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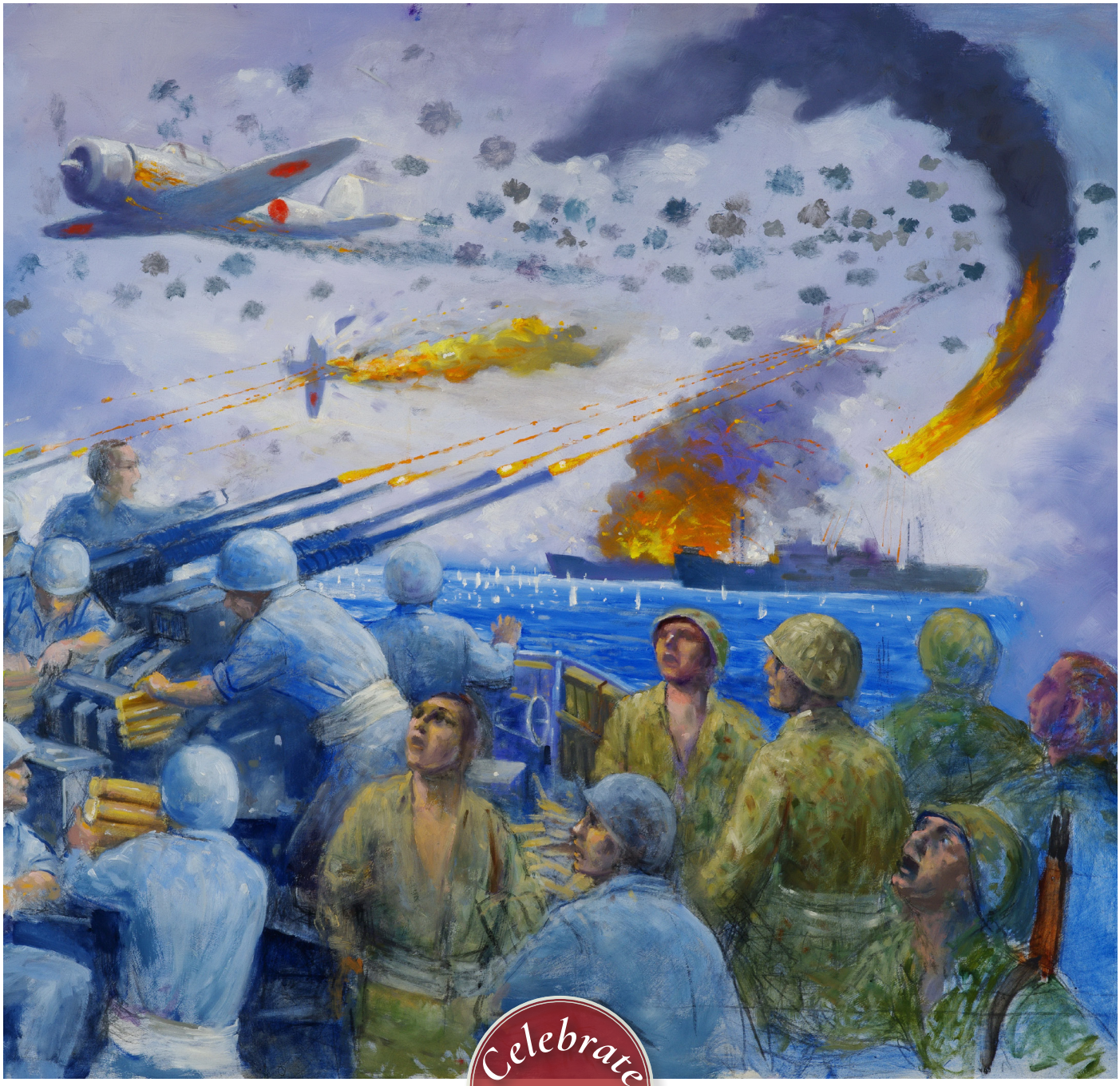

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HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

Operation Iceberg

A BRIEF HISTORIOGRAPHY OF WORLD WAR II'S BATTLE OF OKINAWA, 1 APRIL–22 JUNE 1945

By Sarah E. Patterson, PhD

While major European battles such as the D-Day landings at Normandy and the iconic Pacific theater battle at Iwo Jima's flag raising garner attention from the public and historians alike, other significant World War II battles sometimes fall into the shadows. The Battle of Okinawa, the final major battle of the war, often is overlooked. In spite of its sometimes ignored or understated status, the Battle of Okinawa significantly influenced American opinion on the overall war against the Japanese and encouraged U.S. leaders to use the new weapon in their arsenal, the atomic bomb, rather than conducting massive amphibious landings to invade the Japanese main islands. The horrible casualty numbers at Okinawa led many military planners to believe that such a campaign in Japan would be far more costly and to hope that using the atomic bombs might push the Japanese to surrender before an invasion was needed.[1] The historiography of the battle includes official histories created by the U.S. military, academic monographs, and memoirs of U.S. servicemembers who fought in the battle. Marines wrote several of the most notable narratives. This essay briefly describes the battle and identifies and evaluates important historical research on the Battle of Okinawa, as well as a few of the most frequent debates surrounding the battle.

The Battle

While preparations for the Battle of Okinawa, codenamed Operation Iceberg, began as early as 1944, the invasion force, under the auspices of the U.S. Tenth Army, landed on 1 April 1945 on the island's Hagushi Beaches. The Tenth Army was an inter-Service force, including the Army's XXIV Corps, the Marine Corps' III Amphibious Corps, and the Tactical Air Force, Tenth Army, as well as elements of the Navy's Fifth and Third Fleets. Major units of the XXIV Corps included the 7th, 96th, 77th, and 27th Infantry Divisions. III Amphibious Corps consisted of the 1st, 2d, and 6th Marine Divisions. Army lieutenant general Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr. led the Tenth Army ground forces.[2] Many of these various units regularly worked

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[1] George Feifer, *Tennozan: The Battle of Okinawa and the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1992); and Alexander Burnham, "Okinawa, Harry Truman, and the Atomic Bomb," *Virginia Quarterly Review* 71, no. 3 (Summer 1995): 377–92.

[2] Gordon L. Rottman, *Okinawa 1945: The Last Battle* (Long Island City, NY: Osprey, 2002), 26–29, 38–43, 76; and Robert Leckie, *Okinawa: The Last Battle of World War II* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 1–7, 56–62. For overviews of the Battle of Okinawa, see also Saul David, *Crucible of Hell: The Heroism and Tragedy of Okinawa, 1945* (New York: Hachette Books, 2020); Roy E. Appleman et al., *Okinawa: The Last Battle* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1993); Thomas M.

in support of each other regardless of Service branch, largely with Buckner's support.[3]

Just prior to the Okinawa landings, Buckner tasked elements of Tenth Army with securing the nearby Kerama Retto island group as a location for the American naval fleet to station for refueling, repair, and assembly purposes and to prevent possible Japanese artillery attacks from these locations. The 77th Infantry Division began securing the islands on 26 March and completed its mission on 31 March. These locations became vital for providing repair facilities for U.S. naval ships that sustained damage during the numerous Japanese air attacks to come.[4]

As the majority of Tenth Army began making its way to the Hagushi Beaches on 1 April, the 2d Marine Division participated in demonstration landings off the Minatoga Beaches, pretending on 1 and 2 April that they would make an additional amphibious landing. They hoped to split Japanese forces on the island and distract attention from the main landing force at Hagushi. As the Tenth Army made its way inland from Hagushi Beach, the landing force initially faced very limited resistance. Japanese military leaders on Okinawa, Lieutenant General Mitsuru Ushijima, Major General Isamu Cho, and Colonel Hiromichi Yahara, planned not to defend the beaches with the *Japanese 32d Army* but instead to fortify strategically chosen points in the southern half of the island to grind away at American forces as they approached. This meant that U.S. forces moved quickly away from the landing beaches. By the end of the day on 2 April, elements of the 7th Infantry Division reached the east coast days ahead of schedule, creating an American line across the center of the island that cut off the northern and southern sectors. From there, the Army XXIV Corps turned south, and the III Amphibious Corps moved north.[5]

Another important strategy used by the Japanese at Okinawa involved Operation Ten-go, using a combination of conventional and suicide aircraft to attack the American fleet supporting the Okinawa invasion and causing large numbers of American naval casualties. The first of these major kamikaze attacks occurred on 6–7 April, but numerous organized attacks by these fliers continued during the next two months. At the same time the first major kamikaze wave reached Okinawa, Navy Task Force 58 learned about a group of Japanese naval ships that were also approaching under the auspices of Operation Ten-Ichi. Planes from Task Force 58 intercepted the group, including the super battleship *Yamato* on 7 April, sinking *Yamato* and several other ships before forcing the remnants of the fleet to return to Japan. The thwarted Japanese plan involved destroying as many American naval ships as possible on the way to beaching *Yamato* off the Okinawa coast and using the ship's guns to bombard the island until ammunition ran out and

Huber, *Japan's Battle of Okinawa, April–June 1945*, Leavenworth Papers no. 18 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1990); Jim Boan, *Rising Sun Sinking: The Battle for Okinawa* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2000); Gerald Astor, *Operation Iceberg: The Invasion and Conquest of Okinawa in World War II* (New York: Donald I. Fine, 1995); Feifer, *Tennozan*; Bill Sloan, *The Ultimate Battle: Okinawa 1945–The Last Epic Struggle of World War II* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007); Frank M. Benis, *Okinawa: The Great Island Battle* (New York: Elsevier-Dutton, 1978); James Belote and William Belote, *Typhoon of Steel: The Battle for Okinawa* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); and Ian Gow, *Okinawa 1945: Gateway to Japan* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1985). For Marine Corps-focused overviews, see Joseph H. Alexander, *The Final Campaign: Marines in the Victory on Okinawa* (Washington, DC: Marine Corps Historical Center, 1996); Charles S. Nichols Jr. and Henry I. Shaw Jr., *Okinawa: Victory in the Pacific* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1955); Benis M. Frank and Henry I. Shaw Jr., *Victory and Occupation: History of U.S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, vol. 5 (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1968); and Laura Homan Lacey, *Stay Off the Skyline: The Sixth Marine Division on Okinawa—An Oral History* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2005). Several authors have also written unit- or company-specific histories of the battle, such as George R. Nelson, *I Company: The First and Last to Fight on Okinawa* (Bloomington, IN: 1st Books Library, 2003); and Donald O. Dencker, *Love Company: Infantry Combat Against the Japanese World War II Leyte and Okinawa Company L, 382nd Infantry Regiment 96th Infantry Division* (Manhattan, NY: Sunflower University Press, 2002).

[3] See Rodney Earl Walton, *Big Guns, Brave Men: Mobile Artillery Observers and the Battle for Okinawa* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2013) for more on the cooperation between mobile artillery observers with various units on the ground at Okinawa. Samuel Eliot Morison also provides an account of the Navy's work in support of Operation Iceberg. Samuel Eliot Morison, *Victory in the Pacific, 1945*, History of United States Naval Operations in World War II, vol. 14 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1960), 79–282; and Robert N. Colwell, "Intelligence and the Okinawa Battle," *Naval War College Review* 38, no. 2 (March–April 1985): 81–95.

[4] Rottman, *Okinawa 1945*, 53–54; Leckie, *Okinawa*, 56–58; and Morison, *Victory in the Pacific, 1945*, 88.

[5] Rottman, *Okinawa 1945*, 18–26, 35–36, 54–66; and Leckie, *Okinawa*, 67–85.

then sending the surviving crew to join in the fighting on the ground.[6]

April also brought the invasion of more of the smaller surrounding islands by U.S. forces in support of the larger battle. In one incident, famous war correspondent Ernie Pyle was killed on 18 April while embedded with the 77th Infantry Division on the nearby island of Ie Shima (Iejima). The many American servicemembers who admired him mourned his loss.[7]

By 19 April, XXIV Corps forces stalled at what became known as the Shuri Line, a defensive line stretching from Ouki village on the eastern part of Okinawa to the Machinato Inlet on the western side of the island. It was here that the U.S. forces encountered the first of several mutually supporting fortifications prepared by the Japanese military. Even as elements of the XXIV Corps became stuck at the Shuri Line, the 6th Marine Division successfully secured the northern Motobu Peninsula on 20 April. During the next week or so, the 77th Infantry Division, previously involved in securing nearby smaller islands, landed on Okinawa and quickly relieved the exhausted 96th Infantry Division. At almost the same time, the 1st Marine Division relieved the 27th Infantry Division near the Shuri Line as well. The 27th Infantry Division moved north to continue the process of securing northern Okinawa, and soon, the remainder of III Amphibious Corps joined the battle at the Shuri Line as well.[8]

The 6th Marine Division moved into the critical position fighting for control of the area surrounding Sugar Loaf Hill, control of which assisted in the fight to capture Shuri. The fierce battle lasted from 13 to 19 May, allowing the division to advance only 520 yards and costing more than 3,000 Marine casualties. Eventually, however, the 6th Marine Division succeeded in capturing its objective.[9]

Although the battle at the Shuri Line was fierce, the Americans made slow headway, and from 30 May to 4 June, the Japanese *32d Army* began quietly withdrawing the bulk of its forces to a second fortified line further south at the Kiyamu Peninsula, leaving just enough troops behind to slow the American advance. By 31 May, the 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division, controlled Shuri Castle. Just a few days later, the 4th Marines, 6th Marine Division, tried to take advantage of the recent forward progress by conducting a shore-to-shore assault on the Oroku Peninsula on 4 June, a maneuver that would later be recognized as the last opposed amphibious assault of World War II. By 14 June, U.S. military leaders considered the peninsula secure, and the following day the 8th Marines, part of the 2d Marine Division, joined up with the 1st Marine Division at Naha.[10]

Even as the battle moved in favor of the Americans, a piece of shrapnel killed General Buckner while he observed near the front. As a result of his death and under Buckner's previous orders, Marine Corps general Roy S. Geiger took charge of Tenth Army, becoming the only Marine to command a field army in battle. Army lieutenant general Joseph W. Stilwell relieved Geiger a few days later. On 21 June, Geiger declared the end of organized resistance on Okinawa, although pockets of guerrilla-style fighting continued until around 30 June in the southern part of Okinawa and 4 August in the northern part of the island. As the Americans pressed farther south, General Ushijima realized that time was limited, and he soon ordered Colonel Yahara to escape and report back to Tokyo. Meanwhile, Ushijima and General Cho prepared for

[6] Rottmann, *Okinawa 1945*, 76–77; Leckie, *Okinawa*, 15–21, 87–96, 115–19, 141–46, 187–95; and Astor, *Operation Iceberg*, 145–88, 291–309. For more on the U.S. Navy's involvement in the Battle of Okinawa, see Morison, *Victory in the Pacific*; Rod MacDonald, *Task Force 58: The U.S. Navy's Carrier Strike Force That Won the War in the Pacific* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2021), 427–51; Stephen L. Moore, *Rain of Steel: Mitscher's Task Force 58, Ugaki's Thunder Gods, and the Kamikaze War off Okinawa* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2020); Robin L. Rielly, *Kamikazes, Corsairs, and Picket Ships: Okinawa, 1945* (Havertown, PA: Casemate, 2008); and Simon Foster, *Okinawa, 1945* (London: Arms and Armour, 1995). See also Arnold Lott, *Brave Ship, Brave Men* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1964) for more on the USS *Aaron Ward* (DD 483); and John Wukovits, *Hell From the Heavens: The Epic Story of the USS* Laffey *and World War II's Greatest Kamikaze Attack* (Boston, MA: DaCapo Press, 2015) for more on the USS *Laffey* (DD 724).

[7] Rottmann, *Okinawa 1945*, 66–69; and Leckie, *Okinawa*, 125–26.

[8] Rottmann, *Okinawa 1945*, 69–75; and Leckie, *Okinawa*, 133–39.

[9] Rottman, *Okinawa 1945*, 78–79; Leckie, *Okinawa*, 165–81; and James H. Hallas, *Killing Ground on Okinawa: The Battle for Sugar Loaf Hill* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1996).

[10] Rottmann, *Okinawa 1945*, 80–83; and Leckie, *Okinawa*, 183–86, 197.

ritual suicide, the only way they believed they could maintain their honor in the face of impending defeat.[11]

The Battle of Okinawa caused catastrophic loss of life. Thousands of Americans, Japanese, and Okinawans died. While numbers vary somewhat from one source to another, Gordon L. Rottman's numbers are fairly representative. He lists Marine Corps losses as 2,938 dead or missing and 16,017 wounded, Army losses as 4,675 dead or missing and 18,099 wounded, and more than 26,200 additional casualties who suffered from noncombat-related injuries, various illnesses, and combat fatigue. The U.S. Navy also lost 4,900 dead or missing and suffered 4,800 wounded. Thirty-six ships were sunk, and another 368 vessels were damaged. Rottman estimates that about 66,000 Japanese and Okinawan soldiers died, approximately 17,000 were wounded, and 7,400 became prisoners of war. Additionally, around 4,600 kamikaze air crews and hundreds of other pilots with more conventional missions died as well. The highest number of deaths that resulted from the Battle of Okinawa, however, occurred among the civilian population of Okinawa: at least 122,000, including around one-third of the island's indigenous population. These losses devastated Okinawan families and culture.[12]

Published Primary Sources

Published primary sources related to Okinawa also provide valuable insight into the decisions made by commanders and the experiences of the soldiers and Marines on the ground. For example, E. B. Sledge's *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* and R. V. Burgin's *Islands of the Damned: A Marine at War in the Pacific* recount the authors' experiences at battles in the Pacific theater, including Okinawa, from the perspective of an enlisted man in the 1st Marine Division. Christopher L. Kolakowski recently introduced and edited General Buckner's diaries from his time at Okinawa in *Tenth Army Commander: The World War II Diary of Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr.* Nicholas Evan Sarantakes also edited *Seven Stars: The Okinawa Battle Diaries of Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., and Joseph Stilwell*, a version of Buckner's and General Joseph Stilwell's Okinawa diaries. John Grehan compiled the official British admiralty account of Great Britain's portion of the battle—*Okinawa: The Last Naval Battle of WW2: The Official Admiralty Account of Operation Iceberg*—providing further insight into high-level decision-making during the battle.[13] While not many works focused on the Japanese and Okinawan perspectives are available in English at present, those that are available provide important insight into other sides of the battle. A few notable examples include the memoir of Colonel Hiromichi Yahara, senior staff officer of Japan's *32d Army* during the Battle of Okinawa, *The Battle for Okinawa: A Japanese Officer's Eyewitness Account of the Last Great Campaign of World War II*; the memoir of Admiral Matome Ugaki, commander in charge of many of the Japanese *5th Air Fleet*'s kamikaze attacks on American ships supporting the Battle of Okinawa, *Fading Victory: The Diary of Admiral Matome Ugaki, 1941–1945*; Okinawan civilian Tomiko Higa's memoir of her experiences as a seven-year-old child separated from her family during the battle, *The Girl with the White Flag: An Inspiring Story of Love and Courage in War Time*; as well as a translated collection by Mark Ealey and Alastair McLauchlan of edited newspaper articles originally published by an Okinawan newspaper that attempted to preserve and highlight the experiences of civilian Okinawans during the battle in the years

[11] Rottmann, *Okinawa 1945*, 35, 83; Leckie, *Okinawa*, 197–205; and Hiromichi Yahara, *The Battle of Okinawa: A Japanese Officer's Eyewitness Account of the Last Great Campaign of World War II* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1995).

[12] Rottmann, *Okinawa 1945*, 84–85; and Feifer, *Tennozan*, 446–63, 527–34.

[13] E. B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1981, 2010); R. V. Burgin, *Islands of the Damned: A Marine at War in the Pacific* (New York: NAL Caliber, 2011); Christopher L. Kolakowski, ed., *Tenth Army Commander: The World War II Diary of Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr.* (Havertown, PA: Casemate Publishers, 2023); Nicholas Evan Sarantakes, ed., *Seven Stars: The Okinawa Battle Diaries of Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., and Joseph Stilwell* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004); and John Grehan, comp., *Okinawa: The Last Naval Battle of WW2: The Official Admiralty Account of Operation Iceberg* (Yorkshire, UK: Frontline Books, 2022). See also Art Shaw, *82 Days on Okinawa: One American's Unforgettable Firsthand Account of the Pacific War's Greatest Battle* (New York: William Morrow, 2020).

after the war, titled *Descent into Hell: Civilian Memories of the Battle of Okinawa*.[14]

Unpublished Primary Sources

A number of archival collections contain significant unpublished primary sources related to the Battle of Okinawa. The Marine Corps History Division's Archives Branch offers a finding aid for its collections related to the battle in its Campaign Collections Research Guides.[15] The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) also holds relevant collections, including Record Group 38, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1875–2006, and Record Group 127, Records of the United States Marine Corps, 1775–1981. Additionally, NARA holds records related to the postwar occupation period and the prosecution of war crimes that include Okinawa in Record Group 260, Records of U.S. Occupation Headquarters, World War II, 1923–72.[16]

Historical Debates

Two major themes emerge in the historiography with regard to historical debate surrounding this battle. First, a number of historians consider the significance of the Battle of Okinawa to the impending end of World War II. For example, Robert Leckie's classic work, *Okinawa: The Last Battle of World War II*, George Feifer's *Tennozan: The Battle of Okinawa and the Atomic Bomb*, and Alexander Burnham's article for the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, "Okinawa, Harry Truman, and the Atomic Bomb," argue that American success in the battle critically influenced the Japanese decision to surrender. These authors do not argue that the U.S. use of atomic bombs and the Russian invasion of Manchuria were not important but that the significance of the Battle of Okinawa to these conversations has been understated. Additionally, the military's experiences at Okinawa informed President Harry S. Truman's decision to use the atomic bombs. Some in the Truman administration thought that if Japanese soldiers and sailors would fight so hard for land hundreds of miles from their home islands, they and the civilian populace seemed likely to fight even harder for their homes.[17]

Another major point of debate for many historians has been the effectiveness of General Buckner's command decisions. As the battle lasted for 82 days, an increasing number of military leaders questioned Buckner's methods and whether his plans were aggressive enough for the situation. In particular, historians considered Buckner's decision not to conduct a second amphibious landing at Minatoga Beach in late April to approach the Japanese Army from an additional direction and potentially hasten the end of the battle. Some agree with Buckner's assessment that adequate supplies were not available to support a seconding landing, while others argue that supplies were available and a second landing could have ended the battle much sooner, saving lives. The debate began during the battle with disagreements between members of Buckner's senior staff as to the best way forward. The Navy's argument in favor of more aggressive action hinged on the unusually large number of casualties the Service suffered as a result of Japanese aerial attacks as they waited offshore in support of the ground invasion. As Buckner considered the options, he eventually decided that in addition to a lack of necessary supplies, the ground forces already engaged with the Japanese needed the support of the troops suggested for the amphibious force, and additionally, the landscape of the Minatoga beachhead could make for a very difficult landing. Furthermore, Buckner believed that Ushijima's forces were weakening and a

[14] Hiromichi Yahara, *The Battle for Okinawa: A Japanese Officer's Eyewitness Account of the Last Great Campaign of World War II* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1995); Matome Ugaki, *Fading Victory: The Diary of Admiral Matome Ugaki, 1941–1945* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991); Tomiko Higa, *The Girl with the White Flag: An Inspiring Story of Love and Courage in War Time*, trans. Dorothy Britton (New York: Kodansha International, 2013); and Mark Ealey and Alastair McLauchlan, trans., *Descent into Hell: Civilian Memories of the Battle of Okinawa Ryukyu Shimpo* (Portland, ME: Merwin Asia, 2014).

[15] Campaign Collections, Okinawa, Archives Branch, Marine Corps History Division, Quantico, VA.

[16] These records can be located at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) location in College Park, MD, although some records are now available digitally at the NARA website. NARA also holds information on the Army's involvement in the Battle of Okinawa in Record Group 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[17] Leckie, *Okinawa*; Feifer, *Tennozan*, 566–84; and Burnham, "Okinawa, Harry Truman, and the Atomic Bomb," 377–92.

breakthrough could be expected soon. Splitting their focus at that point with another amphibious landing might slow that progress. Several researchers, including Paul E. Cunningham II and Christopher Kolakowski conclude that, overall, Buckner and his staff made the best decisions they could with the information they had at the time and conducted a largely successful campaign.[18]

Marine Corps involvement was vital to the success of American forces in the Battle of Okinawa, and Marines fought alongside their Army counterparts throughout the ground battle and alongside Navy and Army Air Corps pilots in the air. Many arguments about the relative contribution of the Army versus the Marine Corps exist, as well as debates over the effectiveness of particular units within Tenth Army. The reality, however, is that both Army and Marine Corps efforts were vital to the eventual success of Operation Iceberg. Much of the debate surrounding who received more credit originated in differences in media coverage of the Army versus the Marine Corps during the battle. Nicholas Evan Sarantakes argues that the Marine Corps' embrace of the press relative to the Army resulted in a larger amount and more favorable media coverage for the Corps. This created inter-Service resentment at the appearance of media favoritism of the Marine Corps.[19] However, all the involved Services made important contributions to the battle.

Conclusions

Historians and military strategists have extensively considered many aspects of the battle, particularly the command decisions. There are, however, some parts of the battle that would yet benefit from further investigation. More information in English is needed on the experiences of Japanese soldiers during the battle, as well as the tragic circumstances of the Okinawan people who remained trapped in the center of brutal combat. Additionally, in spite of the importance of the island's terrain to the conduct of the battle, environmental history of the Battle of Okinawa is still relatively limited. Although most historians of the Battle of Okinawa reference the terrain, few focus intensively on this issue.[20] While the Battle of Okinawa has received substantial consideration, the above provide a few examples of areas where the historiography could benefit from additional research.

After 82 days of hard fighting on Okinawa, the American military began preparations for its next battle. The Battle of Okinawa provided a snapshot for American leaders as to conditions servicemembers might face in battle on the main islands of Japan, the next planned stop for the U.S. military. As the Japanese soldiers seemed determined to fight to the very last, Americans considered potential death tolls for a fight happening at Japan's front door and the estimates were chilling. While it is debatable to what extent President Truman and his advisors made their decision to use the atomic bomb rather than conduct a ground invasion based on loss data from the Battle of Okinawa, these heavy casualties were soon used as justification for this new weapon's use. Even as the Battle of Okinawa came to an end, it remained uncertain, especially to those on the island, that this would be the final major battle of the war.

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[18] Paul E. Cunningham II, *Command and Control of the U.S. Tenth Army During the Battle of Okinawa* (London: Verdun Press, 2014); Sarantakes, *Seven Stars*, 134–36; Leckie, *Okinawa*, 158–62; Kolakowski, *Tenth Army Commander*, 233–38; and Christopher L. Kolakowski, " 'Our Flag Will Wave Over All of Okinawa': Simon Bolivar Buckner's Pacific War," *Army History*, no. 130 (Winter 2024): 6–22.

[19] Nicholas Evan Sarantakes, "Warriors of Word and Sword: The Battle of Okinawa, Media Coverage, and Truman's Reevaluation of Strategy in the Pacific," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 23, no. 4 (2016): 334–67.

[20] While many historians mention the landscape in passing, including the extensive tunnel and cave systems and the use of reverse slope tactics, few focus extensively on the impact of terrain on the battle. For example, Dale Floyd's article considers Okinawa's terrain but focuses more specifically on the strategies used by combat engineers. Dale E. Floyd, "Cave Warfare on Okinawa," *Army History*, no. 34 (Spring/Summer 1995): 6–9. The master's thesis of Kennon Howell Keiser Jr. provides an initial glimpse into how an environmental history of the Battle of Okinawa might look. Kennon Howell Keiser Jr., "Weaponized Landscapes: An Environmental History of the Battle of Okinawa and Its Aftermath" (master's thesis, Appalachian State University, 2019).