

Abstract

The Final Say on the Last Japanese World War II Holdout: The *Asahi Shimbun*'s "Ki no Hito" Article Series on Hiroo Onoda

The *Asahi Shimbun*'s "Ki no Hito" series of articles highlighted individuals from Wakayama, such as Hiroo Onoda, the last Japanese WWII holdout in the Philippines who remained fighting for thirty years. He returned to Japan a national hero. The Japanese associated its traditional values and qualities with Onoda; however, he could be critical of the people and the country's move toward Western modernity. As he got older, Onoda continued to be covered in the popular press, often highlighting the major events in his life. The *Asahi* articles represented the last coverage of Onoda before he passed away. Contrasted with the extensive media coverage of the past, *Asahi*'s reportage was insightful and in depth, revealing his inner thoughts and critiques of Japan. The *Asahi* paper was ideally suited for this role as the final publisher of Onoda because the paper itself reflected many of the contrarian instincts and values of Onoda.

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