote the image of disabled veterans as praiseworthy icons of sacrifice and bravery, a project of cultural reimagining that was subsequently reversed by the Allied Occupation's abolition of the system of preferential treatment for military casualties that had been established during the war. Whereas Pennington focuses on soldiers who sustained debilitating injuries (specifically amputees), however, Yoshida takes a broader approach that addresses the ways in which the majority of troops encountered death on the battlefield, ranging from war wounds to disease, malnutrition, and drowning. Indeed, Yoshida's focus on the grim realities of death, and the structural issues inherent in the Japanese military institution that contributed to such tragic outcomes, sets his work apart.

Research on the history of the Asia-Pacific War is a relatively new field that has only come into its own in recent years. Factors such as the unavailability of primary sources—including classified documents and materials confiscated by the U.S. military (which were later returned to Japan)—initially limited the scope of possible research topics. As a result, earlier studies tended either to produce overview histories of the entire war, or zoomed in on well-known, often controversial events such as the Nanjing Massacre, the "road" to Pearl Harbor, a handful of key strategic battles and campaigns, and perhaps the most widely debated of all, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Their conclusions, moreover, became a proxy for ideological battles regarding the legitimacy of the war and the way in which it was brought to an end.

Lost among the political and moral debates were the stories of ordinary folk on whose shoulders the burdens of war disproportionately fell. The gradual declassification and publication of key historical documents, discovery of previously unknown private sources, and development of user-friendly digital databases, along with an increased interest in the lives of commoners, have greatly enriched the diversity of approaches and themes undertaken by scholars. Moving away from the grand narrative-style history centered on political and military leaders, recent scholarship has come to recognize that each individual group had its own unique stories, thus enabling a more sophisticated understanding of Japan's wartime experience—as is reflected in the numerous studies featured in this review. Even then, however, the fate of ordinary soldiers and their unglamorous stints on the front lines have—with the notable exception of the student kamikaze pilots—remained a blind spot in the literature. It is to these men and their experiences that Yoshida turns, and through which we are able to gain an honest appreciation of the true costs of war.

Translated Text

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The edited volume containing Yoshida's article, published by Iwanami Shoten

***Ajia-Taiheiyō sensō 5: senjō no shosō* (2006)**

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to reconstruct the battlefield experience of the ordinary Japanese soldier during the Asia-Pacific War. This is a project that is entirely distinct from both the official military histories written from the viewpoint of the staff and officers who strategized in command rooms removed from the battlefield and the kind of accounts produced by Yasukuni Shrine and its affiliated museum, the Yūshūkan, whose sole purpose is to commend and console the spirits of the soldiers who died in battle. Although research of this kind was rarely undertaken by historians in the decades after the war, one contribution that deserves special mention is Kuroha Kiyotaka's "Aspects of Death in the Fifteen-Year War: Of 'Statistics' and 'Poems,'" published in the journal *Shisō* in August 1971.[29] This pioneering work was written at a time when the sources available to historians were still extremely limited. Above all, my goal is to take up Kuroha's call for "the study of the realities of death" (*shinikata no jitsugaku*), which he posited as a counterpoint to "the aestheticization of death" (*shinikata no bigaku*). Wherever possible, I hope to draw on my understanding of recent developments in the fields of social, local, and people's history (*minshūshi*), and incorporate insights developed by scholars working on such topics as "the body," "the family," and "funerary rites."

Of course, in examining the history of the Asia-Pacific War as a war of aggression, there is a need to pursue what might be called "the study of the realities of killing" (*koroshikata no jitsugaku*) alongside research on war crimes, but on this issue, I refer readers to the work of Kasahara Tokushi.[30] Even in the "Emperor's military," with its dominant philosophy that "from the outset, there can be no expectation of returning alive," there were, in fact, various ways for soldiers to choose "life." They could, for example, remove themselves from battle by surrendering or deliberately injuring themselves, or volunteer for positions away from the front lines.[31] In this regard, there is, no doubt, also a need for "the study of the realities of survival" (*ikinokori no jitsugaku*), but that too lies beyond the scope of this article.

1. The Characteristics of Military Mobilization

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Competition with Labor Mobilization

First, I would like to look at the special characteristics of military mobilization in Japan. The first characteristic is the severe competition between military mobilization and labor mobilization necessary for wartime production, as a result of the underdevelopment of Japanese capitalism. As Ōe Shinobu has pointed out, because of the low level of technical capital composition (*shihon no gijutsuteki kōsei*) in Japanese industry, it was necessary to retain a large number of skilled workers in the workforce; this was especially true in the villages, where labor-intensive small-scale farming was dominant.[32] For this reason, there arose fierce competition between military and industry for the recruitment of able-bodied men, leading to a military mobilization rate that was much lower than in the Western powers.

This situation can be observed in the system of draft deferment for reservists, originally introduced as a general draft deferment system in 1927 and revised following an amendment to the Army mobilization plan implemented in May 1943. According to this amendment, many technicians, laborers, and railroad and communications workers who formed the core of the wartime domestic labor force were subject to draft deferment.[33] As a result, the total number of workers who received deferments was approximately 380,000 in 1943, 700,000 in 1944, and 850,000 in 1945. It is also interesting to note that Imperial Palace staff—including imperial household chamberlains, physicians to the emperor, palace police, and fire officers—as well as members of the Imperial Diet, and secretaries in charge of military affairs in town and village-level administration were subject to deferment under the same amendment.[34]

Favoritism toward Active-Service Soldiers

Because the Imperial Navy was, with the exception of the final months of the war, by and large a volunteer corps, most of the reservists called up during the war served in the Imperial Army. The Army, however, could not free itself from a mobilization ideology favoring active-service soldiers (*gen'ekihei*), resulting in a distrust of soldiers called up from the conscript reserves who did not have military experience. Once the Sino-Japanese War broke out, since most of the active-service soldiers were organized into an elite division in preparation for an anticipated clash with the Soviet Union, many special divisions, drawn from the ranks of the second reserves, were created and sent into battle in China. As a result, first reserve (*yobieki*) and second reserve (*kōbieki*) soldiers made up the majority of the Japanese troops in China.

The first and second reserve soldiers who had previously served in the military were relatively old, and many were married with a family. Because of this, they were not as physically strong, and many went into battle bearing anxieties about loved ones back home. Their morale, in other words, was not very high.

As the Sino-Japanese War developed into a protracted conflict without a clearly defined objective, the first and second reserve troops became the central troublemakers whose calculating, battle-hardened outlooks posed a fundamental challenge to military discipline.[35] Out of a sense of despair and reckless self-abandon, such soldiers not only repeatedly committed acts of plunder, rape, arson, and murder against Chinese civilians, but also at times behaved violently and with contempt toward superior officers, posing a threat to military discipline.[36] To address such issues, the central command moved to demobilize and repatriate first and second reserve troops in China, replacing them with active-service soldiers or younger soldiers from the conscript

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reserves. As a matter of fact, the percentage of active-service soldiers within the Army's total forces significantly increased: 37.3% in 1937, 54.5% in 1938, 68.1% in 1939, 71.5% in 1940.[37]

Another factor that accelerated the discharge of first and second reserve troops was the population problem. Since many soldiers with families had been called up for service, the birth rate in 1938 dropped to 27.2 (births per 1,000 population), compared to 30.9 the previous year. Noting that the birth rate recovered to 29.4 in 1940 as a result of roughly 120,000 discharges in each of 1939 and 1940, clearly this demobilization contributed to restoring the birth rate.[38] This was a factor that led to the sending of large numbers of active-service soldiers and young soldiers from the conscript reserves to the China front.[39]

2. The Body of the Mobilized Soldier

The Deterioration of Soldiers' Physical Conditions

We shall consider next the physical conditions of the young men eligible for conscription. According to the physical examination records for young conscripts, there was no large difference in their average height or weight between 1935 and 1941: respectively 160.3 cm and 52.95 kg in 1935, versus 160.8 cm and 53.14 kg in 1941.[40]

However, according to a May 1942 report, "On the Physical Strength of Young Conscripts," compiled by the Army Ministry's Medical Bureau, the body-mass ratio (weight divided by height) of conscripts examined since 1939 exhibited a downward trend, eliciting concern from the central command.[41] In the eyes of an anonymous Army Ministry official, the decrease in the body-mass ratio suggested that:

> The young men these days have a poor physique; tall but skinny and weak looking. More and more men are coming to exhibit the weaknesses of an urbanite: thin chests, slender arms, and pale faces. This is extremely alarming.[42]

The official went on to state that he believed the reason for this state of affairs came from the "concentration of youth in cities, and especially the absorption of youth from the countryside into urban factories and other places with poor facilities to promote health." Such problems were associated with the development of heavy industry and increased urban migration following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War.

Another factor affecting the physical condition of young men was the rapid upsurge in tuberculosis. Although Japan's total mortality rate continued to decrease between 1932 and 1944, tuberculosis mortality, particularly for men ages 20 to 24 increased rapidly. According to Aoki Masakazu, this was due to the growth in the heavy and chemical industries, and the fact that the expanding military itself was becoming a hotbed for the mass infection of tuberculosis.[43] Moreover, it was not until 1940 that X-ray radiography was introduced to the military's physical examinations for conscripts.

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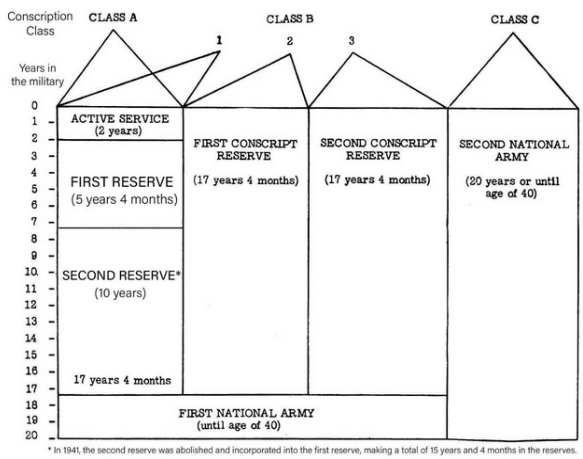

Figure 1. Classes of Service in the Imperial Japanese Army, circa 1940 Adapted from U.S. War Department, Handbook on Japanese Military Forces (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1944), 3. (BT) Click to expand.

The largest problem, however, was that the military had no choice but to begin recruiting even those in poor physical condition to reach troop quotas. As has already been discussed, the expansion and prolongation of the Sino-Japanese War made the procurement of active-service soldiers and conscript reserves critical. This forced the military to reform its conscription system. The conscription system initially categorized youth into six categories based on a physical examination: Class A (*kōshu*), Class B-1 (*dai-ichi otsushu*), Class B-2 (*dai-ni otsushu*), Class C (*heishu*), Class D (*teishu*), and Class E (*boshu*) (see Figure 1). In theory, Class A and Class B conscripts were deemed fit for active service, while Class C conscripts were to serve in the National Army (*kokumin heieki*; a lower-ranking reserve force); Class D conscripts were deemed unfit for service, and Class E conscripts would be reexamined the following year. Before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, roughly speaking, Class A conscripts entered into service as active-service soldiers, Class B-1 conscripts as first reserve troops, Class B-2 as second reserve troops, and Class C entered the second National Army. In practice, being assigned to the second reserve troops or the National Army was akin to being exempted from military service.

With the expansion and prolongation of the Sino-Japanese War and an increasing need for more troops, however, Class B-1 conscripts were mobilized as active-service soldiers, with Class B-2 conscripts entering the first reserve. As a result, by 1939, a Class B-3 category was newly instituted in order to fill the second reserve forces. The central command decided that, while not ideal, some Class C conscripts could be transferred to Class B-3 in order to mobilize them as reserve troops.[44]

One term that frequently comes up in discussions of Japan's prewar military is *gen'ekihei* (現役兵), which can be translated as either an "active-service" or "active-duty" soldier. Since the term primarily denotes a soldier's class of service, I have chosen to translate it as "active-service" (a two-year assignment for those who were deemed most physically fit), to avoid confusion with the mobilization status of being on "active duty" (those called up to serve on a military operation, regardless of their class of service).

The different classes of service reflected a wide variation in levels of training among recruits. Active-service soldiers in the Japanese Army, for example, received the most comprehensive and rigorous training in their two-year term of service. Upon completion of their active service term, they were assigned to the first reserve (*yobieki*) for five years and four months, followed by another ten years in the second reserve (*kōbieki*). During this time, they could be summoned for training for five periods of up to 35 days each, and were also subject to an annual inspection muster.

In contrast, those in the first conscript reserve received training for a period of up to 120 days (later extended to 180 days), followed only by the annual inspection muster. Serving in the second conscript reserve, in turn, required no training, and was basically akin to being exempted from military service. As a result, when the scope of mobilization was expanded in wartime to include those in the reserves, they were frequently looked down upon by their active-service colleagues because of their lack of rigorous training and military experience. (BT)

In order to accommodate the growing demand for troops, standards for conscription were greatly reduced through revision of the Army physical examination rules in 1940. According to the aforementioned "About the Physical Strength of Young Men" (1942), this 1940 revision deemphasized the previous concern of examiners to "discover underlying illnesses or

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abnormalities," and encouraged them to pass conscripts to Class B-3 or above, even if they were "ill or mentally unbalanced," as long as such symptoms were "deemed not to interfere with their military duty."

This revision not only resulted in recruits who were in poor health or physical condition, but many men with mental disabilities. At the Kōnodai Army Hospital—a military hospital, expanded following the Sino-Japanese War, which specialized in the treatment of mental disorders—the percentage of patients with intellectual disabilities grew from only 0.9% in 1938 to 13.9% by 1945. According to Asai Toshio, a military physician at Kōnodai Hospital who conducted "group mental examinations" for several units toward the end of the war, those with intellectual disabilities reached 3 to 4%, revealing a "high ratio of intellectually limited conscripts, even among those in Class A who appeared to be in good physical condition." In response, Central command developed a standardized "group mental examination methodology" in 1944 with the help of the Army Military Medical School and Kōnodai Hospital, and partially implemented it in the conscription examination the following year.[45]

Deterioration in Military Provisions

One notable characteristic of Japan's war footing was that the strengthening of wartime organization proceeded hand in hand with the deterioration in people's standards of living. The government's attempt to promote the rapid industrialization and militarization of society with limited resources had the effect of reducing people's standards of living to the bare minimal level. Although a higher standard of provisions was maintained in the military than for civilians, even military rations deteriorated with the worsening war situation. According to a report submitted to the GHQ on September 5, 1945, by the Army Ministry, due to the "worsening war situation and the depletion of domestic food reserves," the nominal daily provisions for the average soldier on the Japanese home islands (*naichi*) was reduced to 2,900 calories—the "actual caloric value" (*jissai kyūyō netsuryō*) measuring at 2,800 calories with a regional disparity of around 500 calories.[46] The standard caloric intake recommended for mainland soldiers at the time was 3,400 calories. On the other hand, the "amount of labor required of each soldier had increased rapidly in preparation for the decisive battle on the mainland and fortification efforts," which was estimated to require at least 3,200 calories per person. As a result, malnutrition became a persistent problem, with the soldiers' prewar average body weight of 60 kg falling to 54 kg by the end of the war.

On January 15, 1945, Vice Minister of the Army Ministry Shibayama Kenshirō sent out a notice (*Rikumitsu* no. 149) calling attention to the "rapid decline in the physical strength of the domestic troops," which "provided much cause for concern," and led him to emphasize the maintenance of physical health and the necessity for a self-supporting system with regard to provisions. On January 26, he issued a directive (*Rikumitsu* no. 301) ordering troops on the home islands to be responsible for procuring 10% of staple foods, 30% of vegetables, and 5% of meat products on their own.[47]

However, setting up a system of self-sufficiency while preparing for a fight on the mainland was challenging, and individual soldiers ended up buying food from neighborhood farmers on the black market or, at times, resorted to stealing in order to stave off hunger. Manabe Motoyuki, a private first class who was drafted into the Shikoku Infantry Regiment, discusses the practice of soldiers buying black-market rice:

> It was the Japanese military's proud tradition to fully and thoroughly guarantee

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> the livelihood of its soldiers; it was only thus that they could demand the soldiers' undivided and absolute obedience…However, many soldiers were buying rice on the black market…Any rice purchased with one's own funds is considered "personal property." Once soldiers start depending on private property to support their daily livelihood, the military's tradition loses its foundation. This is because personal provisions give birth to a personal mentality, producing fissures in the absolute obedience most cherished by the Japanese military.[48]

On the other hand, the situation was more grievous for troops stationed overseas. Once the Japanese forces lost command of the sea and air, their supply route was completely cut off. Let us look at a document produced in the final stages of the war by the Ōmori corps of the Fifth Division Eleventh Infantry Regiment, which fought various battles in New Guinea. "Since all squadrons within the corps transitioned to a complete self-supporting basis," the physical strength of the troops has deteriorated, and the average body weight has dropped by 4 to 6 kilograms.[49] By January 1945, the daily caloric intake was only around 1,700 calories. In order to address this situation, the document recommended adjusting the soldiers' work so that they were not wasting energy on aimless tasks. In other words, it ordered troops not to use their labor preparing for the decisive battle but to focus exclusively on conserving energy. Needless to say, this could no longer be called an army.

The Late Mechanization of the Japanese Military

The "Imperial Army" was extremely slow to mechanize. The infantry, which comprised the "main combat force," generally moved around on foot, and the primary mode of transportation for artillerymen and machine gun squadrons within infantry regiments was not car but horse. Even the transport corps, which was tasked with supplying food and ammunition, depended largely on transportation by horseback and horse-drawn carriage. When it came to movement and transport, the Japanese Army relied heavily on its foot soldiers and horses.

Japanese soldiers on the march, 1939.

For this reason, the full uniform and equipment load carried by foot soldiers on long marches—which included a helmet, knapsack, ammunition pouch, backup ammunition, and provisions—could reach up to 20 to 30 kilograms. For example, the load of an average rifleman serving in a company during the First Changsha Operation of September 1941 was 25.175 kg.[50] According to a study by the Army Medical Corps, the "maximum efficient load was between 35 to 40% of one's own body weight."[51] As the average body weight of prewar soldiers was roughly 60 kg, according to the aforementioned 1945 report to the GHQ, 25.175 kg already exceeded this recommended limit.

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The outbreak of the Pacific War on December 8, 1941 made the soldiers' burden even more demanding. Once the Allied forces began their counteroffensive in late 1942, Japan lost command of sea and air, rendering supplies by large-scale munition transport ships extremely difficult thereafter. Moreover, the transportation of combat units was prioritized over logistics units. This, combined with the character of isolated islands in the South Pacific and New Guinea, meant that Japanese supplies depended on so-called "man-powered carriage" (*jinriki tansō*). A study of the transport corps, *Shichōheishi* (1979), elaborates:

> Especially on isolated islands as well as in New Guinea, which was similarly hard to navigate, even the motorcars that were brought onto land with much difficulty had a limited range of operation. In addition, many transport corps regiments left their horses behind, causing many battlegrounds to rely on man-powered carriage; it was virtually impossible to compete with the material superiority of the [American] enemy.[52]

Furthermore, the Japanese Army did not possess the mechanical engineering capability to rapidly clear undergrowth, construct airfields, and build basic infrastructure such as roads. As a result, the ammunition and provision load for each individual soldier increased, with a fully equipped foot soldier carrying upwards of 50 kilograms. This was also true on the China front, where Japanese forces had lost command of the air to the Americans, making supply by ground or rail transport difficult. This in turn increased foot soldiers' physical burden.[53]

Most problematic was the fact that a substantial segment of the troops who were forced to undertake such grueling marches were young soldiers with weak physical condition. Furthermore, due to the extensive mobilization of forces, the ratio of active-service soldiers to reserves in the army had been greatly reduced after 1941. For example, the 27th Division, engaged in battle on the China front, received reinforcements of approximately 2,000 troops in October 1943. However, a military physician reported that "the majority had previously contracted tuberculosis, and their age, along with their inferior physical status, caused us great alarm."[54] The same division would go on to participate in Operation Ichi-Gō in April 1944; their condition at the start of the operation was described as follows.[55]

> The troops all bore an excessively heavy equipment load, with individual soldiers carrying a total of 45 kilograms. If my memory is not mistaken, the average weight of a soldier at the time was around 52 kilograms. The majority of the troops were either soldiers from the conscript reserves or new recruits with only two months of experience; less than half were active-service soldiers who had received proper training.[56]

According to this testimony, the division's soldiers carried loads that amounted to 87 percent of their body weight, making it natural that there would be stragglers during forced marches. Fujiwara Akira, who had participated in this operation as a company commander in the 27th Division, recalled that the "accommodation of stragglers was the most challenging problem for a company commander," adding that, "since it had a direct impact on our military capability, the depletion of troop strength as a result of marches was the biggest headache for me as the commander."[57]

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Kume Shigezō, a regimental adjutant to the 236th Infantry Regiment who participated in the Battle of Hunan-Guangxi (湘桂作戦) in 1944, recounted that constant forced marches caused "a breaking point in the soldiers' fatigue; many of the conscript reserves who joined us in Hengyang fell out while on the march, with some going so far as to commit suicide with grenades or rifles; it was heartbreaking."[58] Stories of troops driven to suicide by the forced marches appear frequently in soldiers' memoirs, a testament to the grueling nature of the Army's relentless marching.

At the same time, shoddy military boots increased the suffering of the marching soldiers. In a hot and humid environment, the sewing thread holding the footwear issued by the Japanese Army to hold the shoe together would come apart, causing the sole to peel off. Because of this, it was a common sight to see "[military boots] all falling apart as if they had their mouths open after each operation."[59] Many soldiers also developed blisters on their feet after being supplied ill-fitting military boots. Hori Hajime, a member of the 4th Trench Mortar Unit who marched some 6,500 km as part of Operation Ichi-Gō, recalled that he was only provided with three pairs of military boots during the entire operation. The first pair "developed holes after only two months of use, causing gravel to enter the shoes every time [we marched]."[60] Once the worsening strategic situation prevented the arrival of supply trains, usage of military boots was restricted or banned altogether. In 1945 soldiers were ordered to "try not to wear military boots, and instead wear the cloth-shoes (*haizu*) used by the Chinese."

The situation was even more grievous on the South Pacific front. According to Hirao Masaharu, an Imperial Navy lieutenant who served as a medical officer in the Solomon Islands, his commanding officer issued an order "prohibiting the use of military boots by all soldiers below the rank of captain, in order to save them for the final battle," forcing many troops to go barefoot. "Our toes, which used to open up smartly like that of a human, became like that of a beast," writes Hirao with much shock: "we suddenly went from being civilized people of the twentieth century to primitive men of the stone age."[61]

This kind of deterioration also affected military uniforms. The "unusual attire" of army officers became more noticeable from around 1944—for example, when older reserve officers responded to a call-up wearing outdated uniforms from the Taishō period (1912-1926). With supply ships sunk by enemy attack, officers were forced to wear civilian clothing, uniforms of non-commissioned officers, or even uniforms taken from Allied soldiers in order to make-do.[62]

On the Southern Pacific front where supply lines were completely cut off, troops' attire was often nothing less than bizarre. Mori Tetsuju, an accountant for the 18th Army, relates his experience in an essay titled, "Supplies in Operations in Eastern New Guinea."

> All the equipment by this time was handmade. We made everything from patrol caps, haversacks, mosquito nets (made by stitching gauze together in a double layer), belts, and eating utensils, and wore straw sandals or simply attached a separated shoe sole to our feet with string. We carried our possessions by crafting a bag out of tent material or other pieces of cloth and tying it to our backs, or used a farmer's *shoiko* [a wooden frame used for backpacking a load]. Our "marching uniform" also came to include a waterproof apron worn over the backside, so that we could sit down in marshy fields at a moment's notice.[63]

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Other sources corroborate the fact that, "after the Battle of Lae-Salamua in 1943, the standard outfit of "hip-apron, cane, and *shoiko* became popularized as the "New Guinea-style" military uniform.[64]

3. The Multiple Realities of Death in War

The Sino-Japanese War Period

Next, I would like to examine in greater detail the manner in which soldiers died. First, let us look at full-scale conflict against China. Table 1 lists Japan's military casualty statistics during the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1941). Although the incompleteness of the available records means there may be a significant margin of error, the number of wounded is almost two to three times the number of deaths. In the Russo-Japanese War, the number of wounded soldiers (130,203) in the Army outnumbered deaths (60,031) by roughly a factor of 2.2.[65] From the perspective of the lethality of the enemy's weapons the Sino-Japanese War was similar to the Russo-Japanese War.

Table 1. Casualties on the China Front

	Combat death (a)	Death by disease (b)	Injury (c)	ca	ba+b×100
1937, 1938	62,007	12,605	159,712	2.6	16.9
1939	30,081	9,338	55,979	1.9	23.7
1940	15,827	13,688	72,653	4.6	46.4
1941	12,498	12,713	35,389	2.8	50.4

(Created by the First Demobilization Ministry, December 1945)
Source: Rikusen gakkai senshi bukai, ed., *Kindai Sensō Shi Gaisetsu (shiryōshū)*, (Tokyo: Rikusen Gakkai, 1984).
Notes: Combat deaths (a) do not include figures from Manchuria; it is not clear if this was also the case for the deaths by disease (b) and injury (c) statistics.

The issue of war deaths by disease (*senbyōshi*) is also important. Prior to the nineteenth century, war deaths by disease often greatly outnumbered combat deaths. During the Crimean War (1853-1856), the percentage of deaths by disease among in the French Army was 89.3% of total fatalities; for the Union Army in the American Civil War (1861-1865), the figure was 66.6%. In the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), including the Japanese invasion of Taiwan, the percentage of deaths by disease among the total war fatalities was 89.4%. By the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), however, improvements in military hygiene and sanitation and maintenance of a dependable supply line had resulted in this figure dropping to 26.3%.[66] The Russo-Japanese War, in other words, was a watershed from an epidemiological standpoint. For the first time in military history combat deaths outnumbered deaths by disease.[67]

The ratio of war deaths by disease in the Sino-Japanese War, as shown by Table 1, was 16.9% in 1937-38, and 23.7% in 1939, thus not very different from the Russo-Japanese War. Once the war reached an impasse after 1940, however, the ratio of war deaths by disease jumped to 46.4%. By 1941, the number of deaths by disease overtook the number of combat fatalities. This was an inevitable outcome of the Japanese military repeatedly undertaking combat operations beyond its capabilities. It also proved to be an omen of

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what was to come.

War Deaths, Injuries, and Deaths by Disease

The Pacific War, which began in December 1941, had several distinctive characteristics. First, with the exception of the early successful campaigns, all direct Japanese military confrontations with Allied forces ended in crushing Japanese defeat. A postwar survey on naval hygiene by Isshiki Tadao, a Navy medical officer and major who worked in the Second Demobilization Ministry (*Daini fukuinshō*), indicated a total of 156,000 war deaths and 40,000 wounded for the Navy for the duration of the war. He provided the following explanation:

> Although the wounded commonly outnumbered battle fatalities in previous campaigns by a factor of two to three, in this war the figures were completely reversed. There were approximately 3.5 times more combat deaths than wounded, resulting from advances in warfare such as the improvement in firearms and the fierceness of air strikes. This gives vivid expression to how relentless and cruel this war has been.[68]

These figures are clearly low (the Ministry of Health and Welfare puts the estimate of Navy war deaths at 457,800), and the Navy Command was almost certainly unable to accurately account for the number of wounded soldiers. Considering the rapid advances in military technology and the overwhelming gulf in war-making capacity between Japan and the Allied forces, however, it is highly probable that the number of deaths caught up with, and in some cases overtook, the number wounded.

Furthermore, this was the first war in which there were zero wounded soldiers in some battles. This phenomenon began in May 1943, in the series of *gyokusai* (fight to the death without surrender) battles starting with the Battle of Attu. In this engagement, all wounded soldiers who could walk were forced to participate in the final "*banzai* charge" through American lines, and those who were unable to move either had to commit suicide or be given a "final treatment" (*shochi*) by the medical officer or combat medic. Tatsuguchi Nobuo, a medical officer in training who died on Attu Island, wrote in his diary: "It has been decided that we will undertake a final charge, and that all inpatients are to commit suicide."[69] The *Senjinkun* (Code of Battlefield Conduct), issued in January 1941, prohibited Japanese soldiers from being taken prisoner by the enemy. Such peculiar "battlefield codes" (*senjin dōtoku*) led to this tragedy.

Some ex-soldiers indeed confessed to having administered "final treatments" to wounded and ill personnel. Ogawa Yasushi, for example, recollects his experience of "intravenously administering mercuric chloride" to wounded soldiers after having "first given them opium to numb their senses" during the January 1944 retreat in the Battle of New Britain. Ogawa regretted his actions; "If I depart for the nether world while concealing this truth," he wrote, "I could not bear to face the Buddha, leading me to take up my pen."[70]

The second major characteristic of this war was the large number of deaths by starvation. Of the 2.3 million total war dead (i.e. sum of combat deaths and deaths by disease) since the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War (1937), 1.4 million are estimated to have been fatalities caused by starvation due to malnutrition, or a more broadly defined category of "starvation" resulting from malaria and other diseases contracted because of nutritional immunodeficiency.[71] From the perspective of the ratio of combat deaths to deaths by disease,

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the Japanese Army thus "reverted" to the levels recorded during the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95).

The main reason why there were so many deaths by starvation was the severing of Japanese supply lines. The situation was especially dire for the garrisons at the South Pacific front which had been left behind enemy lines due to the U.S. military's "island hopping" strategy. In a document produced by the General Staff Headquarters, Major Iwagoe warned against the dangers of "assuming that things can be worked out on the battlefield, without any thought given to supplying the units from the rear."[72] He further stated, "securing a communication and supply line at sea is vital to island operations," concluding that, "marine logistics depend upon command of the air." In the end, the loss of control of the air on the South Pacific front, combined with a lack of long-term strategic planning on the part of the military command, left deployed forces constantly under threat of starvation.

Soldiers on the China front did not fare much better. The U.S. Air Force's advance into China cut supply lines and forced many physically compromised soldiers to undertake long marches—typified in Operation Ichi-Go—leading to severe physical deterioration. In terms of casualties, there were 11,100 combat deaths and 54,800 deaths by disease in 1942, 12,700 combat deaths and 65,100 deaths by disease in 1943, 11,300 combat deaths and 69,191 deaths by disease in 1944, and 8,900 combat deaths and 34,429 deaths by disease in 1945.[73] Although deaths by disease are only estimates, and we cannot be sure if they include statistics from Manchuria, they nevertheless show that the number of deaths by disease skyrocketed after 1942, outnumbering combat fatalities by a factor of four to six. A considerable portion of these are thought to have been caused by a broadly defined "starvation."

Underlying all of these developments was the fact that Japan's military medicine and wartime hygiene infrastructure had fallen behind the times. Conduct regulations of Army field hospitals and sanitary corps had been based on wartime hygiene codes and guidelines established around the time of the Russo-Japanese War. The expansion of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937 naturally forced a reconsideration of the ways in which such issues were handled—rescue efforts on the front lines needed to be strengthened, and wounded soldiers needed to be treated as soon as possible after their injuries were sustained. A revision of the operations manual (*sakusen yōmurei* no. 3) in March 1940 reorganized the sanitary corps into a casualty evacuation detachment, and dispatched combat rescue detachments to the frontlines. Yet this still failed to effect changes in the wartime hygiene code or the Army's overall war organization, leaving each division's sanitary corps to enter the Pacific War ill-equipped to deal with the brutal realities of modern warfare.[74]

Slowness to adapt to the latest developments in military hygiene exacerbated the situation. As soon as the Pacific War began, a sizable number of the Japanese soldiers and officers serving in the South Pacific front contracted malaria. Shortages of medication such as quinine further accelerated this trend. In the words of the "Lessons Based on Operational Experiences in Eastern New Guinea," sent to all army units by the Imperial General Headquarters in November 1943, "[In] combat units engaged in operational activity, after 1.5 months, symptoms of malaria began to appear; after 2.5 months, military strength was reduced by half; after 3.5 months, military strength was reduced to a third; after 5 to 6 months, only one-seventh of the soldiers could be said to be in good health."[75]

Despite this state of affairs, the military failed to formulate timely countermeasures. The Health Bureau of the Army Ministry only

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published and distributed a "Manual for Malaria Prevention (For the Use of Commissioned Officers)" in August 1943, and the General Headquarters of the South Pacific army did not issue "Guidelines for Malaria Prevention in the South Pacific Army" until May 1945. Even the issue of countermeasures against malnutrition did not receive proper study until a full year after the February 1943 retreat from Guadalcanal.[76]

In contrast to the Japanese military's failure to deal with the perils of malaria, the U.S. military successfully curbed the spread of infectious diseases through the use of the synthetic pesticide DDT.[77] They similarly recognized early on that blood transfusion was critical for treating severely wounded soldiers, and established a system for sending large quantities of blood and blood products to the frontlines. The image of a medic conducting a blood transfusion in the midst of battle by stabbing a rifle into the ground by its bayonet and hanging a blood plasma bottle from the safety switch, came to symbolize the U.S. Army's medical program.[78] Japan was completely left behind on this front as well. Shiokawa Yūichi, a medical officer who served on the Burma Front from 1943, gave the following account: [p. 76-] "All the medical procedures I carried out on the battlefield were stopgap measures such as disinfecting wounds with antiseptic solution or applying a compression bandage to an injured joint; we never learned how to treat heavy bleeding at the Military Medical School. Neither was any thought given to blood transfusions."[79]

Death by Drowning and Suicide Attack (tokkō)

The third characteristic of Japanese war deaths was the high level of "death by drowning" (*kaibotsu*) caused by the sinking of warships. According to Ikeda Sadae's study of sunken warships during the Pacific War, the number of deaths by drowning totaled 182,000 Navy soldiers and paramilitary personnel, and 176,000 Army soldiers and paramilitary personnel.[80] This amounts to 15.6% of the total casualties of all military and paramilitary personnel from the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War (2.3 million), and is 4.1 times the sum total of Army and Navy casualties of the Russo-Japanese War (88,133). In January 1945, the Army Division of the General Headquarters issued a circular on "How to Deal with Maritime Emergencies." Compiled from interviews with the surviving members of transport ships that were sunk in the East China Sea, the document relates the tragic final moments on a sinking ship: "[There were] those who lost consciousness as soon as the enemy's torpedo hit us; those who lost the will to survive after floating on the water for a while, realizing that they had a very slim chance of being rescued; those who attempted suicide to escape the pain of being submerged under water; those who began to hallucinate as a result of total exhaustion and fell into the ocean from the life raft; those who began to act violently out of mental imbalance; and those who passed away soon after they were rescued."[81]

Although it is well-known that Allied submarine and aircraft effectively destroyed Japan's sea transport network, internal factors also contributed to the large number of maritime casualties. As available shipping was reduced, individual vessels became "extremely overloaded." This is why "a single sunken vessel caused a massive loss in one stroke." The available tonnage to transport one person decreased from 3 to 5 tons in mid-1942 to 1.5 to 2 tons in mid-1943, and 0.5 to 1 ton by late 1943.[82]

The majority of the Army's transport ships were actually requisitioned freighters, making them highly susceptible to sinking. The Allied forces used exclusive military transport ships or

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requisitioned passenger boats to transport troops, and a certain level of livability was taken into account. In contrast, Japanese transport ships were hastily modified freight vessels that used the main hold as the troops' living quarters; soldiers slept in bunk beds, many of which were arranged in triple bunks called "silkworm shelves" (*kaiko-dana*). The only way to the deck—also the only emergency exit—consisted of a makeshift wooden staircase built at an extremely steep angle. Packing so many soldiers into such a confined space virtually guaranteed that many of them would not be able to make it out in the event of a torpedo attack, meaning that sinkings inevitably resulted in high casualties.[83] According to Ōuchi, when listing the sunken transport vessels in the Pacific War in order of their death figures, the top thirty incidents account for 69,140 deaths. This alone would be roughly equivalent to the total number of Army deaths in the Russo-Japanese War.

The fourth characteristic of Japanese war deaths was the emergence of an extraordinary new type of death: tokkō. Tokkō [a shortened form of the Japanese term for "special attack"] refers to suicide attacks carried out by combat pilots crashing their planes directly into enemy warships. The first Kamikaze Tokkō Squadron was organized and launched by the Navy in October 1944 on the Philippines front, followed by the Army's Banda and Fugaku Squadrons in November of the same year. Both the Navy and Army launched tokkō attacks in subsequent months, peaking during the Battle of Okinawa in March 1945. Tokkō attacks resulted in approximately 4,000 deaths. There were also marine tokkō by motorboats called "Shin'yō," as well as underwater tokkō by manned torpedoes called "Kaiten."

As the war situation worsened, the "tokkō spirit" was forced upon soldiers and officers. In September 1944, the Chief of the General Staff gave the following instructions to Yamashita Tomoyuki, Commander of the 14th Army Group as he was sent to the Philippines front, in a document titled "Strategies for a Certain Victory."[84] [p. 78-]

> Against an enemy who now clearly has the upper hand, we will not be able to win using only ordinary methods. We must therefore break away from our conventional, lukewarm mindset and fully demonstrate our imperial army's unique spirit of sacrifice for the nation. We must go forward in air, water, and on land, carrying the battle to the enemy and finding a way out of a fatal situation, using [suicide attacks] (*tai-atari*) to take down their warships and tanks, one by one. This is the method that will lead us to certain victory and strike terror into the enemy's heart.

When the Army and Navy formulated their first joint plan of operations in January 1945 ("General Outlines of the Imperial Army and Navy Plan of Operations") in anticipation of a decisive battle on the mainland, they made "surprise raids and tokkō attacks" an important element of the strategy.[85] They had, it seems, run out of other options by this point.

I have thus far examined the different aspects of war death in some detail. It is worth noting before proceeding that commissioned and non-commissioned officers had a lower death rate than soldiers. Although it is difficult to prove this due to a lack of statistics that categorize war casualties according to rank, the first scholar to take up this issue was Fujiwara Akira.[86] Discussing the Japanese garrison on Woleai Atoll—known in Japan as Mereyon Island—which had fallen behind enemy lines and was cut off from supplies, Fujiwara argued that there was an "undeniable correlation between the order of starvation and the individual's rank" (Table 2). Sure enough, the

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lower the rank the higher the death rate, with ordinary soldiers having a death rate as high as 82 percent.

Table 2. Casualty Rates in the Woleai Atoll Garrison

Category		Combat death	Death by disease	Total deaths (%)	Survivors (%)
Imperial Army	Officer	5	57	62 (33)	126 (67)
	Warrant officer	1	8	9 (23)	30 (77)
	NCO	19	311	330 (64)	185 (36)
	Soldier	107	1,911	2,018 (82)	445 (18)
	Subtotal	132	2,287	2,419 (75)	786 (25)
Imperial Navy		175	2,206	2,381 (74)	840 (26)
Total		307	4,493	4,800 (75)	1,626 (25)

Writer Sawachi Hisae has also focused on this issue, analyzing the case of the 59th Infantry Regiment, about which we have detailed personnel records: 4 deaths among commissioned officers (0.56% of the total), 41 deaths for non-commissioned officers (5.76%), and 667 deaths for soldiers (93.68%).[87] This regiment suffered heavy casualties from disease and starvation while defending Palau due to compromised supply lines. Given the makeup of military personnel in the Army in 1943—4.6% commissioned officers, 13.7% non-commissioned officers, and 81.7% soldiers—the lower death rate for officers and higher rate for soldiers is striking.[88]

4. The Frontline and the Home Front

Troop Morale

Soldiers on the frontlines constantly reminisced about home while fighting, motivated at least partly by concern for the families they left behind. Safeguarding the livelihood of family members on the home front was thus important to prevent the deterioration of troop morale. State initiatives to ensure this took the form of social welfare from the Military Relief Act (*gunji fujo hō*), enacted in July 1937, and military support organizations such as the Shōbukai, as well as stipends or allowances paid by the companies at which soldiers were employed before being conscripted. National expenditure did not completely cover the livelihood of the families left behind, and not all former workplaces provided stipends to conscripts' families. However, the government placed a much higher priority on military relief when compared to the Russo-Japanese War. Scholarship on the principles and practices of such military relief efforts has greatly expanded in recent years. One representative work can be found in Gunshi Jun's 2004 book, *Gunji engo no sekai* (*The World of Military Relief*).[89]

Soldiers were also preoccupied with the "chastity" of their wives. According to a 1939 report published in a Justice Ministry publication, not only had there been a "gradual increase in such objectionable and deplorable acts as adultery and elopement among the wives of soldiers at the front," but also "not a few acts of sexual aggression such as molestation and sexual assault by unscrupulous men."[90] With regard to the perspective of the wives of soldiers at the front or war widows, vivid testimony is provided in Kikuchi Keiichi and Ōmura Ryō's 1964 work, *Ano hito wa kaette konakatta* (*He Did Not Come Back*).[91]

Given the effect that such issues might have on

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troop morale, the state felt the need to intervene. For example, even though adultery was a crime that could only be applied to women in prewar Japan, "the government started to punish men [who committed such acts] by charging them with breaking and entering." As a result, the number of men arrested for breaking and entering grew noticeably during the war.[92]

Major Horiguchi Masao of the Kenpeitai [military police] also commented on the impact of home affairs on troop morale, stating that "[soldiers] are always concerned about the home front, especially news about their family…since one of the most frequently mentioned issues is the chastity of one's wife and the treatment of family members left behind, we must be careful how to counsel them, as this will profoundly affect their morale."[93]

A problem that further vexed soldiers was the livelihood of wives and children in the event of their death; many were particularly concerned with the one-time benefits and pensions paid to bereaved families. For example, since the civil code strongly privileged the (male) head of the household, there were cases in which the father of the war dead tried to abuse the system and take away the rights to welfare benefits from the wife by forcing her into a divorce. Another major problem was that common-law wives did not have the right to receive such benefits.

Fujii Tadatoshi, who analyzed the wills of war dead, points out that "many of the wills specified to their parents, who in many cases held the relevant rights, that the one-time benefits, insurance, and pension [that would arise in the event of death] should go to his wife."[94] As mentioned in the aforementioned 1939 report, the soldiers' "first priority was to guarantee the livelihood of one's wife and children," and the second priority was to "secure a stable retirement for their parents."

The life insurance cases examined by Fujii require additional explanation. At the time of the Russo-Japanese War, various stipulations existed with regard to the payment of insurance benefits, ranging from "the charging of special insurance fees and the reduction of the benefits, to the non-payment of the promised money." The total number of cases that actually paid out death benefits during this war among all life insurance policies totalled only 2,462.[95] Once the Sino-Japanese War began, however, life insurance companies faced pressure from the armed forces to unconditionally provide benefits to the families of war dead. Furthermore, they were required to provide a maximum insurance payout of 2,000 yen if the individual signed a new contract. Furthermore, from April 1943, following an arrangement among life insurance companies, all war deaths resulted in an automatic payment of insurance benefits. It was thus that life insurance became popularized during the period of total war. The number of contracts for all life insurance firms by the end of 1941 was 24,225,000.[96]

So important was this system that the government had no choice but to intervene to help resolve disputes related to one-time benefits and pensions. In May 1938, the state strengthened its relief administration by establishing military relief consultation centers in each municipality to deal with all issues related to war-bereaved families. The centers were run by committees consisting of officials, assembly members, and special members. One of their primary duties was the "resolution of disputes regarding the payment of benefits and pensions or household registration involving bereaved family members." In January 1941, the military protection bureau (*gunji hogo-in*) sent out "Guidelines for Dealing with War-Bereaved Families" to each regional governor, recommending the placement of a "woman consultant who could provide earnest advice to bereaved families" under the auspices of the municipal home front contribution society.[97]

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In 1939, the government passed the Personal Arbitration Act to resolve the increasing number of disputes over welfare pensions, and the 1940 revision of the Pension Act recognized the right to welfare benefits for common-law wives and children born out of wedlock—as long as they took measures to acquire legal status. In 1941, court approval became necessary for the removal of a name from the family register, thereby placing restrictions on the abuse of the rights of household heads.[98] The government and military generally took a position supportive of the conscripted soldier's wife out of concern for the troops' morale. As a result, some have argued that this was partially responsible for the dismantling of the "household system" (*ie*).[99]

It is noteworthy that in the case of bereaved families, the military on occasion got involved directly. According to a 1976 history of the Kenpeitai, the military police was forced to deal with cases including "a divorce crisis resulting from complications in the relationship between a soldier's wife and her mother-in-law," "the issue of whether a war widow should remarry with one of the deceased soldier's brothers," "a dispute over divorcing a war widow," and "problems related to the payment of pensions to the bereaved family."[100] The author observes that "it was inevitable that the military police were forced to arbitrate from a position sympathetic to the wife's interest" in cases of one-time benefits and pensions, and that the wartime military police performed the function of an "ad hoc family court."

The government also used censorship to keep home front troubles from reaching the attention of frontline soldiers. According to the official bulletin of the Books Division of the Home Ministry's Police Affairs Bureau [the department responsible for prewar censorship], all newspaper articles and publications concerning destitution on the Home Islands, sexual violation of wives of soldiers at the front, or domestic disputes involving home front families, were either banned or redacted. This censorship was so severe that in January 1938, the novel *Richigi mono* by Satō Haruo featuring a protagonist who develops romantic feelings toward the wife of a soldier at the front, was banned from publication. Anticipating that the war would be protracted, the government issued a notice in July 1938 called "Guidelines for Newspapers," which ordered publishers to "be careful of any topics that deal with the destitution of bereaved families, suicide, and scandals, as these have the potential to cause anxiety among soldiers at the front."[101]

The Issue of the Remains of the War Dead

Another problem arose with the increasing number of war dead: bereaved families' dissatisfaction concerning the sending home of their loved ones' remains. Japanese funerary rites are carried out in the presence of the remains of the deceased, to which attendees pay respects.[102] In the prewar period, since it was impossible for the bodies of soldiers who died in remote combat zones to be sent back, it became customary for their ashes to be returned. With the intensification of combat, however, the military could not afford to properly cremate each body, and it became common for soldiers to cut off their fallen comrades' wrist or little finger in the midst of battle and send it home, cremated, after combat. This inevitably led to the sense on the part of the bereaved families that the remains of their loved ones were being handled with less consideration. This malaise was exacerbated by the fact that it took longer for the families to receive the remains after getting the official death notifications. A 1940 article in a publication by Kaikōsha, a club for Imperial Army officers, alluded to great unease concerning the treatment of the combat dead:

From the perspective of a bereaved family

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> member, it goes without saying that soldiers' remains are irreplaceable, and it is understandable for them to be concerned about the remains of their loved ones. However, one must also say that it reflects poorly on them to fixate on the issue of remains after their sons have gone off to war [knowing that they may not come back alive]; the reality of the battlefield is harsh, but that is the reality, so we must promote more understanding and awareness on the part of family members. There are also those who are dissatisfied with the handling of war dead remains or delay in sending them home, but the former is a groundless rumor that must be dispelled, and the latter is a problem that must be solved by increasing awareness of the realities of the battlefield.[103]

The military tried to address the issue by having soldiers prepare a lock of hair (*ihatsu*) in advance that could be used in lieu of bone remains (*ikotsu*). According to the "Notice Regarding the Additional Requirements of Troop Handbooks" issued in June 1939 by the Imperial Reservist Association, the military had mandated inclusion of an addendum in the Troop Handbooks (*guntai techō*) distributed to all reservists.[104] The addendum instructed all conscripts to prepare a will in advance, and to "wrap up a lock of hair, a tooth, and a fingernail in paper and place it in your backpack." It further warned, "these items will be subject to strict examination at the yearly inspection muster of reservists (*kan'etsu tenko*)," illustrating the importance the military attached to these mementos. The preparation of a will was likely meant to deal with the aforementioned issue of family disputes over welfare benefits.[105]

The situation regarding the remains of those killed in action took a turn for the worse following the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941. According to Niigata prefectural records, for example, it was so difficult to collect the remains after the Battle of Guadalcanal that "sand from the beaches of the island was taken home to be used in place of their remains." When they could not even find something of this nature, locks of hair stored with the reserve troops were placed in the remains container (*ikotsu bako*) and sent to the family. If all else failed, the military simply sent home a remains container with a wooden memorial tablet (*reiji/ihai*) inside.[106] As Ichinose Toshiya demonstrated clearly in his 2005 social history of the home front, in many cases the state could no longer guarantee traditional death ritual conventions.[107] According to a 1997 report published by the Health and Welfare Ministry, the remains of only half of the 2.4 million overseas war dead—including civilians and those who died in the Battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa—ever found their way back home.[108]

Conclusion

The tragic realities of war would deeply influence postwar Japanese pacifism. They disrupted the sense of solidarity between officers and soldiers. They also developed into a generalized antipathy toward militarism and war as well as arousing deep-seated suspicion of the self-serving claims of the state. The consciousness of postwar Japanese was, in short, rooted in antiwar sentiment stemming from these traumatic war experiences.

This pacifism, however, would face challenges from two different directions. First was the issue of war responsibility that resurfaced in the late 1980s. Following the end of the Cold War, people of various Asian countries started

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to denounce Japan for its wartime conduct. As a result, attitudes of Japanese people, based on their self-identification as victims of war, began to show signs of vulnerability. Second was the fact that the generation that had experienced war became a clear minority within Japanese society around the turn of the twenty-first century. The peace consciousness that had been bolstered by war experience could no longer be sustained by direct experience in war by the majority.[109]

The writing of this article was in many ways inspired by this transition. The reason why I emphasized the "study of the realities of death" was that, as part of a generation that has not experienced war, I wanted to reconstruct the harsh realities of the battlefield in my own way. Another reason was my desire to understand the "difficult deaths" faced by Japanese soldiers—a topic emphasized in Oda Makoto's 1991 work—as a prerequisite to approaching the multilayered question of "victimhood" (*higai*) and "aggression" (*kagai*) [with regard to the Japanese war experience toward Asia].[110]

Having finished writing, however, I am struck by the many inadequacies of this approach. I am especially aware that I may have focused too much on the extreme conditions on the battlefield. In his study of battlefield memories, Tomiyama Ichirō has argued that "the battlefield is neither an abnormality nor a madness detached from our daily lives; rather, the mundane activities of everyday life prepare the conditions of the battlefield."111 It is true that I should perhaps have placed greater emphasis on the relationship between normality (*nichijō-sei*) and abnormality (*hinichijō-sei*). Even on the battlefield, there is neither constant combat nor perpetration of war crimes. The backlash from former soldiers toward the "comfort women" controversy, for example, probably stems from the fact that what had been experienced as a normal part of life at the front was now being criticized as a war crime. I would like to continue thinking about the meaning of this issue in the future.

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Notes

[1] Yoshida Yutaka, "Ajia-Taiheiyō sensō no senjō to heishi," in *Senjō No Shosō*: *Iwanami Kōza Ajia-Taiheiyō Sensō 5* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006), 59-86. Since his retirement from Hitotsubashi University in March 2020, Professor Yoshida has become the director of The Center of the Tokyo Raids and War Damage.
[2] Yoshida Yutaka, *Nihongun heishi: Ajia-Taiheiyō sensō no genjitsu* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2017).
[3] "Sensō he no ikari, kenkyū genten," *Asahi Shinbun*, 2 February 2020.
[4] *Biruma no tategoto* was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1956. Ichikawa later remade the movie in color with a new cast in 1985.
[5] Although the 1950s did see the publication of a few books on the Asia-Pacific War, they were primarily eyewitness accounts written by former military officers. See Takagi Sōkichi, *Taiheiyō kaisenshi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1949); Hayashi Saburō, *Taiheiyō sensō rikusen gaishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1951); Hattori Takushirō. *Daitōa sensō zenshi (Tokyo: Masu Shobō, 1953), vols. 1-4.*
[6] This account of the development of postwar Japanese historiography on military history draws heavily on a guest lecture given by Yoshida at the Institute of Politics and Economy (*Seiji keizai kenkyūjo*) in September 2019. Yoshida Yutaka, "Sengo rekishigaku to gunjishi kenkyū: 'Nihongun heishi' o tegakari ni shite," presentation notes, 20 September 2019. I have supplemented this with Fujiwara Akira, *Tennō no guntai to Nicchū sensō* (Tokyo: Ōtsuki Shoten, 2006).
[7] Bōeichō bōeikenkyūsho senshi shitsu ed., *Senshi sōsho*, 102 vols. (Tokyo: Chōun Shinbunsha, 1966-1980); Toga Hiroshi, "Zen 102-kan kanketsu no ji," *Daitōa (Taiheiyō) sensō senshi sōsho furoku* 102 (1980), 1-2.
[8] Other characteristics of the work produced by the Center for Military History, originally known as the Office for War History (*senshi shitsu*), include its willingness to defend the decisions and actions taken by the prewar Japanese leadership, its bias toward central command, and the reproduction of institutional rivalries between the Imperial Army and Imperial Navy, owing to the initially large number of ex-Army officers within its ranks. Fujiwara, *Tennō no guntai to Nicchū sensō*, 230; Yoshida, "Sengo rekishigaku to gunjishi kenkyū," 2.
[9] One notable exception, as referenced by Yoshida in his introductory paragraph, is Kuroha Kiyotaka's article published in the August 1971 issue of the journal *Shisō*. Kuroha based his analysis on a combination of statistical data and poems written by servicemen describing their battlefield encounters.
[10] Fujiwara Akira, *Gunjishi* (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shinpōsha, 1961).
[11] Hata Ikuhiko, *Nitchū sensōshi* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1961); Hata Ikuhiko, *Gun fashizumu undōshi: 3-gatsu jiken kara 2.26 go made* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1962).
[12] Ienaga Saburō, *Taiheiyō sensō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1968). An English translation by Frank Baldwin is Ienaga Saburō, *The Pacific War: World War II and the Japanese, 1931-1945*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). Yoshida points out that Ienaga's work is limited to using the experience of ordinary soldiers to underline the Japanese military's undemocratic and anti-rational tendencies. Yoshida, "Sengo rekishigaku to gunjishi kenkyū," 2.

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[13] Ōe Shinobu, *Nichi-Ro sensō no gunjishiteki kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976).
[14] Yoshida, email communication to translator, 11 May 2020.
[15] Yoshida Yutaka, *Tennō no guntai to Nankin jiken: mō hitotsu no Nitchū sensō shi* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1998); Yoshida Yutaka, *Nihon no guntai: heishi tachi no kindaishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002).
[16] Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Grassroots Fascism: The War Experience of the Japanese People*, trans. Ethan Mark (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015). The original is Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Kusa no ne no fashizumu: Nihon minshū no sensō taiken* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1987).
[17] Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook, *Japan at War: An Oral History* (New York: The New Press, 1992; reprinted 2008). For a collection of translations of private diaries, see Samuel Hideo Yamashita, *Leaves from an Autumn of Emergencies: Selections from the Wartime Diaries of Ordinary Japanese* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005). Yamashita followed this book up with *Daily Life in Wartime Japan, 1940-1945* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015), which attempted to construct a "history of everyday life" (*Alltagsgeschichte*) in wartime Japan using published diaries, letters, and memoirs. Through these works, Yamashita has allowed us to hear the forgotten voices of ordinary Japanese on the home front.
[18] Kenneth J. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at Its Zenith: The Wartime Celebration of the Empire's 2,600th Anniversary* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2010).
[19] Benjamin Uchiyama, *Japan's Carnival War: Mass Culture on the Home Front, 1937-1945* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
[20] As noted by Uchiyama, the kamikaze—known officially as the "special attack force" (*tokkōtai*)—represent one of the few areas concerning Japanese soldiers about which there is a sizable body of English-language scholarship. Some examples include Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975); Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalism: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); M. G. Sheftall, *Blossoms in the Wind: Human Legacies of the Kamikaze* (New York: NAL Caliber, 2005); Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), and chapter 6 of Yamashita, *Daily Life in Wartime Japan, 1940-1945*. See also Uchiyama, *Japan's Carnival War*, 204-207.
[21] James R. Brandon, *Kabuki's Forgotten War: 1931-1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009); Sharalyn Orbaugh, *Propaganda Performed: Kamishibai in Japan's Fifteen Year War* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).
[22] Sabine Frühstück, *Playing War: Children and the Paradoxes of Modern Militarism in Japan* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017). Frühstück's book is not limited to the Asia-Pacific War and examines the series of modern wars beginning with the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95.
[23] While the book-length study is yet to be published, a concise summary of the project can be found in Sheldon Garon, "Transnational History and Japan's 'Comparative Advantage,'" *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 43, no. 1 (February 1, 2017): 65–92.
[24] For an example of a recent dissertation that examines the wartime cooperation of Japanese Christian groups, see Bo Tao, "Imperial Pacifism: Kagawa Toyohiko and Christianity in the

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Asia-Pacific War" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2020). Japanese Christians, who were particularly vulnerable to charges of "unpatriotic" conduct due to their adherence to a foreign religion, strove to prove their loyalty to the nation by staging wartime rallies, writing patriotic hymns, and organizing donation drives to help fund military aircraft.

[25] Takashi Fujitani, *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

[26] Jeremy A. Yellen, *The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019).

[27] Fujitani does include the testimony of several Korean prisoners-of-war held captive by Allied troops. Even there, however, his main concern is with interrogating their motives for serving in the Japanese army, and not on their battlefield experiences per se. See Fujtani, *Race for Empire*, 239-298.

[28] Lee K. Pennington, *Casualties of History: Wounded Japanese Servicemen and the Second World War* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2015).

[29] Kuroha Kiyotaka, "15-nen sensō ni okeru senshi no shosō: 'tōkei' to 'uta' to," *Shisō*, August 1971.

[30] Kasahara Tokushi, "Chiansen no shisō to gijutsu," in *Senjō no shosō, Iwanami Kōza Ajia-Taiheiyō Sensō 5* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006), 215-244.

[31] A conscript who had attained a middle school education had the option of applying to become an officer candidate (*kanbu kōhosei*) upon entering the Army. Those who passed the exam had a number of possibilities to serve away from the frontlines. An officer candidate in the accounting department (*keiri bu*), for example, was eligible to become a low-ranking officer dealing primarily with financial accounts. This was a relatively safe post in the Army. This, of course, required one to have obtained a middle school education, which was not the case for around 80 percent of the conscript population—which had little leeway in selecting their place of service. Yoshida, email communication to translator, 19 April 2020. For more on this issue, see Yoshida Yutaka, *Nihon no guntai: heishi tachi no kindaishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002). (BT)

[32] Ōe Shinobu, *Shōwa no rekishi 3: Tennō no guntai* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1982). While the need to retain farmers in the countryside was recognized by the state, it became more and more difficult to enforce this policy once the war situation necessitated a greater degree of mobilization. As a result, the remaining sources of labor in villages during the latter stages of the war consisted primarily of women, children, and the elderly. Yoshida, email communication to translator, 19 April 2020. (BT)

[33] The intended target of the draft deferment system was industrial and factory workers, and the "laborers" mentioned here did not include farmers. Yoshida, email communication to translator, 19 April 2020. (BT)

[34] Jōestu shishi hensan iinkai, ed., *Jōetsu shi tsushi hen 5* (Jōestu-shi, Niigata: Jōestu-shi, 2004).

[35] First and second reserve troops formed the majority of the Japanese military presence in China. This was due to the Japanese Army's prioritization of the Soviet threat, which led them to permanently station active-service divisions at the Russian border. As a result, only "special divisions" (*tokusetsu shidan*) consisting primarily of older reserve soldiers were available for deployment to the China front. Fujiwara Akira, *Tennō no guntai to Nitchū sensō*

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(Tokyo: Ōtsuki Shoten, 2006), 15. (BT)
[36] First and second reserve troops had previously undergone an intensive two-year regimen as active-service soldiers and looked down on officers called in from the conscript reserve ranks—whom they regarded as inferior because of their lack of proper training—as well as reserve officers and non-commissioned officers who were younger. Being older than the average soldier, many were also married and thus anxious about the family they left back home, inwardly resenting the fact that they had been recalled to duty. Due to this combination of a lack of respect for their immediate superiors and a concern for home front affairs, once the war became protracted and the prospect of an early return dissipated, some older reserve troops turned to acts of violence and atrocity, as well as insubordination toward superior officers. Yoshida, email communication to translator, 19 April 2020; Fujiwara, *Tennō no guntai to Nitchū sensō*, 15. (BT)
[37] Yoshida Yutaka, *Nihon no guntai: heishi tachi no kindaishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002).
[38] Yoshida Yutaka, *Gendai rekishigaku to sensō sekinin* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1997).
[39] Active-service soldiers, who would have been in their early twenties at this point, typically did not have families, and therefore were sent to the front lines to replace older troops who did have families. The same policy was applied to younger soldiers in the conscript reserves. (BT)
[40] Rikugunshō, *Shōwa 10-nen chōhei jimu tekiyō* (Tokyo: Rikugunshō, 1936); Rikugunshō, *Shōwa 16-nen chōhei jimu tekiyō* (Tokyo: Rikugunshō, 1942).
[41] "Kenpei taisaku shiryō tuzuri," Bōeichō Bōei Kenkyūjo Senshibu.
[42] Rikugunshō Heibika ichi-kain, "Chōhei kensa yori mitaru kenpei taisaku no jūyōsei ni tsuite," *Kaikōsha Kiji Tokugō* 824 (1943).
[43] Aoki Masakazu, *Kekkaku no rekishi* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2003).
[44] Jōestu shishi hensan iinkai, ed., *Jōetsu shi tsushi hen 5*.
[45] Shimizu Hiroshi, "Guntai to chiteki shōgaisha," *Kikan Sensō Sekinin Kenkyū* (Spring 2003).
[46] "Nihon busōgun no kenkō ni kansuru hōkoku," Center for Military History (*Senshibu*), National Institute for Defense Studies.
[47] Rikujō jieitai eisei gakkō, *Eisei senshi: hondo kessen junbi* (Not-for-sale item, 1979).
[48] Manabe Motoyuki, *Aru hi, Akagami ga kite* (Tokyo: Kōjinsha, 1994).
[49] "Kenpei taisakujō yori mitaru kyūyō jōshiki ni tsuite," Koi Dai-5173 Squadron, *Eisei kankei raikan tsuzuri*, vol. 2, Center for Military History, National Institute for Defense Studies.
[50] Nagao Goichi, *Sensō to eiyō* (Tokyo: Nishida Shoten, 1994).
[51] Aoki Kesami, *Kōgunbyō teiyō*, (Not-for-sale item, 1936).
[52] Shichōheishi Kankōkai ed., *Shichōheishi (ge)* (Not-for-sale item, 1979).
[53] Yoshida, *Nihon no guntai*.
[54] Dai 27-shidan eisei gyōmu yōhō," *Daitōa sensō rikugun eiseishi hensan shiryō*, Center for Military History.
[55] Operation Ichi-Gō (*Ichi-gō sakusen*, lit. "Operation Number One"), also known as *tairiku datsū sakusen* ("Continent Crossing Operation"), was a Japanese military campaign on the China front that took place in April-December 1944. It had two main objectives: to capture air bases in southeast China from which American bombers were launching attacks on Japanese shipping and naval assets, and to open a land route from China to French Indochina, which was under Japanese control at the time. The campaign mobilized 500,000 Japanese troops,

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800 tanks, and 70,000 horses over 2,400 kilometers, and was the largest single military operation conducted by the Imperial Japanese Army. (BT)

[56] As mentioned in the Translator's Notes, soldiers from the first conscript reserve only received brief training totaling less than six months, while those from the second conscript reserve received no basic training. (BT)

[57] Fujiwara Akira, *Chūgoku sensen jūgunki* (Tokyo: Ōtsuki Shoten, 2002).

[58] Kume Shigezō, *Sensō wa owatta* (Not-for-sale item, 1991). The Battle of Hunan-Guangxi was part of the series of battles comprising Operation Ichi-Gō, which took place across three Chinese provinces (from north to south): Henan, Hunan, and Guangxi. (BT)

[59] Wakamatsukai ed., *Rikugun keiribu yomoyama banashi* (Not-for-sale item, 1982).

[60] Hori Hajime, *Chūgoku kōgun: toho 6,500 kiro* (Suzaka, Nagano Prefecture: Kawabe Shorin, 2005).

[61] Hirao Masaharu, *Kaigun gun'i senki* (Tokyo: Tosho Shuppansha, 1980).

[62] Sasama Yoshihiko, Zukan Nihon no gunsō (Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan, 1970).

[63] Mori Tetsuju, "Tōbu Nyū Ginia sakusen no kyūyō wa?" *Jussei* 7 (1978).

[64] Wakamatsukai ed., *Rikugun keiribu yomoyama banashi: zokuhen* (Not-for-sale item, 1986).

[65] Ōe Shinobu, *Nichiro sensō no gunjishi teki kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976).

[66] Ibid.

[67] Sakai Shizu, *Ekibyō no jidai* (Tokyo: Taishūkan Shoten, 1999).

[68] Koike Iichi ed., *Kaigun imu eiseishi 3* (Tokyo: Yanagihara Shoten, 1986).

[69] Bōeichō bōei kenshūsho senshi shitsu ed., *Senshi sōsho hokutō hōmen rikugun sakusen 1* (Tokyo: Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1968).

[70] Asahi Shinbun tēma danwa shitsu ed., *Sensō (jō)* (Tokyo: Asahi Sonorama, 1987).

[71] Fujiwara Akira, *Uejini shita eirei tachi* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 2001).

[72] "Kaiyō sakusen ni okeru heitan teki kyōkun," Center for Military History.

[73] Rikusen gakkai senshi bukai ed., *Kindai sensō shi gaisetsu* (Tokyo: Rikusen Gakkai, 1984). The combat casualties do not include those in Manchuria.

[74] Kurosawa Yoshiyuki, "Eisei hokyū no shiteki kōsatsu (dai 6 hō)," *Bōei Eisei* 32, no. 6 (1985).

[75] Shirai Akio ed., *"Senkunhō" Shūsei 1* (Tokyo: Fuyō Shobō Shuppan, 2003).

[76] Rikujō jieitai eisei gakkō, *Daitōa sensō rikugun eiseishi (Hitō sakusen)* (Not-for-sale item, 1985).

[77] Iijima Wataru, *Mararia to teikoku* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2005).

[78] Douglas Starr, *Ketsueki no monogatari*, trans. Yamashita Atsuko (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1999). The original work is Douglas Starr, *Blood: An Epic History of Medicine and Commerce* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998).

[79] Shiokawa Yūichi, *Teihon Kikuheidan Gun'i no Biruma nikki* (Tokyo: Nihon Hyōronsha, 2002).

[80] Ikeda Sadae, *Taiheiyō sensō chinbotsu kansen itai chōsa taikan* (Tokyo: Senbotsu itai shūyō iinkai, 1977).

[81] Shirai Akio ed., *"Senkunhō" Shūsei 3* (Tokyo: Fuyō Shobō Shuppan, 2003).

[82] Matsubara Shigeo, *Daitōa sensō ni okeru rikugun senpaku senshi 1-3* (Not-for-sale item, 1970).

[83] Ōuchi Kenji, *Yusōsen nyūmon* (Tokyo: Kōjinsha, 2003).

[84] Yamada Akira and Matsuno Seiya eds., *Daihon'ei rikugunbu jōsō kankei shiryō* (Tokyo:

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Gendai Shiryō Shuppan, 2005).
[85] Bōeichō bōei kenshūsho senshi shitsu ed., *Senshi sōsho daihon'ei rikugunbu 10* (Tokyo: Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1975).
[86] Fujiwara Akira, *Tennōsei to guntai* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1978).
[87] Sawachi Hisae, *Berau no sei to shi* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1990).
[88] Rikusen gakkai senshi bukai ed., *Kindai sensō shi gaisetsu*. Such death ratios were not necessarily a given, as can be seen in the high officer-to-enlisted soldier casualty rates of the British Army in WWI, where nearly half of all officers became casualties during the first year. Peter R. Mansoor and Williamson Murray, eds., *The Culture of Military Organizations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 168. (BT)
[89] Gunshi Jun, *Gunji engo no sekai* (Tokyo: Dōseisha, 2004).
[90] "Shina jihen ni okeru shussei (senshishō)-sha izoku kazoku no dōkō ni kansuru chōsa," *Shisō Geppō* 55–56 (Tokyo: Bunsei Shoin, 1974).
[91] Kikuchi Keiichi and Ōmura Ryō eds., *Ano hito wa kaette konakatta* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1964).
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