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THE FORGOTTEN HOLOCAUST: A SECOND RAPE



IS THERE a child today in any part of the United States, and perhaps in many other parts of the world, who has not seen the gruesome pictures of the gas chambers at Auschwitz or read at least part of the haunting tale of the young Anne Frank? Indeed, at least in the United States, most schoolchildren are also taught about the devastating effects of the atomic bombs the United States dropped over the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But ask most Americans—children and adults alike, including highly educated adults—about the Rape of Nanking, and you will learn that most have never been told what happened in Nanking sixty years ago. A prominent government historian admitted to me that the subject had never once come up

in all her years of graduate school. A Princeton-educated lawyer told me sheepishly that she was not even aware that China and Japan had been at war; her knowledge of the Pacific conflict of World War II had been limited to Pearl Harbor and Hiroshima. The ignorance extends even to Asian Americans in this country. One of them revealed her woeful grasp of geography and history when she asked me, "Nanking? What was that, a dynasty?"

An event that sixty years ago made front-page news in American newspapers appears to have vanished, almost without a trace. Hollywood has not produced a mainstream movie about the massacre—even though the story contains dramatic elements similar to those of *Schindler's List*. And until recently most American novelists and historians have also chosen not to write about it.

After hearing such remarks, I became terrified that the history of three hundred thousand murdered Chinese might disappear just as they themselves had disappeared under Japanese occupation and that the world might actually one day believe the Japanese politicians who have insisted that the Rape of Nanking was a hoax and a fabrication—that the massacre never happened at all. By writing this book, I forced myself to delve into not only history but historiography—to examine the forces of history and the process by which history is made. What keeps certain events in history and assigns the rest to oblivion? Exactly how does an event like the Rape of Nanking vanish from Japan's (and even the world's) collective memory?

One reason information about the Rape of Nanking has not been widely disseminated clearly lies in the postwar differences in how Germany and Japan handled their wartime crimes. Perhaps more than any other nation in history, the Germans have incorporated into their postwar political identity the concession that the wartime government itself, not just individual Nazis, was guilty of war crimes. The Japanese government, however, has never forced itself or Japanese society to do the same. As a result, although some bravely fight to force Japanese society to face the painful truth, many in Japan continue to treat the war crimes as the isolated acts of individual soldiers or even as events that simply did not occur.

In Japan competing stories of what happened during World War II continue to appear. According to a currently popular revisionist view, the country bears no responsibility for the wholesale murder of civilians anywhere during the war. The Japanese fought the war to ensure its own survival and to free Asia from the grip of Western imperialism. Indeed, in return for its noble efforts, Japan itself ended up as the ultimate victim at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

This soothing perception of history still finds its way into Japanese history textbooks, which have either ignored the massacre at Nanking altogether or put a decidedly Japanese spin on the actions of the military. At the far end of the political spectrum, Japanese ultranationalists have threatened everything from lawsuits to death, even assassination, to silence opponents who suggest that these textbooks are not telling the next generation the real story.

But it is not just fanatical fringe groups that are trying to rewrite history. In 1990 Ishihara Shintaro, a leading member of Japan's conservative Liberal Democratic Party and the author of best-selling books such as *The Japan That Can Say No*, told a *Playboy* interviewer: "People say that the Japanese made a holocaust there [in Nanking], but that is not true. It is a story made up by the Chinese. It has tarnished the image of Japan, but it is a lie."

Naturally, this statement enraged scholars and journalists around the world. One proclaimed that "Japan's denial of the rape of Nanjing would be politically the same as German denial of the Holocaust." But the denunciations failed to silence Ishihara, who responded with a furious stream of counterattacks. In his rebuttals, Ishihara, in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, asserted that the world never learned about the Nanking massacre until the International Military Tribunal of the Far East put people on trial for their role in it; that neither Japanese war correspondents nor Western reporters wrote about the massacre as it was occurring; that the *New York Times* correspondent Frank Tillman Durdin failed to witness any massacre; and that the Episcopalian minister John Magee saw only one person killed.

By the 1990s John Magee was, of course, no longer alive to defend himself, but his son, David Magee, made an effort to disprove Ishihara's statements. He gave interviews to the media and attended conferences on the Nanking massacre at which he read from his father's papers and displayed the actual camera his father used to film Japanese atrocities. Frank Tillman Durdin was alive, and he took direct action. Stepping out of retirement in San Diego to hold a press conference to refute Ishihara's remarks, Durdin explained to reporters that he had indeed written an article in 1937 that described the countryside from Shanghai to Nanking as peaceful, but that this article was written two months before the Japanese started their advance on Nanking.

Ishihara's other statements are readily refutable. Contemporaneous reports of the Rape appeared in dozens of Western newspapers, and even Japanese newspapers ran detailed stories about the massacre. As for Durdin, his articles were not only contemporaneous but published on the front pages of the *New York Times*. John Magee's letters contained descriptions like, "The raping of the women has been beyond description or imagination," and, "There were dead bodies in every street and alley in the city, so far as I could tell, and I went around quite extensively including Hsiakwan."

Not to be stopped, however, Ishihara went on to suggest that the Chinese claims of a massacre at Nanking helped influence the U.S. decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As each refutation of his earlier claims made it impossible for Ishihara to repeat them, he shifted his position slightly, but on one point he remained inflexible: even if the Germans had apologized for killing the Jews, that did not mean that the Japanese should do the same; under no circumstances should the Japanese ever admit they were guilty of any wrongdoing.

Ishihara's career remained intact despite the *Playboy* interview, but eventually others were not so lucky.

—One man who was sucked into the vortex of controversy was General Nagano Shigetō. In the spring of 1994, within days of his appointment to the cabinet-level position of justice minister, he gave an interview to the *Mainichi Shimbun* newspa-

per that turned out to be political suicide. "I think the Nanking Massacre and the rest was a fabrication," he told the newspaper. "I was in Nanking immediately afterwards." He went on to call the Korean comfort women "licensed prostitutes," not sex slaves, and to argue that Japan had no choice but to go to war because it was "in danger of being crushed." The violent reaction to his statements across Asia forced Nagano to resign in disgrace.

—In September 1986, Fujio Masayuki, the Japanese minister of education, sabotaged his career when he declared that the Rape of Nanking was "just a part of war." In an interview with *Bungei Shunju* magazine, Fujio defended the actions of the Japanese during the Nanking massacre and claimed that the number of dead had been exaggerated. He also said that Korea was partly to blame for its annexation by Japan in 1910, that Korea willingly accepted colonization, and that the Tokyo War Crimes Trial was "racial revenge" meant to "rob Japan of her power." Though Fujio made these comments only "to restore the Japanese spirit through history and tradition," they cost him his job. That month Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro dismissed him from his post.

—Okuno Seisuki, who had been the prefectural director of the notorious *Kempeitai* (the secret Japanese military police) during the war, rose after the war to become the Japanese minister of justice and even the minister of education. By 1988 Okuno had become the Japanese land agency chief and the third most senior member of the cabinet. But Okuno's undoing came that spring when he visited the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo (where Japanese class A war criminals are enshrined and worshipped) and revealed his true attitudes about World War II. "There was no intention of aggression," Okuno told reporters. "The white race made Asia into a colony, but only Japan has been blamed. Who was the aggressor country? It was the white race. I don't see why Japanese are called militarists and aggressors." His statements provoked an uproar across Asia, prompting Okuno to adjust his wording: "I didn't say Japan wasn't an aggressor. I said it wasn't the only aggressor." By May, Okuno had been forced to resign, but he remained

unrepentant to the end. He had stepped down, Okuno said, only under pressure from the government, not because he wished to retract his statements.

—In August 1994, Sakurai Shin, the director general of the Japanese environmental agency, remarked that Japan did not go to war with the intent to commit aggression. In response to China's angry protests (a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman announced that "the Chinese government regrets that, once again, a Japanese cabinet minister has brazenly made remarks which distort historical facts"), Murayama Tomiichi ended up apologizing for Sakurai's remarks. He also rebuked Sakurai by calling the remarks "inappropriate" and forced the director general to hold a midnight press conference to retract his statement.

—In 1995 Hashimoto Ryutaro, the minister for international trade and industry and a powerful man in the Liberal Democratic Party (he would later become the prime minister of Japan), announced that it was Japan's intention only to fight the United States, Britain, and "others" during World War II. While Japan was aggressive toward China, he said, it really had no intention of invading other Asian countries.

The official denials continued even as this book was going to press. Kajiyama Seiroku, the Japanese chief cabinet secretary, outraged several Asian countries when he stated that the sex slaves and rape victims of the Japanese imperial army during World War II were not slaves at all but willingly engaged in prostitution. In January 1997, he proclaimed that the comfort women of the Japanese army "went for the money" and were no different from the Japanese prostitutes who were working legally in Japan at the time. Amazingly, these comments came on the eve of weekend summit talks between Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro and South Korean President Kim Young-sam, both of whom expressed deep anger over Kajiyama's remarks.

Kajiyama later made a gesture to apologize, though he infuriated critics because the apology seemed insulting and insincere. The cabinet secretary regretted that his comments "caused some unpleasantness at the Japan–South Korean summit, and

misunderstanding among the South Korean people," but he refused to retract his original comments. This was not the first time Kajiyama's mouth had landed him in trouble. In 1990 he was forced to resign from his position as Japanese justice minister after comparing African Americans to prostitutes who come in and ruin a neighborhood.

THE TEXTBOOK CONTROVERSY

Perhaps one of the most sinister aspects of the malaise in Japanese education is the deliberate obstruction of important historical information about World War II through textbook censorship.

Almost from birth, Japanese children fight for footholds in the slippery pyramid of education, striving to reach the tip, which is admission to *Todai*, or Tokyo University. There are cram elementary schools to get into the right high school, where kids study from 9:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M.; cram preparatory kindergartens to ensure admission into the right elementary school; even exclusive maternity wards that guarantee babies a ticket into the right nursery school.

But despite the "examination hell" for which the Japanese are famous, what do their schoolchildren learn about World War II?

Very little, as it turns out. The entire Japanese education system suffers from selective amnesia, for not until 1994 were Japanese schoolchildren taught that Hirohito's army was responsible for the deaths of at least 20 million Allied soldiers and Asian civilians during World War II. In the early 1990s a newspaper article quoted a Japanese high school teacher who claimed that his students were surprised to learn that Japan had been at war with the United States. The first thing they wanted to know was who won.

How does this happen? All textbooks used in Japan's elementary and secondary schools must first be approved by the Japanese Ministry of Education. Critics in Japan note that social studies textbooks come under the heaviest scrutiny. For

example, in 1977 the Ministry of Education reduced a section on World War II within a standard history book of several hundred pages to only six pages, which consisted mainly of pictures of the American firebombing of Tokyo, a picture of the ruins of Hiroshima, and a tally of Japan's war dead. The text neglected to mention the casualties on the other side, Japanese war atrocities, or the forced evacuations of Chinese and Korean prisoners to labor camps in Japan.

Much of this censorship might have gone unchallenged had it not been for the efforts of one brave crusader. In 1965 the Japanese historian Ienaga Saburo sued the Japanese government. This lawsuit was the beginning of a legal battle that would span three decades and gain the backing of thousands of sympathetic Japanese followers.

Those who have met Ienaga are struck by his frailty. The bald octogenarian historian trembles when he walks and his voice is hardly louder than a whisper. But underneath a powerful will is at work.

The Ministry interfered with Ienaga's attempts to document the Nanking massacre for schoolchildren. For example, in his textbook manuscript Ienaga wrote: "Immediately after the occupation of Nanking, the Japanese Army killed numerous Chinese soldiers and citizens. This incident came to be known as the Nanking Massacre." The examiner commented: "Readers might interpret this description as meaning that the Japanese Army unilaterally massacred Chinese immediately after the occupation. This passage should be revised so that it is not interpreted in such a way."

Finally, over Ienaga's protests, the passage was changed to: "While battling the fierce resistance of the Chinese armed forces, the Japanese Army occupied Nanking and killed numerous Chinese soldiers and civilians. This incident came to be known as the Nanking Massacre." That statement may have satisfied textbook censors as a compromise between Ienaga's argument and the ministry's position on the massacre. Unfortunately, the statement is simply not true, because it implies that the massacre occurred in the heat of battle.

The examiner demanded that Ienaga delete his description

of the Rape itself, claiming that "the violation of women is something that has happened on every battlefield in every era of human history. This is not an issue that needs to be taken up with respect to the Japanese Army in particular."

Even the word *aggression* was deemed taboo. "*Aggression*," the censors wrote, "is a term that contains negative ethical connotations." The Ministry of Education also bristled at Ienaga's efforts to condemn Japanese wartime behavior. It took offense at the following passage: "The war was glorified as a 'holy war' and the Japanese Army's defeat and their brutal acts on the battlefield were completely concealed. As a result, the majority of the Japanese people were not able to learn the truth and they were placed in a position where they had no choice but to cooperate enthusiastically in this reckless war." The Ministry of Education deleted this passage on the grounds that the expressions "the Japanese Army's brutal acts" and "this reckless war" were "unilateral criticism of Japan's position and actions" during World War II.

In 1970, when he actually won his case (Sugimoto Ryokichi, the judge for the Tokyo district court, ruled that the screening of textbooks should not go beyond correction of factual and typographical errors), extremists fired off death threats to the plaintiff attorneys, the judge, and Ienaga himself, while thugs kept the scholar awake by banging pots and pans outside his home and screaming slogans. The police had to escort Ienaga and his counsel in and out of court through a secret door.

With the exception of an award that Ienaga received in 1948 (when, he admits, he was "politically tone deaf"), he has been consistently ignored by the official committees that dole out national prizes in history. The historian has won, nevertheless, a place in history itself. The tremendous publicity that Ienaga receives for his efforts arouses foreign protests that force change upon the highly conservative Ministry of Education. By the 1980s years of lawsuits and political activism were beginning to pay off. In 1982 the distortion of the history of the Rape of Nanking in Japanese high school history textbooks had become such a hot issue in Japan that it created an international diplomatic crisis. All four of Japan's major national

newspapers carried headlines on the subject. Chinese and Korean officials also filed formal protests, accusing the Japanese of trying to obliterate from memory the history of their aggression to lay the basis for reviving militarism in the younger generation. The Japanese textbook examination council, however, tried to defend itself by telling reporters: "It was not fair to describe the Nanking atrocity in three to five lines while mentioning Soviet or American atrocities against the Japanese in only one line or two."

In the end, the publicity from the textbook controversy accomplished two things. One was the dismissal of Japan's education minister, Fujio Masayuki, who had rigorously defended the ministry's policy of whitewashing World War II history. The second was a heightened awareness inside the ministry that the Nanking massacre was something they could no longer ignore. Before Fujio's dismissal, the National Conference for the Defense of Japan had prepared a right-wing history textbook that summed up the Nanking massacre in this manner: "The battle of Nanking was extremely severe. China has asked Japan to reflect regarding casualties on the part of the Chinese army and civilians." But after Fujio's dismissal, the Ministry of Education rewrote the passage to read: "The battle in Nanking was extremely severe. After Nanking fell, it was reported that the Japanese army killed and wounded many Chinese soldiers and civilians, thus drawing international criticism."

Of course, the issue of textbook censorship is far from over. Rather than denying the massacre outright, some officials in Japan now focus on minimizing its scale. In 1991 screeners at the ministry ordered textbook authors to eliminate all reference to the numbers of Chinese killed during the Rape of Nanking because authorities believed there was insufficient evidence to verify those numbers. Three years later the ministry even forced a textbook author to reduce the number of killings by Japanese soldiers during one day of the Nanking massacre from twenty-five thousand to fifteen thousand people. The original version of the textbook cited a diary account that twenty-five thousand captives were "put away" in a single day. But under pressure from the ministry, the textbook publisher

backed down and shortened a quotation from the diary so that it read: "The Sasaki unit disposed of 15,000 people."

THE ACADEMIC COVER-UP

With few exceptions, the academic community in Japan has shied away from studying the Rape of Nanking. Some have argued that not enough time has gone by to render the subject worthy of historical study, or for historians to judge Japanese wrongdoing. Some even react indignantly to criticism of Japanese wartime misdeeds. ("How long must we apologize for the mistakes we have made?" one said heatedly.)

Others act as apologists for Japan and have even allied themselves with conservative Japanese ultranationalists to minimize the significance of the massacre and its death toll. One prominent revisionist who has launched his own crusade to distort the history of the Rape of Nanking and other aspects of World War II history is Fujioka Nobukatsu, a professor of education at Tokyo University. Among his incendiary statements are the assertions that far fewer people were killed in the Rape of Nanking than the Chinese claim; that most of the victims of Nanking were guerrilla soldiers, not civilians; and that the Asian sex slaves, or "comfort women," of the Japanese military were ordinary prostitutes. Fujioka equated the women's receipt of financial compensation with "hitting the lottery" and demanded that the Japanese government not only retract the apologies it has offered to these women but strike information about them from Japanese history textbooks.

In Japan serious research on the Rape of Nanking has largely been left up to the efforts of those operating outside of traditional academic communities, such as freelance authors and journalists. Ono Kenji, a factory worker, is a prime example. In 1988 he started to interview farmers in his area who had served in the Aizu Wakamatsu Battalion during the Rape of Nanking. The bachelor Ono had time to devote himself to the subject because he enjoyed thirty-six-hour breaks between long factory shifts and had no family responsibilities. Six years later

it was reported that Ono Kenji had visited some six hundred homes, interviewed two hundred people, photocopied twenty out of some thirty diaries, and videotaped interviews with seven people. Some of his findings appeared in the weekly magazine *Shukan Kinyobi* and were hailed as the first work on the Nanking massacre to be based solely on Japanese sources. In 1996, he coedited an important book on the subject of the Nanking massacre, but he continues to live under the constant shadow of possible Japanese retaliation, refusing even to be photographed for fear of falling prey to right-wing fanatics.

SELF-IMPOSED CENSORSHIP

In Japan censorship is practiced not only by the government when it tampers with textbooks but by the media, which police themselves. In many ways private-sector self-censorship can be more insidious than government censorship because it is subtler and harder to pinpoint.

What distributors did to a scene of the Rape of Nanking in the film *The Last Emperor* is a revealing illustration of Japanese self-censorship at work. In 1988 the Shochiku Fuji Distribution Company removed from Bernardo Bertolucci's film biography of Pu Yi a thirty-second scene depicting the Rape of Nanking. Bertolucci was furious, of course, when he found out. "Not only did the Japanese distributor cut the whole sequence of the 'Rape of Nanking' without my authorization and against my will, without even informing me, but they also declared to the press that myself and the producer, Jeremy Thomas, had made the original proposition to mutilate the movie," he announced. "This is absolutely false and revolting."

Bertolucci's outcry forced the distributors to restore the excised scene immediately. They offered a variety of excuses for their behavior. Kubotani Motoyuki, director of Shochiku Fuji, apologized for the "confusion and misunderstanding," explaining that his company thought the Nanking scene was simply "too sensational" to be shown in Japan. "Cutting the film was our voluntary decision. We had no idea that it would become

such a big issue," he said. Saito Mitsuhiro, another spokesman for Shochiku Fuji, told reporters that the scene was removed "out of respect for Japanese audiences." Nakane Takehiko, a Japanese film critic, speculated that the decision to cut the scene arose from both the distributors' pusillanimity and the threat of ultranationalist violence. "I believe the film's distributors and many theatre owners were afraid these right-wing groups might cause trouble outside the theaters," the critic told reporters. "Some of these people still believe that Japan's actions in China and during the war were part of some sacred crusade."

DEBATES ON THE NANKING MASSACRE

Japanese who find the courage to write books about the Rape of Nanking often face unrelenting attacks. Take the example of Hora Tomio and Honda Katsuichi. Hora, a professor of Japanese history at Waseda University, visited China in 1966 to investigate Japanese atrocities in China; he later published his research on the Nanking massacre in several books. Honda Katsuichi was a prize-winning journalist at the *Asahi Shimbun* who broke the taboo against discussing the Nanking massacre in the Japanese press by going to mainland China in the 1970s and 1980s to interview survivors. His findings, serialized first in the *Asahi Shimbun* and other journals, were later expanded into full-length books. Both Hora and Honda reached the conclusion that Japanese soldiers had killed some three hundred thousand people in Nanking between 1937 and 1938.

Both also faced a vicious backlash in Japan. One vociferous critic of Hora and Honda was the ultraconservative author Suzuki Akira, who challenged their findings in an article entitled "The Illusion of the Nanjing Massacre." Suzuki charged that some of Honda's and Hora's stories were fabricated, that insufficient primary source material existed to substantiate the massacre, and that the Rape of Nanking was an "illusion." The book that resulted from his articles won the *Bungei Shunju* Prize in nonfiction and received eulogies from literary critics as "admirable" and "courageous." When Hora published a series

of rebuttals to Suzuki, several famous Japanese writers immediately sprang to Suzuki's defense.

Another critic was Tanaka Masaaki, a man who claimed to be Matsui Iwane's protégé. In 1984 he published an anti-Honda book called *The Fabrication of the "Nanking Massacre,"* using material from Matsui's wartime diary. Accusing Honda of spreading "enemy propaganda," Tanaka argued that, unlike in Europe or China, "you won't find one instance of planned, systematic murder in the entire history of Japan." This is because, he wrote, the Japanese have "a different sense of values" from Westerners and the Chinese. Revisionists rallied behind Tanaka and joined his attacks on Honda and Hora. The right-wing author Watanabe Shoichi, who wrote a foreword to Tanaka's book, also blasted Honda for heaping guilt "not only on the Japanese officers and men of the time, but on all Japanese, indeed on our children yet to be born."

A debate soon raged between the two camps. There was the liberal "massacre faction," which consisted of Hora, Honda, and their supporters, and the conservative "illusion faction" led by Suzuki and Tanaka. The liberal camp published its findings in the *Asahi Shimbun* and other journals, while the conservatives contributed to right-wing publications like *Bungei Shunju*, *Shokun!*, and *Seiron*. The liberals demanded that the Japanese government apologize for its crimes in China, while the conservatives considered such an apology an insult to veterans and a foreign interference in Japanese internal affairs.

Ironically, attempts to disprove the Nanking massacre backfired when the revisionists themselves began to probe into the subject for ammunition against the "massacre faction." For instance, in the 1980s *Kaikosha*, a fraternity of army cadet school graduates, asked its eighteen thousand members to come forward with eyewitness accounts to discredit the Nanking massacre. To the dismay of the "illusion faction," many *Kaikosha* members confirmed the details of the Rape of Nanking and described atrocities that horrified even hard-core Japanese conservatives. A former officer under Matsui estimated that some 120,000 captives were killed under the orders of a staff officer, although later, no doubt under pressure, he changed the figure

to "no less than tens of thousands." But his testimony scuttled the entire purpose of the survey, and moved even an editor of *Kaikosha's* journal to write in the concluding part of the series that "there was no excuse for such massive illegal executions. As someone related to the old Japanese Army, I have to apologize deeply to the Chinese people."

But the most embarrassing incident was yet to come. In 1985 a popular history journal, *Rekishii to jinbutsu*, discovered as many as nine hundred errors in the newly published Matsui wartime diary. Most of them were intentional attempts to falsify primary documents, a revelation that scandalized historians across Japan. Still more disturbing, the author of these alterations was none other than Tanaka Masaaki, who had proclaimed himself a staunch critic of historical distortion.

INTIMIDATION

What happened to Azuma Shiro, the first Japanese veteran to admit openly his crimes in Nanking, is a spectacular example of the system of Japanese intimidation at its worst. In 1987 he created a sensation when he became the first former Japanese soldier to apologize in public for his role in the Nanking massacre. On the eve of his departure to Nanking to participate in a fifty-year memorial ceremony of the great Rape, he gave interviews to newspaper and television reporters at a press conference in Kyoto. The result was an avalanche of criticism and death threats. To protect himself, Azuma retired from his company and moved with his wife into a house in a tiny village outside Kyoto, where he kept an arsenal of weapons, such as truncheons, clubs, pepper sprays, chains, and knuckle dusters.

The troubles for Motoshima Hitoshi, the mayor of Nagasaki, began when he was asked by a Communist Party member in the city assembly what he thought of the emperor's wartime guilt. It was December 7, 1988, the forty-seventh anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Emperor Hirohito was slowly dying of cancer, and the nation was mourning the passing of the Showa era by muting the holiday festivities.

Motoshima responded that, having read accounts of the war from abroad and served as a soldier himself, he believed that the emperor bore responsibility for the war. The response to his statement was immediate. The next day enraged city legislators and the local branch of the Liberal Democratic Party demanded that the mayor retract his words. But Motoshima refused, announcing that he could not "betray his own heart."

His opponents then embarked on a violent campaign of harassment and intimidation calculated to bring the mayor to his knees. The Liberal Democrats not only dismissed him as the counsel to their organization but succeeded in convincing the prefectural governor to refuse to cooperate politically with the mayor. Right-wing groups even called for Motoshima's death. On December 19, 1988, twenty-four ultranationalist groups drove through Nagasaki on thirty loudspeaker trucks, blasting their demands for "divine retribution" through Motoshima's death. Two days later the number of groups demonstrating in Nagasaki had grown to sixty-two, and the number of loudspeaker trucks to eighty-two. Representatives from numerous conservative organizations, including the office for Shinto shrines, called for his impeachment. Less than two weeks after Hirohito's death on January 7, 1989, a right-wing fanatic shot Motoshima in the back. The bullet punctured his lungs, but miraculously, the mayor survived. The assassination attempt thrilled extremists across the nation, many of whom proclaimed the deed as nothing less than "divine punishment."

EPILOGUE



THE RAPE OF NANKING was only one incident in a long saga of Japanese barbarism during nine years of war. Before the great massacre, Japan had already earned notoriety as the first country in Asia to break the taboo and use airpower not only as a battlefield weapon but as a means of terrorizing civilian populations. Then it launched its armed forces on a campaign of slaughter that started in Shanghai, moved through Nanking, and proceeded inland.

While there was no Japanese equivalent of a "final solution" for the Chinese people, the imperial government endorsed policies that would wipe out everyone in certain regions in China. One of the deadliest was the "Three-all" policy ("Loot all, kill all, burn all") in northern China, where Communist Chinese guerrillas had fought the Japanese furiously and effectively. In his diary, a frustrated Japanese colonel reveals the cruel simplicity of this policy: "I have received orders

from my superior officer that every person in this place must be killed."

The result was a massive terrorist campaign in 1941 designed to exterminate everyone in the northern Chinese countryside. It reduced the population there from 44 million to 25 million people. At least one author on China, Jules Archer, believes that the Japanese killed most of the 19 million people who disappeared from the region, though other scholars speculate that millions must have fled to safer ground. R. J. Rummel, author of *China's Bloody Century*, points out that even if only 5 percent of the population loss consisted of murder victims, that would still amount to nearly 1 million Chinese.

The Japanese also waged ruthless experiments in biological warfare against the Chinese. Some of it was retaliatory and directed against Chinese villages suspected of helping American fliers during the April 1942 Doolittle raid of Tokyo. In areas that may have served as landing zones for the bombers, the Japanese massacred a quarter-million civilians and plowed up every Chinese airfield within an area of twenty thousand square miles. Here as well as elsewhere during the war, entire cities and regions were targeted for disease. We now know that Japanese aviators sprayed fleas carrying plague germs over metropolitan areas like Shanghai, Ningpo, and Changteh, and that flasks of disease-causing microbes—cholera, dysentery, typhoid, plague, anthrax, paratyphoid—were tossed into rivers, wells, reservoirs, and houses. The Japanese also mixed food with deadly germs to infect the Chinese civilian and military population. Cakes laced with typhoid were scattered around bivouac sites to entice hungry peasants; rolls syringed with typhoid and paratyphoid were given to thousands of Chinese prisoners of war before they were freed.

The final death count was almost incredible, between 1,578,000 and 6,325,000 people. R. J. Rummel gives a prudent estimate of 3,949,000 killed, of which all but 400,000 were civilians. But he points out that millions more perished from starvation and disease caused in large part by Japanese looting, bombing, and medical experimentation. If those deaths are added to the final count, then one can say that the Japanese

killed more than 19 million Chinese people in its war against China.

It is impossible for most people to imagine exactly what went through the minds of Japanese soldiers and officers as they committed the atrocities. But many historians, eyewitnesses, survivors, and the perpetrators themselves have theorized about what drove the naked brutality of the Japanese imperial army.

Some Japanese scholars believe that the horrors of the Rape of Nanking and other outrages of the Sino-Japanese War were caused by a phenomenon called "the transfer of oppression." According to Tanaka Yuki, author of *Hidden Horrors: Japanese War Crimes in World War II*, the modern Japanese army had great potential for brutality from the moment of its creation for two reasons: the arbitrary and cruel treatment that the military inflicted on its own officers and soldiers, and the hierarchical nature of Japanese society, in which status was dictated by proximity to the emperor. Before the invasion of Nanking, the Japanese military had subjected its own soldiers to endless humiliation. Japanese soldiers were forced to wash the underwear of officers or stand meekly while superiors slapped them until they streamed with blood. Using Orwellian language, the routine striking of Japanese soldiers, or *bentatsu*, was termed an "act of love" by the officers, and the violent discipline of the Japanese navy through *tekken seisai*, or "the iron fist," was often called *ai-no-muchi*, or "whip of love."

It has often been suggested that those with the least power are often the most sadistic if given the power of life and death over people even lower on the pecking order, and the rage engendered by this rigid pecking order was suddenly given an outlet when Japanese soldiers went abroad. In foreign lands or colonized territories, the Japanese soldiers—representatives of the emperor—enjoyed tremendous power among the subjects. In China even the lowliest Japanese private was considered superior to the most powerful and distinguished native, and it is easy to see how years of suppressed anger, hatred, and fear of

authority could have erupted in uncontrollable violence at Nanking. The Japanese soldier had endured in silence whatever his superiors had chosen to deal out to him, and now the Chinese had to take whatever he chose to deal out to them.

A second factor in the atrocities, scholars believe, is the virulent contempt that many in the Japanese military reserved for Chinese people—a contempt cultivated by decades of propaganda, education, and social indoctrination. Though the Japanese and the Chinese share similar if not identical racial features (which in a distorted way may have threatened the Japanese vision of themselves as unique), there were those in the imperial army who saw the Chinese as subhuman beings whose murder would carry no greater moral weight than squashing a bug or butchering a hog. In fact, both before and during the war members of the Japanese military at all levels frequently compared the Chinese to pigs. For example, a Japanese general told a correspondent: "To be frank, your view of Chinese is totally different from mine. You regard the Chinese as human beings while I regard the Chinese as pigs." A Japanese officer in Nanking who bound Chinese captives together in groups of ten, pushed each group into a pit, and burned them excused his actions by explaining that his feelings when committing these murders were identical to those he had when he slaughtered pigs. In 1938 the Japanese soldier Azuma Shiro confided in his diary at Nanking that "a pig is more valuable now than the life of a [Chinese] human being. That's because a pig is edible."

A third factor was religion. Imbuing violence with holy meaning, the Japanese imperial army made violence a cultural imperative every bit as powerful as that which propelled Europeans during the Crusades and the Spanish Inquisition. "Every single bullet must be charged with the Imperial Way, and the end of every bayonet must have the National Virtue burnt into it," one Japanese general declared in a speech in 1933.

Few Japanese doubted the righteousness of their mission in China. Nagatomi Hakudo, a former Japanese soldier who participated in the Rape of Nanking, said he had been reared to believe that the emperor was the natural ruler of the world,

that the Japanese were racially superior to the rest of the world, and that it was the destiny of Japan to control Asia. When a local Christian priest asked him, "Who is greater, God or the emperor of Japan?" he had no doubt that "the emperor" was the correct answer.

With an entity higher than God on its side, it was not difficult for the Japanese military to take the next step—adopting the belief that the war, even the violence that came with it, would ultimately benefit not only Japan but its victims as well. Some perceived atrocity as a necessary tool to achieve a Japanese victory that would serve all and help create a better China under Japan's "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere." This attitude echoes that of the Japanese teachers and officers who beat their students and soldiers senseless while insisting, between blows, that it was all done for their own good.

Perhaps it was General Matsui Iwane who summed up the prevailing mentality of self-delusion best when he attempted to justify Japanese oppression of China. Before he left for Shanghai in 1937, he told his supporters: "I am going to the front not to fight an enemy but in the state of mind of one who sets out to pacify his brother." Later he would say of the invasion of China:

The struggle between Japan and China was always a fight between brothers within the "Asian Family." . . . It had been my belief during all these days that we must regard this struggle as a method of making the Chinese undergo self reflection. We do not do this because we hate them, but on the contrary *we love them too much*. It is just the same as in a family when an elder brother has taken all that he can stand from his ill-behaved younger brother and has to chastise him in order to make him behave properly.

Whatever the course of postwar history, the Rape of Nanking will stand as a blemish upon the honor of human beings. But what makes the blemish particularly repugnant is that history has never written a proper end for the story. Even in 1997, the

Japanese as a nation are still trying to bury the victims of Nanking—not under the soil, as in 1937, but into historical oblivion. In a disgraceful compounding of the offense, the story of the Nanking massacre is barely known in the West because so few people have tried to document and narrate it systematically to the public.

This book started out as an attempt to rescue those victims from more degradation by Japanese revisionists and to provide my own epitaph for the hundreds upon thousands of unmarked graves in Nanking. It ended as a personal exploration into the shadow side of human nature. There are several important lessons to be learned from Nanking, and one is that civilization itself is tissue-thin. There are those who believe that the Japanese are uniquely sinister—a dangerous race of people who will never change. But after reading several file cabinets' worth of documents on Japanese war crimes as well as accounts of ancient atrocities from the pantheon of world history, I would have to conclude that Japan's behavior during World War II was less a product of dangerous people than of a dangerous government, in a vulnerable culture, in dangerous times, able to sell dangerous rationalizations to those whose human instincts told them otherwise. The Rape of Nanking should be perceived as a cautionary tale—an illustration of how easily human beings can be encouraged to allow their teenagers to be molded into efficient killing machines able to suppress their better natures.

Another lesson to be gleaned from Nanking is the role of power in genocide. Those who have studied the patterns of large-scale killings throughout history have noted that the sheer concentration of power in government is lethal—that only a sense of absolute unchecked power can make atrocities like the Rape of Nanking possible. In the 1990s R. J. Rummel, perhaps the world's greatest authority on *democide* (a term he coined to include both genocide and government mass murder), completed a systematic and quantitative study of atrocities in both the twentieth century and ancient times, an impressive body of research that he summed up with a play on the famous Lord Acton line: "Power kills, and absolute power kills absolutely." The

less restraint on power within a government, Rummel found, the more likely that government will act on the whims or psychologically generated darker impulses of its leaders to wage war on foreign governments. Japan was no exception, and atrocities such as the Rape of Nanking can be seen as a predictable if not inevitable outgrowth of ceding to an authoritarian regime, dominated by a military and imperial elite, the unchallenged power to commit an entire people to realizing the sick goals of the few with the unbridled power to set them.

And there is yet a third lesson to be learned, one that is perhaps the most distressing of all. It lies in the frightening ease with which the mind can accept genocide, turning us all into passive spectators to the unthinkable. The Rape of Nanking was front-page news across the world, and yet most of the world stood by and did nothing while an entire city was butchered. The international response to the Nanking atrocities was eerily akin to the more recent response to the atrocities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda: while thousands have died almost unbelievably cruel deaths, the entire world has watched CNN and wrung its hands. One could argue that the United States and other countries failed to intervene earlier to prevent the Nazis from carrying out their "final solution" because the genocide was carried out in wartime secrecy and with such cold efficiency that until Allied soldiers liberated the camps and saw with their own eyes the extent of the horror, most people could not accept the reports they had been getting as literally true. But for the Rape of Nanking, or for the murders in the former Yugoslavia, there can be no such excuse. The Nanking atrocities were splashed prominently across the pages of newspapers like the *New York Times*, while the Bosnia outrages were played out daily on television in virtually every living room. Apparently some quirk in human nature allows even the most unspeakable acts of evil to become banal within minutes, provided only that they occur far enough away to pose no personal threat.

Sad to say, the world is still acting as a passive spectator to the second Japanese rape—the refusal of the Japanese to apologize for or even acknowledge their crimes at Nanking, and the

attempts by Japanese extremists to erase the event from world history. To get a better handle on the magnitude of the injustice, one only has to compare the postwar restitution that the governments of Japan and Germany have made to their wartime victims. While it is certainly true that money alone cannot give back to murder victims their lost lives or erase from memory the tortures the survivors endured, it can at least convey that what was done to the victims represented the evil of others.

As of 1997 the German government has paid at least DM 88 billion in compensation and reparations and will pay another DM 20 billion by the year 2005. If one factors in all the money the Germans have paid in compensation to individual victims, restitution for lost property, compensatory pensions, payments based on state regulations, final restitution in special cases, and money for global agreements with Israel and sixteen other nations for war damages, the total comes to almost DM 124 billion, or almost \$60 billion. The Japanese have paid close to nothing for their wartime crimes. In an era when even the Swiss have pledged billions of dollars to create a fund to replace what was stolen from Jewish bank accounts, many leading officials in Japan continue to believe (or pretend to believe) that their country did nothing that requires compensation, or even apologies, and contend that many of the worst misdeeds their government has been accused of perpetrating never happened and that evidence that they did happen was fabricated by the Chinese and other Japan bashers.

The Japanese government has taken the position that all wartime reparation issues were resolved by the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty. A close reading of the treaty, however, reveals that the issue was merely postponed until Japan was in a better financial situation. "It is recognized that Japan should pay reparations to the Allied Powers," the treaty states in chapter 5, article 14. "Nevertheless it is also recognized that the resources of Japan are not presently sufficient, if it is to maintain a viable economy, to make complete reparations for all such damage and suffering and at the same time meet its other obligations."

One of the greatest ironies of the cold war is that Japan not only eluded its responsibility to pay reparations but received billions of dollars in aid from the United States, which helped build its former enemy into an economic powerhouse and competitor. Now there is considerable concern in Asia about the prospect of renewed militarism among the Japanese people. During the Reagan administration the United States pushed Japan to beef up its military power—something that alarmed many who had suffered years of Japanese wartime aggression. “Those who ignore history tend to become its victims,” warned Carlos Romulo, the Philippine foreign minister and Pulitzer Prize winner who served as General Douglas MacArthur’s aide-de-camp during World War II and understood the competitive national spirit engendered by the Japanese culture. “The Japanese are a very determined people; they have brains. At the end of World War II, no one thought that Japan would become the foremost economic power in the world—but they are. If you give them the chance to become a military power—they will become a military power.”

But the cold war has ended, China is fast emerging from the chrysalis of communism, and other Asian nations that were bullied by Japan during the war may challenge it as they grow ascendant in the international economic arena. The next few years may well witness giant strides in activism regarding Japanese wartime crimes. The American public is growing demographically more Asian. And unlike their parents, whose careers were heavily concentrated in scientific fields, the younger generations of Chinese Americans and Chinese Canadians are fast gaining influence in law, politics, and journalism—professions historically underrepresented by Asians in North America.

Public awareness of the Nanking massacre increased substantially between the time I first started to research this book and the time I finished it. The 1990s saw a proliferation of novels, historical books, and newspaper articles about the Rape of Nanking, the comfort women, Japanese medical experimentation on wartime victims, and other Japanese World War II atrocities. As of 1997 the San Francisco school district plans to include the history of the Rape of Nanking in its curriculum,

and blueprints have even been drawn up among Chinese real estate developers to build a Chinese holocaust museum.

As this book neared completion, the U.S. government was starting to respond to activist demands to pressure the Japanese to confront their wartime past. On December 3, 1996, the Department of Justice established a watch list of Japanese war criminals in order to bar them from entering the country. In April 1997, former U.S. Ambassador Walter Mondale told the press that Japan needs to face history honestly and directly and expressed his wish that Japan make a full apology for its war crimes. The Rape of Nanking even made its way into a bill that will soon be introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives. Through the spring of 1997, legislators worked with human rights activists to draft a bill that will condemn Japan for the maltreatment of U.S. and other prisoners during World War II and demand an official apology and compensation for its wartime victims.

The movement to force the Japanese government to face the full truth about the legacy of its wartime government is gaining support even in Japan, where official denials of wartime atrocities have aroused considerable shame and embarrassment among those citizens who see themselves as more than simply and solely Japanese. A vocal minority is convinced that their government must acknowledge its past if it expects to command trust from its neighbors in the future. In 1997 the Japanese Fellowship of Reconciliation released the following statement:

In the past war, Japan was arrogant and pompous, behaved as aggressors in other Asian countries and brought misery to a great number of people, especially in China. For fifteen years around the 1930s, Japan continued to make war against the Chinese. War actions continued and victimized tens of millions of people. Here, we sincerely would like to apologize for Japan's past mistakes and beg your forgiveness.

The present generation in Japan faces a critical choice. They can continue to delude themselves that the war of Japanese aggression was a holy and just war that Japan happened to lose

solely because of American economic power, or they can make a clean break from their nation's legacy of horror by acknowledging the truth: that the world is a better place because Japan lost the war and was not able to impose its harsh "love" on more people than it did. If modern Japanese do nothing to protect the truth, they run the risk that history will leave them as tarnished as their wartime ancestors.

Japan carries not only the legal burden but the moral obligation to acknowledge the evil it perpetrated at Nanking. At a minimum, the Japanese government needs to issue an official apology to the victims, pay reparations to the people whose lives were destroyed in the rampage, and, most important, educate future generations of Japanese citizens about the true facts of the massacre. These long-overdue steps are crucial for Japan if it expects to deserve respect from the international community—and to achieve closure on a dark chapter that stained its history.

EPILOGUE FOR

THE 2011 EDITION

by Brett Douglas,
September 23, 2011

WHEN I FIRST MET my wife, Iris Chang, in October of 1988, she was a beautiful, brilliant, charming girl who was full of life. I wouldn't have been surprised if someone had told me she would someday write a best-selling book that would be translated into 15 languages. What does surprise me is that I am now writing an epilogue to *The Rape of Nanking* seven years after her death. With the energy, passion, and drive that Iris showed at age thirty, I thought it was likely she would be writing great books well in her eighties and nineties.

When we met, neither of us had dated more than a few times, but we soon both knew we were a perfect match. We were blessed to have sixteen very happy years together. At the time of this writing, two books have been published about Iris's life: *Finding Iris Chang* by Paula Kamen and *The Woman Who Could Not Forget* by her mother, Ying-Ying Chang. These are both good works, and I encourage those

who want to learn more about Iris to read them. Iris's life ended far too soon, and because she was a private person, much of her life and death has been shrouded in some mystery. I'm grateful to Basic Books for giving me the opportunity to fill in some of the holes and to remove some of the mystery associated with Iris's life so her legacy and the legacy of her book can endure.

Ying-Ying Chang's *The Woman Who Could Not Forget* provides a detailed description of Iris's entire life, and I have no desire to try to improve upon that work. Instead, I'll focus on a few key factors I believe led to her success. Both of her parents were Harvard PhDs who spent their careers doing scientific research. Thus, Iris learned to value intellectual achievement at a very early age. She spent thousands of hours as a youth at the University of Illinois library and other local libraries learning to read and process information quickly. Iris compiled an exhaustive list of all Nobel Prize- and Pulitzer Prize-winning books and Academy Award-winning films, and she proceeded to read and watch each and every one. Her days off consisted of methodically working her way through these books and films.

Iris attended the University of Illinois's University High School, a tiny academic pressure cooker populated primarily by academically driven professors' children who had all passed a rigorous entrance exam. The high school has produced several Nobel Prize winners and many other graduates who went on to achieve extraordinary success. In 1985, Iris was one of the few women who entered the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's competitive Math and Computer Science program. She was on track to graduate in just over three years, but she changed her major to journalism when she was a few hours short of a degree. At the time, it was relatively rare for a girl to study Math and Computer Science, it was rare for someone to complete the program that quickly, and it was extremely rare for someone who had completed the program so easily to change majors at the very end.

Most would expect someone who changed majors after almost three years to be significantly behind her peers, but Iris

soon made up the difference and won internships at *Newsweek*, the *Associated Press*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. While at the *Tribune*, she discovered her real passion was writing lengthy feature stories, so she applied and was admitted to the prestigious Writing Seminars program at Johns Hopkins University. While she was there, at the age of only twenty-two, she met her editor and later her agent, Susan Rabiner. Susan gave her a topic, and Iris started research on her first book, *The Thread of the Silkworm*.

When Iris completed her degree from Johns Hopkins, she moved to Santa Barbara, California, to live with me. Iris was always interested in film, so she took a portfolio of photos to a talent agency and was soon selected to be a dancer in an MC Hammer video. However, Iris had a MacArthur Foundation grant proposal due the very next day, so she declined their offer. We thought it was probably the first time anyone had ever turned down MC Hammer and his production company for that reason. Iris made the right decision. She won the MacArthur Foundation grant.

Iris later went on to win a National Science Foundation grant to continue her research on *The Thread of the Silkworm*. What was truly amazing was that Iris never completed a science degree, and she had no formal affiliation with any university or research institution.

Along with her beauty, her intelligence, and her education, two other factors contributed greatly to Iris's success. She was never shy about asking someone, no matter how famous, for help or advice, and she was always trying to improve herself. For instance, in 1991 Iris was very nervous about the prospect of giving a short toast in front of two hundred people at our wedding reception. Yet she consciously worked at public speaking so that by the time *The Rape of Nanking* was published in 1997, she could hold the attention of a thousand people for an hour or longer while she talked about her research and her books.

During the first ten years of our relationship, it was a true pleasure to watch Iris build herself from a sometimes shy and introverted person into "Super Iris," the famous author and historian who could write best-selling books, keep audiences

enthralled with her speeches, and win debates on national television. It was much sadder to see "Super Iris" rapidly succumb to mental illness during the summer of 2004.

There remain a number of myths and misunderstandings about the life and career of Iris Chang. Even I still have a few questions of my own. I can, however, offer information that I think will offer clarity to readers of this book. The first misunderstanding has to do with whether there was a "Eureka! Moment." Iris attended a conference in Cupertino, California, late in 1994 where she saw photos from the Rape of Nanking. There is a common myth that Iris saw the photos and decided then and there that she had to write a book on the atrocity. This is a nice story, but it is entirely contrary to the way Iris did her work. Iris maintained a meticulous file of book ideas, which grew to 400 potential projects by 2004. Iris had heard stories about the Rape of Nanking as a child from her parents and grandparents. She told me shortly after we started dating in October 1988 of her desire to write a book about the Nanking massacre. As soon as she completed the final draft of her first book *The Thread of the Silkworm*, she determined that Japan's assault on Nanking was the most promising topic for her second book, and so she started research. A month later, in the fall of 1994, she attended the conference in Cupertino where she met with the group of activists who sponsored it. She saw many photographs of victims, and she became acquainted with many people who were to become extremely helpful to her in her research. Yet, somehow the idea got started that looking at the photographs at the conference gave her the inspiration to write the book, and that myth has continued to grow. Iris never made an impulsive career decision like that. Writing *The Rape of Nanking* was something she had planned for years, and she was researching the book already when she attended the conference.

Another myth is that the subject matter of *The Rape of Nanking* and the Bataan Death March led to her breakdown and her death. Iris completed *The Rape of Nanking* in early

1997 but never showed any real signs of mental illness until 2004. While she was researching *The Rape of Nanking* and the Bataan Death March, she read through an enormous amount of information. She provided almost daily updates of her progress to me, and she also discussed the material with her parents and several close friends. My impression was that rather than upsetting her, seeing the photos and reading the material energized her and drove her to do the best job she could to tell the stories. She expressed sadness that the people of Nanking who suffered so much in 1937 and 1938 were still living in severe poverty sixty years later. She developed a close attachment to many Bataan Death March veterans who suffered at the hands of the Japanese from 1942 through 1945. Many of those Bataan veterans were small-town Midwestern boys like me and many of her childhood friends, so she identified closely with them. Most were in their mid-eighties by that time, and by 2004, many had passed away or were diagnosed with terminal illnesses. The only time I saw Iris break down and cry on a work-related issue was when she heard that one of the Bataan veterans she befriended had passed away.

There is another myth that the demands of being a working mother contributed to her mental illness. During the two years between our son's birth and her breakdown, a full-time nanny cared for Christopher and did all the household cooking, cleaning, laundry, and grocery shopping. I spent a great deal of time caring for Christopher, and both my parents and Iris's parents helped care for him. It's difficult to conceive anyone having a better support system for childcare and domestic work than Iris had.

Another myth is that the CIA and the US government were responsible for her breakdown and her death. Iris herself believed this because she was forcefully apprehended and confined against her will in a psychiatric ward in Louisville. It was a terrifying experience for her, and after going several days with very little food, water, or sleep, she believed that the US government was behind it. She related this belief to several people during the last three months of her life, but I never saw any evidence to support her belief.

The final myth is that the Japanese government was somehow responsible for Iris's eventual suicide. Iris's life experiences gave her plenty of reason to be fearful of the Japanese. Iris's parents and their families all experienced the Japanese invasion and occupation of China from 1937 to 1945, so Iris heard terrifying stories about Japanese atrocities growing up. While she researched *The Rape of Nanking*, many of the people she worked with had lived through the Japanese invasion of China. When she was on tour promoting her books many former US servicemen, as well as people from Korea, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines would seek her out to tell her their horror stories of the Japanese occupation and their fears about the Japanese government. The Japanese press and Japanese activists attacked her in every verbal way they could. She received a good deal of hate mail during 1998 and 1999 while she was actively promoting *The Rape of Nanking*. During that time, almost everything in Iris's life was giving her reason to fear the Japanese and providing positive feedback for that fear. However, the hate mail decreased and then stopped almost entirely after she focused her attention on her next book *The Chinese in America*. During the entire thirteen years I lived with Iris, I never saw any evidence of someone from Japan threatening her physical safety or doing anything to contribute to Iris's breakdown or her suicide.

Many have speculated that Iris was mentally ill prior to 2004. Part of this perception may be due to her background, and part of it may come from her career and lifestyle choices. Iris's parents lived through the Japanese invasion of China and the civil war between Mao's Communist forces and Chiang's Nationalist forces. They told Iris many of the horrific stories that they had seen and heard. During her writing career, she researched the Armenian Genocide, the rise of the Nazis and their persecution of the Jews, multiple World War II atrocities, the Chinese Civil War, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution. During the last few years of her life, the US government took several actions that disturbed Iris, most notably the Bush Administration's attack on Iraq in 2003. She was also disturbed by the attack and killing of the Branch

Davidians, the Clinton Administration's bombing of multiple Middle Eastern nations during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, the "Humanitarian Bombing" in Kosovo, the Bush Administration's hostility towards China in 2001, the loss of privacy and personal liberties from the Patriot Act, and the indefinite detention of suspected terrorists without charging them with a crime. Iris saw these as a progression of changes leading the United States towards becoming a society capable of atrocities similar to those she had studied. She would often engage people in lengthy discussions on these and similar subjects and on the potentially disastrous consequences should the current trends continue. In public, Iris always kept a tight hold on emotions, but in private conversations she would often get emotional discussing a topic that was important to her. Someone who engaged in occasional private conversations with Iris might have concluded that this was manic behavior. I think it was due to the fact that she had a great deal of passion on a variety of topics, and she had the energy and intellect to aggressively discuss her point of view. I didn't see a change in that aspect of her behavior from 1988 through 2004.

Iris was a goal-oriented person rather than a relationship-oriented person, so many times she was more focused on achieving her goals than on how she would be perceived by others. This created some problems early in her career when she was expected to ingratiate herself to employers, co-workers, editors, and publishers. After *The Rape of Nanking* was published, however, she knew she would never have to work for anyone else because her writing and speaking skills would be in demand. Very few people experience that kind of freedom at the age of thirty. Working for a company or organization does a great deal to make people conform. While workers get almost constant feedback from their supervisors and co-workers, Iris got none for the last thirteen years of her life. I think what some may have perceived to be unusual behavior was not a result of any mental illness but a reflection of the fact that she had the good fortune to behave as she wished.

Book tours took a heavy toll on her. The closest analogy I can make to Iris's book tours is a rock star on tour. Most

mornings, Iris would wake up, head to the airport, fly to a new city, do the event, attend parties afterward, and then get to her hotel room late at night. At the events, people often told her their horror stories about what had happened to the Japanese's Prisoners of War and the civilians who lived in areas occupied by the Japanese during World War II. She would often repeat that same routine many days in a row. Iris lived that life for most of 1998, the first half of 1999, six weeks in 2003, and five weeks in 2004. Most of the people who met with her during the last seven years of her life did so when she was living this chaotic lifestyle.

Many have speculated about what caused Iris's breakdown. I don't know myself. Several different factors could have contributed to it. She *may* have had a genetic predisposition towards mental illness. Like Iris, one of her relatives had had a successful career until her mid-thirties when it abruptly fell apart, and she never worked again. During the first minute I met her, I thought she was a very charming lady, but she soon shifted the conversation to the people who hated her and wanted to kill her. She was tormented by the same thoughts that would plague Iris during the last three months of her life.

Iris finally stopped her one and a half years of promoting *The Rape of Nanking* in the summer of 1999. She intended to spend time at home resting and recuperating, and we tried to start a family. During the next months, Iris went through several miscarriages, causing wild hormonal swings that we later learned could hasten the onset of bipolar disorder. She was more volatile and excitable than at any other time prior to 2004. Someone meeting her then—who didn't understand her exhaustion from the travel and the hormonal swings—might have concluded she was mentally ill.

Iris also had unusual work habits. She went directly from being a college student to being a self-employed writer, so she never fell into the nine-to-five routine of most Americans. Throughout her career, she pulled frequent all-nighters to meet mostly self-imposed deadlines. Iris used a Franklin Planner to help squeeze in as much productivity as she possibly could

each day. When she would receive a request to write a blurb for a soon to be published book, she always read the book cover to cover, then produced a carefully written endorsement for the book. As a result, she would work late into the night to avoid falling behind on her own projects. These work habits undoubtedly put her under more physical and mental stress as she entered her thirties and may have contributed to her breakdown.

Iris had other medical issues such as thrombophilia and a thyroid condition that accelerated her metabolism. She once told me the thyroid condition could cause mental illness if not treated properly with medication. When Iris had her breakdown, one doctor asked me to write down all the vitamins and supplements she was taking because the overuse of unregulated herbal supplements is a frequent cause of mental illness. When I opened up the cabinet where she kept them, I couldn't believe my eyes. Along with her multivitamins, I found many different bottles full of the following ingredients:

Hymenaea Courbaril Bark, Tabebuia Impigginosa barb, Schinus Molle bark, Peiveria Alliacea whole herb, and Cassia Occidentalis leaf, Cat's Claw vine bark, Physalis Angulata whole herb, Boerhaavia Diffusa whole herb, Petiveria Alliacea whole herb, Cassia Occidentalis leaf, Smilaxsp. root, Physalis Angulata leaf and stem, Schinus Molle bark, Petiveria Alliacea leaf and stem, Mirabilis Jalapa leaf, Achyrocline Satureoides leaf, Urva Usi leaf, Jatoba bark, Hymenaea Courbaril, Chlorella, Garlic, Carageenan, L-Methionine, L-Cysteine, L-Lysine Hcl, Activated Attapulgit (clay), Sodium Alginate, EDTA Calcium Disodium, Alpha Lipic Acid, Betaine Vanadyl, Sulfate Choline, Inositol, Para-Amino-Benzoic Acid, Rutin, Lemon Bioflavonoid Complex, Hesperidin Complex, Quercetin, Milk Thistle Extract, Coenzyme Q-10, L-Glutathione, Grape Seed Extract, L-Carnitine, Artichoke Powder, Beet Juice Powder, Ginkgo Bilboa Extract, Lycopene, Chondroitin Sulfate A, Cilantro, Methyl Sulfonyl Methane, Taurine, L-Proline Hawthorne Berry Extract, Green Tea Extract, Aphanizomenon, Fresh Water Algae, Acacia Amylase, Glucomylase, Lipase, Protease, Invertase, Malt Diastase, Celulase, Bromelain, Lactase, Papain, Green Papaya, Apple Pectin, Ginger, Turmeric, Fennel, Bladderwrack, Nori, Wakame, Peppermint,

Beets, Habanero Peppers, Jalapeno Peppers, African Peppers, Chinese Peppers, Thai Peppers, Korean Peppers, Japanese Peppers, Pumpkin Seed Oil, Burdock, PeachTree Leaves, Chamomile, Jaborandi, Sage Leaves, SD Alcohol and Methyl Salicylate Iodine from Kelp, Alfalfa, Dicalcium Phosphate, Stearic Acid, Magnesium Stearate, and Bilberry Extract.

Iris started promoting *The Rape of Nanking* at age twenty-nine, and she finished at age thirty-one. During her tour, she visited at least sixty-five cities, many of them multiple times. At that age, she seemed to be able to bounce back from the stresses of travel. However, she was thirty-five and thirty-six when she was promoting *The Chinese in America*. Her travel schedule was shorter but even more intense, and she wasn't able to recover like she had six years earlier. The Iris Chang who went on book tour in March 2004 was a very different person than the Iris Chang who returned five weeks later.

I believe Iris's prolonged fear and apprehension about Japanese right-wing extremists, her genetics, her multiple miscarriages, her countless all-nighters, her strenuous book tours, and her herbal supplements all may have contributed to her breakdown in Louisville in August of 2004. Paula Kamen wrote that one form of mental illness is the inability to control one's fears. This is how Iris's fears escalated:

When our son Christopher started showing signs of autism, she discovered that many believed vaccines were the cause. She dug deeper and found that vaccines and drugs given to Gulf War veterans caused various illnesses. Around the same time, we went to see the 2004 version of *The Manchurian Candidate*, in which the government used mind control on Gulf War soldiers. The movie heightened her anxiety. She spent the next few days preparing for an upcoming business trip to Louisville to meet with Colonel Arthur Kelly and interview survivors of the Bataan Death March. Instead of sleeping, she spent the next few nights visiting web sites on autism, Gulf War Syndrome, and many conspiracy theories. We were all quite concerned about her at the time she left for Louisville, but we thought if she went on the research trip she would focus on her work and not on all the conspiracies. However, her mind

began to play tricks on her due to the lack of sleep. She believed that the government was trying to poison her, so she refused to eat or drink anything after she left our home. Her condition deteriorated rapidly due to the deprivation of food, water, and sleep. She called her mother in terrible condition, and her mother contacted Colonel Kelly. When Colonel Kelly and his wife, a retired nurse, saw her condition, they called for an ambulance. Iris had never met Colonel Kelly in person; she became convinced they were part of a conspiracy to do harm to her, so she tried to flee. Police and paramedics forced her to go to the Louisville Hospital for extensive tests. She was placed in the psychiatric ward, where, according to Iris, she was repeatedly threatened by the orderlies. By this time she was firmly convinced that they were trying to drug her or poison her, so she once again refused to eat, drink anything, or sleep while she was there. If Iris had her breakdown at home surrounded by people she loved and trusted, it would not have been nearly as traumatic for her. Instead, she concluded that the people who had tried to help her in Louisville were all part of a Bush Administration conspiracy to harm her. During the last three months of her life, we could never get her to let go of that belief.

After her parents brought her home from the Louisville hospital, we had trouble finding a good psychiatrist to treat her. To compound the problem, Iris was not a cooperative mental health patient. Iris's experience solving our fertility problems caused her to lose respect for most medical doctors. Iris would so thoroughly research the topic that she would overwhelm the doctors she met. After that experience, she had very little faith in most medical doctors. This was a time when we desperately needed to find a good psychiatrist. We even more desperately needed Iris to follow the treatment plan, but she fought it every step of the way.

Iris's parents and I thought it would be a good idea to bring her to a bipolar personality support group, so they brought her to a meeting at Stanford University. The people she saw there were not winning the battle with bipolar disorder. Almost none of them were working, and many were on five or six

medications. Iris described them as zombies, and she said she would never allow herself to be medicated like that. Shortly afterwards, her psychiatrist formally diagnosed her with bipolar personality disorder, meaning she should be treated with mood-stabilizing drugs rather than antidepressant and antipsychotic drugs. The suicide risk for mental health patients goes up during changes in medication.

After Iris's death, her mother did a lot of research on the drugs prescribed to Iris, and she discovered that Asians may be more sensitive to many of the commonly prescribed drugs. These drugs have been tested on very few Asians because they make up such a small portion of the US population, so the medications pose more risk of side effects to Asian patients. This was likely the case with Iris. The powerful antipsychotic and mood-altering drugs she took seemed to cause many side effects on her.

Two days after the diagnosis and change in medication her mother found a gun safety course brochure from Reed's Gun Shop in Iris's purse. This was the first indication we had that she had any plans to buy a gun. When we questioned her, she told us she believed the US government was out to get her, and she needed a gun to protect herself. The combination of meeting the heavily medicated bipolar personality disorder patients, Iris's formal diagnosis of bipolar personality disorder, her change of medications, and the resulting side effects all put Iris in a very unstable state. Iris's parents, her psychiatrist, and I tried to find people who were successfully coping with bipolar personality disorder to talk to Iris and to give her encouragement, but we ran out of time.

After her experience in Louisville, Iris firmly believed the Bush Administration meant to do harm to her. She was hopeful that John Kerry would defeat George Bush in the November 2004 election, but Bush's victory was announced on November 3. Her thoughts of four more years of persecution were too much for her. The police investigation after her death concluded that she purchased the first handgun on the very next day.

The last factor that I believe led to Iris's suicide was something that no one else has mentioned: Pride. In her suicide note, she wrote:

"It is far better that you remember me as I was—in my heyday as a best-selling author—than the wild-eyed wreck who returned from Louisville."

On a personal level, Iris was completely unpretentious. She drove a Geo Metro for five years. If someone had stopped by our home unannounced, they would likely find Iris wearing glasses, no makeup, a t-shirt, and a baggy pair of sweats. However if Iris made a public appearance, her hair and makeup were always perfect, she wore her contacts and a conservative business suit, and she always had a speech prepared and rehearsed. She invested a tremendous amount of time and effort into building up and maintaining her public persona. I don't believe she felt like she could maintain that after her breakdown.

Iris wrote three books in her short life. Her first book, *The Thread of the Silkworm*, was a topic chosen by her editor at Basic Books, Susan Rabiner. Her last book, *The Chinese in America*, was a topic chosen by her publisher at Viking Penguin. *The Rape of Nanking* was the only book chosen by Iris. The one book she intended to write from a very young age spent several weeks on the best-seller list and was translated into 15 languages. She was in a position where she had the financial resources and the influence in the publishing industry to write whatever she wanted for the rest of her life. It is difficult to say what she would have been able to accomplish if she had continued writing for another fifty years.

Since Iris has passed away, many people have said that she has inspired them to carry on her work. I've guided people to visit the Iris Chang collections in the Hoover Archives at Stanford University, at the University of California Santa Barbara, and at the University of Illinois. That's the only way to fully appreciate the tremendous amount of original research that went into all three of her books. The Hoover Archives contains a list

of other books she had planned to write. I encourage anyone who wants to carry on her legacy to complete one of these projects.

Iris's dream was to have her books made into documentaries and feature films. Many claim to have done films based on *The Rape of Nanking*; however as of this writing, no producer has done a documentary film or a feature film on any one of her three books. Iris was not a religious person, but if she is looking down on us, nothing would make her happier than to see this happen.

There are many unsung heroes who are truly carrying on the work of Iris Chang. When our son Christopher started to show the first signs of autism in the summer of 2004, he could have had no better mother than the Iris Chang who researched and wrote three books from 1991 through 2002. That Iris Chang would have done the research necessary to put the best possible program in place to help Christopher achieve his potential. However, the Iris Chang of 2004 was already well on her way towards a mental breakdown. When Iris committed suicide, she left Christopher as a motherless two-year-old autistic child. Several women stepped in and partially filled the void left by Iris's mental illness and death. Our neighbor, Sun-Mi Cabral, and her sister, Sunny Park, cared for Christopher like he was their own child for most of the next year. Iris's mother, Ying-Ying Chang, cooked nutritious dinners for him for the next two years. After Christopher was diagnosed with autism, my girlfriend, Jiebing Shui, quit her job, moved in with us, became his step-mother, and focused full-time on getting him to his therapy sessions. His first adaptive behavioral analysis therapist, Hanna Almeda, made tremendous progress getting Christopher to communicate verbally with other people. However after Jiebing Shui became busy with our newborn son and Hanna Almeda accepted a position with the Palo Alto public schools, Christopher started to regress.

It was then that my parents, Ken and Luann Douglas, sold their retirement home and moved to Normal, Illinois, to be near Illinois State University because it had one of the best special education programs in the United States. I moved my fam-

ily from San Jose, California, to the same community. My parents have spent their retirement years devoted to giving Christopher a chance to develop to his full potential. Melissa Watson has been Christopher's adaptive behavioral analysis therapist since 2007. Melissa has done more to help Christopher develop than any other person. Many other therapists have also worked with Christopher: Hannah Gomez, Monica Bozek, Tricia Ferguson, Susan Konkak, Sarah Conklen, Megan Watson, Grace Watson, Angela Watson, Rachael Wrage, Kristin Hunsburger, Bethany Ingrum, Gavin Meador, many therapists at Easter Seals in Bloomington, Illinois, and many therapists at The Autism Place in Normal, Illinois.

Iris was a hero for telling the story of the people who had suffered so much in Nanking during the winter of 1937 and 1938. She may have been a tragic hero because the same extraordinary motivation and drive that led her to achieve so much by age twenty-nine probably contributed to her breakdown and early death at age thirty-six. Iris influenced hundreds of thousands of people through her writing and on her books tours. I've met only a small fraction of the people she knew, and I'm still learning more about her seven years after her death.

