The RAPE OF NANKING - Historical Background

In 1931, Japanese military forces first invaded Northeastern China, also known as the Manchuria Region. December 1937, Nanjing fell to the Japanese Imperial Army.

The “Rape of Nanking [Nanjing]”, the slaughter of innocent civilians, babies and elders, and the rape of Chinese women, from teenagers to 85-year olds, lasted for six weeks. More than three hundred thousand of Nanjing residents perished. Over twenty thousand cases of rape were reported. These rape cases did not include army brothels or so-called “comfort stations” where women were used to “service” Japanese army soldiers in the field. Japan has never formally offered a sincere apology to any of the invaded countries after World War II.

On that first day, the people of Nanking could not leave the city. The gates were locked and the river boats were commandeered. About 50,000 refugees were machine gunned, starved to death or froze to death. Those who survived were driven to Straw Sandals Gorge where they were brutally slaughtered. The Japanese continued to round up refugees and continued to kill them during the six week invasion.

One Survivor’s story:
Wu Changde was one of the fortunate survivors of these mass killings. Changde was forced into a killing area. Facing the river with the Japanese behind them, the guns began to ring out. As soon as Wu Changde heard the gunfire he hit the ground, avoiding the flying bullets altogether. The gunfire subsided and a group of Japanese approached the bodies, their rifles leveled. To ensure there were no survivors, the soldiers used their bayonets to stab ruthlessly the bodies of the fallen men.
Wu Changde sustained a stab wound about five inches in length. Subsequently, kerosene was poured over all of the bodies and they were set ablaze. Unable to stand the heat of the fire, Wu managed to roll himself into the river, hoping to speed up his death by drowning himself. It was wintertime, so the level of the river was low and he was not drowned. The fire burning all over his body was extinguished. Although Wu’s injuries were serious, they were not fatal. (Note: After the war, Wu Changde testified at the "International Military Tribunal for the Far East" 3 )

A Japanese army general ordered all Chinese shopkeepers to “open their doors and welcome the Japanese.” In the last ten days of December, the “campaign to clear the streets” began. As soon as the shopkeepers opened their doors they were shot. On this one day alone, the dead and wounded numbered in the thousands.
Any one considered to “anti-Japanese” was rounded up and supposedly interrogated, but they were never seen again. More than 10,000 people were killed in this manner.

Some Japanese soldiers considered the act of killing people to be a form of amusement. In one instance, the Japanese doused over 1,000 people with gasoline and then opened fire on the crowd with machine guns. When the bullets hit their bodies, the gasoline caught fire. The refugees’ burning bodies quivered from head to toe causing the whole scene to flicker from the light of the gasoline fires on their bodies. The Japanese soldiers stood by laughing hysterically and taking pleasure from the scene they had created. In another “game” the Japanese forced the Chinese all to strip naked, break the ice, enter the freezing water, and "go fishing." In a matter of seconds they froze to death. On yet another occasion, the Japanese bound up a group of refugees, hand and foot, and threw them into a shallow pond. One after the other, they lobbed in their grenades causing an explosive shower of blood and flesh. The assembled Japanese soldiers could not control their laughter.

Those in charge of the Japanese forces went so far as to use killing "competitions" as a way to boost morale among the troops. They even organized interview teams and sent newspaper reporters to conduct interviews with the "winners" of these competitions to kill people. The facts of this case are as follows: Prior to the invasion and occupation of Nanjing, there were two savage men in the Katagiri
Detachment stationed at Jurong [a prefecture outside of Nanjing] named Mukai Toshiaki and Noda Takeshi. These two men, both sub-lieutenants, were honored for exhibiting the strongest samurai spirit by having the title "brave soldier" bestowed upon them. Encouraged by their senior officials, they agreed to engage in a killing "competition." Whoever could kill a full 100 people before the invasion and occupation of Nanjing was completed would take the prize. When the Japanese forces arrived at Tang Mountain, Mukai Toshiaki had only killed eighty-nine people, while Noda Takeshi had killed a mere seventy-eight. Having failed to reach their goal of 100 dead, the competition could not yet be brought to a close. One source reported that Mukai Toshiaki had already racked up 250 kills which put him ahead of Noda Takeshi, so Mukai invited Noda to make it a race to 1,000.4

During the first month of 1938, the Japanese were subjected to worldwide condemnation and denunciation for the atrocities they had committed during the Nanjing massacre. The ruling clique in Japan could do nothing but admit that their forces in Nanjing had in fact committed the criminal acts of brutal murder, rape, plunder, arson, and destruction. They proceeded to order Nanjing’s International Committee to oversee an expeditious and thorough clearing away of all the remaining corpses which had been accumulating inside and outside the city, either by burial or mass incineration.

**Even worse than these instances, were the rapes of Chinese women:**
One time a group of Japanese gang raped a middle-aged woman. Later, when they discovered that the woman was pregnant, they wantonly cut open her stomach, pulled out the foetus, and used it as a plaything. Laughing, they carried their toy out onto the street where they ran into a Japanese officer. They brandished the foetus, which was pierced onto one of their bayonets, in front of the officer causing him to let out a chuckle.
"Sometimes the soldiers would use bayonets to slice off the women's breasts, revealing the pale white ribs inside their chests. Sometimes they would pierce their bayonets into the women's genitals and leave them crying bitterly on the roadside. Sometimes the Japanese took up wooden bats, hard reed rods, and even turnips, forced the implements into the women's vaginae, and violently beat them to death. Other soldiers stood by applauding the scene and laughing heartily." (Military Commission of the Kuomintang, Political Department: "A True Record of the Atrocities Committed by the Invading Japanese Army," compiled July 1938)
The Japanese “victory” claimed hundreds of thousands of lives.

Charred remains of a victim who was doused with gasoline and set on fire.

Their loved ones killed and their home destroyed, refugees run for their lives along the Shanghai-Beijing Railroad tracks.
A woman in the Langya Mountain area was raped before her abdomen was slashed open by a Japanese bayonet.

A Japanese soldier seems to rejoice in death - holding a head by the ear and smiling for the camera.

A vivisection performed on a “live” Chinese “patient.”