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Zen and the Art of Surrender

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"The man who would be a warrior considers it essential to keep in mind the spirit of battle 24 hours a day. Our country is different from others, for here, even the lowliest merchant, farmer, or artisan is attentive enough to carry with him a rusty old sword. This is the custom of the people of the warrior nation of Japan, and is the Way of the gods, unchanged for ten thousand generations."

- Daidoji Yuzan, *Budoshoshinshu - The Code of The Warrior*, 17th century

"...if you are slain in battle, you should be resolved to have your corpse facing the enemy."

- Tsunetomo Yamamoto, *Hagakure - The Book of the Samurai*, early 18th century

The legacy of Japan's aristocratic, warrior culture, bathed in the rigors and hardships of eras past, yields unique insight toward the actions taken by Japan in its darkest hour. The quotes of these authors and others like them served to inspire a new, modern generation of combatants, unwaveringly resolute in the performance of their duties. On the eve of August 8th, 1945, the nation said to have been born from the sun goddess Amaterasu was forced to confront its decidedly human and undeniably vulnerable nature.

The mythology of Japan and its divine heritage became integral in the nation's spiritual and practical resurrection, the upheaval of centuries old tradition that accompanied the Meiji Restoration. This aristocratic revolution of sorts came to pass with the re-conception of Japan as a new and powerful international actor. There was a novel, special importance bestowed upon the imperial household, and a mutation of the

Japanese citizen. Men and women who born into the life of being a mere wayward laborer were transformed into one of the Emperor's prized children. The factors and changes that comprised the Meiji Restoration are critical to understanding the disaster at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Indeed Japan's defeat cannot be understood lest the discerning scholar or reader critically examine the very fabric of Japanese society.

Any discussion of Japan concerning its actions taken during World War II has a tendency to conjure up a ponderous reflection of the Japanese fighting spirit. Typically laced with anecdotes of troops' indomitable spirit and unshakable will, the militaristic government has been frequently chastised post hoc for its aggressive inculcation of violence. Such a rare and exceptional society did not develop a virulently aggressive and unshakable fighting force by chance – a complex and ingenious agglomeration of manifested historical legacies unified with popular ideals that yielded tremendous results. This thesis will examine the nature and implications of those very legacies, and the ways in which they were implemented into the institutions and society of wartime Japan.

1.1 - Introduction

During World War II, the surrender doctrine put forth by the government was founded from a national doctrine known as kokutai. Kokutai, to the people and government of Japan, defined the nation as unique and arguably superior to other states in the international system. Due primarily to its unbroken Imperial legacy, Japan was seen to exist as a divine nation, the emperor wielding an unshakable imperial mandate. In correlation with this concept, kokutai was synthesized with a separate yet complimentary policy of “decisive victory,” which helped breed elevated levels of nationalism and

militarism. The Japanese Imperial Army formulated its ideology and strategic doctrine within this paradigm. Doing so led ultimately to the development of *ketsugo*, or Japan's infamous "fight to the death," quasi-suicidal mindset.

Many scholars have argued that the ideals associated with the "never surrender" policy have their genesis in Japan's popular ethos, culture, and tradition. This argument holds merit, as it would appear to be true – even in the absence of sufficient military prowess or infrastructural resources, the army vowed to fight to the death. Not doing so would be to challenge the samurai warrior values, ignoring what was codified in the 1882 Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors.

However, this popular perception of Japanese military policy is called into question when examining the development of the nation's oft-heralded naval power. Indeed naval doctrine differed from the army's near delusional conception of its warring capacity. The Imperial Japanese Navy was divided in its approach to Japan's influence beyond the homeland – some demanded complete parity with its Western neighbors in terms of naval power, while others were willing to accede influence in light of America's economic dominance. In addition, the rift between the army and navy was growing. With the army becoming increasingly radical, the Navy began advocating a more peaceful approach to international politics.

1.2 – Thesis

In this thesis I will examine:

- A. The development of the Japanese military ethos, and its origins in Japanese warrior culture.
- B. The implementation of said ethos into doctrine, as utilized by the army and articulated in its demands for surrender.

In this thesis I will argue:

- A. That the commonly held notion of Japanese culture being equated suicidal bids for power is false, and that indeed Japan militarily could have operated within the paradigm of kokutai without unnecessarily compromising the integrity of the nation.
- B. That the Imperial Japanese Navy had the tools to exhibit a moderate line, and in the end, took a more sensible approach to ending the war.

1.3 – Japanese military ethos; origins and development

Bushido – literally, the way of the warrior – is a code immortalized in Japanese culture and literature. A vestige of enigmatic traditionalism, the warrior ethos moved firmly into modernity with the rise of the modern Japanese military. The nation had already been united beneath the banner of state-sponsored Shinto, a calculated reinvention of Japan’s native animistic belief system. Instilled with a new reverence for the Emperor established during the Meiji Restoration, the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors drew reference from state-Shinto, and marked a new dawn for bushido. Instituted in 1882, this rescript “[linked] all ranks [of the military] to the emperor and

institutionalized this relationship.”¹ This linkage became a stalwart facet by which kokutai would receive its ballast. Adherence to kokutai mandated veneration of all things related to, and products of the Imperial household. Much as the emperor was deified, these rescripts also carried a similar holy mandate.

It should be noted, however, that the growth of bushido was not nearly as calculated as one might think. No definitive scripture can be found in the annals history that properly defines the origin of these warrior tenants, let alone a method for their proper application. Most scholars agree that bushido is the organic agglomeration of numerous modes of philosophy, absorbed through Japan’s continued contact with mainland Asia during its formative years. It is best described as "the code of moral principles which [samurai] were... instructed to observe. It is not a written code; at best it consists of a few maxims handed down from mouth to mouth or coming from the pen of some well-known warrior or savant... It is a code unuttered and unwritten..."²

Much like Shinto, because of bushido’s amorphous legacy, the state adopted its precepts and reintroduced it into the common lexicon in a form that directly benefited the nation’s hierarchical power structure. What is known of bushido’s development has been quite mottled with the passage of time. Even such distinctly Japanese practices as seppuku have never had a true, official mandate – variations of the practice of ritualistic suicide can be found throughout Japan’s history. Given its nature, bringing bushido into practical application was a possibility the government capitalized on.

¹ Edward J. Drea, *In the service of the Emperor: Essays on the Imperial Japanese Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 76.

² Inazo Nitobe, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle, 1969).

The strongest historical links bushido maintains are to Confucius' and Mencius' teachings. In addition, Shintoism, Chinese Classics, and the Rinzai school of Zen Buddhism also played an important role in the articulation of the samurai code.

Perhaps the most famous example of bushido in practice is found in the story of the 47 Ronin. The dilemma of the samurai involved surrounded the means by which bushido was to be interpreted. While the story speaks volumes, a discussion of its content is beyond the scope of this essay. Suffice to say, when faced with the contradictions of Tokugawa bushido practices, the quandry left the most noted contemporary scholars "scratching their heads."³

Wrought with the new challenges of modernity, the ancient practice of the warrior ethos conflicted with the new demands of a centralized government. For the leader of these ronin, the path was simple. "Some people live all their lives without knowing which path is right. They're buffeted by this wind or that and never really know where they're going. That's largely the fate of the commoners--those who have no choice over their destiny. For those of us born as samurai, life is something else. We know the path of duty and we follow it without question."⁴

The sense of duty and unquestioning loyalty found in the traditions of budo were ripe for reinterpretation by the wartime government during World War II. In the story of the 47 Ronin, the wandering samurai yearned to avenge their fallen master and follow him into death by means of seppuku. This unquestioning loyalty and absolute faith found in samurai culture was slowly transformed from its existence as a purely aristocratic belief system. It became integrated part and parcel by the government into the society at

³ Kenneth B. Pyle, Lecture. November 18th, 2005.

⁴ John Allyn,, *The 47 Ronin Story* (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle, 1970).

large. The latent need for guidance and meaning in a new modern world was found in the annals of bushido's history, and provided excellent material for the nation's propaganda machine.

Japan's legendary aristocracy, and its militaristic heritage, provided ample substance for the creatively inclined government. A new breed of fighting man was manufactured beneath the banner of the warrior code. A reinterpretation of bushido — focused on the honor found in death, and the necessary self-discipline required in the moments just prior — served as the basis for the strategy of *ketsugo*.

The practice of *seppuku* (or *hara-kiri*) was wrought upon the breast of each samurai, who was trained to face death with dignity and honor. To the samurai, living was dying. "It is essential to engrave this business of the warrior into one's mind well... [otherwise] it will be difficult for him to die a brave and manly death... one should read books concerning military matters, and direct his attention exclusively to the virtues of loyalty and filial piety... to grasp the long and the short swords and to die."⁵

These powerful ideas became the essence of Imperial military doctrine. Any army or navy unafraid of dying was the realization of every military leader's dream:

"[The Japanese soldier] fought and marched... till he died.... We had to kill four hundred and ninety-five [of five hundred] Japanese soldiers"⁶ before a position was able to be captured. "And then the last five killed themselves. It was this combination of obedience and ferocity that made the Japanese Army... so formidable... it would make a European army invincible."⁷ Furthermore, American GI's recognized the unmitigated

⁵ William Scott Wilson, *The Ideals of the Samurai: Writings of Japanese Warriors* (Tokyo: Ohara Publications, 1982).

⁶ Drea, 73.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

patriotism of Japanese soldiers when they related a story concerning their enemy – masters of tactical intrusion and stealth, a four man team suffered the loss of two of its men. The remaining two, during the night, buried their fallen comrades, doing so undetected by the Americans. What was the secret – what was the impetus for such allegiance and commitment? Simple propaganda could not net such extraordinary results. The fanaticism and bravery of the Japanese is unheard of in the history of warfare. Obviously bushido served as a major component, but what made simple peasants believe they were modern-day samurai?

1.4 – The articulation of said ethos into contemporary doctrine

Understanding the nature of bushido illuminates only parts of the whole. The efficacy of the Japanese military cannot be explained solely through “tradition,” no matter how salient the continuity. The process by which the military regime utterly transformed a population’s conception of the Imperial house began with the Meiji Restoration. For those familiar with the development of state-Shinto, the military process followed a parallel course.

Like state-Shinto, ideas already embedded in popular nomenclature were adapted and reinvented to serve the new government. Also in congruence with state-Shinto, the new thrust of military doctrine became centered on the sanctity of the emperor. The army went so far as to claim a special relationship with the Imperial House.⁸ Prior to the restoration, the emperor was not showered with the praise and adoration. His importance was secondary to the influence of the Shogun, the chief warlord of Japan who was armed with the practical control of the nation.

⁸ Drea, 82.

However, with the institution of the Imperial Rescript to Sailors and Soldiers of 1882, Japan's dream of a modern military had arrived. The emperor now was metaphorically reborn into the center of Japanese society.

The military was an integral piece of the puzzle in this redistribution of power. "The barracks is the soldiers' [new] family where together soldiers' share hardships and joys, life and death."⁹ The deeply hierarchical and patriarchal nature of Japanese society was extended beyond the family unit. Indeed, Japan as a whole was reborn as a macrocosm of the family unit, the emperor taking the role of the nation's father. This extension of "loyalties to highly authority, [was] cultivated originally in one's own family... this surrogate or substitute family [of the military] added up to the one great loyalty due to His Imperial Majesty, the emperor of Japan."¹⁰ This loyalty to the emperor was expressed in a microcosmic fashion through the company. "The Japanese army consciously molded the company on familial or paternalistic models... army regulations officially reinforced the place of the company as the soldier's home and family."¹¹

While propaganda can take a military so far, other factors were at play. Namely, the importance bestowed upon military recruits relative to the rest of society. Once drafted, the "recruit had a place in a well-ordered military society and through hard work, loyalty, and proper attitude in the squad could advance in that closed, hierarchical society."¹² In addition, "conscription was a mark of status. It placed the recruit, particularly the peasant, in a hierarchical relationship to his peers... he was

⁹ Drea, 88.

¹⁰ Ibid., 81.

¹¹ Ibid., 81.

¹² Ibid., 82.

acknowledged as one of the best”¹³ by his village and group. Numerous times Drea makes a point of noting that the military served as a smaller representation of society at large, that the reverence and obedience of the Emperor and all of its trappings came from “popular, not military, values.” Naturally, it is not a surprise that “joining the army provided first an elevated status and second a responsibility to meet expectations of family and village or town.”¹⁴ Friends, family, and community heralded a military career as both honorable and desirable.

Drea best sums up the nature of bushido’s contemporary implementation in the following passage:

“Two themes emerge from [an examination of the IJA]. First, the Imperial Army was the natural extension of the prewar Japanese family writ large with all the trappings of respect for hierarchy and group versus individual identification implied in that notion. Second, [there was] was a highly positive and flattering image of the life of a common Japanese soldier. It was misleading insofar as [the propaganda] idealized and romanticized the daily routine... while [concealing] the less savory aspects and violence of life in the barracks.”¹⁵

The army’s unprecedented control of ministerial appointments gave them power without accountability. In many ways, the army’s ultra-conservatism militarism drew upon themes already manifested in society, and provided them with a violent voice. “The ministry of education went to great lengths to ensure that the six years of required schooling had a heavy tinge of nationalism and patriotism... virtues of *chukun aikoku*

¹³ Drea, 79.

¹⁴ Ibid., 80.

¹⁵ Ibid., 77.

(loyalty to the emperor and love of country) were values most brought with them into the army...”¹⁶

The army’s ability to manipulate the government and the Imperial House enabled them to unify policy into a vision of their own, and ultimately, take Japan into the most gruesome depths of war. That being said, the navy, whilst initially purporting a stance similar to the army, changed its stance near the war’s end.

1.5 – The Navy’s role

Many historians have examined the army’s dominance, the latent Samurai mindset encapsulated in society at large, and then broadly surmised Japan’s unrequited thirst for death over surrender as the de facto attitude of all Japanese institutions. There were, however, many voices that have gone unspoken for in the plethora of analyses conducted of the Japanese military.

I hope to draw a distinction between the army’s implementation of bushido and the navy’s own interpretation. While both came into the war with similar intentions (the more “dove-ish” elements of the navy were submerged by the rise of hawks in government), the navy retained a latent moderation that manifested itself near the closing of the Pacific theater of conflict. While both branches held kokutai close to their hearts, their plans to action to maintain the integrity of Japan’s divine genesis varied considerably.

The most apparent evidence indicative of the navy’s stance near the war’s end can be found in the records of the Supreme War Leadership Council’s meeting on August 9th, 1945. Here, Yonai, the naval minister and council representative, debated with Anami,

¹⁶ Drea, 82.

Togo, and Umezu on the terms of surrender. The “psychological shocks of the first atomic bomb and Soviet entry into the war”¹⁷ along with concerns over popular unrest had set the government into motion. The army held fast and demanded preservation of kokutai, self-disarmament, no occupation, and control over war crimes trials. Yonai advocated only the first demand – preservation of kokutai, which in this case, was interpreted as the sanctity of the Emperor. In addition, Rear Admiral Sokichi Takagi is quoted as being “instrumental in pressing the emperor’s top aides to accept the Potsdam terms.”¹⁸ Kido, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and trusted confidant of the emperor became the key figure in the approaches to peace.

“Kido saw no prospect of the army’s accepting peace... [He] had consulted Matsudaira, Kase, Matsutani, and Takagi on his plan [of securing better terms by seeking Moscow’s mediation]... the *modus operandii* of the peace party was gradually being established. The four men constituted a clandestine link among powerful actors such as Kido, Shigemitsu, Togo, Yonai, and Konoe, who could not openly meet and plot for peace.”¹⁹ This mobilization of the navy in opposition to the army’s desires isn’t surprising when considering the navy’s contact with the more “fringe” elements in Japanese society.

Peace feelers in Japan’s academic community were counting on the “navy to prevail on the army and impose the end of the war by the emperor’s decision.”²⁰ Admiral Kiyoshi Hasegawa had expressed his concerns over the army’s plan for *ketsugo* (“one

¹⁷ Hebert P. Bix, “Japan’s Delayed Surrender: A Reinterpretation” in *Hiroshima: In History and Memory*, ed Michael J. Hogan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 108.

¹⁸ Bix, 108.

¹⁹ Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2005), 101.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

decisive strike before peace.”²¹ Yonai, and others also pressed for diplomatic peace negotiations with Moscow. “Japan’s approach to Moscow was a necessary step toward ultimate negotiations with the Allies. Because of the army’s strong opposition to peace, this roundabout process was necessary.”²² No outward display of contest to the war could occur in such a paranoid climate – accusations of treason were assured in such a hierarchical regime.

The navy played a decisive role in this unprecedented policy shift. “While the army planners were preparing for the last-ditch defense of the homeland without knowing their highest superiors had given a nod to the peace overtures through Moscow, the peace party began secret maneuverings to outwit the army.”²³

While intra-military conflict amongst separate branches is not unheard of, the sharp distinction between the army and navy raises a plethora of other inquiries. To the casual observer, this sort of squabbling could easily be attributed to personality differences or individual grudges. Perhaps this was all merely Yonai’s way of striking back at the army and hard-line nationalists for “undermining him in 1940,”²⁴ and thereby losing his position as prime minister. Such an assessment could be no further from the truth.

For Japan, a legacy of turmoil, competition, and backbiting defines the relationship between the army and navy. This dichotomy of attitudes, indeed this fissure between the navy and army, originates amidst the Meiji Restoration. This was not a simple conflict of taste and opinion amongst men.

²¹ Hasegawa, 101.

²² *Ibid.*, 110.

²³ *Ibid.*, 102.

²⁴ David C. Evans and Mark Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887-1941* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 538.

By examining this division through the lens of an institutional paradigm, we can better understand the nature of this struggle. The navy's implementation of bushido depended on strategic considerations originating from their reliance on technology. Unlike the army's doctrine of surmounting technological inferiority with pure fighting spirit, the navy embraced rapid technological advancement in preparation of war.

In 1891, according to Evans and Peattie, the navy still occupied a secondary status both "functionally and organizationally" with respect to the army. The army was responsible for "overall national defense" while the navy was confined to maritime concerns. Hence, the "chief of the Army General Staff was chief of staff for both services."²⁵ Evans and Peattie lay out the foundations of this institutional arrangement:

"The initially inferior position of the naval staff was also because the integration of the staffs brought together two very different staff models: for the navy, the British model, which stressed the subordination of staff to higher bureaucratic control; for the army, that of Prussia, which stressed the independence of the army and its direct links to the throne. It was not by coincidence, therefore, that the chief of the Army General Staff was a full general and a member of the imperial house, while initially, the naval chief of staff was only a rear admiral."²⁶

These conditions marked the lines of the battleground of the bureaucratic conflict. There is no question that "for most of the navy's history, the authority of the chief of the Navy General Staff was somewhat limited compared with that of his [equivalent] in the

²⁵ Evans and Peattie, 22.

²⁶ Ibid., 28.

army.”²⁷ Coupled with the fact that “Japan’s two armed forces were essentially accountable to no one,”²⁸ the stage was set for ripe disagreement.

Interestingly, because of the navy’s secondary role in the war doctrine, its latitude in developing a strategy for the war relied on the army’s ability to repel the enemy on land. “In an age of total war, the Japanese navy conceived the coming conflict in terms of limited war.”²⁹ Suppressed by the militaristic superiority of the army, naval strategy not only relied upon, but was entirely contingent on the success of the army in ground combat. Beyond this, no conclusive tactical considerations were given as to how to end the war beside an implementation of *ketsugo*, of which the navy played no significant part in.

Overtures made by the navy for military parity with the army were an integral part of the disagreements to come later. As stated earlier, what is important here is the work of the institutional paradigms. In the quote (24) above there is a brief discussion of the models on which both branches were derived from. By extension, the doctrine of each varied considerably. For the army, there existed a far more direct appeal to the tenants of *bushido*. While maneuvering naval vessels may indeed be as intense of an experience (any sort of combat is coupled with similar notions of patriotism and resolve) such action still differs considerably from that of an infantryman in combat. Where the navy had the intermediary of technology in their realm of war, the army relied far more on personnel rather than expertise to overcome technological deficiencies. The notion of the eternal Japanese spirit subsuming an opponent’s advantage in armaments was tantamount in army war doctrine.

²⁷ Evans and Peattie, 26.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 516.

“Consistently the Japanese validated their own tactics, because they saw the American Army doctrine as a simplistic belief in weaponry and materiel superiority. Japanese spirit, such staff officers believed, could offset those tangible advantages.”³⁰ It was this belief in the superiority of the Yamato spirit that fueled army advocates of *ketsugo*.

One can quickly ascertain the dividing line between the navy and army based solely on this fact. Removing the interdiction of the soldier in combat, the navy found itself molding its attitudes around a doctrine that relied on technological advancement. Training methods focused on the development of such requisite technical proficiency. “Qualitative superiority... influenced Japanese naval technology... the design and development of its [naval weapon systems] was predicated upon the notion that they would be decisively superior to their enemy counterparts.”³¹ Assuredly there existed an inculcation of warrior values, but the utter reliance on such hardening methods differentiated the army from the navy. Where the army could rely on techniques built for optimizing the morale of their infantry, the navy required a far greater degree of expertise.

“If the Imperial Japanese Navy left to postwar Japan any discernable legacy at all it is in the human technical skills that armed it, served it while it existed, and then survived it decades after... Many who designed and developed the warships, aircraft, and technologies of the old navy put their skills to work in the creation of the super-express trains, the cameras, the mammoth tankers, and the superlative automotive engines that became the wonder of the postwar world.”³²

³⁰ Drea, 69.

³¹ Evans and Peattie, 512.

³² *Ibid.*, 517.

1.6 – Evidence to the contrary

There exists some evidence that serves to perhaps compromise the efficacy of evaluation. First, there is the issue of the navy as a whole. Near the end of the war the fleet was nearly destroyed. Having experienced such devastation, the naval leadership had little to lose by accepting a compromise position. That said, when one takes note of the original naval strategy, this seems to bear far less importance. If the plan since day one of the conflict had been to provide a proper set-up for the army's decisive last stand, the absence of military capacity at the end of the war did not fundamentally alter strategic considerations. The navy had always played a secondary role to the army. The belief in *ketsugo* was as strong on both sides of the military. There is no reason to believe that the navy had any different information from the army with regard to ground forces. If the strategy in the end was to have the army act as the catalyst in *ketsugo*, the navy serving as a mere accompaniment, not so much is changed in light of the navy's decreased capacity by war's end.

Far more of a damning argument comes with the analysis of Toyoda. Toyoda argued against Hirohito's moves toward surrender. As part of the Big 6, he moved sharply against the grain of what I posit as the navy's moderate attitudes:

“In the last days of the war, while the dovish Prince Konoye lobbied for methods to negotiate for peace, Toyoda argued to defend the home islands until the last

Japanese. This argument persisted even after the deployment of atomic bombs by the US and the declaration of war on Japan by Russia.”³³

However, Toyoda appears to be the exception rather than the rule. As the Commander-in-Chief of the combined fleet, his position was in large part compromised by the men who surrounded him. He frequently received inflated numbers from his staff concerning Japanese performance in battles.³⁴ He was decidedly aggressive, so much so that he was a key figure in the depletion of Japan’s naval armaments. His brash, headstrong nature proved to be less in line with the temperance of the navy, and meshed more easily with the army’s attitudes. Even when confronted with unfavorable outcomes, he still pressed forward despite evidence to the contrary.

With his record already tarnished, his credibility was undeniably compromised in a spectacular defeat whereupon under his command, the naval vessel “Yamato” was sent on a suicidal mission and then sunk.³⁵ Having single-handedly destroyed the navy through decisions that go beyond simple mistakes, he severely weakened his practical power, even if his legal standing assured him of otherwise powerful influence.

1.7 – Conclusion

Given these considerations, we can see how Japan’s military institutions played such powerful governance roles. The influence of personalities near the close of the war brought the navy to the forefront in the debate over how to end the conflict. The astute observer can find a marked shift in the navy’s attitude when comparing its stance at the

³³ C. Peter Chen, *WW2DB: Soemu Toyoda*, <http://www.ww2db.com/person_bio.php?person_id=45> (11 December 2005), World War II Database.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

war's onset to its conclusion. A hypothesis could be made, arguing that the navy was simply the more pragmatic of the two branches and was more willing to abandon bushido than the army. I argue this is an incorrect analysis. The navy followed the code of the warrior, albeit in a less direct manner.

The navy operated within the paradigm of kokutai without unnecessarily sacrificing the integrity of the nation by making strategic appeals to a new international order. Its approach to Moscow and contact with peace feelers hint to the navy's underlying, and most importantly, thoughtful considerations. With technology as its intermediary, its doctrine provided space for more moderate views to be expressed. The navy understood that honor meant nothing in the absence of a nation, and here put forth the integrity of Japan as a *unit*, rather than the honor of the *individual* in combat, as the focal point of bushido. This interpretation makes complete sense when seen through the contrasting paradigms of the army and navy. The navy's primary combat unit was a maritime vessel manned by a number of individuals – its war making capacity rested on the capacity of a team of men to act as one. The army's primary combat unit came in the form of a single infantryman – his war making capacity relied on unshakable determination and an absolute fearlessness to press forward in war. Seen in this manner, the navy had the ability to make strategic considerations without unnecessarily sacrificing Japan's very existence – its tactical considerations and history fueled the development of moderation.

Yet, given the nature of this argument, there are no absolutes. After extensive research and much analytical debate, there is still much gray area. Whether the navy was truly a moderate force, or whether it was simply acting in its pragmatic interests, the

answer appears to be neither concrete nor definitive. At the very least, the factors playing into Japan's capitulation show a Japanese navy cognizant of its own faults, and ready to seek honor outside the realm of violence.

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Bibliographic Essay

I first have to thank Professor Pyle for suggesting further analysis of the navy with relation to my original thesis. My two primary and most influential sources were Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2005), and David C. Evans and Mark Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887-1941* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997). Hasegawa's book brought a quasi-revisionist perspective to the table. His extensive use of primary sources opened up the nuances of the conflict over surrender, which proved to be integral in the creation of my argument – his examination of the proceedings leading up to Japan's capitulation, as seen from the Japanese side, yielded excellent information. Evans and Peattie's book proved to a fine resource for examining the conflict between the navy and army, and the history of said division. Unfortunately, I felt it didn't provide sufficient context for some of its information, and seemed to be more of a grab bag of naval facts rather than a coherent analysis. Edward J. Drea, *In the service of the Emperor: Essays on the Imperial Japanese Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998) served as the backbone of this paper. He provided context for Japan's military attitudes. This was something I found to be lacking in most of my other resources. His ability to tease out conclusions greatly aided the development of this paper. His use of Japanese documents and exploration of the attitudes of society at large helped me draw conclusions about the navy. I was somewhat dismayed by his book in that it limited its analysis solely to that of the army. Herbert P. Bix "Japan's Delayed Surrender: A Reinterpretation" in *Hiroshima: In History and Memory*, ed Michael J. Hogan. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

1996), like Hasegawa, gave great insight into the Japanese domestic situation prior to surrender. Unlike Hasegawa, its scope was a bit too broad, and the research not as up to date. This ultimately limited its usefulness. Peter C. Chen, *WW2DB: Soemu Toyoda*, (World War II Database), had a spectacular discussion of Toyoda and his role of the war. Without this resource my analysis may have been severely compromised.

My other resources played secondary roles. John Allyn, *The 47 Ronin Story* (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle, 1970), provided a concrete example of bushido and served as an excellent interpretation of the legendary tale. William Scott Wilson, *The Ideals of the Samurai: Writings of Japanese Warriors* (Tokyo: Ohara Publications, 1982), and Inazo Nitobe, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle, 1969) provided more background information on the origins of bushido and the development of samurai culture.

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