

LAST WRITINGS OF JAPAN'S SPECIAL ATTACK CORPS MEMBERS

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## Preface

My initial exposure to last letters written by Japanese *kamikaze* pilots came in April 2000 at a special exhibition held at Yasukuni Shrine's Yūshūkan Museum in Tōkyō. I first toured the regular museum exhibits, which told a narrative that exalted Japanese militarism and justified Japan's actions in World War II. This chronicle differed greatly from history that I had learned when growing up in former President Harry S. Truman's hometown of Independence, Missouri, which stressed why his decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki prevented even more deaths from the Japanese military's strategy of suicide attacks near the end of the Pacific War. When I entered the room where *kamikaze* pilot letters were displayed, the number of Japanese people who were weeping while reading them astonished me, but my emotions were conflicted. I bought a book of these letters and decided to translate and publish online the book's first selection, a touching letter from Ensign Masahisa Uemura to his baby daughter that reflected human emotions that I had not associated previously with *kamikaze* pilots.

In 2003 and 2004 as a final project for my MA in Liberal Studies degree at Wesleyan University, I researched the history and different portrayals of *kamikaze* pilots and others who died in suicide attacks during World War II. This study included meeting many former Kamikaze Special Attack Corps members and Japanese Navy veterans, who helped me better understand Japan's view of the war and what happened during the Kamikaze Corps operations. I created a website entitled Kamikaze Images to share my research results and have continued since 2004 to add pages to this site.

Not many last letters and diaries left by Japanese Special Attack Corps members have been translated to English, and the few published studies to date on this topic in English cover only a small sample of writings or do not provide translations of larger samples that were analyzed. Limited translated excerpts have been used by authors and editors to arrive at a wide

range of generalized conclusions about the pilots' thoughts about these attacks where they were certain to die. Some persons at one extreme believe that they were patriotic heroes who willingly volunteered to sacrifice their lives to protect the country, while others consider that they were forced and brainwashed to participate in these attacks and did not really believe in the government's emperor-focused militaristic agenda. In order to better understand the thoughts and feelings of Special Attack Corps members and the reasons for the contents of their writings, the present study examines the social and political environment of their education and military training and considers a large sample of translated writings after their assignments to suicide attack units. The thesis includes many excerpts from translated writings, and the Appendix and Notes sections at the end provide links to complete translations.

All translations from the Japanese are my own unless otherwise noted. The romanization of Japanese follows the modified Hepburn system. Japanese names are written with the Western name order of given name and family name. The only exceptions that use the Japanese order with family name first are persons who lived prior to the twentieth century such as Kusunoki Masashige whose name is almost always written in this order in English.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Professors Bill Johnston, Scott Aalgaard, Peter Rutland, and Yoshiko Samuel at Wesleyan University for their valuable guidance and suggestions on this thesis. Senri Nagasue, former Kamikaze Corps member and author of several books on *kamikaze* pilots, provided invaluable support for my research. Wesleyan Professor Stephanie Kudak Weiner in her literature course showed me useful ways to analyze writings that I utilized in this present study. My deepest gratitude goes to my wife Noriko for her loving support. Without her backing and understanding, this work could not have been completed.

## Introduction

The Japanese military carried out numerous organized suicide attacks (called *tokkō* or special attacks in Japanese) against Allied naval vessels during the last ten months of World War II. Nearly 6,000 young Japanese men who died while making these attacks left behind many personal letters, diary entries, and poems that they wrote after assignment to the Special Attack Corps (*tokkōtai* in Japanese). In the postwar period many of these writings have been collected from bereaved families and published in Japanese by a variety of organizations with a limited number of English translations. The last writings before death of Special Attack Corps members, regardless of their education and training background, consistently show that they believed in the value of their deaths for the country's protection. Although last writings of Special Attack Corps members reflect fervent support for the military's suicide attack strategy and the emperor-focused militaristic ideology promoted by the government, their written thoughts and feelings were channeled and restricted by the government and military through indoctrination, propaganda, and organizational controls.

The present study analyzes contents of these writings both quantitatively and qualitatively by identification of common themes and phrases that arise from cultural and historical contexts and by examination of writings that expressed personal concerns and opinions including the few that voiced disagreement with government and military leadership and policies. The study also examines the Japanese government's power over its people and the restraints imposed to influence these men's thinking, and excerpts from their writings are presented to demonstrate the effectiveness of the government's methods of indoctrination and organizational control.

Several prior research studies in Japanese and English examine the contents of writings of Special Attack Corps members as a whole, but most of these studies contain one or more limitations. First, previous studies sometimes include writings of men who did not die as part of a special attack and were not part of the Special Attack Corps of the Japanese Navy and Army. Second, even though a person may have died in a special attack, some writings examined in prior studies were written before assignment to a special attack unit and at times even before the person entered the military, so the writings are not necessarily indicative of how the person thought or felt when facing certain death in a unit that would carry out a suicide attack. Third, the number of Special Attack Corps members included in some prior research studies was very small when compared to the total population of nearly 6,000 men who died, which makes it questionable to extend the results to others in the population. Lastly, some researchers of Special Attack Corps members' writings did not have a systematic method to identify common themes and analyze the writings or utilized categories so broad that they led to limited insights to the men's thinking and emotions as they confronted their impending deaths.

The present study addresses each of the prior studies' weaknesses identified in the prior paragraph. Only Special Attack Corps members who died in special attacks are included, and only writings written after assignment to a special attack unit are considered. The study analyzes writings of 392 Special Attack Corps members by using enough categories to obtain an in-depth understanding of the writings' contents and the writers' thoughts and feelings before death. The focus is a textual analysis of the Special Attack Corps members' writings themselves, and there are not detailed biographical evaluations of individuals to assess the writings. The present study groups the writers in several ways such as rank and training background (i.e., commissioned officers who had been college students, commissioned officers who graduated from a military



academy, enlisted noncommissioned officers) to ascertain whether there are any significant differences in the contents of different groups' writings. Excerpts from writings are presented to illustrate more frequent common themes and to show examples where men expressed personal concerns in areas that do not appear frequently in the writings. The Appendix provides links to web pages where complete writings and basic biographical information of all Special Attack Corps members included in the present study have been translated to English.

Chapter 1 presents the historical background of the Japanese Special Attack Corps including the definition of special attack and the different types of special attack units. The chapter considers how the state influenced people's thinking, the effects of military censorship, how writings of Special Attack Corps members were collected after the war's end, and where these writings now are located. Chapter 2 discusses Japanese and English publications of writings of Special Attack Corps members and evaluates works in both English and Japanese that analyze these writings. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology approach, scope, data sources, assumptions, and limitations. Chapter 4 quantifies frequencies of recurring topics in Special Attack Corps members' final writings in total and by different groups such as age at death. This chapter considers writing excerpts that illustrate the most common themes, such as those related to determination to succeed in their missions, and compares the current study's results with those of other research studies. Chapter 5 explores writings of Special Attack Corps members who had distinctive concerns or opinions on matters related to politics, death, spouses, and family situations. The final section discusses the true beliefs of pilots who died in suicide attacks with examples of men whose writings may not have reflected what they really thought.

## Chapter 1

### Historical Background

The Japanese Special Attack Corps that carried out suicide attacks during the Pacific War has a specific definition that will be discussed in the first section of this chapter. The different types of special attack units and their numbers of members who died are presented. The next section examines how the Japanese government influenced education, military training, and media content and used propaganda and organizational controls, which channeled and constrained the final writings of Special Attack Corps members. The third section considers the circumstances of the composition of writings of Special Attack Corps members as they faced death. The issue of military censorship and its effects on contents are examined. The final section explains how writings of Navy and Army Special Attack Corps members were collected after the end of the war and where they currently are displayed or stored.

### Special Attack Corps Operations

In World War II, especially during the war's final ten months, the Japanese Navy and Army engaged in designated suicide attacks called *tokubetsu kōgeki* (shortened to *tokkō*), which can be translated literally as "special attacks." The term *tokkōtai*, which means Special Attack Corps, is sometimes used in English books and articles. A total of 5,843 Japanese men, most in their late teens or early twenties, died in special attacks. The majority, 2,514 men in the Navy and 1,299 men in the Army, died in aerial suicide attacks where aircraft carrying bombs tried to hit and sink Allied naval vessels.<sup>1</sup> The Navy's Special Attack Corps that made aerial attacks was named Shinpū, meaning "divine wind." However, the Chinese characters for Shinpū (神風) are commonly read as *kamikaze*, which is typically used in most English references and also in some

Japanese sources, and all Japanese aerial suicide attacks and even other types of attacks often are referred to as *kamikaze* attacks. The Chiran Tokkō Heiwa Kaikan, literally translated as Chiran Special Attack Peace Museum, uses the English name of Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots even though the name *kamikaze* technically only applies to the Navy Air Special Attack Corps. The museum in Chiran commemorates only 1,036 Army Special Attack Corps members who died during the Okinawa campaign in 1945, and the number does not include Navy Kamikaze Corps members who died.<sup>2</sup> Special Attack Corps deaths also included 1,082 men in operations related to Navy *shin'yō* motorboats with explosive charges in bow, 436 men in midget submarines including nine who died in the Pearl Harbor attack, 266 men in Army motorboats carrying depth charges to be dropped next to ships, 104 men in *kaiten* manned torpedoes, 88 paratroopers in the Army Giretsu Airborne Unit, 45 Army fighter pilots who died in ramming attacks on American B-29 bombers, and nine men in the Army tank corps.

The first designated special attacks by Japan in the Pacific War took place at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, when nine men died in five midget submarines. An additional ten men in five midget submarines died as part of attacks on May 31 and June 1, 1942, at Sydney Harbor in Australia and Diego Suarez Harbor in Madagascar. These midget submarine attacks were technically not suicide missions, since there were plans for the midget submarines to rendezvous with the mother submarines that had launched them, but the odds of death were very high.<sup>3</sup> Of the ten midget submarines involved in attacks at Pearl Harbor, Sydney, and Diego Suarez, all 20 crewmen except one died, and the one who survived became the United States' first Japanese POW when he lost consciousness as he washed up on the beach at Oahu Island. The midget submarine crewmen were members of the Special Attack Corps in the same way as were Kamikaze Corps pilots<sup>4</sup> who made suicide attacks later in the war, and the Japanese Navy

gave them special posthumous promotions of two ranks. The pilots in the Air Special Attack Corps also could return alive to base if they could not locate the enemy fleet or could not continue on due to bad weather or aircraft mechanical problems. Despite Ohnuki-Tierney's contention that airplanes used in *tokkōtai* operations were "not equipped with a means of returning to base,"<sup>5</sup> all pilots could return to base and land their aircraft in a normal fashion if they could not carry out a mission due to bad weather, inability to locate an enemy ship, or mechanical problems. For example, the five Zero fighters in the first Kamikaze Corps squadron led by Lieutenant Yukio Seki returned to base four times before they finally found the enemy fleet and made an attack on October 25, 1944.<sup>6</sup> However, in contrast to regular aircraft employed in special attacks, the use of two special attack weapons, a *kaiten* manned torpedo launched from a submarine and an *ōka* rocket-powered glider bomb dropped from an attack bomber, meant certain death for the pilot once the attack began since there was no way to stop these weapons and escape once they were released.

The general definition of death by special attack in the Japanese military during the Pacific War was when a man who had been assigned to a special attack unit died after beginning the special attack mission, but there were several exceptions to this definition. The Navy and Army Air Special Attack Corps did not recognize a death by special attack unless the aircraft took off and did not return to base, and it was considered to be a death by special attack if a pilot departed but crashed and died prior to finding an enemy ship. However, the Navy's *Kaiten* Special Attack Corps did recognize special attack deaths for 15 men who died in training in a *kaiten* manned torpedo and 9 men who died after deployment to a forward base but did not make a sortie in a mother submarine carrying *kaiten* weapons.<sup>7</sup> There are different numbers of Special Attack Corps deaths depending on the organization that provides the numbers and the year when

published since over time there have been minor corrections to records based on postwar research. The present study uses numbers published by Tokkōtai (Special Attack Corps) Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai (Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association) in a 1990 book titled *Tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Special Attack Corps), since it covers all types of special attacks and has general recognition with a plaque in front of the Yūshūkan Museum at Yasukuni Shrine in Tōkyō that summarizes the total numbers of deaths by special attack unit.<sup>8</sup> However, the Museum of Naval History at the former Etajima Naval Academy recognizes different numbers of special attack deaths: 2,525 in the Kamikaze Corps, 80 in the Kaiten Corps, and 28 in midget submarines, with no recognition of the 1,082 men who died in the Navy's Shin'yō Corps.<sup>9</sup> In the total for Kamikaze Corps deaths, Etajima Museum of Naval History recognizes deaths of 17 men in eight *Suisei* dive bombers led by Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki just after the Emperor declared the end of the war, but the Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association does not recognize them.<sup>10</sup> The 80 Kaiten Corps deaths recognized at Etajima are only those that occurred after submarines carrying *kaiten* weapons departed base on a mission, and the 28 pilots who died in midget submarine attacks, which included the attacks at Pearl Harbor, Sydney, and Diego Juarez, are a small fraction of the 436 midget submarine pilots recognized by the Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association.<sup>11</sup>

The 1,082 men who died in operations related to Navy *shin'yō* motorboats with explosive charges in the bow make up a substantial percentage of the total special attack deaths of 5,843, but the Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association explains that it was extremely difficult to differentiate between special attack deaths in battle and other deaths in battle, so all deaths by *shin'yō* squadron members in attacks at Corregidor Island in the Philippines (923 men), Okinawa (146 men), and Amami Ōshima (13 men) were recognized as special attack deaths.<sup>12</sup>

The number of deaths includes not only *shin'yō* motorboat pilots but also base personnel and maintenance workers who died when American forces invaded Corregidor and Okinawa.<sup>13</sup>

Aerial attacks carried out between October 1944 and August 1945 by the Navy and Army Air Special Attack Corps sank 47 naval vessels.<sup>14</sup> Rielly calculates that suicide attacks carried out during the Pacific War by Japanese aircraft, manned torpedoes, suicide boats, and suicide swimmers killed 6,805 men and wounded 9,923.<sup>15</sup> The aircraft carrier *Bunker Hill* (CV-17) suffered the most casualties, with 396 dead and 264 wounded, when two Zero fighters each carrying a 250-kg bomb hit the ship in quick succession on May 11, 1945.<sup>16</sup> In aerial special attacks in the Philippines, Taiwan, Iwo Jima, and Ulithi from October 1944 to March 1945, Yasunobu calculates a success rate of 27.1 percent when including both direct hits and very near hits where the bomb carried by the aircraft exploded. For Okinawa aerial special attacks between March and July 1945, there was a decreased success rate of 13.4 percent.<sup>17</sup> This drop in effectiveness of special attacks resulted from better defenses by the Allied fleet, less experienced pilots, less reliable aircraft, and increased use of lower-class aircraft such as trainers.<sup>18</sup>

The number of 5,843 men who died in the Special Attack Corps is miniscule when compared to 1.56 million total deaths in the Japanese military from 1941 to 1945.<sup>19</sup> However, both in and outside Japan, people continue to be fascinated with trying to understand the thinking and feelings of men in this unique military group who carried out organized suicide attacks. Each year in Japan several new and reissued books about the Special Attack Corps are published, and over the years many books in English covering this topic have been published. This does not necessarily mean that attitudes of Special Attack Corps members differed significantly from other Navy and Army men, especially those trained to be aviators, since they received the same education and training and had the same types of experiences as others until they were assigned

to make a sortie in special attack units. When compared to regular military men, the major situational differences of Special Attack Corps members were that they faced almost certain death in the near future, were recognized before death by the public and others in the military as living heroes, and after death received publicity about battle achievements and two-rank promotions for deaths in battle by special attack. In addition, although there are a few exceptions, the majority of Special Attack Corps crewmen were recently trained and never experienced battle prior to their suicide missions since most experienced flight crewmen had been killed earlier in the war. The majority flew on their final missions from Japanese mainland air bases, and even those men who made final sorties from non-mainland bases such as those in the Philippines usually came directly from Japanese mainland air bases and spent only a few days outside Japan before going on their suicide flights. Assignment to the Special Attack Corps did not mean inevitable death, since many pilots trained for suicide attacks but never flew into battle. Moreover, some pilots who made sorties returned safely to base due to bad weather, aircraft mechanical problems, or inability to find enemy ships, but many of these pilots died later in a special attack when sent out again. Even those Japanese Navy aviators who made conventional attacks had a high probability of death, but that was not their objective like those men who carried out special attacks. For example, during the Battle of the Philippine Sea near the Mariana Islands on June 19-20, 1944, about four months before the first attacks by the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps, the Japanese Navy lost 395 out of 430 aircraft.<sup>20</sup>

### **State Influence and Control**

During the period when Special Attack Corps members were educated in schools and trained in the military, the Japanese emperor system effectively molded and restricted the

people's thinking through key pronouncements that guided education and morality with a focus on absolute loyalty to the emperor, filial piety, and willingness to offer one's life for the emperor. The emperor system included not only the emperor but also "powerful, unaccountable elites in the military, bureaucracy, and national police."<sup>21</sup> Not surprisingly, letters written by Special Attack Corps members before their suicide attacks are filled with themes and references from these state-sponsored documents, which reflect the indoctrination by the militaristic government. This section's first part examines major topics in Japanese government proclamations that significantly influenced education, military training, and mass media content from the late 1930s until the war's end in 1945. The second part analyzes the state's propaganda methods and structural restrictions that directed and restricted the thoughts expressed in final writings of Special Attack Corps members.

The Imperial Rescript on Education, issued in 1890 during Emperor Meiji's rule, remained a central national document until the Pacific War's end, and over several decades it generated numerous commentaries and hundreds of teachers' guides and directives issued by the Ministry of Education.<sup>22</sup> The Rescript represented a revival of traditional Confucian values such as filial piety of child to parents, loyalty of subject to ruler, affection among siblings, harmony of married couple, and trust between friends. This decree by Emperor Meiji began with a statement about the origin of the Imperial dynasty and the importance of loyalty and filial piety:

Know ye, Our subjects: Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting, and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein lies the source of Our education.<sup>23</sup>

This short proclamation, less than 250 words when translated to English, also referred to a person's duty to the Emperor in time of crisis: "Should emergency arise, offer yourselves



courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth."<sup>24</sup>

In 1937, the Ministry of Education issued a pamphlet titled *Kokutai no Hongi* (Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan), which emphasized loyalty to the Emperor, filial piety, patriotism, harmony, and martial spirit.<sup>25</sup> The first printing of 300,000 copies went to schools at every level throughout Japan, and the Cabinet Printing Bureau sold an additional 1.9 million copies through March 1943.<sup>26</sup> *Kokutai no Hongi*, which engendered many commentaries, stressed the uniqueness and superiority of Japan among countries of the world and began with a statement of the unbroken line of Emperors back to the founding of Japan, which was a central tenet of radical Shintō ultranationalist orthodoxy.<sup>27</sup>

The unbroken line of Emperors, receiving the Oracle of the Founder of the Nation, reign eternally over the Japanese Empire. This is our eternal and immutable national entity. Thus, founded on this great principle, all the people, united as one great family nation in heart and obeying the Imperial Will, enhance indeed the beautiful virtues of loyalty and filial piety. This is the glory of our national entity.<sup>28</sup>

The government document defined loyalty to the Emperor and offering one's life to Him:

Loyalty means to reverence the Emperor as [our] pivot and follow him implicitly. By implicit obedience is meant casting ourselves aside and serving the Emperor intently. To walk this Way of loyalty is the sole Way in which we subjects may "live," and the fountainhead of all energy. Hence, offering our lives for the sake of the Emperor does not mean so-called self-sacrifice, but the casting aside of our little selves to live under his august grace and the enhancing of the genuine life of the people of a State.<sup>29</sup>

In the years leading up to the Pacific War, the Japanese people considered serving the Emperor and serving the country to be the same.<sup>30</sup> The relationship between loyalty to the Emperor and patriotism was explained in *Kokutai no Hongi* as follows:

To begin with, our country is one great family nation [comprising] a union of sovereign and subject, having the Imperial Household as the head family, and looking up to the Emperor as the focal point from of old to the present. Accordingly, to contribute to the prosperity of the nation is to serve for the prosperity of the Emperor; and to be loyal to the Emperor means nothing short of loving the country and striving for the welfare of the

nation. Without loyalty there is no patriotism, and without patriotism there is no loyalty. All patriotism is always impregnated with the highest sentiments of loyalty, and all loyalty is always attended with the zeal of patriotism.<sup>31</sup>

*Kokutai no Hongi* emphasized filial piety to one's parents: "In our country filial piety is a Way of the highest importance. Filial piety originates with one's family as its basis, and in its larger sense has the nation for its foundation. Filial piety directly has for its object one's parents, but in its relationship toward the Emperor finds a place within loyalty."<sup>32</sup> Loyalty to the Emperor and filial piety to parents were strongly connected:

In our country there is no filial piety apart from loyalty, and filial piety has loyalty for its basis. The logic of the unity of loyalty and filial piety based on national entity herein shines forth beautifully. Yoshida Shōin says in his *Shiki Shichisoku* (The Seven Rules of Morale):

The Sovereign careth for the well-being of his subjects, and so inheriteth the enterprises of the Imperial Ancestors. The subjects manifest loyalty toward the Emperor, and so inherit the will of their fathers. It is only in our country that sovereign and subject are united, and that loyalty and filial piety converge.

And this is a most appropriate statement on the oneness of the Way of loyalty and filial piety.<sup>33</sup>

The government document stressed the inseparable relationship between loyalty and filial piety:

Our national morality is founded on reverence for the deities and our ancestors, and has brought forth the fruits of the great principle of loyalty and filial piety. By making the nation our home, loyalty becomes filial piety; and by making our homes our nation, filial piety becomes loyalty. Herein do loyalty and filial piety join in one and become the source of all good. Loyalty means engaging ourselves zealously in our duties by making it our fundamental principle to be candid, clean, and honest, and it means fulfilling our duties, and thus to serve the Emperor; and by making loyalty our basic principle is filial piety established.<sup>34</sup>

The Prefatory Note to a 1949 English translation of *Kokutai no Hongi* calls it "obvious, blatant, official propaganda."<sup>35</sup> Skya describes it to be a "kind of state religious document addressed to all Japanese subjects that was designed to guide them in matters of religious faith and government" as expressed in "radical Shintō ultranationalist ideology."<sup>36</sup> Despite the mystical

nature of many passages in this government document, the ideas expressed therein were sincerely believed at the time by the vast majority of Japanese people including political and intellectual leaders, and these concepts formed the basis for education and training of Special Attack Corps members who would carry out suicide attacks near the end of the war.<sup>37</sup>

The Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors, issued in 1882 by Emperor Meiji, provided instructions for men who served in the military. The proclamation established the Emperor as the direct Commander-in-Chief and required military men to be loyal to the Emperor: "The soldier and sailor should consider loyalty their essential duty. What that is born in this land can be wanting in the spirit of grateful service to it?"<sup>38</sup> The Emperor in the document directed soldiers and sailors in a poetic manner to be ready to give their lives: "With single heart fulfil your essential duty of loyalty, and bear in mind that duty is weightier than a mountain, while death is lighter than a feather."<sup>39</sup>

In January 1941, the Ministry of War issued the *Field Service Code* (Senjinkun), which originated from the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors and provided concrete rules of conduct. This military document focused on loyalty to the Emperor, filial piety, bravery, aggressiveness, honor, discipline, cooperation, self-sacrifice, simplicity, and integrity. It made clear that a soldier needed to be ready to die: "The lofty spirit of self-sacrificing service to the State must prevail in life and in death. Do your duty with heart and soul, regardless of life or death. After exerting all your powers, spiritually and physically, calmly face death rejoicing in the hope of living in the eternal cause for which you serve."<sup>40</sup> Death had to be faced without concern for one's family: "Do not allow yourself to worry about the fate of those at home in the event of your death, but devote yourself wholly to service. Be always ready to meet death without regret by settling your affairs beforehand."<sup>41</sup> Similar to *Kokutai no Hongi*, the

Department of War's Field Service Code affirmed the unity of loyalty to the Emperor and filial piety to parents: "Loyalty and filial piety, as one, form the essence of our national morality; a loyal subject is always a dutiful son."<sup>42</sup>

Excerpts from last letters of Special Attack Corps members illustrate how their writings reflect themes of loyalty to the Emperor, filial piety, and willingness to offer their lives for the Emperor found in Imperial edicts and statements of dogma promoted by the government and military. Ensign Shinji Furuya, a former student at Keiō Gijuku University, wrote to his parents in a last letter: "I have dedicated myself to the Emperor. I am determined that my attaining the reality of loyalty certainly will be my filial piety. I have forgotten about all of my personal affairs. Without feelings of regret, I am ready to focus on fighting."<sup>43</sup> Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Tsuyoshi Takase wrote in his final letter, "Father and Mother, I did not repay in any way your kindness to me, but please say to me that I am a person with filial piety as I give my life for the Emperor and go to fall for the Empire as an Imperial Japanese military man."<sup>44</sup> Second Lieutenant Tsunenobu Nakahara, an Army Air Academy graduate, included these words in a final letter to his parents: "I was born in the Empire, and I cannot wait to say that I will repay the Empire with my death. Please rest assured that I am determined to carry this out gladly. I did not repay your kindness since my birth. Even though you regret my death, through this I ask that you please forgive my lack of filial piety until now."<sup>45</sup> Second Lieutenant Kaname Ōtsuka, a former student at Chūō University, wrote to his mother in a last letter: "I truly apologize that I am going before you, but it is loyalty and filial piety combined. When it is loyalty to the Emperor, it becomes filial piety to a parent."<sup>46</sup> Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Kiyoshi Yashiro, a *kaiten* human torpedo pilot, wrote in a final letter to his parents: "What I regret most is that I could not show any filial piety at all, but I believe that doing my duty of loyalty to the Emperor is as filial

piety to my parents. As a member of the Special Attack Corps, I believe in Japan's indestructibility, and I will live for an eternal cause."<sup>47</sup> Ensign Takashi Ōkita, who had attended Nihon University, wrote to his parents in a last letter: "Even though you have disciplined me well for the long period of 25 years, I will fall as the cherry blossoms at Kudan without repaying your kindness at all. However, my falling for the Emperor will be considered my filial piety. Since the time when I was a student before joining the Navy, I believe that it was not that the idea of filial piety left my mind. However, I deeply apologize that I was not able to show this due to my own interests."<sup>48</sup>

The Japanese government strictly controlled information conveyed to its people and kept them cut off from foreign sources of news. Organizational controls with threats of punishment kept the people's expressions of personal opinions within the narrow confines of the emperor-focused militaristic agenda promoted by the government. Such an oppressive environment to restrain thinking and discussion, especially any dissenting viewpoints regarding the political system, war situation, and military strategy, greatly restricted the range of communication of sincere sentiments by Special Attack Corps members in last letters to their families.

The 1925 Peace Preservation Law, which made it a crime to instigate other persons to change the *kokutai* (national polity, or state as a political entity), effectively quashed opposition to Japanese government policies. In 1928, the death penalty was added as punishment for transgressions of the Peace Preservation Law.<sup>49</sup> In 1941, the Law was amended to allow preventive and indefinite detention.<sup>50</sup> Historian Daikichi Irokawa describes the times from enactment of the Peace Preservation Law through the end of the Pacific War: "It is difficult to imagine the oppressive atmosphere that the people suffered under the canopy of national polity and the immutable emperor system. There was complete social consensus that those who

violated these ideologies should be eliminated or that they inevitably would be eliminated."<sup>51</sup>

The government established numerous controls to restrain contents of newspapers, books, magazines, radio, and films. Government personnel met regularly with press personnel on desired content for all types of articles, and they sometimes provided propagandistic material for publication. A prior censorship process was instituted for major magazines, and books had to be licensed in advance. Kasza summarizes the success of state controls over the press: "From about mid-1941 to at least 1944, when defeats on the battlefield began to undermine military dominance over the state, the system successfully mobilized the press into an active promoter of state policy. Frontal criticism of basic policies or top leaders was extremely rare and did not go unpunished."<sup>52</sup> Catchphrases were an important part of the government's propaganda efforts. Dower describes the wartime situation, "In fact, throughout the war years Japanese ideologues, publicists, and so-called men of culture almost fell over one another coining phrases, propounding slogans, telling their countryfolk what to think."<sup>53</sup> The most popular wartime slogan, which several Special Attack Corps members also used in their writings, is explained: "The overriding impression of harmony and homogeneity was captured in a single resonant phrase: *ichioku*, 'the hundred million.' This was a literal exaggeration (Japan's population at war's end was around seventy million), but it evoked a powerful sense of common purpose grounded in racial and cultural solidarity."<sup>54</sup> Nobuo Itō, who had attended Meiji University, wrote in a final letter to his younger sister, "However, in this time of one hundred million special attacks, citizens one by one have work that is their duty."<sup>55</sup> Sergeant Major Haruo Ōhashi expressed a similar sentiment in a last letter to his father, "Today when the decisive battle for the mainland has arrived, one hundred million persons all will attack, and everyone is a Special Attack Corps member."<sup>56</sup> Lieutenant Junior Grade Kenji Nakajima, a Naval Academy graduate who was

commander of a *shin'yō* explosive motorboat squadron in the Philippines, wrote in a final letter to his mother: "One hundred million with one heart will overcome numerous difficulties. I believe that the dawn of Greater East Asia along with the glory of victory will come in the near future."<sup>57</sup>

Imperial Headquarters, Japan's military high command that included the Navy and Army Ministers and that reported to the Emperor, carefully controlled war-related information released to the public. During the war Imperial Headquarters released 852 pronouncements, which the mass media communicated regularly. These government statements exaggerated military achievements and downplayed losses and damages, which gave the impression that the military was moving towards victory, even though in 1945 the Japanese people could see for themselves destruction in their cities caused in fire bombings by American B-29s.<sup>58</sup> Consistent with optimism about the war's outcome communicated in government-sanctioned messages in newspapers, Special Attack Corps members also expressed confidence in Japan's victory and their contributions to this effort such as this excerpt from the last letter of Ensign Shigeo Kaida, a former student at Ehime Teachers College, to his parents: "The war is plunging into an increasingly critical period, but I believe in victory for the Empire. I believe others will follow after me. Smiling, I will make a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack against an enemy ship."<sup>59</sup> After the Battle of the Philippine Sea off the Mariana Islands on June 19-20, 1944, the military leadership understood that the war could not be won as reflected in entries dated June 24 and July 1, 1944, of *The Secret War Journal of the Imperial Headquarters*:

We can no longer direct the war with any hope of success. The only course left is for Japan's one hundred million people to sacrifice their lives by charging the enemy to make them lose the will to fight.

In judging the situation ... there is unanimous agreement that henceforth we will slowly fall into a state of ruin. So it is necessary to plan for a quick end to the war.<sup>60</sup>

Of course, this type of candid assessment of Japan's position never was made public until after the war. Organized suicide attacks by Japanese aircraft against Allied ships began in October 1944 as part of the government's strategy to impose damage on the enemy fleet so that Japan could achieve more favorable terms in a negotiated settlement to end the war.<sup>61</sup> However, Special Attack Corps members who were carrying out these suicide attacks did not know of such a grand strategy and focused on their missions to help Japan achieve victory.

Japanese media extolled the bravery and battle success of Special Attack Corps members starting with the first attacks by the Kamikaze Corps Shikishima Squadron Zero fighters led by Lieutenant Yukio Seki on October 25, 1944. The front pages of newspapers often showed small photos of men who had died in special attacks and described their glorious battle achievements with no mention of the many aircraft that failed to reach their targets.<sup>62</sup> Ten weekly newsreels released by Nihon News from November 1944 to June 1945 highlighted the Special Attack Corps, and both *Shashin Shūhō* and *Asahi Gurafu*, weekly pictorial magazines, had more than 10 features each about the Special Attack Corps during the same period.<sup>63</sup> Nihon News newsreels showed positive images of squadron members who were getting final instructions along with a farewell toast, climbing into their aircraft, receiving an enthusiastic send-off, and taking off, ending with a shot of the planes in the clouds.<sup>64</sup> The media's treatment of Special Attack Corps members as living heroes and as the key to Japan's defense against overwhelming Allied forces put much responsibility on their shoulders and motivated them in their endeavors. Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Zen'ichi Ji'nushi expresses this thought in the final letter to his parents, "After all is said and done, if we have responsibility for the country's survival, we truly bear on our shoulders the duty to save it from this danger."<sup>65</sup> Several last writings of Special Attack Corps members mention the media. Second Lieutenant Takashi Komecha, who had attended Ōsaka



College of Foreign Languages, wrote in a last letter to his family from Ozuki Airfield in Yamaguchi Prefecture, "The newspapers and other media are here, and it seems that the situation has become more and more serious, but we surely want to fight free and easy with calmness."<sup>66</sup> Flight Chief Petty Officer Takao Uemura wrote to his mother, "Please look in the newspaper for my achievement."<sup>67</sup> Magazines and newspapers frequently had articles that glorified the virtues of the Special Attack Corps. For example, novelist Riichi Yokomitsu wrote an essay published in the March 1945 issue of *Bungei Shunjū* magazine that is typical of tributes to the Special Attack Corps. The essay's first two paragraphs express the author's admiration:

Spirit that keeps separating from everything else—what manner of thing might this be? Probably no matter how anyone might attempt to discover a way to define it, the spirit of the Special Attack Force that day after day sets off from its base cannot be defined. It is not a matter simply of one man causing an enemy warship to sink. It is hitting a target with one's death. But that definition is also mistaken. It is serving one's country with one's body. No, that's not it either. In that case, what is it?

I believe that the spirit of the Special Attack Force is the expression of the purest world spirit, transmitted from antiquity, thousands of years, perhaps tens of thousands of years back. If it were simply a matter of the fighting spirit needed to destroy the enemy or anything similar, it would not be necessary to separate the spirit from everything else. If it were a matter of a spirit of resignation, yielding to whatever fate might bring, there would be no need for training. I believe that it is not so much a spirit of creating history but of sustaining the spirit of creation, the loftiest spirit of morality, but even saying this does not approach the reality.<sup>68</sup>

Japan's militaristic government instituted or strengthened organizational controls such as neighborhood associations and special police forces in order to guarantee people's wholehearted support for the war effort without questioning the state's policies. These controls restrained the types of opinions that could be included in the writings of Special Attack Corps members. The Ministry of Home Affairs instituted a system of neighborhood associations (*tonarigumi*) with 10 to 15 households each. The September 1940 government order to establish neighborhood associations for a concentrated war buildup included the following objectives for these

organizations: "organize the basis for planning people's moral training and spiritual unity," and "cause all national policies to prevail among the people and help national policies be put smoothly into effect in every respect."<sup>69</sup> A neighborhood association had responsibilities related to rationing of food and other necessities, counterespionage, crime prevention, air and fire defense, selling savings bonds, tax payments, collecting money for postal savings and insurance, and other aspects of daily life.<sup>70</sup> Such an atmosphere of mutual monitoring among members of neighborhood associations and the threat of group punishment of a household if one member got out of line prevented freedom of speech to express dissenting opinions to government policies. Some last writings of Special Attack Corps members ask their family to give their regards to neighborhood association members. Corporal Fusao Ukegawa wrote a separate final letter to his neighborhood association in addition to one to his family:

To everyone in neighborhood association, I trust that you are doing well. I am serving in my military duties as usual. Recently I was appointed to the Special Attack Corps. I will depart shortly. You cared for me in many ways, and I utterly do not know the words of apology for only troubles that I caused you. Children in the neighborhood association, please be cheerful and do your best. As in the Special Attack Corps song, I will go and fall as a cherry blossom.<sup>71</sup>

Japan used the Special Higher Police, often called the thought police, to control the people's thinking and to ensure obedience to the 1925 Peace Preservation Law and other government mandates.<sup>72</sup> This police force often used brutal enforcement methods, and its police manual included the duty "to prevent and suppress social movements that attempted to disrupt the social order or place the nation at peril."<sup>73</sup> The *kenpeitai* (military police) originally was established to maintain order and enforce military regulations, but military leaders increasingly used this feared organization to "enforce ideologically 'correct thinking' within the military and the population" with threats and coercion.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to the Japanese state's structural controls such as neighborhood associations and special police forces that applied to all people, the military had even more strict rules and harsher punishments that will be examined in the next section.

### **Writings When Facing Death**

Many men who died in special attacks wrote personal letters, poems, diary entries, wills, final statements before death, or other miscellaneous writings after they were assigned to a special attack unit. These men often had several weeks between the special attack squadron formation and the final sortie to make a special attack, so the timing of their final writings varied between these two dates. Typically a special attack squadron was organized at an air base in Honshū, Shikoku, northern Kyūshū, or Korea where it was stationed for several weeks for training and other preparations. The squadron then advanced to a forward base in the Philippines between October 1944 and January 1945 or in southern Kyūshū between March and June 1945, and squadron members could be at the forward base for several days before the final special attack sortie. The exact date of a special attack mission often was not known at the forward base until a day or less before it occurred, and there were frequent delays of planned sorties due to weather, enemy fleet movements, and aircraft operational problems. As an example of the timing between formation of a special attack unit and its final sorties, the Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps Shōwa Unit was formed on March 5, 1945, from Zero fighter pilots of Yatabe Naval Air Group in Ibaraki Prefecture.<sup>75</sup> Seven Shōwa Squadrons moved southwest over 1,000 kilometers to Kanoya Air Base in Kagoshima Prefecture a few days before scheduled sorties toward Okinawa, which is located about 600 kilometers south of Kanoya. From April 14 to May 11, 1945, the seven Shōwa Squadrons had 35 men in total who took off toward Okinawa from

Kanoya and did not return to base.<sup>76</sup> The writings by Special Attack Corps members could be composed any time between the date of the special attack unit formation and the date of the final sortie. For example, both Mitsuo Satō of the 4th Shōwa Squadron and Ensign Yasuo Ichijima of the 5th Shōwa Squadron wrote diary entries at both Yatabe and Kanoya Air Bases for several consecutive days prior to their final sorties.<sup>77</sup> Ensign Kiyoshi Ogawa of the 7th Shōwa Squadron wrote a last letter to his parents, undated in the book that published it, that could have been written at any time between the special attack unit formation date and his sortie on May 11, 1945.<sup>78</sup> Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Hiroshi Yabuta of the 5th Shōwa Squadron wrote a final letter to his parents, which is undated in the book that published it, but the letter has the following sentence, "Finally I will make a sortie tomorrow as a member of the Special Attack Corps."<sup>79</sup> Since scheduled sorties often were delayed, the letter was not necessarily written one day before his death on April 29, 1945.

Men in the military had their writings subject to censorship by a superior with certain militarily sensitive information such as places and dates being crossed out.<sup>80</sup> The writings at times may not have reflected the men's innermost feelings but rather were written more for comfort of family members and to meet expectations. Senri Nagasue, who trained as a Navy Kamikaze Corps pilot, does not think that last letters of Special Attack Corps members contained their true feelings:

In those days we petty officers had no freedom in living. Even when sending a postcard, everything had to receive inspection by a superior. This was not an environment where we could write down our true feelings. Even though a person wrote a last letter when facing death after formation of a special attack unit, there was no guarantee that it would be passed to one's family. Moreover, if one thought that it would be looked upon by others' eyes to be censored, writing what really was in one's heart was unthinkable.<sup>81</sup>

When considering the contents of last writings of Special Attack Corps members, military censorship at times led to shorter letters with more standard phrases. The Afterword in the 1959

edition of *Kike wadatsumi no koe* (Listen to the voices from the sea), a selection of writings of former university students who died in the Greater East Asia War, summarized the oppressive military censorship during the war:

You have to remember not only that these documents were wartime productions, but that the Japanese military's total control over every individual even extended to such things as personal letters and diaries. Everything was placed under the strictest censorship and, as a result, free expression was simply impossible. Rather than to protect military secrets, this way of doing things was, in general, designed to control people—not only physically but also in what you might call matters of conscience. Often even the farewell letters those young men sent to their families just before their last missions were written in standard militaristic style; any genuine and really heartfelt ways of expressing themselves were forbidden.<sup>82</sup>

In contrast to the above paragraph, Muranaga, editor of a book of last writings of Chiran Special Attack Corps members, believes that the writings represented the pilots' true feelings:

"As for the soldiers' letters and wills that were subject to censorship, it is foolish to think perhaps that the truth was not expected to be written and that what was written within them was coerced. Why would brave men prepared for death be afraid of censorship? Before death, they wrote wills and composed death poems precisely because they wanted to express their real feelings."<sup>83</sup> Kudō explains that many letters escaped military censorship by being sent through comrades or non-military personnel and concludes that the special attack pilots' last letters represented their true feelings even when taking into account the degree that the expression of their emotions was not permitted due to censorship.<sup>84</sup> There are some cases documented where last writings of Special Attack Corps members escaped inspection by a superior officer's eyes. Reiko Akabane, a high school student who worked for more than three weeks at Chiran Air Base, describes the process for avoiding censorship:

When we were about ready to return home, we frequently received requests from pilots asking us to send letters and other items to their families. Since at that time there was a food shortage, we were allotted two steamed sweet potatoes for lunch. We took these to the barracks inside a bag, and we secretly brought back the requested items concealed

inside the bag. Whereas the pilots' private messages were strictly censored, luckily we could safely bring their items back home because the things we carried did not get inspected. After we returned home, we mailed these items with our own names as senders and our own addresses.<sup>85</sup>

Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Makoto Kawahira explained how he avoided censorship in his letter to the worker who had maintained his aircraft to be used in a special attack: "Since this is an illegal letter that I asked a person in town to drop into a mailbox, I will use a pseudonym. After reading it, please burn and destroy it."<sup>86</sup> When *kaiten* pilot Ensign Minoru Wada's parents made personal visits, he secretly gave them his diary "by having each piece wrapped in oiled paper, placed in the bottom of a lunch box, and covered over with a layer of rice."<sup>87</sup>

Although some last letters and diaries written by Special Attack Corps members escaped censorship, military officers probably censored most last writings. Pilots faced intense pressure from superiors and peers to support suicide attacks, and this may partly account for why so many pilots wrote such positive expressions to support dying for their country without question. Ohnuki-Tierney suggests, "They were not written just for family members. The pilots were told that their wills and letters would be displayed as the writings by 'the heroic souls' (*eirei*)."<sup>88</sup> This contention related to the pilot's motivation for writing about certain themes seems doubtful, since the writings themselves do not mention this, and other authors about the Special Attack Corps do not refer to this practice. Ohnuki-Tierney supports her statement with only one instance related to her several decades after the war's end. When reading last writings by Special Attack Corps members, it is usually not possible to determine whether a specific writing was subjected to censorship unless there are characters marked out by the censor's pen or there is a story that accompanies the writing about how it evaded censorship.

## Collecting Last Writings

Two individuals are largely responsible for gathering together the actual last writings of Navy and Army Special Attack Corps members, and these collections continue to be the core of displays at related Japanese museums. The person who collected Navy writings started in 1946, whereas the former Special Attack Corps member who gathered Army writings started in 1974. As a result, the number of writings by Army pilots that were on exhibit and were published for three decades after the end of the Pacific War was relatively small. However, despite the late start in searching for writings by Army pilots, these now have become much better known with the opening in 1986 of the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots and the rapid growth since then to greater than 500,000 visitors annually on average between 1990 and 2015.<sup>89</sup>

One year after the Pacific War's end, a civilian named Ichirō Ōmi at the age of 55 set out alone on a nationwide condolence tour to meet with bereaved families of Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps members, and he visited 1,900 homes and collected 1,800 last letters between August 1946 and August 1951 during the Allied Occupation. These writings were turned over to the Demobilization Board in the Ministry of Welfare, and later they were transferred to the Museum of Naval History at the former Naval Academy on Etajima Island in Hiroshima Prefecture.<sup>90</sup> Ōmi died in January 1952, and no records were left behind regarding the purpose for his collecting writings of Kamikaze Corps members. In 2012, NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) investigated why so many letters of Kamikaze Corps aviators were being stored at the Etajima Museum of Naval History, and the results were broadcast in a segment titled "Why last letters were collected: Mysterious survey of bereaved families of special attacks."<sup>91</sup> Researchers for the documentary show found that Ōmi worked in the Second Demobilization Bureau created for former Navy personnel, which provided him with family

addresses for Kamikaze Corps members and paid his travel expenses. It appears that the ostensible purpose for Ōmi's visits with bereaved families was to carry out a survey of their attitudes including collection of last writings, but the details remain a mystery due to lack of written records. Ōmi had frequent contact with former Navy Captain Rikihei Inoguchi, who had been Chief of Staff of the 1st Air Fleet, which was the first unit to use organized aerial suicide attacks starting in October 1944 in the Philippines. In 1951, Inoguchi coauthored *Shinpū tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Shinpū special attack corps) and included seven men's final writings that Ōmi had collected during his nationwide pilgrimage.<sup>92</sup> The Museum of Naval History at the former Etajima Naval Academy reopened in 1956 after being closed down at the war's end, and the last room in the museum displays a final writing of at least one Navy Kamikaze Corps member from each of Japan's 47 prefectures. There are other writings on display of members of the Kamikaze Corps, Kaiten Corps, and midget submarine force including crewmen who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor that bring the total number of writings on exhibit to almost 100.<sup>93</sup> Although the Museum of Naval History attracts 70,000 visitors each year, it can only be visited for 30 minutes as part of a 90-minute guided tour, so most people spend a very short time in viewing the writings of Special Attack Corps members in a museum that covers Japanese naval history from the late nineteenth century to 1945.<sup>94</sup>

Tadamasa Itatsu, Sergeant in the Army's 213th Shinbu Special Attack Squadron, took off from Chiran Air Base toward Okinawa on May 28, 1945, to make an attack on the Allied fleet, but he had to make a forced landing on the island of Tokunoshima when his plane's engine developed problems. He returned to Chiran and received orders twice more for special attacks, but they were cancelled due to rain. After the war's end, he returned to his home in Nagoya and worked for Nagoya City Hall. In 1974, after he attended a memorial service in Chiran Town, he



started to try to obtain materials and verify facts about Army Air Special Attack Corps members such as photographs, last writings, and details about how they died in battle in order to understand accurately their deaths and to tell future generations the facts regarding this page in history. Because almost 30 years had passed since the Pacific War, he had great difficulties in contacting bereaved families with only the addresses that he had obtained from a listing prepared in 1953 by the government agency for demobilization. In 1979, he left his job with several years remaining until retirement in order to dedicate himself totally to the task of gathering information and historical artifacts related to the Army Air Special Attack Corps. He visited over 600 bereaved families and donated the many writings, photographs, and other items that he received to the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots, where he served as Director from 1984 to 1988 during a period when the number of visitors doubled to about 400,000.<sup>95</sup>

The Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots has by far the most Special Attack Corps writings on display, but its name that includes "Kamikaze Pilots" is misleading, since it does not exhibit writings of the Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps. Instead, the Chiran Peace Museum displays last writings of a total of 1,036 Army Air Special Attack Corps and Giretsu Airborne Unit members who died in special attacks during the Okinawa campaign from March 26 to July 19, 1945.<sup>96</sup> The writings exclude those written by Army Special Attack Corps pilots who died in special attacks in the Philippines from October 1944 to January 1945. The Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots has about 4,500 photographs, letters, and other articles with the writings exhibited in the main exhibition room in 25 glass display cases and almost 200 pull-out drawers.<sup>97</sup> The museum also provides three large books of about 120 writings in total with pilot photographs and biographical information where visitors can sit down and read them. Five touch-panel display screens are also provided in the main exhibition room where visitors can

view over 100 letters, wills, poems, and essays by Army Special Attack Corps members.<sup>98</sup> The museum focuses on writings, photographs, and other articles in commemoration of Army Special Attack Corps pilots who died. It does not provide historical context of the Pacific War nor mention controversial or negative aspects of Japan's wartime history even though the museum's stated goal is to "expose the tragic loss of their lives so that we may understand the need for everlasting peace and ensure such incidents are never repeated."<sup>99</sup> In 2014 and again in 2015, Minamikyūshū City submitted an application of 333 last writings and other items at the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots for acceptance to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, which caused negative reaction in the foreign press. *USA Today* reported, "In neighboring China and South Korea, the kamikaze letter nomination was denounced as part of an effort by right-wing agents to portray Japan as a victim of the war, rather than a perpetrator."<sup>100</sup> The Japanese government subcommittee that performs a preliminary evaluation of UNESCO documentary heritage program submissions rejected the one for the Chiran Peace Museum's writings for several reasons, including that they were explained from only a Japanese viewpoint and that it was desired that their worldwide significance be explained from more diverse perspectives. Also, the application needed strengthening in its explanations of "completeness" and "uniqueness" of Chiran's writings, and it was limited to special attacks only during the Battle of Okinawa with no explanation.<sup>101</sup>

The Yūshūkan Museum at Yasukuni Shrine became another repository for original writings of Special Attack Corps members, since many bereaved families in the postwar period donated writings and other items to this Shintō shrine where spirits of Japan's war dead are enshrined and honored. Over 30 writings of Special Attack Corps members who died in battle are on display.<sup>102</sup> Yasukuni Shrine dates back to 1869 when Emperor Meiji established a shrine

to commemorate soldiers who had died for the emperor in battle, and it later became the peak of a nationwide network of state-supported Shintō shrines that promoted devotion to the emperor and honored persons who sacrificed their lives in service to the Empire. Although Yasukuni Shrine no longer is directed by the government but rather a privately-funded religious corporation since 1947 when an Article of the Constitution established separation of religion and state, it has remained a controversial reminder of wartime atrocities committed by Japanese in the name of the emperor with the enshrinement there of 14 Class A war criminals. Kingston summarizes its significance, "It is clear that Yasukuni resonates with talismanic symbolism and is the nexus where the cult of the emperor, imperial expansion and militarism are inextricably intertwined."<sup>103</sup> Praise of Special Attack Corps heroes who died in battle for the emperor and country supports Yasukuni Shrine's agenda, and they are given special attention at Yūshūkan Museum.

Hichirō Naemura, who volunteered twice for special attacks but who was assigned as a flight instructor at Bansei Air Base during special attack sorties from there in the spring of 1945, collected many last writings of 120 Army Air Special Attack Corps members who died in sorties from Bansei, and they are now on display at the Bansei Tokkō Peace Museum, which opened in 1993.<sup>104</sup> The Air Base Museum at Kanoya, the sortie base for 829 Kamikaze Corps members who died in battle, opened in 1972 and displays about 80 Special Attack Corps member writings.<sup>105</sup> Other writings have been collected for books, which are discussed in the following chapter, but the actual letters generally are not on display anywhere. Although this section has discussed exhibits of last writings of Special Attack Corps members at several museums, it does not mean that the original writings are shown to the public. In some cases, these writings in

museum exhibits are copies or transcriptions, and the originals may be stored elsewhere for safekeeping or still held by family members.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

Writings of Japan's Special Attack Corps members have been published in many Japanese books since 1947 by a wide variety of organizations, and a few of these writings have been translated into English. This chapter discusses these publications and also evaluates works in both English and Japanese that analyze writings of Special Attack Corps members. These analyses by other researchers include both identification of common attributes in a large number of the writings and general analysis of common themes based on a small or unspecified sample of writings.

#### Japanese Publications

The personal writings of Japanese Special Attack Corps members who carried out suicide attacks near the end of the Pacific War have been collected and published in the postwar period, but the corpus of writings remains incomplete and fragmented with no definitive publication or centralized database available. Some bereaved families may not have released these writings or may never have been contacted, and the writings for an individual may not be complete if a bereaved family wanted only certain writings to be seen by the public. Editors of these writings made choices for publications, sometimes to support their own views, as to what writings and what parts of selected writings to include. Although many writings of Special Attacks Corps members who made aerial attacks or *kaiten* human torpedo attacks have been published, extremely few writings are available for men who died in attacks with explosive motorboats and midget submarines. The former Japanese Navy and Army, or often subgroups within these military branches, pursued their efforts separately to collect and publish writings of Special

Attack Corps members. The only two major organizations involved with publication of both Navy and Army Special Attack Corps member writings are Yasukuni Shrine and the Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association, which is a national organization formed to remember and honor men who died in special attacks with its members including primarily surviving family members and veterans associated with these attacks. Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association maintains a close relationship with Yasukuni Shrine as evidenced by holding its annual spring memorial ceremony there, locating its office in Yasukuni's Yūshūkan Museum for several years, and having the first link on its web page of related links to Yasukuni's home page.<sup>106</sup>

The first publications of Special Attack Corps member writings during the Allied Occupation of Japan from August 1945 to April 1952 focused on former college students who died during the war. *Haruka naru sanga ni* (In the faraway mountains and rivers), originally published in 1947, contains writings by 39 Tōkyō Imperial University students, including six Special Attack Corps members, who died in the war.<sup>107</sup> In 1949, this selection of writings was expanded to add former students from several other universities in the book *Kike wadatsumi no koe* (Listen to the voices from the sea), which had as its goal the promotion of peace so as to never repeat the tragedy of war.<sup>108</sup> This book has writings of 75 former university students and nine Special Attack Corps members, including three whose writings appeared also in *Haruka naru sanga ni*. The book *Kike wadatsumi no koe* achieved great popularity as evidenced by its fourth-place ranking of 1950 bestsellers.<sup>109</sup> In 1951, Captain Rikihei Inoguchi and Commander Tadashi Nakajima, two officers who worked in the Philippines with the originator of the Kamikaze Corps, Takijirō Ōnishi, wrote *Shinpū tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Shinpū special attack corps).<sup>110</sup> This book has a section with six writings of former college students and one writing of

a noncommissioned officer in the Kamikaze Corps.<sup>111</sup> Writings published during the Allied Occupation were subject to stringent censorship under the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD) until September 1949 and continued to be enforced in other ways until the Occupation ended in April 1952.<sup>112</sup> Dower explains censorship related to Japan's wartime activities: "Controlling commentary about the recent war naturally was of utmost importance to the victors at the outset of the occupation. They considered it essential to suppress any rhetorical appeals that might rekindle violent wartime passions and thereby either imperil the security of occupation personnel or undermine their reformist agenda."<sup>113</sup> Kazuo Watanabe writes in the Introduction to *Kike wadatsumi no koe*: "In the beginning, I had leaned quite far in the direction of all-inclusiveness and insisted that it would be much more fair and just to include even rather fanatical Nipponism, or even a few short essays shading toward the glorification of war, but the members of the Publication Department did not show any sign of agreement with my position. The primary reason for their opposition was that the publication of this book must not at all affect negatively the current social conditions, and so on."<sup>114</sup> The editorial committee of *Kike wadatsumi no koe* deleted the following from students' writings: militaristic content, militaristic expressions such as "seven lives to serve the country" (*shichishō hōkoku*), and any content that extolled the former government such as "let's meet at Yasukuni" and "long live the Empire of Japan."<sup>115</sup> As an example, the following sentence was not included in the excerpts published from the diary of Ensign Yasuo Ichijima, a former student at Waseda University who died in a special attack on the Emperor's birthday of April 29, 1945, "On this good day of today, we are happy to offer our lives to the Emperor"<sup>116</sup> In spite of forced editing of wartime writings during the Allied Occupation, books published after 1952 have included unedited versions of some of these

writings such as Ichijima's complete diary from April 20 to 29, 1945, in *Ā dōki no sakura* (Ah, cherry blossoms of same class) published in 1966.<sup>117</sup>

Several books focus on writings of men in specific Navy training classes and programs who died during the Pacific War, and these include many writings of Special Attack Corps members. In 1952, Hakuō Izokukai (White Gull Bereaved Families Association) published *Kumo nagaruru hate ni: Senbotsu kaigun hikō yobi gakusei no shuki* (To the end of the flowing clouds: Writings of Navy reserve students who died in war) with writings of 63 men in the Navy's 13th Class of Flight Reserve Students who died in the war including a little over half by Special Attack Corps members.<sup>118</sup> In 1995, Hakuō Izokukai published an expanded version of the book with writings of about 20 additional men and some writings from classes of Flight Reserve Students other than the 13th.<sup>119</sup> In 1966, Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai (Navy Flight Reserve Students 14th Class Association) published *Ā dōki no sakura: Kaerazaru seishun no shuki* (Ah, cherry blossoms of same class: Writings of youth that would not return), which includes writings of 26 men that were written after assignment to the Special Attack Corps.<sup>120</sup> In 1995, the 14th Class Association published a second book that contains writings of an additional 34 men that were written after assignment to a special attack unit.<sup>121</sup> A book with only writings of Navy Yokaren (Preparatory Flight Training Program) graduates, who became noncommissioned officers upon completion of training and who made up 59 percent of the Navy's deaths by special attack, did not get published until 1968 with *Seishun no isho: "Yokaren" senbotsusha no shuki* (Last letters of youth: Writings of "Yokaren" war dead), which has writings of about 30 men after being assigned to the Special Attack Corps.<sup>122</sup> In 1973, *Ware tokkō ni shisu: Yokaren no ikō* (I will die in a special attack: Yokaren writings) was published with writings of about 60 Yokaren graduates who wrote them after selection for the Special



Attack Corps.<sup>123</sup> In 2004 and 2006, Unabarakai (Sea Association), an association of Yokaren graduates and their families, published two books of Yokaren letters, poems, and other writings, which include those written by about 70 men after they were named to a special attack unit.<sup>124</sup> Quite a few of these writings come from prior publications, but the two books contain several writings not published before.<sup>125</sup> The associations with members from bereaved families and veterans mentioned in this paragraph have as a primary purpose to remember and honor men who died in battle, and they do not express a negative view of the Greater East Asia War in comparison to anti-war sentiments of the publication committees for *Haruka naru sanga ni* and *Kike wadatsumi no koe*.

Three books related to the former Army Air Base at Chiran contain most of the first publications of personal writings of Special Attack Corps pilots who took off from Chiran and other Army air bases during the Okinawa campaign. In 1979, Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai (Chiran Girls' High School Nadeshiko Association), made up of women who in their youth had worked for more than three weeks at Chiran Base during the start of special attack sorties from there, published *Gunjō: Chiran tokkō kichi yori* (Deep blue: From Chiran special attack air base) with personal writings of about 30 men after their selection for the Special Attack Corps.<sup>126</sup> This book contains touching writings by Special Attack Corps members such as the last letter of Second Lieutenant Anazawa to his fiancée Chieko and the last letter of Second Lieutenant Masashi Ōhira to his "most beloved wife" Fukuko who would be alone with their young son after his death.<sup>127</sup> Since 1989, many visitors to the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots purchase the book *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Chiran special attack forces) with its many photographs and pilot writings.<sup>128</sup> Most of the book's writings by 36 pilots after being named to a special attack unit are short, but the first one is a 13-page diary entitled *Ryūkonroku* (Record of

Everlasting Spirit) by Sergeant Major Shinpei Satō. The diary covers nine days and includes separate last letters to his father and mother.<sup>129</sup> The most comprehensive book of writings related to the former Chiran Army Air Base is *Konpaku no kiroku: Kyū rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai chiran kichi* (Record of departed spirits: Former Army Special Attack Corps Chiran Base) published in 2005.<sup>130</sup> This large-size book has writings of over 100 pilots after being selected for a special attack unit, and each writing is limited to a half-page, so a few omit portions of the writings. Other publications of writings by mainly Chiran pilots generally cover the same writings originally published in the three books discussed above.<sup>131</sup>

Other sources of published writings of Special Attack Corps members include several publications centered on air bases other than Chiran where pilots trained or from where they made sorties. These other sources present positive portrayals of Special Attack Corps members as heroes who died in defense of their country. The museum at Kanoya Air Base, where about a third of the Navy Kamikaze Corps aviators took off toward Okinawa, sells a book of writings titled *Kokoro no sakebi* (Cries of the heart) by men in the Kamikaze Corps who made special attack sorties from Kanoya or another Navy air base.<sup>132</sup> This book has photographs of the aviators and images of a portion of most of the writings, and it contains writings of about 40 men after they were named to a special attack unit.<sup>133</sup> Hichirō Naemura, who was at Bansei Air Base during special attack sorties from there, led efforts to open a museum at the former base location in 1993 and compiled writings of men who died in battle after taking off from there in *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi: Bansei tokkōtaiin no isho to isatsu* (Army's last special attack base: Last letters and photographs of Bansei special attack corps members).<sup>134</sup> This publication includes writings of about 60 men dated after joining the Special Attack Corps. Out of 79 pilots who took off from Miyakonojō Army Air Base and died in battle, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō*

*Shinbutai* (Miyakonojō Air Base Hayate Special Attack Shinbu Unit) includes writings of 44 pilots after they were selected for a special attack squadron.<sup>135</sup> The former Kokubu No. 2 Naval Air Base and Tsukuba Naval Air Base also have books with last writings of Special Attack Corps members who died.<sup>136</sup>

Several other books are valuable sources of last writings of Special Attack Corps members. These sources positively portray the men who died in battle for Japan and its Emperor. In 1970, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai: Kaerazaru seishun no isho shū* (Ah, Kamikaze Special Attack Corps: Collected last letters of youth that would not return) was published with writings by 70 Navy men and 10 Army men after their selection for the Special Attack Corps.<sup>137</sup> Since Mamoru Kitagawa, the editor of this book, tried to include writings by men of all training backgrounds from both the Navy and Army, the small number of writings by Army pilots reflects the relatively few writings by Army Air Special Attack Corps members published in other sources through 1970.<sup>138</sup> In 1971, Fujio Matsugi, a Navy special press corps member for over three years during the Pacific War, compiled *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekita no isho* (Last letters of Navy Special Attack Corps) with writings of 80 men after being named to the Special Attack Corps.<sup>139</sup> These men came from all training backgrounds, including several Naval Academy graduates, and the writings include those of several *kaiten* human torpedo pilots and a *shin'yō* explosive motorboat pilot. *Tokkōtai iei shū* (Special Attack Corps death poem collection), compiled by the Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association, contains 779 poems composed by Navy and Army Special Attack Corps members or their relatives.<sup>140</sup> Since 1995 through 2014, Yasukuni Shrine published ten volumes in the series *Eirei no koto no ha* (Words of the spirits of war dead), which include in each volume about 60 writings of persons who died in Japan's wars through 1945 with about 18 percent on average of the writings by Special Attack Corps

members.<sup>141</sup> Yasukuni Shrine has published several other books with biographical information and writings of Special Attack Corps members.<sup>142</sup> In 1965, the Kaiten Memorial Association published privately the book *Kaiten* with writings of 51 of the 104 *kaiten* human torpedo pilots recognized as having died in special attacks.<sup>143</sup> In 1967, *Ningen gyorai: Kaiten tokubetsu kōgekitaiin no shuki* (Human torpedo: Writings of Kaiten Special Attack Corps members) was published by Mainichi Shinbunsha with last writings of about 20 men after they began training to make a special attack with a *kaiten* weapon.<sup>144</sup> Other sources of Special Attack Corps members' final writings include biographies of individual pilots, compilations of an individual pilot's writings, or other books with selections of previously-published writings.<sup>145</sup>

### **English Translations**

There are few published writings by Special Attack Corps members that have been translated to English. These translations are spread out among many different sources such as books, museums, websites, and journal articles. No one source has a large number of English translations, and some translations can be viewed only by going in person to a Japanese museum. In 1958, *The Divine Wind* by Captain Rikihei Inoguchi and Commander Tadashi Nakajima was published as an English translation of the original book in Japanese published in 1951, and it remains the most influential book in English about the history of the Navy's Kamikaze Special Attack Corps.<sup>146</sup> The book's last chapter presents last writings by seven men after assignment to the Kamikaze Corps, and excerpts and full text of these final letters and diary entries have been quoted frequently in a wide variety of other publications such as Millot's *Divine Thunder* (1971), Morris' *The Nobility of Failure* (1975), and Rice's *Kamikazes* (2000).<sup>147</sup> Included in *The Divine Wind* is one of the best-known letters written by a Kamikaze Corps pilot. Following is a

paragraph from this letter written to the mother of Ensign Ichizō Hayashi, who was raised as a Christian and was a former student at Kyōto Imperial University:

We live in the spirit of Jesus Christ, and we die in that spirit. This thought stays with me. It is gratifying to live in this world, but living has a spirit of futility about it now. It is time to die. I do not seek reasons for dying. My only search is for an enemy target against which to dive.<sup>148</sup>

In 2000, there was the publication of *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, a translation by Yamanouchi and Quinn of the new edition of *Kike Wadatsumi no Koe* (1995), which was published originally in 1949.<sup>149</sup> This book of writings of Japanese college students who died in the Greater East Asia War includes nine who were Special Attack Corps members, but the book includes only six men with writings after assignment to the Special Attack Corps and who died in a special attack if the following three men are excluded: two men with all writings before entering the military and one man with poems without a date and with content where the time period cannot be determined.<sup>150</sup> *Listen to the Voices from the Sea* has the well-known last writings of Army Second Lieutenant Ryōji Uehara, who wrote in *Shokan* (My Thoughts) the night before his attack about his belief in the inevitable victory of liberty and the defeat of authoritarian and totalitarian countries.<sup>151</sup> The book also includes a letter from Ensign Ichizō Hayashi to his mother, but it is a different one than his letter published in *The Divine Wind*.<sup>152</sup> In 1954 in the book *Le Japon et ses morts* (Japan and its dead), Jean Lartéguy translated into French some Japanese student writings from *Kike Wadatsumi no Koe* (1949), and an English translation of Lartéguy's work in French was published in 1956 in Great Britain with the title *The Sun Goes Down: Last letters from Japanese suicide-pilots and soldiers*.<sup>153</sup> This book has a chapter "The Kamikazés" with writings of eight Special Attack Corps members.<sup>154</sup> The writings in *The Sun Goes Down* have been shortened considerably by cutting out sentences, paragraphs, and diary entries.<sup>155</sup> In 2005, there was the publication of *Faraway Mountains and Rivers* (*Harukanaru*

*Sanga ni*): *More Voices From A Lost Generation of Japanese Students*, a translation by Yamanouchi and Quinn of a collection of writings by Tōkyō Imperial University students who died in the Greater East Asia War that was published originally in 1947.<sup>156</sup> This book of writings by Tōkyō Imperial University students who died in the Greater East Asia War includes six who were Special Attack Corps members, but the book has only three men with writings after assignment to the Special Attack Corps and who died in a special attack.<sup>157</sup> The book has extended writings from two *kaiten* human torpedo pilots, one who died in battle and another who died in a training accident, but the writings of the one Kamikaze Corps pilot include just a one-page letter written before he joined the Navy and only a little more than a hundred words excerpted from his last letter written a week before his death.<sup>158</sup>

The Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots, through museum displays, a book, and its website, provides English translations of last writings of many Army Special Attack Corps members who died from late March to July 1945 during the Okinawa campaign.<sup>159</sup> However, these translations are very difficult to access primarily due to the museum's remote location at the southern end of Japan's southernmost main island of Kyūshū and to the complication in accessing the writings on the museum's website. A separate room at the museum displays final writings of eight men each in a separate display case with the original writing, typed writing with pronunciation of Japanese characters, an English translation, and a photograph with basic biographical information in Japanese and English.<sup>160</sup> These include the last letter of Second Lieutenant Toshio Anazawa to his fiancée Chieko. The Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots also has five touch-panel display screens in the main exhibition room where one can examine a database of last writings in both Japanese and English.<sup>161</sup> The displays have the following numbers of writings based on the museum's categorization: 50 wills and letters, 36

deathbed poems, 26 essays *kamikaze* pilots left before death, and 11 writings *kamikaze* pilots left before death. The museum store sells a book of English translations of 22 last writings of Army Special Attack Corps members. This book entitled *The Mind of the Kamikaze*, written by an employee of the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots, can only be purchased at the museum store.<sup>162</sup> The museum website has an English section where three translated writings of Army Special Attack Corps members, including the four-page last letter of Second Lieutenant Toshio Anazawa to his fiancée Chieko, can be accessed.<sup>163</sup> The museum's website server also has about 35 other final writings translated into English, but these cannot be accessed through the museum website links, but they can be found by taking the first part of the web address for the three translated letters that are linked and inputting this into Google Search.<sup>164</sup>

Two other Japanese museums have several English translations of writings of Special Attack Corps members who died in battle. The Yūshūkan Museum has 10 English translations with exhibits of the last writings including the last letter of Lieutenant Naoji Iwasa, one of nine midget submarine crewmen who died at Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The museum also has a notebook of translations of last writings of eight more Special Attack Corps members.<sup>165</sup> Kanoya Air Base Museum in Kagoshima Prefecture has a notebook of English translations with writings of 12 men after assignment to the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps.<sup>166</sup>

A few other books have a limited number of English translations of last writings of Special Attack Corps members. For example, *Thunder Gods* (1989) has one page with the death statements of three *ōka* rocket-powered glider bomb pilots and two crewmen of Betty bombers that carried the *ōka* weapons into battle.<sup>167</sup> The excerpt of the last letter of one of these *ōka* pilots, 20-year-old Navy Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Ataru Shimamura, contains several typical themes found in writings of Special Attack Corps members:

I shall fall, smiling and singing songs. Please visit and worship at Yasukuni Shrine this spring. There I shall be a cherry blossom, smiling, with many other colleagues. I died smiling, so please smile. Please do not cry. Make my death meaningful.<sup>168</sup>

*Japan at War* (1992) includes an English translation of the one-page last letter of Army Second Lieutenant Haruo Araki to his wife Shigeko.<sup>169</sup> *Kamikaze: Japan's Suicide Gods* (2002) contains previously unpublished English translations of last letters of three Special Attack Corps members, including those of Navy Lieutenant Yukio Seki, leader of the first Kamikaze Special Attack Corps unit, and last poems of six other men.<sup>170</sup> This book's three other final writings, which consist of two letters from *The Divine Wind* and the last letter of Ryōji Uehara from *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, are slightly edited versions not acknowledged to be from other sources.<sup>171</sup>

Websites and webpages in English generally publish existing writings from printed sources discussed above, but a few Internet sources have original translations. For example, *Harper's Magazine* has an online article with four letters that it says are written by World War II *kamikaze* pilots, but actually only the first two are written by men in the Special Attack Corps including the last letter of Ensign Masahisa Uemura to his infant daughter Motoko.<sup>172</sup> Prior to the start of the present research study in late 2017, my website *Kamikaze Images* had about 20 translations of last writings of Special Attack Corps members.<sup>173</sup>

## **General Analysis of Writings**

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney wrote the most recognized and cited academic works about Special Attack Corps pilot writings, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms* in 2002 and *Kamikaze Diaries* in 2006.<sup>174</sup> The first book "centered on the ways in which war and death were aestheticized by the uses of cherry blossoms in the state's attempt to persuade citizens to



sacrifice their lives to nationalist and imperialist goals" and included one chapter that introduced writings of four Special Attack Corps members.<sup>175</sup> The second book expanded the number of first-hand sources from Special Attack Corps members as she "tried to describe and understand their personal lives as well as their intellectual and political perspectives and to portray them as human beings in painful agony regarding the inevitable early death they faced."<sup>176</sup> Despite the two books' valuable in-depth explanations of aesthetic, cultural, and political influences on the pilots such as the state's militarized meaning assigned to cherry blossoms, they have several limitations, and her second book repeats information and arguments from her first one.<sup>177</sup>

*Kamikaze Diaries* covers in detail the writings of just seven student soldiers, and only three of these were pilots in the Special Attack Corps, all covered in *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*. Her first book discusses the writings of five student soldiers, four who were in the Special Attack Corps. Her second book includes more first-hand sources, but they are limited in number and length. In *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, Ohnuki-Tierney briefly discusses a handful of writings by other Special Attack Corps pilots and explains the range of contents in these: "Although we see expressions of agonized conflict between duty and personal feelings in the examples above, there certainly were others who were unambiguously patriotic or even expressed the pro-military ideology, at least in the passages chosen for publication."<sup>178</sup>

Even though the author sometimes acknowledges that the book includes other student soldiers, there are misleading statements where it seems that all of the writings apply to Special Attack Corps members, such as the following sentence after introducing quotations from four student soldiers but only two in the Special Attack Corps: "These passages from the diaries of tokkōtai pilots do not fit the image of the 'kamikaze' held outside of Japan."<sup>179</sup> Almost all writings examined in *Kamikaze Diaries* for two of the three pilots are dated before they joined the Special

Attack Corps and even before they entered the military, so there are few insights as to their thinking just before death after they had been assigned to units that would make suicide attacks. For example, the first Special Attack Corps pilot discussed in both books is Ensign Hachirō Sasaki who died in May 1945, but the diary excerpts discussed in *Kamikaze Diaries* come from 1939 to 1943 before he joined the Navy in December 1943.<sup>180</sup> Another Special Attack Corps pilot considered in both books is Ensign Takenori Nakao who died in May 1945, but no diary is available for review after he entered the Navy in December 1943, since it was burned in an attack on Takuma Air Base where he was stationed. *Kamikaze Diaries* does have one short letter to his parents written six days before his death where he states, "I am truly a happy person."<sup>181</sup> With writings in Ohnuki-Tierney's two books dated long before the pilots' deaths, almost no support exists for her statements related to *tokkōtai* pilots like the following: "As some put it, if one was likely to die anyway, one might as well die a hero. Yet agony over their approaching death is evident throughout their writings and in their final diary entries."<sup>182</sup>

One of Ohnuki-Tierney's contentions in her two books is that the Special Attack Corps pilots reproduced the emperor-centered military ideology in their actions but not in their thoughts.<sup>183</sup> This is best expressed in the Conclusion section of *Kamikaze Diaries*:

Ironically, the portrayal promoted by the Japanese military government corresponds closely with the stereotype of kamikaze outside of Japan, presenting these young men as the modern incarnation of the warriors happily sacrificing themselves for the lord, now the emperor. The diaries presented in the book offer a salutary correction, allowing us to listen to the student soldiers' voices and helping us to understand the dilemmas they faced. The *tokkōtai* pilots were forced to volunteer. None of them whole-heartedly espoused the emperor-centered military ideology and willingly sacrificed his life out of loyalty to the emperor *qua* Japan. The pilots carried out the mission that the military had designed and assigned to them, diving or ramming into American vessels, but they did so without subscribing to the military ideology.<sup>184</sup>

Ohnuki-Tierney seems to consider silence in the few writings that she examines as support for her contention that student soldiers who were *tokkōtai* pilots did not believe the military

ideology, and in some instances she appears to try to explain away a pilot's written statements of seeming agreement with this ideology. For example, Ensign Ichizō Hayashi is the only Special Attack Corps pilot in *Kamikaze Diaries* where she provides extensive excerpts from his writings after assignment to a suicide attack unit. Hayashi writes in a letter to his mother, "I am happy to go as a tokkōtai pilot." He continues, "Mother, I am a man. All men born in Japan are destined to die fighting for the country. You have done a splendid job raising me to become an honorable man. . . . I will do a splendid job sinking an enemy ship. Do brag about me."<sup>185</sup> Ohnuki-Tierney writes as an introduction to another letter to his mother, "But he knows very well the futility of his act."<sup>186</sup> This seems to contradict Hayashi's own optimistic words in the letter: "The enemy's action is being dulled. Victory is for us. Our mission will be the last blow to the enemy."<sup>187</sup> She explains that "Hayashi's assertions of his complete devotion to the military defense of Japan are always contradicted by other thoughts and feelings."<sup>188</sup> However, these other thoughts, such as his mention one day after his assignment to a special attack unit that he could not say that he truly wished to die for the emperor, do not mean that Hayashi did not sincerely believe his declarations regarding the value of his involvement in military operations.<sup>189</sup> Some of Ohnuki-Tierney's statements have little or no substantiation, or they could have been disproved by increasing the number of Special Attack Corps student soldier writings that she reviewed. For example, she asserts about the *tokkōtai*, "None volunteered to sortie."<sup>190</sup> However, this is not a subject covered specifically in any of the men's writings included in her two books. In contradiction to her claim, Ensign Isamu Saitō, a Kamikaze Corps Zero fighter pilot who graduated from Waseda University, wrote in the final letter to his parents: "I have been waiting anxiously since about two months ago when I was named as section leader of a special attack squadron. Now I am engaged in rigorous training. Actually, although there were three times that

volunteers were requested, I always wrote 'eagerly desire.'"<sup>191</sup> Ryuji Nagatsuka, a former Tōkyō Imperial University student and an Army Air Special Attack Corps member who survived his mission when he returned to base due to poor visibility, wrote in his wartime memoir that "I can affirm that our own wishes were in perfect accord with orders from the high command." He addressed the question of whether the pilots were volunteers or acting on official orders:

"Volunteers or conscripts: that is not the question. I can only reaffirm that all my comrades were ready to accept the order voluntarily, even to ask to be sent on a suicide-mission. It matters little whether they volunteered or acted under strict orders: their one thought was to defend their homeland, even at the sacrifice of their lives."<sup>192</sup>

Japan's militaristic state used the cherry blossom as the leading military symbol. Fallen and scattered cherry blossom petals signified soldiers' deaths, and blooming cherry blossoms symbolized fallen soldiers reborn at Yasukuni Shrine, the memorial dedicated to honor spirits of Japan's war dead.<sup>193</sup> Ohnuki-Tierney concludes that cherry blossoms significantly influenced the Special Attack Corps pilots:

In this process of *méconnaissance* [absence of communication that results when people do not share a meaning but rather derive different meanings from the same symbols and rituals], the evocative power of the aesthetics of cherry blossoms played a critical role. The role of *méconnaissance* is extremely important for an understanding of the most important question of this book—why did the pilots reproduce the imperial ideology in action without reproducing its intellectual and spiritual content. The flower did not *move* them to take action, but it made them *not* confront the *méconnaissance* between their thoughts and the state ideology.<sup>194</sup>

However, the author's examination of Special Attack Corps pilot diaries does not seem to substantiate the conclusion that cherry blossom symbolism as manipulated by the state prevented them from resisting if only in their thoughts. Most diary excerpts contain few references to cherry blossoms, and many of these are typical comments made by Japanese people in springtime to recognize their beauty.<sup>195</sup> More plausible reasons exist for the pilots' reluctance in

opposing the military and government in their thinking. The military required unquestioned obedience, and dissenters received swift and severe punishment. Japanese citizens, including those in the military, had pressure to conform with the system of neighborhood associations established by the government where any protest, however slight, could be reported to the police.<sup>196</sup> Ohnuki-Tierney does not explore a reasonable alternative explanation proposed by M. G. Sheftall that Special Attack Corps pilots who were intellectual elites, while recognizing the existence and even weaknesses of the militaristic ideology, sincerely believed that their deaths in attacks would contribute to the country's defense and supported the military's decision to carry them out as evidenced by their completed suicide attacks.<sup>197</sup> Instead, she downplays their personal capacity to act and unconvincingly ascribes their actions to the state's ideological manipulation cloaked in aesthetics. The final paragraph in *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms* makes clear that Ohnuki-Tierney considers former student soldiers to be victims rather than willing participants in attacks that led to their deaths: "In any historical process, some historical agents, such as the leaders of totalitarian regimes, are far more influential than others. Their sins against humanity should never be exonerated. The pilots' diaries serve as a testimony to the monstrous acts of Japanese imperialism in driving these young men full of dreams and idealism to their deaths."<sup>198</sup> In spite of this claim, even in an environment where the state and military actively shaped the people's thinking, it is plausible that the Special Attack Corps pilots genuinely supported the military's suicide attack strategy and believed in its worth as the most effective way to defend the country from advancing enemy forces, especially from the Battle of the Philippine Sea in June 1944 until the war's end when most Japanese conventional aircraft pilots got killed when they engaged in battle.

All four Special Attack Corps pilots whose diaries are analyzed in Ohnuki-Tierney's two books, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms* and *Kamikaze Diaries*, attended the Tōkyō Imperial University or Kyōto Imperial University, described as "the twin peaks of higher education in prewar Japan."<sup>199</sup> These four former students at the country's two most prestigious universities are not representative of the group of "student soldiers" mentioned by Ohnuki-Tierney in her books, since this group also included former students at teacher colleges, higher technical schools, commerce colleges, agricultural colleges, and a wide variety of private universities. The author erroneously states that 85 percent of the young men who died in *tokkōtai* operations were student soldiers,<sup>200</sup> but actually only 25 percent of those who died in the Navy and Army Air Special Attack Corps were former college students, and very few of these came from Tōkyō Imperial University or Kyōto Imperial University.<sup>201</sup> The scope of her two books excludes writings of enlisted noncommissioned officers, Navy and Army Academy graduates, and other commissioned officers who made up 63 percent, 7 percent, and 5 percent, respectively, of deaths by the Air Special Attack Corps.<sup>202</sup> In summary, the conclusions in Ohnuki-Tierney's two books on *kamikaze* pilots are based on a narrow and unrepresentative sample of the total population of men who died in special attacks.

Mako Sasaki's 1996 article about *kamikaze* pilots examines how they felt toward their missions based on an examination of actual letters and diaries of several Army youth pilots and former college students. She concludes that they generally were happy to serve the country, believed that their death in suicide missions could improve the war situation for Japan, had no regrets, and thought that their missions could be considered as filial piety to their parents.<sup>203</sup>

Yuki Tanaka in a 2005 article identifies five psychological themes in writings of Special Attack Corps pilots who were former college students: 1) rationalization of own death to defend

country and its people, 2) belief that to die for country was to show filial piety to parents and particularly to mother, 3) strong solidarity with flight-mates who shared same fate, 4) strong sense of responsibility and contempt for cowardice, and 5) lack of an image of the enemy.<sup>204</sup>

Although these observations seem reasonable, the article provides no examples from writings of *kamikaze* pilots and does not specify what writings were reviewed to reach these conclusions.

Kiyomi Morioka analyzes writings of former college students, including members of the Special Attack Corps, who died in the latter part of the Pacific War.<sup>205</sup> He discusses and provides examples, including excerpts from Special Attack Corps members, of the following eight key themes in their writings: ready to die, experiencing struggles (e.g., not wanting to die), coping with struggles, presence of family and especially mother, longing for mother on battlefield, expressing appreciation and acknowledging lack of filial piety, loyalty (to emperor) and filial piety as one in repayment for lack of filial piety, and giving meaning to death in battle.<sup>206</sup>

Mayumi Ito in her 2007 master's thesis on "Japanese Tokkō Soldiers and Their Jisei" researches *jisei* (death poems) written by Special Attack Corps members and provides examples to support her arguments regarding their historical and cultural contexts.<sup>207</sup> The thesis discusses three primary historical intertexts in death poems of Special Attack Corps members: *sakimori* (soldiers who protected western frontier of Japan from the seventh to the ninth centuries and who composed poems included in *Man'yōshū*, the oldest surviving anthology of Japanese poetry), Kusunoki Masashige (a fourteenth century samurai warrior who symbolized courage and devotion to the Emperor), and Yoshida Shōin (activist scholar and educator who strongly advocated the Emperor's restoration to power, which challenged the ruling shogunate at end of Edo Period in nineteenth century). Both Kusunoki and Yoshida died for their loyal support of the Emperor. The common cultural intertexts in the Special Attack Corps members' death poems are cherry blossoms, Yasukuni Shrine, and *gyokusai* (literally means "shattering jewel," which

signified noble death). Some death poems focus on feelings toward family members and loved ones or on comradeship with other squadron members, and a handful of men confessed equivocal attitudes toward their mission.<sup>208</sup> Ito concludes her work in quite a different manner than arguments expressed by Ohnuki-Tierney in *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms* and *Kamikaze Diaries*:

The recurring ideologically laden terms and images in the tokkō soldiers' jisei, in other words, can be interpreted not as evidence of these young men's naiveté under the state's manipulative power, but as a sign of their collective effort—the effort to face their death by gathering courage from the words of their comrades and predecessors; the efforts to give courage to those who must follow them and comfort to those who must survive without them; and, perhaps most importantly, the effort to give meaning to their own lives—short as they were, but lived with an intensity that is difficult to imagine for those who have never experienced it.

. . . The critics who find the tokkō soldiers' "true" voices only in the pieces that are free from the tennō-centered [emperor-centered] nationalist ideology of the past and dismiss the writings characterized by uniformity may be silencing the voices of the majority—in their eagerness to champion the voices of the minority who share the same value system as their own. I suggest that what the reader hears in the tokkō soldiers' jisei is the collective voice of the patriotic young men who lived and died for their country, which only makes sense when their works are read together within the proper cultural and historical context.<sup>209</sup>

The *jisei* examples presented in Ito's thesis provide convincing support for her interpretation regarding "ideologically laden terms and images" as evidence of the men's personal collective efforts rather than just the state's manipulation of their beliefs. The present study's inclusion of writings from multiple Japanese publications from a wide variety of sources, without excluding any based on contents, addresses Ito's concern of biased selection by some critics who dismiss writings that contain emperor-centered nationalist ideology from their studies.

## **Research on Common Attributes**

This section evaluates studies by Kenji Imai (2004), John Orbell and Tomonori Morikawa (2011), and Luli van der Does-Ishikawa (2015) that identify and classify common



attributes in a large body of last writings of Special Attack Corps members.<sup>210</sup> Each study examines the texts directly to determine common attributes, and Imai's results are published in Japanese while the other two studies are presented in English. The strengths and limitations of these prior studies played a major role in the design of the present study's research methodology.

Imai reviewed last letters written by 143 Army Air Special Attack Corps pilots who died in battle in the Okinawa campaign between March 26 and July 19, 1945. He selected these since the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots and the Bansei Tokkō Peace Museum had both publications with these writings and the originals or copies available for examination.<sup>211</sup> He identified the following major broad themes with percentages of writings that addressed them: thoughts on special attacks (53 percent), love of family (29 percent), thoughts on Empire (12 percent), love of others such as teacher or friend (4 percent), and love of homeland (2 percent).<sup>212</sup> For each person in the study, Imai did a close reading of the last writing and estimated the percentage of this writing that covered each of the five themes. Since other themes were rare, they were excluded from the analysis.<sup>213</sup> His study also investigated relative percentages of the five themes by the men's training background in seven categories.<sup>214</sup> Percentages of themes in the last writings for men with the four training background categories in the greatest numbers as shown in Table 1 seem relatively consistent.

Table 1. Percentages of last writings with certain themes of Army Air Special Attack Corps members based on rank and training background

Theme	Commissioned officers		Noncommissioned officers	
	Air Academy graduates	Former college students (Tokusō)	Youth Pilots (Shōhi) training program	Pilot Training School (Kōyō)
Thoughts on special attacks	50%	59%	50%	44%
Love of family	32%	22%	33%	30%
Thoughts on Empire	17%	11%	9%	19%
Love of others such as teacher	1%	2%	6%	6%
Love of homeland	-	6%	2%	1%
Total men	12	38	39	32

Source: Data adapted from Kenji Imai, *"Genki de meichū ni mairimasu": Isho kara mita rikugun kōkū tokubetsu kōgekitaī* ("In high spirits I go to hit a target": Army Special Attack Corps seen from last letters) (Tōkyō: Genshū Publishing Co., 2004), 89-90, 93, 96.

He also examined published last letters written by 32 Navy Kamikaze Corps members who were college students and compared these to the 38 Army Air Special Attack Corps members who had attended college, with the results summarized in Table 2. Former college students in the Navy write much less (1 percent) than those in the Army (11 percent) about thoughts on Empire including expressions of loyalty to the Emperor and patriotism. The difference is largely made up by Navy men with a greater percentage of their writings on the theme of love of family.

Table 2. Percentages of last writings with certain themes of Navy and Army Air Special Attack Corps members who were college students

Theme	Navy	Army
Thoughts on special attacks	59%	59%
Love of family	33%	22%
Thoughts on Empire	1%	11%
Love of others such as teacher	3%	2%
Love of homeland	4%	6%
Total men	32	38

Source: Data adapted from Imai, "Genki de meichū," 124-6.

In the last letters of former college students in the Navy and Army that were reviewed, there was no indication of any man who shirked from his special attack mission.<sup>215</sup> Imai explains his research methodology including sources, assumptions, scope, names of the 143 Army pilots, and excerpts from their writings.<sup>216</sup> He includes only writings of pilots who faced impending death based on contents or dates of the writings.<sup>217</sup> The study's drawback is that the categories of common themes are so broad to yield little detailed understanding of the pilots' thoughts unless the many excerpts are read.

Orbell and Morikawa analyzed materials written by 661 Special Attack Corps members and 402 other Japanese military men who died in battle (referred to by authors as "rank-and-file").<sup>218</sup> The authors selected writings of "rank-and-file" military men from the same publications that also included writings of Special Attack Corps members.<sup>219</sup> This study was the first systematic analysis of contents of Special Attack Corps member writings as explained by the authors: "The Kamikaze campaign is unique among suicide attack campaigns insofar as

participants left an extensive record of letters, poems, wills, and memoirs that are available for systematic study. These materials are a substantially untapped resource; while many authors have used at least some of them in nonsystematic ways, we have found none who conducts a formal content analysis."<sup>220</sup> Their study measured 19 subcategories of specified thematic content that were summarized into eight categories, which provides a greater understanding of the writings' contents than the five general categories used in Imai's study discussed above. If a theme appeared more than once in a subcategory, it was counted only once.<sup>221</sup> The data from their content analysis, with an excerpt presented below in Table 3, support their main conclusion that "those data are consistent with the pilots' being motivated by an awareness that their deaths could, possibly, help improve Japan's rapidly declining military fortunes, and that with their deaths they were making a contribution both honorable and beautiful."<sup>222</sup> The data in Table 3 show that the percentage in *kamikaze* pilots' writings in the category of honorable or beautiful death (78.8 percent) was considerably higher in comparison to those of rank-and-file military men (60.0 percent). This result possibly may have been caused partly by flattering publicity in the media of exploits by Special Attack Corps members. The belief among *kamikaze* pilots that their contribution was critical to war efforts (26.9 percent) was much more than rank-and-file military men (only 0.5 percent). Perhaps one reason for this considerable difference may be that exaggerated battle reports from the military of many enemy ships that were sunk encouraged inexperienced Special Attack Corps members that their efforts were succeeding and that they could be successful on their missions. Another reason for this difference could be that most *kamikaze* pilots' deaths occurred during a critical stage of the war when the enemy fleet was advancing toward the Japanese mainland and when many large cities were being fire-bombed by B-29 bombers. This second possible reason may also have affected the frequency that *kamikaze*

pilots mentioned that their mission to die was for the country (49.2 percent) in comparison to a lower figure for writings of the rank-and-file military men (35.8 percent).

Table 3. Percentages of coded items with specified thematic content: kamikaze pilots (n: 661) and rank-and-file military men (n: 402)

Category	Sub-categories	Kamikaze		Rank and File	
		Sub categories	Collapsed across categories	Sub categories	Collapsed across categories
"Honorable" or "beautiful" death	Honorable death	71.9% (n=475)	78.8% (n=521)	52.9% (n=213)	60.0% (n=225)
	Beautiful death	28.4% (n=188)		9.7% (n=39)	
Mentions of war effort	War effort, general	37.8% (n=250)	52.5% (n=347)	28.1% (n=113)	29.4% (n=118)
	My contribution critical to war efforts	26.9% (n=178)		0.5% (n=2)	
	Inspiration to others	6.7% (n=44)		2.7% (n=11)	
Expressions of family love, filial piety	Expressions of filial piety	18.9% (n=125)	33.7% (n=223)	18.4% (n=74)	31.3% (n=126)
	Comfort to family	23.1% (n=153)		17.4% (n=70)	
Religion-based comments			28.4% (n=188)		28.6% (n=115)
"I'm doing it for my country"	For Japan/country	36.0% (n=238)	49.2% (n=325)	23.4% (n=94)	35.8% (n=144)
	For the Emperor	32.5% (n=215)		25.6% (n=103)	
	For my hometown	0.8% (n=5)		1.7% (n=7)	

Source: Excerpt from original table at John Orbell and Tomonori Morikawa, "An Evolutionary Account of Suicide Attacks: The Kamikaze Case," *Political Psychology* 32, no. 2 (April 2011): 310, doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00808.x.

A weakness in Orbell and Morikawa's study is lack of details regarding the body of writings that they used and how they were selected. Their article refers to an online annotated bibliography of materials from diverse sources, but comments on this bibliography of 45 sources suggest that the number of men who were classified as *kamikaze* pilots in the study may be overstated.<sup>223</sup> For example, the annotated bibliography incorrectly states that *Kumo nagaruru hateni* (To the End of the Flowing Clouds) published in 1952 has written materials issued by 84 Special Task Force members. The original version published in 1952 has writings by only 63 men, so it is assumed

the bibliography entry should refer to the 1995 expanded edition that includes writings of 84 former students in the Navy who died in battle, but only 45 of these 84 men were in the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps.<sup>224</sup> In another example, the annotated bibliography describes *Rikugun saigo no tokkou kichi* (Army's last special attack base) as "one of the largest collections of written statements by about 200 Kamikaze soldiers who were recruited by the Imperial Army of Japan," even though this book about Bansei Air Base indicates that only 120 pilots in the Special Attack Corps made sorties from there toward Okinawa, and another 72 pilots stationed at Bansei but not in the Special Attack Corps died in battle.<sup>225</sup> The selection methodology used in Orbell and Morikawa's study, lacking any detailed explanation by the authors, also could have duplicated writings published in multiple publications and included writings of men before they were assigned to a special attack unit. Their article does not provide any examples of writings of Special Attack Corps members.

Van der Does-Ishikawa summarizes the incidence of texts containing 340 frequently-occurring content words categorized into 18 subsets by reviewing 379 writings, including 80 poems, of Navy Kamikaze Corps members.<sup>226</sup> The researcher employed "word extraction, multidimensional scaling (MDS) and word co-occurrence analysis" with the following steps: (1) identified content words that appeared in more than five writings, (2) used an MDS statistical computer program to display the structure of the dataset's words based on the sample's similarity or dissimilarity including identification of word clusters of associated words, and (3) performed a co-occurrence network analysis to classify the words into subgraphs along with displaying the magnitude of occurrence and the relationships between words.<sup>227</sup> This approach dissects the words in the writings without trying to understand the ideas and themes by simply reading the entire writings. The following word subsets appear most frequently in the writings with the

percentage of occurrence in parentheses: (1) self-first person pronoun and associated linguistic items (78 percent), (2) family (77 percent), (3) ideal youth (65 percent), (4) military expressions used in their social environment (64 percent), (5) concerns for the addressees' well-being (64 percent), (6) emotions (63 percent), (7) nature and the homeland (62 percent), and (8) mission, responsibility (59 percent).<sup>228</sup> The study concludes that none of the following four premises about *kamikaze* pilots found support in the study's empirical results based on the low percentages of occurrence for certain content words and subsets: (1) actions under duress with lack of responsibility and authority to make choices, (2) intellectual and psychological weaknesses of men who are naïve, brain-washed, and conformist, (3) extremism exhibited by fanatic Shintoism and emperor-worship, and (4) belligerence and hatred against enemies along with prominent topics in missives of imperialism, militarism, or ultranationalism.<sup>229</sup> The author explains, "In short, the top forty words are related to the notion of family and their members, indicating that the Kamikaze pilots primarily wrote about their relationship with family members, their health and well-being, before their own impending deaths."<sup>230</sup> This research has the shortcoming of using word subsets that give few insights into the thoughts and feelings of pilots who were facing death, especially with almost no excerpts from writings to support the author's claims. For example, the following conclusions are not supported: "Their writings display anguish, desires and doubts among other natural emotions. Many letters mention conflicting feelings about friendship and romantic relationships. Some voice doubts about their own decision to carry out their mission, but such doubts are typically followed by expressions of reasoning, self-assurance, and self-encouragement."<sup>231</sup> Other unsubstantiated statements include that "the Kamikazes were in anguish, but they nonetheless chose to go for two reasons: they considered themselves to be 'the chosen ones' and no alternative was possible, otherwise their treasured home would be lost,

and with it their identity," and "the evidence from this empirical study is compelling: the missives demonstrated how each one of the Tokkō-tai youth, faced with the order to sortie, wrestled with it, considered it, and came to a decision to obey before making their final flight."<sup>232</sup>

The English translations of three short excerpts of writings do not indicate the sources and only provide initials of the writers, which make it difficult to verify authenticity of the quotations. The study by van der Does-Ishikawa does not explain how the 379 writings were accessed, although it mentions that they come from the Ōmi Collection, which is stored at the museum at the former Etajima Naval Academy, now the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force First Service School.<sup>233</sup>

The lack of details regarding the source of the writings does not allow another person to read them in order to confirm the author's results and conclusions. The study does identify religious affiliations of Navy Kamikaze Corps members, which is not addressed in other sources: Buddhist (89.64 percent), Shintō (9.20 percent), Tenrikyō (0.73 percent), and Christian (0.44 percent).<sup>234</sup>

However, the author does not explain how these religious affiliations were determined, and most Japanese persons practice to some extent both Buddhism and Shintōism concurrently depending on the context.

This chapter described the lack of English translations of last writings of Special Attack Corps members and the shortfalls of many prior studies of these writings. The existing research about the men's final writings has several drawbacks such as lack of documentation on research methodology details to allow understanding of what exactly was examined, inclusion of men who did not die in special attacks and of writings written before assignment to a special attack unit, assessment of only a small sample of writings with results that were projected inappropriately to the entire population, and either an absence of a methodical approach to identify common themes or an insufficient number of classifications to understand the men's

thoughts and emotions. The present study's research methodology outlined in the next chapter seeks to avoid these limitations while providing additional English translations of final writings of Special Attack Corps members.



## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

The methodology used in the present study's analysis of Special Attack Corps writings includes both qualitative and quantitative elements. Typical themes and phrases identified in the writings are supported qualitatively with examples and quantitatively by percentages of authors whose writings have these characteristics. Although formal statistical analysis was considered, it was not feasible due to issues such as an incomplete population of writings, a population that is not homogeneous (e.g., length and purpose of writings very different such as diaries and postcards), the availability of writings that differ greatly between different special attack units such as Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps and Navy Shin'yō Corps, and the probable bias in available writings that have been published. For these reasons, although this study considered writings of 392 men out of the total 5,843 Special Attack Corps members who died in battle, the quantitative results cannot be used to make any definitive conclusions about the entire population. The writings have been examined with several groupings such as educational background (e.g., former university student or not) or age to determine whether there are differences in attributes of their writings, but the study did not do detailed biographical evaluations of individuals to assess their writings.

This chapter describes the present study's research methodology in detail so that the approach, scope, data sources, assumptions, and limitations can be understood and so that the steps can be replicated by others. The first section specifies criteria for selection of writings examined. The next part discusses why my own English translations have been used for analysis of last writings of Special Attack Corps members. The third part considers limitations in the examination of writings with issues regarding such topics as completeness, accuracy,

authenticity, background, and truthfulness. The final section explains characteristics of the population selected and attributes in the writings reviewed.

### **Criteria for Selection**

The study only includes men who died in a special attack as recognized by the Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai (Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association) in *Tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Special Attack Corps) published in 1990. The only writings examined are those that have a very high probability that they were written after assignment to a special attack unit. All writings, including short poems, are considered. However, an individual short poem (e.g., *tanka* of 31 syllables or *haiku* of 17 syllables) has been excluded from analysis if this is the only available writing. Poems written by Special Attack Corps members already have been studied by Ito in "Japanese Tokkō Soldiers and Their Jisei." Only one individual short poem often is problematic in the analysis of contents and themes of a person's writings due to extremely few words, which make it difficult to assess context and meaning and to ascertain the time period when written.

Verification that writers died in a special attack was performed in order to avoid unintentional inclusion of men who were either not in the Special Attack Corps or did not die in a manner recognized by Japanese military authorities as a special attack. For example, Ensign Shunji Shinozaki, a member of the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps 1st Shōwa Squadron, is incorrectly described as dying in a special attack by the Navy Flight Reserve Students 14th Class Association.<sup>235</sup> Shinozaki died during takeoff at Kanoya Air Base when the bomb dropped from his Zero fighter and exploded on the runway before he could get into the air, so the Navy did not classify his death as one that occurred in a special attack, and the Tokkōtai Commemoration

Peace Memorial Association and other Japanese sources do not recognize Shinozaki as dying in a special attack.<sup>236</sup> As a result, Shinozaki's last letters to his family are not included in the present study even though he faced the same circumstances as the other ten 1st Shōwa Squadron members who took off from Kanoya on the same date and did not return.<sup>237</sup> In another example, the Chiran Special Attack Memorial Society inaccurately lists First Lieutenant Kazuhiko Ishikawa, 62nd Shinbu Special Attack Squadron Leader, with other men who died in special attacks.<sup>238</sup> He died when his plane crashed into a mountain in heavy fog when flying between two air bases in Japan, so his death was not acknowledged by the Army or the Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association as one that happened in a special attack.<sup>239</sup>

In order to examine writings of Special Attack Corps members as they faced their impending deaths, only those that are certain or have a very high probability to have been written after assignment to a special attack unit have been included in the present research study. All available evidence was used to determine when the writings were composed. The definite ones are writings that refer directly to making a sortie for a special attack or a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack. Other ones where the timing could be determined with certainty was a date on the letter and a known date when the special attack squadron was formed. However, some writings of Special Attack Corps members that have been published are not dated and do not directly mention participation in a special attack. The timing of most writings are determined easily based on contents, but the following very short letter by Ensign Hitoshi Kawai of the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps 3rd Mitate Squadron, which has been included in the present study, illustrates the difficulty to conclude with absolute certainty that it was written after assignment to a special attack unit:

At long last I will accomplish my desire.

I have not even one regret.

I pray for everyone's health.<sup>240</sup>

Kawai's letter is not an extract, since the source shows the actual letter on a postcard, although no date is provided. The first sentence is assumed to refer to the special attack mission, but this cannot be proven. In published letters of Special Attack Corps members, a death poem is often included, but many times it is difficult to determine whether it was composed at the same time as the letter and was part of the letter. For example, Naemura includes the following poem with two last letters of Second Lieutenant Takashi Komecha:

Emperor said, in the world  
Only let there be peace  
With all our might  
Now let us strike  
We will do battle<sup>241</sup>

The contents do not allow a conclusive determination that Komecha wrote the poem after assignment to a special attack squadron, but it was judged to be after since it was published together with two final letters where described events and a date allowed a certain conclusion regarding timing.

Several publications include writings of a Special Attack Corps member both before and after his joining the Special Attack Corps. When analyzing a person's writings, all available translated writings after assignment to the Special Attack Corps have been included in the present study, and any writings judged to be before that date have been excluded. Taking the writings of Ensign Takashi Wakaomi as an example, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (To the end of the flowing clouds) includes both six pages from an undated diary and a one-page final letter with a date and time one hour before he took off on his suicide mission.<sup>242</sup> Since his diary mentions no events or ideas that refer definitively to the period after assignment to the Special Attack Corps,

it has been omitted from writings to be examined. The writings of Second Lieutenant Akira Okayasu illustrate the variety and number of writings of some men after assignment to the Special Attack Corps. In the week before his final sortie from Chiran Air Base, he wrote six separate short letters to family members, seventeen poems, diary entries, and other writings.<sup>243</sup> All of these have been included in the last writings that have been examined. If the same writing is published in more than one place with one or more being an abridged version, then the longest one has been used. For instance, *Seishun no isho* (Last letters of youth) presents Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Yukio Saitō's last letter of four sentences without any indication of the addressee's name and that it is abridged, but the same letter, addressed to his mother, with a length about four times longer appears in *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū (2)* (Last letters, poems, and writings of Navy Preparatory Flight Trainees (2)), so this latter one was used for the present study.<sup>244</sup>

### **Selection Translations**

English translations are used for the analysis of last writings of Special Attack Corps members. Since published English translations are extremely limited, the translations used for the present study are my own and have been published in "Letters, Poems, Diaries, and Other Writings" on the website *Kamikaze Images*.<sup>245</sup> These translations let persons who do not read Japanese better understand the thoughts and feelings of Special Attack Corps members as they faced near certain death. English translations also allow readers to examine supporting examples for results in the present research and to perform their own investigation of contents. Most writings included have not been published before in English. Where existing English translations are available, these have been consulted when completing a new translation.

My own translations avoid some drawbacks of existing published translations that sometimes add or omit ideas or words when compared to original Japanese writings, which make them questionable when trying to compare and analyze different ideas and wording of writings of Special Attack Corps members. Even though the English translations of seven last writings included in Inoguchi and Nakajima's *The Divine Wind* generally are accurate, the following example from the beginning of Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Isao Matsuo's last letter shows how additions and omissions from the original Japanese can affect content analysis and comparison with other last writings. Inoguchi and Nakajima's original Japanese book published in 1951 has the following beginning of Matsuo's final letter:

父母様 喜んで下さい。勲はいゝ立派な死に場所を得ました。今日は最後の日です。皇国の興廃此の一戦に在り、大東亜決戦に南海の空の花と散ります。  
*Chichihahasama yorokonde kudasai. Isao wa ii rippa na shi ni basho o emashita. Kyō wa saigo no hi desu. Kōkoku no kōhai kono issen ni ari, daitōa kessen ni nankai no sora no hana to chirimasu.*<sup>246</sup>

The English translation in *The Divine Wind* published in 1958 of the letter portion above is:

Dear Parents:  
Please congratulate me. I have been given a splendid opportunity to die. This is my last day. The destiny of our homeland hinges on the decisive battle in the seas to the south where I shall fall like a blossom from a radiant cherry tree.<sup>247</sup>

The more literal translation from the original Japanese that is used for the present study is:

Dear Father and Mother,  
Please be glad. I have obtained a splendid place to die. This is the last day. The Empire's destiny lies with this battle. In the decisive battle for Greater East Asia, I will fall like a flower in the skies of the southern seas.<sup>248</sup>

Although the translation in *The Divine Wind* captures well the general meaning of the original passage, there are several places where its impreciseness can affect analysis of contents. The Japanese original uses the common word *hana*, which literally means "flower" or "blossom," whereas the translation goes beyond the actual word to interpret it as a cherry tree blossom.

Since the present study specifically quantifies the frequency that cherry blossoms are mentioned in reference to death, the use of *The Divine Wind* translation in this case would overstate the results. This translation omits some words from the original such as "Greater East Asia" (*daitōa*) and "skies" (*sora*) and adds words like "radiant." The first sentence is translated as "Please congratulate me" rather than the more common translation of "Please be glad," which also would distort an analysis of contents since these make up two distinct attributes quantified in the present study. The second sentence is translated in the passage from *The Divine Wind* as "a splendid opportunity to die" rather than the direct translation of "a splendid place to die," which is another attribute in the writings that is quantified in the present study.

The English translations in *The Mind of the Kamikaze* by Kawatoko have some shortcomings with expressions by a non-native speaker that sometimes do not allow for the meaning in the original Japanese to be determined easily in addition to drawbacks summarized in the previous paragraph.<sup>249</sup> A last writing by Captain Yoshio Itsui is an example:

人生の総決算  
何も謂ふこと無し  
伍井大尉  
*Jinsei no sōkessan*  
*Nanimo iu koto nashi*  
*Itsui tai*<sup>250</sup>

Kawatoko translates the above as follows:

This is my final statement.  
I have nothing to say.  
I only do my best<sup>251</sup>

The translation used for this research study is:

The final settlement of accounts of my life  
There is nothing to say  
Captain Itsui<sup>252</sup>

Kawatoko's translation of Itsui's writing has two principal flaws. First, the statement "I only do my best" does not exist in the original Japanese and has been added by the translator. Second, the term "final statement" is misleading, since most readers would think that the rest of the writing would be Itsui's last utterance. The following two sentences seem contradictory: "This is my final statement. I have nothing to say." However, "statement" is correct in that the Japanese does mean "settlement of accounts," but use of the word "statement" in this context causes confusion.

The main objective of an effective translation is to convey accurately and clearly the meaning of the original text with language that sounds natural. The two principal approaches are literal translation, which follows as closely as possible the wording and form of the source language, and free translation, which focuses on the meaning of the source text to make it comprehensible to the target audience without being as concerned about the source's structure and wording. The present study tries to follow an approach somewhere between these two extremes, especially with regard to idiomatic expressions that do not translate well directly from Japanese to English, but many concepts and words are translated more literally in order to permit comparison of their frequency of use between writings of different persons. If a literal translation of a portion of text provides an accurate meaning that can be understood easily in English, then this is preferred in the present study in comparison to a more free translation that adds ideas or words not in the original. One writer translates the first sentence of Army Second Lieutenant Bun'ichi Ishikiryama's last letter to his parents, "I will go as Kamikaze on 15:00 tomorrow."<sup>253</sup> A more literal translation used for the present study reads, "Finally it has been decided that I will go on a mission tomorrow on the 12th at 15:00."<sup>254</sup> The Kamikaze Corps was the name of the Japanese Navy's special attack units, but the name was not used at all by the Army's special attack units. The use of the name Kamikaze in this sentence is a good example of a free



translation to a word that does not exist in the original text. Another writer translates a sentence from a diary entry of Ensign Heiichi Okabe, "I shall die watching the pathetic struggle of our nation."<sup>255</sup> The more literal translation used for the present study reads, "I will go as I am watching the country's grim condition."<sup>256</sup> The original text uses the common word for "go" rather than "die," and the Japanese does not include the concept of "struggle" included in the freer translation.

A direct comparative analysis of writings in Japanese of Special Attack Corps members such as the one by Orbell and Morikawa might seem preferable to a comparable examination of English translations, but their article in English contains only results by number and percentage of 661 *kamikaze* pilots' writings that mention certain topics such as "honorable death" and "comfort to family." The article contains no examples from writings to support inclusion in a category, although an online supporting file does provide one example without the name of the writer for each category (e.g., Honorable death - "This will be the most glorious moment in my life"). Their research findings do not allow a person who does not read Japanese and does not have access to source publications to be able to view the support for the research results and to understand the context of the topics included in the writings.<sup>257</sup>

No matter what care is taken in translating to English from Japanese writings of Special Attack Corps members, certain limitations and risks exist. The Japanese language has several levels of formality and politeness, and the present study's translations do not try to reflect these. When a sentence's subject or direct object is not stated explicitly, a judgment must be made in translation based on the overall information provided in a writing, which usually is obvious but at times not. Sometimes a person's given name in Japanese has multiple possible pronunciations, so the most common pronunciation has been selected if nothing regarding the pronunciation

could be found in printed or Internet sources. For example, the given name of Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Zen'ichi Ji'nushi is 善一, which has the common pronunciations of both Yoshikazu and Zen'ichi.<sup>258</sup> Since a Google search of "善一" and "ぜんいち" (Zen'ichi) resulted in slightly more hits than "善一" and "よしかず" (Yoshikazu), Zen'ichi was the pronunciation that was selected. A single Japanese word may be translated into many possible English words that can be considered correct translations. A common word used as an adjective and adverb in the writings of Special Attack Corps members is 立派 (*rippa*), which as an adjective can be translated in English as splendid, fine, praiseworthy, brilliant, noble, worthy, magnificent, good, nice, and several other words. In the last letter of Captain Yoshio Itsui to his son who was four months old, Kawatoko translates one phrase, which contains the word *rippa*, as "strive to become to an honorable Japanese man."<sup>259</sup> The translation for the present study reads "become a good Japanese man as a child of the Emperor."<sup>260</sup> This is an example where "honorable" and "good" are both acceptable English translations for the Japanese word *rippa*, but they have different connotations in English. Moreover, this excerpt from Itsui's last letter provides another example where a person with a free translation style omits a key phrase (i.e., "as a child of the Emperor") that is included in the Japanese text.

### **Limitations in Writings**

Last writings of Special Attack Corps members have several drawbacks that make it difficult to come to definitive conclusions when analyzing contents. This section discusses issues regarding completeness, accuracy, authenticity, background, and truthfulness of the writings. These limitations should be considered when reviewing the present research study's results.

Usually it cannot be known whether available published letters, diaries, and other writings of a Special Attack Corps member are all of the writings that were written from the date of assignment to a special attack unit until death. Families may have made only certain writings available for review by others, donation to a museum, or publication, so the possibility exists that these other writings not made available have contents that are different than what is known. In addition, some families may have never shared any writings.

Any one publication contains only a selection of writings of Special Attack Corps members, so the selection process may have been influenced by views of the editor or publisher. Ohnuki-Tierney voices her criticism of writings selected for publication: "If liberals have represented these pilots through their own lens, so have those on the right. A large number of publications, mostly non-scholarly, consist of collections of letters, wills, etc., taken out of context and emphasizing patriotic themes."<sup>261</sup> Rielly voices a similar complaint about writings published in English: "It is unfortunate that too few sources about the kamikazes have been published in English. Most of those extant have been of three types: (1) translations of work by pilots and officers who seek to justify their participation in the program, (2) publications with a leftist flavor, tending to discredit Japan's participation in the war, and (3) journalistic writings by Western bushidophiles seeking to glorify the exotic aspects of Japanese culture."<sup>262</sup> In order to minimize effects of bias by an editor or publisher in including only certain types of writings of Special Attack Corps members in an existing publication, multiple Japanese books from a wide variety of sources have been used for the present study. No book was excluded as a source in order to obtain a wide-ranging sample of writings. Regardless of questions and criticisms of one-sidedness of some sources used in this study such as publications by the controversial Yasukuni Shrine, the writings examined for the present study represent actual words from Special Attack

Corps members although some paragraphs or sentences may have been omitted by editors. Most books used for the present study have partiality by the editor or publisher, but a few seem to be less susceptible to this. For example, books by Naemura and Terai seem to be impartial attempts to collect and publish as many last writings as possible of Army Special Attack Corps pilots who made sorties from the air bases of Bansei and Miyakonojō, respectively.<sup>263</sup> Table 4 lists sources of writings used in the present study.

Table 4. Sources of writings

	Number	Percentage
Matsugi, ed., <i>Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho</i> (Last letters of Navy Special Attack Corps)	58	14.8%
Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, ed., <i>Konpaku no kiroku</i> (Record of departed spirits)	51	13.0%
Kitagawa, ed., <i>Ā kamikaze tokkōtai</i> (Heroic Kamikaze Special Attack Corps)	37	9.4%
Naemura, <i>Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi</i> (Army's last special attack base)	35	8.9%
Terai, ed., <i>Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai</i> (Miyakonojō Air Base Hayate Special Attack Shinbu Unit)	26	6.6%
Yasukuni Jinja, ed., <i>Eirei no koto no ha</i> (Words of the spirits of war dead), Volumes 1-10	23	5.9%
Kanoya Kōkū Kichi Shiryōkan Renraku Kyōgikai, <i>Kokoro no sakebi</i> (Cries of the heart)	21	5.4%
Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, ed., <i>Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura</i> (Continuation • Ah, cherry blossoms of same class)	18	4.6%
Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai ed., <i>Gunjō: Chiran tokkō kichi yori</i> (Deep blue: From Chiran special attack air base)	16	4.1%
Hakuō Izokukai, ed., <i>Kumo nagaruru hate ni: Senbotsu kaigun hikō yobi gakusei no shuki</i> (To the end of the flowing clouds: Writings of Navy reserve students who died in war) (1952 or 1995 edition)	15	3.8%
Kojima, ed., <i>Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū (1)</i> (Last letters, poems, and writings of Navy Preparatory Flight Trainees (1))	15	3.8%
Mainichi Shinbunsha, ed. <i>Seishun no isho</i> (Last letters of youth)	13	3.3%
Unabarakai Henshū Iinkai, ed., <i>Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū (2)</i> (Last letters, poems, and writings of Navy Preparatory Flight Trainees (2)).	11	2.8%
Katabami, <i>Mō hitotsu no "Eien no Zero"</i> (Another "Eternal Zero")	6	1.5%
Other (27 sources)	47	12.1%
Total	392	100.0%

Source: Author.

By just reading a published writing by a Special Attack Corps member, it is difficult to determine whether the text is complete or whether some parts have been omitted. Sometimes

editors will indicate that a portion has been omitted, but there is no indication about the length or topics in the omitted parts. Diaries will sometimes have missing dates, which could either mean that the person did not write on that day or that the editor did not include that day in the book. Take for example the diary of Ensign Yasuo Ichijima, which covers the last ten days up to his death on April 29, 1945. One book includes an entry on each of the ten days, whereas another publication has the complete entry from the first day and shortened entries from the second, fourth, and fifth days.<sup>264</sup> A third book includes just the shortened entries from the second, fourth, and fifth days.<sup>265</sup> There is no indication that any day or text has been excluded. Ohnuki-Tierney explains that editors of books of writings by Special Attack Corps pilots included mainly passages that corresponded to their beliefs: "Beyond brief remarks in their prefaces and postscripts, the editors, except Morioka, rarely spelled out their method of selection. In general, however, editors with liberal inclinations excluded nationalistic passages, while conservative editors did the opposite."<sup>266</sup> Although this may be true with regards to omission of certain passages, other considerations for editors are reader interest and space constraints. For example, one of the books in the series entitled *Eirei no koto no ha* (Words of the spirits of war dead) published by Yasukuni Shrine omits the passage below in the last letter written by Second Lieutenant Junjirō Wakasugi to his mother, but this passage is included in another book:<sup>267</sup>

While thinking that I should write something, I will not go further in my writing.

I have no connections with money or women.

Please use my savings account money for something for my younger sisters. In only about three hours I think that I will be able to meet everyone, and I will introduce myself to Father.<sup>268</sup>

This series of books published by Yasukuni Shrine limits each writing to two pages, so the above omission does not necessarily relate to any bias but rather space limitations. In this instance the

exclusion of words do not affect significantly the meaning of the published letter. There are only a very few cases where an image of the writing is published next to the text, so in these cases the completeness of the text sometimes could be verified.<sup>269</sup> The present study uses the most complete version available of a specific writing, but there are still a few instances where a writing is included in the study with known omissions based on indications by the editor.<sup>270</sup>

There are various types of concerns related to accuracy of Japanese text of last writings of Special Attack Corps members. Morioka comments that he noted many insignificant copying errors and typographical errors when comparing published versions of writings of Special Attack Corps members to the original documents, and there were some copying errors that could not be overlooked since they distorted the interpretation of the original document and a few errors that even missed the meaning of the original.<sup>271</sup> The same types of errors were noted in the present study when comparing different published versions. Often these differences only related to minor matters such as updates to the modern way of writing *kanji* (Chinese characters) and variations in punctuation, paragraphs, and use of *kanji* or *hiragana* (syllabic alphabet).<sup>272</sup>

Ideally a researcher could examine original versions of writings of Special Attack Corps members. However, Ohnuki-Tierney explains, "Unpublished material is nearly impossible to use in publications due to the difficulty in locating the material and in receiving permissions from the survivors."<sup>273</sup> There are other practical obstacles such as verifying that the writing is an original rather than a transcription and getting permission from a museum to examine directly the originals if they exist rather than copies. Even a researcher's direct use of original writings has risks as shown in the following passage cited by van der Does-Ishikawa in the analysis of 379 writings by Navy Special Attack Corps members in the Ōmi Collection held by the JMSDF First

Service School at the former Japanese Naval Academy.<sup>274</sup> She asserts, "The following example depicts empathy or compassion towards the people of the unknown enemy land."<sup>275</sup>

From the windows of my plane I look to the Imperial land and people that have given me abundant love all along. As I call Banzai praying for victory, my thoughts go to those called 'the enemy' – I imagine the beauty of the land and faces of the people of the enemy nation. Tears well up and I dab my eyes, but I must stand firm in my conviction. I tell myself that there is no other way but to crash into the enemy.<sup>276</sup>

Referring to excerpts from writings, including the one above, of two Special Attack Corps members in the journal article, the author claims, "The authenticity of the above words is not in doubt, as the two letters were found in the original state in the envelopes when the analyst consulted the collection, witnessed by two other researchers."<sup>277</sup> In comparison to writings by other Special Attack Corps members in published Japanese sources, the contents of this passage are quite unusual with just the pilot's thought of the enemy bringing tears to his eyes, so investigation was performed to verify its legitimacy despite the author's contention that there is no doubt regarding its validity. The name of the pilot who wrote the above passage is not specified in the article, but the writer's initials of MM are provided. MM refers to Minoru Mori, a *kaiten* human torpedo pilot, which can be ascertained by comparing the Japanese version in van der Does-Ishikawa's article (refer to first passage below) with a version in two Japanese books (refer to second passage below):

愛機の内より大君の鎮まり居ます御國の愛を拝し奉り候ひて大君の万才と大日本帝国の必勝を祈り候えば髣髴として湧き興る敵國の山河人々の顔唯唯目頭熱くなり候ひて撃碎せずんば止まざるの念を更に固め申し候。

*Aiki no uchi yori ōkimi no shizumari imasu mikuni no ai o haishi tatematsuri sōraite ōkimi no banzai to dainipponteikoku no hisshō o inori sōraeba hōfutsu to shite wakiokoru tekikoku no sanga hitobito no kao tadatada megashira atsuku nari sōraite gekisai sezunba yamazaru no nen o sara ni katamemōshi sōrō.*<sup>278</sup>

愛艇の内より、大君のしろしめす故国の空を拝し奉り候いて、大君の万歳と大日本帝国の必勝を祈り候えば、髣髴として湧き起る故国の山河、人々の顔、唯々目頭熱くなり候いて、撃碎せずんば止まざるの念を更に固め申し候。

*Aitei no uchi yori, ōkimi no shiroshimesu kokoku no sora o haishi tatematsuri sōraite,*

*ōkimi no banzai to dainipponteikoku no hisshō o inori sōraeba, hōfutsu to shite  
wakiokoru kokoku no sanga, hitobito no kao, tadatada megashira atsuku nari sōraite,  
gekisai sezunba yamazaru no nen o sara ni katamemōshi sōrō.*<sup>279</sup>

Below is a translation of the second passage, which provides a completely different meaning than the English version provided by van der Does-Ishikawa:

From inside our boat, I looked at the skies of the homeland ruled over by the Emperor. Saying long live the Emperor, when I pray for certain victory for the Empire of Japan, I indeed am moved to tears at the homeland's mountains and rivers and at persons' faces that appear as vivid memories. The feeling that I must destroy the enemy completely has strengthened even more.<sup>280</sup>

The article's version in Japanese of Mori's writing (referred to as version 1) has three significant differences when compared to the version published in two Japanese books (referred to as version 2). The first word is the most notable one. Version 1 uses the word 愛機 (*aiki*) for "my plane," whereas version 2 uses 愛艇 (*aitei*) for "our boat," which refers to the submarine carrying Mori's *kaiten* weapon that was launched at Guam Island's Apra Harbor on January 12, 1945. The second key difference is that version 1 has the word 敵國 (*tekikoku*) for "enemy nation," while version 2 uses 故国 (*kokoku*) for "homeland." The context of the article's excerpt and the entire writing of Mori provides no support for use of "enemy nation." It seems natural to have tears when remembering one's homeland but not when thinking about "the land and faces of the people of the enemy" that one has never seen. The final major difference is where version 1 has 愛 (*ai*) for "love," and version 2 shows 空 (*sora*) for "skies." The direct translation of this portion of version 1 is "see the love of the country where Emperor is calm," but it has been translated improperly as "look to the Imperial land and people that have given me abundant love all along." This same part in version 2 has the more natural thought of "looked at the skies of the homeland ruled over by the Emperor," since it is common to see skies but not love.



The writings of Special Attack Corps members who died in battle have several other inherent limitations. Just because an idea or opinion is not mentioned in a writing does not necessarily mean that writer did not believe this. A last writing before death covers only a few topics, so nothing is available regarding a person's views on many subjects. Some of this silence on certain subjects may have been due to censorship of personal correspondence in the military, but much probably is attributable to an individual's decision to not write anything about particular matters. Usually most background information about a writer and an addressee is not known, which makes it difficult to understand why the writer includes or does not include certain comments. For example, some last writings of Special Attack Corps members do not make clear that they will die soon, but the reason for this could be that there was a prior letter or home visit when this already had been communicated. Another drawback when examining writings of Special Attack Corps members who died in battle is that generally there are not enough writings to analyze how their views changed from before the Special Attack Corps assignment and after. The factors of military censorship, peer pressure by squadron members to conform to certain beliefs, and self-censorship to not write things objectionable to family members and others must be kept in mind when analyzing contents of final writings of Special Attack Corps members.

### **Population and Attributes**

The writings of the 392 Special Attack Corps members selected for the present research study generally have a wide range when considering various factors such as military branch, type of special attack unit, age, sortie base, rank, and length of writings. This section quantifies these different factors to show that the sample of selected last writings minimizes sampling bias for a total population where certain editors and publishers may have slanted their selections in support

of their views. Multiple writings from the same author (e.g., separate letters to father and mother) have been considered in the analysis but counted only once. The Appendix provides names of Special Attack Corps members whose writings were included in the present study. The relative frequency distributions of attributes of writers in the sample mostly follow closely distributions of attributes of all Special Attack Corps members who died in battle, although Table 5 indicates that five of eight special attack units (i.e., Navy Shin'yō Corps, Navy Special Submarine Force, Army Offshore Advance Force, Army Giretsu Airborne Unit, and Army Tank Corps) have almost no writings included in the present study (i.e., only four writings out of 1,881 men who died). It is not possible to make conclusions from writings of these five special attack units since the sample is too small, so the focus of the present study will be on writings of Special Attack Corps members in the Navy Kamikaze Air Corps, Navy Kaiten Corps, and the Army Air Corps.

Table 5. Last writings by military branch and special attack unit

	Men with writings in present study	Total men who died	% with writings reviewed
Navy Kamikaze Air Corps	211	2,514	8.4%
Navy Shin'yō Corps	1	1,082	0.1%
Navy Special Submarine Force	2	436	0.5%
Navy Kaiten Corps	24	104	23.1%
Total Navy	238	4,136	5.8%
Army Air Corps	153	1,344	11.4%
Army Offshore Advance Force	0	266	0%
Army Giretsu Airborne Unit	1	88	1.1%
Army Tank Corps	0	9	0%
Total Army	154	1,707	9.0%
Grand total	392	5,843	6.7%

*Source:* Author, column on "Total men who died" from inscription dated June 28, 2005, on plaque erected by Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association next to *kamikaze* pilot statue in front of Yūshūkan Museum at Yasukuni Shrine in Tōkyō. Plaque photograph at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/monuments/yushukan/index.htm>.

Table 6 shows that the frequency distribution of known ages of Navy Special Attack Corps members with writings included in the present study very closely matches the distribution for all men in the Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps who died.<sup>281</sup> The overwhelming majority of men with writings in the study were between ages 18 and 23 when they died in special attacks.

The average (arithmetic mean) age at death for Special Attack Corps members in the present study is 21.4 years, with the Army at an average of 21.4 years and the Navy at 21.3 years.

Table 6. Ages of Special Attack Corps members

Age at Death	Writings in present study			Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps
	Navy	Army	Total	
16-17	2.1%	1.3%	1.8%	1.1%
18-23	83.2%	81.8%	82.7%	82.4%
24-29	13.9%	14.9%	14.3%	15.9%
30 or more	0.4%	2.0%	1.0%	0.6%
Not known	0.4%	-	0.2%	-
Total men	238	154	392	2,225

*Source:* Author, column on "Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps" computed from data in exhibit at Kanoya Air Base Museum of age at death, if known, of Kamikaze Special Attack Corps members (visit on October 10, 2018).

The sortie bases of Kamikaze Corps members as shown in Table 7 align closely with the sortie bases of men whose writings are included in the present study. Six of the eight air bases with the most special attack sorties making up 80 percent of the total writings were located in Kagoshima or Miyazaki Prefectures in southern Kyūshū, while the other two air bases in the top eight that make up 7 percent of the total writings were in the Philippines.

Table 7. Sortie air bases of Navy Kamikaze Special Attack Corps members

	Writings in present study	Total Kamikaze Corps Members
Kanoya	38%	33%
Kushira	19%	13%
Kokubu No. 2	10%	7%
Kokubu No. 1	5%	6%
Mabalacat (Philippines)	4%	6%
Miyazaki	5%	5%
Cebu (Philippines)	3%	3%
Ibusuki	4%	3%
Other in Philippines	5%	8%
Other in Taiwan	1%	4%
Other	6%	11%
Unknown	-	1%
Total men	211	2,526

*Source:* Author, column on "Total Kamikaze Corps Members" computed from data in "Kamikaze Special Attack Corps" exhibit at Kanoya Air Base Museum (visit on October 10, 2018).

Table 8 lists the top three Army sortie air bases of Chiran, Bansei, and Miyakonojō, which are located in Kagoshima or Miyazaki Prefectures in southern Kyūshū. The table shows that a total of 87 percent of men with writings in the present study took off from one of the top three bases,

but only 45 percent of the total Army Air Corps members made a sortie from these bases. One reason for this significant discrepancy is that several books focus on writings of pilots who took off from Chiran. In addition, Bansei and Miyakonojō each have one book devoted exclusively to writings of pilots who made sorties from these two former Army air bases.<sup>282</sup> The second reason is that there are relatively few writings available in publications for Army pilots who took off on special attack missions from bases in the Philippines, Taiwan, and other locations.

Table 8. Sortie air bases of Army Air Special Attack Corps members

	Writings in present study	Total Army Air Corps Members
Chiran	39%	30%
Bansei	27%	9%
Miyakonojō	21%	6%
Nyūtabaru	2%	3%
Other in Philippines	1%	21%
Other in Taiwan	4%	10%
Other	6%	21%
Total men	153	1,342

*Source:* Author, column on "Total Army Air Corps Members" computed from data in following two sources: Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, ed., *Konpaku no kiroku* (Record of departed spirits), rev. ed. (Chiran Town: Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, 2005), 69; Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Special Attack Corps) (Tōkyō: Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, 1990), 253-303.

Table 9 indicates that most men who died in special attacks were enlisted noncommissioned officers, but the relative proportion of writings included in the present study is less for these officers. The percentage of writings (40 percent) by commissioned officers who were former college students is 15 percent greater than the percentage (25 percent) of total former college students who died in special attacks, and the main reason for this is the greater relative number of published writings by former college students in comparison to enlisted noncommissioned officers.

Table 9. Last writings by rank and training background of Navy and Army Air Special Attack Corps members

	Writings in present study			Total men who died		
	Navy	Army	Total	Navy	Army	Total
Commissioned officers						
College students	47%	30%	40%	25%	23%	25%
Military academy graduates	6%	10%	8%	5%	12%	7%
Other	1%	6%	3%	1%	12%	5%
Total commissioned officers	54%	46%	51%	31%	47%	37%
Enlisted noncommissioned officers	46%	54%	49%	69%	53%	63%
Total men	211	153	364	2,514	1,329	3,843

Source: Author, columns on "Total men who died" from Kiyomi Morioka, *Wakaki tokkōtaiin to taiheiyō sensō* (Young Special Attack Corps members and Pacific War) (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1995), 11, 51. Morioka's figures come from data in Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Special Attack Corps) (Tōkyō: Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, 1990), 129-219, 253-299.

The present study includes writings of former college students from many different schools as shown in Table 10. Nine of the top ten institutions making up 47.3 percent of the total are located in Tōkyō. There are substantial percentages of former students who attended higher technical schools, teacher colleges, and colleges of commerce.

Table 10. Higher education institutions (not including military academies) of Special Attack Corps members with writings in present study

	Number	Percentage
Waseda University (Tōkyō)	13	8.4%
Chūō University (Tōkyō)	12	7.8%
Keiō Gijuku University (Tōkyō)	12	7.8%
Meiji University (Tōkyō)	9	5.8%
Hōsei University (Tōkyō)	6	3.9%
Nihon University (Tōkyō)	6	3.9%
Tōkyō Imperial University	6	3.9%
Kyōto Imperial University	5	3.2%
Senshū University (Tōkyō)	5	3.2%
Tōkyō University of Agriculture	4	2.6%
Other - Higher technical schools (12 schools)	16	10.4%
Other - Teacher colleges (12 schools)	14	9.1%
Other - Colleges of commerce (7 schools)	8	5.2%
Other - Imperial universities and colleges (6 schools)	7	4.6%
Other universities and colleges (18 schools)	28	18.3%
Not known	3	1.9%
Total men (65 schools)	154	100.0%

Source: Author.

Table 11 shows that 71 percent of writings in the present study are of short or medium length between 51 and 400 words when translated into English. The percentage of long and very long

writings included in the present study is somewhat less than what is available in Japanese publications due to time constraints to translate these longer writings into English.

Table 11. Length of Special Attack Corps member writings translated to English

	Navy	Army	Total
Very short (50 words or less)	6%	3%	5%
Short (51-200 words)	37%	42%	39%
Medium (201-400 words)	32%	32%	32%
Long (401-1,000 words)	19%	21%	20%
Very long (more than 1,000 words)	6%	2%	4%
Total men	238	154	392

*Source:* Author.

For writings by Navy and Army Air Special Attack Corps men in the present study, 75.0 percent are from men who died in special attacks in April and May 1945 as summarized in Table 12. The Japanese military used aerial suicide attacks most frequently during the Battle of Okinawa, which took place from April 1 to June 22, 1945. The total Air Special Attack Corps deaths near Okinawa were 62.4 percent for the Navy and 70.1 percent for the Army.<sup>283</sup> The percentages of writings included in the present study for Air Special Attack Corps members who died in the Philippines from October 1944 to January 1945, 11.4 percent for the Navy and 1.3 percent for the Army, are much less than the total percentages of Air Special Attack Corps men who died there, 16.4 percent for the Navy and 20.7 percent for the Army.<sup>284</sup> The especially large difference for Army Air Special Attack Corps members who died in the Philippines results from the fact that no organization after the war's end covered specifically the last writings of this group of 283 men.<sup>285</sup> The Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots, which gathered writings of many Army pilots who died in special attacks, only covers men who died in the Okinawa campaign.<sup>286</sup> The only two writings by Army Air Special Attack Corps members who died in the Philippines come from books published by Yasukuni Shrine, which contain writings from all men who died in the Greater East Asia War including Special Attack Corps members.<sup>287</sup>

Table 12. Month of death of Navy and Army Air Special Attack Corps members with writings in present study

Month of death	Navy	Army	Total
Oct. 1944	3.8%	-	2.2%
Nov. 1944	1.0%	1.3%	1.1%
Dec. 1944	2.8%	-	1.6%
Jan. 1945	3.8%	-	2.2%
Feb. 1945	1.9%	-	1.1%
Mar. 1945	5.7%	2.0%	4.1%
Apr. 1945	53.1%	40.5%	47.8%
May 1945	21.3%	35.3%	27.2%
Jun. 1945	3.8%	18.9%	10.2%
Jul. 1945	0.9%	1.3%	1.1%
Aug. 1945	1.9%	0.7%	1.4%
Total men	211	153	364

Source: Author.

The Special Attack Corps members included in the present study came from all over Japan.

There are at least three men from each of Japan's 47 prefectures except for Okinawa Prefecture with only one person and Aomori Prefecture with nobody. Table 13 presents the home prefectures of men whose writings have been reviewed.

Table 13. Home prefecture of Special Attack Corps members with writings in present study

Prefecture	Number	Percentage
Tōkyō	27	6.9%
Kagoshima	25	6.4%
Hokkaidō	17	4.3%
Nagano	16	4.1%
Other prefectures (41 in total)	305	77.7%
Former territory (Karafuto)	1	0.3%
Not known	1	0.3%
Total	392	100.0%

Source: Author.

As expected based on the youth of most Special Attack Corps members, the primary addressee of 69.0 percent of the last writings included in the present study is both parents or one parent as shown in Table 14. In several cases where the primary addressee is only one parent, the other parent had died.<sup>288</sup> The percentage to one or both parents is higher if the following four categories are considered in writings where the addressee may be the parents but is not stated explicitly, where the parents are one of the addressees but not the primary one when based on the

length of total writings, or where the parents are included as part of family that is being addressed in a writing: not indicated - not diary (9.4 percent), not indicated - diary (4.6 percent), family (4.1 percent), and multiple family members (2.1 percent). For example, the diaries of Ensign Takuya Adachi, Ensign Yoshikage Hatabu, Ensign Yasuo Ichijima, and Sergeant Major Shinpei Satō are classified as "not indicated - diary" since the overall diary does not have an addressee, but each diary contains entries addressed directly to the writer's parents often in a manner similar to a letter.<sup>289</sup> In another example, Corporal Shun'ichi Kagawa wrote five separate final letters for different family members so the primary addressee for his writings was identified as "multiple family members," but one of these letters was to his parents.<sup>290</sup>

Table 14. Primary addressee in writings of Special Attack Corps members in present study

	Number	Percentage
Both parents or one parent		
Both parents	195	49.7%
Mother	57	14.5%
Father	19	4.8%
Total of both parents or one parent	271	69.0%
Brother or sister	17	4.3%
Family	16	4.1%
Multiple family members	8	2.1%
Son or daughter	5	1.3%
Wife	4	1.0%
Relative (e.g., uncle, grandmother)	4	1.0%
Not indicated - not diary	37	9.4%
Not indicated - diary	18	4.6%
Other (e.g., friend)	12	3.2%
Total	392	100.0%

*Source:* Author.

The common themes in Special Attack Corps members' writings to be quantified in the present study were determined through an iterative process. In the beginning, a sample of about 30 writings was selected and read in order to identify possible themes for quantification. Classification schemes of common themes used by other researchers discussed in the prior chapter were also considered. The present study's objective was to use enough categories to gain an in-depth understanding of the writings' contents while still making the categories broad



enough to attain a reasonable frequency of occurrences. The only attributes that were included with the expectation of few or no occurrences were "doubts or ambivalence about mission" and "coerced into participating in mission," which were also categories in Orbell and Morikawa's study.<sup>291</sup> During the analysis for common themes and at the end of the process, certain categories were combined, and other categories were not included if they had too few occurrences or did not seem to provide a better understanding of the contents. Table 15 lists the themes directly related to death or the special attack mission that finally were used for summarization of results. Subcategories used for two themes are indented below the applicable theme.

Table 15. Themes directly related to death and mission in Special Attack Corps member writings

Category	Theme
Communication	Communicates will die
	Mentions special attack
Mission results	Will sink or hit ship
	Determined to succeed, strive to complete, concentrated on mission
	Useful mission
How considers death	Death or mission for country or Emperor
	Death or mission for country
	Death or mission for Emperor
	Die honorably or mission is honorable
	Obtained good place to die
	Living or dying for eternal cause or great cause ( <i>taigi</i> )
Own feelings about mission	Mission is long-cherished or greatest desire that nothing else surpasses
	Glad, satisfied, or appreciative about mission or death
	Will go or am in high spirits or full of vigor
	Will go or fall smiling
	No regrets
	Glorious, splendid, or supreme mission or death
	Mentions cherry blossoms associated with death
Others' feelings about mission	Asks others to be glad, do not cry, or do not be sad about death
	Asks others to say "well done" or praise person when hear news of death
Negative opinions about mission	Doubts or ambivalence about mission
	Coerced into participating in mission

*Source:* Author.

Table 16 lists other common themes in the writings apart from those directly related to death or the mission. Subcategories used for three themes are indented below the applicable theme.

Table 16. Other themes in Special Attack Corps member writings

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Statement related to filial piety

Apology for lack of filial piety or repayment of kindness

Apology for improper behavior or causing worries as youth

Asks sibling or other person to perform filial piety after death

Death is in place of filial piety, greatest filial piety, or partial repayment

Mentions Emperor positively

Thanks or recognition of kindness to others

Thanks or recognition of kindness to one or both parents

Spirit will live on or return

Spirit will be at Yasukuni Shrine

Expresses hatred toward enemy or revenge on enemy

Advice to siblings or other children

Mentions war situation critical or worsened

Memories of past events or person's face or figure

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*Source:* Author.

The research methodology described in this chapter provides a systematic framework to assess the last writings of a large sample of Special Attack Corps members in the Navy Kamikaze Air Corps, Navy Kaiten Corps, and the Army Air Corps. The number of writings selected, the wide variety of sources, and a selected sample with characteristics similar to the total population minimize any bias even though it is not a statistical sample. The reasonably detailed common themes used in the analysis make available meaningful results to better understand the thoughts and feelings expressed in the pilots' writings. The online publication of English translations of the writings along with an Excel file that documents the assessment of the writings allows others to replicate the present study's results and to read the entire writings.<sup>292</sup>

## **Chapter 4**

### **Common Themes**

Recurring topics in Special Attack Corps members' final writings are quantified in this chapter's first section, which also considers how much the frequency of these themes varies for groupings by age, branch of service, rank and training background, and time period when they died. An Excel file is available online with the assessment of writings of each person included in the study and the calculations of frequencies of common themes in total and by different groups.<sup>293</sup> Through excerpts from final writings and reference to frequencies of topic occurrence, the next two sections examine two groupings of themes that reflect the strong influence of the emperor-focused militaristic ideology promoted by the government. This chapter's second section assesses several recurrent themes that demonstrate enthusiastic commitment of Special Attack Corps members to their missions, and the third section considers how they conveyed thanks and appreciation to their families and others usually with typical phrases advocated by the state, such as those related to filial piety. The last section compares the present study's results with those of other research studies on writings of Special Attack Corps members.

#### **Frequency of Topics**

The results of examination of last writings of Special Attack Corps members are summarized in Table 17 with mention of selected themes ordered from most to least frequent. Subcategories are shown for certain themes in the right-hand column. The most frequent theme is to communicate that they will die (88 percent of writings). The mention of special attack in a letter (39 percent of writings) was an indication that they would die, since this was understood to mean a suicide attack. The communication of death often was accompanied by the reason for the attack due to the critical or worsening war situation (30 percent of writings). As an example of

these themes, Ensign Hiroshi Nishikawa, who had attended Waseda University, wrote in the final letter to his parents: "I will become a spirit to protect the country. It is my greatest honor. Please be glad. I will attack the landing fleet of the detestable enemy heading for the mainland of Shinshū (Japan). I will carry out a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack in the sea off Okinawa and strike terror into the enemy's heart."<sup>294</sup>

Table 17. Frequency of mention of selected themes in Special Attack Corps member writings

	Theme	Subcategory
	(% of total men)	
1. Communicates will die	88%	
Mentions special attack		39%
2. Determined to succeed, strive to complete, concentrated on mission	58%	
3. Statement related to filial piety	55%	
Apology for lack of filial piety or repayment of kindness		40%
Death is in place of filial piety, greatest filial piety, or partial repayment		21%
Apology for improper behavior or causing worries as youth		14%
Asks sibling or other person to perform filial piety after death		11%
4. Thanks or recognition of kindness to others	53%	
Thanks or recognition of kindness to one or both parents		46%
5. Death or mission for country or Emperor	42%	
Death or mission for country		29%
Death or mission for Emperor		25%
6. Will sink or hit ship	37%	
7. Mentions Emperor positively	30%	
7. Mentions war situation critical or worsened	30%	
9. Asks others to be glad, do not cry, or do not be sad about death	28%	
10. Advice to siblings or other children	27%	
10. Glad, satisfied, or appreciative about mission or death	27%	
10. Spirit will live on or return	27%	
Spirit will be at Yasukuni Shrine		14%
13. Die honorably or mission is honorable	26%	
14. Mentions cherry blossoms associated with death	24%	
14. Mission is long-cherished or greatest desire that nothing else surpasses	24%	
16. Will go or am in high spirits or full of vigor	23%	
17. No regrets	18%	
18. Living or dying for eternal cause or great cause ( <i>taigi</i> )	16%	
18. Will go or fall smiling	16%	
20. Memories of past events or person's face or figure	15%	
21. Glorious, splendid, or supreme mission or death	13%	
22. Asks others to say "well done" or praise person when hear news of death	10%	
23. Expresses hatred toward enemy or revenge on enemy	9%	
24. Obtained good place to die	6%	
25. Useful mission	3%	
26. Coerced into participating in mission	0%	
26. Doubts or ambivalence about mission	0%	
Total men	392	392

Source: Author.

A short example letter illustrates some of the most frequent themes in the writings of Special Attack Corps members. Navy Ensign Kiyoshi Ogawa, a former student from Waseda University, piloted one of two Zero fighters that crashed into the aircraft carrier *Bunker Hill*, which suffered the most casualties of any suicide attack in the Pacific War. He wrote a final letter that includes the following 10 of the most frequent 20 themes in Special Attack Corps member writings in Table 17: 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 14, 15, 18, and 19.

Dear Father and Mother,

It has been decided that I also will make a sortie as a proud Special Attack Corps member. Looking back, when I think of your raising me in your arms for more than twenty years, I am filled with a sense of gratitude. I truly believe that no one else has lived a happier life than me, and I am resolved to repay the Emperor and my Father for your kindness.

Beyond those boundless white clouds, I will make my attack with a calm feeling. Not even thoughts of life and death will come to mind. A person dies once. It will be an honorable day to live for an eternal cause.

Father and Mother, please be glad for me.

Above all, Mother, please take care of your health, and I wish for everyone's prosperity. As I will be at Yasukuni Shrine, Father and Mother, I always and forever will be living near you and will be praying for your happiness.

I will go smiling, both on the day of my sortie and forever.<sup>295</sup>

The next four tables examine how the frequencies of the 15 most frequent themes in last writings of Special Attack Corps members vary based on rank and training background, branch of service, age, and time period when they died. The comparison in Table 18 summarizes these themes for commissioned officers who had been college students, commissioned officers who graduated from a military academy, and enlisted noncommissioned officers. There are also 11 commissioned officers who did not attend college or military academy in the population tested, but the last writings of this group are not included in the summary due to its small sample size,

which would make comparisons difficult with much larger numbers in the other groups. The results in Table 18 show little difference in percentages of themes in the final writings of the three groups. This is not surprising for several reasons. Military unit members, regardless of their background, develop close relationships and usually have a consensus of opinions on certain topics in order to succeed in their mission. Although many men had attended universities or military academies, they received the same state-controlled education as enlisted noncommissioned officers until they entered institutions of higher education. When all of the men joined the military, they got similar training in values expected of military men who served the Emperor. Commissioned officers who had been college students have a slightly lower frequency of certain themes in comparison to the average for the total population: mission is long-cherished desire (6 percent less than total average), mentions Emperor positively (5 percent less), and death for Emperor (5 percent less). These slightly lower frequencies do not necessarily signify that former college students had less commitment, since the following themes were higher in comparison to the average for the total population: determined to succeed (5 percent more than total average), will die honorably or mission is honorable (5 percent more), and will sink or hit ship (4 percent more). The number of military academy graduates with last writings in the present study is fairly small at 38 men, so it is more problematic to draw conclusions about them. The following categories related to the mission are considerably less than the total average: asking others to be glad about death (15 percent less), communicates will die (14 percent less), mentions special attack (13 percent less), will die honorably or mission is honorable (8 percent less), will sink or hit ship (8 percent less), and determined to succeed (8 percent less), but being glad about mission or death is 5 percent more than the total average. These differences may be related to the longer period of military training at a separate facility for

military academy graduates to become professional commissioned officers, which could have led to certain differences in how they expressed their beliefs in their last writings, but the differences when compared to the other two groups possibly can be explained by a much smaller population. For enlisted noncommissioned officers, the category with the most significant difference is the mission is a long-cherished desire, which is 7 percent more than the total average.

Table 18. Frequency of themes in Special Attack Corps member writings by rank and training background

	Commissioned officers			Total Results	
	Former college students	Military academy graduates	Enlisted noncommissioned officers	Theme	Subcategory
1. Communicates will die	88%	74%	91%	88%	
Mentions special attack	39%	26%	43%		39%
2. Determined to succeed	63%	50%	57%	58%	
3. Statement related to filial piety	51%	50%	58%	55%	
Apology for lack of filial piety	36%	39%	44%		40%
Death is in place of filial piety	20%	11%	24%		21%
Apology for behavior as youth	13%	11%	14%		14%
Asks sibling to perform filial piety	14%	11%	9%		11%
4. Thanks for kindness	59%	50%	50%	53%	
Thanks for kindness to parents	52%	47%	42%		46%
5. Death for country or Emperor	39%	42%	45%	42%	
Death for country	28%	24%	30%		29%
Death for Emperor	20%	24%	29%		25%
6. Will sink or hit ship	41%	29%	37%	37%	
7. Mentions Emperor positively	25%	34%	32%	30%	
7. Mentions war situation critical	33%	37%	26%	30%	
9. Asks others to be glad about death	27%	13%	32%	28%	
10. Advice to siblings	27%	13%	26%	27%	
10. Glad about mission or death	25%	32%	29%	27%	
10. Spirit will live on or return	28%	26%	24%	27%	
Spirit will be at Yasukuni Shrine	14%	5%	16%		14%
13. Die honorably	31%	18%	24%	26%	
14. Cherry blossoms related to death	22%	18%	28%	24%	
14. Mission is long-cherished desire	18%	24%	31%	24%	
Total men	153	38	190	392	392

Source: Author.

The frequency of most themes shown in Table 19 is very similar between the Army and Navy for last writings of Special Attack Corps members. However, the following themes have a difference of 8 percent or more for the Army in comparison to the Navy: glad about mission or death (Army 14 percent more than Navy), mentions special attack (Army 10 percent more),

statement related to filial piety (Army 9 percent more), apology for behavior as youth (Army 9 percent more), and mentions war situation is critical (Army 8 percent less).

Table 19. Frequency of themes in Special Attack Corps member writings by military branch

	Army	Navy	Total Results	
			Theme	Subcategory
1. Communicates will die	88%	87%	88%	
Mentions special attack	45%	36%		39%
2. Determined to succeed	55%	60%	58%	
3. Statement related to filial piety	60%	51%	55%	
Apology for lack of filial piety	43%	38%		40%
Death is in place of filial piety	21%	21%		21%
Apology for behavior as youth	19%	10%		14%
Asks sibling to perform filial piety	13%	11%		11%
4. Thanks for kindness	56%	51%	53%	
Thanks for kindness to parents	47%	45%		46%
5. Death for country or Emperor	42%	42%	42%	
Death for country	29%	29%		29%
Death for Emperor	27%	24%		25%
6. Will sink or hit ship	39%	36%	37%	
7. Mentions Emperor positively	31%	29%	30%	
7. Mentions war situation critical	25%	33%	30%	
9. Asks others to be glad about death	29%	28%	28%	
10. Advice to siblings	26%	27%	27%	
10. Glad about mission or death	36%	22%	27%	
10. Spirit will live on or return	25%	27%	27%	
Spirit will be at Yasukuni Shrine	12%	15%		14%
13. Die honorably	24%	27%	26%	
14. Cherry blossoms related to death	26%	24%	24%	
14. Mission is long-cherished desire	25%	24%	24%	
Total men	154	238	392	392

Source: Author.

The total population of men in the Special Attack Corps whose last writings are included in this present study has been split based on age at death to obtain two groups of approximately equal numbers of younger men and older men. Table 20 indicates that generally the frequencies of themes in their writings are similar. However, the writings of younger men from ages 16 to 20 have four themes with a difference of 6 percent or more than the writings of older men over the age of 20. These themes include asking others to be glad about death (younger group 11 percent more than older group), mission is long-cherished desire (younger group 9 percent more), death is in place of filial piety (younger group 6 percent more), and mentions war situation is critical



(younger group 6 percent less). This may indicate that men in the younger group had a tendency to slightly greater expression in writing about enthusiasm toward their impending missions.

Table 20. Frequency of themes in Special Attack Corps member writings by age at death

	Age		Total Results	
	16-20	Over 20	Theme	Subcategory
1. Communicates will die	88%	87%	88%	
Mentions special attack	39%	39%		39%
2. Determined to succeed	57%	59%	58%	
3. Statement related to filial piety	57%	53%	55%	
Apology for lack of filial piety	41%	40%		40%
Death is in place of filial piety	25%	19%		21%
Apology for behavior as youth	13%	14%		14%
Asks sibling to perform filial piety	10%	13%		11%
4. Thanks for kindness	51%	55%	53%	
Thanks for kindness to parents	43%	47%		46%
5. Death for country or Emperor	44%	41%	42%	
Death for country	29%	28%		29%
Death for Emperor	28%	24%		25%
6. Will sink or hit ship	40%	36%	37%	
7. Mentions Emperor positively	30%	29%	30%	
7. Mentions war situation critical	26%	32%	30%	
9. Asks others to be glad about death	35%	24%	28%	
10. Advice to siblings	26%	27%	27%	
10. Glad about mission or death	30%	25%	27%	
10. Spirit will live on or return	25%	28%	27%	
Spirit will be at Yasukuni Shrine	16%	12%		14%
13. Die honorably	26%	26%	26%	
14. Cherry blossoms related to death	28%	22%	24%	
14. Mission is long-cherished desire	30%	21%	24%	
Total men	155	236	392	392

Source: Author.

The periods of most frequent special attacks were in the Philippines from October 1944 to January 1945 and during the Battle of Okinawa from April to June 1945. A question to be considered is whether writings at an earlier stage differed from those at a later stage when the war situation was more desperate for Japan. The periods considered are from October 1944 to March 1945, which includes special attacks in the Philippines and Iwo Jima, and from April 1945 to the war's end in August 1945. Table 21 shows that frequencies for these two time periods are similar, but the later period had higher percentages by 9 percent or more for the following themes: will sink or hit ship (later period 16 percent more than earlier period),

mentions special attack (later period 14 percent more), statement related to filial piety (later period 12 percent more), mentions cherry blossoms related with death (later period 11 percent more), and communicates will die (later period 9 percent more). The reason for lower percentages in the earlier period for will sink or hit ship, mentions special attack, and communicates will die probably relates to more secrecy regarding military operations, whereas later during the Battle of Okinawa, special attacks to sink ships had become more commonplace and publicized, and squadrons had more training time on special attack tactics to sink ships. The reasons could be partly due to the relatively few men with writings in the earlier period. The greater mention of cherry blossoms in the later period probably relates to the high number of deaths in April 1945 when cherry blossoms were blooming or falling on the Japanese mainland.

Table 21. Frequency of themes in Special Attack Corps member writings by month of death

	Month of Death		Total Results	
	10/1944 to 3/1945	4/1945 to 8/1945	Theme	Subcategory
1. Communicates will die	80%	89%	88%	
Mentions special attack	27%	41%		39%
2. Determined to succeed	54%	59%	58%	
3. Statement related to filial piety	44%	56%	55%	
Apology for lack of filial piety	36%	41%		40%
Death is in place of filial piety	19%	22%		21%
Apology for behavior as youth	14%	13%		14%
Asks sibling to perform filial piety	7%	12%		11%
4. Thanks for kindness	54%	53%	53%	
Thanks for kindness to parents	44%	46%		46%
5. Death for country or Emperor	42%	42%	42%	
Death for country	25%	29%		29%
Death for Emperor	29%	24%		25%
6. Will sink or hit ship	24%	40%	37%	
7. Mentions Emperor positively	31%	29%	30%	
7. Mentions war situation critical	31%	30%	30%	
9. Asks others to be glad about death	34%	27%	28%	
10. Advice to siblings	25%	27%	27%	
10. Glad about mission or death	27%	27%	27%	
10. Spirit will live on or return	27%	27%	27%	
Spirit will be at Yasukuni Shrine	15%	14%		14%
13. Die honorably	27%	26%	26%	
14. Cherry blossoms related to death	15%	26%	24%	
14. Mission is long-cherished desire	25%	24%	24%	
Total men	59	331	392	392

Source: Author.

## Enthusiastic Commitment

The last writings of Special Attack Corps members reflect a fervor, often conveyed in formulaic expressions, to accomplish their mission to sink an enemy ship. This section presents several excerpts to demonstrate this enthusiasm and its connections to the emperor, honor, family, and the critical war situation. A very frequent theme in their final writings is a declaration that they were determined to succeed and would strive to complete the mission (58 percent of writings in Table 17), often accompanied with a statement that they would sink or hit a ship (37 percent of writings). Their language is a form of self-encouragement to ensure that they would obtain significant military results in exchange for their lives. For example, Flight Chief Petty Officer Takeshi Komatsu wrote in a last letter to his mother: "Now I have no regrets in particular. At any rate while I am living I am determined absolutely to do my best to the end. I intend surely to sink one or two enemy aircraft carriers."<sup>296</sup> Second Lieutenant Hirohiko Ikoma, a former student at the Kyōto School of Pharmacy, communicated the following to his parents in a final letter: "I who received the sortie order finally will go tomorrow. Being born in the Empire unparalleled in the world, I who have Japan's best parents have boundless joy in being able to do my service in the skies following after the resolve of my older brother Masayuki. I look towards an instant sinking tomorrow of a ship."<sup>297</sup> Second Lieutenant Saburō Ishikura, a former student at Meiji University, wrote in his last letter: "The only thing that I am thinking about during sleepless nights is my mission. Even though I plunge into the sea along the way, I will swim to attack and carry out my mission."<sup>298</sup>

Many Special Attack Corps members stated in last writings that their death or mission was for the country or Emperor (42 percent of writings in Table 17) and that their death or mission was honorable (26 percent of writings). Each of the following two examples illustrates

both of these themes, and the first also exemplifies the belief of unity of loyalty to the Emperor and filial piety to parents. Corporal Nariaki Yoshimizu wrote in a final letter to his parents: "Even though from the beginning offering my life for the Emperor was the long-cherished desire of a young Japanese man that nothing can surpass, I think that piloting a cutting-edge aircraft and making a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack against an enemy ship is the greatest honor. It is loyalty and filial piety together as one. I will not stop believing in my hope that you certainly will be satisfied."<sup>299</sup> Ensign Kenji Satō, who had attended the Tōkyō University of Agriculture, wrote in the last letter to his parents: "Now the Empire directly faces an unprecedented national crisis. Regarding the opportunity to carry out my commitment as a military man, I choose to do the most honorable deed even with my young life, and today I devote myself, body and soul, to become a shield for the Emperor and to live for an eternal cause."<sup>300</sup>

A considerable percentage of Special Attack Corps members expressed positive personal feelings about their upcoming missions such as the following themes: glad or satisfied about mission or death (27 percent of writings in Table 17) or mission is long-cherished or greatest desire (24 percent). They also frequently mentioned cherry blossoms positively in relationship to their deaths (24 percent). For example, Sergeant Takashige Seya wrote in a final letter to his parents: "Being given life in the Empire, I feel happy like a young cherry blossom that will fall honorably in defense of the Empire. There is no long-cherished desire of a young Japanese man that surpasses this thrilling deed."<sup>301</sup> Second Lieutenant Tsunenobu Nakahara, a graduate of the Army Air Academy, included this paragraph in a final letter to his parents: "I believe that dying bravely like a cherry blossom is the greatest honor for a military man. Nothing else surpasses this as my long-cherished desire. I think that you also will be glad and will celebrate my first battle."<sup>302</sup>

The men in the Special Attack Corps who wrote final letters also considered their family's feelings toward their mission. In 28 percent of the writings in Table 17, they asked others to be glad and to not be sad about their death such as this excerpt from Sergeant Tadashi Miyake's last letter to his mother: "In any case we must win the Greater East Asia War by dying. I also meanwhile surely will become a war hero. I think that it will be the time when cherry trees are blooming. Please wait looking forward to it. When the news is published in the newspapers, I request everyone in the family to celebrate."<sup>303</sup> Ensign Kunio Ōtani, a former student at Keijō Imperial University in Seoul, began his final letter to his mother with these words: "Please be glad. When I departed and rejoined my unit, I was given a noble place to die. Tomorrow I will attack in high spirits. The target is an enemy aircraft carrier or warship. The time that I will compete with cherry blossoms is 9 p.m. on May 4."<sup>304</sup>

Lieutenant Junior Grade Takahiro Kumakura, a former student at Senshū University, was scheduled to take off from Kanoya Air Base during the Battle of Okinawa's first mass suicide aircraft attack on April 6, 1945. In a diary entry dated April 6, he showed his commitment by his expression of extreme disappointment in not being able to make a sortie with his comrades:

My own *kutai* (group of four aircraft) number also finally came. The departing aircraft were sent off by the commanding officer, Commander Nakajima. They pulled the aircraft out from the concrete hangars, and he commanded all of them to line up on the runway. In the instant when I was trying to take off, a bomb somehow dropped from where it was held. Unfortunately, they pulled the aircraft off the runway and tried again to hang a bomb, but they were not able to do so as the hanging mechanism was completely damaged. Regrettably when they looked back, it was discovered that the fourth plane also had dropped its bomb and was stopped. Evening was approaching, and I had a feeling the attack would be in the evening. When the second and third aircraft were about ready to take off, they came running to the takeoff point, and the second and third aircraft pilots seemed to see their concerned faces. They signaled them with flags to go. The pilots acknowledged the instruction and took off. When they returned to the aircraft and looked at the bomb, the maintenance workers worked hard to fix it, but in the end the mechanism that held the bomb had to be replaced.

Ah, I wonder what it could have been. I have fallen behind!

I felt bitter and resisted weeping. I reported to the commanding officer. He indicated that if the repairs could be completed in 30 minutes then we could depart, but if the departures were stopped then we would be moved to the next date. When I looked to see whether I was alone, Ensign Ichinoseki on the fourth aircraft also was crying on the grass. The majority of the aircraft had their bombs dropped, quickly did the repairs in time, and took off. Although I tried to not cry, I could not control the dropping tears, what a disappointment! Three of us cried before the *buntai* (squad) commander. We truly had a failure!

Since the sun set and it became dark, we returned again to the elementary school [that served as a makeshift barracks], but I did not want to mix with others. I was dizzy inside my head. But two subordinates were before me, and I could not be discouraged. Regrettably I showed a distressed face, and I said that certainly I would participate in the next attack. I vowed that my battle results would be more than twice as much.

I was not able to sleep. I did not need a meal either. I am full of bitterness. I did not listen at all to the words of the head officer. The words of the *buntai* commander also were no good. I do not understand this feeling. Ah, why do I have bad luck?

About this time everyone has turned the surface of the Okinawa Sea to crimson red, and what was floating has been sunk and what was flying has been knocked down. As they are laughing they are waiting in the other world for me to go. Looking at my watch, I think that it is about the time that the last planes have attacked. About now the skies around Okinawa must have changed to deep red and the seas must be afire.<sup>305</sup>

The final writings of 39 percent of Special Attack Corps members in the present study included one or more poems. These poems expressed their firm commitment to succeed in the undertaking to sink an enemy ship. Corporal Toshio Chizaki included three death poems on a military topic, the most common subject of these poems, at the end of his last letter to his mother:

For His Majesty, not thinking about either family or parents  
For my country this body will no longer be

Now I will go riding above smoke of guns and rain of bullets  
Aimed at a large enemy aircraft carrier

Waiting for decisive battle at Okinawa where I will go  
This body with my plane will break into pieces<sup>306</sup>

Ensign Takashi Sōma, who had attended Keiō Gijuku University, expressed a warrior's sentiments in a death poem with a final letter to his mother:

With full moon tonight a young warrior will launch attack  
To scatter in pieces a large enemy ship with certain-death *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack  
Live bravely as should live, fall courageously as should die  
Warrior who earnestly pursues true way<sup>307</sup>

Corporal Kiyoshi Sakamoto wrote this death poem at the end of a last letter to his father:

Shouting three times for prosperity of Emperor  
I will make *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack on barbarians' ship  
Overcoming snow, enduring cold, white plum blossom  
Now gives off its fragrance as time has come  
To barbarians who try to assault Emperor's reign  
I will display spirit of Yamato man  
The joy of true Yamato man  
To break like jewel inside an enemy ship  
Shattering as jewel for the Emperor  
Let the foreigners see this brave spirit<sup>308</sup>

The grave military situation for Japan in the last year of the war, mentioned by 30 percent of writings in Table 17, motivated Special Attack Corps members to succeed in their mission.

Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Takeshi Kado wrote in a final letter to his parents, "I know that there has been great damage due to frequent air attacks on the Imperial capital, but we are striving to repay the enemy double that."<sup>309</sup> Lieutenant Mitsuo Kodama, a Naval Academy graduate, wrote to his parents in a last letter: "It is a time when the sacred land of the Empire, here for three thousand years in the Imperial Era, is being desecrated by enemy Americans and their despicable leaders. Finally I was selected for the next great remarkable deed. There is no honor for a warrior that exceeds this, and I am very joyful."<sup>310</sup>

After numerous examples presented in this section of the Special Attack Corps pilots' fervid dedication to their suicide missions, the question remains as to whether they truly believed this. The fact that they took off and tried to complete their suicide attacks provides evidence of

their support for this military tactic, or at least it shows that they did not feel strongly enough against it to try to escape from accomplishing their missions by doing something like intentionally ditching their aircraft in the sea prior to reaching enemy ships. Moreover, most pilots expressed enthusiastic commitment to success in their missions in written words well beyond what would be expected if they did not really believe this. In contrast, a few pilots wrote very short last letters (5% of men in Table 11 wrote less than 50 words when translated to English), which becomes much more problematic to surmise their thoughts when faced with missions that would lead to their deaths. For example, Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Iwao Nakano, member of first Kamikaze Corps unit formed in the Philippines, wrote only the following words in the final letter to his parents: "As the Emperor's child and as your child, I go to die honorably. I go joyfully. Please take good care of yourselves. Goodbye."<sup>311</sup> Even though this very short letter contains only formulaic expressions, it would be only speculation to claim that Nakano did not sincerely believe the words written to his parents. The brevity and lack of originality of his last letter could have been his normal writing style or could have been due to his busyness in mission preparation, not wanting to express any more to his parents, not being allowed to reveal any mission details, or another reason. Each of these possible reasons did not mean that he did not really believe in the value of his mission and in the words that he wrote to his parents. Although most pilots' thoughts and feelings prior to their special attack missions are not known beyond the text in their last writings, Iwao Nakano was one of the 23 non-commissioned officers in the first Kamikaze Corps unit who enthusiastically received news from the 201st Naval Air Group executive officer about the proposal for pilots to make crash-dives into enemy ships: "He [The executive officer] reviewed the critical war situation when all 23 of the men were assembled and then explained Admiral Ohnishi's proposal. In a frenzy of emotion



and joy, the arms of every pilot in the assembly went up in a gesture of complete accord."<sup>312</sup>

Although writings of Special Attack Corps pilots reflect the influence of indoctrination by the state and military, the example last letters presented in this section provide substantial evidence that many of them truly believed that their deaths in suicide missions would be worthwhile for the war effort and the country's protection. On the other hand, very few examples exist where pilots wrote or said something that would indicate that they may have been opposed to the military's suicide attacks and the emperor-focused militaristic ideology espoused by the government. The next chapter discusses these cases of apparent dissent.

### **Thanks and Appreciation**

A frequent element in last writings of Special Attack Corps members is thanks or recognition of kindness (53 percent of writings in Table 17), especially to parents (46 percent). A statement regarding lack of filial piety to parents (40 percent) is often accompanied by an expression of thanks to them. For example, Ensign Toshio Furuichi, who had attended Keiō Gijuku University, wrote to his parents: "Thank you for the many ways that you cared for me. I apologize for not showing any form of filial piety up to now. However, I think that you will be satisfied that I can do the greatest filial piety."<sup>313</sup> Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Toshimune

Hattori wrote to his mother:

When I reflect back, for twenty years since I was born into the current world, I was raised with just the loving hands of my parents, and today I am in the Navy. I cannot help but be extremely regretful for going to die without having shown any filial piety at all as a son during that period of time. I apologize over and over again for this lack of filial piety. However, I will make a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack against an enemy ship together with my plane carrying a bomb, and I will fall shattering as a jewel. With this battle result even though it is only a ten-thousandth of my lack of filial piety until now, if you forgive me, there is nothing else that will surpass my joy.<sup>314</sup>

Ensign Yoshikage Hatabu, a former student at Kyōto Imperial University, wrote to his parents:

Mother and Father, I truly want to express my grateful thanks for kindly loving me from your hearts. Within this short writing, please understand all of my feelings. Saying these things seems to be formal and gives me a strange feeling. I go to die a short time before you, but I hope that you will please be happy that I was able to go to die for the country. You took care of me for a long time, and I am truly sorry that I did not do anything for you to make you happy. Please consider that my death at least will be repayment for your kindness.<sup>315</sup>

These three last letters reflect that the person's death takes the place of filial piety at least partially or reflect the greatest filial piety (21 percent of writings). The letters display the belief promoted by the state that loyalty (*chū*) to the emperor was equivalent to filial piety (*kō*) to parents and that a way to repay the emperor's and parents' kindness together was to serve the country and even die for it.<sup>316</sup> The final letter of Ensign Yoshimune Suga, who had attended Rikkyō University, conveyed his thanks to his parents after their visit to his air base but does not specifically mention lack of filial piety. Below is an excerpt from Suga's letter:

Yesterday and today the cherry trees of our unit have been in full bloom. I have never seen a cherry tree as beautiful as these cherry trees. Surely it is most likely because of the heart of the person who is seeing them. Surrounded by these pretty cherry trees, I am overflowing with small sentiments about you who departed from our unit. I absolutely can declare that it is not loneliness or sad homesickness. I, who was blessed with parents and grew up filled with happiness in a warm family, truly feel keenly that my life was fortunate from my school days and as I advanced along life's path in high spirits with my dear plane. Having grown up with abundance and uprightness is now my greatest strong point. I appreciate you. There were probably also many weak points when I was growing up as a child, but fundamentally in whatever situation I found myself, you certainly accepted it kindly and interpreted it favorably. As a trump card to defend Japan on this occasion when I go to battle, as a Japanese person and also as your son, being able to make a sortie with more pride and more joy than anyone, I am smiling that it will be my greatest victory.<sup>317</sup>

Some last writings expressed gratitude to someone other than parents such as the final letter of Lieutenant Junior Grade Shizuyo Todokoro, a Naval Engineering School graduate and *kaiten* pilot, to his older sister:

For me who does not have even a mother, does not have even a home that I should return to, and of course does not have children, I am a person who in the near future can die gladly for the Emperor without having to commit myself anew. In my short life you have

been like a mother and also like a true older sister, and you have given me great openness and fairness. I, who always felt hollow somewhere in my heart and who was starved for family affection, was glad for the times that I knew you were there. Now I tell this to you clearly. Older Sister, you cannot imagine what a happy person I was.<sup>318</sup>

Ensign Tadahiro Kubo, a former student at Kyōto Imperial University whose parents had passed away, wrote to his older brother:

At last the time has come to write my last letter. When I think about it, you truly have cared for me for a really long time. I who was self-centered, quick-tempered, and insolent did not think of you as an older brother. However, I dearly appreciate that until the end you truly loved me like you do now. Each time when I think back, I deeply feel that I was blessed by fortune in many ways that I did not deserve.<sup>319</sup>

A few final letters of Special Attack Corps members expressed emotions with no mention of filial piety and the militaristic ideology promoted by the state and military. For example, Corporal Nobuo Aihana wrote the following last letter of thanks and apology to his stepmother, who had married his father after his mother died of illness:<sup>320</sup>

Dear Mother, how are you doing?

Thank you very much for what you have done for so long. You raised me since I was six years old. Even though a stepmother, there never once was any misconduct like this type of woman.

You are a mother who looked after me with loving care, a kind mother, a precious mother. I was happy.

Until the end I did not call you "Mother." Several times I resolved to call you that, but I must have been weak-willed. Mother, please forgive me. How sad you must have been.

Now is the time for me to call you in a loud voice: "Mother, Mother, Mother."<sup>321</sup>

Some men expressed their thanks and appreciation in poems. In Second Lieutenant Akira Okayasu's last week before death, he wrote seven poems to convey appreciation to men who maintained fighter aircraft:

Even at night silently clutching wrench  
Soldier intently making only efforts

Young cherry blossom blooms in shade without knowing sun  
Keeping only my plane in mind

Wet with sweat and stained with oil, probing with wrenches  
I know men who know about toiling at maintenance

Now maintenance men send off my plane taking off  
Waving flags as hold back tears

Everywhere embracing aircraft tails  
Base maintenance workers regret departure

Cherry blossoms of maintenance workers' kindness  
Are blooming nobly on pilot seats

Cherry blossoms in full bloom during spring in April  
For the Emperor I will fall together with them<sup>322</sup>

Corporal Minoru Okazawa included this poem in a final letter to his parents:

Higher than the mountains  
Deeper than the sea  
Kindness of Father and Mother  
With seven lives  
I will repay them<sup>323</sup>

In the poem to express appreciation to his parents, Okazawa used the phrase "with seven lives," which refers to the common militaristic expression of "seven lives to serve the country" (*shichishō hōkoku*).

The few pilots in the Special Attack Corps who were married conveyed their thanks in loving terms to their wives in final letters. These letters from husbands are examined in a separate section titled "Married or Engaged" in the next chapter.

## **Comparison to Other Studies**

Chapter 2 evaluated other researchers' studies of last writings by Special Attack Corps members, and these studies include both research on common attributes and general analysis of

themes in the writings. John Orbell and Tomonori Morikawa conducted a study that is most similar to the present one with quantification of frequency of certain themes, but their results have several major differences when compared to the present study's findings. For example, their study has 71.9 percent of writings with the theme of "honorable death," whereas Table 17 indicates only 26 percent of the final writings express that the person will die honorably or the mission is honorable.<sup>324</sup> The difference probably can be attributed to a much broader definition in their study, since the one example that they provide for this theme of "honorable death" is "this will be the most glorious moment in my life," which does not use the actual word "honor."<sup>325</sup> The present study would have put that example in the category of "glorious, splendid, or supreme mission or death" rather than "die honorably or mission is honorable." Orbell and Morikawa report that 18.9 percent of the final writings of Special Attack Corps members contain expressions of filial piety for the population that they selected, whereas the present study finds that 40 percent of the writings include an apology for lack of filial piety or repayment of kindness.<sup>326</sup> The reason for such a considerable variance is not known. They report that Special Attack Corps members' writings include the following: 36.0 percent for country, 32.5 percent for Emperor, and 49.2 percent for country or Emperor. Table 17 shows the following results, which are somewhat less: 28 percent for country, 25 percent for Emperor, and 42 percent for country or Emperor.<sup>327</sup> These may be other attributes where Orbell and Morikawa define them more broadly than the present study. Both their study and the present study do not find one writing that implies any coercion to engage in a suicide attack. Their study reports that 9.1 percent of the men expressed ambivalence or conflict about their task, whereas the present study did not identify any instance of this. Orbell and Morikawa give the example of "no matter how I think calmly, all I can think about is the faces of my parents" for ambivalence or conflict about the task, but the

present study did not consider a statement like this to be doubt or ambivalence about the mission since a person could still be totally committed to it while at the same time feeling sadness about leaving others behind.

Kenji Imai's findings cannot be compared directly with the present study's results, since he estimated percentages of each writing that cover five selected themes, whereas the present study quantifies the mention of common topics without any attempt to measure the amount within each writing related to the topics. Imai's review of 143 Army Air Special Attack Corps pilots identified the following top three topics based on percentages of their writings: thoughts on special attacks (53 percent), love of family (29 percent), and thoughts on Empire (12 percent). These seem consistent with the present study's findings even though a direct quantitative comparison cannot be made. For example, the high percentages for the following themes in Table 17 correspond well with his 53 percent for thoughts on special attacks: determined to succeed, strive to complete, concentrated on mission (58 percent), mentions special attack (39 percent), and will hit or sink ship (37 percent). Imai found that the percentages for the top three topics were generally similar between commissioned officers who had been college students, commissioned officers who graduated from the Army Air Academy, and enlisted noncommissioned officers (refer to Table 1). Table 18 from the present study also shows few substantial differences between these three groups for frequency of themes in Special Attack Corps writings.

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney argues that student soldiers who became *tokkōtai* pilots did not reproduce the emperor-centered military ideology in their thoughts even though they did so in their actions, but the findings in the present study provide little support for this contention.<sup>328</sup> Table 18 indicates that writings of commissioned officers in the Special Attack Corps who were

former college students had frequent mentions of themes that indicate support for the emperor-centered military ideology: determined to succeed (63 percent), death for country or Emperor (39 percent), will sink or hit ship (41 percent), will die honorably or mission is honorable (31 percent), and glad about mission or death (25 percent). These frequencies are similar to those for commissioned officers who graduated from a military academy and enlisted noncommissioned officers, which are two groups that Ohnuki-Tierney did not consider when examining writings of *tokkōtai* pilots. She also claims that most of them had not "subscribed to the militarized meaning of cherry blossoms as it was articulated in the state ideology,"<sup>329</sup> but no writings of former college students in the present study confirm this claim. Former college students mention cherry blossoms in reference to death in 22 percent of their writings, which is close to the overall average of 24 percent for writings of all Special Attack Corps members (refer to Table 18).

Mako Sasaki's conclusions based on an examination of letters and diaries of Special Attack Corps members generally were confirmed in the present study. The frequencies of topics in their writings summarized in Table 17 largely support Sasaki's observations that they were happy to serve the country (e.g., 42 percent - death for country or Emperor, 27 percent - glad or satisfied about mission or death, 24 percent - mission is long-cherished or greatest desire), believed that their death in a suicide mission could improve the war situation for Japan (e.g., 58 percent - determined to succeed, 37 percent will sink or hit ship), had no regrets (18 percent), and thought that their mission could be considered as filial piety to their parents (21 percent).<sup>330</sup>

Some of the five psychological themes identified by Yuki Tanaka in writings of Special Attack Corps pilots who had been college students have little support in the frequencies of themes in their writings shown in Table 18 for commissioned officers who were former college students.<sup>331</sup> He argues that pilots rationalized their own deaths to protect the country and that

their writings only contained occasional stereotypical militaristic phrases that "are usually used rhetorically rather than conveying deep conviction or abiding nationalistic sentiment."<sup>332</sup> It is unclear how just from their writings an assessment can be made of the depth of the pilots' convictions, and Tanaka provides no examples from these writings to support his conclusions. The use of "stereotypical militaristic phrases" in final letters does not necessarily support his contention that the pilots did not sincerely believe in the worth of special attacks that they planned to carry out. The present study found that 39 percent of the former college students indicated that their death or mission was for the country or Emperor, which was only slightly less than the 42 percent who wrote this among all Special Attack Corps members. The second psychological theme discussed by Tanaka is the belief that to die for the country was to show filial piety to parents, which is consistent with the 21 percent of former college students who mentioned this in their final writings. However, the present study does not support that this sentiment was expressed particularly to the mother, since almost all of the 30 last writings of former college students that expressed this were addressed to both parents. Only two writings were to just the person's mother, and one of these mentioned that his father died when he was young.<sup>333</sup> The same number of writings, two, were to only a person's father.<sup>334</sup> The third psychological theme of Special Attack Corps pilots' writings discussed by Tanaka is strong solidarity with flight-mates who shared the same fate. The writings in the present study do not have many references to other squadron members, and most of these are brief, but this claim is most probably correct for almost all special attack squadrons based on both their writings and eyewitness accounts published in other sources. However, Tanaka's following assertions on this topic of solidarity lack plausibility with no citations or examples and with no mention of these in the writings considered in the present study: "In cases where pilots in the same team were



separated on different missions, many complained bitterly to their commanders, claiming that they had pledged to die together. It seems that, in some cases, their friendship developed into homosexual relationships."<sup>335</sup> The fourth psychological theme identified by Tanaka is a strong sense of responsibility and contempt for cowardice. The first part, a strong sense of responsibility, is consistent with high percentages for the following themes in writings of former college students in Table 18: 63 percent - determined to succeed, 39 percent - death for country or Emperor, and 31 percent - die honorably or mission is honorable. The second part, contempt for cowardice, is not mentioned in the writings in the present study, and no support or example is provided for Tanaka's following claim, "However, some boys, if clearly a minority, resisted orders to complete kamikaze missions by feigning illness or fleeing."<sup>336</sup> The fifth psychological theme of the pilots' lack of an image of enemy, mainly due to lack of actual combat experience, is consistent with writings in the present study. Only 5 percent of the writings of former college students use a derogatory adjective to describe the enemy or declare that they will take revenge against the enemy. Those few writings lack an image of the enemy, such as the following sentence at the beginning of the last letter of Second Lieutenant Heiichi Matsuzawa, a former student at Tōkyō College of Science, to his parents, "At the time when the arrogant enemy now approaches the mainland, in the morning I will depart to destroy them completely."<sup>337</sup>

Mayumi Ito identified three significant common cultural intertexts and three primary historical intertexts in her thesis on death poems written by Special Attack Corps members.<sup>338</sup> The present study found each of these six intertexts in multiple writings, although four intertexts had a low frequency of appearance. The common cultural intertext of cherry blossoms in reference to death was found in 24 percent of the present study's writings, and Yasukuni Shrine was mentioned in 14 percent of the writings as the place where the writer's spirit would live on

after death (refer to Table 17). Only 4 percent of the writings included the common cultural intertext of *gyokusai* ("shattering jewel," which signified noble death) such as the following death poem of Second Lieutenant Yoshio Usui, a former student at Tōkyō College of Science, which he wrote at the end of one of his final letters to his parents:

Now I go as shield for Emperor  
A Yamato warrior to shatter as jewel<sup>339</sup>

This poem also exemplifies one of the ancient terms, shield for Emperor, that Ito indicates that Special Attack Corps pilots used to describe themselves.<sup>340</sup> The term shield for Emperor is used in 9 percent of the present study's writings. With regards to the three principal historical intertexts identified by Ito, the present study's writings have several different references to Kusunoki Masashige, a fourteenth century samurai warrior who symbolized courage and devotion to the Emperor. These references include 4 percent of the writings that refer to seven lives to serve the country, a phrase that "originates in the words allegedly spoken by Masashige's brother, Masasue, just before they committed suicide by thrusting their swords into each other."<sup>341</sup> Second Lieutenant Isamu Okamoto, a graduate of the Army Air Academy, wrote, "Now we are confronting a time of crisis for the Empire. There is nothing done by dying once bravely, but certainly I will carry through with the spirit of Dai-Nankō [Kusunoki Masashige] with seven lives to serve the country."<sup>342</sup> Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Isao Matsuo wrote, "I shall be a shield for His Majesty and die bravely along with my squadron leader and others. I will be born seven times, each time to destroy the enemy."<sup>343</sup> Only two writings in the present study directly mention *sakimori*, another historical intertext discussed by Ito. Lieutenant Junior Grade Hiroshi Kusumi, a *kaiten* human torpedo pilot and Navy Academy graduate, in the last letter to his parents refers to these soldiers who protected the western frontier of Japan from the seventh to the ninth centuries for the emperor: "I want to sleep in peace deep in the southern seas

as a nameless *sakimori* who protected the Imperial reign.<sup>344</sup> Ensign Shizuo Komuro, a former student at Yokohama Higher Technical School, wrote the following poem at the end of the final letter to his mother:

For the country to win against a foreign country  
I will be a *sakimori* of the skies<sup>345</sup>

Four writings have references to Yoshida Shōin, who was an activist scholar and educator who strongly advocated the Emperor's restoration to power at the end of the Edo Period in the nineteenth century. Sergeant Major Shinpei Satō titled his final diary *Ryūkonroku* (Record of everlasting spirit), which is the same name as the diary of Yoshida Shōin.<sup>346</sup> Two Special Attack Corps members included Yoshida Shōin's death poem in the last letter to parents:

Parents' heart surpasses children's heart for parents  
How will they hear the news of today?<sup>347</sup>

Corporal Shun'ichi Kagawa includes a death poem with the same first line as Yoshida Shōin's death poem:

Parents' heart surpasses children's heart for parents  
How will they see the cherry blossom that goes to fall?<sup>348</sup>

The quantification in this chapter of how often selected themes appeared in last writings of Special Attack Corps members demonstrates their fervent dedication to succeed in their missions to sink enemy ships. Much of this commitment and enthusiasm arguably came from their indoctrination of emperor-focused militaristic beliefs during their education and military training. The breakdown of results by different groupings such as time period of death, age, rank and training background, and branch of service indicates few substantial differences between these categories. The writings of commissioned officers who were former college students generally exhibited the same degree of zeal for their missions to sink ships with their deaths as writings by enlisted noncommissioned officers and military academy graduates.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Mixed Feelings**

Common topics in last writings of Special Attack Corps members were examined in the prior chapter. However, the contents of their writings did not all follow standard templates, so this chapter considers writings by men who wrote about their own distinctive concerns, interests, or opinions. These men might be considered more likely to disagree with the state's emperor-focused militaristic ideology, so this chapter examines their final writings to determine if their distinctive beliefs or personal situations adversely affected their commitment to defend the country and Emperor, support the military strategy of suicide attacks, and succeed in their missions. The first section explores final writings by the few pilots who voiced dissatisfaction with political or military conditions and leadership. The next section reviews first how Special Attack Corps members typically expressed their thoughts about death with standard concepts promoted by the government and then examines several writings where the pilots contemplated more personally the meaning of death. The third section analyzes last letters of husbands to their wives or children and of engaged men to their fiancées. Only 4 percent of the men in the present study were married or engaged, and they had some different concerns when compared to unmarried men. The fourth section covers men who had different family situations such as leaving behind a younger sister or sending money to assist their families in difficult times. The final section delves into the issue of discovering the true beliefs of Special Attack Corps members when taking into consideration the influence and control by the state and military.

## Traces of Dissatisfaction

Although Special Attack Corps members typically conveyed fervor for their missions, a few pilots voiced dissatisfaction in their writings. Negative feelings about government and military leaders or policies were described in general terms with consideration for the military's censorship, and more candid assessments could be communicated only when the pilot knew that his writing would not be subject to censorship. This section presents some of the few examples where pilots criticized political or military strategies, ideology, and circumstances.

Second Lieutenant Ryōji Uehara's final thoughts, written the night before his final sortie on May 11, 1945, became the most famous of Special Attack Corps members' writings with his frank opinions about liberty, totalitarianism, the Special Attack Corps, his beloved homeland Japan, and his deceased beloved sweetheart. This writing avoided censorship since he gave it directly to Army news crew member Toshirō Takagi, who had asked him in his barracks at Chiran Air Base to write down what he was thinking. Takagi delivered Uehara's writing by hand in June to his parents' home in Nagano Prefecture.<sup>349</sup> The new edition of *Kike wadatsumi no koe* (Listen to the voices of the sea) in 1995 presented Uehara's writing given to Takagi as the book's first writing of Japanese students who had died during the war, whereas the first edition in 1949 had Uehara's last letter to his parents written between February and June 1944 as its opening writing but also included later in the book his writing from the night prior to his sortie.<sup>350</sup> Ryōji Uehara, a former student at Keiō Gijuku University, wrote:

### *Shokan* (My Thoughts)

I strongly feel that there is nothing that surpasses the honor of being selected for the Army Special Attack Corps, which is considered the exemplary attack force of my glorious homeland of Japan.

If I think with universal theoretical logic to state my belief that I acquired through my long time in school, I think liberty's victory is evident, even though perhaps I might be

called a liberalist. Like the Italian Croce is saying, I think that it is a fact that liberty, an essential part of human nature, absolutely cannot be destroyed. Even though it appears as if it is suppressed, deep down it is always fighting, and in the end it surely will win. Although authoritarian and totalitarian countries may prosper temporarily, it is certainly a plain fact that they will be defeated in the end. I think that we can see that truth in the Axis countries of the present world war. How about Fascist Italy? Nazi Germany also already has been defeated, and now authoritarian countries are collapsing one after another like buildings whose stone foundations are destroyed. The factual universality of this is being confirmed based on current reality like history showed in the past, and it appears that the greatness of liberty will be proven forever. That my belief was correct may perhaps be fearful for my homeland, but I am very glad. I think that what makes up the foundation of any current conflict is surely ideologies. Based on existing ideologies, I believe that the war's outcome can be seen clearly.

The ambition to make my beloved homeland Japan a great empire like the former British Empire became futile in the end. I think that if persons who truly love Japan had been allowed to stand up, Japan would not have been driven to a situation like now. The ideal in my dreams was Japanese people who walk confidently anywhere in the world.

It is certain what one friend said that a Special Attack Corps pilot of the skies is nothing more than a machine. The machine that takes the control stick, without personality, without feelings, and of course without reason, is nothing more than an iron molecule in a magnet that will stick to an enemy aircraft carrier. If one thinks with reason, it is truly incomprehensible. When forced to consider it, can one say that they are even suicidal? I think that this can be seen only in a spiritual country as Japan. As for me, who is a machine, there is no right to say anything. However, I only wish that the Japanese people will make my beloved Japan great.

If I go in a mental state such as this, it certainly may be nothing even if I die. Therefore, like I stated in the beginning, I feel honored to have been selected for the Special Attack Corps.

I am nothing but a machine when I get into my plane, but since of course I am a human once I come down, there I have emotions also, and my passions also are moved. When my beloved sweetheart died, I also died spiritually together with her. When I think of her waiting for me in heaven and that I can see her in heaven, death is of no concern since it is nothing more than being on the way to heaven. Tomorrow is the sortie. These extreme ideas of course should not be made public, but in the above words I conveyed my state of mind without deception. Please forgive me for arranging my ideas in a disorderly way as I thought them without any organization. Tomorrow one liberalist will depart from this world. His appearance from behind is lonesome, but his heart is full of contentment.

I said only what I wanted to say. Please forgive any discourtesy. Well, here I will stop.

Written night before sortie<sup>351</sup>

Uehara's strong declaration stands out from other writings of Japanese military men who lost their lives in the Pacific War, but very few other Special Attack Corps members, even former university students, expressed such sentiments due to the oppressive environment fashioned by government and military leaders during the war.

The 1882 Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors contained the admonition to "neither be led astray by current opinions nor meddle in politics, but with single heart fulfil your essential duty of loyalty,"<sup>352</sup> which is consistent with almost no Special Attack Corps members' final writings that included expressions of personal beliefs about the government's performance and the political situation. The few pilots who mentioned politics in their last writings expressed their opinions in general, almost philosophical, terms aimed at the highest level. Ensign Takuya Adachi, who had attended Tōkyō Imperial University, wrote the following diary entry about one month before his death:

The men to save the country are exclusively great persons at the grand center. The Special Attack Corps that has appeared in our divine land is undoubtedly a miracle to save the country. That is no more than a fortress against material strength. It is only when there is a strong government that the country can be full of vigor.

Saying "I will follow after you" is not merely believing in following men who will fight with determination to die. The sacrifices of the Special Attack Corps are nothing but men who greatly desire that the country advance more. Truly the men who will save the country are those great persons to emerge who, even though they may not possess a wise appearance, remain calm and do not quiver at any kind of adversity, compare their positions to the lightness of a large bird's feathers, and live only based on honest morality. However many special attack units appear one after another, the government that is operating at the core will have an empty presence, and sooner or later a ruined country's fate will arrive.<sup>353</sup>

Ensign Teruo Yamaguchi, who had attended Kokugakuin University, complained about politicians in the final letter to his father: "Even now I feel sorrow in my heart for some politicians who deceive the majority of the nation's people who are honest. However, since I believe in the national identity and think that it is a lovely and beautiful thing, I will follow

orders of advisors to politicians and the high command."<sup>354</sup> Ensign Heiichi Okabe, a former student at Taihoku Imperial University in Taiwan, wrote in his diary soon after assignment to a special attack unit about the lack of an effective leader:

It was a world with too much noise. Since there was not a single great leader, in the end there emerged a society with endless tumult. We need to build a more rational and calm human society.

We gladly will attack in the midst of the country's hardships. We will destroy enemy ships assured in our ideals that Japan always will be a great country where only beautiful hometowns, strong women, and beautiful friendships exist.<sup>355</sup>

Former university students wrote all of the above passages with criticisms of the political situation. For writings considered in the present study, no military academy graduate or enlisted noncommissioned officer expressed a similar criticism. Military academy graduates had longer and more thorough training in the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors that admonished to "neither be led astray by current opinions nor meddle in politics," and noncommissioned officers did not have exposure to diversity of thought on political matters in comparison to the environment experienced by former university students. However, even for former university students, most had no complaints about politics in their writings and seemed to support the goal and strategies of the government and military. At times military academy graduates voiced dissatisfaction but not about anything related to politics. For example, Second Lieutenant Masashi Katsura, an Army Air Academy graduate and 65th Shinbu Squadron Leader, wrote a day before his death about frustrations with pilot training and planes:

I do not want to let my men die in vain. In order to do this, we must be thorough in training in *tokkō* (special attack) skills.

I desire excellent planes for special attack planes. However, how is the current situation? Superior pilots who have nearly 1,000 hours of flying time are departing in Type 98 Direct Cooperation Planes or Intermediate Trainers. The feeling that they are not flying machines even though they are machines has reached a peak now.<sup>356</sup>



Although Table 17 indicates that 18 percent of Special Attack Corps members wrote that they did not have any regrets, a few pilots conveyed disappointment or dissatisfaction about what they would miss, often related to family members. Second Lieutenant Toshio Anazawa, who had attended Chūō University and one of only three pilots in the current study who were engaged to be married at the time of their deaths, wrote the following diary entry dated April 9, 1945, three days before his death in battle, and expressed what he would have liked to have done if he could have lived longer:

It was raining and windy all day.

I started to read *Shizen to tomo ni* (Together with nature) by Yoshirō Nagayo.

I was reading aloud the *Man'yōshū* (oldest compilation of *waka* poems). I was reading aloud the poems.

Books I want to read

1. *Man'yōshū, Kushū* (collection of *haiku* poems by Bashō)
2. *Dōtei* (Journey) by Kōtarō Takamura
3. *Ittenshō* (One Bell) by Tatsuji Miyoshi
4. *Kokyō* (Hometown) by Minoru Ōki

Things I want to see

*Madonna and Child* by Raphael  
*Hibō Kannon* (Merciful Mother Kannon) by Hōgai

Things I want to hear

1. Collection of Strauss waltzes
2. Voices of fondly-remembered people<sup>357</sup>

Although Anazawa conveyed his longings about what he wanted to still do, the last letter to his fiancée Chieko focused on her future rather than dwelling on what could have been if he did not have to die in a special attack:

Now I do not want to retrace in vain the remains of our long relationship in the past. The issue is that there is a future.

I believe that your sharp mind always will give you proper judgment to go forward.

However, separate from that, as the man who was engaged to marry you and as the man who will go to fall, I want to say a few things to you who is a woman.

"There is nothing else other than my hoping for your happiness."

"Do not be fixated in vain on obligations of the past. You are not to live in the past."

"With courage forget the past and discover a new life in the future."

You will live in the reality of moment by moment in the future. I no longer exist in the real world.

Perhaps these words went along extremely abstractly, but the intention is so that you make use of them in various real situations that will arise in the future and not that these be selfish one-sided words. I say this from a purely objective standpoint.<sup>358</sup>

Lieutenant Junior Grade Saiki Nakanishi, who had attended Keiō Gijuku University, wrote also about losing the chance to marry after his assignment to a special attack unit. He wrote in a diary entry dated the same month as his death: "I received a marriage proposal from Yoshida. She loves me, and I also love her. However, my future is too short. There is nothing else to do than to turn down respectfully that proposal."<sup>359</sup>

The name Kamikaze (or Shinpū), the name given to the Navy's Air Special Attack Corps, evoked the legend of the famous typhoon called *kamikaze*, meaning "divine wind," that destroyed Mongol invaders who attacked Japan in the late thirteenth century. In October 1944 when the name Kamikaze appeared in the Japanese media, there was hope that Japan would accomplish the same end as the historical *kamikaze*, namely, to destroy enemy ships and turn back foreign invaders. The following Special Attack Corps members who mention *kamikaze* or other divine aid in their last writings expressed doubts that a miracle would occur or would be enough for a Japanese victory. Sergeant Kōichi Mukōjima, a pilot in the Army's Air Special Attack Corps and not the Navy's Kamikaze Corps, wrote in the last letter to his parents: "A

*kamikaze*, so that people will not suffer God's ordeal, will not blow. I cannot desire divine aid. I hope that everyone will be able to live together more and more happily, strongly, and truly and can carry out the duty of Imperial subjects."<sup>360</sup> Lieutenant Kentarō Mitsuhashi, a Naval Academy graduate, wrote in the final letter to his younger brother and sister: "The *kamikaze* from long ago was a gift where persons did their best and the heavens did the rest. Now in the divine country of Japan will there be as expected a *kamikaze* that protects the Emperor's domain? I believe that there certainly will be one, but that is in addition to the best efforts of people."<sup>361</sup> Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Minoru Mori, a *kaiten* manned torpedo pilot, wrote in a final letter to his older brother: "The Empire now faces its greatest crisis. The country's citizens equally shout themselves hoarse with one another about the country's crisis, and I believe that they are working with all their strength in their positions. Even though the Empire always has divine aid, however, without effort, without truth, without honesty, and without things that one absolutely must obtain, there will be peril again even though they try to rely in vain on divine aid."<sup>362</sup>

### **Considering Death**

Almost all Special Attack Corps members (88 percent) in the present study communicated in their last writings that they were certain to die (refer to Table 17), but very few men after assignment to a special attack unit expressed in detail their thoughts and feelings about death other than brief, typical expressions used by Japanese military men in the Pacific War. This section examines some of these standard expressions with concepts backed by the state and also presents writings where pilots pondered more deeply what death would mean. The following two sections in this chapter consider how the men communicated their deaths and future concerns to spouses or families.

Some last writings of Special Attack Corps members mentioned that their spirit would live on or return (27 percent of writings in Table 17), often at Yasukuni, the shrine where spirits of Japan's war dead were honored. For example, Sergeant Major Shinpei Satō wrote: "However, Father and Mother, when I die my spirit will live forever and ever. Older Brother's spirit and my spirit will always be watching over you."<sup>363</sup> Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Tamao Murata communicated to his mother in a last letter: "I will not be dead. Although my figure will not be before everybody, certainly I will be in the home of all of you. Along with Father who died and Older Brother at Yasukuni, I will be watching over our happy home."<sup>364</sup> The last letter of Lieutenant Junior Grade Korekiyo Otsuji, a Naval Academy graduate, to his parents exemplifies what many Special Attack Corps members expressed with thoughts on death described in typical terms promoted by the government: "All human beings have a fate of life or death. Even though there is a lack of discussion on this, I am confident of living with the permanence of the Empire of 3,000 years through the honor of its people as our spirits never end. However, even in the hereafter, being reborn as a human seven times, I look forward to striking the enemy trying to vanquish the Empire."<sup>365</sup>

The concept promoted by the state of *taigi* (great cause or principle) or *yūkyū no taigi* (eternal cause) is stated in 16 percent of writings of Special Attack Corps members, and *taigi* is mentioned more than 20 times in the 1937 pamphlet entitled *Kokutai no Hongi* (Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan) that was published by the Ministry of Education. The idea typically was used with the phrase "live for an eternal cause." However, since *taigi* signified a person's total loyalty and devotion to the country and Emperor by following the highest ethical standards, "live" often actually signified "die."<sup>366</sup> Second Lieutenant Tōru Ikeda, an Army Air Academy graduate, wrote to his parents in a last letter, "I have been given an important mission,

and it is the greatest joy to be able to live for an eternal cause."<sup>367</sup> Sergeant Tetsuo Noguchi wrote in a final letter to his father: "Serving the country with seven lives, I live for an eternal cause. With this grand spirit, I offer myself in a way that will lead to death."<sup>368</sup> Sometimes the pilots wrote "die for an eternal cause," such as the final letter of Ensign Shunsuke Yukawa, former student at Kwansai Gakuin University, to his family: "The time has come when I will die for an eternal cause as an Imperial military man and as a member of the most honored Special Attack Corps. Supported by everyone's hopes, I surely am determined to hit the target with my plane."<sup>369</sup>

A few men wrote more philosophically about their approaching deaths. Ensign Sumio Shima, a former student at Keiō Gijuku University, wrote the following entry in his diary in the same month as his death:

A person is born from nothing and returns to nothing.

A person, more than how to live, rather should search how to have a beautiful way of dying.

Isn't a person's happiest way of living life when one dies while beautiful dreams still remain in one's life?

When a person comes to a conviction that one will be able to die comfortably at any time, all the more one always wants to live. Whatever the sadness or difficulty, one comparatively can bear it calmly. Death settles everything. Accordingly, both difficulty and sadness, also loneliness, do not exist. While living, one often suffers and mourns. If one thinks so about death, unceasing courage appears in one's life day by day, and one feels like an extremely bright world has been found. It is a pleasant feeling where it seems that one wants to laugh heartily.<sup>370</sup>

The final part of the diary of Ensign Toyooki Seki, who had attended Meiji University and was a *kaiten* human torpedo pilot, expressed his thoughts about death:

In the end I cannot be spared from death. Therefore, I will pursue life for eternity.

Even though possibly my corpse may be filled by earth with a handful of ashes or my body may be at the bottom of the sea, I will be an intangible spirit that will be glorious

for eternity. If there can be protection for the next generation, I believe correctly that I will maintain forever my indestructible, unending, and determined life.

The matter of death is an easy matter. However, the psychological process of a human who decides to die and undertakes that is by no means either a simple issue or an easy matter. While one is tormented by that, one reaches a conclusion. That is one thing that is called human.<sup>371</sup>

Several Special Attack Corps members wrote that they had lived a full life even though they were dying young. For example, Second Lieutenant Kōshirō Ishizuka, who had attended Aoyama Gakuin University, wrote: "Since the special attack unit was formed, my living with kindred spirits who have pledged to share the same fate has been the most enjoyable time of my life. It was a fulfilling period of time. As for the fulfillment of only this, I do not know if I would have been able to obtain it if I had a normal life even if I had a long life of 50 years more. Now I will end my life at 25, but the essence is the same as a person who lived until 75."<sup>372</sup> Ensign Osamu Makino, a former student at Meiji University, wrote in the final letter to his parents: "The expression said by people in the past was that life is only 50 years. We in the world now say that it is a whole life already at 20 years and that it is extra change beyond that. Still more, having lived three years longer is the best of luxury. Without sparing any effort, I will fall smiling at the end of the southern seas."<sup>373</sup> Flight Warrant Officer Takeshi Kogusuri, who had survived many air battles in contrast to most Special Attack Corps members who went into battle for their first time, wrote to his parents and older sister in a last letter:

The ancients say that death is the easiest. However, we after a while will be one hundred million. If I die, I will end my life. However, what regrets will there be? In the current situation, there is no anxiety about the future. Not understanding a person's fate, a person's life is like the morning dew. There are persons who can pass away in their bed on a tatami mat. In comparison to these, I have selected a place to die in a planned manner, and I am happy that I have obtained a chosen place to die.<sup>374</sup>

Gallows humor is expressed in 2 percent of the final writings in the present study. For example, Second Lieutenant Shiori Harada, a graduate of Waseda University, expressed in his

final letter, "My body of a mere five feet will rest in a 50,000-ton coffin."<sup>375</sup> The 50,000-ton coffin refers to an aircraft carrier. Sergeant Kōichi Mukōjima wrote in the final letter to his parents: "There is nothing at all that can compare to the joy of having been born a man at this critical time for the Empire. Even though my body fattens fish in the Pacific, several times I will return alive and offer myself to serve in the sacred mission."<sup>376</sup> Lieutenant Junior Grade Minoru Sueyoshi, who had attended Hamamatsu Higher Technical School, described his location in a last letter to his parents, "I am writing this from inside my plane (that is, my coffin)."<sup>377</sup> Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Kazumi Hashizume included the following poem in his final letter:

Young cherry blossom in decisive battle  
Five or six hundred enemy heads as presents  
I enter the shrine gate at Yasukuni<sup>378</sup>

Similar to pilots who included gallows humor in their writings, Lieutenant Junior Grade Norimasa Hayashi, who had attended Keiō Gijuku University, gave a whimsical explanation of death in one of his final diary entries addressed to his family: "Soon I will go to Hans Christian Andersen's fairyland, and I will become a royal prince there. And I will talk to the little birds, flowers, and trees."<sup>379</sup>

Very few last writings of Special Attack Corps members mention traditional religion specifically. A few men made remarks about their Buddhist beliefs. Corporal Takayuki Yamashita ended the last letter to his mother with the words: "I will dive into an aircraft carrier while chanting in remembrance of the Buddha as you always say. Praise to Amida Buddha."<sup>380</sup> Sergeant Tetsurō Koya wrote to his parents: "I will crash and receive sweet dharma rain. If you do not receive news of my death in battle, I will carry out a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack at 1800 on April 6. I desire to be given a shower of dharma before Buddha."<sup>381</sup> Dharma refers to the basic principles of cosmic or individual existence in Buddhism. Ensign Takamaru Shigenobu,

who had attended Ryūkoku University to study philosophy, wrote the following in a final letter to his younger sister: "One can say that the matter called death is difficult, but when you think 'it is nothing and it is brought about by Buddha,' it is no problem. The things that you think that you desire will not become your things, and there are things that you do not want to part from. For example, you say that you do not want to part from me. Tomorrow with calmness I will go and fall in an instant as I leave you and others behind completely."<sup>382</sup> Corporal Toyoshi Takada wrote a poem to each of four family members with two having a reference to Sanzu River, which is the Japanese Buddhist equivalent of the River Styx:

My parents' great kindness unmatched by seas and mountains  
Now repaying this as I fall for country      Father

Tears of my unforgettable mother like a dream  
Aching I cross the Sanzu River      Mother

Going before my gentle Grandmother  
I will tell you about shallows of Sanzu River      Grandmother

Chanting Buddha's name, Grandmother's constant teaching  
I go with walking stick on trip to other world      Grandmother in Koinzemi<sup>383</sup>

Ensign Ichizō Hayashi, a former student at Kyōto Imperial University, is the only known Christian in the present study. He wrote in one of the last letters to his mother, "I will be singing a hymn when I crash into an enemy ship."<sup>384</sup> In another final letter he quoted the following verse from the Bible, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."<sup>385</sup>

Some pilots did not think deeply about death prior to their suicide attack mission. For example, Lieutenant Junior Grade Saiki Nakanishi, a former student at Keiō Gijuku University, wrote in his final diary entry about death: "While I have put into words that people die, the idea of death truly has not yet drawn near. Finally tomorrow will be the day that I crash into a ship,



and for the first time dying is on my mind. No, even that still feels like another person's matter. However, tomorrow I will crash into a ship. If I do that, certainly I will die."<sup>386</sup>

### **Married or Engaged**

Only 4 percent of the 392 Special Attack Corps members in the present study were married, engaged, or widowed, but their few writings in publications and at museums tend to be some of the most popular ones.<sup>387</sup> This section examines these writings that express love and appreciation to wives, give guidance to their children, and express hopes for the future and concerns about what will happen to their families after the men's deaths.

Ensign Akira Satō, a former student Kyūshū Imperial University and a *kaiten* human torpedo pilot, expressed to his wife Marie in a last letter: "It was a short time, but you dearly cared for me. You were for me the best wife in Japan. Wherever I may be, I will protect you. Please live properly and cheerfully on the appropriate path."<sup>388</sup> Second Lieutenant Masashi Ōhira, who had attended Hōsei University, wrote to his wife Fukuko: "To me you were a wife who was superior. You were a wife who was too good for me. At the end, I am thankful."<sup>389</sup> He discussed his son Shun'ichi and Fukuko's future in a diary entry to his wife dated the day before his death: "I rely on you for Shun'ichi's matters. I surely rely on you. Please bring him up to be a good child. Certainly please raise him as my boy. I do not want to give you to anyone. Please always remain single. I only pray that you carry through as a divine eagle's wife. I always believed what you said."<sup>390</sup> Second Lieutenant Toshio Kuramoto, who graduated from Kagoshima College of Commerce and was one of the older pilots at age 30, did not share clearly with his wife Kimiko the nature of his military assignment while she stayed with him during his final weeks prior to his death.<sup>391</sup> He wrote to her: "Please forgive me for the time of departure.

Only because I loved you, my heart was filled with the desire to not cause you sadness for a while. I absolutely was not lying."<sup>392</sup> Toshio and Kimiko had been married three months prior to his death, and she was pregnant with child when he left for a special attack. He wrote a short letter to his unborn child:

To my dear child,

If you are a boy, please do not be second to me and become a fine Japanese person.

If you are a girl, please become a woman with a kind nature.

Also, please take care of Mother and show sufficient filial piety to her.

From Father<sup>393</sup>

Lieutenant Yukio Seki, a Navy Academy graduate who led the first Kamikaze Special Attack Corps unit in October 1944, had been married for about six months. In contrast to the three letters to wives presented above, Seki wrote the following final letter to his wife without any direct expression of love or appreciation:

Dear Mariko,

I am truly sorry for going to fall without being able to do anything for you.

Even without words, I think that you, with readiness as the wife of a military man, are sufficiently able. Please keep in mind to show filial piety to your parents. I write now before my departure while many memories come to me.

I hope that Emi and her young boy also will be in high spirits.<sup>394</sup>

Several fathers in the Special Attack Corps wrote letters directly to their children to communicate why they would be gone and to convey hopes for their future. Captain Yoshio Itsui, a 32-year-old father with two daughters who were four and two years old and a son who was four months old, wrote the following in the last letter to his son Yoshinori: "Even though it is regrettable that I will not see you grow up since I am going away, I will watch over you as I

live for an eternal cause."<sup>395</sup> His son died of malnutrition three months later.<sup>396</sup> Captain Ken'ichi Shibuya, 30 years old, wrote the following in a final letter to his daughter Noriko and to his child not yet born:

While Father was in this world, your Mother was truly good. Even though there are many wives of flight officers, there are few persons compared to her who are as determined as a Japanese woman. Father always has appreciation for her. My one regret is that there truly were few chances to make Mother happy when I have been so busy during the war. When you have grown, you should show filial piety to Mother for my part. This is Father's request.

Now there is no limit to the number of boys and girls who have lost their fathers and mothers when their houses were burned in large cities due to enemy aircraft bombings. When I think about that, I am extremely heartbroken. You are cherished by Mother, Grandfather, and Grandmother, and you should not forget to grow up truly happy. Although there are many things that I have written, when you grow older, I desire that you listen well to Mother, understand her hardships, and definitely do not be disobedient.<sup>397</sup>

Ensign Masahisa Uemura, who graduated from Rikkyō University, wrote the following paragraph in the final letter to his daughter Motoko:

When you grow up and want to meet me, please come to Kudan. And if you pray deeply, surely your father's face will show itself within your heart. I believe you are happy. Since your birth you started to show a close resemblance to me, and other people would often say that when they saw little Motoko they felt like they were meeting me. Your uncle and aunt will take good care of you with your being their only hope, and your mother will only survive by keeping in mind your happiness throughout your entire lifetime. Even though something happens to me, you must certainly not think of yourself as a child without a father. I am always protecting you. Please be a person who takes loving care of others.<sup>398</sup>

Kudan mentioned in the first sentence is the location in Tōkyō of Yasukuni Shrine, the shrine to honor spirits of Japanese soldiers killed in battle. In the spring of 1967 after graduation from Rikkyō University with a degree in English and American literature, Motoko performed a *Nihon buyō* (traditional Japanese dance) at Yasukuni's main hall of worship to comfort her father's spirit with her mother Yoshie and her father's war comrades in attendance.<sup>399</sup>

The following two Special Attack Corps members in the present study who were engaged to be married approached the situation in quite different ways. Ensign Nobuaki Fujita, a former student at Tōkyō University of Agriculture, expressed a sense of desperation in a final letter to his fiancée after finding out by a letter three days before his death that her parents gave permission for their wedding: "My dear beloved wife Mutsue! Both in the coming world and the next world, and also in the world after that, please be my wife. Mutsue, Mutsue, Mutsue. More than anyone I love you with your gentleness. Mutsue, farewell. Mutsue, Mutsue, Mutsue, Mutsue! Kind, kind single Mutsue, farewell! Another day."<sup>400</sup> After Fujita's death in battle, a wedding ceremony was held at the house of his parents. After the war's end, she returned to Tōkyō with consent of her adoptive father, attended a university, and remained single until her death.<sup>401</sup> Lieutenant Keiu Matsuo, a Naval Academy graduate who piloted a two-man midget submarine in an attack on Sydney Harbor on the night of May 31, 1942, wrote to his parents and asked them to notify his fiancée about his death, "Finally, as for Toshiko's finding out about this, since she will not be able to bear it, I request that you please notify her directly."<sup>402</sup>

The one widower among the Special Attack Corps members in the present study has a tragic story. First Lieutenant Hajime Fujii, an Army Air Academy graduate who became an officer at an Army aviation school in charge of students' character building and mental instruction, volunteered for the Special Attack Corps even though it was not expected for someone in his position to be selected since he had a wife and two young daughters, three-year-old Kazuko and one-year-old Chieko. Army leaders rejected Fujii's two written petitions to join the Special Attack Corps. His wife Fukuko initially opposed her husband's joining the Special Attack Corps, but in time she came to understand his firm determination to join his students to make a special attack. In December 1944, Fukuko committed suicide along with their two

children so that her husband could freely go on a special attack mission.<sup>403</sup> He wrote the following last letter to his deceased older daughter Kazuko before his sortie on May 28, 1945:

A cold, blustery December day

Your life disappeared as dew on Arakawa River's bank. It is painfully sad that together with your mother you sacrificed yourself ahead of your father because of his fervent desire to lay down his life for his country. However, I hope that you, who as a young girl vanished together with your mother, will be gladly smiling.

Father also will soon be able to follow after you. At that time I'll gladly hold you close to me as you sleep. If Chieko cries, please take good care of her. Well then, goodbye for a short time.

Daddy will perform a great feat on the battlefield and bring it as a present for you. Both you and Chieko, please wait for me until then.<sup>404</sup>

Several Special Attack Corps members who were married wrote in their last letters about the future. Lieutenant Kiyoshi Satō, who at 38 years of age was the oldest man in the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps to die, expressed great confidence in his wife's capabilities to handle the future for his son, daughter, and third child yet to be born: "Since you always are prepared, there is nothing to deliver to you, and there is not even anything to tell you now. The thing that I think about is that I have caused you many troubles. There is just no excuse. Also, now I will die with you alone who will shoulder responsibilities based on my wishes and with my entrusting to you the children's future."<sup>405</sup> Sergeant Major Haruo Ōhashi showed concern about his wife Ayako in both a final letter to his father and the following excerpt from the last letter to his mother:

You together with Father have provided excellent care to Ayako. You have made it peaceful and decent for her up to today. Also, I thank you deeply and warmly for the gift of your strength, Father and Mother.

Mother, from now on, please look after Ayako still more. Also, not being able to give her a formal wedding ceremony, she always told me that she wanted to return home together with me one time, but that could not happen. Since she is not yet close with the neighbors, I think that her being alone suddenly will be a great hardship.

Mother, as a woman with a woman, please take good care of Ayako. Finally, I pray for your health. I must be going now.<sup>406</sup>

Haruo Araki, an Army Air Academy graduate, and his wife Shigeko grew up together in Tōkyō when his father and her mother married. When Haruo suddenly returned home for an overnight leave at about 11 p.m. on April 9, 1945, he asked whether he could marry Shigeko. Even though his parents and Shigeko knew that he had been assigned to a special attack squadron, the marriage ceremony was held that night. Haruo spent only four hours with his new wife Shigeko before he had to return to base.<sup>407</sup> He wrote her the following final letter before his sortie from Chiran Air Base on May 11:

Dear Shigeko,

Are you doing well? One month has passed. The happy dream has vanished, and tomorrow I make an attack on an enemy ship. I will cross the Sanzu River to the next world along with some Americans.

Looking back, I have been very unkind to you. It has been my habit to treat you unkindly and have regrets afterward. Please forgive me.

I feel as if my heart will break when I think of your long life ahead. Please somehow be strong in spirit and be happy. After I am gone, please take care of my father in place of me.

Living for an eternal cause, this country  
I will protect always as a humble shield

Haruo  
Yūkyū Hikōtai Commander<sup>408</sup>

## **Family Concerns**

Some Special Attack Corps members in their final writings expressed concerns about family matters or about a family member's future. This section presents excerpts about family-related issues with specifics that go beyond typical expressions in correspondence such as,

"Finally, I will not stop praying for everyone's health and happiness forever."<sup>409</sup> Several men communicated concerns about a younger sister left at home. Maintenance Petty Officer 2nd Class Toyohiko Katō, who had lost both of his parents, wrote in a last letter to his older brother: "Our next meeting will be at Yasukuni Shrine. Now there are no lingering attachments, but there is only Hisako, our only younger sister. Please take good care of Hisako. After losing Father at an early age and because Mother passed away, I think that living by herself is lonely for her. I ask that you please raise her to be a fine Japanese woman."<sup>410</sup> Ensign Ta'ichi Imanishi, a *kaiten* human torpedo pilot who had attended Keiō Gijuku University, wrote in a last letter to his father and younger sister: "Father, when I think about Fumi's lonely life, I cannot say anything. However, Japan is facing a time of crisis. It is natural for a person who is Japanese to take part in this battle tactic."<sup>411</sup> He wrote later in the letter:

Fumi, please be a fine Japanese girl and live happily. Other than this I have no wishes for you. I ask that you take care of Father. I have been freed of worries, and I will go this way. I ask that you make up for my absence. Whatever others may say, Father was the world's best, and Mother was Japan's finest mother. Please be a Japanese mother who will not disgrace them. You, who inherited the character of Father and Mother, have capabilities of only them. I, who did not take any actions, cannot stop my tears when I think about you.<sup>412</sup>

Ensign Bun'ya Motoi, a *kaiten* pilot who graduated from the Naval Engineering College, ended the final letter written two days before his death to his younger sister Masako with these words: "When I saw the film *Young Girl's Friend* (Shōjo no Tomo), the people on a South Seas island were glad for the days that rain fell. That was because afterward fine weather would come. They did not know whether it would come several days later or several years later. However, it certainly would come. Hardships are coming after this. Do your best to bear them well."<sup>413</sup> Ensign Michinori Machida, who had attended Kyūshū Imperial University, wrote about his younger sister in a last letter to his mother: "Young Ayako in the prime of her life has

experienced a great deal of hardships. Without even makeup, without even a kimono, I think that she only has worked for the family. I indeed bow to her. Please find a good bridegroom."<sup>414</sup>

There are 5 percent of Special Attack Corps members in the present study who mentioned in their final writings that they would send money or transfer bank accounts to families for their use. Several men gave instructions for how they would like the money to be distributed or spent. Sergeant Major Ichidō Hara wrote to his mother: "After my death, all of the money and other things will be sent to you. Please give them to Older Brother Takeo, my other brothers and sisters, and Older Sister Isoe according to need."<sup>415</sup> Sergeant Kōichi Mukōjima wrote in the final letter to his parents: "You are free to use the money given to me. Please use a part of it for house remodeling that you wanted while I was alive."<sup>416</sup> The writings of 8 percent of Special Attack Corps members in the present study included a statement about sending or distributing bags and other items. For example, Second Lieutenant Zenji Yokoyama, a former student at Meiji University, wrote to his parents about items that he was sending:

It is just a little, but the articles put into this trunk are ones that I saved as much as I could. I saved items that I wanted to eat but without eating them.

The *sake* and other items in the large box were ones received only by men who will make a sortie. They were given at the same time as the order to prepare for a sortie. I wanted to eat the food with everyone, but I could not do even that. These truly are only trifling things, but they are items from the bottom of my heart at the first and last. Alongside my photograph, please eat the items inside the box.<sup>417</sup>

Some men asked their family to contribute the money elsewhere. Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Tatsuzō Suzuki made the following request to his parents: "Furthermore, I am sending my money since I do not need it. From this please take a small amount of 50 yen and deliver teaching materials to the national school."<sup>418</sup> Flight Chief Petty Officer Yasuo Itabashi wrote to his parents, "Next, with regards to the matter of my money, please contribute all of it as part of the manufacturing cost for one aircraft."<sup>419</sup>



Three pilots included in the present study mentioned life insurance in their last writings even though they faced imminent death. Corporal Kiyoshi Sakamoto wrote to his father: "Today I signed up for insurance. I am enclosing the receipt. I think that notification from the company will come to you."<sup>420</sup> Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Kazumi Hashizume wrote, "Distribute equally the insurance money to my parents."<sup>421</sup> Sergeant Tadashi Miyake explained the insurance policy in a final letter to his mother:

I recently obtained a 10,000-yen life insurance policy with a maturity of 25 years. Since I entered into the agreement based on my decision without getting everyone's permission, everybody should not worry about anything. I am prepared to pay the premium every half year, and this will not cause any trouble to anyone in the family. I earnestly request everyone to not shorten your life by worrying about money. The payment to be provided is 200 yen for a half year. I paid the first one. While I am living, I have the responsibility. When I die in battle, Father will receive the money.<sup>422</sup>

In writings considered in the present study, 3 percent of Special Attack Corps members discussed a family successor. Lieutenant Junior Grade Tatsuji Nakanishi, a Naval Academy graduate, expressed to his father his beliefs related to the continuation of their family even though he had a younger brother named Kyōzō:

Father, as one final matter, you no doubt believe firmly that I did not disgrace the family. If anything I think that I will be able to regain a part of the Nakanishi Family honor that has started to fade. Afterwards I rely on Kyōzō. I surely believe that Kyōzō is a person who will work excellently for the country.

Perhaps it is discourteous to you Father, but I am willing for the Nakanishi Family line to die out. I think that "even though the family dies out, it is not to be regretted if the country can carry out its destiny." Now it is a crisis for the country. When I think about what would happen if the Empire of Japan were to die, I feel deeply that whatever happens to the family is acceptable.

Our country is not made up only of families. Our country is first made up of the national family. As for our Nakanishi Family, even though it is cut off at your generation, I want to ask you to forgive me. Ah, I wrote this while just thinking in a rambling way. For now I will stop writing.<sup>423</sup>

Ensign Toshio Furuichi, a former student at Keiō Gijuku University, wrote the following note to his younger brother Hideaki at the end of the last letter to his parents:

You have become a student in the highest grade at elementary school. I think that you are asking your teachers and know well what type of thing is this war. Your being a prankster, I suppose that you are running riot. Rampaging around is good, but do not cause trouble for Father, Mother, and Older Sister. When I go, after that you will remain as the only male child, and everyone will depend on you. Not being in high spirits is the worst. I will make a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack into an enemy aircraft carrier. Become a man fitting as a man.<sup>424</sup>

The men often had advice for their siblings or children (27 percent of writings in Table 17). Ensign Isamu Saitō, a graduate of Waseda University, wrote the following message to his younger brothers and sisters in a postscript to the last letter to his parents, "My dear Masako, Kazunari, Hiroshi, Reiko, Yōko, and Kiyoka, please make your bodies strong, listen well to what Father and Mother say, study hard, and become fine Japanese persons. Farewell."<sup>425</sup>

Among pilots in the present study, there were 3 percent who said that they had no debts, and another 3 percent wrote that they had no relationship with a woman. The purpose of these statements was to reassure their families that they were leaving behind no obligations for them. For example, Flight Chief Petty Officer Kazuo Osaka ended the last letter to his father with these words: "I have no money loans. I have no connection with a woman. There were times when I drank alcohol and went on quite a rampage, but there is nothing concerning a woman and no regret in my heart. Do not worry."<sup>426</sup>

## **True Beliefs**

While recognizing that Special Attack Corps members' writings may not represent their actual viewpoints when taking into account the strong influence and control by the state and military, this section presents the few known instances where men felt differently than what they

wrote as evidenced by comments to others near the time of their deaths that were not consistent with contents in their last writings. In the first instance, Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Yoshiaki Ono wrote in the final letter to his parents and older sister: "Truly I cannot suppress this long-cherished desire. In spite of facing death in air battles off Taiwan, I shamelessly survived and truly apologize to my comrades who died before me. Now at last I will have a splendid place to die, so I can apologize to my comrades and to you father and mother. Without any regrets I can go to crash into an enemy ship."<sup>427</sup> His mother and older sister went by train to visit Ono at his air base before he departed, and his older sister described their parting: "Our hearts were touched when at the time of his final parting he spoke just the words, 'I do not yet want to die.' These were his last words to us."<sup>428</sup> Senri Nagasue, a Kamikaze Corps member who survived the war, gave his opinion about the apparent contradiction between Ono's final letter and his last words to his mother and older sister:

I experienced also that there are ups and downs in a person's feelings. Even though someone made a firm decision of "Yes, I'll do it!" when joining a special attack squadron, thoughts of "I do not yet want to die" arose as time passed. So both the declaration written in Mr. Ono's last letter and the words he blurted out at his final farewell when he met his mother represented his true feelings.

"The public praises us as members of the Special Attack Corps, but the truth is I do not want to die." This is probably what Mr. Ono really felt as he faced death the following day.<sup>429</sup>

Lieutenant Yukio Seki, a Navy Academy graduate who led the first Kamikaze Special Attack Corps unit in October 1944 and had been married for about half a year at the time of his death in battle, is the second instance where a Special Attack Corps member felt differently than what he wrote. He expressed his feelings about his mission in a last letter to his wife's parents: "Now standing at the crossroads of victory or defeat for the Empire, I am determined to repay the Emperor's grace with my own body. There is nothing that surpasses this as the long-cherished

desire of a military man." He ends the letter, "I am determined to repay the Emperor's grace by carrying out a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack on an aircraft carrier with my own body for the Empire of Japan."<sup>430</sup> When interviewed by Masashi Onoda, a Dōmei News Agency correspondent, Seki expressed his true feelings: "Japan also is at the end. It is killing excellent pilots like me. If it were me, I am confident that I would score a hit with a 500-kg bomb on an enemy aircraft carrier's deck without making a *taiatari* (body-crashing) attack. I do not go for His Majesty the Emperor or the Empire of Japan. I go for my beloved wife. If Japan loses, she may be raped by the Americans. I die in order to protect her. I die for my loved ones. How about that? It is splendid."<sup>431</sup>

In a few cases where pilots wrote diaries, the thoughts in an entry on one date seemed to conflict with views expressed on another date. This could have been caused by the men's holding seemingly inconsistent beliefs at the same time, or it could be that the men's thinking changed over time. Ensign Cadet Akio Ōtsuka, a former student at Chūō University, wrote in a diary entry addressed to his three sisters: "Speaking clearly, I will not enjoy dying. I will not die without any matters remaining in my heart. I cannot help but be concerned about the country's future. Even more so, I am concerned about the future of Father, Mother, and you. The anxiety about it is unbearable. When everyone finds out about my death, if you are sad with an unsettled heart and go to follow a foolish path, just what will become of me?"<sup>432</sup> On the day of his death one week later, he wrote about his concerns for his family but also conveyed his resolution to make a successful attack: "Believing in certain victory in the Greater East Asia War, praying for your great happiness, and apologizing for my lack of filial piety up to now, smiling I will make a sortie. This evening there is a full moon. While viewing the moon from the sea off Okinawa's

main island, I will search for the enemy and suddenly will make a crash attack. I will die bravely and wisely."<sup>433</sup>

Ensign Ichizō Hayashi, who had attended Kyōto Imperial University, wrote in a last letter to his mother on February 23, 1945, the day after assignment to a special attack unit at Genzan Air Base in Korea: "Honestly, it is still hard to say that the desire to die for the Emperor is something from my heart. However, it has been decided for me that I will die for the Emperor. I sincerely believe that I can reach a state of tranquility by means of following this path and going to die."<sup>434</sup> Although this could be interpreted that Hayashi was hesitant to die for the Emperor, he wrote in a letter to his close friend Shōhachi Yoshida sometime before he advanced to Kanoya Air Base in Kagoshima Prefecture for his final sortie, "I desire to be a humble shield for the Emperor, truly a humble shield."<sup>435</sup> In a last letter to his mother after he arrived at Kanoya Air Base, he communicated his determination to succeed in the mission: "I certainly will carry out a *hitchū gōchin* (sure hit, instant sinking). One ship among the battle results will be mine. Until the end I am determined to do it thoroughly and certainly. You must be watching. Since you must be praying, I will carry out a crash dive with peace of mind."<sup>436</sup>

Notwithstanding examples where true beliefs of Special Attack Corps members differed from what they wrote in last letters and diaries, these known instances are very few in number, and the writings left behind by most men who died in special attacks showed that they were determined to complete successfully their missions and that they believed that their deaths would be beneficial for the country's protection. Although it is questionable that these final writings in some cases actually represented their views due to strong state and military influence and control, many ideas that they expressed most likely would have remained the same if military censorship had been removed completely, since they had received thorough indoctrination in the

state's emperor-focused militaristic ideology during their formal education and military training. Even after the war ended and the Emperor denied that He was divine in an Imperial Rescript issued at the beginning of 1946, families of Special Attack Corps members killed in battle typically believed in the worth of the pilots' brave actions to protect the country by giving their lives. However, not every family felt this way. For example, Ensign Ichizō Hayashi's mother grieved that her son had died in vain (*inujini* or literally "dog's death").<sup>437</sup> On the day that the Emperor announced the war's end, she shouted out for Vice Admiral Ōnishi, who had formed the first aerial special attack unit in the Philippines, to die.<sup>438</sup> The more typical response by families after the war can be understood by two men who died as members of the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps Jinrai Butai (Divine Thunderbolt Unit), which included bombers that carried *ōka* rocket-powered glider bombs and Zero fighters that carried bombs. The two pilots' fathers contributed their thoughts about their sons' deaths in a book published in 1952 by the Hagoromo Society of Kamikaze Divine Thunderbolt Corps Survivors. Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Ataru Shimamura, an *ōka* pilot, wrote in the final letter to his parents that he gave to them on his last visit home: "I, who will inherit eternally the history of the glorious Empire with an imperial line of 3,000 years, have the honor to fall before the Emperor. There is nothing that surpasses this long-cherished desire of a military man. Smiling and singing a song, from here I will go and fall."<sup>439</sup> In 1952, his father wrote these thoughts about his son's death:

I was pleased that he had performed his duty by being of some help to the country. It makes my heart glad to have had such a filial son.

Unfortunately, we were defeated, although peace seems to have been restored to the world. In view of the fact that we probably won't have any more opportunities to serve the Emperor, I really think my son was fortunate in being given his own time and place so that he could fulfill his destiny.<sup>440</sup>

Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Haruo Arai, a Zero fighter pilot, wrote in the last letter to his parents: "As an aircraft crewmember in the honored Imperial Navy, there is no greater honor than to fall, a corpse that colors the clouds in the sky. There is nothing that surpasses this long-cherished desire of a young man."<sup>441</sup> In 1952, his father wrote:

The accomplishments of the Divine Thunderbolt Squadrons were truly splendid. They regarded the protection of our country as supremely important, denying themselves every selfish human desire and finally sacrificing their own lives to protect the Fatherland.

I firmly believe that what they did should rank at least one degree higher than what was done by those who performed the desperate exploits of the famous Russo-Japanese War. Although it is a deed of supreme valor to volunteer for a task that is regarded by a nation as a forlorn hope, present-day society has no real appreciation of their bravery. We should once more reflect on the fact that they all died in action for the sake of the Emperor and our great country.<sup>442</sup>

The two fathers' comments seven years after the war's end reflect the continuing strong influence of the state's wartime ideology on their thinking, but they also illustrate the usual desire of bereaved parents to remember positively their children and their achievements.

This chapter explored many varieties of individual concerns and personal thoughts found in Special Attack Corps members' last writings, including a small number that questioned and criticized the political situation and country's leadership. Regardless of private opinions and feelings on matters such as family circumstances, imminent deaths, and other concerns, these men's core convictions such as resolve to complete successfully their missions, regret for lack of filial piety shown to parents, and belief that their deaths would be beneficial for the country and Emperor remained consistent among them.

## **Conclusion**

### **United Determination**

Even though final writings of Japan's Special Attack Corps members reflect enthusiastic agreement for the military's suicide attack strategy and the emperor-focused militaristic ideology promoted by the state, the government and military channeled and restricted their written thoughts and feelings through indoctrination, propaganda, and organizational controls. The analysis of common themes in last writings before death of Japan's Special Attack Corps members shows that they consistently believed in the worth of their deaths in battle for the country's protection, as 58 percent of the men wrote that they were determined to succeed in the mission, 42 percent remarked that their deaths or missions were for the country or Emperor, and 37 percent mentioned that they would sink or hit a ship. The common themes that appear in their writings also illustrate that the Japanese state effectively molded the men's thinking during their education and military training by pronouncements that guided their basic beliefs with an emphasis on absolute loyalty to the Emperor, filial piety, and willingness to offer their lives for the Emperor. The very few known instances when Special Attack Corps members made known their disagreement about some aspect of political or military leadership or policies did not mean that they questioned basic beliefs of the emperor-centered ideology espoused by the state or that their complaints lessened their commitment to defend their country. A categorization of frequencies of common themes in writings of commissioned officers who had been college students, commissioned officers who graduated from a military academy, and enlisted noncommissioned officers does not show significant differences in the opinions and feelings of these three groups and reflects their united determination to succeed in their special attack missions and stop the advancing enemy.



The present study provides an understanding of thoughts and feelings of Special Attack Corps members as expressed in their own final writings as they faced certain death in planned suicide attacks. Although their writings were influenced by the government's ideology and propaganda, military censorship of writings, and self-censorship due to concerns about how family members and others would consider their last words, these writings represent the best sources to gain insights into their thinking and emotions. This study analyzed a large sample of these writings with multiple classifications to identify common themes among Special Attack Corps members and between different subgroups based on rank and training background, branch of service, age at time of death, and time period when they died. In contrast to prior research in English to identify common themes, the present study provided supporting details of the writings included in the sample used for analysis, and it also made available additional English translations of writings to let non-Japanese readers examine directly their contents and to provide future researchers translated resources not accessible until now. Additionally, this study addressed drawbacks of other studies by including only Special Attack Corps members who died in special attacks and only writings written after assignment to special attack units.

Whatever the background and individual thinking of Japan's Special Attack Corps members who would soon die in attacks on the enemy, their final writings show that they were united in their resolve to succeed in their missions and in their firm belief that their deaths would be valuable for the country's defense. This consistency in belief displays not only their patriotism but also the effectiveness of the indoctrination and organizational controls imposed by the Japanese state on its people.

## Appendix

The following listing provides names of 392 Special Attack Corps members whose writings were included in the present study. Each name has been linked to the web page with an English translation of the last writing and basic background information about the writer.

[Excel file with detail assessment of each man's writings and calculations of frequencies of common themes in total and by different groups](#)

<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Hideo Abe</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Kaneyuki Fukuda</a>
<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Tadaaki Abe</a>	<a href="#">Ensign Cadet Shigeo Fukuda</a>
<a href="#">Corporal Takao Adachi</a>	<a href="#">Ensign Masaji Fukushima</a>
<a href="#">Ensign Takuya Adachi</a>	<a href="#">Flight Chief Petty Officer Teruo Fukushima</a>
<a href="#">Corporal Nobuo Aihana</a>	<a href="#">Corporal Yasuo Fukushima</a>
<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Shigeaki Amano</a>	<a href="#">Corporal Tadamasa Fukuura</a>
<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Masanori Anami</a>	<a href="#">Lieutenant Junior Grade Masamichi Fukuyama</a>
<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Toshio Anazawa</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Iwao Fumoto</a>
<a href="#">Corporal Kōji Andō</a>	<a href="#">Ensign Toshio Furuichi</a>
<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Haruo Arai</a>	<a href="#">Ensign Shinji Furuya</a>
<a href="#">Sergeant Kazuo Arai</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Genjirō Gakiya</a>
<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Haruo Araki</a>	<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Mitsuharu Gotō</a>
<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Kazuhide Araki</a>	<a href="#">Corporal Hitoshi Hamada</a>
<a href="#">Corporal Yukio Araki</a>	<a href="#">Sergeant Major Ichidō Hara</a>
<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Tatsuzō Arisue</a>	<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Shiori Harada</a>
<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Matayuki Asakawa</a>	<a href="#">Flight Chief Petty Officer Yukio Harada</a>
<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Takashi Asao</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Isume Hasegawa</a>
<a href="#">Ensign Setsurō Asou</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Kiichi Hasegawa</a>
<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Saburō Chiba</a>	<a href="#">Corporal Saburō Hasegawa</a>
<a href="#">Corporal Toshio Chizaki</a>	<a href="#">Corporal Toyoji Hashimasa</a>
<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Kanji Eda</a>	<a href="#">Corporal Isamu Hashinokuchi</a>
<a href="#">Lieutenant Junior Grade Haruji Endō</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Kazumi Hashizume</a>
<a href="#">Ensign Masuji Endō</a>	<a href="#">Ensign Yoshikage Hatabu</a>
<a href="#">First Lieutenant Hajime Fujii</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Toshimune Hattori</a>
<a href="#">Lance Corporal Hideo Fujii</a>	<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Genrō Hayashi</a>
<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Tsutomu Fujimura</a>	<a href="#">Second Lieutenant Hiroshi Hayashi</a>
<a href="#">Corporal Bunroku Fujita</a>	<a href="#">Ensign Ichizō Hayashi</a>
<a href="#">Ensign Nobuaki Fujita</a>	<a href="#">Lieutenant Junior Grade Norimasa Hayashi</a>
<a href="#">Corporal Tsuneaki Fujiyama</a>	<a href="#">Ensign Yūsaku Hirabayashi</a>
<a href="#">Lieutenant Naoji Fukabori</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Keishi Hiram</a>
<a href="#">Lieutenant Junior Grade Tadasu Fukino</a>	<a href="#">Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Sakae Hirashima</a>
<a href="#">Lieutenant Junior Grade Hitoshi Fukuda</a>	<a href="#">Corporal Masato Hisanaga</a>

[Ensign Kōichi Honda](#)  
[Ensign Sōji Horie](#)  
[Corporal Kan'ichi Horimoto](#)  
[Lieutenant Junior Grade Masami Hoshino](#)  
[Ensign Yasuo Ichijima](#)  
[Ensign Takatsugu Ichikawa](#)  
[Ensign Takeshi Inuma](#)  
[Second Lieutenant Tōru Ikeda](#)  
[Second Lieutenant Hirohiko Ikoma](#)  
[Sergeant Osamu Imanishi](#)  
[Ensign Ta'ichi Imanishi](#)  
[Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Nobutaka Inoue](#)  
[Lieutenant Junior Grade Nobuo Ishibashi](#)  
[Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Masayuki Ishii](#)  
[Lieutenant Junior Grade Seizō Ishikawa](#)  
[Second Lieutenant Bun'ichi Ishikiriyama](#)  
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## Notes

1. The numbers of Special Attack Corps members in total and by military branch and special attack unit come from a plaque erected by Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association in 2005 next to *kamikaze* pilot statue in front of Yūshūkan Museum at Yasukuni Shrine in Tōkyō. Plaque photograph at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/monuments/yushukan/>. The total number of deaths on the monument for special attack units generally agree with the sums of the names listed in the following source: Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai (Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association), *Tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Special Attack Corps) (Tōkyō: Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, 1990), 129-312. However, there are the following minor differences: Navy Air Special Attack Corps (Book - 2,494, Monument - 2,514), Army Air Special Attack Corps (Book - 1,347, Monument - 1,344), Army Offshore Advance Force with motorboats (Book - 263, Monument - 266), and midget submarine force (Book - 440, Monument - 436). The 1,344 men in the Army Air Special Attack Corps includes 1,299 who made attacks on naval vessels and 45 who made ramming attacks on American B-29 bombers. The 45 who made ramming attacks on B-29s comes from Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 50-2, 298-99.

2. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai (Chiran Special Attack Memorial Society), ed., *Konpaku no kiroku: Kyū rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai chiran kichi* (Record of departed spirits: Former Army Special Attack Corps Chiran Base), revised edition (Chiran Town, Kagoshima Prefecture: Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, 2005), 69.

3. Peggy Warner and Sadao Seno, *The Coffin Boats: Japanese Midget Submarine Operations in the Second World War* (London: Leo Cooper in association with Secker & Warburg, 1986), 14, 18, 193-4; Burl Burlingame, *Advance Force Pearl Harbor* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1992), 8-9, 49-51, 134.

4. The use of the word "pilots" in relationship to the Air Special Attack Corps includes other aviators such as navigator/observers, radio operator/gunners, and other crewmen. The term "pilots" in other places also can refer to *kaiten* human torpedo pilots, midget submarine pilots and other crewmen, and explosive motorboat pilots and other crewmen.

5. Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 3.

6. Rikihei Inoguchi and Tadashi Nakajima, *Shinpū tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Shinpū special attack corps) (Tōkyō: Nihon Shuppan Kyōdō, 1951), 57-8.

7. Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 235-9; Toshiharu Konada and Noriaki Kataoka, *Tokkō kaiten sen: Kaiten tokkōtai taichō no kaisō* (Special attack kaiten battles: Kaiten Special Attack Corps leader's reminiscences) (Tōkyō: Kōjinsha, 2006), 183-94, 331-3.

8. Ibid.

9. Plaques at Etajima Museum of Naval History (visit on May 16, 2004).

10. Kamikaze Kankō Iinkai (Kamikaze Publication Committee), ed., *Shashinshū kamikaze: Riku kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai jōkan* (Kamikaze photograph collection: Army and Navy special attacks, Vol. 1, October 1944 to March 1945) (Tōkyō: KK Bestsellers, 1996), 19.

11. Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 235-8; visit to Etajima Museum of Naval History on May 16, 2004.

12. Ibid., 239-52. *Tokubetsu kōgekitai* only lists the names of 922 Shin'yō Corps members who died at Corregidor, but it is missing the name of Nobuo Nakamura, which is shown as a 12th Shin'yō Special Attack Squadron member in the following reference: Shin'yō Association (Shin'yōkai), ed., *Ningen heiki: Shin'yō tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Human weapon: Shin'yō Special Attack Corps), Shirō Arai, general editor, volume 1 (Tōkyō:



Kokushokankōkai, 1990), 124. *Ningen heiki*, 120, gives a total of 923 Shin'yō Corps men who died at Corregidor as part of the 7th to 13th Shin'yō Special Attack Squadrons.

13. According to Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 108, the men who died in the Shin'yō Special Attack Corps did not receive special posthumous two-rank promotions and instead received regular posthumous one-rank promotions for deaths in battle.

14. Bill Gordon, "47 Ships Sunk by Kamikaze Aircraft," <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/background/ships-sunk/>.

15. Robin Rielly, *Kamikaze Attacks of World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010), 317-24.

16. *Ibid.*, 268, 323.

17. Takeo Yasunobu, *Kamikaze tokkōtai* (Kamikaze special attack corps), edited by Kengo Tominaga (Tōkyō: Akita Shoten, 1972), 171. There is disagreement among various authors regarding the calculation of special attack effectiveness rates. The best discussions or assumptions used for these various figures can be found in the following two sources: Kenji Imai, "*Genki de meichū ni mairimasu*": *Isho kara mita rikugun kōkū tokubetsu kōgekitai* ("In high spirits I go to hit a target": Army Special Attack Corps seen from last letters) (Tōkyō: Genshū Publishing Co, 2004), 290-7; Ikurō Ozawa, *Tsurai shinjitsu: kyokō no tokkō shinwa* (Hard truths: Fictitious special attack myths) (Tōkyō: Dohsei Publishing Co., 1983), 69-108.

18. Masayasu Hosaka, "*Tokkō*" to *nihonjin* ("Special Attacks" and Japanese People) (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2005), 207-9; Rielly, *Kamikaze Attacks of World War II*, 67-72.

19. John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon, 1986), 297.

20. Denis Warner, Peggy Warner, with Commander Sadao Seno, *The Sacred Warriors: Japan's Suicide Legions* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1982), 19-20.

21. Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 62.

22. Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 127.

23. Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary, and Donald Keene, comp., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 646.

24. *Ibid.*, 647.

25. Daikichi Irokawa, *The Age of Hirohito: In Search of Modern Japan*, translated by Mikiso Hane and John K. Urda (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 128.

26. John Owen Gauntlett, trans., *Kokutai No Hongi: Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan*, edited by Robert King Hall (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), 10.

27. Walter A. Skya, *Japan's Holy War: The Ideology of Radical Shintō Ultrationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 264.

28. Gauntlett, *Kokutai No Hongi*, 10.

29. *Ibid.*, 80.

30. Michiyoshi Fukahori, *Tokkō no shinjitsu: Meirei to kenshin to izoku no kokoro* (Truth about special attacks: Command and dedication and bereaved families' spirit) (Tōkyō: Hara Shobō, 2001), 43.



31. Gauntlett, *Kokutai No Hongi*, 83.
32. Ibid., 87.
33. Ibid., 90.
34. Ibid., 143.
35. Gauntlett, *Kokutai No Hongi*, v.
36. Skya, *Japan's Holy War*, 263-4.
37. Gauntlett, *Kokutai No Hongi*, 8.
38. Tsunoda, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 706.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., 12-3.
41. Ibid., 18.
42. Tokyo Gazette, *Field Service Code (Senjinkun)*, adopted by the War Department on January 8, 1941 (Tokyo: Tokyo Gazette Publishing House, 1941), 10.
43. Mamoru Kitagawa, ed., *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai: Kaerazaru seishun no isho shū* (Ah, Kamikaze Special Attack Corps: Collected last letters of youth that would not return) (Tōkyō: Nihon Bungeisha, 1970), 193. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/furuya/>.
44. Yasukuni Jinja, ed. *Eirei no koto no ha* (Words of the spirits of war dead), Volume 3 (Tōkyō: Yasukuni Jinja Shamusho, 1997), 55. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/takase/>.
45. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai (Chiran Girls' High School Nadeshiko Association), ed., *Gunjō: Chiran tokkō kichi yori* (Deep blue: From Chiran special attack air base), originally published in 1979 (Kagoshima City: Takishobō, 1996), 55. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nakahara-tsunenobu/>.
46. Hichirō Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi: Bansei tokkōtaiin no isho to isatsu* (Army's last special attack base: Last letters and photographs of Bansei special attack corps members) (Ōsaka: Tōhō Shuppan, 1993), 166. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/otsuka/>.
47. The Mediasion Co., *Ningen gyorai kaiten* (Kaiten human torpedo) (Hiroshima: The Mediasion Co., 2006), 95. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yashiro/>.
48. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai (Navy Flight Reserve Students 14th Class Association), ed., *Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura: Wakaki senbotsu gakusei no shuki* (Continuation • Ah, cherry blossoms of same class: Writings of young students who died in war) (Tōkyō: Kōjinsha, 1995), 23-4. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/okita/>.
49. Christopher W. A. Szpilman, "Conservatism and conservative reaction," in *Routledge Handbook of Modern Japanese History*, edited by Sven Saaler and Christopher W. A. Szpilman (London: Routledge, 2018), 175.
50. Saburō Ienaga, *The Pacific War, 1931-1945: A Critical Perspective on Japan's Role in World War II* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 98.
51. Irokawa, *The Age of Hirohito*, 25.

52. Gregory J. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan, 1918-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 300-1.
53. John W. Dower, *Japan in War and Peace* (New York: New Press, 1993), 101.
54. Ibid., 102.
55. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 44. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ito-nobuo/>.
56. Ibid., 52. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ohashi/>.
57. Fujio Matsugi, ed., *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekитай no isho* (Last letters of Navy Special Attack Corps) (Tōkyō: KK Bestsellers, 1971), 136. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nakajima-kenji/>.
58. Toshio Iritani, *Group Psychology of the Japanese in Wartime* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1991), 66-9.
59. Yasukuni Jinja, ed., *Sange no kokoro to chinkon no makoto* (Spirits of heroic dead and devotion to repose of souls) (Tōkyō: Yasukuni Jinja, 1995), 60. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kaida/>.
60. Irokawa, *The Age of Hirohito*, 92.
61. Albert Axell and Hideaki Kase, *Kamikaze: Japan's Suicide Gods* (London: Pearson Education, 2002), 115; Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005), 35.
62. Peter B. High, *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Years' War, 1931-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 487-8.
63. Hideyuki Nakamura, "Tokkōtai hyōshōron" (Comments on representations of Special Attack Corps), in *Iwanami kōza: Ajia - Taiheiyō sensō 5: Senjō no shosō* (Iwanami lectures: Asia-Pacific War, vol. 5: Various aspects of battlefield) (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2006), 304-5.
64. Ibid., 312; Mainichi Shinbunsha, ed., *Bessatsu ichiokunin no shōwashi nihon nyūsu eigashi* (Separate volume of Shōwa Era history of one hundred million people, film history of Nihon News) (Tōkyō: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1977), 450-3, 455-61, 464-5, 468-9, 471-2, 480-1, 483-5.
65. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 115. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/jinushi/>.
66. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 101. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/komecha/>.
67. Unabarakai Henshū Iinkai (Unabarakai Editing Committee), ed., *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū* (2) (Last letters, poems, and writings of Navy Preparatory Flight Trainees (2)) (Tōkyō: Unabarakai, 2006), 26. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/uemura-takao/>.
68. Donald Keene, *So Lovely A Country Will Never Perish: Wartime Diaries of Japanese Writers* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2010), 56-7.
69. Thomas R. H. Havens, *Valley of Darkness: The Japanese People and World War Two* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978), 75.
70. Havens, *Valley of Darkness*, 77, 84, 87; Iritani, *Group Psychology of the Japanese in Wartime*, 130.
71. Shun'ichi Terai, ed., *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai* (Miyakonojō Air Base Hayate Special Attack Shinbu Unit) (Tōkyō: Genshobō, 1977), 24.

72. Barak Kushner, "Japan's war of words: World War II propaganda," in *Routledge Handbook of Modern Japanese History*, edited by Sven Saaler and Christopher W. A. Szpilman (London: Routledge, 2018), 256.
73. Barak Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 51-3.
74. Kushner, "Japan's war of words," 256.
75. Maxwell Taylor Kennedy, *Danger's Hour: The Story of the USS Bunker Hill and the Kamikaze Pilot Who Crippled Her* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008), 188.
76. Kazuhiko Osuo, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai no kiroku (kaigun hen)* (Record of special attack corps (Navy)) (Tōkyō: Kōjinsha, 2005), 203-4
77. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai (Navy Flight Reserve Students 14th Class Association), ed., *Ā dōki no sakura: Kaerazaru seishun no shuki* (Ah, cherry blossoms of same class: Writings of youth that would not return) (Tōkyō: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1966), 115-25, 137-40. The final diary entries of Ensign Mitsuo Satō are translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato-mitsuo/>. The final diary entries of Ensign Yasuo Ichijima are translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ichijima/>.
78. Yasukuni Jinja, ed., *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 5 (1999). Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ogawa/>.
79. Keizō Kojima, ed., *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū (1)* (Last letters, poems, and writings of Navy Preparatory Flight Trainees (1)) (Tōkyō: Unabarakai: 2004), 11. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yabuta/>.
80. Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai (Japan Memorial Society for the Students Killed in the War—Wadatsumi Society), comp., *Listen to the Voices from the Sea: Writings of the Fallen Japanese Students (Kike Wadatsumi no Koe)*, translated by Midori Yamanouchi and Joseph L. Quinn (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2000), 196.
81. Senri Nagasue, *Shiragiku tokkōtai: Kaerazaru wakawashitachi e no chinkonfu* (Shiragiku special attack unit: Requiem to young eagles who would not return) (Tōkyō: Kōjinsha, 1997), 212.
82. Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai, *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, 304.
83. Kaoru Muranaga, ed., *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Chiran special attack forces) (Kagoshima City: Japlan, 1989), 124.
84. Yukie Kudō, *Tokkō e no rekiemu* (The requiem for Kamikaze) (Tōkyō: Chūōkōron Shinsha, 2001), 65.
85. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 188.
86. Yasuhiro Shōguchi, *Senchi kara no saiki no tegami: Nijūninin no wakaki kaigun shōhei no isho* (Last letters from battlefield: Final letters of 22 young Navy officers and men) (Tōkyō: Kairyūsha, 2016), 110.
87. Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, 245.
88. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 190.
89. Philip Seaton, "Kamikaze Museums and Contents Tourism," *Journal of War & Culture Studies* (2018): 8, doi:10.1080/17526272.2018.1424432. Original source for number of annual visitors to Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots is Minami Kyushu City Tourism Division.

90. Information panel about Ichirō Ōmi at Etajima Museum of Naval History (visit on October 16, 2018). The Japanese name for the museum is Kyōiku Sankōkan, which literally means Educational Museum. Two English brochures were obtained from the JMSDF First Service School during a visit on May 30, 2003, and one brochure says Museum of Naval History while the other indicates Educational Museum.

91. NHK, "Naze isho wa atsumerareta ka ~Tokkō nazo no izoku chōsa~" (Why last letters were collected: Mysterious survey of bereaved families of special attacks), broadcast August 28, 2012, accessed February 16, 2019, <http://www.nhk.or.jp/gendai/articles/3237/1.html>.

92. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū tokubetsu kōgekитай*, 317-29.

93. Visit to Etajima Museum of Naval History on September 11, 2019.

94. Kaijō Jieitai (Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force), "Daiichi Jukka Gakkō ni tsuite 'shuyō kōnai shisetsu'" (About the First Service School "Principal campus facilities"), accessed February 17, 2019, <http://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/onemss/about/facility/index.html>.

95. Asahi Shimbun Seibu Honsha, *Sora no kanata ni* (To distant skies) (Fukuoka: Ashishobō, 1990), 119-21; Tadamasu Itatsu, "Tokkō • junreikō" (Going on special attack pilgrimage), in *Ichioku nin no shōwa shi (Nihon no senshi 4): Tokubetsu kōgekитай* (Shōwa history of 100 million people (Japan's war history, Volume 4): Special Attack Corps), edited by Kikuo Makino (Tōkyō: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1979), 292-3; Itatsu Jii-chan Ganba no Kai, "Itatsu Tadamasu-shi no kore made no keireki" (Tadamasu Itatsu's personal history to date), last updated February 19, 2019, accessed February 28, 2019, <http://www.itatsutadamasu.jp/profile/profile.html>; Seaton, "Kamikaze Museums and Contents Tourism," 8. The Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots was known as Chiran Tokkō Ihinkan (Chiran Special Attack Items Museum) from 1975 until opening of new building in 1986.

96. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 69, 153-220.

97. *Ibid.*, 21.

98. Visits to Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots on October 9 and 12, 2018.

99. Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots, "Introduction," accessed July 18, 2019, <http://www.chiran-tokkou.jp/english/about/heiwakaikan/>.

100. Kirk Spitzer, "Japan city wants kamikaze letters in historical register," *USA Today*, June 5, 2014, accessed March 14, 2019, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/06/05/kamikaze-letters-japan/10003139/>.

101. Monbukagakushō (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology), "'Yunesuko kioku isan kigyō' no heisei 26nen no shinsa ni fusuru anken no sentei ni tsuite – dai 128 kai bunka katsudō shōiinkai no shingi kekka" (UNESCO Documentary Heritage Program 2014 topic selections for judging: 128th Cultural Activities Subcommittee session results), June 12, 2014, accessed February 13, 2019, [http://www.mext.go.jp/b\\_menu/houdou/26/06/1348757.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/26/06/1348757.htm).

102. Visit to Yūshūkan Museum on August 31, 2019.

103. Jeff Kingston, "The politics of Yasukuni Shrine and war memory," in *Routledge Handbook of Modern Japanese History*, edited by Sven Saaler and Christopher W. A. Szpilman (London: Routledge, 2018), 441, 445.

104. Hichirō Naemura, *Sekai no gokai o toita shijun no kororo* (Pure hearts that dispelled world's misunderstandings) (Hirakata City, Osaka Prefecture: Mingeikaku, 2004), 5, 9; visit to Bansei Tokkō Peace Museum on October 11, 2018.

105. Kanoya Kōkū Kichi Shiryōkan Renraku Kyōgikai (Kanoya Air Base Museum Coordinating Committee), *Kokoro no sakebi* (Cries of the heart) (Kanoya, Kagoshima Prefecture: Kanoya Kōkū Kichi Shiryōkan

Renraku Kyōgikai, 2003), 114, 142; visit to Kanoya Air Base Museum on October 10, 2018; number of Kamikaze Corps members who made sorties from Kanoya from "Kamikaze Special Attack Corps" exhibit at Kanoya Air Base Museum.

106. Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai (Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association), "Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai," accessed July 17, 2019, <http://www.tokkotai.or.jp/>. Annual spring memorial ceremony - [http://www.tokkotai.or.jp/about\\_us.html](http://www.tokkotai.or.jp/about_us.html), office in Yasukuni Shrine's Yūshūkan Museum for several years - <http://www.tokkotai.or.jp/history.html>, and first link on its web page of related links to Yasukuni's home page - <http://www.tokkotai.or.jp/links.html>.

107. Tōdai Senbetsu Gakusei Shuki Henshū Iinkai (Committee to Compile Writings of University of Tōkyō Students Killed in War), comp., *Haruka naru sanga ni* (In the faraway mountains and rivers) (Tōkyō: Tōdai Kyōdō Kumiai Shuppanbu, 1947).

108. Nihon Senbetsu Gakusei Shuki Henshū Iinkai (Editing Committee of Writings of Students Killed in the War), ed., *Kike wadatsumi no koe: Nihon senbetsu gakusei no shuki* (Listen to the voices of the sea: Writings of Japanese students who died in war) (Tōkyō: Tōdai Kyōdō Kumiai Shuppanbu, 1949).

109. Yoshiaki Fukuma, *Junkoku to hangyaku: Tokkō no katari no sengoshi* (Dying for country and rebellion: Postwar history of special attack narrations) (Tōkyō: Seikyūsha, 2007), 28.

110. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū tokubetsu kōgekitai*.

111. Ibid., 317-29. The writing of Lieutenant Junior Grade Nobuo Ishibashi on page 323 does not specify that he was a former college student at Tōa Dōbun Shoin Daigaku (East Asia Common Cultural College) in Shanghai, which is indicated at Osuo, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai no kiroku (kaigun hen)*, 198.

112. John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 406-7.

113. Ibid., 412.

114. Nihon Senbetsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai, *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, 1.

115. Hosaka, "*Tokkō*" to *nihonjin*, 79-80.

116. Ibid., 87, 90. Hosaka indicates the writer is anonymous, but it can be determined to be Ensign Yasuo Ichijima based on the writer's background information and the diary's contents compared to Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 115-25.

117. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 115-25. Another example of a writing edited during the Allied Occupation but later published in its complete form is the first letter that appeared in *Kike wadatsumi no koe: Nihon senbetsu gakusei no shuki* (Listen to the voices of the sea: Writings of Japanese students who died in war) in 1949. This letter by Ryōji Uehara had about one third of its content omitted, but the complete letter was published in 1979 in *Gunjō: Chiran tokkō kichi yori* (Deep blue: From Chiran special attack air base) by Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai (Chiran Girls High School Nadeshiko Association). See "Last Writings of Second Lieutenant Ryōji Uehara" (<http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/uehara/>) for details.

118. Hakuō Izokukai (Hakuō Bereaved Families Association), ed., *Kumo nagaruru hate ni: Senbetsu kaigun hikō yobi gakusei no shuki* (To the end of the flowing clouds: Writings of Navy reserve students who died in war) (Tōkyō: Nihon Shuppan Kyōdō, 1952).

119. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952); Hakuō Izokukai (Hakuō Bereaved Families Association), ed., *Kumo nagaruru hate ni: Senbetsu kaigun hikō yobi gakusei no shuki* (To the end of the flowing clouds: Writings of Navy reserve students who died in war), expanded edition (Tōkyō: Kawade Shinbō Shinsha, 1995).

120. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*.
121. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura*.
122. Mainichi Shinbunsha, ed., *Seishun no isho: "Yokaren" senbotsusha no shuki* (Last letters of youth: Writings of "Yokaren" war dead) (Tōkyō: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1968). The percentage of Yokaren graduates who died in special attacks out of the total Navy special attack deaths is computed from data in the "Kamikaze Special Attack Corps" exhibit at Kanoya Air Base Museum (visit on October 10, 2018).
123. Noboru Orihara, comp., *Ware tokkō ni shisu: Yokaren no ikō* (I will die in a special attack: Yokaren (Preparatory Flight Training Program) writings) (Tōkyō: Keizai Ōraisha, 1973).
124. Kojima, *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū (1)*; Unabarakai Henshū Iinkai, *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū (2)*.
125. Two examples of writings not published prior are the last letters and poems of Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Masanobu Nagazawa and Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Mitsuo Yoshinaga at Kojima, *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū (1)*, 24, 27. These are translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nagazawa/> and <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yoshinaga/>.
126. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*.
127. Ibid., 10-33. The last writings of Masashi Ōhira are translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ohira/>.
128. Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai*; Takaoka, Osamu, ed. *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai* (Chiran special attack forces) (Kagoshima City: Japlan, 2009).
129. Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 18-30. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato-shinpei/>.
130. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*.
131. Two examples of more recent works that cover the same writings as prior publications about Chiran Special Attack Corps pilots include: Chiran Tokkō Heiwa Kaikan (Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots), ed., *Itsu made mo, itsu made mo ogenki de* (Be in good spirits forever and ever) (Tōkyō: Sōshisha, 2007); The Mediasion Co., *Tada hitosuji ni yuku* (I go with complete commitment) (Hiroshima: The Mediasion Co., 2006).
132. Visits to Kanoya Air Base Museum on October 14, 2007, and October 10, 2018.
133. Kanoya Kōkū Kichi Shiryōkan Renraku Kyōgikai, *Kokoro no sakebi*.
134. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*.
135. Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*, 1-174, 183.
136. Kiyoshi Iwamoto and Tsutomu Mukaida, eds., *Chinkon -- shirakumo ni norete kimi kaerimase: Tokkō kichi daini kokubu no ki* (Repose of souls -- riding on the white clouds, come back to us: Record of Special Attack Corps Kokubu No. 2 Air Base) (Mizobe Town, Kagoshima Prefecture: Jūsanzukabaru tokkōhi hozon iinkai (Committee to Preserve the Jūsanzukabaru Special Attack Corps Monument), 1992); Masaaki Katabami, *Mō hitotsu no "Eien no Zero": Tsukuba Kaigun Kōkūtai* (Another "Eternal Zero": Tsukuba Naval Air Group) (Tōkyō: Village Books, 2014).
137. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*. The same book was published by the same company (Nihon Bungeisha) in a 1983 version with the title of *Sōretsu kamikaze tokkōtai: Kaerazaru seishun no isho shū* (Heroic Kamikaze Special Attack Corps: Collected last letters of youth that would not return).



138. Ibid., 9-10.
139. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*.
140. Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai (Tokkōtai Commemoration Peace Memorial Association), *Tokkōtai iei shū* (Special Attack Corps death poem collection) (Tōkyō: Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, 1999).
141. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volumes 1-10 (1995-2014).
142. The following are examples of books published by Yasukuni Shrine about the deaths and writings of Special Attack Corps members: Yasukuni Jinja, ed., *Iza saraba ware wa mikuni no yamazakura* (Farewell, we are our country's mountain cherry blossoms) (Tōkyō: Tentensha, 1994); Yasukuni Jinja, *Sange no kokoro to chinkon no makoto*; Jinja Shinpō Kikaku, ed., *Chichiue-sama hahaue-sama: Sakura o kouru eirei no koe* (Father, Mother: Voices of spirits of war dead who love cherry blossoms) (Tōkyō: Jinja Shinpōsha, 1988).
143. Kaiten Kenshōkai (Kaiten Memorial Association), *Kaiten* (No place: Kaiten Kenshōkai, 1965).
144. Mainichi Shinbunsha, ed., *Ningen gyorai: Kaiten tokubetsu kōgekitaiin no shuki* (Human torpedo: Writings of Kaiten Special Attack Corps members) (Tōkyō: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1967).
145. Examples of biographies of individual pilots or compilations of their writings include: Yasuki Fukushima, *Sokoku yo!: Tokkō ni chitta Anazawa shōi no koi* (My country!: Love of Second Lieutenant Anazawa who fell in special attack) (Tōkyō: Genki Shobō, 2009); Takako Hino, *Tsubasa no kakera: Tokkō ni chitta kaigun yobi gakusei no seishun* (Wing fragment: Youth of Navy reserve students who died in special attacks) (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1997); Tadao Hiroi, *Hotaru ni natta tokkōhei: Miyakawa Saburō monogatari* (Kamikaze pilot who turned into firefly: Story of Saburō Miyakawa) (Niigata City: Niigata Nippō Jigyōsha, 1995); Fumino Mizuguchi, *Chiran kara on tegami* (Letters from Chiran) (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 2007); Tsuneyuki Mōri, *Yuki wa jūnanasai tokkō de shinda: Koinu yo saraba, itoshiki inochi* (Yuki died at 17 in a kamikaze attack: Goodbye puppy, dear life) (Tōkyō: Popurasha, 2004); Masataka Ōishi, *Pen o tsurugi ni kaete: Tokkō gakutohei kaigun shōi Ōishi Masanori* (Replacing the pen with the sword: Special attack student soldier Ensign Masanori Ōishi) (Fukuoka: Nishinippon Shinbunsha, 2007); Shigeharu Tada, *Haha e no isho: Okinawa tokkō Hayashi Ichizō* (Final letters to his mother: Ichizō Hayashi, Okinawan special attack corps member) (Fukuoka: Genshobō, 2007); Ryōji Uehara, *Ā sokoku yo koibito yo* (Ah, my country, my lover), edited by Hiroaki Nakajima (Nagano: Shinano Mainichi Shinbun, 2005); Hidehiko Ushijima, *Kieta haru - Tokkō ni chitta tōshu Ishimaru Shin'ichi* (Lost spring - pitcher Shin'ichi Ishimaru who fell in special attack) (Tōkyō: Kawade Bunko, 1994); Minoru Wada, *Wadatsumi no koe kieru koto naku: Kaiten tokkōtaiin no shuki* (Voices from the sea have not disappeared: Writings of Kaiten Special Attack Corps member) (Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobō, 1967); Naoaki Yamashita, *Waga inochi sora ni hatsuru tomo: Kamikaze tokubetsu kōgekitai daini seitō tai Yamashita Hisao ikōshū* (Although my life comes to end in clouds: Collection of last writings of Hisao Yamashita in Kamikaze Special Attack Corps 2nd Seitō Squadron) (Tōkyō: Bungeisha, 2006). Examples of books with selections of previously-published writings include: Katsuhiko Hara, *Chinkon: Tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho* (Repose of souls: Last letters of Special Attack Corps) (Tōkyō: KK Bestsellers, 2007); Yūkō Kitakage, *Tokkōtaiin no shuki o yomu* (Reading the writings of Special Attack Corps members) (Tōkyō: Bensei Shuppan, 2012); The Mediasion Co., *Ningen gyorai kaiten*.
146. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū tokubetsu kōgekitai*; Rikihei Inoguchi and Tadashi Nakajima, with Roger Pineau, *The Divine Wind: Japan's Kamikaze Force in World War II* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1958).
147. Bernard Millot, *Divine Thunder: The Life and Death of the Kamikazes* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1971), 249-52; Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan* (New York: New American Library, 1975), 309-11, 313, 320; Earle Rice Jr., *Kamikazes* (San Diego: Lucent Books, 2000), 97.
148. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *The Divine Wind*, 205.

149. Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai, *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*; Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Ki'nenkai (Japan Memorial Society for the Students Killed in the War), ed., *Shinpan kike wadatsumi no koe: Nihon senbotsu gakusei no shuki* (Listen to the voices of the sea new edition: Writings of Japanese students who died in war) (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1995).

150. The six men with writings after assignment to the Special Attack Corps are in Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai, *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, 7-9, 236-8 (Ryōji Uehara), 215-8 (Ichizō Hayashi), 224-7 (Yasuo Ichijima, spelled incorreccted as Ichishima in book), 228-30 (Akio Ōtsuka), 240-5 (Minoru Wada), and 249-50 (Norimasa Hayashi, spelled incorrectly as Toshimasa Hayashi in book). The two men with all writings before entering the military are at 118-29 (Hachirō Sasaki) and 140-3 (Takenori Nakao). The man with poems without a date and with content where the time period cannot be determined is at 171 (Tarō Tsukamoto).

151. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 80. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/uehara/>.

152. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *The Divine Wind*, 203-7; Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai, *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, 215-8.

153. Lartéguy, Jean, ed., *The Sun Goes Down: Last letters from Japanese suicide-pilots and soldiers*, translated from the French by Nora Wydenbruck (London: New English Library, 1956), 4, 6.

154. *Ibid.*, 89-112. The letter in Lartéguy's *The Sun Goes Down* but not in *Listen to the Voices from the Sea* was written by 22-year-old Army pilot Yoshi Miyagi. There is no available evidence to confirm that he was a Special Attack Corps member based on a review of the listing of men who died in special attacks in Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 129-219, 253-99. Miyagi's statements are more negative against the special attack military operations than other pilots, such as the following paragraph: "We, the *kamikazé* pilots, are nothing more than robots, we can do nothing except remain silent, entreating our compatriots to make Japan into the great country of our dreams. I know that no purpose can any longer be served by my death, but I remain proud of piloting a suicide-plane and it is in this state of mind that I die" (Lartéguy, *The Sun Goes Down*, 100). Miyagi's letter is not included in Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Ki'nenkai, *Shinpan kike wadatsumi no koe* (Listen to the voices of the sea new edition) (1995). It is not known why this letter was removed.

155. Lartéguy, *The Sun Goes Down*, 101-2; Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai, *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, 7-9, 230-9. The writings of Ryōji Uehara is one example where *The Sun Goes Down* has significant cuts when compared to his writings in *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*. Missing from Lartéguy's translation are Uehara's *Shokan* (My Thoughts), selected diary entries from March 1944 to February 1945, and his statement when he became a member of a special attack unit. The last letter to his parents omits some paragraphs and sentences in the version in *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*.

156. Todai Gakusei Jichi-kai Senbotsu Gakusei Shuki Hensan Inkai (Committee for Compiling the Writings of the University of Tokyo Students Killed in the War, the University of Tokyo Student Council), comp., *In the Faraway Mountains and Rivers (Harukanaru Sanga ni): More Voices From A Lost Generation of Japanese Students*, translated by Joseph L. Quinn and Midori Yamanouchi (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2005); Tōdai Senbotsu Gakusei Shuki Henshū Inkai, *Haruka naru sanga ni*.

157. The three men with all writings before entering the military are in Todai Gakusei Jichi-kai Senbotsu Gakusei Shuki Hensan Inkai, *In the Faraway Mountains and Rivers*, 1-5 (Hachirō Sasaki), 31-2 (Masao Eguchi), and 113 (Masatsugu Matsuyoshi).

158. The two *kaiten* pilots with writings after assignment to the Special Attack Corps are in Todai Gakusei Jichi-kai Senbotsu Gakusei Shuki Hensan Inkai, *In the Faraway Mountains and Rivers*, 86-95 (Minoru Wada) and 124-7 (Yasuhiko Isumi, spelled incorrectly as Yasuhiko Gaikaku in book). The pronunciation of Yasuhiko Isumi comes from The Mediasion Co., *Ningen gyorai kaiten*, 82.



159. The observations in this paragraph are from visits to the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots in Minamikyūshū City (formerly Chiran Town) on October 9 and 12, 2018.

160. The final writings of the eight Army Special Attack Corps members were in the Multipurpose Exhibition Room at Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots during a visit on September 8, 2019. The layout of the Multipurpose Exhibition Room can be viewed at <http://www.chiran-tokkou.jp/english/floor/kikaku/index.html>, accessed September 22, 2019. The Multipurpose Exhibition Room has changing exhibits, and during a visit on October 12, 2018, there were final writings with English translations of 16 Army Special Attack Corps members on exhibit.

161. An example of a touch-panel display screen of the database of final writings of Army Special Attack Corps members at Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots can be viewed at <http://www.chiran-tokkou.jp/english/guide/commentary/index.html>, accessed February 7, 2019.

162. Takeshi Kawatoko, *The Mind of the Kamikaze* (Minamikyūshū City, Kagoshima Prefecture: The Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots, 2008).

163. Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots, "Digital Archives," accessed February 7, 2019, <http://www.chiran-tokkou.jp/learn/pilots/index.html>.

164. The following first part of the web address (URL) for the translated writings of the three Army Special Attack Corps members linked on the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots website can be input into Google to obtain links to about 35 additional final writings: "http://www.chiran-tokkou.jp/learn/pilots" (accessed February 6, 2019).

165. Visit to Yasukuni Shrine Yūshūkan Museum on August 31, 2019.

166. Visit to Kanoya Air Base Museum on October 10, 2018.

167. Hatsuho Naito, *Thunder Gods: The Kamikaze Pilots Tell Their Stories*, translated by Mayumi Ishikawa (Tōkyō: Kōdansha International, 1989), 113-4.

168. Ibid., 114. Shimamura's last letter is translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/shimamura/>.

169. Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook, *Japan at War: An Oral History* (New York: The New Press, 1992), 327. Araki's last letter is translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/araki-haruo/>.

170. Axell and Kase, *Kamikaze*, 50-1, 136-8, 143-4.

171. Ibid., 138-42. The letter of Ryōji Uehara on pages 138-40 comes from Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinen-Kai, *Listen to the Voices from the Sea*, 236-8. The letters of Isao Matsuo (misspelled as Masuo by Axell and Kase) and Teruo Yamaguchi on pages 140-2 come from Inoguchi and Nakajima, *The Divine Wind*, 198-201.

172. Nicholas Voge, trans., "Into the rising sun," *Harper's Magazine*, January 2002, accessed June 22, 2007, <http://www.harpers.org/archive/2002/01/0079031/>.

173. Bill Gordon, "Kamikaze Images: Letters, Poems, Diaries, and Other Writings," <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/>.

174. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*; Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

175. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, xvii.

176. Ibid.

177. There are many examples where *Kamikaze Diaries* has paragraphs, most slightly edited and rearranged, that are from *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*. As one example, paragraph 3 on page 49 and paragraphs 1 to 3 on page 50 of *Kamikaze Diaries* are essentially the same as paragraphs 2 to 3 on page 200 and paragraphs 1 to 2 on page 201 of *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*.

178. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 173.

179. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, xiv.

180. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 193-211; Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 39-69.

181. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 218-25; Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 185-211. In *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms* (191, 218), the given name of Takenori Nakao incorrectly appears as Taketoku, and the Preamble (xiii) of *Kamikaze Diaries* incorrectly gives his name as Teketoku.

182. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 8.

183. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 7, 300; Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 11, 34.

184. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 34.

185. *Ibid.*, 173.

186. *Ibid.*, 174.

187. *Ibid.*, 175.

188. *Ibid.*, 178.

189. *Ibid.*, 170.

190. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 183.

191. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 7 (2001), 19-20.

192. Ryuji Nagatsuka, *I Was a Kamikaze*, translated from the French by Nina Rootes (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1973), 158-9.

193. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 9, 38, 102, 109, 111, 121, 140.

194. *Ibid.*, 3, 303.

195. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 174-5, 177, 192.

196. Cook and Cook, *Japan at War: An Oral History*, 171-2.

197. M. G. Sheftall, review of *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers*, by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Social Science Japan Journal* 10, no. 1 (April 2007): 114-7.

198. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 304-5.

199. *Ibid.*, 136.

200. *Ibid.*, 299.

201. Kiyomi Morioka, *Wakaki tokkōtaiin to taiheiyō sensō* (Young Special Attack Corps members and Pacific War) (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1995), 11, 51. Morioka's figures come from data in Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 129-219, 253-299.

202. Percentages from data from Morioka, *Wakaki tokkōtaiin to taiheiyō sensō*, 11, 51, which is from data in Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 129-219, 253-299.

203. Mako Sasaki, "Who Became Kamikaze Pilots and How Did They Feel Towards Their Suicide Mission?" *The Concord Review* 7, no. 1 (Fall 1996): 176, 184-8, 190-1.

204. Yuki Tanaka, "Japan's Kamikaze Pilots and Contemporary Suicide Bombers: War and Terror," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 3, no. 7 (July 6, 2005): 1-4, accessed January 27, 2019, <https://apjif.org/-/Yuki-Tanaka/1606/article.pdf>.

205. Kiyomi Morioka, *Kesshi no sedai to isho: Taiheiyō sensō makki no wakamono no sei to shi* (Generation ready to die and writings left behind: Life and death of young men in last stage of Pacific War) (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1993), 6-18.

206. *Ibid.*, 61-147.

207. Mayumi Ito, "Japanese Tokkō Soldiers and Their Jisei," Master's thesis, University of Alaska Anchorage, 2007.

208. *Ibid.*, 42-80.

209. *Ibid.*, 80-1.

210. Imai, "*Genki de meichū*," 25-137; John Orbell and Tomonori Morikawa, "An Evolutionary Account of Suicide Attacks: The Kamikaze Case," *Political Psychology* 32, no. 2 (April 2011): 297-322, doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00808.x; John Orbell and Tomonori Morikawa, "On-Line Appendices for: Lessons from the Kamikaze Campaign For the Evolved Psychology of 'Suicide Heroism,'" accessed January 27, 2019, [https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/downloadSupplement?doi=10.1111%2Fj.1467-9221.2010.00808.x&file=POPS\\_808\\_sm\\_OnlineApp.doc](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/downloadSupplement?doi=10.1111%2Fj.1467-9221.2010.00808.x&file=POPS_808_sm_OnlineApp.doc); Luli van der Does-Ishikawa, "Contested memories of the Kamikaze and the self-representations of Tokkō-tai youth in their missives home," *Japan Forum* 27, no. 3 (2015): 345-79.

211. Imai, "*Genki de meichū*," 21-4.

212. *Ibid.*, 72-5, 81. Percentages have been estimated as shown on graph on page 81, since exact numbers are not provided.

213. *Ibid.*, 74-5.

214. *Ibid.*, 89-124.

215. *Ibid.*, 126.

216. *Ibid.*, 13-137.

217. *Ibid.*, 25, 124-5.

218. Orbell and Morikawa, "Evolutionary Account of Suicide Attacks," 297-322.

219. *Ibid.*, 305.

220. *Ibid.*, 304-5.

221. *Ibid.*, 305, 307.

222. Ibid., 314.
223. Orbell and Morikawa, "On-Line Appendices."
224. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1995).
225. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 485-95.
226. van der Does-Ishikawa, "Contested memories of the Kamikaze," 345-79.
227. Ibid., 362-4.
228. Ibid., 365.
229. Ibid., 356, 364, 369.
230. Ibid., 364.
231. Ibid., 369.
232. Ibid., 370.
233. Ibid., 357, 361, 375.
234. Ibid., 361.
235. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura*, 56.
236. Kyūgun senshi zassō nōto - Kyū dainippon teikoku rikukaigun no senshi (Former military battle history miscellaneous notes - Former Imperial Japanese Army and Navy battle history), "Yatabe Kaigun Kōkūtai (Nidai)" (Yatabe Naval Air Group (second generation)), last modified March 3, 2011, accessed February 7, 2019, <http://pico32.web.fc2.com/kaigun/sentoki/yatabe.htm>. The following three sources did not have Shinozaki included as a person who died in a special attack: Katsuhiko Hara, *Shinsō kamikaze tokkō: Hisshi hitchū no 300 nichi* (Kamikaze special attack facts: 300 days of certain-death, sure-hit attacks) (Tōkyō: KK Bestsellers, 2004), 204; Kazuhiko Osuo, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai no kiroku (kaigun hen)*, 203; Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 184.
237. Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 184. Shinozaki's last letters are translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/shinozaki/>.
238. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 100, 204.
239. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 97.
240. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 83. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kawai/>.
241. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 101. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/komecha/>.
242. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952), 119-127. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/wakaomi/>.
243. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 83-91. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/okayasu/>.
244. Mainichi Shinbunsha, *Seishun no isho*, 137; Unabarakai Henshū Iinkai, *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • iei • ikōshū* (2), 39. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/saito/>.

245. Gordon, "Kamikaze Images: Letters," <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/>.
246. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū tokubetsu kōgekitaï*, 320.
247. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *The Divine Wind*, 200.
248. Isao Matsuo's last letter is translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/matsuo/>.
249. Kawatoko, *The Mind of the Kamikaze*. Following are three examples of translations that show the translator's native language is not English: "It will be usual that no chops of my body are left after I die" (22); "Dear my mother" (34); "I only want to you for your happiness" (54).
250. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 97.
251. Kawatoko, *The Mind of the Kamikaze*, 35.
252. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/itsui/>.
253. Kawatoko, *The Mind of the Kamikaze*, 19.
254. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 108. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ishikiriyama/>.
255. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *The Divine Wind*, 207.
256. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 152. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/okabe/>.
257. Orbell and Morikawa, "An Evolutionary Account"; Orbell and Morikawa, "On-Line Appendices."
258. Final letter to parents translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/jinushi/>.
259. Kawatoko, *The Mind of the Kamikaze*, 37.
260. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 97. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/itsui/>.
261. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 364-5.
262. Rielly, *Kamikaze Attacks of World War II*, 344.
263. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*; Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*.
264. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 115-25; Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Ki'nenkai, ed., *Kike wadatsumi no koe* (Listen to the voices of the sea gods) (Tōkyō: Kōbunsha, 2005), 168-70. Ensign Yasuo Ichijima's diary entries dated April 20-29 are translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ichijima/>.
265. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1995), 214-7.
266. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 363.
267. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 4 (1998), 5-6.
268. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 117.
269. Three examples where an image of the writing could be used to verify the text completeness are (1) last letters of Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Hayashi Yamawaki (translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/>)

[writings/yamawaki/](#)): Masasuke Ōnishi, *17-sai no tokkōtaiin: Yamawaki Hayashi nitō hikō heisō no seishun to sono jidai* (17-year old Special Attack Corps member: Youth of Flight Petty Officer 2nd Class Hayashi Yamawaki and those times) (Kōchi City: Rīburu Shuppan, 2016), 204-9; (2) last letter of Captain Masanobu Kuno (translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kuno/>): Asahi Shimbun Seibu Honsha, *Sora no kanata ni*, 98; and (3) last letter of Corporal Keiki Yamaguchi (translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yamaguchi/>): Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 119; Kawatoko, *The Mind of the Kamikaze*, 29.

270. Three examples where there are known omissions indicated by the editor are (1) last letter of Ensign Ta'ichi Imanishi (translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/imanishi-taichi/>): Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 132-4; (2) last letter of Flight Petty Officer 1st Class Tatsuzō Suzuki (translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/suzuki-tatsuzo/>): Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 81-2; and (3) last letter of Second Lieutenant Zenji Yokoyama (translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yokoyama/>): Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 9 (2009), 15-6.

271. Morioka, *Wakaki tokkōtaiin to taiheiyō sensō*, 5.

272. The two last letters of Lieutenant Junior Grade Tadasu Fukino are examples where four different versions have differences in punctuation, paragraphs, and use of *kanji* (Chinese characters) or *hiragana* (syllabic alphabet), and the three later versions have updates to the modern way of writing *kanji*. The four versions with publication year are: Hakuō Izokukai, ed., *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952), 43-6; Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 72-4; Hakuō Izokukai, ed., *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1995), 51-4; Katsuhiko Hara, *Chinkon: Tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 142-3. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/fukino/>.

273. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 187.

274. van der Does-Ishikawa, "Contested memories of the Kamikaze," 357, 369, 375.

275. *Ibid.*, 369.

276. *Ibid.*, 369.

277. *Ibid.*, 370.

278. *Ibid.*, 376.

279. Kennosuke Torisu, *Ningen gyorai: Tokkō heiki "kaiten" to wakadōtachi* (Human torpedo: "Kaiten" special attack weapon and young people) (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1983), 144. The writing by Minoru Mori is also published at the following source: Orihara, *Ware tokkō ni shisu*, 226.

280. Entire writing translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/mori-minoru/>.

281. The present study uses the current method of counting age based on number of years from the birth date, but for some sources it could not be verified if the current method or the traditional Japanese method of counting age was used. The traditional method regards a child as age one at birth and adds an additional year on each New Year's day thereafter.

282. Books with writings focused on pilots who made sorties from Chiran Air Base include Asahi Shimbun Seibu Honsha. *Sora no kanata ni*; Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*; Chiran Tokkō Heiwa Kaikan, *Itsu made mo, itsu made mo ogenki de*; Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*; Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai*. The book with writings by pilots who took off from Bansei is Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*. The book with writings by pilots who took off from Miyakonojō is Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*.

283. Navy's percentage computed from data in "Kamikaze Special Attack Corps" exhibit at Kanoya Air Base Museum (visit on October 10, 2018). Army's percentage computed from data from Morioka, *Wakaki tokkōtaiin to taiheiyō sensō*, 11, which is from data in Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 253-299.

284. Ibid.
285. Tokkōtai Senbotsusha Irei Heiwa Ki'nen Kyōkai, *Tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 254-63.
286. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 1, 69.
287. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 6 (2000), 21-2; Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 4 (1998), 57-8. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nishio/> and <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yonezu/>.
288. Two examples where a Special Attack Corps member addressed a letter to only one parent because the other parent had died are the last letters of Corporal Toshio Chizaki and Ensign Zenji Ueno. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 150-1; Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 162-3. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/chizaki/> and <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ueno/>.
289. Ensign Takuya Adachi: Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 178-80, translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/adachi-takuya/>; Ensign Yoshikage Hatabu: Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 166-71, translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hatabu/>; Ensign Yasuo Ichijima: Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 115-25, translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ichijima/>; Sergeant Major Shinpei Satō: Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 18-30, translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato-shinpei/>.
290. Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*, 37-40. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kagawa/>.
291. Orbell and Morikawa, "Evolutionary Account of Suicide Attacks," 307, 309.
292. Bill Gordon, "Special Attack Corps Last Writings Analysis," <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/writings-analysis.htm>.
293. Ibid.
294. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura*, 72. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nishikawa/>.
295. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 5 (1999), 105-6. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ogawa/>.
296. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 111. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/komatsu/>.
297. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 143. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ikoma/>.
298. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 111. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ishikura/>.
299. Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*, 52. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yoshimizu/>.
300. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura*, 96. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato/>.
301. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 159. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/seya/>.



302. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 74. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nakahara-tsunenobu/>.
303. Ibid., 103. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/miyake/>.
304. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 122. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/otani/>.
305. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952), 196-7. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kumakura/>.
306. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 151. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/chizaki/>.
307. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 189. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/soma/>.
308. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 106. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sakamoto/>.
309. Unabarakai Henshū Iinkai, *Kaigun hikō yoka renshūsei isho • ie • ikōshū* (2), 2. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kado/>.
310. Kanoya Kōkū Kichi Shiryōkan Renraku Kyōgikai, *Kokoro no sakebi*, 39. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kodama/>.
311. Kamikaze Tokkō Shikishima-tai Go Gunshin Hōsankai (Kamikaze Special Attack Shikishima Squadron Five War Heroes Support Association), *Shikishima-tai go gunshin no shirube* (Guide to Shikishima Squadron five war heroes) (Saijō City, Ehime Prefecture: Naramoto Jinja, 1975), 33. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nakano/>.
312. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *The Divine Wind*, 10.
313. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura*, 96. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/furuichi/>.
314. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 100. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hattori/>.
315. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 167-8. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hatabu/>.
316. Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), 209-13; Sister St. John the Baptist Watanabe, "The Tradition of Filial Piety and Japanese Moral Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston College, 1962), 129-30, 132, 148, 150-2, 156, 158-9.
317. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 148-9. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/suga/>.
318. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 71-2. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/todokoro/>.
319. Ibid., 160. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kubo-tadahiro/>.
320. Asahi Shimbun Seibu Honsha, *Sora no kanata ni*, 99-100.



321. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 124; Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 42, 45. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/aihana/>.
322. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 89. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/okayasu/>.
323. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 7 (2001), 16.
324. Orbell and Morikawa, "Evolutionary Account of Suicide Attacks," 309.
325. Orbell and Morikawa, "On-Line Appendices."
326. Orbell and Morikawa, "Evolutionary Account of Suicide Attacks," 309.
327. Ibid.
328. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, 7, 300; Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 11, 34.
329. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries*, 29.
330. Sasaki, "Who Became Kamikaze Pilots?" 176, 184-8, 190-1.
331. Tanaka, "Japan's Kamikaze Pilots and Contemporary Suicide Bombers," 1-4.
332. Ibid., 2.
333. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 134-5; Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 156-8. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yamaguchi-masato/> and <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/otsuka/>.
334. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 169-71; Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 7 (2001), 57-8. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/honda/> and <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/shikata/>.
335. Tanaka, "Japan's Kamikaze Pilots and Contemporary Suicide Bombers," 3.
336. Ibid.
337. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 106. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/matsuzawa/index.htm>.
338. Ito, "Japanese Tokkō Soldiers and Their Jisei," 42-80.
339. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 181. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/usui/>.
340. Ito, "Japanese Tokkō Soldiers and Their Jisei," 45.
341. Kōya Nakamura, *Nankō Seishin no Ken'yō* (Exaltation of Lord Kusunoki spirit) (Tōkyō: Ministry of Imperial Navy, 1932), 18, quoted in Mayumi Ito, "Japanese Tokkō Soldiers and Their Jisei," 50.
342. Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*, 82. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/okamoto/>.
343. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 69. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/matsuo/>.

344. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekитай no isho*, 145. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kusumi/>.
345. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 127. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/komuro/>.
346. Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekитай*, 18-30. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato-shinpei/>.
347. The two Special Attack Corps members are *kaiten* pilot Lieutenant Junior Grade Hitoshi Fukuda, a graduate of the Naval Engineering School, and Second Lieutenant Isamu Okamoto, an Army Air Academy graduate. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/fukuda-hitoshi/> and <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/okamoto/>.
348. Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*, 38. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kagawa/>.
349. Atsuko Kameoka, "Tokkōtaiin Uehara Ryōji ga toikakeru mono" (What Special Attack Corps member Ryōji Uehara was questioning), in *Ima tokkōtai no shi o kangaeru* (Thinking now about death of Special Attack Corps members), Iwanami Booklet No. 572, edited by Atsushi Shirai (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2002), 34-6.
350. Nihon Senbetsu Gakusei Ki'nenkai, *Shinpan kike wadatsumi no koe* (1995), 17-20; Nihon Senbetsu Gakusei Shuki Henshū Iinkai, *Kike wadatsumi no koe* (1949), 1-2, 243-5.
351. Uehara, *Ā sokoku yo koibito yo*, 26-8. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/uehara/>.
352. Tsunoda, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 706.
353. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 178-9. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/adachitakuya/>.
354. Ibid., 221. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yamaguchi-teruo/>.
355. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 153. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/okabe/>.
356. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 204. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/katsura/>.
357. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 21-2. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/anazawa/>.
358. Ibid., 24-5.
359. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952), 243. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nakanishi/>.
360. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 122. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/mukojima/>.
361. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekитай no isho*, 224. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/mitsuhashi/>.
362. Orihara, *Ware tokkō ni shisu*, 226. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/mori-minoru/>.
363. Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekитай*, 21. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato-shinpei/>.

364. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 186. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/murata-tamao/>.
365. Kanoya Kōkū Kichi Shiryōkan Renraku Kyōgikai, *Kokoro no sakebi*, 13. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/otsuji/>.
366. Fukahori, *Tokkō no shinjitsu*, 300.
367. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 83. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ikeda/>.
368. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 121. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/noguchi/>.
369. Kanoya Kōkū Kichi Shiryōkan Renraku Kyōgikai, *Kokoro no sakebi*, 43. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yukawa/>.
370. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Ā dōki no sakura*, 150. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/shima-sumio/>.
371. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 84. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/seki/>.
372. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 199. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ishizuka/>.
373. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952), 142. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/makino/>.
374. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 136. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kogusuri/>.
375. Muranaga, *Chiran tokubetsu kōgekitai*, 72. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/harada-shiori/>.
376. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 122. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/mukojima/>.
377. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 8 (2004), 7. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sueyoshi/>.
378. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 128. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hashizume/>.
379. Nihon Senbetsu Gakusei Shuki Henshū Inkai, *Kike wadatsumi no koe* (1949), 259. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hayashi-norimasa/>.
380. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 133. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yamashita/>.
381. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 103. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/koya/>.
382. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 41. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/shigenobu/>.
383. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 127. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/takada/>.

384. Hiroko Kaga, ed., *Hi nari tate nari: Hayashi Ichizō ikōshū / Nikki, haha e no tegami* (Sun and shield: Writings left by Ichizō Hayashi / Diary, letters to mother) (Fukuoka: Tōka Shobō, 1995), 64. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hayashi-ichizo/>.

385. Ibid., 71.

386. Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952), 243. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nakanishi/>.

387. Examples of publications that highlight writings of married or engaged Special Attack Corps members as the first writing in the book include the following: Ensign Masahisa Uemura in Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 1, 1-2; Second Lieutenant Toshio Anazawa and Second Lieutenant Masashi Ōhira in Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 10-33; Ensign Nobuaki Fujita in Shōguchi, *Senchi kara no saiki no tegami*, 7-18; Ensign Masahisa Uemura in Hakuō Izokukai, *Kumo nagaruru hate ni* (1952), 13-4.

388. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 1 (1995), 101-2. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato-akira/>.

389. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 27. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ohira/>.

390. Ibid., 31.

391. Toshirō Takagi, *Tokkō kichi Chiran* (Chiran, special attack force base) (Tōkyō: Kadokawa Shoten, 1973), 149-78.

392. Terai, *Kōkū Kichi Miyakonojō Hayate Tokkō Shinbutai*, 44. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kuramoto/>.

393. Ibid., 45.

394. Junzen Nemoto, *Shikishima tai shi e no itsukakan: Shinpū tokkōtaichō Seki Yukio to yonin no wakamono no saigo* (Shikishima Squadron's five days to death: End of Shinpū special attack squadron leader Yukio Seki and four young men) (Tōkyō: Kōjinsha, 2003), 54. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/seki-yukio/>.

395. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 97. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/itsui/>.

396. Kawatoko, *The Mind of the Kamikaze*, 36.

397. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 183. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/shibuya/>.

398. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 1 (1995), 2. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/uemura/>.

399. Yasukuni Jinja, *Iza saraba ware wa mikuni no yamazakura*, 19; Yasunobu, *Kamikaze tokkōtai*, 174-6.

400. Exhibit at Tsukuba Naval Air Group Museum (visit on October 20, 2018). Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/fujita-nobuaki/>.

401. Shōguchi, *Senchi kara no saiki no tegami*, 13-8.

402. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 2 (1996), 74. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/matsuo-keiu/>.

403. Asahi Shimbun Seibu Honsha, *Sora no kanata ni*, 43; Jirō Kōsaka, *Tokkō kaerazaru wakumonotachi e no rekiuemu* (Requiem for young men of special attack corps who did not return) (Tōkyō: PHP Kenkyūsho, 2003), 17-23; Sanae Satō, *Tokkō no machi: Chiran* (Special attack corps town: Chiran) (Tōkyō: Kōjinsha, 2003), 171-84; Yasukuni Jinja, *Sange no kokoro to chinkon no makoto*, 123-4.
404. Satō, *Tokkō no machi: Chiran*, 177, 179. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/stories/fujii/>.
405. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 175-6. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sato-kiyoshi/>.
406. Chiran Kōjo Nadeshiko Kai, *Gunjō*, 53-4. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ohashi/>.
407. Cook and Cook, *Japan at War: An Oral History*, 319-27.
408. The Mediasion Co., *Tada hitosuji ni yuku*, 80. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/araki-haruo/>.
409. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 134. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/fukuda-shigeo/>.
410. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 164. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/kato/>.
411. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 133. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/imanishi-taichi/>.
412. Ibid., 134.
413. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 108. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/motoi/>.
414. Katabami, *Mō hitotsu no "Eien no Zero,"* 97. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/machida/>.
415. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 122. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hara/>.
416. Chiran Tokkō Irei Kenshō Kai, *Konpaku no kiroku*, 122. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/mukojima/>.
417. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 9 (2009), 15-6. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/yokoyama/>.
418. Kitagawa, *Ā kamikaze tokkōtai*, 82. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/suzuki-tatsuzo/>.
419. Mainichi Shinbunsha, ed., *Seishun no isho*, 204. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/itabashi/>.
420. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 106. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/sakamoto/>.
421. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekitai no isho*, 128. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hashizume/index.htm>.

422. Naemura, *Rikugun saigo no tokkō kichi*, 103. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/miyake/>.
423. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekитай no isho*, 39-40. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/nakanishi-tatsuji/>.
424. Kaigun Hikō Yobi Gakusei Dai 14 Ki Kai, *Zoku • Ā dōki no sakura*, 97. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/furuichi/>.
425. Yasukuni Jinja, *Eirei no koto no ha*, Volume 7 (2001), 20. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/saito-isamu/>.
426. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekитай no isho*, 127. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/osaka/>.
427. Senri Nagasue, "Mada shinitakunai! (I do not yet want to die!)", accessed August 6, 2019, <http://www.warbirds.jp/senri/12-3/02tubasa/09ono/index.html>. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/ono/>.
428. Ibid.
429. Ibid.
430. Nemoto, *Shikishima tai shi e no itsukakan*, 53-4.
431. Yoshimitsu Nishikawa, *Tokkō to nihonjin no sensō: Yurusarezaru sensō no jissō to ikun* (Special attacks and Japanese people's war: Reality and teachings of unforgivable war). (Tōkyō: Fuyō Shobō Shuppan, 2009), 67-8.
432. Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Shuki Henshū Inkai, *Kike wadatsumi no koe* (1949), 239. <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/otsuka-akio/>.
433. Ibid., 242.
434. Kaga, *Hi nari tate nari*, 29. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/hayashi-ichizo/>.
435. Ibid., 108.
436. Ibid., 68.
437. Tada, *Haha e no isho*, 175.
438. Kenzō Ebina, *Taiheiyō sensō ni shisu: Kaigun hikō yobi shōkō no sei to shi* (Dying in Pacific War: Life and death of Navy flight reserve officers) (Tōkyō: Nishida Shoten, 1983), 311.
439. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekитай no isho*, 120. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/shimamura/>.
440. Hagaromo Society of Kamikaze Divine Thunderbolt Corps Survivors, *The Cherry Blossom Squadrons: Born to Die*, edited and supplemented by Andrew Adams, translated by Nobuo Asahi and the Japan Tech Co. (Los Angeles: Ohara Publications, 1973), 147-8.
441. Matsugi, *Kaigun tokubetsu kōgekитай no isho*, 193-4. Translated at <http://www.kamikazeimages.net/writings/arai/>.
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