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## The Battle for Leyte, 1944: Allied and Japanese Plans, Preparations, and Execution

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welfare, and this extends even to the moral authority of the military to enforce its regulations regarding administration of such agents as Anthrax vaccine to military forces, or to new but not yet fully recognized scientific discoveries. Equally provocative is the thesis that medical contributions to interrogational torture may be morally defensible under conditions that offer the possibility of preventing egregious harm to others.

As a treatise addressing contemporary ethical issues in military medicine, this is a useful contribution. Unfortunately, the writer's style at times intermixes elements of the arcane phraseology of the professional academic ethics community. "The uninitiated" must read and reread some passages if they are motivated to comprehend fully the ethical dilemmas being debated and dissected.

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Vego, Milan. *The Battle for Leyte, 1944: Allied and Japanese Plans, Preparations, and Execution*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2006. 479pp. \$55

There have been many books published about the battle for Leyte Gulf. This book, however, is unique, because it is not only a narrative but also a critical analysis of the planning, preparation, and execution of that famous battle as viewed by both the Americans and the Japanese. Milan Vego, professor of military operations at the Naval War College and author of a textbook on operational warfare, is also a former merchant marine officer. He has tackled the subject of this work with much

vigor and depicts the battle with clarity and in great depth.

The book is organized into eleven chapters. Chapters 1 through 5 show how both sides planned and organized for the battle, and chapter 6 discusses the background and operations just before the engagement. However, the heart and soul of the book are in the final section that depicts the battle itself.

Vego begins by noting that in the early days of the Pacific War the Americans split their command arrangements, with General Douglas MacArthur in charge of the South West Pacific Area (SWPA) and Admiral Chester Nimitz commanding the Pacific Ocean Area (POA). This scheme worked well enough until the Leyte operation, when it produced much confusion over command relationships, leading to problems between Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey and Vice Admiral Thomas Kinkaid, Commander Allied Naval Forces that almost lost them the battle. Vego is critical of the delays in communications between various American components. He concludes that the Americans relied too much on Japanese intentions—as interpreted via information gleaned from the MAGIC intercepts—and less on actual capability. He believes that the Americans' strength was in their operational-logistic plans and programs.

However, Vego argues, the Japanese were even worse in comparable ways. Parochial competition between the army and navy cost them dearly. The Japanese had little intelligence that could compare with that of the Americans, and they had serious logistical problems that were never properly resolved.

Among the book's strengths are the subheadings of each chapter, which allow the reader to skip around. Vego's sixty-seven pages of notes are excellent, enabling the reader to delve deeper into the battle, and his bibliography is outstanding. There are sixteen appendixes showing the order of battle of the adversaries, as well as six excellent maps. Vego's conclusion, while offering nothing new, does an outstanding job of summarizing the battle. Also, his summary of Halsey's failure in the battle is superior. Professor Vego concludes that "the Japanese came close to accomplishing their mission not because of their skills but because of the mistakes that Halsey made."

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Tyerman, Christopher. *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2006. 1,024pp. \$35

Christopher Tyerman, a lecturer in medieval history at Oxford University, offers this work at a crucial moment. With world attention focused as it is on the Middle East and on the social, political, religious, and military interactions between the Muslim East and Christian West, *God's War* could not have come at a more opportune time, especially for those who wish to have a better understanding of this exotic and violent period. Over the past decade, the subject of the Crusades has become a popular one for writers, but Steven Runciman's three-volume *History of the Crusades* remains the primary standard of comparison. Tyerman accurately, if perhaps with a bit of hubris, notes that Runciman's

work is now outdated and seriously flawed. What makes Tyerman's work stand out is the extent of his knowledge of the entire crusading era and his ability to deploy that knowledge in a clear, concise, and generally readable manner in the course of a single (if massive) volume.

*God's War* is reasonably if not totally comprehensive. The first four Crusades are covered in minute detail, the later Crusades less so. Tyerman, however, also discusses many related movements not normally considered as crusades, such as the *Reconquista* in Spain and Teutonic campaigns in the Baltic, and even the expansion of the concept of holy war to the conquest of the New World. This breadth of coverage makes up for an occasional lack of depth. At times the book does suffer from an overreliance on name-dropping, some of which is repetitive and, for the novice, confusing.

Tyerman stresses that one cannot know how the Crusaders thought or felt—making it ironic when he comments, as he frequently does, on what did or did not motivate them. This is peculiar, as one of the strongest points of the book is its explanation of how the movement originated and the ways in which the Crusades were products of the sometimes paradoxical social, religious, and political forces of the Middle Ages. Another strong point is his descriptions of the personalities of the Crusaders. Tyerman fleshes out the leaders, men like the Christians Godfrey of Bullion and Bohemond, Frederick Barbarossa, or Richard of Anjou, and the Muslim leaders Saladin and Baybars. These people are described from the standpoint both of their apologists and their critics and enemies, and thus as true three-dimensional