



# BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION

## PACIFIC WAR

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Pacific War, the Battlefield Evolution supplement covering armies and battles in the Pacific Theatre.

Japan's ambition to dominate the entire Pacific may seem a mad gamble when viewed from a comfortable 21<sup>st</sup> Century perspective, but it should be remembered that, in the 1940's, empires still existed. European powers had commanded vast tracts of the Pacific region for centuries, and the British Empire remained the largest in history. On the other side of the world, Germany had conquered almost the whole of continental Europe, so the idea of powerful nations taking territory by force was an attractive one which, today, might seem repugnant.

Despite naval actions in oceans across the globe, it was Japan's entry into the war that truly turned hostilities into a World War. By attacking Pearl Harbour, Japan ensured the United States was put into a position whereby it could not remain neutral. No longer was the fighting confined to Europe and Africa, with warships trading blows overseas. Now the people of almost every continent were directly affected by the war.

Ultimately, Japan failed in its gamble. Before it fell, however, it had dealt the United States a grievous blow and all but ended the hold European countries had in the region (not least because they had their own problems back in Europe). Once forced on the defensive, Japan proved to be a tenacious foe. Both strengthened and bound by the code of Bushido, its military was willing to fight to the last breath, ferociously resisting the advance of the Allies, as its forces were gradually pushed back to the Japanese homeland.

The end of the Pacific war marked the end of the Second World War as a whole, an ending mushroom-shaped and terrifying. This 'ultimate solution' would lead on to a new struggle that held the world in its grip for most of the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

## Using this Book

The *Battlefield Evolution: World at War* main rulebook concentrated on the late period of the war in Europe. This was chosen because it allowed us to feature the best equipment and some of the most famous battles of the war. From the Normandy landings to the liberation of France, from Kursk to the Battle of Berlin, this part of the war remains very strong in the memories and histories of many. However, we always intended to visit other periods of the war and other theatres. Which one would we choose first?

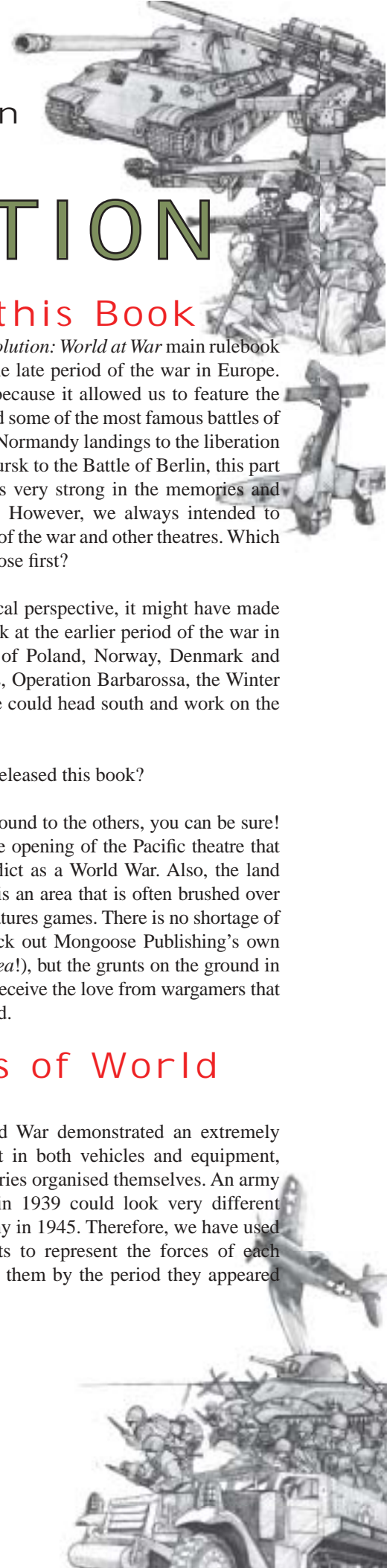
From a geographical perspective, it might have made sense for us to look at the earlier period of the war in Europe – the fall of Poland, Norway, Denmark and the Low Countries, Operation Barbarossa, the Winter War. Or maybe we could head south and work on the war in Africa.

So, why have we released this book?

Well, we will get round to the others, you can be sure! However it was the opening of the Pacific theatre that cemented the conflict as a World War. Also, the land war in the Pacific is an area that is often brushed over or ignored in miniatures games. There is no shortage of naval actions (check out Mongoose Publishing's own game, *Victory at Sea!*), but the grunts on the ground in the Pacific do not receive the love from wargamers that perhaps they should.

## Periods of World War II

The Second World War demonstrated an extremely rapid development in both vehicles and equipment, and the way militaries organised themselves. An army from one nation in 1939 could look very different from the same army in 1945. Therefore, we have used different army lists to represent the forces of each nation, classifying them by the period they appeared in the war.







## Introduction

The army lists in the main rulebook all feature units from the Late period of the war, while the army lists in *Pacific War* cover both Mid and Late periods.

We have defined these periods as follows.

**Early War:** From the outbreak of hostilities to the end of 1941.

**Mid War:** 1942 to the end of 1943.

**Late War:** 1944 to the end of hostilities.

You will find while later army lists will have access to equipment the forces in earlier periods could only

dream about, from a game perspective, all army lists are balanced. Therefore, a 2,000 point Early War German infantry force will be able to compete on an even level with a Late War United States army. Newer and more capable hardware has a higher points cost in *Battlefield Evolution*, so expect earlier forces to be able to field more special equipment, tanks and aircraft.

In addition, we have included a few new rules for armies in the Pacific theatre, such as new Traits and Advanced Rules for jungle fighting. There is also a new scenario, Beach Assault, for those attacking forces who really are gluttons for punishment!



# THE PACIFIC WAR

## The Beginnings in Asia

The Great Depression caused enormous hardship throughout the world, and the newly modernised Japan was no exception. Here, as in Europe, populist ultra-nationalist movements sprang up as a reaction to what many saw as the incompetence of their leaders. This brand of nationalism was particularly virulent within the Japanese military, who chafed at being under the control of a civilian government. They believed the ABCD powers (America, Britain, China and the Dutch), as they were known, were threatening the Empire of Japan and the only solution would be conquest and war.

Japan's first conquest, in the lead up to her entry to the Second World War, took place in 1931 when in response to the Mukden Incident Japanese forces invaded Inner Mongolia. The Mukden Incident involved the dynamiting of a Japanese railroad, supposedly by Chinese militants, although there has always been a suspicion Japanese militarists were behind the act. This gave the Japanese forces in the area an excuse to attack and invade inner Mongolia, against the wishes of the civilian government in Japan. By February 1932 the area had been overrun and a puppet state set up and in 1933 Japan had left the League of Nations after criticism of its aggression. Subsequently the military were to take over the government of Japan and a wider war became almost inevitable.

The next outbreak of hostilities occurred in 1937 when the Kwantung army of Japan advanced out of Manchuria, began to take control of the major ports on the east coast of China and succeeded in capturing vast swathes of the country in the years which followed. During this time reports of atrocities committed

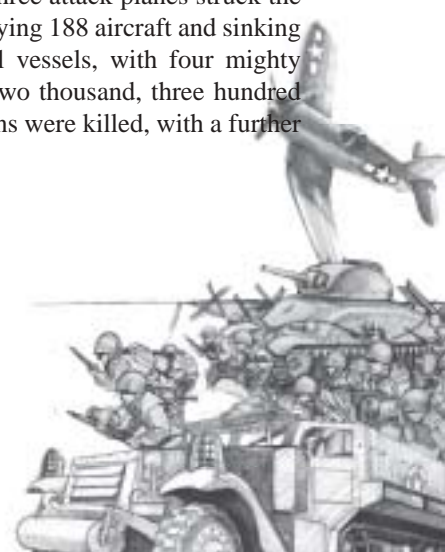
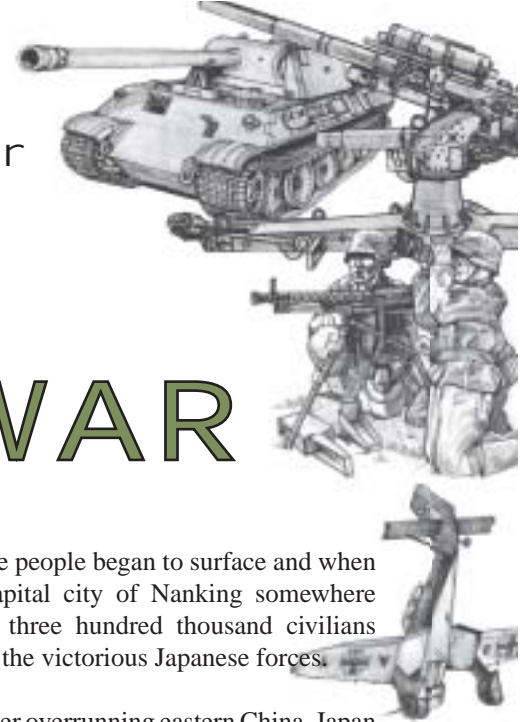
against the Chinese people began to surface and when Japan took the capital city of Nanking somewhere between two and three hundred thousand civilians were murdered by the victorious Japanese forces.

In 1941, shortly after overrunning eastern China, Japan moved ground forces into a small section of Vietnam, then part of French Indochina. Initially doing so with the permission of the Vichy French government, fighting soon began after the Japanese broke the terms of the agreement. After a quick victory against the French, Japan signed treaties with Germany and Italy, formally making Japan a part of the Axis powers.

The continuing aggression shown by the Japanese led Western nations to stop selling vital materiel to them. It was hoped this would lead to Japanese policies being reversed as without the iron ore, steel and, especially, oil military operations would become nearly impossible. However, for the hardliners behind Japan's aggression, this embargo was unacceptable and would be the catalyst for the conflict to escalate and provided the excuse they desired for further conquest.

## Pearl Harbour

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941, Japan began its latest offensive by attacking the American naval base at Pearl Harbour with a carrier strike force. The result was the worst attack upon an American target in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Three hundred and fifty three attack planes struck the base in two waves, destroying 188 aircraft and sinking or damaging many naval vessels, with four mighty battleships being sunk. Two thousand, three hundred and eighty eight Americans were killed, with a further 1,178 wounded.





## The Pacific War



President Franklin D. Roosevelt called it 'a date which will live in infamy' and it marked the moment the United States could no longer ignore the situation in the Pacific. The American public wanted to avenge those who fell at Pearl Harbour and demanded action. The United States joined forces with Great Britain and declared war. As some in the Japanese military had feared from the start of their campaign, they had 'woken the sleeping giant'.

### The Invasions of Burma and the Far East

While the American fleet was under attack at Pearl the Japanese were preparing for more attacks all across the theatre. Powerful forces were readying to attack Malaya, Thailand, Hong Kong, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, Borneo, Burma and numerous islands across the Pacific.



Hong Kong was attacked the day after Pearl Harbour, with Japanese forces inevitably overcoming the valiant defenders in a little over two weeks. From their bases in French Indochina the Japanese launched an aggressive campaign against those nearby. Thailand was quickly overrun by the invaders, surrendering within 24 hours and becoming allied to the Japanese as a condition of their peace agreement.

Japanese divisions then advanced rapidly through Malaya, brushing aside the poorly prepared and equipped garrison. The Malayan campaign saw the previously unthinkable sinking, by aircraft, of HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse whilst underway at sea, the loss of these two capital ships removing the only major Royal Navy presence in the area. The campaign ended with the fall of Singapore in February, with some 130,000 troops being taken prisoner, underlining the disasters of the preceding weeks.

The American outposts at Guam and Wake Island also found themselves under attack. Although Guam was quickly captured with minimal losses, largely due to the lack of equipment available to the defenders, Wake was a much more difficult operation since the garrison there was far better prepared. Wake saw the first loss of Japanese warships as the shore guns and aircraft of the marine defenders sunk two destroyers, both exploding and being lost with all hands. A second, reinforced, invasion force attacking two weeks later was successful, however, and the island fell.

The Philippines were seen as a vital stepping stone for future conquest by the Japanese and aircraft began attacking the US air bases there almost as soon as the war started. Once again catching the allied defenders ill prepared, Japanese troops were soon able to land and push onward. American and Filipino forces fell back towards the Bataan peninsula and Corregidor, while Manila was declared an open city. The twin strongholds found themselves under determined attack not long afterwards. The defenders were able to resist the Japanese for several months, but Bataan fell in April and Corregidor in May. The conclusion of the battles did not end the suffering for the American and Filipino prisoners of war, of those captured at the former battle approximately 18,000 were murdered by the victors during the Bataan Death March, and many others would die as a result of systemic Japanese cruelty in the years of captivity which followed.

British Borneo was also the target of an invasion force. In just a few days, Japanese troops seized important cities like Miri, Seria, Kuching and Lutong. The British forces held out at Brunei and Jesselton, but when small