

FROMM INSTITUTE

The United States and the Second World War

Peter O'M. Pierson

RECOMMENDED READINGS FOR THE PACIFIC THEATER, WORLD WAR II

Many works listed below have bibliographies to aid further reading

General

Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of U.S. Naval Operations in World War II*, 15 vols.: vols. III, *Rising Sun in the Pacific*; IV, *Coral Sea, Midway and Submarine Actions*; V, *The Struggle for Guadalcanal*, VI, *Breaking the Bismarcks Barrier*, VII, *Aleutians, Gilberts and Marshalls*, VIII, *New Guinea and the Marianas*, XII, *Leyte*, XIII, *Liberation of the Philippines, Luzon, Mindanao, the Visayas, 1944-August 1945*, XIV, *Victory in the Pacific 1945*. Close to the events, these volumes have a special immediacy, even if some code matters were still classified and more would be learned later. A Harvard professor and yachtsman who duplicated Columbus's voyage. Morison received a Lieutenant Commander's commission from President Roosevelt and permission to follow fleet operations world wide to gain material for this semi-official work. Morison achieved the rank of Captain by war's end, and Rear Admiral afterward. There is a one volume abridgement, *Two Ocean War* (1963)

U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard have thoroughly detailed official histories produced after the war, which are most useful and sometimes by distinguished historians.

John Costello, *The Pacific War 1941-1945* (1981), wide coverage including Southeast Asia.

Ronald H. Spector, *Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan* (1985)

John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (1986)

John Prados, *Combined Fleet Decoded: The Secret History of American Intelligence and the Japanese Navy in World War 2* (1995)

William Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur* (1978)

E. B. Potter, *Nimitz* (1976)

Thomas E. Buell, *The Quiet Warrior: Admiral Raymond Spruance* (1974)

Buell, *Master of Sea Power: Admiral Ernest King* (1980)

William F. Halsey, with J. Brian, *Admiral Halsey's Story* (1947)

Hiroyuki Agawa, *Reluctant Admiral: Yamamoto and the Imperial Navy* (trans. 1979)

China

Dick Wilson, *When Tigers Fight, The Story of the Sino-Japanese War 1937-1945* (1982)

Pearl Harbor.

Gordon W. Prange, *At Dawn We Slept* (1981) remains far and away the best work

Japanese conquest of Philippines, Malaya, East Indies, Burma

John Toland, *But Not in Shame* (1961), solid treatment of Japanese tide of conquest in the six months after Pearl Harbor. (Toland is a "revisionist on Pearl Harbor)

Martin Middlebrook & Patrick Mahoney, *Battleship: The Loss of the Prince of Wales and the Repulse* (1977)

W. L. White, *They Were Expendable* (1942); first hand account of PT boats in the Philippines and getting MacArthur out; claims of sunk Japanese ships were understandably wishful.
Michael Norman & Elizabeth M. Norman, *Tears in the Darkness: the Story of the Bataan Death March and Its Aftermath* (2009), much personal reminisce.

Battle of Midway

Gordon W. Prange (with Donald Goldstein and Katherine Dillon), *Miracle at Midway* (1982), a posthumous work is good, if flawed with minor mistakes.
Jonathan Parshall and Anthony Tully, *Shattered Sword: The Untold Story of the Battle of Midway* (2005), outstanding background and depth for the Japanese side. Essential for understanding battle.

Guadalcanal

Richard B. Frank, *Guadalcanal: The Definitive Account of the Landmark Campaign* (1990)
Richard Tregaskis, *Guadalcanal Diary* (1943), fine sense of immediacy.

Battle of Leyte Gulf

Evan Thomas, *Sea of Thunder: Four Commanders and the Last Great Naval Campaign 1941-1945* (2006), focus on personalities.
Stanley L. Falk, *Decision at Leyte* (1966)

Okinawa

E. B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed at Pelelieu and Okinawa* (1981)
George Fieffer, *Tennozan: The Battle of Okinawa and the Atomic Bomb* (1992)

A-Bomb and Japanese Surrender

Richard B. Frank, *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* (1999)