

# Secret Intelligence Service

(C-I)

## On the Treatment and Maltreatment of Women

### Room 15. Discussion Notes

#### On the MASS RAPE of GERMAN WOMEN During and following WW2

*Churchill said to the Germans in January, 1945, "We Allies are no monsters. This, at least, I can say, on behalf of the United Nations, to Germany. Peace, though based on unconditional surrender, will bring to Germany and Japan immense and immediate alleviation of suffering and agony." Austin Joseph App says that those Allies who were "no monsters" literally raped more European women than had ever before been raped in the history of the world.*

German women were raped by members of the Russian, Polish, French and American forces during and at the end of World War II. During their flight to the West and the period of expulsions, German girls and women were also raped by Czechs, Serbians and Slovenians. Before that German soldiers and members of the SS troops had been the rapists.

**A nation defeated. German women suffered mass rape when Germany lost in 1945. These brave women try to build a future amongst the ruins of Berlin in 1945.**

At the end of World War II, Red Army soldiers are estimated to have raped around 2,000,000 German women and girls. Norman Naimark writes in "The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945-1949." that although the exact number of women and girls who were raped by members of the Red Army in the months preceding and years following the capitulation will never be known, their numbers are likely in the hundreds of thousands, quite possibly

as high as the 2,000,000 victims estimate made by Barbara Johr, in "Befreier und Befreite".

Many of these victims were raped repeatedly. Antony Beevor estimates that up to half the victims were victims of gang rapes. Naimark states that not only did each victim have to carry the trauma with her for the rest of her days, it inflicted a massive collective trauma on the East German nation.

Naimark concludes "The social psychology of women and men in the soviet zone of occupation was marked by the crime of rape from the first days of occupation, through the founding of the GDR in the fall of 1949, until - one could argue - the present." German women who became pregnant after being raped by Soviet soldiers in World War II were invariably denied abortion to further humiliate them as to carry an unwanted child.

As a result, according to the book Berlin: The Downfall, 1945 by Antony Beevor, some 90% of raped Berlin women in 1945 had venereal diseases as results of these consequential rapes and 3.7% of all children born in Germany from 1945 to 1946 had Soviet fathers. The history behind this particular rape of the German women by the Soviet troops was considered a taboo topic until 1992.

**Berlin women were at the mercy of the Soviet soldiers for food  
in 1945**

The West Allies went into the Second World War with the aim to bring to an end the fascistic dictatorship and introduce democracy and dignity to the German people. This honourable goal is still to this day attributed to the West Allies in history books. The reality of 1945 was quite different. The victors occupied the conquered land but there was not any respect shown for dignity. The ideals they once held went to dust. Any mans of degradation, humiliation was applied, and the people were treated as monsters. When, towards the end of the war and after May 8th, 1945, the victors feared no more German retaliation, they proved on many instances what they were really thinking of human dignity - namely nothing. Cruel tortures of imprisoned German soldiers went on daily, robbing them of their personal belongings, denying them any right to a rightful hearing. High-handed sentences were given out on a daily basis in the years after the war. Women were fair game, even in the West.

**Defenseless German girls and women bore the brunt of Russian  
vengeance and the atrocities by Allied armies**

The enormous personal humiliations and violations of dignity towards the prisoners during interrogation happened especially in 1945. Ernst von Salomon delivered impressive examples of those deeds in his questionnaire. German women had to endure rape on top of this. The victors of the East and West are both guilty of these crimes. Millions of German women and girls were ravished by this barbaric behaviour. The estimated figures are about two million. Ingo von Münch calculates 1.4 million rapes for the territory east of the Oder and Neißé line, about 500,000 in the former DDR. Ilya Ehrenburg, distributed flyers among the Soviet soldiers weeks ahead before the Red Army entered East Germany, calling for rape in public and killing of at least one German each day. Soldiers and Officers alike took part in it to follow Ilya Ehrenburg`s appeal. Very few officers resisted this lack of discipline and very few seldom interfered. In Berlin alone tens of thousands of women had to endure this brutal, humiliating behaviour by the Red Army. The call "women come" became a feared word. Just recently are extensively written monographs made public.

**As the Red Army advanced toward her in 1945, the city of Berlin had become a city virtually without men. Out of a civilian population of 2,700,000, 2,000,000 were women. It is small wonder that the fear of sexual attack raced through the city like a plague. Doctors were besieged by patients seeking information on the quickest way to commit suicide, and poison was in great demand.**

### **The French colonial troops**

The French let loose their coloured troops from time to time on German women and girls to show their disdain and disrespect towards them. In Freudenstadt e.g. the French officers let their Moroccan troops loose on the German public to have a field day in looting and raping. The German women and girls were considered fair game. Similarly happened in the district of Tübingen where hundreds of women were raped by French troops that came marching into the district. In Stuttgart, French white officers took pleasure for weeks on end using force on German women until the American leadership put a stop to it.

The U.S. troops, especially when they subjected women to interrogation, practiced rapes besides their normal bodily

torture. American units had already made themselves a bad name when landing on French soil, towards the native women shortly after the landing to the point, that the 'French people wished the Germans were back. Even less moral scruples were shown by the Americans when they entered Germany. Johann Heilmeyer gave an affidavit to an interrogation hearing, that the U.S. members in his presence, raped a woman bound by her hands to a chair, torn off the bits of clothes off her body and tortured her. Other women were threatened, that, if they did not give the information to the interrogators they wanted to hear, they would be put together for a night long with coloured troops of the U.S.

**On March 24, 1945, the Red Army entered Danzig. A 50-year-old Danzig teacher reported that her niece, 15, was raped seven times, and her other niece, 22, was raped fifteen times. A Soviet officer told a group of women to seek safety in the Cathedral. Once they were securely locked inside, the beasts of Bolshevism entered, and ringing the bells and playing the organ, "celebrated" a foul orgy through the night, raping all the women, some more than thirty times. A Catholic pastor in Danzig declared, "They violated even eight-year-old girls and shot boys who tried to shield their mothers."**

On May 4th, 2010, the Süddeutsche Zeitung (German news paper published in Munich ) wrote about the mass rapes that were held secret for so many years. The number of women that were raped at the end of the Second World War goes probably into the hundreds of thousands if not into the millions. So far only the Red Army's shameful and scandalous deeds have been made public and that sits deep in the collective conscience of the post war time. "The Russians were rapists, the Americans were liberators". That is how in 1945 German people judged after 1945. Today we know that this is not true. 65 years after the end of the war it becomes more and more clear, that many violations go the account of the French and American troops.

**The rapists did not all wear a red star. John Dos Passos, writing in LIFE magazine for January 7, 1946, quotes a "red-faced major" as saying that "Lust, liquor and loot are the soldier's pay." A serviceman wrote to TIME magazine for November 12, 1945 "Many a sane American family would recoil in horror if they knew how 'Our Boys' conduct themselves, with such complete callousness in human relationships over here." An army sergeant wrote "Our own Army and the British Army ...have done their**

**share of looting and raping... This offensive attitude among our troops is not at all general, but the percentage is large enough to have given our Army a pretty black name, and we too are considered an army of rapists."**

Contrary to the general believe, the German troops showed right to the end of the Second World War a model discipline towards prisoners and civil population alike in the occupied lands. Particularly superiors tolerated no encroachments by their subordinates towards the local women of the occupied lands. In the appeal of the German commanders to their troops it was made very clear, that violations towards women would be severely punished . If nevertheless something occurred, that can happen in a million strong army, the military justice would be swift in punishment to keep up the discipline and moral of the troops.

This article is based upon the books, "Richtstellungen zur Zeitgeschichte" (Corrections to History of our Time) Volume 4, page 526, published by Grabert Verlag, D-72066 Tübingen, Postfach 1629, Germany.

**For the Americans and British, open rape was not as common as among the Soviet troops. The Soviets simply raped any female from eight years up and if a German man or woman killed a Russian soldier for anything, including rape, 50 Germans were killed for each incident, as reported in TIME magazine, June 11, 1945. But for most of our boys, having that "wonderful time" depended a great deal on the "cooperation" of the German and Austrian women. From the starving and the homeless, of course, sexual "cooperation" could be bought for a few pennies or a mouthful of food.**

A schoolteacher told the girls of her class two days before the fall of Berlin: "If a Russian soldier violates you, there remains nothing but death." Ruth Andreas-Friedrich commented in her diary on 6 May that more than half of this woman's students had taken their teacher at her word, often by drowning themselves in the nearest body of water. "They kill themselves by the hundreds. The phrase 'honour lost, everything lost' had been the words of a distraught father who presses a rope into the hand of his daughter who has been violated twelve times. Obediently she goes and hangs herself at the nearest window transom." Sexual violation was, perhaps, the most comprehensible reason for self-destruction. No one has ever reliably quantified the suicides in Germany in 1945, but these certainly ran into many tens of thousands. In every city occupied by the victors, corpses hung from the rafters, or lay slumped where poison had done its business with them.

**One shudders to think what the Russian soldiers did to BDM (Nazi organisation for women) girls like these**

### **Rape in East Prussia in 1945. Eyewitness account**

**Dr. Arnold Niedenzu, A German surgeon in East Prussia**

"During the Russian invasion of East Prussia, I was a senior physician at the St. Josef Hospital in Roessel remained there. After replacement by a Polish doctor, I left East Prussia on 12.12.1945.

**"I think there were very few Russians who did not take part in these terrible crimes. There was little difference between officers and ordinary soldiers. "**

Roessel had not been evacuated due to complete failure of the competent German authorities. Few residents had time to get to safety before the Russians came. The city was occupied after very minor resistance on 28.01.1945 afternoon. Immediately, there was extensive looting, arson, violence and rape, murder and manslaughter. Already in the first few days 60 people were killed in Roessel.

After the first few a young woman was admitted in our hospital to the maternity ward with very severe lung shot. When a Russian tried to rape her, she made it clear to him that she was close to giving birth. Then the Russian came to her on her stomach and shot her. The child was born prematurely, the mother came in an

almost hopeless condition to the hospital, but lucky to get cured in a few months.

The rapes took place on an unimaginable scale. In my experience I can say that from the women and girls aged 15 to 50 years, only 10% were spared. The Russian made no exceptions: old women (to 80 years), (down to 10 years) children, heavily pregnant women and new mothers. No one was spared. The Russians invaded the hapless women often even during the day, but mostly at night. They entered through broken windows and pounced on the hapless women and girls. Usually at gunpoint. Often they kept the gun muzzle directly into the mouth of the unfortunate victim. Many women were shot afterwards (eg, a very well known to me Mrs. K), another (Ms D) then run over with a car or tank.. Often, the women were raped or beaten in the worst way, engraved or otherwise mistreated.

Worse still was the moral degeneration. While initially stunned women and girls wept, later they took it with equanimity. A main topic of conversation was that last night the Russians "harassed", even amongst teenagers. Still later, some women and girls chose to go with Russians in an relationship in order to be protected against attacks by others And even later, because of hunger. Then there was the bad example of those who enticed the Russians and even bragged about it.

**Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn**, then a young captain in the Red Army and a committed opponent to such outrages, describes the entry of his regiment into East Prussia in January 1945: "Yes! For three weeks the war had been going on inside Germany and all of us knew very well that if the girls were German they could be raped and then shot. This was almost a combat distinction . **In his epic poem Prussian Nights, Solzhenitsyn gives a more compelling description of the wanton arson and murder:**

We've hit him good and hard, the foe!  
Everything's aflame. -Night quarters?  
We'll have to spend it in the snow.  
Oh, well, that's bad. But all the same,  
We've given them a tougher time:  
The whole district sees a dawn  
The like of which it's never known! . . .  
To flame the work of centuries turns,  
Fire is weaving, fire is lashing,

Above my head it burns and burns. . .

.  
In Neidenburg conflagrations shiver  
To shards old masonry's good stone.  
The town's a chaos; in a fever  
Of acquisition our pursuit takes it. . .

.  
Twenty-two Hoeringstrasse.  
It's not been burned, just looted, rifled.  
A moaning, by the walls half muffled:  
The mother's wounded, still alive.  
The little daughter's on the mattress,  
Dead. How many have been on it?  
A platoon, a company perhaps?  
A girl's been turned into a woman,  
A woman turned into a corpse.  
It's all come down to simple phrases:  
Do not forget! Do not forgive!  
Blood for blood!K tooth for a tooth!  
The mother begs, "Soldier, kill me!"  
Her eyes are hazy and bloodshot.  
The dark's upon her. She can't see.  
Am I one of theirs? Or whose? . . .  
A pram that's been abandoned,  
Blue,  
Lace trimmings, too:  
"Look, a little 'un.  
Still, he's a German!  
He'll grow and put a helmet on.  
Deal with him now, d'you think?  
The order from Supreme Command  
Is Blood for Blood! Give no quarter!". . .  
And then they shot the housewife first,  
Spattering with blood the carpet's pile.  
The husband was bedridden, ill:  
They cured him with a carbine burst.  
Only the nephew, a young boy,  
In a flash managed to escape  
—Out of the window and away  
Over the fence with a leap! With a leap!  
Like a wild creature,  
Like a little hare,  
Across the field toward the wood  
Running, ducking, dodging aside.  
The whole troop, nearly, rushed from the road,  
Firing anyhow, in pursuit:

"I'll get him". "Winged him!" "He's down!"  
"He's away!" "-Shoot! Shoot!"  
"Ah, the brute,  
He's got away. Well, when he's grown."

## Stalin's War of Extermination

### RAPE BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS DURING WW2 IN EUROPE

A study by Robert J. Lilly estimates that a total of 14,000 civilian women in England, France and Germany were raped by American GIs during World War II. It is estimated that there were around 3,500 rapes by American servicemen in France between June 1944 and the end of the war and one historian has claimed that sexual violence against women in liberated France was common.

The journalist Osmar White, a war correspondent from Australia who served with the American troops during the war, wrote that:

"After the fighting moved on to German soil, there was a good deal of rape by combat troops and those immediately following them. The incidence varied between unit and unit according to the attitude of the commanding officer. In some cases offenders were identified, tried by court martial, and punished. The army legal branch was reticent, but admitted that for brutal or perverted sexual offences against German women, some soldiers had been shot - particularly if they happened to be Negroes. **Yet I know for a fact that many women were raped by white Americans. No action was taken against the culprits. In one sector a report went round that a certain very distinguished army commander made the wisecrack, 'Copulation without conversation does not constitute fraternisation.'**"

A typical victimization with sexual assault by drunken American personnel marching through occupied territory involved threatening a German family with weapons, forcing one or more women to engage in sex, and putting the entire family out on the street afterward.

As in the eastern sector of the occupation, the number of rapes peaked in 1945, but a high rate of violence against the German and Austrian populations by the Americans lasted at least into the first half of 1946, with five cases of dead German women found in American barracks in May and June of 1946 alone.

**American soldiers raped German women and then left gifts of food for them may have permitted themselves to view the act as a prostitution rather than rape.**

At the end of World War II roughly 300,000 American GIs were deployed as occupation forces in Germany. Many of them quickly developed intimate relations with their former enemies. Those informal interactions played a significant role in the transformation of Germany from enemy to ally of the United States, argues Petra Goedde in this study. **Goedde finds that as American soldiers fraternized with German civilians, particularly as they formed sexual relationships with women, they developed a feminised image of Germany that contrasted sharply with their wartime image of the aggressive Nazi stormtrooper.**

### **GIs and Frauleins. The German - American Encounter in 1950s West Germany. BARBARA JOHR**

In her book *GIs and Frauleins*, - the author points out that American soldiers did not have to resort to rape because the

sight of the Dollar presented sufficient means of coercion and temptation for hungry women in the liberated countries. However, one of the interviewees in the film said: "I would say Yes to chocolate and stockings but No if I were to do all this for them". She had been raped by a US soldier. French soldiers were guilty of hundreds of cases of rape in Southern Germany, above all in Stuttgart, Pforzheim and Freudenstadt. **Research showed, however, that British soldiers were practically blameless in this respect. After the war, the Western Allies showed little interest in bringing up the rapes by members of the Red Army because they would have had to question the behavior of their own troops as well.**

Nazi propaganda had prepared German women to regard Russians as rapists but little credence was in fact given to these horror stories. The disappointment at the behaviour of the liberators was therefore all the greater, particularly among communist and social-democratic women and the few Jewish women who had survived the war on German soil.

Ruth Andreas Friedrich, a journalist and underground fighter, wrote in her diary:

*"For four years Goebbels kept telling us that the Russians were rapists, that they would violate, murder, rob and pillage us. Such propaganda did not shock us and we looked forward to being liberated by the Allies. We did not want to be disappointed. We could not bear it when Goebbels turned out to be right."*

### **The German Women Suffered after the Rape**

The first hours and weeks following the event: the reaction, particularly of young girls, was one of total disintegration. The shock persisted for many weeks. They had no prior knowledge of sex and the shame was enormous: "I was panic-stricken - I was always afraid that everybody could see it in me. I was insecure in myself - I felt so empty." Young girls became suicidal: "I wanted to do away with myself and kept crying. My mother would not let me go anywhere alone, not even to the toilet." The reaction of adult women, some married, was calmer: "Apathy sets in - I kept thinking, I wish it was all over." There was something of a team-spirit during that first period, some mutual understanding among the women. But this understanding disappeared almost totally once the gossip of the cellar, bunker and escape communities got going: "There was no compassion for us." The reaction of husbands, families and neighbors was nearly as hurtful as the rape itself: "My husband said that he would leave home if I had the child - You promised me to be faithful -

Ah, this is the one the Russians have had."

The following two years: the women tried to regain control of their lives, to organize their affairs and the survival of their children. In this way they hoped to escape the magnitude of their emotional upheaval. The fear of death which they had experienced became a phobia for some women: "I was a bunch of nerves, full of anxieties."

Three to five years afterwards: women became extremely cautious in their relations with other people, single women particularly in their attitude to men: "Relationships would develop just up to a certain point and then I acted as if I were totally numb. I promised myself I would remain single." Married women had to realize that "the marriage was never the same as before". There were many divorces. Plenty of difficulties developed in those marriages which survived. A patient and sympathetic man was needed to make a new marriage work out. Only a few women had the good luck to find such a husband. When a child was born, the relationship between the mother and the child was rather distant because each physical touch and each physical contact was difficult for them. Their attitude to their own bodies was just as confused as to other people.

Situation at present: the women realize the full depth of how the act of rape affected them and that their endeavours to blot out the enormous significance of the event from their lives were futile. Their attempts at coming to terms with the situation yielded various results: they had more pity for the men returning from war than for themselves; they did not want anything for themselves; in later life, they existed more for others than for themselves. **When it became clear to many women that "they paid the price for what the German men had done in the countries which they had invaded" they felt that they had no right to complain and did not consider themselves any longer as the victims.** Some of the women became purposely active in politics (against rearming West Germany, in the extra-parliamentary opposition etc.) but they never publicized the personal motivation that drives them.

Only a small fraction of these women took the opportunity to claim compensation for themselves (offered by the West German legislature) or the payment of maintenance for children born as the result of rape (in accordance with the Compensation for Occupation Damages Law). Apart from the fact that most women were not aware of these possibilities, applications for compensation also involved the publication of the victims'

names. Many women shied away from this and decided against applying at least until their financial means were exhausted. Those who did apply experienced depressing situations with the authorities. Women had to prove that they were victims, i.e. that their cases were indeed cases of true rape and not just of coercion and that the damage to their health could be directly attributed to the rape. This was almost impossible to prove.

**The following is from the famous book "Downfall, Berlin 1945" by Antony Beevor. The article was published in the Guardian May 1, 2002.**

"Red Army soldiers don't believe in 'individual liaisons' with German women," wrote the playwright Zakhar Agranenko in his diary when serving as an officer of marine infantry in East Prussia. "Nine, ten, twelve men at a time - they rape them on a collective basis."

The Soviet armies advancing into East Prussia in January 1945, in huge, long columns, were an extraordinary mixture of modern and medieval: tank troops in padded black helmets, Cossack cavalymen on shaggy mounts with loot strapped to the saddle, lend-lease Studebakers and Dodges towing light field guns, and then a second echelon in horse-drawn carts. The variety of character among the soldiers was almost as great as that of their military equipment. There were freebooters who drank and raped quite shamelessly, and there were idealistic, austere communists and members of the intelligentsia appalled by such behaviour.

Beria and Stalin, back in Moscow, knew perfectly well what was going on from a number of detailed reports. One stated that "many Germans declare that all German women in East Prussia who stayed behind were raped by Red Army soldiers". Numerous examples of gang rape were given - "girls under 18 and old women included".

Marshal Rokossovsky issued order No 006 in an attempt to direct "the feelings of hatred at fighting the enemy on the battlefield." It appears to have had little effect. There were also a few arbitrary attempts to exert authority. The commander of one rifle division is said to have "personally shot a lieutenant who was lining up a group of his men before a German woman spreadeagled on the ground". But either officers were involved themselves, or the lack of discipline made it too

dangerous to restore order over drunken soldiers armed with submachine guns.

Calls to avenge the Motherland, violated by the Wehrmacht's invasion, had given the idea that almost any cruelty would be allowed. Even many young women soldiers and medical staff in the Red Army did not appear to disapprove. "Our soldiers' behaviour towards Germans, particularly German women, is absolutely correct!" said a 21-year-old from Agranenko's reconnaissance detachment. A number seemed to find it amusing. Several German women recorded how Soviet servicewomen watched and laughed when they were raped. But some women were deeply shaken by what they witnessed in Germany. Natalya Gesse, a close friend of the scientist Andrei Sakharov, had observed the Red Army in action in 1945 as a Soviet war correspondent. "The Russian soldiers were raping every German female from eight to eighty," she recounted later. "It was an army of rapists."

Drink of every variety, including dangerous chemicals seized from laboratories and workshops, was a major factor in the violence. It seems as if Soviet soldiers needed alcoholic courage to attack a woman. But then, all too often, they drank too much and, unable to complete the act, used the bottle instead with appalling effect. A number of victims were mutilated obscenely.

The subject of the Red Army's mass rapes in Germany has been so repressed in Russia that even today veterans refuse to acknowledge what really happened. The handful prepared to speak openly, however, are totally unrepentant. "They all lifted their skirts for us and lay on the bed," said the leader of one tank company. He even went on to boast that "two million of our children were born" in Germany.

The capacity of Soviet officers to convince themselves that most of the victims were either happy with their fate, or at least accepted that it was their turn to suffer after what the Wehrmacht had done in Russia, is striking. "Our fellows were so sex-starved," a Soviet major told a British journalist at the time, "that they often raped old women of sixty, seventy or even eighty - much to these grandmothers' surprise, if not downright delight."

One can only scratch at the surface of the psychological contradictions. When gang-raped women in Königsberg begged their attackers afterwards to put them out of their misery, the Red Army men appear to have felt insulted. "Russian soldiers do not

shoot women," they replied. "Only German soldiers do that." The Red Army had managed to convince itself that because it had assumed the moral mission to liberate Europe from fascism it could behave entirely as it liked, both personally and politically.

Domination and humiliation permeated most soldiers' treatment of women in East Prussia. The victims not only bore the brunt of revenge for Wehrmacht crimes, they also represented an atavistic target as old as war itself. Rape is the act of a conqueror, the feminist historian Susan Brownmiller observed, aimed at the "bodies of the defeated enemy's women" to emphasise his victory. Yet after the initial fury of January 1945 dissipated, the sadism became less marked. By the time the Red Army reached Berlin three months later, its soldiers tended to regard German women more as a casual right of conquest. The sense of domination certainly continued, but this was perhaps partly an indirect product of the humiliations which they themselves had suffered at the hands of their commanders and the Soviet authorities as a whole.

A number of other forces or influences were at work. Sexual freedom had been a subject for lively debate within Communist party circles during the 1920s, but during the following decade, Stalin ensured that Soviet society depicted itself as virtually asexual. This had nothing to do with genuine puritanism: it was because love and sex did not fit in with dogma designed to "deindividualise" the individual. Human urges and emotions had to be suppressed. Freud's work was banned, divorce and adultery were matters for strong party disapproval. Criminal sanctions against homosexuality were reintroduced. The new doctrine extended even to the complete suppression of sex education. In graphic art, the clothed outline of a woman's breasts was regarded as dangerously erotic. They had to be disguised under boiler suits. The regime clearly wanted any form of desire to be converted into love for the party and above all for Comrade Stalin.

Most ill-educated Red Army soldiers suffered from sexual ignorance and utterly unenlightened attitudes towards women. So the Soviet state's attempts to suppress the libido of its people created what one Russian writer described as a sort of "barracks eroticism" which was far more primitive and violent than "the most sordid foreign pornography". All this was combined with the dehumanising influence of modern propaganda and the atavistic, warring impulses of men marked by fear and suffering.

The novelist Vasily Grossman, a war correspondent attached to the invading Red Army, soon discovered that rape victims were not just Germans. Polish women also suffered. So did young Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian women who had been sent back to Germany by the Wehrmacht for slave labour. "Liberated Soviet girls quite often complain that our soldiers rape them," he noted. "One girl said to me in tears: 'He was an old man, older than my father'."

The rape of Soviet women and girls seriously undermines Russian attempts to justify Red Army behaviour on the grounds of revenge for German brutality in the Soviet Union. On March 29 1945 the central committee of the Komsomol (the youth organisation of the Soviet Union) informed Stalin's associate Malenkov of a report from the 1st Ukrainian Front. "On the night of 24 February," General Tsygankov recorded in the first of many examples, "a group of 35 provisional lieutenants on a course and their battalion commander entered the women's dormitory in the village of Grutenberg and raped them."

In Berlin, many women were simply not prepared for the shock of Russian revenge, however much horror propaganda they had heard from Goebbels. Many reassured themselves that, although the danger must be great out in the countryside, mass rapes could hardly take place in the city in front of everybody.

In Dahlem, Soviet officers visited Sister Kunigunde, the mother superior of Haus Dahlem, a maternity clinic and orphanage. The officers and their men behaved impeccably. In fact, the officers even warned Sister Kunigunde about the second-line troops following on behind. Their prediction proved entirely accurate. Nuns, young girls, old women, pregnant women and mothers who had just given birth were all raped without pity.

Yet within a couple of days, a pattern emerged of soldiers flashing torches in the faces of women huddled in the bunkers to choose their victims. This process of selection, as opposed to the indiscriminate violence shown earlier, indicates a definite change. By this stage Soviet soldiers started to treat German women more as sexual spoils of war than as substitutes for the Wehrmacht on which to vent their rage.

Rape has often been defined by writers on the subject as an act of violence which has little to do with sex. But that is a definition from the victim's perspective. To understand the crime, one needs to see things from the perpetrator's point of view, especially in the later stages when unaggravated rape had

succeeded the extreme onslaught of January and February.

Many women found themselves forced to "concede" to one soldier in the hope that he would protect them from others. Magda Wieland, a 24-year-old actress, was dragged from a cupboard in her apartment just off the Kurfürstendamm. A very young soldier from central Asia hauled her out. He was so excited at the prospect of a beautiful young blonde that he ejaculated prematurely. By sign language, she offered herself to him as a girlfriend if he would protect her from other Russian soldiers, but he went off to boast to his comrades and another soldier raped her. Ellen Goetz, a Jewish friend of Magda's, was also raped. When other Germans tried to explain to the Russians that she was Jewish and had been persecuted, they received the retort: "Frau ist Frau."

Women soon learned to disappear during the "hunting hours" of the evening. Young daughters were hidden in storage lofts for days on end. Mothers emerged into the street to fetch water only in the early morning when Soviet soldiers were sleeping off the alcohol from the night before. Sometimes the greatest danger came from one mother giving away the hiding place of other girls in a desperate bid to save her own daughter. Older Berliners still remember the screams every night. It was impossible not to hear them because all the windows had been blown in.

Estimates of rape victims from the city's two main hospitals ranged from 95,000 to 130,000. One doctor deduced that out of approximately 100,000 women raped in the city, some 10,000 died as a result, mostly from suicide. The death rate was thought to have been much higher among the 1.4 million estimated victims in East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia. Altogether at least two million German women are thought to have been raped, and a substantial minority, if not a majority, appear to have suffered multiple rape.

If anyone attempted to defend a woman against a Soviet attacker it was either a father trying to defend a daughter or a young son trying to protect his mother. "The 13-year old Dieter Sahl," neighbours wrote in a letter shortly after the event, "threw himself with flailing fists at a Russian who was raping his mother in front of him. He did not succeed in anything except getting himself shot."

After the second stage of women offering themselves to one soldier to save themselves from others, came the post-battle need to survive starvation. Susan Brownmiller noted "the murky

line that divides wartime rape from wartime prostitution". Soon after the surrender in Berlin, Ursula von Kardorff found all sorts of women prostituting themselves for food or the alternative currency of cigarettes. Helke Sander, a German filmmaker who researched the subject in great detail, wrote of "the grey area of direct force, blackmail, calculation and real affection".

The fourth stage was a strange form of cohabitation in which Red Army officers settled in with German "occupation wives". The Soviet authorities were appalled and enraged when a number of Red Army officers, intent on staying with their German lovers, deserted when it was time to return to the Motherland.

Even if the feminist definition of rape purely as an act of violence proves to be simplistic, there is no justification for male complacency. If anything, the events of 1945 reveal how thin the veneer of civilisation can be when there is little fear of retribution. It also suggests a much darker side to male sexuality than we might care to admit.

**Note : The "*Tomb of the Unknown Soviet soldier*" in Berlin. This stands as a monument to the victimised women of Berlin.**

Outside she could hear the Russian soldiers, their voices slurred with drink, shouting for women. "Frau komm, frau komm," ("come here woman, come here woman") they bellowed in heavily Russian-accented German. It was a cry that thousands of women would learn to dread.

Suddenly some of the soldiers stumbled into the kitchen and a handful of old women refugees, fearful they would be attacked, dragged Gabriele out, thrusting her towards the Russians. She was immediately raped by every soldier. It was not the first time. The day before she had been caught by two Russians, hurled to the ground and violated.

So it went on for two weeks until she was taken to another farm and hidden from the sex-crazed soldiers. Now aged 80 Gabriele still remembers those terrible days and in particular how she was betrayed by the old women. "I despised those women, I still do," she said. "I have no tears but I feel hatred rising up inside me."

It is a boiling hatred that has lasted 65 years since the

Allies, including fierce Soviet forces, smashed their way across Europe to victory over Nazism. But as they advanced the Russians unleashed an orgy of sickening self-gratification as soldiers of the Red Army embarked on a lengthy campaign of rape, looting, murder and depravity.

Now Gabriele Koepf has written a book of searing honesty called *Why Did I Have To Be A Girl*, about the rapes carried out by the Red Army as it advanced towards Berlin. The book is unprecedented, being the first time a German woman has broken the lengthy taboo by writing about being one of the estimated two million victims of rampaging Soviet soldiers.

What sickened many at the time was that the soldiers were actively encouraged to rape German women by Russian dictator Josef Stalin. When one of his commanders protested Stalin exploded: "Can't you understand it if a soldier, who has crossed thousands of kilometres through blood and fire and death, has fun with some woman or takes a trifle?" To Stalin German women were merely the "spoils of war".

Gabriele was such a "spoil" for those 14 days when she was relentlessly and repeatedly raped by Russian soldiers, so much so that she cannot even to this day, say the very word. "My life has been some 29,200 days," she said. "But really it was destroyed in those 14 days of the ... I cannot say the word. I was innocent when it happened.

"There is a debate going on in Germany at the moment about the so-called expellees from land that once belonged to Germany, the loss of the homeland, etc, but that is nothing to me. I live with what happened to me all the time. There are days I cannot eat because of it, even now all these years later.

"Writing of what happened hasn't made anything easier for me but I had to do it. Who else would?" Gabriele studiously avoids detail and writes in the book of "the place of the terror", the "gates of hell" and calls the rapists "brutes and scoundrels". She avoids the word "rape" and adds with some fear in her eyes: "I cannot even say that word."

The book is a searing scrutiny of the agony that to this very day the Russian establishment continues to deny. Gabriele was one of an estimated two million German girls and women, some as young as six and as old as 80, who were raped by Soviet soldiers.

Their justification was that Hitler's invasion of Russia had left 26million dead and revenge would be sweet. Much of the rape and murder by the Russians took place as they approached Berlin. They fought with superhuman toughness to reach the Nazi capital, smashing their way to the city's edges. Hitler, cowering in his bunker like a terrified rat, would soon take the coward's exit, shooting himself through the temple.

Berliners had prayed that the Western Allies would reach their city before the Russians but General Eisenhower, the overall commander-in-chief, had decided the Russians should reach Berlin first on account of their own huge losses.

But as early as 1944 terrible reports were seeping through to Berlin from the moment the thrusting Red Army entered East Prussia and Silesia.

By the time the Soviet troops entered Berlin there was terror on the streets. The rapes usually started in the evenings after the soldiers had drunk large amounts of vodka. That familiar cry of "frau komm" soon echoed around the rubble-strewn streets.

Any woman found, whatever her age, was savagely thrown to the ground and brutally attacked. Filthy drunken soldiers hunted in packs, some women were raped by as many as 20 men.

One of the worst mistakes of the defeated German authorities had been their failure to destroy Berlin's considerable stocks of alcohol as the Red Army drew nearer. Erroneously, they thought a drunken enemy could not fight. But the Russians fought even harder, as well as having their desires inflamed.

Nor did the Soviet women soldiers do anything to stop their male comrades. One Berlin woman was being raped in succession by three men when three others arrived, one of them a woman. When the German woman appealed to her to intervene she merely laughed out loud. There were tragic attempts to resist the soldiers. A 13-year-old boy

started flailing at a soldier who was raping his mother in front of him.

When the Russian finished he turned to the boy and shot him. Although usually well-behaved, Soviet officers had little control over their men. When one girl was hauled out into the street and raped it was explained by a German neighbour that she was Jewish and had been persecuted by the Nazis. The officer's

reply was a shrug of the shoulders and the terse observation that "Frau ist frau" ("a woman is a woman").

AS night closed in the screams of women being attacked could be heard all over the city. it is estimated that up to 10,000 of the women who were raped died, mostly from suicide. Some could never talk about it and for the young such as Gabriele, it would prove a lifelong horror.

For many men returning home learning that their wives had been raped was traumatic. The historian Antony Beevor, in his book Berlin: The Downfall, 1945, recounts the reaction of one man on learning of the experiences which the inhabitants of one building had survived.

"You turned into shameless bitches, every one of you," he yelled.

"I can't bear to listen to these stories. You've lost all your standards!" Many marriages broke up as returning husbands considered their wives little more than damaged property.

Eventually communist leaders became deeply embarrassed by the reports of Soviet behaviour and made complaints to the Kremlin which admitted nothing and even claimed it was all Western propaganda designed to "damage the high reputation of the Red Army". But discipline was suddenly tightened and some rapists were executed.

**The Red Army war memorial in Berlin is dominated by a huge figure of a Russian soldier. There is an expression of heroic triumph on his sculptured face. in one hand he holds a child, while the other wields a sword that smashes a swastika.**

But to German women of the wartime generation, including Gabriele Koepp, there is another name for that memorial: "The tomb of the unknown rapist."

#### **RAPE OF GERMAN WOMEN BY THE POLISH AT THE END AND AFTER THE WAR**

(From Savage Continent by Keith Lowe. p. 236)

The rape of German women by the Polish began as the Red Army began its move towards Berlin. Polish men targeted German women

fleeing from East Prussia, Pomerania and territory which had began occupied by the Nazis and which the 'Big Three' had decided was to be given to Poland. Many German victims gave their stories of rape to the German Ministry for Expellees, Refugees and war Victims in the later 1940s and 1950s.

Many of the victims were women who were captured while they were fleeing and made to work in Polish farms and factories where the vulnerable women were raped by the Polish soldiers and foremen.

An eye witness account by a victim, Anna Kientoff, tells of fleeing German women accosted by hordes of Polish soldiers who selected young girls and raped them. Their mothers wailed in agony as their young daughters were dragged away for the hellish experience. The Red Army soldiers stood watching and shrugged their shoulders when the German women appealed to them to save them from the Polish soldiers and said the Polish were the masters here. They could do nothing.

Many German women were raped in Czechoslovakia during the expulsion of Germans after the war was over.

#### Reference

Freiwild: Das Schicksal deutscher Frauen 1945

Die Frauen in den deutschen Ostgebieten und in Berlin waren 1945, als die Rote Armee zum Endsieg über Hitlers Drittes Reich antrat, Freiwild der russischen Soldaten. Hunderttausende wurden in sowjetische Arbeitslager verschleppt. Mehr als hunderttausend Frauen und Mädchen wurden allein in Berlin vergewaltigt, insgesamt waren es annähernd zwei Millionen. Viele starben an den ihnen zugefügten Qualen, andere begingen Selbstmord. Die, die überlebten, gingen durch die Hölle, waren traumatisiert und stigmatisiert. Sie wurden gemieden, von ihren Männern verlassen, ihre Kinder galten als »Russenbälger«. Das Schicksal dieser Frauen wurde zu einem der großen Tabus der deutschen Nachkriegsgesellschaft - in Ost und West. Erst der 2003 erschienene Bestseller »Eine Frau in Berlin«, der ergreifende Erlebnisbericht einer Berliner Journalistin aus dem Jahre 1945, brachte es an die Öffentlichkeit. Anlässlich der Verfilmung dieses Buches - mit Nina Hoss in der Hauptrolle - bereitet die TV-Journalistin Ingeborg Jacobs für das ZDF eine Dokumentation zum Thema vor. Das begleitende Buch stellt die Ergebnisse ihrer

umfangreichen Recherchen vor. Es stützt sich maßgeblich auf die zahlreichen Interviews, die die Autorin mit betroffenen Frauen geführt hat und die sie mit Sensibilität und erzählerischer Kraft in das zeitgeschichtliche Umfeld einbettet. So entsteht erstmals ein Gesamtbild jenes schrecklichen Geschehens, das die Deutschen angesichts der Last ihrer Kriegsschuld tief verdrängt haben.

One of the worst crimes in the Second World War included the mass rape of German women and girls by Soviet soldiers in 1944/45. Many of these women and girls were not once but sexually abused many times. Neither children nor old women were spared. Reliable estimates suggest that around two million women and girls were victims of those rapes. The enormity of these crimes and the human suffering caused by it and experienced for decades, has not received adequate public attention. Only in recent times, these events are mentioned frequently, but almost always as part of a description of flight, expulsion and forced labor. In contrast, the present book deals exclusively with the rape and, among other things, the questions of how and why it has come to these excesses, why resistance was futile, and what happened to the children who were victims or "only" witness of sexual violence were .

Zu den schlimmsten Verbrechen im Zweiten Weltkrieg gehören die Massenvergewaltigungen deutscher Frauen und Mädchen durch sowjetische Soldaten 1944/45. Viele dieser Frauen und Mädchen wurden nicht ein Mal, sondern viele Male sexuell mißbraucht. Weder Kinder noch Greisinnen blieben verschont. Verlässlichen Schätzungen zufolge wurden rund zwei Millionen Frauen und Mädchen Opfer jener Vergewaltigungen. Das ungeheure Ausmaß dieser Verbrechen und der durch sie verursachten menschlichen Leiden hat jahrzehntelang keine angemessene öffentliche Aufmerksamkeit erfahren. Erst in neuerer Zeit werden diese Ereignisse häufiger erwähnt, allerdings fast immer nur als Teil einer Schilderung von Flucht, Vertreibung und Zwangsarbeit. Demgegenüber befasst sich das vorliegende Buch ausschließlich mit den Vergewaltigungen und hier unter anderem mit den Fragen, wie und warum es zu diesen Exzessen gekommen ist, warum Widerstand zwecklos war und was mit den Kindern geschah, die Opfer oder „nur“ Zeuge der sexuellen Gewalttaten waren. Erlebnisberichte von Opfern und Tätern sind eine wesentliche, weil authentische Grundlage dieser Darstellung.

Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones: From the Ancient World to the Era  
of Human Rights

By  
ELIZABETH HEINEMAN

*"[Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones] makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the relationship between sexual violence and periods of conflict."*

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Brutality and Desire: War and Sexuality in Europe's Twentieth Century

By  
DAGMAR HERZOG

**Tracing sexual violence in Europe's twentieth century from the Armenian genocide to Auschwitz and Algeria to Bosnia, this path breaking volume expands military history to include the realm of sexuality. Examining both stories of consensual romance and of intimate brutality, it also contributes significant new insights to the history of sexuality.**

***Rape, combined the desire to avenge with the impulse to destroy, to smash German luxuries and waste the Fascists' wealth. It punished women and it reinforced the fragile manliness of the perpetrators.*** It also underscored the emotional ties between gangs of the men, and it was as a gang, not individuals, that the men usually acted, drawing an

energy and anonymity from the momentum of the group. It was the collective triumph of these males, certainly, that rape purported to celebrate.

Stalin's objective was to gain control of as much of Europe as he possibly could get away with, and he succeeded magnificently. All Churchill and Roosevelt wanted to do was defeat Hitler. If they could get the Russians to do as much of this dirty work as possible, so much the better. **If they had to pay Stalin off in territory, ethnic cleansing, rape, forced conceptions, murder, and pillage; well, so be it, as long as they felt their hands were, more or less, clean. It seems incomprehensible that Roosevelt and Churchill should have had so little concern for the final outcome and the future of Europe.**

From **Renata Reinhart** - In the Course of my Life

*(It's an inside look at what Russia did to millions of women and children in their destructive acquisition of eastern German provinces, one of which the author grew up in, East Prussia. While the book is listed as 'historical fiction,' it's a compelling read that seems very real).*

The Red Army's orgy of rape in the dying days of Nazi Germany was conducted on a much greater scale than previously suspected, according to a new book by the military historian Anthony Beevor.

Beevor, the author of the best-selling Stalingrad, says advancing Soviet troops raped large numbers of Russian and Polish women held in concentration camps, as well as millions of Germans.

The extent of the Red Army's indiscipline and depravity emerged as the author studied Soviet archives for his forthcoming book Berlin, to be published in April by Viking.

Beevor - who was educated at Sandhurst and served in the 11th Hussars (Prince Albert's Own), an elite cavalry regiment - says details of the Soviet soldiers' behaviour have forced him to revise his view of human nature.

"Having always in the past slightly pooh-poohed the idea that most men are potential rapists, I had to come to the conclusion that if there is a lack of army discipline, most men with a weapon, dehumanised by living through two or three years of war,

do become potential rapists," he told The Bookseller.

### **A weapon of warfare 24 Jan 2002**

He appears to echo the American feminist Marilyn French's notorious claim that "in their relations with women, all men are rapists, and that's all they are".

Any such resemblance is, however, superficial. Beevor is careful to qualify any suggestion that what happened from 1944 onwards is in any way typical of male behaviour in peacetime. But he admits that he was "shaken to the core" to discover that Russian and Polish women and girls liberated from concentration camps were also violated.

"That completely undermined the notion that the soldiers were using rape as a form of revenge against the Germans," he said.

"By the time the Russians reached Berlin, soldiers were regarding women almost as carnal booty; they felt because they were liberating Europe they could behave as they pleased. That is very frightening, because one starts to realise that civilisation is terribly superficial and the facade can be stripped away in a very short time."

Beevor's high reputation as a historian ensures that his claims will be taken seriously. Stalingrad was widely praised and awarded the prestigious Samuel Johnson Prize, the Wolfson Prize for History and the Hawthornden Prize.

His account of the siege of Berlin, however, promises to be more controversial. "In many ways the fate of the women and the girls in Berlin is far worse than that of the soldiers starving and suffering in Stalingrad."

To understand why the rape of Germany was so uniquely terrible, the context is essential. Operation Barbarossa, the Nazi invasion of Russia in 1941, began the most genocidal conflict in history. Perhaps 30 million inhabitants of the Soviet Union are now thought to have died during the war, including more than three million who were deliberately starved in German PoW camps.

The Germans, having shown no quarter, could expect none in return. Their casualties were also on a vast scale. In the Battle of Berlin alone more than a million German soldiers were killed or died later in captivity, plus at least 100,000 civilians. The Soviet Union lost more than 300,000 men.

Against this horrific background, Stalin and his commanders condoned or even justified rape, not only against Germans but also their allies in Hungary, Romania and Croatia. When the Yugoslav Communist Milovan Djilas protested to Stalin, the dictator exploded: "Can't he understand it if a soldier who has crossed thousands of kilometres through blood and fire and death has fun with a woman or takes some trifle?"

And when German Communists warned him that the rapes were turning the population against them, Stalin fumed: "I will not allow anyone to drag the reputation of the Red Army in the mud." The rapes had begun as soon as the Red Army entered East Prussia and Silesia in 1944. In many towns and villages every female, aged from 10 to 80, was raped. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the Nobel laureate who was then a young officer, described the horror in his narrative poem Prussian Nights: "The little daughter's on the mattress, / Dead. How many have been on it / A platoon, a company perhaps?"

But Solzhenitsyn was rare: most of his comrades regarded rape as legitimate. As the offensive struck deep into Germany, the orders of Marshal Zhukov, their commander, stated: "Woe to the land of the murderers. We will get a terrible revenge for everything."

By the time the Red Army reached Berlin its reputation, reinforced by Nazi propaganda, had already terrified the population, many of whom fled. Though the hopeless struggle came to an end in May 1945, the ordeal of German women did not.

How many German women were raped? One can only guess, but a high proportion of at least 15 million women who either lived in the Soviet Union zone or were expelled from the eastern provinces. The scale of rape is suggested by the fact that about two million women had illegal abortions every year between 1945 and 1948.

It was not until the winter of 1946-47 that the Soviet authorities, concerned by the spread of disease, imposed serious penalties on their forces in East Germany for fraternising with the enemy.

Soviet soldiers saw rape, often carried out in front of a woman's husband and family, as an appropriate way of humiliating the Germans, who had treated Slavs as an inferior race with whom sexual relations were discouraged. Russia's patriarchal society

and the habit of binge-drinking were also factors, but more important was resentment at the discovery of Germany's comparative wealth.

The fact, highlighted by Beevor, that Soviet troops raped not only Germans but also their victims, recently liberated from concentration camps, suggests that the sexual violence was often indiscriminate, although far fewer Russian or Polish women were raped when their areas were liberated compared to the conquered Germans.

Jews, however, were not necessarily regarded by Soviet troops as fellow victims of the Nazis. The Soviet commissars had commandeered German concentration camps in order to incarcerate their own political prisoners, who included "class enemies" as well as Nazi officials, and their attitude towards the previous inmates was, to say the least, unsentimental.

As for the millions of Russian prisoners or slave workers who survived the Nazis: those who were not executed as traitors or sent to the Gulag could count themselves lucky. The women among them were probably treated no better than the Germans, perhaps worse.

The rape of Germany left a bitter legacy. It contributed to the unpopularity of the East German communist regime and its consequent reliance on the Stasi secret police. The victims themselves were permanently traumatised: women of the wartime generation still refer to the Red Army war memorial in Berlin as "the Tomb of the Unknown Rapist".

*This is from the secretly recorded tapes of the conversation between captured German soldiers in a Britain prison.*

**In one section a passage attributed to Reibold reads: 'In the first officers' prison camp where I was being kept here, there was a really stupid guy from Frankfurt , a young lieutenant, a young upstart. 'And he said: 'Oh, we caught this female spy who had been running around in the neighborhood.**

**'First we hit her in the t\*\*s with a stick and then we beat her rear end with a bare bayonet. Then we f\*\*\*\*\* her, and then we threw her outside and shot at her. When she was lying there on her back, we threw grenades at her. 'Every time one of them landed near her body, she screamed.'**

**'And just think, there were eight German officers sitting at that table with me, and they all broke out laughing.'**

..

Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Eichwede and Prof. Jan Phillip Reemtsma citing Russian historian and German sources, say that more than a million children were conceived in Russia, most because of rape. Based on biological realities it can be said statistically that about one in ten sexual intercourse resulted in a pregnancy. **Consequently, it must be assumed that approximately 10 million rapes were committed by German soldiers alone on Russian soil.**

In Norway, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands and France, some 200,000 children were born because of the presence of German soldiers during occupation.

Due to the high incidence of rape, homosexuality and disease among soldiers, on September 9, 1939 the Minister of the Interior Wilhelm Frick decreed the establishment of brothels in the occupied territories.

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**Japanese** historian Oshiro Masayasu writes about the large scale rape by American soldiers in Okinawa in 1945. He reports the incident at a village in Motobu peninsula where GIs landed and found only women, children and old folks there. What followed was abominable. There was a hunt in broad daylight for Japanese women who were ravaged mercilessly.

There is no documentary evidence that mass rape was committed by Allied troops during the Pacific War. There are, however, numerous credible testimony accounts which allege that a large number of rapes were committed by US forces during the Battle of Okinawa in 1945.

Okinawan historian Oshiro Masayasu (former director of the Okinawa Prefectural Historical Archives) writes based on several years of research:

Soon after the U.S. marines landed, all the women of a village on Motobu Peninsula fell into the hands of American soldiers. At the time, there were only women, children and old people in the

village, as all the young men had been mobilized for the war. Soon after landing, the marines "mopped up" the entire village, but found no signs of Japanese forces. Taking advantage of the situation, they started "hunting for women" in broad daylight and those who were hiding in the village or nearby air raid shelters were dragged out one after another.

According to Toshiyuki Tanaka, 76 cases of rape or rape-murder were reported during the first five years of the American occupation of Okinawa. However, this is probably not the true figure, as most cases went unreported.

In 1998 the remains of three U.S. Marines stationed on Okinawa were discovered outside of a local village. Accounts from elderly Okinawans claim that the 3 marines had made frequent trips to the village to rape the women that lived there, but were ambushed and killed by dozens of villagers with the help of 2 armed Japanese soldiers who were hiding in the jungle, in a dark narrow mountain pass near a river on one of their return trips. "The Japanese soldiers shot at the marines from the bushes and several dozen villagers beat them to death with sticks and stones." According to the same article, one academic claims that "rape was so prevalent that most Okinawans over age 65 either know or have heard of a woman who was raped in the aftermath of the war."

**Source;**

Yuki Tanaka/Toshiyuki Tanaka, Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution During World War II, p. 110-111

***Women were also raped when they went to US camps to receive food hand-outs***

According to a survey conducted by a feminist group in Okinawa - Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence - US troops landed on Zamami Island, a small island west of the main island, and began raping women there in March 1945, shortly after they had landed. They abducted the women, carried them one by one to deserted coastal areas and gang-raped them. After being raped, the women were allowed to go. There is also a testimony that some Okinawan nurses and local women patients who had been admitted to the US Field Hospital were raped by US soldiers. **One of the victims, a young girl patient, was raped by a GI in front of her father who was in the tent attending to her.**

These victims had nowhere to report the crime even if they had

wished to do so, the Japanese police system of Okinawa having completely collapsed during the battle.

The rape of Okinawan women by American soldiers continued even after the war officially ended and there are many incidents in which **American soldiers took young girls from civilian houses at gunpoint. These girls would later return with their clothes torn off. Some were even killed, although the perpetrators were never caught.** As a result, villagers throughout Okinawa used a warning signal of banging on pots and pans to warn of approaching American troops. On hearing this, girls would hide until all was clear. **Some women were also raped when they went to US camps to receive food hand-outs.** During the first five years of the American occupation of Okinawa, 76 cases of murder or rape-murder were reported. This number was but the tip of the iceberg, as most cases went unreported.

Two rape cases were reported in Yokosuka on August 30, the day that the US marines landed there. At about 11:00 am, only a few hours after the landing began and three hours before General MacArthur stepped out of his plane at Atsugi airport, **two marines on an "inspection tour" entered a civilian house in Yokosuka, and raped a 36-year-old mother and her 17-year-old daughter at gunpoint.** About 6:00 pm that day, two other marines entered another home in Asahi-chd and found a housemaid at home alone. **While one of the marines was on watch at the door, the other made lewd gestures and tried to grab her. In fear she fled upstairs. The marines followed and raped her in turn in a small room upstairs.**

On August 31, a US Marine advance party landed at Tateyama in Chiba prefecture. Three days later the US occupation forces to be stationed in Chiba arrived there under the command of General A. Cunningham. On September 1, many small groups of marines from this advance party visited villages nearby and entered some public buildings and private houses, claiming that they were conducting "inspections." The following are some of the incidents that occurred at that time and were eventually reported to the Adjutant General's Office of the GHQ through the CLO:

*1 Around 12:30 am on September 1, three American soldiers intruded in to the house of Mr. B. I., [the details of the address], Awa district in Chiba*

prefecture. These intruders showed something like a ten yen bank note to the housewife N., 28 years old and claimed intimacy to her by making gestures while upon receiving her flat refusal they brought her to the inner room and raped her in succession.

2 At about 2:00 pm the same day another four American soldiers intruded into the house of Mr. A. T., [the details of the address], the same village. They threatened the wife, T. aged 30 as well as his mother and then chased the three to the next room and one of the Americans violated T. in the first place. But at that time another three American soldiers entered the same house. They withdrew from the house without attaining their intended purposes satisfactorily.

3 At the same hour on that day seven American soldiers while ransacking the village office in Nishiki village, resorted to indecent acts such as touching breasts of the girl clerks or rubbing their cheeks.

4 Another several Americans resorted to the same acts to the girl clerks in the post office located in the same village

#### **GANG RAPE BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS**

**About 6 o'clock, in the afternoon of September 1st, two American soldiers in a truck forced two Japanese to guide them around the Yokohama city.**

**When they came to Shojikiro, at Eirakucho, Naka-ku they forced Miss**

**K. Y., aged 24, a maidservant, to board the truck against her will and**

**absconded to the US Barracks in Nogeyama Park. There altogether 27 of**

**the American soldiers violated her in turn and rendered her unconscious,**

**though she later recovered her consciousness through the care of some other**

**American soldiers and was sent home on September 2nd.**

There were also 1,336 reported rapes during the first 10 days of the occupation of Kanagawa prefecture after the Japanese surrender.

**Source;** Schrijvers, Peter (2002). *The GI War Against Japan*. New York City: New York University Press. p. 212. ISBN 0814798160.

*For instance, rape--which is considered a way to sharpen aggressiveness of soldiers, steeling male bonding among warriors, and, moreover, "reflects a burning need to establish total dominance of the other" (p. 211)--was a general practice against Japanese women. "The estimate of one Okinawan historian for the entire three-month period of the campaign exceeds 10,000. A figure that does not seem unlikely when one realizes that during the first 10 days of the occupation of Japan there were 1,336 reported cases of rape of Japanese women by American soldiers in Kanagawa prefecture alone" (p. 212).*

Many women on Okinawa came to wish the Americans had just killed them and dumped them into a hole. Instead, the enemy brutally violated them, showing not even the least mercy. Marching south, men of the 4th Marines passed a group of some 10 American soldiers bunched together in a tight circle next to the road. They were "quite animated," noted a corporal who assumed they were playing a game of craps. "Then as we passed them," said the shocked marine, "I could see they were taking turns raping an oriental woman. I was furious, but our outfit kept marching by as though nothing unusual was going on."<sup>19</sup>

Wartime rape serves to sharpen the aggressiveness of soldiers. It also helps to steel the male bonds between warriors, hence the frequency of gang rapes in war. But rape just as much reflects a burning need to establish total dominance of the other. That is why enemy women are quite commonly sexually abused in front of fathers, husbands, or brothers with the express purpose of increasing also the humiliation of the male foe. That drive for indisputable control, to be accomplished in part through demeaning, was undoubtedly what moved US marines, for example, to rape almost all women of one of the villages on Motobu Peninsula.<sup>20</sup>

Remarkably, to be of Oriental appearance was sufficient reason for women on Okinawa to run the risk of rape. When, for example, Korean 'comfort women,' brought to the island by Japanese forces before the battle, fell into American hands, some of them, too, were forced to succumb to GIs.<sup>21</sup>

#### **RAPE OF JAPANESE WOMEN IN MANCHURIA BY RUSSIAN SOLDIERS**

Many Japanese women in Manchuria were raped during and after World War II. Japanese women in Manchuria found life difficult after Soviet troops entered Manchuria near the end of the war. Many of those women were used as "dolls" -- sexual objects. There are many accounts of several Japanese women who were raped or almost raped. In one account, a young girl threw herself out a three-story window to avoid being raped by Soviet troops. Another account demonstrated how not only Soviet troops but also Chinese civilians tried to rape Japanese women. A Chinese man came to a woman's house and asked her to give him her two daughters because his daughters were raped by Japanese soldiers. The woman offered herself instead, but the man changed his mind. Japanese men offered some Japanese women as female Kamikaze troops to Soviet troops to protect their community and other Japanese women and children. Once women were raped, they were no longer part of their community and were often rejected by their husbands.

#### **RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE OF JAPANESE WOMEN IN THE POST WAR PERIOD**

Terese Svoboda, "U.S. Courts-Martial in Occupation Japan: Rape, Race, and Censorship," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol 21-1-09, May 23, 2009. "We too are an army of rapists," anonymous soldier, letter to the editor, *Time Magazine*, November 12, 1945.

**Immediately after the Japanese surrendered in 1945, the Japanese Ministry of the Interior made plans to protect Japanese women in its middle and upper classes from American troops.** Fear of an American army out of control led them to quickly establish the first "comfort women" stations for use by US troops. By the end

of 1945, the Japanese Ministry of Home Affairs had organized the Recreation Amusement Association (R.A.A.), a chain of houses of prostitution with 20,000 women who serviced occupation forces throughout Japan. (Many more women known as *panpan* turned to prostitution in the struggle to survive in the midst of the postwar devastation.) **Burritt Sabin of the Japan Times reported in 2002 that just days before the R.A.A. was to open, hundreds of American soldiers broke into two of their facilities and raped all the women.** The situation prompted MacArthur and Eichelberger, the two top military men of the U.S. occupation forces, to make "**rape by Marines**" their very first topic of discussion. Yuki Tanaka notes that **1300 rapes were reported in Kanagawa prefecture alone between August 30 and September 10, 1945,** indicative of the pervasiveness of the phenomenon in the early occupation.

Historian Takemae Eiji reports that  
. . . *US troops comported themselves like conquerors, especially in the early weeks and months of occupation. Misbehavior ranged from black-marketeering, petty theft, reckless driving and disorderly conduct to vandalism, assault arson, murder and rape. . . . In Yokohama, Chiba and elsewhere, soldiers and sailors broke the law with impunity, and incidents of robbery, rape and occasionally murder were widely reported in the press.*

**Two weeks into the occupation, the Japanese press began to report on rapes and looting. MacArthur responded by promptly censoring all media.** Monica Braw, whose research revealed that even mention of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and particularly the effects of the bomb on civilians, were censored, maintains that pervasive censorship continued throughout the occupation years. "It [censorship] covered all means of communications and set up rules that were so general as to cover everything. It did not specify subjects prohibited, did not state punishment for violations, although it was clear that there were such punishments, and prohibited all discussion even about the existence of the censorship itself."

Censorship was not limited to the Japanese press. MacArthur threw prominent American journalists such as Gordon Walker, editor of the Christian Science Monitor, and Frank Hawley of the New York Times out of Japan for disobeying his orders. Even internal military reports were censored.

Five months after the occupation began, one in four American soldiers had contracted VD. The supply of penicillin back in the U.S. was low. **When MacArthur responded by making both**

**prostitution and fraternization illegal, the number of reported rapes soared, showing that prostitution and the easy availability of women had suppressed incidents of rape.**

John Dower writes in his *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* that while the U.S./Japanese-sponsored brothels were open "the number of rapes and assaults on Japanese women were around 40 a day," but after they were closed, the number rose to 330 a day.

Yuki Tanaka records two major incidents of mass rape around the same time. **On April 4, fifty GIs broke into a hospital in Omori and raped 77 women, one a woman who had just given birth, killing the two-day-old baby by tossing it onto the floor. On April 11, forty U.S. soldiers cut off the phone lines of one of Nagoya's city blocks and entered a number of houses simultaneously, "raping many girls and woman between the ages of 10 and 55 years."**

If these incidents are in any sense indicative, how are we to understand the fact that reports in U.S. archives about rape in postwar Japan are sparse: General Eichelberger issued three documents during the first year of the Japanese occupation admonishing the troops about their behavior, citing looting, rape and robbery. General Eisenhower ordered a report about troop behavior on Japan and the Philippines in 1946. (The National Archives has the report's cover sheet, but not the report.) **Albert Hussey, one of the framers of the Japanese constitution, mentions the rise of "institutional rape."** Under the cover of screening for venereal diseases, young women getting home from work were arrested in the subway or in the streets, pressed to have relations and/or examined by Japanese doctors in the presence of soldiers. **Rape continued during the occupation** as indicated by the plea reported in the NY Times April 21, 1952, from a prominent woman leader, Ms. T. Uyemura, to Mrs. Ridgway, wife of MacArthur's replacement, General Ridgway, asking her husband to isolate the immoral US troops.

**Recorded courts-martial for rape during the occupation are few.** The Judge Advocate General's Board of Review for the year 1946, when the R.A.A. closed, shows only 6 courts-martial. The Return of General Prisoners from the 8th Army stockade in Tokyo, where all GI prisoners were incarcerated prior to being returned to the U.S., lists 6 soldiers sentenced for rape during spring 1946.<sup>26</sup> The Index to the Board of Review Opinions of the Branch Office of the JAG (1942-1949) shows only two courts-martial listed during the same period.

French researcher Bertrand Roehner has made available the texts of hundreds of directives from the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers to the Japanese government (called SCAPs, SCAPINS or SCAPINs) that reveal much more sexual violence occurred than has ever been acknowledged, a small window onto what went on behind MacArthur's wall of censorship.

For example, the SCAPIN of August 31, 1949 is illustrative of another tactic MacArthur used to suppress reports of rape and other crimes by occupying forces. **It shows that five Japanese were sentenced to hard labor "for spreading rumors derogatory to occupation forces" when American soldiers were accused of raping Japanese women.** Another instance of this policy is noted by Takamae Eiji:



**When US paratroopers landed in Sapporo, an orgy of looting, sexual violence and drunken brawling ensued. Gang rapes and other sexual atrocities were not infrequent. Victims of such attacks, shunned as outcasts, sometimes turned in desperation to prostitution; others took their life rather than bring shame to their families. Military courts arrested relatively few soldiers for these offenses and convicted even fewer, and restitution for the victims were rare.** Japanese attempts at self-defense were punished severely. In the sole instance of self-help that General Eichelberger records in his memoirs, when local residents formed a vigilante group and retaliated against off-duty GIs, Eighth Army ordered armoured vehicles in battle array into the streets and arrested the ringleaders, who received lengthy prison terms.

My uncle, Don Svoboda, unwittingly introduced me to this subject. He committed suicide in 2004, leaving behind audiotapes that spoke of the building of a gallows in Tokyo's 8th Army stockade where he served as an M.P. in 1946. In trying to discover whether an execution he had witnessed decades earlier had anything to do with his suicide, I interviewed many veterans who had served in the stockade. Five of them remembered "a colored boy" being executed for rape in May; none of them remembered his name; two thought there was more than one execution. No records from the 8th Army stockade report any executions, and neither Truman nor MacArthur signed any military execution papers during 1946, the year that the soldiers remember the hanging. In addition, no records speak of the use, or even the building of the very large gallows that all the vets remembered, including soldiers who were just passing through on their way to Korea in 1952, just before it was dismantled.

AMERICAN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPH JAPANESE WOMEN IN OCCUPIED JAPAN  
If court-martials for rape went under reported, perhaps so too did trials, prison sentences and executions for rape. In particular, keeping executions secret would be a logical extension of MacArthur's use of censorship. Did MacArthur order executions to send a message to the troops in order to bring rape under control but conceal it from the public and the press? The MPs assumed the execution(s) were approved. Did MacArthur sign the execution papers and then have them destroyed? Were the executions handled extra-judicially by one of MacArthur's subordinates? James Zobel, the MacArthur Memorial archivist, referred to MacArthur's righthand man, General Willoughby, who was head of Intelligence in Japan, as a "burner." An index at the National Archives contains a letter from a Mr. Leon Guess "concerning the number of Negro soldiers executed as a result of

courts-martial" dated July 7, 1946, about the time it would take for news of a May execution to get back to the States, but there's only the index notation, no letter, the only one missing in the file.

J. Robert Lilly, who has written extensively on executions of black soldiers during WWII, discovered that questioning the families of dead soldiers did not necessarily determine whether a soldier had been executed because sometimes the military reported deaths due to other causes. In trying to trace the executed men, I found that pursuing the records of soldiers who died in occupied Japan was also fruitless. No soldiers were buried in Japan, and those executed are not distinguished from those who died accidentally or from natural causes. In addition, many of the 202 Americans cremated in Japan are among those listed as unknown. An examination of chaplains' and physicians' records regarding executions also reveals no relevant material. Emailing and writing to the historian at the 8th Army Public Affairs office in Yongsan, Korea was met with silence. Files around the subject of executions during the occupation consulted at the National Archives sometimes contain lists of the contents but no contents, a situation confirmed by Roehner's experiences at the Archives in the US and in Japan.

Although Roehner maintains that a kind of "omerta" surrounds occupation records worldwide, there are other possible explanations for some of the omissions. The 1973 National Archives fire offers one possible explanation for the lack of documentation regarding soldiers' records--at least it is most often cited. The Bush Administration's funding cuts to the National Archives make it very difficult for archivists to process or even become familiar with the huge holdings. Many of the occupation files in the National Archives are filed either with WWII or Korean War papers--but sometimes at the beginning of administrative files marked 1950, which makes them difficult to locate.

According to my uncle, **most of the serious offenders in the 8th Army stockade were black.** Alice Kaplan writes in *The Interpreter*, a book that discusses the discrepancies in sentencing between black and white servicemen convicted of rape in the European theater, that **black troops who made up 8.5 percent of the armed forces during WWII were accused of committing 79 percent of all capital crimes.** Lilly reports that while 57% of the soldiers accused of sexual offenses in Europe were white, most of the convicted were black, some 66%. **"It is quite possible that the complaints against black soldiers were**

**those the army selected to record, thus indirectly creating an incomplete and inaccurate account,"** he writes. They were also more likely to be tried because of commander prejudice, many commanders being Southerners. Although white and black soldiers were convicted of rape in both theaters during the war, only black servicemen were executed for this crime. Racial prejudice at a time when lynching was frequent in civilian life in the south and the military remained segregated is censorship's "elephant in the room."

The US government, with Japanese collaboration, has suppressed important information about crime and punishment during the occupation: it has concealed the numbers of rapes and the identity of the perpetrators; it has concealed the prosecutions, arrests and executions for rape and other crimes. There is reason to believe that the information is not only politically charged in terms of the US-Japan relationship, but that it is racially charged. Specifically, the extreme punishment of blacks charged with rape—in several cases including execution—is a reminder of the Jim Crow justice of an earlier era.

*This is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented at The American Society for Legal History, Ottawa, November 2008.*

#### COMFORT WOMEN FOR AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN JAPAN

In the week following its surrender, and before occupation forces arrived, the Japanese government had discussed ways of dealing with the anticipated problem of sexual violence by occupation forces. On August 21, Prime Minister Prince Higashikuni Naruhiko called a special meeting of several of his ministers. The subject of discussion was the various demands put forward by the Allied forces regarding the actual procedures for ending the war. The details of these demands were brought back by Lieutenant-General Kawanabe Torashird, an envoy extraordinary, who had just returned to Tokyo that morning from a meeting with the military commanders of the Allied forces in Manila in the Philippines.

At this cabinet meeting, Prince Konoe Fumimaro, then Deputy Prime Minister, who had served as Prime Minister three times during the Asia-Pacific War, expressed grave concern about the possibility of "mass rape" of Japanese women by Allied troops. He suggested setting up a comfort women system to protect Japanese women and girls. The suggestion seemed to come

out of his anxiety over the possibility of "mass rape" such as that committed by Japanese troops against civilians in occupied territories during the war.

***Announcement to New Japanese Women.***

***We require the utmost co-operation of new Japanese women who participate in a great project to comfort the occupation forces, which is part of the national emergency establishment of the postwar management. Female workers, between 18 and 25 years old, are wanted. Accommodation, clothes and meals, all free.***

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THE IGNOMINY OF A DEFEATED JAPAN: POLICE ORGANISED BROTHELS FOR AMERICAN TROOPS

On August 18, 1945 the Police and Security Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs telegraphed the following instructions to the governors and police chiefs of all prefectures:

With regard to the comfort facilities in areas where the foreign troops are going to be stationed:

In the areas where foreign troops will be stationed, the establishment of comfort facilities are necessary as outlined in the following separate notation. As the handling of this matter requires circumspection, please take every possible precaution by paying attention particularly to the following items.

1 It is still beyond speculation where the foreign troops will be stationed

and when they will arrive. Therefore, do not cause public unrest by

forming a hasty conclusion that it is inevitable for those troops to advance to your prefecture.

2 Make preparation of such facilities now confidentially as their prompt establishment is required in the case of the troops' station, but **ensure**

**that the information not be revealed to the outside.**

3 In carrying out this plan, avoid arousing misunderstanding among local people by explaining to them that this scheme will be implemented for the purpose of protecting Japanese citizens.

The outline of the preparation for the establishment of comfort facilities for the foreign troops:

1 Allow the business for the foreign troops within limited quarters, regardless of existing regulations of control.

2 The above-mentioned limited quarters should be determined by the [prefectural] police chief, and prohibit Japanese subjects from using the facilities.

3 The police chief should actively give guidance in management of the following facilities and promote their rapid expansion.

- **Sexual** and **comfort** **facilities**
- Eating and drinking facilities
- Recreation centres

4 **Recruit the women required for the business from geisha, licensed and unlicensed prostitutes, waitresses, barmaids, habitual illicit prostitutes and the like.**

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*Long after night fall, GIs heard the sound of an approaching truck. When it was within hailing distance, one of the sentries yelled "Halt!" The truck stopped, and from it emerged a Japanese man, with a flock of young women. Warily, they walked towards the waiting GIs. When they came close, the man stopped, bowed respectfully, swept the ground behind him with a wide, generous gesture, and said: "Compliments of the Recreation and Amusement Association!"*  
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Comfort women were subject to numerous instances of sexual violence. For example, on the evening of September 4, three Australian soldiers visited a comfort station at Higashiyama in Kyoto. They were apparently former POWs who had been released from a POW camp somewhere in Japan and were staying at a hotel in Kyoto, waiting to be repatriated. After they were entertained at this station, they insisted on being accompanied by three comfort women to their hotel, where their fellow Australian soldiers were staying. The manager of the station refused the request. However, **they forcibly took the women away, shouting at the manager that "Japan lost the war and your police have no power at all!"** At the hotel, the women were confined to one room and gang-raped by seven drunken former POWs. In the following morning these women were sent back to the comfort station. The Australian men apparently kept the women's underwear kimonos.

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Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation By Toshiyuki Tanaka  
RAPE BY JAPANESE SOLDIERS (AND LATER OCCUPYING AMERICAN SOLDIERS)

*Japan's Comfort Women tells the harrowing story of the "comfort women" who were forced to enter prostitution to serve the Japanese Imperial army, often living in appalling conditions of sexual slavery. Using a wide range of primary sources, the author for the first time links military controlled prostitution with enforced prostitution. He uncovers new and controversial information about **the role of the US' occupation forces in military controlled prostitution**, as well as the subsequent "cover-up" of the existence of such a policy. This groundbreaking book asks why US occupation forces did little to help the women, and argues that **military authorities organised prostitution to prevent the widespread incidence of GI rape of Japanese women**, and to control the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.*

According to popular media, the image of an American soldier during WW2 is that of a gentleman compared to the brutish, rough Red Army soldier. He did not take advantage of hapless women in

Europe, but seduced him with chocolates and other gifts (Especially the starving German women). But a book by an American women scholar explodes the myth. In her book **Mary Louise Roberts**, author of "What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II France" researched the subject and came up with startling revelations.

Here are some gems....

With the landing on Omaha Beach, "a veritable tsunami of male lust" washed over France

After their victory, the soldiers felt it was time for a reward. And when they enjoyed themselves with French women, they were not only validating their own masculinity, but also, in a metaphorical sense, the new status of the United States as a superpower. The liberation of France was sold to the American public as a love affair between US soldiers and grateful French women.

On the other hand, following their defeat by the Germans, many French perceived the Americans' uninhibited activities in their own country as yet another humiliation. Although the French were officially among the victorious powers, the Americans were now in charge.

The subject of sex played a central role in the relationship between the French and their liberators. Prostitution was the source of constant strife between US military officials and local authorities.

Some of the most dramatic reports came from the port city of Le Havre, which was overrun by soldiers headed home in the summer of 1945. In a letter to a Colonel Weed, the US regional commander, then Mayor Pierre Voisin complained that **his citizens couldn't even go for a walk in the park or visit the cemetery without encountering GIs having sex in public with prostitutes.**

"Scenes contrary to decency" were unfolding in his city day and night, Voisin wrote. It was "not only scandalous but intolerable" that "youthful eyes are exposed to such public spectacles." The mayor suggested that the Americans set up a brothel outside the city so that the sexual activity would be discrete and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases could be combated by medical personnel.

But the Americans could not operate brothels because they feared that stories about the soldiers' promiscuity would then make their way back to their wives at home. Besides, writes Roberts, many American military officials did not take the complaints seriously owing to their belief that it was normal for the French to have sex in public.

But the citizens of Le Havre wrote letters of protest to their mayor, and not just regarding prostitution. We are **"attacked, robbed, run over both on the street and in our houses,"** wrote one citizen in October 1945. **"This is a regime of terror, imposed by bandits in uniform."**

A café owner from Le Havre expressed the deep French disillusionment over the Americans' behavior when he said: **"We expected friends who would not make us ashamed of our defeat. Instead, there came incomprehension, arrogance, incredibly bad manners and the swagger of conquerors."**

Sexuality, prostitution and rape were all methods used by Americans to "assert their power on the French."

The average GI 'had no emotional attachment to the French people or the cause of their freedom'.

Normandy women launched a wave of rape accusations against American soldiers, threatening to destroy the erotic fantasy at the heart of the operation. The spectre of rape transformed the GI from rescuer-warrior to violent intruder.

With the raping and the bombing, it was therefore understandable why some French wondered whether they really had been 'liberated' after all.

'France for the Americans – as well as the Germans – is Paris and women,' observed another Frenchman, noting that there was little difference between the average GI and average Boche.

French women who worked as prostitutes even looked back on their German clients with something approaching affection. GIs, it seemed, wanted more than just sex.

'You had to keep an eye on your purse with those bastards,' one woman recalled. **'It's sad to say, but I missed my Fritzes, who were gentler with women.'** I was not the only one to say it; all

the women thought the same as me, only they did not always say it.'

**Rumours abounded of particularly horrific stories, including that of a girl who had been hacked to death and then had her corpse violated.**

Of the mere 152 American soldiers who were tried for rape, 139 of the defendants were 'colored'.

Courts martial were often little more than kangaroo courts, with men sent to the gibbet convicted on the flimsiest of evidence, and tried by officers with little or no legal training.

In addition, another unpalatable truth is that many French women were as racist as the American officers.

Although we like to think of the men who freed Europe as members of the 'greatest generation', and that the Allies had fought a 'good war', the true story is a lot more complicated and disturbing.

As they trained for the military operation in the UK, the GIs were motivated by lurid stories of how French women had few morals and would be swift to show their appreciation.

GI promiscuity took place in parks, cemeteries, streets and abandoned buildings in cities. Sexual relations became unrestricted and public; sexual intercourse was performed in daylight before the eyes of civilians, including children.

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According to **J. Robert Lilly** the writer of Taken by Force

**Estimate of the number of rapes by U.S. soldiers during the liberation of France?**

In the archives of the American military justice, the number of rapes reported by the U.S. military is 181 for France (121 in England, 552 in Germany), and 116 U.S. soldiers were tried for rape in France. But rape is one of the most under-represented in the archives crimes: the number of rapes reported are estimated at 5%. I conclude that the number of rapes in France committed by American soldiers was about 3,500, against 2,500 in the UK

and 11,000 in Germany. Rape in Germany represent two thirds of these estimates, but no American soldier was sentenced to death. In the case of England and France, it is therefore of sexual crimes in times of war, whose authors are considered criminals, while in Germany, these acts were considered "war rape "where the circumstances and the nationality of the victims make them somehow" acceptable. "

### **The profile of the American soldier rapist?**

This is not a combat soldier, but mostly supply troops, and the act went on behind the lines, often at night. In 85% of cases, they were not officers and black soldiers. At over 60%, it was gang rape. Of the 116 soldiers tried, 21 were executed in France (publicly hanged) and 67 sentenced to life imprisonment, a sentence made in the United States.

### **A Case**

The first rape which led to a trial in France: June 14, 1944, 4 km southeast of Sainte-Mère-Eglise, Miss S., Polish refugee was raped 300 meters from her home in a field where she would milk the cows, four "colored soldiers" who had previously helped to push a cart. Records indicate that they "had drunk wine." A brief trial was held on June 20, Private Whitfield was sentenced to death, hanged August 14, 1944.

### **Why these rapes are they misunderstood?**

Because they raise three issues. First, they cast a harsh light on those Roosevelt defined as belonging to "the greatest generation any society has ever created." This generation of the victory of 1945, mythologized in the United States, had their faults, like two generations of American soldiers largely demystified, in the Vietnam War, and the Iraq war. Rape raises the sensitive issue of segregation and racism in the U.S. Army rapists were certainly often black, but they were still "over-sentenced" compared to whites, and propaganda specifically warned civilians against them. Finally, the rapes illustrated the stereotype of the French "easy woman", the exciting picture propagated by the GI of a "sexual freedom of French women." General Bradley writes of the ***"Early fever that gripped the U.S. Army to approach Paris, fueled by incredible stories that made***

***France a place unlike any other in Europe."***

*What Soldiers Do* by **Mary Louise Roberts**

Among the most valuable statistics *What Soldiers Do* contains is that ***between 1944 and 1945, 29 public executions by hanging were performed as a result of rape convictions. Of those hanged, 25 were African-American soldiers.*** French women, Roberts insists, were just as culpable as the US military: scapegoating African-Americans was a means of ensuring that someone would be punished for their rapes, if not the exact culprit. "In this way," she points out, ***"the French and the Americans became deadly allies in racism."***

*Lilly's book proceeds to use military records and trial transcripts to study American soldiers' rapes of some 14,000 civilian women in western Europe. Robert Lilly's short tome hence becomes a most valuable addition to the literature on World War II, for in examining the subject of rape by U.S. soldiers, a topic that most works on Americans at war avoid, he provides a necessary corrective to the often excessively heroic and exclusively masculine literature of that war in particular, and of war in general, to which so many American authors cling*

The Nanking Massacre, or Nanjing Massacre, also known as the Rape of Nanking, is a mass murder and **war rape** that occurred during the six-week period following the Japanese capture of the city of Nanjing (Nanking), the former capital of the Republic of China, on December 13, 1937 during the Second Sino-Japanese War. During this period, hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians and disarmed soldiers were murdered and 20,000-80,000 women were raped by soldiers of the Imperial Japanese Army.

History casts long shadows. The roots of the present tension between China and Japan lies in the barbaric way the Japanese

acted during their occupation of China during WW2. Especially stands out the Nanking Massacre. There were no military benefits of such killings. What happened at Nanking was stupid in a way. It stiffened Chinese resistance. It also labelled the Japanese soldier as a mindless brute, which was true, the Bushido culture withstanding. So when the Americans came they thought little of the "yellow vermin" and shot POW outright, firebombed Japanese cities and finally atom bombed Japan.

In August 1937, the Japanese army invaded Shanghai and there they met strong resistance and suffered heavy casualties. The battle was bloody as both sides faced attrition in urban hand-to-hand combat. By mid-November the Japanese had captured Shanghai with the help of naval bombardment. The General Staff Headquarters in Tokyo initially decided not to expand the war due to heavy casualties incurred and the low morale of the troops. However, on December 1, headquarters ordered the Central China Area Army and the 10th Army to capture Nanking, then-capital of the Republic of China.

After losing the Battle of Shanghai, Chiang Kai-shek knew the fall of Nanking would be simply a matter of time. He and his staff realized that he could not risk annihilation of their elite troops in a symbolic but hopeless defense of the capital. In order to preserve the army for future battles, most of them were withdrawn. Chiang Kai-shek's strategy was to follow the suggestion of his German advisers to draw the Japanese army deep into China utilizing China's vast territory as a defensive strength. Chiang planned to fight a protracted war of attrition by wearing down the Japanese in the hinterland of China.

Leaving General Tang Shengzhi in charge of the city for the Battle of Nanking, Chiang and many of his advisors fled to Wuhan, where they stayed until it was attacked in 1938.

In a press release to foreign reporters, Tang Shengzhi announced the city would not surrender and would fight to the death. Tang gathered about 100,000 soldiers, largely untrained, including Chinese troops who had participated in the Battle of Shanghai. To prevent civilians from fleeing the city, he ordered troops to guard the port, as instructed by Chiang Kai-shek. The defense force blocked roads, destroyed boats, and burnt nearby villages, preventing widespread evacuation.

The Chinese government left for relocation on December 1, and the president left on December 7, leaving the fate of Nanking to an International Committee led by John Rabe.

The defense plan fell apart quickly. Those defending the city encountered Chinese troops fleeing from previous defeats such as the Battle of Shanghai, running from the advancing Japanese army. This did nothing to help the morale of the defenders.

### **The Japanese army enters Nanking**

Eyewitness accounts of Westerners and Chinese present at Nanking in the weeks after the fall of the city state that over the course of six weeks following the fall of Nanking, Japanese troops engaged in rape, murder, theft, arson, and other war crimes. Some of these accounts came from foreigners who opted to stay behind in order to protect Chinese civilians from harm, including the diaries of German John Rabe and American Minnie Vautrin. Other accounts include first-person testimonies of the Nanking Massacre survivors, eyewitness reports of journalists (both Western and Japanese), as well as the field diaries of military personnel. An American missionary, John Magee, stayed behind to provide a 16 mm film documentary and first-hand photographs of the Nanking Massacre.

A group of foreign expatriates headed by John Rabe had formed the 15-man International Committee on November 22 and mapped out the Nanking Safety Zone in order to safeguard civilians in the city, where the population numbered from 200,000 to 250,000. Rabe and American missionary Lewis S. C. Smythe, secretary of the International Committee and a professor of sociology at the University of Nanking, recorded the actions of the Japanese troops and filed complaints to the Japanese embassy.

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East estimated that 20,000 women were raped, including infants and the elderly. A large portion of these rapes were systematized in a process where soldiers would search door-to-door for young girls, with many women taken captive and gang raped. The women were often killed immediately after the rape, often through explicit mutilation or by stabbing a bayonet, long stick of bamboo, or other objects into the vagina.

On 19 December 1937, Reverend James M. McCallum wrote in his diary:

I know not where to end. Never I have heard or read such brutality. Rape! Rape! Rape! We estimate at least 1,000 cases a night, and many by day. In case of resistance or anything that seems like disapproval, there is a bayonet stab or a bullet ... People are hysterical ... Women are being carried off every morning, afternoon and evening. The whole Japanese army seems to be free to go and come as it pleases, and to do whatever it pleases.

On March 7, 1938, Robert O. Wilson, a surgeon at the American-administered University Hospital in the Safety Zone, wrote in a letter to his family, "a conservative estimate of people slaughtered in cold blood is somewhere about 100,000, including of course thousands of soldiers that had thrown down their arms".

Here are two excerpts from his letters of 15 and 18 December 1937 to his family:

The slaughter of civilians is appalling. I could go on for pages telling of cases of rape and brutality almost beyond belief. Two bayoneted corpses are the only survivors of seven street cleaners who were sitting in their headquarters when Japanese soldiers came in without warning or reason and killed five of their number and wounded the two that found their way to the hospital.

Let me recount some instances occurring in the last two days. Last night the house of one of the Chinese staff members of the university was broken into and two of the women, his relatives, were raped. Two girls, about 16, were raped to death in one of the refugee camps. In the University Middle School where there are 8,000 people the Japs came in ten times last night, over the wall, stole food, clothing, and raped until they were satisfied. They bayoneted one little boy of eight who have [sic] five bayonet wounds including one that penetrated his stomach, a portion of omentum was outside the abdomen. I think he will live.

In his diary kept during the aggression to the city and its occupation by the Imperial Japanese Army, the leader of the Safety Zone, John Rabe, wrote many comments about Japanese atrocities. For the 17th December:

Two Japanese soldiers have climbed over the garden wall and are about to break into our house. When I appear they give the excuse that they saw two Chinese soldiers climb over the wall. When I show them my party badge, they return the same way. In one of the houses in the narrow street behind my garden wall, a woman was raped, and then wounded in the neck with a bayonet. I managed to get an ambulance so we can take her to Kulou Hospital ... Last night up to 1,000 women and girls are said to have been raped, about 100 girls at Ginling College Girls alone. You hear nothing but rape. If husbands or brothers intervene, they're shot. What you hear and see on all sides is the brutality and bestiality of the Japanese soldiers.

There are also accounts of Japanese troops forcing families to commit acts of incest. Sons were forced to rape their mothers, fathers were forced to rape daughters. One pregnant woman who was gang-raped by Japanese soldiers gave birth only a few hours later; although the baby appeared to be physically unharmed (Robert B. Edgerton, *Warriors of the Rising Sun*). Monks who had declared a life of celibacy were also forced to rape women.

On 13 December 1937, John Rabe wrote in his diary:

It is not until we tour the city that we learn the extent of destruction. We come across corpses every 100 to 200 yards. The bodies of civilians that I examined had bullet holes in their backs. These people had presumably been fleeing and were shot from behind. The Japanese march through the city in groups of ten to twenty soldiers and loot the shops (...) I watched with my own eyes as they looted the café of our German baker Herr Kiessling. Hempel's hotel was broken into as well, as almost every shop on Chung Shang and Taiping Road.

On 10 February 1938, Legation Secretary of the German Embassy, Rosen, wrote to his Foreign Ministry about a film made in December by Reverend John Magee to recommend its purchase. Here is an excerpt from his letter and a description of some of its shots, kept in the Political Archives of the Foreign Ministry in Berlin.

During the Japanese reign of terror in Nanking - which, by the way, continues to this day to a considerable degree - the Reverend John Magee, a member of the American Episcopal Church Mission who has been here for almost a quarter of a century, took motion pictures that eloquently bear witness to the atrocities committed by the Japanese .... One will have to wait

and see whether the highest officers in the Japanese army succeed, as they have indicated, in stopping the activities of their troops, which continue even today.

On December 13, about 30 soldiers came to a Chinese house at #5 Hsing Lu Koo in the southeastern part of Nanking, and demanded entrance. The door was open by the landlord, a Mohammedan named Ha. They killed him immediately with a revolver and also Mrs. Ha, who knelt before them after Ha's death, begging them not to kill anyone else. Mrs. Ha asked them why they killed her husband and they shot her. Mrs. Hsia was dragged out from under a table in the guest hall where she had tried to hide with her 1 year old baby. After being stripped and raped by one or more men, she was bayoneted in the chest, and then had a bottle thrust into her vagina. The baby was killed with a bayonet. Some soldiers then went to the next room, where Mrs. Hsia's parents, aged 76 and 74, and. The soldiers killed her with a revolver. The grandfather grasped the body of his wife and was killed. The two girls were then stripped, the elder being raped by 2-3 men, and the younger by 3. The older girl was stabbed afterwards and a cane was rammed in her vagina. The younger girl was bayoneted also but was spared the horrible treatment that had been meted out to her sister and mother. The soldiers then bayoneted another sister of between 7-8, who was also in the room. The last murders in the house were of Ha's two children, aged 4 and 2 respectively. The older was bayoneted and the younger split down through the head with a sword.

Pregnant women were a target of murder, as they would often be bayoneted in the stomach, sometimes after rape. Tang Junshan, survivor and witness to one of the Japanese army's systematic mass killings, testified:

The seventh and last person in the first row was a pregnant woman. The soldier thought he might as well rape her before killing her, so he pulled her out of the group to a spot about ten meters away. As he was trying to rape her, the woman resisted fiercely ... The soldier abruptly stabbed her in the belly with a bayonet. She gave a final scream as her intestines spilled out. Then the soldier stabbed the fetus, with its umbilical cord clearly visible, and tossed it aside.

According to Navy veteran Sho Mitani, «The Army used a trumpet sound that meant "Kill all Chinese who run away"». Thousands were led away and mass-executed in an excavation known as the "Ten-Thousand-Corpse Ditch", a trench measuring about 300m long and 5m wide. Since records were not kept, estimates regarding

the number of victims buried in the ditch range from 4,000 to 20,000. However, most scholars and historians consider the number to be more than 12,000 victims.

On August 6, 1937, Hirohito had personally ratified his army's proposition to remove the constraints of international law on the treatment of Chinese prisoners. This directive also advised staff officers to stop using the term "prisoner of war".

Immediately after the fall of the city, Japanese troops embarked on a determined search for former soldiers, in which thousands of young men were captured. Many were taken to the Yangtze River, where they were machine-gunned. What was probably the single largest massacre of Chinese troops occurred along the banks of the Yangtze River on December 18 in what is called the Straw String Gorge Massacre. Japanese soldiers took most of the morning tying all of the POWs hands together and in the dusk divided them into 4 columns, and opened fire at them. Unable to escape, the POWs could only scream and thrash in desperation. It took an hour for the sounds of death to stop, and even longer for the Japanese to bayonet each individual. Most were dumped into the Yangtze. It is estimated that at least 57,500 Chinese POWs were killed.

The Japanese troops gathered 1,300 Chinese soldiers and civilians at Taiping Gate and killed them. The victims were blown up with landmines, then doused with petrol before being set on fire. Those that were left alive afterward were killed with bayonets.

F. Tillman Durdin and Archibald Steele, American news correspondents, reported that they had seen bodies of killed Chinese soldiers forming mounds six feet high at the Nanking Yijiang gate in the north. Durdin, who was working for the New York Times, made a tour of Nanking before his departure from the city. He heard waves of machine-gun fire and witnessed the Japanese soldiers gun down some two hundred Chinese within ten minutes. Two days later, in his report to the New York Times, he stated that the alleys and street were filled with civilian bodies, including women and children.

According to a testimony made by missionary Ralph L. Phillips to the U.S. State Assembly Investigating Committee, he was "forced to watch while the Japs disembowled a Chinese soldier" and "roasted his heart and liver and ate them"

## HOW LONG DID THE MASSACRE LAST?

The Battle of Nanking ended on December 13, when the divisions of the Japanese Army entered the walled city of Nanking. The Tokyo War Crime Tribunal defined the period of the massacre to the ensuing six weeks. More conservative estimates say the massacre started on December 14, when the troops entered the Safety Zone, and that it lasted for six weeks.

***The roots of the aggressive China of today perhaps lies partly in the Nanking Massacre in 1937.***

One of articles on the "Contest to kill 100 people using a sword" published in the Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun. The headline reads, "'Incredible Record' (in the Contest to Cut Down 100 People) -Mukai 106 - 105 Noda-Both 2nd Lieutenants Go Into Extra Innings"

The sheer volume of murdered civilians posed a formidable logistical challenge when it came to disposing of the bodies. Many Chinese were conscripted into "burial teams".



