

## Questions:

1. The battle for Corregidor and the Bataan Death March are both well-known as among the worst atrocities of war, any war. Because many of the victims of Nanking were non-combatants, is the rape of Nanking really just an extended part of warfare or is it something far more heinous and why?
2. Chang notes that an American officer remarked that the polite answer to a Japanese question was one "satisfactory to the questioner" (p.54). If that is understood as telling someone what he wants to hear, or keeping the questioner happy, what does that say about honesty/integrity or about inequality between questioner and respondent? (Remember: Chang notes, p.20, the Code of the Samurai was one of built-in violence. Samurai could behead a peasant if the answer were considered unpleasant/unsatisfactory in any way.) What sort of society does that engender?
3. The Japanese are Shinto; the Chinese, Confucian. Confucianism defends female purity. Do we read the unbridled violence of rape simply as a consequence of being conquered or, in this instance, as simultaneous and deliberate degradation of person and national culture/belief ?
4. Killing someone becomes a game, which is to say that the life of the conquered is worth nothing for he can be done away with as sport. Yet C.S. Lewis and many others argue for natural law which holds that each of us has a built-in moral compass. Clearly, John Rabe, Dr. Wilson, and Minnie Vautrin marched to a tune very different from that of the Japanese conquerors. Apples and oranges, or right vs. wrong?
5. We joke when we say "The devil made me do it." But a Japanese doctor admitted that when he behaved as he did, committing some very awful deeds, he was indeed "a devil". Is this a shift of blame, an out, an escape, what?
6. Nanking is Asian history. The Holocaust took place in Europe. In South America, the Inca were wiped out. All took a bit of time. Anything in North America? (Yes, in the founding of St. Augustine, Pedro Menendez deliberately butchered a bunch of Huguenots led by Jean Ribaut in order to insure that Florida remained safe for Spanish exploration and treasure export. However, the incidents at Matanzas were over very quickly.) What does any of that say about becoming inured to evil? What about today's inner city kids--78 homicides thus far this year in one section of DC?
7. On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was bombed, and a few days later, Nagasaki. In today's world, many consider those US bombings reprehensible. Given Nanking and the afore-mentioned Bataan Death March, were those bombings really beyond decency or were they a way to end hideous bloodshed East and West? ( The Battle of the Bulge with its carnage comes late in WWII; the prison camps were still in operation. Eisenhower in Crusade in Europe notes that he summoned up a number of ranking American officers to accompany him when, having been told of the camps, he

went to find out for himself. He took the others with him because the word of many could not be denied.)

8. Note the tone of the Introduction. The reader is being prepped to be outraged. Necessary?

9. What is the takeaway from this book: "Man's inhumanity to Man makes countless thousands mourn." or "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." or "Never again." ?