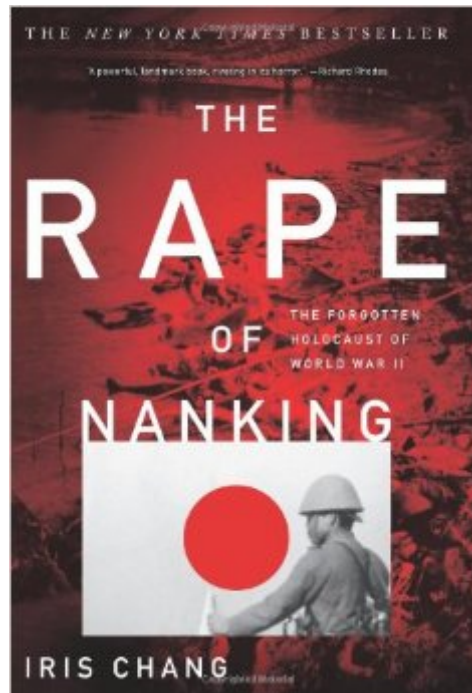


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The Rape Of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust Of World War II



Synopsis

In December 1937, the Japanese army swept into the ancient city of Nanking. Within weeks, more than 300,000 Chinese civilians and soldiers were systematically raped, tortured, and murdered—a death toll exceeding that of the atomic blasts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined. Using extensive interviews with survivors and newly discovered documents, Iris Chang has written the definitive history of this horrifying episode.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A few years ago, on the 4th of July, a friend of mine from high school committed suicide. He hung himself while riding a train en route to New York. I wasn't called or invited to the funeral. A couple of years later I saw his mother at a wedding. She was obviously still deep in the process of grief. She had a vacancy in her eyes that matched the one in my soul. Somehow I allowed her to corner me and to ask me the question: why? I gave the only answer I could have; a meaningless and sympathetic answer that must have been as false as it sounded. Today on NPR I hear, "Iris Chang, the bestselling non-fiction author of the 'Rape of Nanking,' was discovered dead in a car on the side of a California highway, an apparent suicide." She shot herself. Her friend, Ignatius Ding, says of her: "She saw all of the dark side of human history. She was so sad and frustrated to see, day in and day out, what people could do to their fellow human beings. Those images hung over her all the time. Her room was like a shrine. This is where she had lived for the last ten years ever since I have known her. She cried a lot and was so depressed about the unfortunate past. Her study was just full of maps, pictures, photos. She posted all of it on the wall to keep track of the things she was writing. This is where she lived and it was like a shadow over her life all the time." This is something like

what I said to my friend's mother. I imagine that, as this explanation of a courageous woman's death, my words were just as false.

I read through the book and I think it is a very nicely written one. One minor point is that it would be nicer to note in the text the references documents in the style of academic articles. That would be easier for readers who are interested in digging into the original documents themselves.

Nonetheless, I think that this book gave a very clear view of one of the saddest event ever happened in human history in a way that can be understood by general public. I strongly disagreed with one of the reader's review for criticizing this book as "ridiculous". The reasons for my disagreement are as followed: 1. Criticizing Point: "Iris Chang is a fourth-Generation Chinese American. She does not speak or understand any of the languages needed to examine this issue (Chinese, Japanese and German). I have concluded that all information used in this book is second-hand information, most of them is propaganda." Disagreement: First of all, there are a lot of first hand references written in English, as were listed in the book. In fact, one of the reasons that Nanking Massacre was known to the world was because quite a few Europeans and Americans happened to witness and documented the event. If the reviewer considered none of those documents are first-hand documents, I am not sure what the definition of "first-hand" information is. In addition, some of the documents are even reported by Japanese themselves. It is not reasonable to report something against their own country if it is not truth, especially during the war time. Second, according to what the author stated in the book, the author is a second generation Chinese American (not a very important point here, but it implies the reviewer may not read the book clearly before jumping into conclusion).

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