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# Ghost of War: The Sinking of the Awa maru and Japanese-American Relations, 1945-1995

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Dingman, Roger. *Ghost of War: The Sinking of the *Awa maru* and Japanese-American Relations, 1945–1995*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1997. 373pp. \$35

In the *Ghost of War*, Roger Dingman recreates both the intense national emotions of World War II and the high drama of U.S. submarine warfare in the Pacific theater. Interweaving the strategy of nations with the operational imperatives of submarine warfare, Dingman recounts the tragic sinking of the Japanese merchant ship *Awa maru* by the American submarine *Queenfish*. Traveling under a safe-passage agreement with the United States, *Awa maru* was torpedoed while transiting the Taiwan Strait, with the loss of all hands, save one.

Was the sinking of the *Awa maru* intentional, or was its loss simply another tragic act within an unscripted theater of global conflict? Did the U.S. submarine commander intentionally disobey orders that granted the ship safe passage? Did he, in concert with the U.S. theater commander, knowingly send it to the bottom? Did the fact that the Japanese had openly violated *Awa maru's* terms of safe passage by loading it with contraband mitigate the political consequences of its sinking? Would Japan's brutal treatment of allied prisoners of war, which had prompted the shipment of Red Cross relief supplies to them onboard *Awa maru*, be intensified? Should the commander of *Queenfish* have been court-martialed? Should the United States have apologized to an enemy who had little respect for international convention? Should it have made reparations for the sinking of *Awa*

*maru*, to an enemy that tortured and murdered its prisoners of war? And, of lasting consequence, how did the sinking of the *Awa maru* affect postwar political relationships between the Supreme Commander Allied Powers and an emerging postwar Japanese government?

Brilliantly written and exceptionally documented, *Ghost of War* transits the uncertain chasm between the exquisite development of a national policy and the visceral employment of weapons of war. Exploring the nuances of the war and its political aftermath, this book notably accomplishes all of its stated purposes, most notably offering "substantial food for thought about how individuals, governments, and peoples deal with issues that war raises for all of us."

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Bischof, Günter, and Robert L. Dupont, eds. *The Pacific War Revisited*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1997. 220pp. \$25

This book is a collection of works on some of the more obscure aspects of the World War II Pacific theater, offered at an Eisenhower Center conference that coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor. Noted scholars contributed monographs that explored the roles played by culture, racism, and logistics in determining American action against Japan, including unrestricted submarine war against Japanese shipping and the decision to drop the atomic bomb.