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The War in the Pacific: From Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay

Mark Hess

Harry A. Gailey

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(doubtless a result of Boyne's experience at the Smithsonian). Although some attention is paid to the Soviet and Japanese air forces as well as to the Luftwaffe and Mussolini's air arm, Boyne looks at the Pacific War from the viewpoint of the Western Allies.

Boyne has organized his work along chronological lines and avoids the common practice of dealing first with the war against the European Axis and then flashing back to the conflict in the Pacific, as though they were different struggles entirely. He therefore captures the simultaneity absent in many other works. Boyne's writing style makes this book a pleasure to read, and it is not surprising to find that he holds orthodox opinions on many issues concerning airpower historiography. But his two appendices do not contribute much about the types of aircraft used in World War II, and instead of a bibliography he has included a list correctly labeled as "Selected Readings"—the works of the most acerbic revisionists (like Michael Sherry) being conspicuous by their absence.

Clash of Wings is a competent and well written history of World War II. For a general reader wanting a quick picture of the operational dimensions of the struggle in the air, the book is worthwhile. However, others, like the readers of the *Naval War College Review*, will find most of the material in Boyne's work already familiar. If some among them need a survey of the subject that casts a wider net and covers the non-operational dimensions of airpower history more thoroughly and equally competently, I recommend instead R.J. Overy's *The Air War, 1939-1945*

(New York: Stein and Day, 1981). Unhappily the latter is no longer in print.

DAVID R. METS

School of Advanced Airpower Studies
Air Command and Staff College
Air University
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

Gailey, Harry A. *The War in the Pacific: From Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay*. Novato, Calif.: Presidio, 1995. 534pp. \$29.95

Harry Gailey, professor of history at San Jose State University, has drawn upon his extensive knowledge and previous writings on World War II in the Pacific to offer an important, encyclopedic, general account of the Pacific War. Although the author concentrates on the Pacific theater, he does include relevant aspects of the war in East Asia that affected such strategic decisions as the 1944 Japanese *Ichigo* offensive in China. The book succeeds admirably. While both expansive and accurate, it is a lively study chronicling not only the source of conflict between Japan, Britain, and the United States but also the bloody war that ensued for control of the Pacific.

While not dwelling on questionable actions of the American on-scene commanders (including MacArthur) at the outbreak of war, Gailey keenly portrays an America not ready for war in the Pacific. He then discusses the remarkable Anglo-American and ANZUS efforts to defend remaining strongholds like New Guinea and Midway after the rapid, far-reaching Japanese advances following 7 December 1941. Gailey

presents the facts and offers short, cogent analyses rather than "second guessing" of strategic or operational assessments. The facts are more vivid than fiction, and he lets the story tell itself. Thus from the comprehensive particulars of battles and events readers are able to draw their own lessons about strategy or operations. This running narrative style is a highly effective way of presenting the vast and often confusing Pacific theater.

Gailey is careful to include most battles of consequence, with distinct focus on opposed amphibious landings—most germane today for those familiar with the U.S. Navy's white paper "Forward . . . from the Sea." Another particularly pleasing feature of the book is its terse but candid appraisal of the key commanders of the theater. Relying on the author's detailed account of events and his sagacity in evaluating command actions, serious students of the Pacific campaigns can assess for themselves the decisions of Allied and Japanese theater commanders (such as MacArthur, Nimitz, and Yamamoto) and what impact they had on subordinates and on-scene commanders. *You make the call.* This approach offers a history that acknowledges the foibles or mistakes of war leaders and, most importantly, the problems that resulted, especially for those at the front. The Pacific War's famous battles in New Guinea, on Guadalcanal, and later in the Philippines, on Iwo Jima, and Okinawa are accorded treatment that reflects both their strategic and operational importance and their suffering and carnage. Gailey pays tribute to the grit of all combatants with his accurate portrayal of Pacific

hell—intemperate weather (too cold and snowy in the Aleutians, or too hot and rainy in the tropics) and austere living conditions. Capable, determined adversaries fought in a cockpit replete with extreme climates and ever-present diseases, often facing starvation at the ends of long, vulnerable supply lines.

Gailey concludes his book with an engrossing, insightful examination of the preparations for the invasion of the Japanese home islands, and of the use of the atomic bomb. In a dispassionate, reasoned manner, the author draws upon previous accounts of the many battles and campaigns of the Pacific up to 1945 to show Japanese soldiers and civilians (when present with their troops) as determined, zealous defenders—even when starving, with no sign of relief in isolated outposts, and faced with the prospect of certain death if they continued to resist. They remained resolute even in bypassed or secluded places, where the war had already come and gone—as in Bougainville, where Australian troops trying to clear the island in early 1945 met with intense resistance. One might conclude that the Japanese commitment to holding "worthless backwater" parts of the Pacific may have been a last-ditch defense by warriors who had never lost a modern war. Most interesting is Gailey's review of the U.S. decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan in light of the emperor's reluctance to intervene and end the war until mid-August 1945. Even after Hirohito's radio address submitting to the Allied terms of surrender, there were still Japanese officers reluctant to follow.

MARK HESS
Commander, U.S. Navy

Prados, John. *Combined Fleet Decoded*.
New York: Random House, 1995.
803pp. \$35

John Prados's *Combined Fleet Decoded* is a history of American naval intelligence with respect to the Japanese navy in the Pacific in World War II. He is the author of the well received book *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Soviet Strategic Forces* and the coauthor of a volume on military history, *Valley of Decision: The Siege of Khe Sanh*. His *Combined Fleet Decoded* describes how the massive contributions of U.S. naval intelligence formed the crucial edge for victory over a very competent Japanese navy and naval air force. Prados supports his assertions with evidence obtained through massive research.

This work has many strong points. It is an inclusive study of American naval intelligence, not limited to signals intelligence, that explores the contributions of prewar work by American naval attaches in Japan, interrogations of Japanese prisoners of war, photo reconnaissance and interpretation, the capture and translation of documents by Nisei (second-generation Japanese immigrants) and American spies, technical intelligence, the use of coastwatchers, and the development of intelligence estimates. (The last item is the precursor of today's national intelligence estimate, probably the most important document produced by the American intelligence system.) The author repeatedly shows the effectiveness of American naval

intelligence, not only at Midway but in countless other examples. For instance, in 1942 U.S. naval intelligence knew as early as 17 April of Japanese plans to capture Port Moresby in early May by way of the Coral Sea. He casts new light on the repercussions of General Douglas MacArthur's loss of the Philippines at the beginning of the war—namely, the island of Luzon had been a "major center" in the U.S. effort to break Japanese naval codes.

Combined Fleet Decoded contains excellent biographical sketches of senior Japanese naval officers. The author also includes a careful description of Japanese naval intelligence and its various weaknesses, buttressing the latter discussion with numerous examples of failures. For example, in 1941 Japanese intelligence regarding Australia was "thin" despite the possibility that Japan would invade it, and Japanese intelligence officers had little information about American carrier groups. Japanese aerial reconnaissance was deficient during the early part of the war, because there were no specialized reconnaissance planes in the naval air force.

Although its virtues predominate, this book does have several weaknesses. Prados goes into too much detail at times. For example, his description of Admiral Isoroku Yamato's quarters on the *Nagato* before the attack on Pearl Harbor and what food he ate in them adds nothing to the narrative. The maps are not of good quality, certainly not what one would expect. Also, Prados occasionally goes beyond his evidence: he writes of what was running through the mind of Radioman Second Class