

= The Rape of Nanking ( book ) =

The Rape of Nanking : The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II is a bestselling 1997 non-fiction book written by Iris Chang about the 1937 ? 1938 Nanking Massacre , the massacre and atrocities committed by the Imperial Japanese Army after it captured Nanjing , then capital of China , during the Second Sino-Japanese War . It describes the events leading up to the Nanking Massacre and the atrocities that were committed . The book presents the view that the Japanese government has not done enough to redress the atrocities . It is one of the first major English-language books to introduce the Nanking Massacre to Western and Eastern readers alike , and has been translated into several languages .

The book was a source of fame for Chang but was also controversial ; it was received with both acclaim and criticism by the public and by academics . It has been praised as a work that " shows more clearly than any previous account " the extent and brutality of the episode , while at the same time it was criticized as " seriously flawed " and " full of misinformation and harebrained explanations " . Chang 's research on the book was credited with the finding of the diaries of John Rabe and Minnie Vautrin , both of whom played important roles in the Nanking Safety Zone , a designated area in Nanjing that protected Chinese civilians during the Nanking Massacre .

The book prompted AOL executive Ted Leonsis to fund and produce Nanking , a 2007 documentary film about the Nanking Massacre .

= = Inspiration = =

When Iris Chang was a child , she was told by her parents , who had escaped with their families from China to Taiwan and then to the United States after World War II , that during the Nanking Massacre , the Japanese " sliced babies not just in half but in thirds and fourths . " In the introduction of The Rape of Nanking , she wrote that throughout her childhood , the Nanking Massacre " remained buried in the back of [ her ] mind as a metaphor for unspeakable evil . " When she searched the local public libraries in her school and found nothing , she wondered why no one had written a book about it .

The subject of the Nanking Massacre entered Chang 's life again almost two decades later when she learned of producers who had completed documentary films about it . One of the producers was Shao Tzuping , who helped produce Magee 's Testament , a film that contains footage of the Nanking Massacre itself , shot by the missionary John Magee . The other producer was Nancy Tong , who , together with Christine Choy , produced and co-directed In The Name of the Emperor , a film containing a series of interviews with Chinese , American , and Japanese citizens . Chang began talking to Shao and Tong , and soon she was connected to a network of activists who felt the need to document and publicize the Nanking Massacre .

In December 1994 , she attended a conference on the Nanking Massacre , held in Cupertino , California , and what she saw and heard at the conference motivated her to write The Rape of Nanking . As she wrote in the introduction to the book , while she was at the conference , she was " suddenly in a panic that this terrifying disrespect for death and dying , this reversion in human social evolution , would be reduced to a footnote of history , treated like a harmless glitch in a computer program that might or might not again cause a problem , unless someone forced the world to remember it . "

= = Research = =

Chang spent two years on research for the book . She found source materials in the US , including diaries , films , and photographs of missionaries , journalists , and military officers who were in Nanjing at the time of the massacre . Additionally , she traveled to Nanjing to interview survivors of the Nanking Massacre and to read Chinese accounts and confessions by Japanese army veterans . Chang did not , however , conduct research in Japan , and this left her vulnerable to criticisms on how she portrayed modern Japan in the context of how it deals with its World War II past .

Chang 's research led her to make what one San Francisco Chronicle article called " significant discoveries " on the subject of the Nanking Massacre , in the forms of the diaries of two Westerners who were in Nanjing leading efforts to save lives during the Japanese invasion . One diary was that of John Rabe , a German Nazi Party member who was the leader of the Nanking Safety Zone , a demilitarized zone in Nanjing that Rabe and other Westerners set up to protect Chinese civilians . The other diary belonged to Minnie Vautrin , the American missionary who saved the lives of about 10 @, @ 000 women and children when she provided them with shelter in Ginling College . The diaries documented the events of the Nanking Massacre from the perspectives of their writers , and provided detailed accounts of atrocities that they saw , as well as information surrounding the circumstances of the Nanking Safety Zone . Chang dubbed Rabe the " Oskar Schindler of Nanking " and Vautrin the " Anne Frank of Nanking " . Rabe 's diary is over 800 pages , and contains one of the most detailed accounts of the Nanking Massacre . Translated into English , it was published in 1998 by Random House as *The Good Man of Nanking : The Diaries of John Rabe* . Vautrin 's diary recounts her personal experience and feelings on the Nanking Massacre ; in it , an entry reads , " There probably is no crime that has not been committed in this city today . " It was used as source material by Hua @- @ ling Hu for a biography of Vautrin and her role during the Nanking Massacre , entitled *American Goddess at the Rape of Nanking : The Courage of Minnie Vautrin* .

= = The book = =

The Rape of Nanking is structured into three main parts . The first uses a technique that Chang called " the Rashomon perspective " to narrate the events of the Nanking Massacre , from three different perspectives : that of the Japanese military , the Chinese victims , and the Westerners who tried to help Chinese civilians . The second part concerns the postwar reaction to the massacre , especially that of the American and European governments . The third part of the book examines the circumstances that , Chang believed , have kept knowledge of the massacre out of public consciousness decades after the war .

= = = Atrocities = = =

The book depicted in detail the killing , torture , and rape that occurred during the Nanking Massacre . Chang listed and described the kinds of torture that were visited upon the residents , including live burials , mutilation , " death by fire " , " death by ice " , and " death by dogs " . Based on the testimony of a survivor of the massacre , Chang also described a killing contest amongst a group of Japanese soldiers to determine who could kill the fastest . On the rape that occurred during the massacre , Chang wrote that " certainly it was one of the greatest mass rapes in world history . " She estimated that the number of women raped ranged from 20 @, @ 000 to as many as 80 @, @ 000 , and stated that women from all classes were raped , including Buddhist nuns . Furthermore , rape occurred in all locations and at all hours , and both very young and very old women were raped . Not even pregnant women were spared , Chang wrote , and that after gang rape , Japanese soldiers " sometimes slashed open the bellies of pregnant women and ripped out the fetuses for amusement " . Not all rape victims were women , according to the book , Chinese men were sodomized and forced to perform repulsive sexual acts . Some were forced to commit incest ? fathers to rape their own daughters , brothers their sisters , sons their mothers .

= = = Death toll = = =

Chang wrote of the death toll estimates given by different sources ; Chinese military specialist Liu Fang @- @ chu proposed a figure of 430 @, @ 000 ; officials at the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall and the procurator of the District Court of Nanjing in 1946 stated at least 300 @, @ 000 were killed ; the International Military Tribunal for the Far East ( IMTFE ) judges concluded that more than 260 @, @ 000 people were killed ; Japanese historian Fujiwara Akira approximated 200 @, @ 000 ; John Rabe , who " never conducted a systematic count and left Nanking in February " , estimated only 50

@, @ 000 to 60 @, @ 000 ; and Japanese author Ikuhiko Hata argued the number killed was between 38 @, @ 000 and 42 @, @ 000 .

The book discussed the research of historian Sun Zhaiwei of the Jiangsu Academy of Social Sciences . In his 1990 paper , The Nanking Massacre and the Nanking Population , Sun estimated the total number of people killed at 377 @, @ 400 . Using Chinese burial records , he calculated that the number of dead exceeded the figure of 227 @, @ 400 . He then added estimates totaling 150 @, @ 000 given by Japanese Imperial Army Major Ohta Hisao in a confessional report about the Japanese army 's disposal efforts of dead bodies , arriving at the sum of 377 @, @ 400 dead .

Chang wrote that there is " compelling evidence " that the Japanese themselves , at the time , believed that the death toll may have been as high as 300 @, @ 000 . She cited a message that Japan 's foreign minister K?ki Hirota relayed to his contacts in Washington , DC in the first month of the massacre on January 17 , 1938 . The message acknowledged that " not less than three hundred thousand Chinese civilians [ were ] slaughtered , many cases in cold blood . "

= = Acclaim = =

The Rape of Nanking sold more than half a million copies when it was first published in the U. S. , and according to The New York Times , received general critical acclaim . Iris Chang became an instant celebrity in the U. S. ; she was awarded honorary degrees , invited to give lectures and to discuss the Nanking Massacre on shows such as Good Morning America , Nightline , and The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer , and was profiled by The New York Times and featured on the cover of Reader 's Digest . The book was on the New York Times ' Best Seller list for 10 weeks and sold more than 125 @, @ 000 copies in four months . Hillary Clinton invited her to the White House , U. S. historian Stephen Ambrose described her as " maybe the best young historian we 've got " , and the Organization of Chinese Americans named her National Woman of the Year . The book 's popularity prompted a lengthy book tour , with Chang visiting 65 cities in over a year and a half .

The book received praise from news media . The Wall Street Journal wrote that it was the " first comprehensive examination of the destruction of this Chinese imperial city " , and that Chang " skillfully excavated from oblivion the terrible events that took place " . The Atlantic Monthly described the book as " a crushing indictment of the Japanese army 's behavior " . The Chicago Tribune called it " a powerful new work of history and moral inquiry " and stated that " Chang takes great care to establish an accurate accounting of the dimensions of the violence . " The Philadelphia Inquirer wrote that it was a " compelling account of a horrendous episode that , until recently , has been largely forgotten " , and that " animals do not behave the way the Japanese troops of the Imperial Army behaved . "

According to William C. Kirby , Professor of History at Harvard University , Chang " shows more clearly than any previous account just what [ the Japanese ] did " , and that she " draws connections between the slaughter in Europe and in Asia of millions of innocents during World War II " . Ross Terrill , an associate in research at the Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard University , wrote that the book is " scholarly , an exciting investigation and a work of passion " . Beatrice S. Bartlett , Emeritus Professor of History at Yale University , wrote , " Iris Chang 's research on the Nanking holocaust yields a new and expanded telling of this World War II atrocity and reflects thorough research . "

= = Criticism = =

Joshua A. Fogel , at York University , argued that the book is " seriously flawed " and " full of misinformation and harebrained explanations . " He suggested that the book " starts to fall apart " when Chang tries to explain why the massacre took place , as she repeatedly comments on " the Japanese psyche " , which she sees as " the historical product of centuries of conditioning that all boil down to mass murder " even though in the introduction , she wrote that she would offer no " commentary on the Japanese character or the genetic makeup of a people who could commit such acts " . Fogel asserted that part of the problem was Chang 's " lack of training as a historian " and

another part was " the book 's dual aim as passionate polemic and dispassionate history " . David M. Kennedy , a Pulitzer Prize @-@ winning professor of history at Stanford University , also pointed out that while Chang noted that " this book is not intended as a commentary on the Japanese character , " she then wrote about the " ' Japanese identity ' ? a bloody business , in her estimation , replete with martial competitions , samurai ethics , and the fearsome warriors ' code of bushido " , making the inference that " ' the path to Nanking ' runs through the very marrow of Japanese culture . " Kennedy also suggested that " accusation and outrage , rather than analysis and understanding , are this book 's dominant motifs , and although outrage is a morally necessary response to Nanjing , it is an intellectually insufficient one . " Roger B. Jeans , professor of history at Washington and Lee University , referred to Chang 's book as " half @-@ baked history " , and criticized her lack of experience with the subject matter :

In writing about this horrific event , Chang strives to portray it as an unexamined Asian holocaust . Unfortunately , she undermines her argument ? she is not a trained historian ? by neglecting the wealth of sources in English and Japanese on this event . This leads her into errors such as greatly inflating the population of Nanjing ( Nanking ) at that time and uncritically accepting the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal and contemporary Chinese figures for the numbers of Chinese civilians and soldiers killed . What particularly struck me about her argument was her attempt to charge all Japanese with refusing to accept the fact of the ' Rape of Nanking ' and her condemnation of the ' persistent Japanese refusal to come to terms with its past.'

Jeans continued what he calls " giving the lie to Iris Chang 's generalizations about ' the Japanese ' " by discussing the clashing interest groups within Japanese society over such things as museums , textbooks , and war memory .

Robert Entenmann , professor of history at St. Olaf College , criticized the work on the grounds that the " Japanese historical background Chang presents is clichéd , simplistic , stereotyped , and often inaccurate . " On Chang 's treatment of modern Japanese reaction to the massacre , he writes that Chang seemed " unable to differentiate between some members of the ultranationalist fringe and other Japanese " , and that " her own ethnic prejudice implicitly pervades her book . " Stating that Chang 's description of the massacre is " open to criticism " , Entenmann further commented that Chang " does not adequately explain why the massacre occurred " .

Timothy M. Kelly , professor at Edogawa University , described Chang 's work as exhibiting " simple carelessness , sheer sloppiness , historical inaccuracies , and shameless plagiarism . " Kelly further criticized Chang for her " lack of attention to detail " . Finally , Kelly charged that Chang had plagiarized passages and an illustration from Japan 's Imperial Conspiracy by David Bergamini .

Kennedy criticized Chang 's accusation of " Western indifference " and " Japanese denial " of the massacre as " exaggerated " , commenting that " the Western world in fact neither then nor later ignored the Rape of Nanking " , " nor is Chang entirely correct that Japan has obstinately refused to acknowledge its wartime crimes , let alone express regret for them . " Chang argues that Japan " remains to this day a renegade nation , " having " managed to avoid the moral judgment of the civilized world that the Germans were made to accept for their actions in this nightmare time . " However , according to Kennedy , this accusation has already become a cliché of Western criticism of Japan , most notably exemplified by Ian Buruma 's *The Wages of Guilt* ( 1994 ) , whose general thesis might be summarized as " Germany remembers too much , Japan too little . " Kennedy pointed out that a vocal Japanese left has long kept the memory of Nanking alive , noting the 1995 resolution of Japan 's House of Councillors that expressed " deep remorse " ( fukai hansei ) for the suffering that Japan inflicted on other peoples during World War II and clear apologies ( owabi ) for Imperial Japan 's offenses against other nations from two Japanese Prime Ministers .

Sonni Efron of the Los Angeles Times warned that the bitter row over Iris Chang 's book may leave Westerners with the " misimpression " that little has been written in Japan about the Nanjing Massacre , when in fact the National Diet Library holds at least 42 books about the Nanjing massacre and Japan 's wartime misdeeds , 21 of which were written by liberals investigating Japan 's wartime atrocities . In addition , Efron noted that geriatric Japanese soldiers have published their memoirs and have been giving speeches and interviews in increasing numbers , recounting the atrocities they committed or witnessed . After years of government @-@ enforced denial , Japanese

middle school textbooks now carry accounts of the Nanjing massacre as accepted truth . Fogel also writes : " Dozens of Japanese scholars are now actively engaged in research on every aspect of the war .... Indeed , we know many details of the Nanjing massacre , Japanese sexual exploitation of ' comfort women , ' and biological and chemical warfare used in China because of the trailblazing research " of Japanese scholars .

San Francisco Chronicle staff writer Charles Burrell wrote that Chang 's quote of a secret telegram sent by Japan 's foreign minister in 1938 was incorrectly cited as " compelling evidence " that Japanese troops killed at least 300 @, @ 000 Chinese civilians in Nanjing . According to Burrell , the figure of 300 @, @ 000 Chinese civilians killed actually came from a message sent by a British reporter , concerning deaths not only in Nanjing but in other places as well . Additionally , Burrell questioned Chang 's motivation for writing the book - whether she wrote it as an activist or as a historian , stating that the book " draws its emotional impetus " from her conviction to not let the Nanking Massacre be forgotten by the world . Burrell also cited Ikuhiko Hata , a Japanese history professor at Nihon University , who argued that 11 photos in the book were misrepresented or fake . One particular photo shows women and children walking across a bridge with Japanese soldiers , and captioned as " The Japanese rounded up thousands of women . Most were gang @-@ raped or forced into military prostitution . " Hata stated that the photo originally appeared in 1937 in a Japanese newspaper as part of a series of photos that showed peaceful scenes of Chinese villagers under Japanese occupation .

Chang responded to Charles Burrell 's criticism in a letter written to the San Francisco Chronicle , but the letter was not published by the newspaper . In the letter , she offered criticism of her own concerning Burrell 's article . Chang found a " disturbing tendency " by Burrell to quote right @-@ wing Japanese critics " without demanding evidence to back up their allegations " . She argued that Ikuhiko Hata , a source cited by Burrell , was not " regarded as a serious scholar " in either Japan or in the U. S. , because he was a regular contributor to " ultra right @-@ wing " Japanese publications . One such publication had published an article from a Holocaust denier that argued that no gas chambers were used in Germany to kill Jews . This caused the parent publisher to shut down the publication . On Burrell 's criticism of her inaccurate photo captioning , Chang disputed the contention that the caption was wrong . She wrote that her book dealt with the " horror of the Japanese invasion of China " , and that the caption reading " The Japanese rounded up thousands of women . Most were gang @-@ raped or forced into military prostitution " contained two statements of indisputable fact .

Chang also issued a rejoinder to Burrell 's argument that she incorrectly cited a telegram sent by Japan 's foreign minister . She wrote that while the original figure of 300 @, @ 000 Chinese civilian deaths in Nanjing was reported by a British reporter , this figure was cited in a message that Japan 's foreign minister sent to his contacts in Washington , DC . Chang argued that figure 's use by a high @-@ ranking Japanese government official was evidence that the Japanese government recognized 300 @, @ 000 as the number of Chinese civilian deaths . Finally , she criticized Burrell for his " nitpick " of small details in order to draw attention away from the scope and magnitude of the Nanking Massacre , writing that such was a " common tactic " of Holocaust deniers .

= = Reaction in Japan = =

The Rape of Nanking has caused controversy in Japan . Los Angeles Times staff writer , Sonni Efron , reported that Chang was also criticized by both Japanese " ultranationalists " , who believe that the massacre in Nanjing never took place , and Japanese liberals , who " insist the massacre happened but allege that Chang 's flawed scholarship damages their cause " . Associate Professor David Askew of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University stated that Chang 's work dealt a " severe blow " to the " Great Massacre School " of thought , which advocates for the validity of the findings at the Tokyo Trials , the tribunal convened to try the leaders of the Empire of Japan for crimes committed during World War II . Askew further argued that " the Great Massacre School has thus been forced into the ( unusual ) position of criticising a work that argues for a larger death toll . "

Following the publication of The Rape of Nanking , Japanese critic Masaaki Tanaka had his 1987

book on Nanking translated into English . Entitled What Really Happened in Nanking : The Refutation of a Common Myth , Tanaka stated in his introduction " I am convinced that [ American researchers ] will arrive at the realization that violations of international law of the magnitude alleged by Iris Chang in The Rape of Nanking ( more than 300 @,@ 000 murders and 80 @,@ 000 rapes ) never took place . "

Chang 's book was not published in a translated Japanese language edition until December 2007 . Problems with translation efforts surfaced immediately after a contract was signed for the Japanese publishing of the book . A Japanese literary agency informed Chang that several Japanese historians declined to review the translation , and that one professor backed out because of pressure placed on his family from " an unknown organization " . According to Japan scholar Ivan P. Hall , revisionist historians in Japan organized a committee of right @-@ wing scholars to condemn the book with repeated appearances at the Foreign Correspondents ' Club in Tokyo and throughout Japan . They prevailed on Kashiwa Shobo , the contracted Japanese publisher of the book , to insist that Chang edit the book for " corrections " they wanted made , to delete photographs and alter maps , and to publish a rebuttal to Chang 's book . Chang disagreed with the changes and , as a result , withdrew the Japanese publishing of the book . The rebuttal piece was nonetheless published as a book by Nobukatsu Fujioka and Shudo Higashinakano entitled A Study of ' The Rape of Nanking ' .

Shudo Higashinakano , a professor of intellectual history at Asia University of Japan , argued in Sankei Shimbun that the book was " pure baloney " , that there was " no witness of illegal executions or murders " , and that " there existed no ' Rape of Nanking ' as alleged by the Tokyo Trial . " He identified 90 historical factual errors in the first 64 pages of the book , some of which were corrected in the 1998 Penguin Books edition .

= = = Chang 's death = = =

The book was the main source of fame for Iris Chang , who was well respected in China for raising awareness of the Nanking Massacre in the Western world . At the same time , Chang received hate mail , primarily from Japanese ultranationalists , threatening notes on her car and believed her phone was tapped . Her mother said the book " made Iris sad " . Suffering from depression , Chang was diagnosed with brief reactive psychosis in August 2004 . She began taking medications to stabilize her mood . She wrote :

I can never shake my belief that I was being recruited , and later persecuted , by forces more powerful than I could have imagined . Whether it was the CIA or some other organization I will never know . As long as I am alive , these forces will never stop hounding me .

Chang committed suicide on November 9 , 2004 . A memorial service was held in China by Nanking Massacre survivors coinciding with her funeral in Los Altos California . The Memorial Hall of the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre , a memorial site in Nanjing built to commemorate the victims of the Nanking Massacre , added a wing dedicated to her in 2005 .

In the U. S. , a Chinese garden in Norfolk , Virginia , which contains a memorial to Minnie Vautrin , added a memorial dedicated to Chang , including her as the latest victim of the Nanking Massacre , and drawing parallels between Chang and Vautrin , who also took her own life . Vautrin exhausted herself trying to protect women and children during the Nanking Massacre and subsequently during the Japanese occupation of Nanjing , finally suffering a nervous breakdown in 1940 . She returned to the US for medical treatment , committing suicide a year later .

= = Editions = =

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Chang , Iris ( 1998 ) . The Rape of Nanking : The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II . Penguin USA ( Paper ) . ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 14 @-@ 027744 @-@ 9 . Foreword by Harvard professor William C. Kirby .

French : Chang , Iris ( 2010 ) . Le viol de Nankin ? 1937 : un des plus grands massacres du XXe siècle . Payot. p . 367 . ISBN 978 @-@ 2 @-@ 228 @-@ 90520 @-@ 6 .  
Chinese : ? , ?? ( 2005 ) . ????? . Translated by ??? , ??? , ??? . ????? . p . 382 . ISBN 978 @-@ 7 @-@ 5060 @-@ 1052 @-@ 8 .  
Japanese : ????? ? ? ? ??? ? ?? ? ?? ? ????????????????????? ? ? ???? ? 2007?12? ? ISBN 4 @-@ 88683 @-@ 617 @-@ 8  
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