A comparative study of the United States Marine Corps and the Imperial Japanese Army in the central Pacific War through the experiences of Clifton Joseph Cormier and Hiroo Onoda

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Abstract
This thesis is a biographical description of the lives of two men that fought in the Pacific War, 1941-1945. One was a member of the Third Marine Division, the other a member of the Imperial Japanese Army stationed on Lubang Island in the Philippines. They were connected by a very intense, almost Paleolithic conflict across the vastness of the Pacific Ocean. Primary sources were drawn from the two privately published books by both. Clifton Cormier’s A Postcard From Joseph (2002) and Onoda’s No Surrender, My Thirty Year War (1974). In addition, Clifton Cormier graciously supplied self-written newspaper articles, private telephone conversations, and e-mail messages providing data not found in his book. The treatment of this thesis attempts to describe the experiences of these two gentlemen as seen through their eyes. It describes how the battlefield behavior of the Japanese soldier and the United States Marine were different yet strangely similar when fought on a stage of live combat where the will to survive is paramount to the will to win. Also find brief thematic descriptions of the military cultures that spawned the two along with eye witness descriptions of two of the largest banzai attacks in the Marianas (1944) along with a short treatment of the Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima campaigns. It concludes that the war itself is the real culprit as opposed to the political, racial, and social differences that existed in that era between these two armies and the cultural diversity under extreme stress that goes with it. This thesis explains how both gentlemen had no choice and did what they could to survive within the parameters allowed. Clifton Cormier rationalized that victory achieved revenge and Onoda sought isolation to circumvent the dishonor of defeat both of which brought to each the crowning glory of survival.

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The United States Marine Corps is mainly used as an immediate resource of troops that can be deployed immediately to any part of the world. The Marines do not win wars by themselves. Historically, the United States Marine Corps has achieved fame in several campaigns, as referenced in the first line of the Marine Corps Hymn: "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli". In the early 19th century, First Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon led a group of seven Marines and several hundred Egyptian Mameluke soldiers in deposing the dictator of Tripoli. In World War II, the Marines played a central role in the Pacific War, and the war saw the expansion of the Corps from two brigades to two corps with six divisions and five air wings with 132 squadrons. This strategy is the exact method that the United States Marine Corps and the United States Army did in the Pacific Theater of World War II. Fighting the Imperial Army first at Pearl Harbor, the Battle Of Miday, Makin Atoll, the Battle Of The Coral Sea, Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester, Tarawa, Saipan, Tinian, Bouganville, The Philippines, Iwo Jima, Anguar, Ten-Go, Burma, New Guinea, Guam, Kwajalein, and lastly on Okinawa. When the tide of the war is fully turned against the Imperial Army. - Japanese commander when Marine faction is capturing a flag during War. "The Americans have taken our flag!"/"Our flag has fallen to the Americans!"/"Our flag has fallen! We must fight to regain our honor!" - Japanese commander when Marine Raiders capture a flag during War.