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MRes Thesis

"Iris Chang and the trauma of The Rape of Nanking"

Supervisor: Associate Professor Robert Reynolds

Statement of Originality

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

(Signed)_____ Date: 28/11/2017.

Candidate's name

Abstract

In December 1997, an unknown Chinese American author named Iris Chang published *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War Two*. Her passionate but error strewn account of a sixty-year-old episode of Asian political violence was a spectacular success, with over half a million books sold. This thesis asks why. Why that piece of history; why that moment; and why that author and that book? It argues the most compelling answers to these questions are found if the situation is viewed through the paradigmatic lens of trauma.

It therefore offers a theoretical reading of this important historical moment, utilising key theorist, Jeffrey C. Alexander's social theory of cultural trauma. It examines parallel historical and social processes in China and the West – centred on trauma, representation and identity - which it argues Iris Chang connected so profoundly with her book. It claims that *The Rape of Nanking* is structured to utilise a framework of traumatic understanding constructed around the Holocaust, the defining trauma of the epoch. This allowed her narrative to be read and easily decoded by its audience in the now familiar register of trauma.

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Introduction

'The Rape of Nanking' refers to six terrible weeks from 13th December 1937 in which the troops of the invading Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) sacked what was then the Chinese capital, and brutalised the population. The exact death toll is still contested, but many thousands of civilians and surrendered soldiers were killed, and uncounted women and girls raped. The IJA's rampage remains perhaps the single most contentious historical issue in contemporary Sino-Japanese relations.[1] However, for sixty years, it was a relatively unknown event outside East Asia.

That changed suddenly and irrevocably in December 1997 with the publication of Chinese American journalist and author Iris Chang's *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*.[2] Chang's book, a passionate and graphic retelling of the horrors, was an instant hit. It spent twenty weeks in *The New York Times* bestseller list, sold more than half a million copies, and would be translated into fifteen different languages.[3] Chang became a household name in North America, with a continent-wide book tour and numerous television appearances. The book's popularity brought knowledge of the events to a new,

[1] This thesis uses the Chicago Footnote Referencing Style. See; "Notes and Bibliography", *The Chicago Manual of Style Online*. Accessed online 19 November 2017. http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html.

Daqing Yang, "Revisionism and the Nanjing Atrocity", *Critical Asian Studies*, 43:4, (2011): 635-636. Other 'history problems' between the two nations include the so-called 'comfort women' and Japan's medical experimentation on Chinese prisoners during WWII. See; Karl Gustafsson, "The 'History Problem' in Sino-Japanese Relations: What's the Problem?", *E-International Relations*, 31 October 2016. Accessed online 9 November 2017. http://www.e-ir.info/2016/10/31/the-history-problem-in-sino-japanese-relations-whats-the-problem/

[2] Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, (USA: Basic Books, 2011).

[3] Peter Gries, *China's New Nationalism,* (USA: University of California Press, 2005), 90.

global audience, and acted as the catalyst for an interest in Nanking 1937[4] which continues to this day.

This thesis asks the overarching question, what was it that gave Iris Chang's representation such potency and resonance? It offers a specific theoretical reading of this important historical moment, to best understand and explain the "unprecedented acclaim, controversy, and, of course, commercial success"[5] of *The Rape of Nanking*. This thesis posits that the most suitable lens through which to view the forces leading to the production of *The Rape of Nanking*, and to understand its popular reception, is that of trauma. It considers parallel historical and social processes in China[6] and the West,[7] centred on trauma, representation and identity, which Iris Chang connected so profoundly in 1997. It is broken into three key questions - one per chapter - and argues that in each case, the most compelling

[4] Nanking translates as 'Southern Capital'. See; "Explore the "Southern Capital": Nanjing", *Global Times Online*, 6 June 2014. Accessed online 19 November 2017. https://gbtimes.com/explore-southern-capital-nanjing 'Nanking' was the city's Romanised name in 1937 using the Wade-Giles translation system which was the standard at the time. Using the current *pinyin* Romanisation system, the city is referred to as Nanjing. See; "Wade-Giles romanization", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Accessed online 19 November 2017. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Wade-Giles-romanization This paper uses Nanjing unless the original author uses the older Wade-Giles spelling as Iris Chang does. This paper uses the most commonly accepted Romanisation of prominent Chinese historical figures' names, for example, 'Mao Zedong' and 'Chiang Kai-shek'. When referencing scholars of Chinese and Japanese heritage, this paper respects and replicates their individual preference regarding the order of first name/family name.

[5] Michael Berry, *A History of Pain: Trauma in modern Chinese literature and film,* (USA: Columbia University Press, 2008), 111.

[6] This paper uses 'China' to refer to the People's Republic of China (PRC) as opposed to the Republic of China/Taiwan (ROC). The term 'mainland' is also used to refer to the PRC.

[7] This thesis uses the term 'West' to refer broadly to Western societies, primarily the Anglophone nations of the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom but also Western Europe, where Chang's book was translated and published into various languages including French and German. This term is used not to homogenise these varied cultures and societies, but to allow the author to speak about the processes and responses in more general terms than would be possible if referring for example only to 'America', 'Canada', 'England' or 'France'. Most of the scholars referenced in this paper are based in North America, Europe or Australia.

answers to those questions can be found if the situation is viewed through the primary theoretical lens of trauma.

Chapter One asks *Why Nanjing?* This first chapter considers processes in mainland China which by 1997 had resulted in the events at Nanjing becoming the centrepiece of a calendar of traumatic remembrance. It asks why, and how, in a century steeped with tumult, violence and death, the Chinese government chose to elevate the events at Nanjing above all others. Chapter Two asks *Why 1997?* This chapter steps away from China and Nanjing, to examine the historical basis of the social conditions present in the West in the late 1990s. It will chart trauma discourse's intellectual and social construction, and the emergence of a firmly established paradigm of understanding centred on representations of the Jewish Holocaust. It also documents the complete transformation in the status of victims of misfortune, and trauma's concurrent transformation from an affliction which shattered individuals, to something capable of constituting communities. This change allowed Iris Chang's plea for the status of victimhood on behalf of the Chinese nation to resonate so profoundly. And finally, Chapter Three asks, *Why Iris Chang's "The Rape of Nanking"?* Here, focus shifts from broad historical processes, to consider the book, and the immediate circumstances surrounding its publication in late 1997. *The Rape of Nanking* was not the first book of its kind to be published in the West, nor was it the most scholarly. What was it about Iris Chang's position as a Chinese American and the descendant of 'survivors' which gave her story credence and authority? And what was it about the structure of Chang's narrative which allowed it to be decoded and understood so readily by popular Western media outlets through the register of trauma?

Chang and the Academy

In the months following the release of *The Rape of Nanking*, Iris Chang and her book received a decidedly mixed reception. The Western media and reading public very much took to the book, and that is still in evidence now, twenty years on. Towson University's Erik Ropers has surmised that if one were to visit an airport bookshop today, and there was indeed a book on the Nanjing massacre[8] available, it is likely to be Chang's book.[9] Her representation still has considerable cultural potency in the West. But the academy roundly and vociferously criticised her work.[10] They objected to her claim that the massacre had been 'forgotten'.[11] They also objected to *The Rape of Nanking*'s lack of footnotes and its numerous factual errors.[12] Her considerable impact on the knowledge and awareness of the massacre has perhaps therefore not had the consideration it deserves.

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[8] It is indicative of the enduring controversy and discord surrounding the events at Nanjing that there is, as yet, no agreement on the nomenclature. In English, the event is labelled as the *Rape of Nanking/Nanjing*, the *Nanjing massacre,* (with or without a capital 'M') the *Nanjing atrocity,* and the *Nanjing incident*. In mainland China, the event is known as *Nanjing datusha* meaning massacre, suggesting systematic killing. The Japanese translation of this is *Nankin daigyakusatsu* meaning the great (large scale) Nanjing massacre. A more common label in Japan is *Nankin jiken* meaning incident, suggesting objectivity and neutrality but with undertones of minimisation. There is a similar sliding scale to the labels applied in English, each one suggesting a view on the history and the death toll. This can be roughly summarised as *Rape of Nanjing (300,000+) > Nanjing Massacre (200,000-300,000) > Nanjing atrocity (200,000-100,000) > Nanjing incident (less than 100,000)*. For a full discussion on Nanjing terminology, see David Askew, "New Research on the Nanjing Incident", *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 2:7, (2004). Iris Chang, perhaps unsurprisingly used the emotive 'Rape of Nanking', highlighting the crimes against Chinese women and invoking a pre-existing structure of feeling surrounding sexual violence as trauma. This paper uses *massacre*, *atrocities,* or simply, *Nanjing* when referring to the events.

[9] Erik Ropers, "Debating History and Memory: Examining the Controversy Surrounding Iris Chang's *The Rape of Nanking*", *Humanity*, 8:1, (2017): 90-91.

[10] See for example; Joshua A. Fogel, "*The Rape of Nanking, The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* by Iris Chang", review of *The Rape of Nanking*, by Iris Chang, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 57: 3, (1998): 818-820.

[11] Andrew, E. Barshay, "The Rape of Nanking", *The New York Times*, (4 January 1998). Accessed online 6 November 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/01/04/letters/letters.html

[12] No less than 170 errors were cited by the Japanese conservative press. See; Takashi Yoshida, *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking": History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States*, USA: Oxford University Press, 2006, 146.

In 2005, genocide scholar David Macdonald published an article questioning Chang's use of the Holocaust[13] as a tool for comparative analysis.[14] In 2012, Australian Damien Kinney assessed her filmic legacy, noting the numerous representations that her book inspired.[15] However, other than these papers, there has been comparatively little discourse generated specifically dedicated to Chang and her book. As such, there is ample space for this thesis to make an original contribution. 2017 is the 80th anniversary of the massacre and the 20th anniversary of the publication of *The Rape of Nanking*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this year has seen a spike in the number of journal articles concerning the massacre, second editions of key texts, and one article by Erik Ropers dealing specifically with Chang's legacy.

In March 2017, Ropers published in American journal *Humanity,* specifically concerning the controversy surrounding *The Rape of Nanking*.[16] Ropers situates the book within the 'memory boom' of the 1990s, and within the emerging discourse surrounding human rights violations, and in particular the contemporary and historical abuses of women which were receiving unprecedented attention at that time.[17] Indeed, he cites *The Rape of Nanking* as having made a valid contribution to that discourse, stimulating conversation and debate within the media and the public.[18] Ropers is correct in locating the book thus. However, this thesis regards the discourse surrounding women's rights as itself being situated

[13] When referring to the extermination of 6 million European Jews by Nazi Germany during the Second World War, this thesis uses the term *Holocaust* with a capital 'H', *Shoah*, *Jewish genocide, Jewish Holocaust* or *Judeocide*. Any other event utilising the label is referred to as a *holocaust* without the capital 'H'.

[14] David, B. Macdonald, "Forgetting and Denying: Iris Chang, the Holocaust, and the Challenge of Nanking," *International Politics*, 42:4, (2005): 403-427.

[15] Damien Kinney, "Rediscovering a massacre: The filmic legacy of Iris Chang's The Rape of Nanking", *Continuum*, 26:1, (2012): 11-23.

[16] Ropers, "Debating History and Memory,*"* 77-99.

[17] Ibid. 78.

[18] Ibid. 79.

within a broader global discourse of trauma. No scholar has situated the book within a discourse of trauma. The traumatic reading of *The Rape of Nanking* offered here is therefore original analysis. As this thesis offers a specific theoretical reading of a historical moment, methodologically speaking, it will primarily be concerned with secondary source materials, and will analyse those source materials through the theoretical lens of trauma. A close reading of the primary source material, *The Rape of Nanking,* will be offered in Chapter Three, again viewing the book as the product of, and latterly a contributor towards, a Western discourse of trauma.

Why Trauma?

In contemporary Western society, trauma is everywhere. One cannot turn on a television or open a newspaper or webpage but read of people seemingly traumatised by events ranging from earthquakes[19] to the death of a pet.[20] These examples are not intended to belittle the effect on individuals of experiencing earth tremors or the unexpected loss of a beloved canine companion, but rather to demonstrate how pervasive the term has become. We talk about any and all present-day violence or upset in terms of trauma. The use of the term now carries with it firmly established notions of responsibility, victimhood, recovery, and often the expectation of compensation.[21] Moreover, the term is applied not just to contemporary upset. As a society, we have traumatised our experience of the present, and in doing so we

[19] Emine Eren-Kocak, and Cengiz Kilic, "Posttraumatic Growth After Earthquake Trauma is Predicted by Executive Functions", *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 202:12, (2014): 859-862.

[20] Olivia K. Brown and Douglas K. Symons, ""My pet has passed": Relations of adult attachment styles and current feelings of grief and trauma after the event", *Death Studies*, 40:4, (2016): 247-255.

[21] Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse To Political Terror*, (UK: Pandora, 1994), 190-192.

have traumatised our connection to the past. Indeed, over the last twenty-five years trauma has become established as one of the "dominant modes of representing our relationship with the past".[22]

There are numerous, often overlapping, theories of trauma as both a medical and a moral diagnosis, a veritable spectrum of thought. Scholars at one end take a psychoanalytical approach, arguing that trauma is a direct, individual response to an event or events so far beyond the realm of normal human experience as to be mentally unassimilable.[23] Academics who sit in the middle also affix the traumatogenesis directly to a violent event, a "tear in the social fabric",[24] but consider trauma as affecting collectives not just individuals.[25] And at the other end of this spectrum are scholars who consider trauma purely as a collective experience and capable of originating within that collective,[26] as opposed to having an external source. Chapter Two will present a more comprehensive analysis of trauma discourse, including its genealogy and emergence. However, it is important to establish an overall tone and epistemological foundation for this thesis, and to state how it will apply trauma theory to the processes at hand. As such, this paper will be written from a constructivist perspective. It argues that while trauma is a real and genuine phenomenon for those suffering from it, the processes being examined in this paper are, for the most part, constructed.

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[22] Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman, *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*, trans. Rachel Gomme, (USA: Princeton University Press, 2009), 15.

[23] Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*, 20th Anniversary Edition, (USA: John Hopkins University Press, 2016), 4.

[24] Ron Eyerman, "Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity", in Jeffrey C. Alexander et al, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, (USA: University of California Press, 2004), 61.

[25] See; Arthur G. Neal, *National Trauma and Collective Memory: Major Events in the American Century*, (USA: Routledge, 1998), ix. And see; Arlene Audergon, "Collective Trauma: The Nightmare of History", *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, 2:1, (2004): 16.

[26] Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Trauma: A Social Theory*, (UK: Polity Press, 2012), 13.

Representations of Nanjing were specifically constructed in China from the mid-1980s for the purposes of generating a new, nationalistic Chinese identity, and with it, fostering loyalty to the state.[27] Trauma as a medical diagnosis in the West was formulated by the medical and legal professions around two world wars, the conflict in Vietnam, and domestic violence.[28] Trauma has also undergone an historically situated, social construction,[29] being adapted and adopted by Western societies as changes to the social order and shared values have changed the way we regard the victims of violent events.[30] A major factor behind this shift in Western discourse, and with it Western consciousness, has been the construction of a framework of understanding centred on representations of the Holocaust.[31] The Holocaust is thus now the benchmark of traumatic suffering in the West. However, again this was a process, the framework being developed over several decades.[32] In turn, Chang's book, itself a construction, was carefully fashioned to attach to that framework, and to appeal to hitherto established notions of victimhood and recognition. And finally, at various junctures during the period in question, the traumatic past has been used to construct identity at individual, community and national level. This paper will utilise the work of several trauma scholars whose theories are written from this constructivist position and can therefore be applied to

[27] Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations,* (USA: Columbia University Press, 2012), 9.

[28] Richard J. McNally, *Remembering Trauma*, (USA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 1-14.

[29] Emma Hutchison, *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions After Trauma*, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 33.

[30] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 23.

[31] Alexander, *Trauma,* 31-96.

[32] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 18.

the processes that are under investigation, the central theorist being Yale University's Professor of Sociology, Jeffrey C. Alexander.[33]

Why Representation?

Aligned with its constructivist position, this thesis emphasises throughout the importance of representation to the trauma mediation process. Indeed, it is centred on a popular representation of an historical trauma - Iris Chang's *The Rape of Nanking* as a representation of the historical trauma of the same name. All key theorists utilised herein agree that representation is vital to the process of collective trauma formation.[34] Practices of representation give meaning and understanding to the world around us, including traumas past and present. However, communicating trauma is notoriously difficult. Political scientist Emma Hutchison has argued that "(e)ncoded as it is more in sensations and images than in verbal narrative, trauma evades the parameters of everyday expression."[35] There is also an argument that in the case of mass killings such as Nanjing, even attempting a literary depiction is an attempt to portray the unportrayable,[36] and explores the very limits of representation.[37] These linguistic and ethical challenges have clearly not stopped Iris Chang and others like her

[33] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Curriculum Vitae", Department of Sociology, *Yale University*. Accessed online 9 November 2017. https://sociology.yale.edu/sites/default/files/alexander_jeffrey.pdf

[34] See; Alexander, *Trauma*, 56. See also; Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 17-18. And see; Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 3.

[35] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 122. This difficult in representing trauma in literary terms is one reason why photographs of Nanjing have always been fundamental to representations of Nanjing. See "Remembering" and "Trauma, Representation, and Diasporic Identity", below.

[36] Yosefa Loshitzky, "Introduction", in *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List*, ed. Yosefa Loshitzky, USA: Indiana University Press, 1997, 2.

[37] See; Saul Friedlander, *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the 'Final Solution'*, USA: Harvard University Press, 1992.

from writing about traumas they felt had been 'forgotten'. The resulting representations give trauma the ability to be understood and expressed, and consequently, translated into something that can potentially resonate with the many.[38]

Trauma can be an isolating and solitary experience for its sufferers.[39] Representations of trauma - whether in the form of a memoir, an artwork, museum, memorial, or a popular historical novel - allow trauma to become collectivised and constitutive. These representations allow "those who do not experience trauma directly, but only bear witness, from a distance,"[40] to experience and share in the them. This distance can be either geographical, temporal, or as in the case of *The Rape of Nanking*, both. Representations thus enable trauma to be collectively experienced and enacted with a wider society or community. However, if a trauma is to resonate with that community, it must find expression in a language common to all.[41] How that trauma is represented is therefore a key determinant in an audience being able to identify with the trauma of another.[42] This process of identification through representation is thus the key to a trauma moving from a solitary experience, to one experienced by a collective.

Further, traumatic representations have a dual nature. Not only do they manifest the subject position of their author – whether that is a state in the case of a museum, or a member of a diaspora in the case of *The Rape of Nanking* - they also influence the subject positions of others in relation to the trauma represented.[43] It is in this way that popular books such as *The*

[38] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 59.

[39] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 47.

[40] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 3.

[41] Ibid. 54.

[42] Ibid. 31.

[43] Ibid. 131.

Rape of Nanking, written in emotive yet simple language to be clearly read and understood by its audience, can be so potent. They can both influence their audience's perception and understanding of the historical event, and enable a community in the present, to form around a trauma from the past.

What is Trauma?

Despite, or perhaps because of its ubiquity, trauma remains a notoriously difficult term to define. Trauma studies emerged very much in tandem with memory studies, the two growing in size and influence over the course of the last decades.[44] Their parallel development was due to the inherent affinity between their subjects - the term trauma generally being used to refer to a specific form of damaged and damaging memory.[45] In addition, developing as it did from the fields of psychiatry and psychology, many of the concepts and labels used in these disciplines are now applied, seemingly unproblematically, to the study of trauma in fields as diverse as culture, society, politics and history.[46]

Theorists thus talk of 'injuries', 'wounds' and 'scars' suggesting that a trauma has a painful, deleterious, and damaging effect, which can still be recognised and felt long after the initial violation. This longevity is often linked to a notion of latency,[47] the pain of a traumatic episode remaining dormant for weeks, years or even generations before returning to inflict its negative effects on victims in the present. However, every theorist takes a different

[44] Antonio Traverso and Mick Broderick, "Interrogating trauma: Towards a critical trauma studies", in *Interrogating Trauma: Collective Suffering in Global Arts and Media*, eds. Antonio Traverso and Mick Broderick, (UK: Routledge, 2013), 5.

[45] Ibid. 5.

[46] Ibid. 6.

[47] Caruth, *Trauma and Experience*, 7.

approach to the application of these key themes of pain, memory, latency, and the connection between past injury and present suffering. It is therefore prudent for the purposes of this paper to define exactly what key theorist Jeffrey Alexander means when he uses the term 'trauma'. How does he synthesise these key themes and transpose them from the individual to the collective?

For Alexander, a trauma has occurred "when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways."[48] Alexander therefore acknowledges the traumatic traits of damage, scarring, alteration, memory, and identity but extends the traumatising effect from the past, through the present, and into the future. He also makes it clear that in his conception of trauma, there need not necessarily be an originating event. Collectives are more than capable of constructing traumas from exaggerated or even entirely imagined origins.[49] However, this paper is centred on traumatic representations of an event which, despite efforts to deny, downplay, and minimise its severity,[50] most certainly happened.

[48] Alexander, *Trauma*, 6.

[49] Ibid. 13.

[50] For a full account of the historiography of Nanjing in Japan, see; Takashi Yoshida, "A Battle over History: The Nanjing Massacre in Japan," in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel, (USA: University of California Press, 2000), 70-132.

The Rape of Nanking

China's twentieth century does not lack violent and potentially traumatogenic episodes for consideration. The century began with the Boxer Rebellion[51] and ended with the bloody Tiananmen Square crackdown of 1989.[52] There were numerous revolutions,[53] two world wars and one of the worst famines any country has ever experienced.[54] But an examination of the Chinese calendar of historical remembrance, and tellingly the history texts of junior and middle schools, reveals the presence of certain historical traumas and the absence of others.[55] There are no shortage of references to the Nanjing massacre of 1937 in both calendar and texts.

The massacre is one of the most notorious episodes of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945).[56] After an unexpectedly long and difficult siege at Shanghai which ended in August 1937, the troops of the invading IJA proceeded up the Yangtze River towards the Chinese capital.[57] After a brief siege the Japanese army brutally sacked Nanjing. From 13th December 1937, over what is now generally accepted to be a six-week period, Japanese troops looted the city and killed and raped its inhabitants. There is to this day considerable debate as to the numbers killed, unsurprising given their symbolic significance. The Tokyo

[51] Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Third Edition, (USA: W.W. Norton and Company, 2013), 222–228.

[52] Ibid. 657–665.

[53] For a discussion of China and revolutions, see; Colin Mackerras, *China in Transformation 1900-1949*, Second Edition, (UK: Pearson Longman, 2008), 5-6.

[54] 'The Great Leap Famine' of 1958-1962 is estimated to have led to the premature deaths of between 15-45 million Chinese. For a decidedly maximalist account, which lays the blame for the famine squarely on Mao Zedong's shoulders, see; Frank Dikotter, *Mao's Great Famine*, (UK: Bloomsbury, 2011), xii.

[55] Wang, *Never Forget*, 23.

[56] See; Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 398-429.

[57] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 33–34.

Trials of 1946-48 put the death toll at 200,000 plus.[58] The Nanjing Trials which ran concurrently raised the death toll to over 300,000 and it is this figure which has been consecrated in Chinese memorialisation of the event.[59] Not only were the killings militarily completely unnecessary, they were also often carried out sadistically with sword and bayonet as well as bullet.[60] Though by no means the only incident of its kind perpetrated by the IJA, the massacre has become the centrepiece of a Chinese calendar of traumatic remembrance.

This, however, has not always been the case. In the fifty years that followed them, the events at Nanjing virtually disappeared from public view, all trace being expunged from Chinese collective memory during the Mao Zedong era.[61] The following chapter will chart the convoluted representational journey of the Nanjing massacre, detailing why the episode was first forgotten, then why and how it was subsequently remembered, not just as a dark episode in China's past, but as a historical trauma.

[58] The Tokyo Trials is the common name given to the International Military Tribunal for the Far East which took place from May 1946-November 1948. See: Yoshida, "A Battle over History", 70-72.

[59] The Nanjing Trials, organised by Chiang Kai-shek to run concurrently with the Tokyo Trials, brought the number up to 300,000. This became the CCP's official figure and the number quoted in the Nanking Massacre Memorial Museum. See: Mark Eykholt, "Aggression, Victimization, and Chinese historiography of the Massacre", in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel, (USA: University of California Press, 2000), 21-22. Chang discussed the matter at length and suggests the much higher figure of 377,400. See: Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 99-104.

[60] Charles S. Maier, "Foreword", in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel, (USA: University of California Press, 2000): viii.

[61] Mao Zedong was the leader of the Chinese Communist Party from January 1935 until his death in 1976. He was China's 'Great Helmsman' from October 1949 onwards. See; Mackerras, *China in Transformation*, 5.

Chapter One – Why Nanjing?

The Forgetting and Remembering of a Cultural Trauma

The political agents of a nation often use events from history to construct stories and symbols through which citizens come to learn the national narrative.[62] These stories, according to historian Ernest Koh, "provide people with a sense of identification and belonging to a political container known as the nation."[63] The resulting representations, whether in the form of textbooks, monuments, museums, or national holidays, combine to form a nation's collective historical memories.[64] These historical memories mould and shape not only how a nations' citizens regard its past, but also often its present and its future. The large group identities - themselves mental representations[65] - formed through common access to historical memories define the citizens' relationship to the state. These identities are thus often manipulated by agents of the state to encourage state loyalty and feelings of nationalism. Anthony D. Smith has argued "no memory, no identity; no identity, no nation."[66]

History plays an especially important role in the politics of contemporary China, with the past often being held up as a mirror to explain the present and suggest direction for the future.[67] When Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came to power in 1949, it

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[62] Wang, *Never Forget,* 3.

[63] Ernest Koh, *Diaspora at War: The Chinese of Singapore between Empire and Nation, 1937-1945*, (USA: Brill, 2013), 13. Accessed online 1 September 2017. http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/content/books/9789047428220

[64] Wang, *Never Forget*, 3. For more on collective memory, see; Maurice Holbswachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (USA: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 38.

[65] Vamik D. Volkan, "Transgenerational Transmission and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity", *Group Analysis*, 34:1, (2001): 79-97.

[66] Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, (UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 383.

[67] Huaiyin Li, "From Revolution to Modernization: The Paradigmatic Transition on Chinese Historiography in the Reform Era" *History and Theory*, 49, (2010): 338.

quickly set about the nationalisation of all culture industries and institutions, and then developed them in ways that would support their ideology.[68] In the decades following, the CCP managed to retain a firm grip on both the country and the means of cultural production. It uses this political and cultural power to carefully orchestrate which events from the past the Chinese populace is encouraged to remember, and thereby, which it is encouraged to forget.[69] The Nanjing massacre provides an excellent example of this deeply political manipulation of the past. This chapter considers the processes behind the Nanjing massacre's journey from forgotten footnote to traumatic focal point. It will argue that Nanjing has been remembered and represented in a specific manner, for a specific purpose; the massacre has been deliberately reconstructed by the CCP since the early 1980s as a 'chosen cultural trauma.' This term is a conflation of complementary theories by Johan Galtung, Vamik Volkan and Jeffrey Alexander.

Norwegian scholar Galtung first coined the term "chosenness-myth-trauma complex"[70] when describing the multifaceted relationship between national identity, trauma and history. Galtung claims that nation-states form their identity around three planks - their uniqueness, their positive history, and crucially for this thesis, their negative history.[71] This proactive selection of negative history is taken further by political psychiatrist Vamik Volkan who used the term "chosen trauma".[72] He defines a chosen trauma as the shared

[68] Kirk Denton, "Exhibiting the Past: China's Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum", *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 12:20:2, (2014); 1.

[69] Wang, *Never Forget*, 3.

[70] Johan Galtung, "The Construction of National Identities for the Cosmic Drama: Chosenness-Myths-Trauma (CMT) Syndromes and Cultural Pathologies," in *Handcuffed to History: Narratives, Pathologies and Violence in South-East Asia*, ed. S. P. Udayakumar, (USA: Westport, 2001): 61-77.

[71] Ibid. 62-64.

[72] See, for example; Volkan, "Transgenerational Transmission," 79.

"representation of a massive trauma that the group's ancestors suffered at the hand of an enemy".[73] Volkan argues that chosen traumas are a key component of large group identity, defined as the subjective experience of a persistent sense of sameness shared by members of a large ethnic, religious or national group.[74] He believes that chosen traumas are often resurrected by agents of the state during times of great social or political upheaval.[75] They are used to confirm not only large-group identity in relation to the state and the perceived 'enemy', but also used by the individual to confirm their 'core identity' within the large group.[76] The use of the word 'chosen' suggests a degree of agency and so must be clarified. Obviously, a group does not choose to be invaded, assaulted or victimised, but it may choose to dwell on, and in some cases, mythologise, a violent event, so the agency lies in the trauma selection.[77] Volkan's theory of 'chosen trauma' neatly overlays with Jeffrey Alexander's theory of 'cultural trauma'.

Over a period of several years, a group of sociologists led by Alexander developed what he termed a "social theory of cultural trauma."[78] The theory attempts to explain why certain violent events that might be considered traumatic go on to become embedded within a society's historical consciousness, while others do not. Clearly, by claiming that not every violent event becomes a trauma, Alexander is arguing that violent events are not in and of themselves naturally traumatic. Indeed, he talks of the necessity to move beyond the "naturalistic fallacy".[79] And, by looking at traumas as they affect collectives, Alexander further

[73] Ibid. 79.

[74] Volkan, "Transgenerational Transmission," 83.

[75] Ibid. 84.

[76] Ibid. 84

[77] Wang, *Never Forget*, 48.

[78] Alexander, *Trauma*, 6.

[79] Ibid. 13.

distances himself from the more individualistic, psychoanalytical approach to trauma taken by the likes of Cathy Caruth and Judith Herman.[80]

Alexander argues that although the process of cultural trauma formation takes place at the societal level, the society itself does not select its traumas.[81] Rather, the selection is done by social agents with access to and control over the means of symbolic production.[82] They decide which events are remembered as traumatic, and which are forgotten.[83] Thus, the social traumas that affect a nation at the cultural level are both deliberately chosen, and carefully constructed. For both Volkan and Alexander, representation is vital to an event being perceived and understood as a trauma. Indeed, for Alexander, representation is the key difference between a violent event being remembered as a trauma or not. Societies can experience massive disruptions which are not considered traumatic because they are not represented as such. For example, the loss of many hundreds of thousands of lives in a victorious war is represented and therefore remembered by a collective very differently to the loss of far fewer lives in a lost war.[84] Alexander, like Volkan, links trauma formation to collective identity. He argues that trauma is not the result of a collective experiencing pain, but the result of this perceived injury becoming core to the group's sense of itself. A cultural trauma is a threat to collective identity.[85] However, he argues that certain basic criteria must be fulfilled for this trauma creation process to be initiated.

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[80] Alexander cites Caruth as the most influential scholar taking a psychoanalytical approach to trauma. Ibid. 11.
See; Cathy Caruth (ed), *Trauma; Explorations in Memory*, (USA: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995). See also; Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*.

[81] Alexander, *Trauma*, 15.

[82] Ibid. 15.

[83] Ibid. 15-16.

[84] Ibid. 3.

[85] Ibid. 15.

Firstly, some form of claim must be made regarding the perceived injury to the collective; then secondly this claim must be broadcast by "symbolic representations"[86] to a wider audience. This broadcasting is done by what Max Weber in his sociology of religion referred to as "carrier groups".[87] These carrier groups can be religious leaders, come from society's margins, or be the political elites of a society, as in China.[88] Regardless, the goal of the carrier group is to convincingly project the trauma claim onto society at large by making use of the historical specifics, the symbolic resources at hand, and the opportunities provided to them by society's institutional structures.[89]

The carrier group must comply with four key criteria; first it must firmly establish "the nature of the pain", i.e. what happened, and to whom.[90] Secondly, following this, the victim of the trauma must be clearly identified; was it an individual, a group, or a people as a whole?[91] Thirdly, this must be relatable to a wider audience.[92] What is society's connection to the victim? What shared qualities are emphasised to allow symbolic participation in the originating traumatic experience? And fourthly, once the trauma and its victim have been identified, and a connection to both established, the perpetrator must be identified, and responsibility attributed.[93] It is through this structure of representation that traumatic master narratives are generated, and cultural traumas formed.

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[86] Ibid. 16.

[87] Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, (USA: University of California Press, 1978): 468-517.

[88] Alexander, *Trauma*, 16.

[89] Ibid. 16-17.

[90] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma", in Jeffrey C. Alexander et al, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Memory*, (USA: University of California Press, 2004), 13.

[91] Ibid. 13-14.

[92] Ibid. 14-15.

[93] Ibid. 15.

The remainder of this chapter will apply Alexander's theory of cultural trauma to the recollection and representation of the Nanjing massacre in China from 1937 to 1997. It will initially use the theory to explain why Nanjing was forgotten, as indeed Alexander did in his work with Rui Guo.[94] Thereafter, part of this thesis' original contribution will be to detail why and how the Nanjing massacre was represented as a national-level trauma, something Alexander and Guo stop short of doing in their work. The first question then is, why did the events at Nanjing fail to become a cultural trauma at the time of their occurrence? Why, when the events were violent, socially disruptive and front-page news in both Communist and Nationalist newspapers[95] did they not become imprinted on Chinese historical consciousness? The answer lies in the politics of representation.

Forgetting

When the Japanese attacked Nanjing, China was governed by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party.[96] The Kuomintang (KMT) had been in relative control of China since the Northern Expedition of 1926-28[97] despite a bitter civil war with the CCP that had raged since the Expedition's completion. In 1937, following the Japanese invasion, the two parties formed an uneasy truce, the so-called 'Second United Front'.[98] However, Chiang and Mao's efforts to

[94] Jeffrey C. Alexander and Rui Guo, "Mass Murder and Trauma: Nanjing and the Silence of Maoism", in *Trauma: A Social Theory*, ed. Jeffrey Alexander (UK: Polity Press, 2012).

[95] Ibid. 121.

[96] See; Mackerras, *China in Transformation*, 4.

[97] Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 310-355.

[98] Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2000), 583. The First United Front was during the early stages of the Northern Expedition but collapsed when Chiang turned on the Communists, killing large numbers during the "Shanghai Massacre" of April 1927. See; Colin Mackerras, *Modern China; A Chronology*, (UK: Thames and Hudson, 1982), 315.

repel the Japanese invasion did not extend to combined military action.[99] Consequently, it was the Nationalists alone who defended Shanghai, relatively successfully, and Nanjing, very poorly. In the years that followed, had Chiang and the KMT chosen to consecrate the massacre by emphasising the scale of Japanese atrocities, they would also have emphasised the loss of the capital and their own weakness.[100] This would have positioned the KMT as victims and would not have served them in the fight against Mao's resurgent CCP, the civil war having resumed only months after Japanese surrender.[101]

Nanjing did briefly return to local and international consciousness towards the end of the KMT's rule on the mainland. The American-led Tokyo Trials of 1946-1948 and the KMT-organised Nanjing Trials which ran concurrently, both sought to attribute responsibility and mete out justice for Nanjing and other Japanese military transgressions. At the Tokyo Trials, General Matsui Iwane (one of three commanding Generals of the Nanjing assault) was tried with several others for war crimes.[102] However, only seven Japanese including Matsui were executed for their crimes.[103] During the Nanjing Trials, the KMT were far more interested in prosecuting Communist collaborators than Japanese war criminals.[104] The Nanjing Trials convicted 504 Japanese, sentenced 149 to death, but executed only four.[105] By comparison, more than 10,000 Chinese collaborators were convicted, with 342 executed.[106] And, when

[99] Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 400-401.

[100] Alexander and Guo, "Mass Murder and Trauma," 125.

[101] The KMT and CCP had escalated to a full-scale resumption of hostilities by July 1946. See; Hsu, *Modern China*, 619-643. See also; Stanley Karnow, *Mao and China; Inside China's Cultural Revolution*, (USA: Viking-Penguin, 1984), 52.

[102] Eykholt, *Chinese historiography*, 20.

[103] Ibid. 20.

[104] Ibid. 22.

[105] Ibid. 22. See also; Daqing Yang, "The Malleable and the Contested: The Nanjing Massacre in Postwar China and Japan", in *Perilous Memories*, ed. Geoffrey M. White, (USA: Duke University Press, 2001), 53.

[106] Eykholt, *Chinese historiography*, 22.

the KMT's rule of the mainland came to an abrupt halt with the Communist victory on 1st October 1949,[107] there ended the Nationalists' chance to memorialise Nanjing as a nation-defining trauma.

What then of the possibility of the CCP consecrating the events at Nanjing, incorporating them into their own narratives and eventually Chinese historical consciousness? The CCP had considerable control over the means of symbolic production in the aftermath of Nanjing, with no shortage of support and a range of media outlets both at home and abroad.[108] The CCP was well used to generating traumatic representations. Alexander and Guo argue that the CCP have long considered the history of their party as a series of traumatic events.[109] However, these were always within a clearly defined framework of political binaries, and the massacre did not fit into the CCP's pre-existing framework of cultural representations.

Mao very much defined the CCP against his nemesis, the arch-traitor of revolution, Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalists. Communist texts are full of narratives of traumas, historical injuries perpetrated by the KMT with the victims either being the Communist collectivity or the Chinese people themselves.[110] To have focussed on Nanjing would have forced the CCP to reframe its conception of both victim and perpetrator. As mentioned, there

[107] Mackerras, *Modern China*, 438.

[108] Alexander and Guo, "Mass Murder and Trauma," 124.

[109] Jeffrey C. Alexander and Rui Gao, "Remembrance of Things Past: Cultural Trauma, the 'Nanking Massacre' and Chinese Identity" in *Tradition and Modernity: Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Kang-I Sun Chang and Meng Hua, (China: Peking University Press, 2007), 271-272.

[110] Alexander and Guo, "Mass Murder and Trauma," 126.

were no Communist troops at Nanjing.[111] However, Volkan[112] and Alexander[113] agree that empirical accuracy often has little impact on the power of a cultural script. Indeed, cultural traumas may be narrated from completely imagined origins.[114] There was still therefore an opportunity to portray those killed as victims. But to consecrate the Nanjing massacre and its victims would have involved the consecration of victims of all classes, and a fair number of Nationalist troops. To comply with CCP traumatic narratives, any victims had to be not just Chinese compatriots but also the forces of progress.[115] And to cast the Japanese as the perpetrators and therefore the enemy would have been equally counterproductive. Defeat of the Japanese army and the end of hostilities would have resolved the trauma without the need for the glorious social revolution that was the CCP's *raison d'etre*.[116] The Second United Front was thus merely a marriage of convenience that could be explained away as short-term pragmatism.[117] Indeed, as soon as the Second Sino-Japanese War ended, the CCP immediately resumed its literal and cultural battle with its old enemy. So, both Nationalists and Communists had more than enough time and opportunity to construct Nanjing as a chosen, and potentially nation-defining, cultural trauma, but their pre-existing narratives prevented them. The carrier groups did not carry.[118]

There was of course a third possible carrier group for the generation of a traumatic master narrative centred on Nanjing - those who witnessed the events directly, the local

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[111] Ian Buruma, "The Joys and Perils of Victimhood", *New York Review of Books*, 46:6, (1999); 4-9.

[112] Volkan, "Transgenerational Transmission," 88

[113] Alexander, *Trauma*, 4

[114] Ibid. 13

[115] Alexander and Guo, "Mass Murder and Trauma," 127.

[116] Ibid. 127.

[117] Ibid. 126

[118] Ibid. 124.

population. However, after Nanjing fell in December 1937, it remained under Japanese occupation until their eventual surrender on 15th August 1945.[119] Thus, for more than seven years, the potential carrier group, and with them the trauma creation process, were under the control of the perpetrators.[120] Evidence of the massacre was destroyed and counternarratives disseminated within the Japanese occupied territories, effectively silencing these potential carriers.[121] It was impossible for the massacre to be consecrated at a local level when the perpetrators were in control of the means of symbolic production. Next, this thesis asks what changed that the CCP felt they needed to construct, or more properly reconstruct the events at Nanjing as a chosen cultural trauma.

From Victor to Victim

In the forty years since the death of China's Great Helmsman, Mao Zedong, four words have come to dominate the way the Chinese view their nation's history. 'Never Forget National Humiliation' (*wuwang guochi)*[122] has become a mantra for nationalistic Chinese both young and old.[123] The humiliation referred to relates to a period from 1839, the date of the commencement of the First Opium War,[124] to 1949, the year of the Communist revolution. The CCP claim their victory brought to an end what is referred to as China's 'Century of National Humiliation' (*bainian guochi*).[125] Schoolchildren are taught, not just the phrase, but to recall a long list of historical events whereby late-Qing and early-Republican China was

[119] Mackerras, *Modern China*, 412.

[120] Alexander and Guo, "Mass Murder and Trauma," 123.

[121] Ibid. 123.

[122] Wang, *Never Forget*, 3.

[123] Ibid. 4-5.

[124] See; Spence, *Modern China*, 152-158. Others such as Wang take 1840 as the start date. See; Wang, *Never Forget*, 6.

[125] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 215.

forced to acquiesce to European, Russian, American and, crucially, Japanese military and economic might.[126] This narrative of historical humiliation and victimhood is in stark contrast to the "China as victor"[127] narrative of glorious, inevitable revolution and class struggle which had dominated state-sanctioned historiography during the Mao era.[128] Indeed, China scholar William Callahan has referred to humiliation as the new "master narrative" of modern Chinese history.[129] But why the historiographical shift? What changed that the CCP's national narrative altered so dramatically? And why did the CCP think that claiming the status of victimhood on behalf of the Chinese nation was to its advantage? The answer lies not with a single event but with a combination of factors that shook the CCP's ontology and legitimacy to the core.

With Mao's death in 1976,[130] the CCP lost not only their figurehead but also a primary source of cultural legitimacy; the cult of personality which had been structured and developed around Mao.[131] The Chinese people, exhausted after twenty years of repression and economic stagnation, and the decade-long tumult of the Cultural Revolution, openly expressed their displeasure at the party.[132] Mao's 'anointed' successor, Hua Guofeng, despite his best efforts to copy Mao's personal style, including his haircut,[133] was not the solution. He survived less than two years, and has been consigned to history as a mere interregnum. Under

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[126] For full chronology of the "Century of National Humiliation" See; Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, Table 6.1, 217-219.

[127] Gries, *China's New Nationalism,* 79.

[128] Li, "Revolution to Modernization,*"* 337.

[129] William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives*, 29, (2004): 204.

[130] Mackerras, *Modern China*, 595.

[131] For a complete examination of this personality cult, particularly from 1966 onwards, see; Melissa Schrift, *Biography of a Chairman Mao Badge: The Creation and Mass Consumption of a Personality Cult*, (USA: Rutgers University Press, 2001).

[132] Richard Baum, *Burying Mao; Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping*, (USA: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3.

[133] Ibid. 51-52.

Deng Xiaoping's leadership[134] from 1978 onwards, China began the long and ongoing process of 'reform and opening up'.[135] China's formerly socialist economic structures and relationship to the means of production began to morph into something much more akin to capitalist relations.[136] The euphemistic label applied to this new economic system, "Socialism with Chinese characteristics,"[137] could perhaps disguise the processes behind reform, but could not disguise the changes which were becoming apparent within Chinese society. The country, which in theory at least, had been classless for thirty years, soon began to stratify as those positioned to take advantage of reforms did so, and made sums of money previously beyond their comprehension.[138]

As the ideologies of Marx, Lenin and Mao which had underpinned the CCP's claims to the rightful governance of China faded into history, so the party's political legitimacy faded with them. Combine this waning legitimacy with increasing inequalities, and the potential for social unrest, a long-time feature of Chinese life,[139] became manifold. The CCP's worst fears were realised in May/June of 1989 when student protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square

[134] Despite appointing younger, better qualified men to the top jobs within the Politburo, Deng was 'paramount leader' and the real power behind the CCP from 1978 until Jiang Zemin was appointed first Secretary General of the CCP in 1990, then President of China in 1993. See; Linda Benson, *China Since 1949*, Second Edition, (UK: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, 2011), 4 and 64.

[135] Ibid. 5.

[136] Yeonsik Choi, "The Evolution of "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics": Its Elliptical Structure of Socialist Principles and China's Realities", *Pacific Focus*, 26:3, (2011), 385-404.

[137] Choi, "The Evolution of Socialism".

[138] Li Shi, Hiroshi Sato and Terry Sicular, *Rising Inequality in China; Challenges to a Harmonious Society*, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1-2.

[139] Modern China has a long and sometimes proud history of social movements/social unrest. From the Taiping and Boxer Rebellions which tore Imperial China apart, to the nationalistic and progressive May Fourth and May Thirtieth Movements. See; Mackerras, *China in Transformation*. And see; Frederick Wakeman Jr., "Rebellions and Revolutions: The Study of Popular Movements in Chinese History", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 36:2, (1977): 201-237.

steadily escalated over a period of several weeks.[140] The decision to send in the People's Liberation Army on 4th June led to a bloody crackdown which was broadcast to the world and still frames Western understandings of China.[141] However, the historical trauma of Tiananmen Square is one event conspicuously absent from the calendar of remembrance in China.[142] With the fall of the Berlin Wall only a few months later,[143] and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991,[144] the CCP's need for a new source of legitimacy went from urgent to desperate. State-sanctioned historiography thus shifted as the CCP turned to the painful past to obfuscate the painful present.

Hutchison has argued that trauma can "be politically appropriated to strengthen prevailing forms of community."[145] Representations of trauma which fostered national unity through shared suffering would therefore serve the state well in this new China with its consumerism and class distinction.[146] Japanese atrocities were morally unambiguous and had the potential to focus social discontent on an external other, separate from the party/state.[147] And so it was that after fifty years in the shadows Nanjing was suddenly thrust into the spotlight. The CCP had begun the construction of the massacre as a chosen cultural trauma

[140] For an examination of the circumstances surrounding Tiananmen Square 1989, see; John Gittings, *The Changing Face of China; From Mao to Market*, (UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 223-249.

[141] See for example; Wang, *Never Forget*, 1. Wang cites 'Tank Man' as a popular Western image of modern China and the relationship between people and the state.

[142] There is similarly no place for any of the so-called 'dark anniversaries' such as the *Taiping Rebellion*, or the disastrous *Great Leap Forward* and *Cultural Revolution*. See; Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 223.

[143] See; Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, (USA: Vintage Books, 1998): 386-389.

[144] Ibid. 361-394.

[145] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 57.

[146] Kirk A. Denton, "Heroic Resistance and Victims of Atrocity: Negotiating the Memory of Japanese Imperialism in Chinese Museums", *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, (5:10), 2007: 2.

[147] Ibid. 2.

some years before[148] but the project took on a new urgency in light of these recent events. A shocking historical episode which had resurfaced in the 1980s as a means of political point scoring against the economically superior Japan was now transformed into something altogether more potent.

Remembering

In the explication of his theory, Alexander details the "institutional arenas"[149] which can be brought to bear in the construction of a cultural trauma. These include religious, legal, aesthetic, scientific, mass media and state bureaucracy.[150] Ordinarily, any group wishing to use these institutional areas for traumatic construction would be subject to the limitations of what Alexander calls "stratificational hierarchies";[151] their access to said institutions limited or constrained by the uneven distribution of power and resources within a society. However, in the Chinese case, due to the nature of the authoritarian political system, these institutional areas are in the full control of the party/state. The CCP can therefore use them at will to mediate powerfully the representational process and thus create a master narrative of social suffering. This process began in earnest in 1979[152].

After a fifty year absence, the first references to Nanjing began to appear in the very essence of bureaucratic cultural authority - school textbooks. Ever since the rise of the nation-state, history textbooks have been used by the body politic as instruments for the glorification

[148] See; Mark Eykholt, *Chinese historiography*, 28-45.

[149] Alexander, *Trauma*, 19.

[150] Ibid. 20–24.

[151] Ibid. 25.

[152] Alexander and Guo, "Mass Murder and Trauma," 122.

of the nation, to consolidate national identity, and to justify social and political systems.[153] A cursory glance at a nation's school texts therefore reveals not only the state's preferred version of the past, and with it national identity, but by their absence, the events that the state would rather its citizens forget. Indeed, it was bureaucratic historical revisionism, this time from Japan, which stimulated efforts to construct Nanjing as a chosen cultural trauma.

It is an oversimplification to argue, as Ian Buruma has, that whereas the Germans perhaps remember too much, the Japanese perhaps remember too little of their WWII transgressions.[154] There have always been politicians and scholars, particularly from the Japanese progressive left, who have fought to raise consciousness of Nanjing and other atrocities. Indeed, some of the best Nanjing scholarship has come from these sources.[155] However, there has also been an ever-present counter-narrative emanating from the conservative side of Japanese politics. This ranges from complete denial to concerted efforts to downplay the severity of crimes committed, and the number of Chinese casualties.[156] It was these conservative forces that attempted to purge WWII atrocities, including Nanjing, from school texts in 1982.[157] Japan's *aggressive war* became its *offensive war*, *invasions* became *advances,* and the atrocities at Nanjing were blamed on the resistance of locals to these *advances*.[158] News of the amendments generated a storm of public protest in China that was to background Sino-Japanese relations for the next fifteen years. It was also to

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[153] Wang, *Never Forget*, 23.

[154] See; Ian Buruma, *The Wages of Guilt*, (UK: Jonathan Cape, 1994).

[155] Arguably the most prominent Japanese scholar of the massacre is journalist Honda Katsuichi who pioneered Japanese research into Nanjing in the 1970s. See: Honda Katsuichi, *The Nanjing Massacre: A Japanese Journalist Confronts Japan's National Shame,* (UK: Routledge, 1999).

[156] See the anything but impartial: Kitamura Minoru, *The Politics of Nanjing: An Impartial Investigation*. (USA, University Press of America, 2007).

[157] Yang, "Malleable and Contested,*"* 62.

[158] Eykholt, *Chinese historiography*, 28.

provide a catalyst for traumatic cultural construction by the CCP using their considerable influence over aesthetic, mass media and bureaucratic institutional areas.

As a direct response to the so-called 'textbook controversy',[159] the CCP immediately drew up plans for the preeminent aesthetic representation of the massacre, an official site of memorialisation in Nanjing itself, the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum[160] (NMMM). Museums such as the NMMM have played an important role in the promulgation of a "discourse of victimization"[161] in modern China. Nothing in the museum is left to chance. Every component delivers a carefully calculated message designed to remind Chinese visitors, in Volkan's words, of the "massive trauma that the group's ancestors suffered at the hand of an enemy".[162] Even the date chosen for the opening was significant - the 15th August 1985 was the fortieth anniversary of Japanese surrender.[163] Visitors to the museum are confronted with the number 300,000 carved in stone into the entrance wall, and the word *Victims* in eleven different languages.[164] Visitors can be left in no doubt as to both the scale of the atrocities committed, the identity of the victim, and the depth of Chinese suffering.[165] The focus on empirical evidence continues inside the museum, its location chosen to sit atop one of the many mass graves uncovered in the years following the massacre.[166] Visitors are presented with exhibits including gruesome photographs, testimonies, and the bones of the

[159] Yoshida, *The Making of*, 89-93.

[160] The museum goes by several different names including *Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall* and *Memorial Hall to the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre*. See; Denton, "Heroic Resistance".

[161] Ibid. 3.

[162] Volkan, "Transgenerational Transmission," 79.

[163] Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, 610.

[164] Denton, "Heroic Resistance," 13.

[165] Eykholt, *Chinese historiography*, 49.

[166] Denton, "Exhibiting the Past," 9.

many victims uncovered, leaving no doubt as to the identity of the perpetrators.[167] This rather blunt-edged drive to prove the veracity and scale of the massacre was mirrored by the first wave of state-sponsored mass media representations which appeared on the mainland in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Xu Zhigeng's *Lest We Forget: Nanjing Massacre, 1937*[168] is typical of this first wave.[169] Published in 1995, the book features the same selection of grainy black and white images displayed in the museum.[170] Using these photographs, taken by Japanese soldiers,[171] was almost ubiquitous for the first tranche of books and movies. Indeed, the plot of Lou Guanqun's film, *Massacre in Nanjing* (1987), is centred on a Nanjing local's attempt to smuggle the photos out of the occupied city.[172] A second film, *Black Sun: The Nanjing Massacre* (1995) by T.F. Mou, also uses the photos to weave a powerful cinematic representation of the massacre. Mou splices the photographs into meticulous filmic re-enactments of the scenes immortalised by them.[173] *Black Sun* was particularly gruesome in its representation of the massacre. When it was eventually released in the United States in 2003, it was by a low budget distribution company specialising in schlock horror movies.[174] However, as crude as some of these early films and books were, their power in forming the popular understanding of the massacre in the minds of the Chinese people should not be underestimated. As Michael Berry notes,

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[167] Ibid. 9.

[168] Xu Zhigeng, *Lest We Forget: Nanjing Massacre, 1937*, (China: Chinese Literature Press, 1995).

[169] Other, proof driven Chinese language titles included, *A Collection of Testimonies by Survivors of the Rape of Nanjing Committed by the Invading Japanese Army*, and, *A Collection of Testimonies by Foreigners About the Rape of Nanjing Committed by the Invading Japanese Army*. See; Berry, *A History of Pain*, 111.

[170] Xu, *Lest We Forget*, 1-6.

[171] Berry, *A History of Pain*, 115.

[172] Ibid. 116.

[173] *Black Sun: The Nanking Massacre*. Directed by T. F. Mou. (1995; California: Unearthed Films, 2003), DVD.

[174] Berry, *A History of Pain*, 128.

"memories, perceptions and impressions of atrocity are often shaped not by the actual events of history but rather by how those events are represented, re-created, reconstructed, and, in some cases, deconstructed through the lens of popular culture".[175]

After its initial attempts at bureaucratic traumatogenesis with textbook revisions in the late 1970s, the CCP's inculcation of Chinese youth shifted gears with the launch of Jiang Zemin's Patriotic Education Campaign in 1991. The campaign urged schoolchildren to 'Never Forget National Humiliation', with the massacre being a central plank of this humiliation narrative. To underline the pedagogical importance of Nanjing in the hearts and minds of young Chinese, in 1996 the CCP made school visits to the museum compulsory for local children.[176] To cope with the influx of school groups, the museum was expanded considerably the following year, the sixtieth anniversary of the massacre. Floor space nearly doubled to 54,000 square metres.[177]

So, by 1997, though the master narrative of cultural trauma centred on Nanjing was by no means fully-formed, representations of the massacre had undergone a complete transformation. Consecrated by neither Nationalists nor Communists in the years immediately following the massacre, Nanjing then all but disappeared during the Mao era. Memorialisation would have run counter to the pre-existing narratives of glorious, inevitable revolution, the mainstay of Chinese historiography from 1949-1976. But changes in leadership and ideology, with concomitant questions of legitimacy, saw the massacre resurrected for political use, and resurrected with the full cultural power of the apparatus of the party/state. The carrier groups that had failed to carry at the time now used all their

[175] Ibid. 112.

[176] Eykholt, *Chinese historiography*, 36.

[177] Denton, "Exhibiting the Past", 8.

considerable symbolic resources to create a master narrative of cultural trauma around the Nanjing massacre.

Chapter One discussed why and how the Nanjing massacre was constructed in mainland China as a national level cultural trauma. Jeffrey Alexander's theory of cultural trauma has been applied, not only to the forgetting of the massacre, but also for the first time, to its remembering. In the following chapter, this thesis charts the concurrent development of trauma discourse in the West. This thesis argues that by 1997, when Iris Chang published *The Rape of Nanking*, trauma discourse had developed sufficiently that Chang's representation of the traumatic master narrative of Nanjing resonated profoundly with a receptive Western audience used to thinking about the past in terms of victims, perpetrators, and trauma.

Chapter Two – Why 1997?

Trauma: From the Margins to the Mainstream

Iris Chang published *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* in December 1997.[178] Its publication was timed quite deliberately to coincide with the event's 60th anniversary. However, if ever the Western world was ready to bear witness to an episode of historical trauma in a far-off land, it was the late 1990s. In their 2009 book, Didier Fassin and Richard Rechman name and describe *The Empire of Trauma*.[179] They argue that by the end of the twentieth century, a far-reaching restructuring of the cognitive and moral foundations of Western society had occurred.[180] This restructuring fundamentally altered our relationship to misfortune and those suffering it.[181] Over the course of the century, trauma changed from a singular, isolating, internal affliction which shattered a sufferer, to a collective experience, and one which, paradoxically, could lead to the formation of communities, united in their shared suffering.[182] Trauma had transformed from a medical condition into a cultural object[183] and a social phenomenon.[184]

This chapter details that transformation. It presents a brief history of trauma discourse in the West. It examines the historical processes, which led to the social conditions that allowed Iris Chang's plea for victimhood to find a receptive and understanding Western

[178] Paula Kamen, *Finding Iris Chang*, (USA: Perseus Books, 2007), ix.

[179] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*.

[180] Ibid. 7.

[181] Ibid. 7.

[182] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 3.

[183] Eric Werthheimer and Monica J. Caspar, "Within Trauma", in *Critical Trauma Studies: Understanding Violence, Conflict and Memory in Everyday Life*, eds. Eric Werthheimer and Monica J. Caspar, (USA: New York University Press, 2016), 3.

[184] Hutchinson, *Affective Communities*, 6.

audience. This audience were able to comprehend her text through the register of trauma. It traces the 'dual genealogy' of trauma discourse as both a medical and a moral social construction. As a fundamental part of this discourse formation, this thesis considers the impact of the preeminent and defining trauma of our age[185]: the Jewish Holocaust. The discovery of the extermination camps was to affect a traumatic paradigm shift, and the label 'Holocaust' was set to become a bridging metaphor and a floating moral signifier that Chang utilised powerfully. Finally, trauma having been democratised and universalised, this chapter considers the rising status of the victim, with trauma sufferers coming to represent the ultimate witnesses to the horrors of the age. However, the authority and social status afforded to the trauma sufferer in the late 1990s sat in stark contrast to the accusations of cowardice, malingering, hysteria and flat-out fiscal fraud which blighted the claims of sufferers earlier in the 20th century. And, just as the Nanjing massacre was socially constructed as a cultural trauma in China, so trauma discourse and the status of the 'victim as witness' were socially constructed in the West.[186] In the West as in China, the key to this construction was representation.

A History of Trauma

There is an intellectual history of trauma, which considers it primarily as a medical discourse.[187] This version of the past, elevates and valorises the work of clinicians in the reification and promulgation of a discourse of trauma within Western society. Indeed, the

[185] Alexander, *Trauma*, 64.

[186] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 6.

[187] See for example; Allan Young, *The Harmony of Illusion: Inventing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*, (USA: Princeton University Press, 1995).

importance of high-profile medical professionals should not be underestimated. However, the adoption of a purely clinical genealogy fails to recognise that societal morality has always been deeply implicated in the medical diagnosis of trauma.[188] The prevailing moral mood of Western society has at points influenced the clinical treatment of sufferers, and the often pejorative labels applied to them by clinicians.[189] The medical and the moral have been intertwined for over a century, and the causal relationship is far from unidirectional.[190] Clinicians should therefore be regarded more correctly as catalysts for a process of profound social change.[191] The 'empire of trauma' is the product not only of clinical medicine, but also of social history.[192]

Prior to the American Civil War, the term trauma was used purely to refer to physical injury,[193] and the word still has that dual clinical usage today. It was therefore understandable that John Erichsen and the "nerve specialists"[194] of the 1860s sought a physical source for the suffering of their patients. Erichsen studied those who had been in railway accidents and thereafter suffered from somatic symptoms. His diagnosis of "railway spine"[195] located the pathology within human physiology but was as much determined by society as by science. The new forces of industry harnessed during the Victorian era brought with them unprecedented productive potential, but from the beginning were associated with illnesses

[188] Paul Lerner and Mark. S. Micale, *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870-1930*, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 9.

[189] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 62-63.

[190] Ibid. 29.

[191] Ibid. 22.

[192] Ibid. 22. Fassin and Rechtman refer to this as trauma's "dual genealogy". See; Ibid. 8.

[193] Young, *The Harmony of Illusion,* 6.

[194] Lerner and Micale, *Traumatic Pasts*, 11.

[195] Ibid. 12.

of mind and body, and in particular the nervous system.[196] Erichsen's diagnosis was therefore reflective of society's concerns with the dawning of the modern era. Indeed, trauma discourse has from the beginning been embroiled with man's fears of modernity. Trauma has equally long reflected the relationship between an individual and society, represented by the individual's relationship with their nation and state.[197] But of course, the state has differing expectations of its citizens, depending upon where they are positioned within society. It was pointedly noted that those most likely to suffer from 'railway spine' were riding in the third-class carriages.[198] This moralising tone, a taint of fiscal impropriety, and a similarly deprecatory suggestion of weakness of character would hang over decades of traumatisation claims.

The association of trauma with inherent weakness had its origins in the study of female 'hysterics' by the early psychiatrists such as Charcot and his pupil Freud.[199] The associated diagnosis of 'trauma neurosis' was enshrined in German legislation in 1889[200] and only finally deleted from official medical parlance in the West as late as 1980.[201] Freud's contribution was to shift the pathogeny from the physical to the psychic, to connect trauma with the idea of latency, and to argue that it represented some form of unmastered memory;[202] a psychic wound which needed to be opened up to light and to air. However, the

[196] Ibid. 11-12.

[197] Ibid. 30.

[198] Eric Caplan, *Mind Games: American Culture and the Birth of Psychotherapy*, (USA: University of California Press, 2001), 16.

[199] Young, *The Harmony of Illusions*, 20.

[200] Lerner and Micale, *Traumatic Pasts*, 13.

[201] See; Cecelia Tasca et al, "Women and Hysteria in the History of Mental Health", *Clinical Practice & Epidemiology in Mental Health*, 8, (2012): 110.

[202] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 32-33.

wound was thought to be more due to the weakness of the sufferer than the severity of the event.

World War One then commenced at a global peak of patriotic and nationalistic fervour.[203] Rather than being 'over by Christmas' as many had initially predicted,[204] the grinding, trench-based warfare stretched the medical capacities of Allied and Central Powers alike.[205] The injuries sustained were not restricted to the physical. Vast numbers of front-line soldiers were diagnosed with "shell shock".[206] The medical treatment these men received had the singular aim of returning them to the front, often to their deaths. This was not only deeply pragmatic, it was also deeply moral, reflective of what their nations expected of those men. For men to be unwilling or incapable of fighting and dying was to shirk their responsibilities to their countries.[207] Their somatic symptoms were not regarded as the product of historical suffering, but instead of their own making.[208] And as the men were deemed to be at fault and not the war, the brutal 'cures' offered for shell shock reflected this morality.[209] Traumatised soldiers were often forced to admit their weakness for their trauma to be recognised.[210] These shattered individuals were far from the respected witnesses of the horror of conflict they

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[203] Ibid. 63.

[204] James Simms, "Over By Christmas?", *Military History*, 33: 5, (2017): 54-59.

[205] Ibid. 56.

[206] Marc-Antoine Croiq and Louis Croiq, "From shellshock and war neuroses to posttraumatic stress disorder; a history of psychotraumatology", *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience*, 2:1, (2000): 49.

[207] Thomas Lacqueur, "We Are All Victims Now", Book review of *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*, by Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman, translated by Rachel Gomme. *London Review of Books*, 32:13, (2010), 21.

[208] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 63.

[209] Treatments included isolation, electroshock therapy, restricted diets and shouted commands. See; Peter Howarth, "The treatment of shell-shock: Cognitive therapy before its time", *Psychiatric Bulletin*, 24, (2000): 226. Austrian psychiatrist Wagner von Jaureg faced criminal proceedings after the war due to his use of electroshock treatment. See; Lacquer, "We Are All Victims Now," 20.

[210] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 63.

would become in later years. This climate of suspicion persisted up to and including World War Two (WWII), with traumatically affected soldiers still being regarded as weak and treated accordingly.[211] It would take the 'discovery'[212] of the Nazi extermination camps by American troops to affect a paradigm shift. It was Auschwitz which set trauma on a new course.[213]

The Defining Trauma of Our Age

The liberation of the camps and the emergence of the emaciated individuals who had been fortunate enough to escape with their lives, called for a complete reassessment of both the etiological origins of trauma and the veracity of the claims of sufferers. The traits exhibited by these few poor souls were identical in many cases to those of allegedly 'cowardly' soldiers.[214] And yet, there was no possibility that these broken men, women and children could be regarded as cowards, malingerers, or worse still, frauds. A new paradigm of trauma was required in which the event was traumatogenic.[215] Over the next several decades, a paradigm with the Holocaust at its very centre was duly constructed, its construction driven just as much by survivors and the society in which they would live out the rest of their lives, as by the clinicians who would treat them. This paradigm shift would see traumatic experience reconfigured not as individual suffering, but as collective social memory. The survivors of the camps came to represent more than just themselves. They also bore witness to the untold

[211] Ibid. 66-70.

[212] The Allies were all too aware of the presence of Nazi extermination camps in 1943 but, in spite of pleas by Jewish lobbyists, chose to focus their efforts elsewhere during the conflict. See; Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Culture trauma, morality and solidarity: The social construction of "Holocaust' and other mass murders", *Thesis Eleven*, 132:1, (2016): 5.

[213] Lacqueur, "We Are All Victims Now", 20.

[214] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 71

[215] Ibid. 71.

stories of those who did not escape the Nazi horror.[216] More than that, traumatic experience and the recounting of it came to be regarded not as a testimony of individual, subjective experience, but universalised and thus representative of all human experience.[217] The victim as witness was born.[218] How then, did the Jewish genocide become the preeminent trauma of the 20th century and the defining mark of the epoch?[219] How was a historical tragedy affecting one ethnic group universalised so as to speak to all of us, and speak for all of us? First, the 'Holocaust' itself would have to be constructed as the ultimate example of a trauma. The key to this process, as with the construction of the Nanjing massacre as a cultural trauma in China, was representation.

Jeffrey Alexander posits in his social theory of cultural trauma, that for an audience to be receptive to the suffering of others they need to relate to the victims.[220] For it to exist at all, the trauma in question must be coded in terms so as to be easily understood and relatable. It must be weighted so that society understands its severity, and it must be narrated, represented in popular forms and disseminated freely.[221] Even the unfamiliar must be made to appear familiar.[222] All collective trauma is thus mediated.[223] The coding of the Holocaust trauma narrative began with the choice of epithet itself. At the most fundamental level, the words we choose to represent particular events are the most basic units of the narratives we

[216] Ibid. 72.

[217] Ibid. 72.

[218] Lacqueur, "We Are All Victims Now", 20.

[219] Alexander, *Trauma*, 56.

[220] Ibid. 18.

[221] Ibid. 35 - 38

[222] Ibid. 38.

[223] Ibid. 35.

form around them.[224] Words gain relevance and meaning from the social context in which they emerge.[225] These discursive symbols are therefore far from passive, and shared meanings and understandings of episodes of history begin with the value-laden labels we apply to them.[226] The word 'holocaust', meaning something burnt up entirely,[227] was first used to refer to the Jewish genocide as it was occurring, and was quoted in the *Israeli Declaration of Independence* of 1948.[228] However, it only became a key descriptor after the opening of *Yad Vashem*, *The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre*, in 1953.[229] This again, like the Nanjing Museum, demonstrates the importance of having a physical, aesthetic site of representation in the promulgation of a traumatic master narrative. The appellation became even more commonly associated with the event following the intense global interest in the Adolf Eichmann trial of 1961.[230] Through this largely retrospective construction,[231] the Jewish genocide gained an epithet that meant so much but at the same time was so perfectly non-referential.[232] This very non-referentiality was to prove crucial in its subsequent universalisation. The new appellation for the ultimate trauma allowed it to become a bridging

[224] Zev Garber and Bruce Zuckerman, "Why Do We Call the Holocaust "The Holocaust?" An Inquiry into the Psychology of Labels", *Modern Judaism*, 9:2, (1999): 197-211.

[225] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 58.

[226] The Rape of Nanking/Nanking Massacre/Nanking Atrocity/ Nanking Incident is an excellent example of this. See footnote 8.

[227] Garber and Zuckerman, *Why Do We Call*, 198.

[228] At this point, however, it had not yet gained the capital "H". See; "Declaration of Establishment of State of Israel", 14th May 1948. *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website*. Accessed online, 19th September 2017. http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/declaration%20of%20establishment%20of%20state%20of%20israel.aspx

[229] *Yad Vashem Website*, The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre. Accessed online 19 November 2017. http://www.yadvashem.org/ See; David B. Macdonald, "Forgetting and Denying: Iris Chang, the Holocaust and the Challenge of Nanking", *International Politics*, 0, (2005): 13.

[230] Alexander, *Culture trauma*, 6.

[231] Peter Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory*, (UK: Bloomsbury, 1999), 20.

[232] Alexander, *Trauma*, 58.

metaphor,[233] enabling a symbolic and affective extension between the Holocaust and other tragic historical or contemporary episodes of mass death and suffering. The word 'Holocaust' provided the symbolic extension for the trauma of the Jews to become the trauma of humankind.[234]

Running concurrently with the social coding of the Jewish genocide, there was a clinical coding, or more accurately a re-coding, of the trauma suffered by survivors. The post-war period coincided with the heyday in the West (especially the United States) of psychoanalysis. The discipline was far better suited to explaining the etiology of Holocaust trauma than previous psychiatric understandings which blamed weakness within the sufferer. As a result, the old diagnosis of 'traumatic neurosis' was gradually replaced by 'survivor syndrome' or 'survivor guilt' as the new crop of psychoanalysts such as Robert Jay Lifton and Bruno Bettelheim sought to explain the symptoms of camp survivors.[235] This new nomenclature represented a major somatic recoding. Trauma victims became not merely sufferers, but simultaneously sufferers and *survivors*. This new label, ascribing a degree of agency, reflected the shifting clinical and social attitude to the plight of the Jews. The label *survivor* would go on to become a marker applied to those suffering from traumas ranging from cancer to childhood sexual abuse and most things in between. "Almost everyone has become a 'survivor' of something", notes Thomas Lacqueur, somewhat cynically.[236]

Having been coded as a trauma, the Holocaust had then to be weighted as such, leaving those bearing witness in no doubt as to the extent and severity of the horrors

[233] Ibid. 58.

[234] Ibid. 58.

[235] Lacqueur, "We Are All Victims Now", 20.

[236] Ibid. 21.

perpetrated upon the Jews, and the guilt of those responsible. Again, this occurred over a period of many years. For the Holocaust to be weighted as a sacred-evil, it had to be reconfigured as being atypical, with no historical precedent, and as a manifestation of evil on a scale the likes of which man had never seen before.[237] It therefore became an end point, an inexplicable tragedy, but one which contained lessons for us all, lessons which must be learned in order that there is never a repeat of such sacred-evil.[238]

And finally, after being coded, labelled, and weighted as the ultimate example of evil, the Holocaust then had to be narrated, represented so as to be understood by all. In the years immediately following the end of the war, the Jews and the horrors which befell them were perhaps just too other to have the effect of inculcating a traumatic narrative in Western society.[239] Reflective of this, early popular filmic and televisual representations of the Nazi concentration camps were centred not on the tragedy of the Jews, but on the plight of American GI's;[240] more relatable characters in what Alexander calls the emerging "trauma-drama"[241] of the Holocaust. Indeed, it would take many years for the Holocaust narrative to fully form, this very latency seemingly confirming the traumatic nature of the suffering in question.[242] When representations began to appear, they were centred on the stories of

[237] Ibid. 56.

[238] Ibid. 59.

[239] It serves not to forget that prior to WWII, Jews had been regarded as "nefarious and subhuman" and persecuted across the Western world for many centuries. See; Alexander, *Culture trauma*, 4. "Judeo-Christian" as a label was only reified following the Holocaust in the early 1950's. See; Mark Silk, "Notes On The Judeo-Christian Tradition in America", *American Quarterly*, 36:1, (1984): 65-85.

[240] For example, 1953's *Stalag 17* and *Hogan's Heroes* from the early 1960s. Both focussed on American soldiers, neither mentioned the Jews. See; Alexander, *Trauma*, 67-68.

[241] Ibid. 65.

[242] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 18.

individuals, of husbands and wives, brothers and sisters. The victims thus became *every* husband, wife, brother or sister.[243]

Anne Frank's famous *Diary* was very much the prototype for this form of representation, and despite its obvious potency took well over a decade to migrate from initial publication in Dutch in 1947, to the immensely influential movie of 1959.[244] As in the case of *Diary*, much of the narration of the Holocaust as trauma-drama was done by the victims themselves, the first wave taking the form of diaries and memoirs.[245] These personal utterances contained the inherent process of testimony, a key element to the clinical thinking of the day regarding trauma.[246] Testimony, speaking to and through the horrors of trauma, is still regarded as a key component of the recovery process.[247] It also represents a narrative, a story, the most natural and flexible of human communications in its purest form.[248] These survivors told not just their own stories, but those of the Jews who had not survived the camps.

Popular televisual representations would follow beginning with the mini-series *Holocaust* which brought the Jewish genocide into the living rooms of huge Western audiences in the late 1970s. The series, which focussed almost exclusively on Jewish victimhood,[249] was watched by more than 120 million Americans, roughly half the nation's

[243] Alexander, *Trauma*, 65.

[244] Ibid. 65.

[245] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 18.

[246] Claudia Welz, "Trauma, memory, testimony. Phenomenological, psychological, and ethical perspectives", *Jewish Studies in the Nordic Countries Today*, 27, (2016): 122.

[247] See, for example; Judith Herman Lewis, *Trauma and Recovery*.

[248] Alexander, *Trauma*, 94.

[249] Tom Dreisbach, "Transatlantic Broadcasts: 'Holocaust' in American and West Germany", *Penn History Review*, 16:2, (2009): 77.

population, the vast majority of them non-Jewish.[250] Alexander argues that "(s)uch dramaturgical personalization of Jewish victims began transforming the Holocaust from an historical event into a deeply moving trauma-drama".[251] Reviews were mixed but regardless, *Holocaust* and the ensuing media debate was an important step in the universalisation of the trauma of the Jewish genocide.[252] It may even have encouraged the creation of the Holocaust Memorial Commission and latterly the United States Holocaust Memorial.[253] The commission was formed a mere two weeks after the show aired.[254]

Arguably the preeminent popular representation of the Holocaust trauma-drama came in 1993 in the form of Steven Spielberg's multi-Oscar winning *Schindler's List*.[255] The film was the first studio production to deal directly with the gravity of the Holocaust, and was made by the most commercially successful director in movie history, who also happened to be Jewish.[256] Even more so that *Holocaust*, *Schindler's List* penetrated popular historical consciousness and transformed how the Judeocide[257] was and is perceived by millions across the globe.[258] It also represented an epistemological shift in the portrayal of the Holocaust, being "a film about survival rather than death, redemption instead of annihilation."[259] This

[250] Ibid. 76 and 79.

[251] Alexander, *Culture trauma*, 6.

[252] Dreisbach, "Transatlantic Broadcasts," 86.

[253] Ibid. 76 and 92.

[254] Ibid. 91.

[255] William Grimes. "Spielberg Wins at Last With 7 Oscars for 'Schindler's List", *The New York Times*, 22 March 1994. Accessed online 5 September 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/1994/03/22/movies/spielberg-wins-at-last-with-7-oscars-for-schindler-s-list.html?pagewanted=print

[256] Loshitzky, *Introduction*, 2.

[257] The term 'Judeocide' was first coined by Arno Mayer in 1988. See; Arno Mayer, *Why Did The Heavens Not Darken? The 'Final Solution' in History*, (USA: Pantheon, 1988), vii.

[258] Ibid. 3.

[259] Ibid. 3.

representational shift was concurrent to the clinical and moral shift to the appellation *survivor*. The film also introduced a powerful new character into the cast of the Holocaust trauma-drama: The Good Nazi.[260]

Thanks to this gradual but comprehensive process of coding, weighting and narration through representation, the Holocaust was decontextualised, universalised and generalised.[261] It was recoded as a less nationally bound, less temporally specific, more universal trauma-drama.[262] The term thus became both a bridging metaphor, allowing symbolic extension to other mass ethnic killings, and a floating signifier,[263] the term now invoking a defined and understood moral framework. This symbolic potency is the reason why, since as early as the late 1960s, the term has been appropriated by various social and ethnic causes. Its popularity arose precisely because of the established notions of right and wrong, good and evil, guilt and innocence, which it had come to represent. In the 1960s, the term was applied to the treatment of various minority ethnic groups in the United States by the government, especially native Americans.[264] In the 1980s, the world feared a 'Nuclear holocaust', the prospect of mutually assured destruction rebranded to reflect this emerging universal morality.[265]

In the early 1990s, the term was applied to the ethnic cleansing occurring in the former Yugoslavia.[266] In the case of the Balkan 'holocaust', the application of the term became

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[260] Haim Bresheeth, "*The Great Taboo Broken: Reflections on the Israeli Reception of 'Schindler's List'*", in *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List,* ed. Yosefa Loshitzky, (USA: Indiana University Press, 1997), 201-202.

[261] Alexander, *Trauma*, 55.

[262] Ibid. 63

[263] Ibid. 63.

[264] Alexander, *Trauma*, 79.

[265] Ibid. 79.

[266] Ibid. p. 80.

associated with successful political action. U.S. President Bill Clinton invoked images of the Jewish genocide as justification for successful military action against the Serbs.[267] This demonstrated not only the validity of the use of the holocaust label, but that a post-Holocaust social morality could be realised in a practical manner; rhetoric could be followed up with action.[268] The successful application of the holocaust bridging metaphor and floating signifier to an episode of ethnic wrongdoing and injustice, resulting in global condemnation and a positive political outcome, cannot have gone unnoticed by activists the world over. With the Holocaust having been established as the preeminent trauma of our age, and the moral framework having been constructed around the application of the label, traumatic suffering then had to be democratised so that it spoke to more than the suffering of the Jews or the horrors experienced by soldiers at war. Though it was precisely the suffering of thousands of traumatised Vietnam veterans which would provide the next catalyst for this process.

"We Are All Victims Now"

The Vietnam War was a disaster for the United States of America. Not only did the war cost more than US$100 billion[269] and the lives of close to 60,000 Americans,[270] but huge numbers of the young men who survived the hell of jungle combat came home still experiencing the fighting they had left behind thousands of miles away. Further, many of these men had been traumatised as much by their own actions as by the actions of the enemy. Prominent popular

[267] Ibid. p. 81.

[268] Ibid. p. 82.

[269] This is equivalent to a trillion today. See; Stephen Daggett, "Cost of Major U.S. Wars", *Congressional Research Service*, 29th June 2010. Accessed online, 19th September 2017. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22926.pdf

[270] John Tirman, *The Deaths of Others: The Fate of Civilians in America's Wars*, (USA: Oxford University Press, 2012): 125.

representations of their suffering such as Michael Cimino's Academy Award winning 1978 film epic *The Deer Hunter*,[271] demonstrated the trauma of the perpetrator and elicited a sympathetic reaction from the public to the men's collective suffering.[272] In 1980, when the American Psychiatric Association published the third edition of its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSMIII)[273] it contained fundamental changes which reflected this shifting social attitude. Not only did this version of the manual finally delete 'hysterical neurosis', it also introduced a formal diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).[274] With this clinical proclamation, the status of returned soldiers suffering trauma irrevocably changed. The decades-old climate of suspicion and doubt was erased, and the 'victim' label was extended to those who may previously have been considered perpetrators.[275] Sufferers now had the appropriate diagnosis for their symptoms, and one which entitled them to fiscal recompense. There are currently more than 340,000 American Vietnam war veterans receiving social security payments for PTSD of up to US$3,000 per week.[276] The breakthrough of the PTSD diagnosis represented a huge step forward for the sufferers of trauma. However, the democratisation of trauma did not end with this single clinical judgement. For trauma to become truly universal, for all of us to become its potential victims, the appellation would have to be extended to include more than just veterans.

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[271] Robert McGill, *War Is Here: The Vietnam War and Canadian Literature*, (USA: Queen's University Press, 2017): 201.

[272] Ibid. 201.

[273] Lerner and Micale, *Traumatic Pasts*, 1.

[274] Ibid. 1.

[275] Lacqueur, "We Are All Victims Now", 21.

[276] Alan Zarembo, "As disability awards grow, so do concerns with the veracity of PTSD claims", *Los Angeles Times*, 3rd August, 2014. Accessed online 19th September 2017. http://www.latimes.com/local/la-me-ptsd-disability-20140804-story.html

The 1990s saw the commencement of feminism's "third wave".[277] Amongst other key issues, this push for women's rights included a renewed focus on gender violence and rape which had been a core aim of feminism's "second wave".[278] The Balkans conflict demonstrated to an outraged world that sexual violence against women was still part and parcel of modern conflict. Serbian forces are thought to have raped up to 50,000 Bosnian women.[279] During the early part of the 1990s, there were notable legislative moves designed to offer increased legal protections for women who suffered abuse – sexual or physical - at the hands of a husband or partner.[280] These changes reflected an increased awareness within Western societies of the plight of women, and an increased willingness to act on their behalf. However, many dissatisfied women took matters into their own hands in their push for equality and co-opted a discourse of trauma to assist them.

Emboldened by 1980s PTSD judgement, empowered by legislative changes, and equipped with a new language of trauma, key theorists such as Judith Lewis Herman contested that the symptoms of abused women were no different to the symptoms of returned soldiers.[281] They successfully argued that the status now afforded to these traumatised men should be extended to traumatised women, for example the victims of rape, sexual assault and domestic battery. The very label of 'traumatised' thus now carried with it notions of right and wrong, and the somatic symptoms of violent trauma brought with them

[277] R. Clare Snyder, "What Is Third-Wave Feminism? A New Directions Essay", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 34:1, (2008): 175-193.

[278] Ibid. 179.

[279] Elizabeth A. Kohn, "Rape as a Weapon of War: Women's Human Rights during the Dissolution of Yugoslavia", *Golden Gate University Law Review*, (1994): 199.

[280] For example, the USA's 1994 The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). See; Lisa, N. Sacco, "The Violence Against Women Act: Overview, Legislation, and Federal Funding", *Congressional Research Service*, 26th May 2015. Accessed online 20th September 2017. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42499.pdf

[281] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*.

status, and the right to fiscal compensation. The medical and social construction of the empire of trauma has therefore not only "created new avenues for exposing the reality of persecution and prejudice" but it has also "given the victims of such persecution a tool in their struggle for recognition and compensation."[282]

Since the PTSD judgement, there has been a further shift in the position of the victim. The authority to speak in the name of trauma victims is now measured by the speaker's personal proximity to the traumatic event.[283] This was contingent to the event being consecrated as the etiological root of the trauma. As such, the words of victims and their spokespeople came to have a form of moral authority.[284] This again is a complete transformation from the early part of the century. As shall be discussed, Iris Chang's position as spokesperson for the victims of Nanjing gained much potency thanks to this shift. Not only was she a member of the ethnic community most affected by the massacre, but as a granddaughter of 'survivors' of Nanjing, her testimony was perceived as having status and authority when it came to speaking for the victims.

And so, in 1997, Iris Chang published *The Rape of Nanking* into a fully engorged, socially constructed Western discourse of trauma. The status of the sufferer of violence, past and present, had been elevated to that of the true witness of the horrors of the modern era. This represented a remarkable turnaround from earlier conceptions of trauma and those suffering its effects. The suspicion and insinuation of inherent weakness that had tainted opinion of 'hysterics' and those suffering from the symptoms of trauma since the Victorian era had vanished entirely. Trauma sufferers were now not only representative of their own

[282] Lacquer, "We Are All Victims Now," 19.

[283] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 28.

[284] Stephen Hopgood, *The Endtime of Human Rights*, (USA: Cornell University Press, 2013), 75.

experience, but the suffering of humanity. Moreover, this suffering was no longer contested. Where it once elicited scorn and suspicion, trauma now testified to an experience which excites sympathy and merits compensation.[285] To deny a victim this status was to injure them a second time.[286] Trauma, where once it had shattered and fragmented individuals, had been socially transformed into a collective experience that could unite communities, whether Jewish survivors, returned soldiers or abused women. Crucially, the closer victims were to the traumatogenic event, either by physical or temporal proximity or by emotional extension, the more credibility their story carried. A victim's testimony, the narrative of suffering, held a moral authority like never before.

By 1997 trauma discourse was so enmeshed in the Western way of thinking about and understanding, not only the present but also the past, that everyone was a potential victim, everyone a potential perpetrator, and everyone a witness to the horror of modernity: no audience could legitimately distance itself from the suffering of a collective.[287] And with the use of the label 'holocaust' now representative of a threat to humanity, it was impossible to imagine a sacrifice too great if the very fate of humanity was at stake.[288] In the chapter which follows, this paper will argue that Iris Chang's *The Rape of Nanking* was the representational nexus of the historical and social processes discussed in Chapters One and Two. Her impassioned narration of the cultural trauma of Nanjing, was written and structured to be readily decoded in traumatic terms.

[285] Lacquer, "We Are All Victims Now," 19.

[286] Ibid. 20.

[287] Alexander, *Culture trauma*, 9.

[288] Alexander, *Trauma*, 77.

Chapter Three – Why Iris Chang's "*The Rape of Nanking*"?

From Macro to Micro

To best understand and explain the what gave *The Rape of Nanking* its potency and resonance, this thesis has so far looked at parallel historical processes at work in China and the West. Chapter One addressed the question, *Why Nanjing?* It argued that despite there being numerous potentially more traumatic and certainly more devastating incidents in China's twentieth century history, the CCP chose to construct the massacre as a cultural trauma, primarily for the purposes of galvanising a new national identity. Chapter Two considered the question *Why 1997?* It charted the emergence of a socially constructed Western discourse of trauma centred on the Holocaust, which by the late 1990s had seen a remarkable turnaround in the status of the victim, and general societal attitudes to sufferers of misfortune, past and present.

Rather than the macro approach taken to the broad historical processes at work in the first two chapters, Chapter Three will focus on the micro, asking *Why Iris Chang's 'The Rape of Nanking'?* Again, the most compelling answers to the question can be found if one considers the situation through a primary theoretical lens of trauma. This chapter will examine the immediate circumstances surrounding the book's publication, and briefly, its reception by American media outlets. It addresses three key areas. The first is Chang's position as a member of the Chinese diaspora[289] in North America, and the role of that

[289] This thesis uses the terms 'Chinese diaspora' in a similar manner to which it employs the term 'West', see footnote 7. It is not used in an attempt to homogenise all ethnic Chinese living outside of China, nor indeed to apply a label purely on the basis of ethnicity, but to facilitate discussing the broad responses of a group. Diaspora is also used to emphasise the "ideological relationship which can form between centres and peripheries", a fundamental element of the identity formation processes being discussed. See; Koh, *Diaspora at War,* 11.

diaspora in the dissemination of Nanjing's traumatic master narrative. The second will be to examine Chang's text itself. Although the word 'trauma' rarely appears in print, the language, emotion, and affect contained within its narrative, and indeed, the structure of that narrative, are all deeply embedded within trauma discourse. And finally, the third area of discussion will be how *The Rape of Nanking* was received and understood by prominent American media outlets, and by the Jewish American diaspora. Far from being accused of inappropriate 'word napping', Chang was welcomed with open arms by a much larger and more powerful community than her own, again one formed around historical trauma.

Trauma, Representation and Diasporic Identity

Due to a particular set of historical circumstances, the West has always been involved in the representation of the very Eastern tragedy that is the Nanjing massacre. Therefore, the practice of remembering and representing Nanjing has never been solely limited to Asia. There were a number of foreign correspondents in the city in December 1937, there to report on Japanese attempts to push west into China.[290] As a consequence, the IJA's assault on Nanjing made the front page of *The New York Times* on 18th December 1937.[291] Similar reports appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*[292] and the *Manchester Guardian*.[293] However, the Japanese

[290] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 144-145.

[291] "US Naval Display Reported Likely Unless Japan Guarantees Our Rights: Butchery Marked Capture Of Nanking", *The New York Times*, (18 December 1937). Accessed online 21 June 2017. http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=9400E3DC113DE23ABC4052DFB467838C629EDE&legacy=true

[292] C. Yates McDaniel, "Nanking Horror Described in Diary of War Reporter", *Chicago Tribune*, 18 December, 1937. Accessed online 20 July 2017. http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1937/12/18/page/8/article/nanking-horror-described-in-diary-of-war-reporter

[293] For details of Australian, Harold Timperley's reporting from war-torn China See John Gittings, "Japan rewrites Guardian history", *The Guardian*, 4 October 2002. Accessed online 21 June 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/oct/04/artsandhumanities.japan

were only too happy to assist journalists in safe passage out of Nanjing; the *Times'* F. Tillman Durdin, had actually left prior to the publication of his cover story on the 18th.[294]

As the Chinese capital, Nanjing also had a relatively large number of foreign nationals living there, many of whom had families, born and raised in China. A core group of these men and women – as will be discussed - chose to remain with their homes, their businesses, and their local employees despite considerable risk to their personal safety. They thus bore witness to much of the death and destruction wrought by the IJA. Many of these Westerners recorded what they saw and heard in personal diaries and letters to loved ones. Several of these eyewitness accounts subsequently appeared in prominent Western media outlets.[295] However, by late 1938, interest in the plight of China waned as the West became increasingly concerned with the rise of Hitler and the Reich. And with that, the control over the symbolic production of the Nanjing massacre master narrative moved firmly back to Asia for the next fifty years.

As discussed, the perpetrators of the atrocities, the Japanese, had no interest in generating representations of the massacre. As also discussed, for various political reasons, neither did the Chinese. Indeed, remembrance of the massacre was shunned first by the KMT, then from 1949 by the CCP, with the party/state firmly in control of the means of cultural production. Consequently, in the first five decades after Nanjing, creative attempts to represent the massacre were so few as to go almost unnoticed.[296] This sits in stark contrast to representations of the Nazi Judeocide which over the same period generated a body of

[294] Durdin left with most of his contemporaries on the 15th December. See; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 145.

[295] Excerpts from the diary of George Fitch, an American missionary, were published in various outlets including *Time* and *Reader's Digest*. See; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 155.

[296] Berry, *History of Pain*, 112.

work either reflecting on, or set against it, sufficient that Holocaust literature and film can be considered as "distinct and powerful genres in their own right".[297]

Creative representations of Nanjing only appeared on the mainland in the 1980s, beginning with the initial tranche of Chinese language films referred to previously. How far these films penetrated Western historical consciousness is unclear. VHS cassettes may have been available to members of the Chinese-speaking diaspora, but none of the films gained commercial release in the West at the time.[298] Xu Zhigeng's book, *Lest We Forget: Nanjing Massacre, 1937* was, however, translated into English and published in 1995. Xu, "a veteran author of party sponsored reportage"[299] appears inside the dust cover in full military garb, and the book won numerous awards on the mainland.[300] It can therefore be understood as offering a reflection of the CCP-sanctioned master narrative, as it existed on the mainland at that time. Xu's volume is similar to Chang's in certain ways – the title contains an analogous call for remembrance - but very different in others. The ubiquitous grainy black and white photographs appear as a horrendous preface to the text, but Xu's writing is dry, and he lacks Chang's obvious emotional connection to the events. *Lest We Forget's* 300 pages are divided into no less that fifteen chapters plus epilogue and appendices.[301] Those appendices feature diary excerpts written by American Robert Wilson, the only surgeon who remained in Nanjing following the Japanese assault.[302] They also feature the names of the *Nanking International Safety Zone Committee*,[303] of which Wilson was a member. Xu's decision to consign Wilson's

[297] Berry, *History of Pain*, 111.

[298] Ibid. 128.

[299] Ibid. 139. Footnote.

[300] Ibid. 139.

[301] Xu, *Lest We Forget*, Contents.

[302] Ibid. 266.

[303] Ibid. 306.

testimony to an appendix, itself anonymously titled "The Diary of an American Eyewitness"[304] speaks volumes about where he, and therefore the CCP, saw the role of the Western witnesses at the time of publication; they were little more than an anonymous epilogue in the Nanjing massacre master narrative. This was about to change. In the 1990s, the CCP lost their iron grip on the master narrative as the story was told and retold by a new carrier group; members of the Chinese diaspora. These diasporans were in a unique position when it came to telling histories; they were simultaneously insiders and outsiders. They were insiders because of their ethnicity, and outsiders due to their geographical, temporal and often also generational distance from the traumatic event.[305]

Iris Chang's 1997 *The Rape of Nanking* became the preeminent diasporic literary representation of the massacre, and it was also one of the first. 1995 saw the publication of *Tree of Heaven* by R. C. Binstock[306] and *Tent of Orange Mist* by Paul West,[307] two romance novels set in Nanjing at the time of the Japanese assault. West was English and Binstock, American, both men, both non-Chinese. Chang mentions the novels early in her own book.[308] She also mentions 1996's *The Rape of Nanking: An Undeniable History in Photographs*,[309] a coffee table sized pictorial book – though quite how many coffee tables it went on to adorn is unclear – with a foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. She also acknowledges that she only became aware of the three books she at a 1994 conference and exhibition in Cupertino,

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[304] Ibid. 266.

[305] Pin-chia Feng, "Remembering Nanking: historical reconstructions and literary memorializations of the Nanking Massacre", *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 18:1, (2017): 77.

[306] R. C. Binstock, *Tree of Heaven*, (USA: R.C. Binstock Books, 1995).

[307] Paul West, *Tent of Orange Mist*, (UK: Simon and Schuster Ltd., 1995).

[308] Chang, *Rape of Nanking*, 10.

[309] Shi Young and James Yin, *The Rape of Nanking: An Undeniable History In Photographs*, Ron Dorfman (ed), Second Edition, (USA: Innovative Publishing Group, 1996). See; Chang, Rape of Nanking, 10.

California. This conference has become a critical component in Iris Chang's personal mythology, often being incorrectly cited as her principal inspiration for writing *The Rape of Nanking*.[310] Again, the same disturbing visual images featured prominently, this time blown up to poster-size.[311]

They must have been gruesome and powerful representations for anyone viewing them, especially for Chang who was already invested in the story of the massacre, and had been since childhood. A young Iris was told tales of the Japanese atrocities at Nanjing over the dinner table by her parents, including of babies sliced "not just in half but in thirds and fourths".[312] They had previously heard the same stories from Chang's grandparents, who had fled Nanjing shortly before the Japanese assault began.[313] The unmediated visual representations of trauma in Cupertino resulted in something of an epiphany for Chang. In "a single blinding moment"[314] she resolved to tell the stories of the Chinese victims in the photographs who were unable to speak for themselves. Tellingly, Chang chose to include the same photographs in the centre section of her book.[315]

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[310] See, for example; Alice Yang and Alan S. Christy, "Eternal Flames: The Translingual Imperative in the Study of World War II Memories", in *Doing Recent History*, eds. Clare Bond Potter and Renee C. Romano, (USA: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 230. See also; Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, "Iris Chang Reassessed: A Polemical Introduction to the Second Edition", in *The Nanjing Atrocity: Complicating the Picture*, Second Edition, ed. Bob Tadashi Wakayabashi, (USA: Bergharn Books, 2017), xxxiii. Wakabayashi describes the conference as Chang's *deus ex machina.*

[311] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 9.

[312] Ibid. 8.

[313] Ying-Ying Chang, "Reflections in the Nanking Massacre After 70 Years of Denial: In Memory of Our Daughter Iris Chang", *Harvard Asia Pacific Review*, 2008, 75.

[314] Chang*, The Rape of Nanking*, 10.

[315] Ibid. 160 – 161.

The conference and exhibition were organised by the *Global Alliance for Preserving the History of World War II in Asia*[316], a grassroots activist movement of first and second generation Chinese Americans and Chinese Canadians. Chang suggests that these increasingly acculturated members of the Chinese diaspora were "fearful that their assimilation into North American culture might cause them to forget this important part of their historical heritage."[317] But why focus on a negative aspect of their historical heritage? Why are "memories of Nanking more worthy of preservation than Confucian thought, T'ang poetry, or Sun painting"[318]? Why do "young generations of Chinese….. seek to present the pain, suffering, and victimhood to the rest of the world on behalf of the Chinese?"[319]

China scholar Joshua Fogel offers a possible explanation. In his 2000 volume, *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, he highlights the effect and influence of the process of cultural deracination on diasporic identity. An increasingly mobile - physically and socially - Chinese diaspora, uprooted to the cultural melting pot of late-20th century North America, had few members "grounded in the sources, languages and histories of the culture putatively their own".[320] This led to a focus on traumatic histories in order to articulate their distinct identity and remain connected to their communities;[321] the real, tangible diasporic communities of which they are a part, and the broader, imagined national community to

[316] Ibid. 9. See also; *Global Alliance for Preserving the History of World War II in Asia* website. Accessed online 3rd November 2017. http://www.global-alliance.net/

[317] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 9.

[318] Wakabayashi, *Iris Chang Reassessed*, xxxiii.

[319] Joshua Fogel, "The Nanking Atrocity And Chinese Historical Memory", in *The Nanjing Atrocity: Complicating the Picture*, ed. Bob Tadashi Wakayabashi, (USA: Bergharn Books, 2007), 268.

[320] Fogel, *Introduction*, 3.

[321] Ibid. 3.

which they also wish to belong.[322] Fogel has on several occasions drawn parallels between the Chinese American diaspora and the Jewish American diaspora who, "no longer knowledgeable of their own traditions, languages, and texts… cling to the state of Israel and the sanctity of the Holocaust as basic to their identity".[323] Again, there was a period of latency, several decades before Jewish Americans were confident enough with their place in their new society to embark on "rediscovering the Holocaust as a focal point for American-Jewish memory and identity".[324] Overseas Chinese have experienced a similar lag, and have manifested a similar response to the Nanjing massacre.[325] *Global Alliance* member Ignatius Ding frames this delayed response as follows; "Chinese-American intellectuals have reached a "maturity" in this country [America] whose roots are secure, allowing them to turn their attention to issues such as Nanking."[326] Previously divided by the political issue of the PRC/Taiwan rift, overseas Chinese began to come together in the wake of 1989's Tiananmen Square protests.[327]

1989 was a pivotal year in East Asia. Not only did the CCP send in tanks against their own people, but Japan's Emperor Hirohito died, Vietnam carried out major economic reforms, and the South Korean democratisation movement gathered pace.[328] These major events in

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[322] For the original explanation of 'imagined' national communities, see; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Revised Edition, (UK: Verso, 1991). Anderson does of course cite the printed word as being critical to the formation of imagined communities. Ibid. 37-38.

[323] Fogel, *Introduction*, 3.

[324] Dreisbach, "Transatlantic Broadcasts", 78.

[325] Fogel, *The Nanking Atrocity*, 273.

[326] Ding in MacDonald, "Forgetting and Denying", 6.

[327] Tiananmen Square is not the sole issue which galvanised the Chinese diaspora, the textbook controversy of 1982 and the (still ongoing) sovereignty dispute over the Daio-yu-tai/Senkaku islands were also rally points for overseas Chinese. See; MacDonald, "Forgetting and Denying," 6.

[328] Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Rana Mitter, "Re-envisioning Asia, Past and present", in *Ruptured Histories: War, Memory, and the Post-Cold War in Asia*, eds. Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Rana Mitter, (USA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 2.

the East coincided with the fall of the Berlin Wall in the West, the purported "end of history",[329] and the resulting emergence of a new unipolar geopolitical order. They also coincided with a global memory boom of monumental proportions;[330] a "surge of memory"[331] as Carol Gluck puts it. Those who had endured the rigours of WWII "would not let it pass from living memory without a collective autobiographical sigh, sob, or salute."[332] The task of remembrance then fell to subsequent generations. In the case of Chinese war memories, this generation was substantially located outside of its ethnic homeland.

Having come together initially to express their displeasure and outrage at the PRC and the CCP for the 'June 4th Incident', activist communities then used their newly formed networks to protest other historical wrongdoings such as the Japanese conduct in WWII and, in particular, the events at Nanjing. For example, the *Global Alliance* was formed in 1992.[333] The post-Tiananmen, post-Cold War period thus heralded a proliferation of histories centred on WWII in Asia. Daqing Yang has referred to this phase as the "third moment of knowing" of Nanjing[334]. Takashi Yoshida considers it the fourth phase of remembering[335]. Regardless of chosen denomination, this was the "phase in which Asian Americans became heavily involved

[329] Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?", *The National Interest*, 16, (1989): 3–18.

[330] Duncan Bell, *Memory, Trauma and World Politics; Reflections on the Relationship between Past and Present*, (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 1.

[331] Carol Gluck, "Operations of Memory: "Comfort Women" and the World", in *Ruptured Histories: War, Memory, and the Post-Cold War in Asia*, eds. Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Rana Mitter, (USA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 47.

[332] Ibid. 47.

[333] David B. MacDonald, *Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide: The Holocaust and Representation*, (UK: Routledge, 2009), 149.

[334] Daqing Yang, "The Challenges of the Nanjing Massacre", in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel, (USA: University of California Press, 2000), 148.

[335] Yoshida divides his monograph on Nanjing historiography into four chronological sections. The fourth "Part IV. The Internationalization of the Nanjing Massacre" covers 1989 to present. See; Yoshida, *The Making of*, 129 – 179.

in the production and circulation of war memories of Nanking."[336] Additionally, overseas Chinese could protest far more freely than their mainland counterparts.[337] David Macdonald has described diasporic communities as having "more money, more coercive power, and better access to the Internet than their counterparts in the People's Republic".[338] Dense diasporic communities have thus formed around the traumatic past. But why choose an overwhelmingly negative historical tragedy such as the Shoah or the Nanjing massacre?

Fogel argues that "such an event represents something which is unassimilable and irreproachable. It immediately links all members of an ethnic group in victimhood and bonds them in ways which cannot be questioned."[339] Ian Buruma makes the same overall point but in rather less understanding, reductionist terms. He suggests that when all a diaspora has left are "bagels or dim sum, symbols of terrible collective suffering become a kind of badge of common identity".[340] Hutchison has argued that a sense of collective identity can be created from "telling trauma stories",[341] something the Chinese diaspora appears to have been engaged in for years. She claims that a commonality of experience "binds people together, defining them in relation to others who are considered incapable of identifying with their

[336] Feng, "Remembering Nanking", 76.

[337] That is not of course to say that mainland Chinese do not protest. The last two decades have seen a dramatic rise in Chinese domestic unrest, with protests over land seizures and environmental issues being commonplace. However, protests tend to be local in their nature and their aim. The CCP's considerable '*weiwen*' (stability maintenance) operations ensure protests do not escalate on a national level as they did in 1989. See, for example; Yuhua Wang and Carl Minzer, "The Rise of the Chinese Security State", *The China Quarterly*, (2015): 1-21.

[338] Macdonald, "Forgetting and Denying", 5.

[339] Fogel, *The Nanking Atrocity*, 272.

[340] Ian Buruma, "The Nanking Massacre as a Historical Symbol", in *Nanking 1937: Memory and Healing*, eds. Fei Fei Li, Robert Sabella, and David Liu, (UK: East Gate Books, Routledge, 2002), 9.

[341] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 60.

pain."[342] Identities are therefore at least partially constituted around shared understandings of trauma.[343]

To suggest that large group identity formation is the one and only reason the North American Chinese diaspora took an interest in the massacre would be to do them a major disservice. It would also grossly oversimplify what has always been a complicated and nuanced process of historical remembrance. However, there is ample evidence to suggest that since the early 1980s, the trauma of Nanjing has been used at an individual, community and even national level as a tool to help construct identity. The Chinese diaspora has at points been happy to wear the "badge of honour" worn on the mainland, afforded by the century of humiliation.[344] The succession of historical traumas exceptionalising their community as it does the Chinese national community.[345] And, although Iris Chang may have initially used her research on Nanjing to explore her identity as a Chinese American,[346] she soon became the figurehead for a much larger movement, and a powerful global carrier for the traumatic narrative of Nanjing.

Iris Chang was young, beautiful, passionate and articulate, and the *Global Alliance* capitalised on her potential as a spokesperson. The society helped Chang organise and promote her book tour, and members of the *Alliance* were often seen handing out leaflets at

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[342] Ibid. 60

[343] Ibid. 60.

[344] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 226.

[345] Ibid. 226.

[346] Chang's limited bibliography of three published books are all centred on either Chinese American identity, Chinese history, or the two in combination. Her first book, *Thread Of The Silkworm* is the story of Tsien Hsue-Shen, a Chinese scientist who worked in the US before being deported as a Communist. See; Iris Chang, *Thread Of The Silkworm*, (USA: Basic Books, 1996); *The Rape of Nanking* was her second book. Her third was *The Chinese in America*, a narrative history of the challenges and achievements of the Chinese diaspora in the U.S. See; Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America*, (USA: Penguin Books, 2004).

her book launches, highlighting the massacre amongst other atrocities. Her book became "a bible for Chinese American activist groups lobbying for Japanese war accountability."[347] This led people to question whether Chang was first and foremost an historian, or an activist.[348] Regardless, it did not take long for Chang's own representation of the massacre to become a tool for others in their search for identity. According to Yang and Christy, *The Rape of Nanking* "became a crucial resource for the promotion of Chinese American ethnic identity at the turn of the century."[349] "Everyone's been waiting for this book to come out for 60 years," Chang is quoted as saying in a 1998 interview. "There are people spilling out the door and people weeping on my shoulder, and people saying, 'I'm so happy this book has been written finally. You make me proud to be Chinese American.'"[350]

[347] Charles Buress, "Wars of Memory", *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 July 1998, 3. Accessed online 5 November 2017. http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Wars-of-Memory-When-Iris-Chang-wrote-The-Rape-3000210.php

[348] Ibid. 5.

[349] Yang and Christy, *Eternal Flames*, 230.

[350] Chang in Burress, *Wars of Memory*, 3–4.

"The Rape of Nanking"

Returning to Jeffrey Alexander's social theory of cultural trauma, Alexander argues that for a carrier group to establish successfully a traumatic master narrative within a society, it must satisfy four criteria; it must firmly establish the nature of the pain, the identity of the perpetrator, the identity of the victim, and ensure the victims are relatable to a wider audience.[351] It is through this representative structure that traumatic master narratives are generated and cultural traumas formed. The following section will continue this paper's original contribution by offering a close reading of Chang's text, arguing that *The Rape of Nanking* satisfies each of these four criteria. Chang, through her book, can therefore be regarded as a carrier for the traumatic master narrative of the Nanjing massacre. Further, the book is peppered with direct and indirect references to the Holocaust as Chang sought to attach her book, and with it the massacre, to the pre-existing framework of understanding constructed around the Judeocide. *The Rape of Nanking* contains numerous other markers which suggest the book is a product of a discourse of trauma. Iris Chang thus took her version of the story of Nanjing to a new, global audience, and through her structure, her language, her emotion and affect, she ensured the book was read and understood by this audience in terms of trauma.

Chang wastes no time in addressing the first three of Alexander's criteria; establishing the nature of the pain, and the identity of victim and perpetrator. Although the word trauma features only a handful of times across its 300 pages, from blood-red front cover to blood-red back cover, the book clearly hopes to invoke an emotional response from its reader. The word "RAPE", in stark white block capitals sits prominently against the red; the chosen font twice

[351] Alexander, *Trauma*, 13-15.

the size of anything else on the page.[352] Visible through the 'blood' are bodies lining the banks of the Yangtze. A lone Japanese soldier stands tall in the foreground, the rising sun of the Japanese flag as red as the blood. Guilt and innocence, victim and perpetrator, are clearly defined before one turns a page.

Once the reader moves beyond the cover, they find that Chang is swift to emphasise not only her ethnic but also her familial connection to the events – the dinner table horror stories.[353] In doing so, she thereby heralds, courts, and accepts the newly ordained authority to speak in the name of the victims that this proximity to the traumatogenic event affords her. Chang thus grew up regarding the Nanjing massacre "as a metaphor for unspeakable evil"[354] echoing the construction of the Holocaust as 'sacred evil' in the years following WWII. She is also quick to establish a "hierarchy of victimhood with China at the top",[355] assuring readers that the massacre "surpasses much of the worst barbarism of the ages" such as the Roman slaughter at Carthage and the Spanish Inquisition.[356] She also claims more lives were lost at Nanjing that the combined death toll of the two atomic blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.[357] This dubious statistic was widely reported as fact by the U.S. media.[358] In relatively short order then, Chang firmly establishes not only the nature, but also the severity of the pain.

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[352] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, Front Cover.

[353] Ibid. 7.

[354] Ibid. 8.

[355] Fogel, *The Nanking Atrocity*, 274.

[356] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 7.

[357] Ibid. 8.

[358] See, for example; George F. Will, "Breaking A Sinister Silence", *The Washington Post*, 19 February 1998. Accessed online 5 November 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1998/02/19/breaking-a-sinister-silence/28b01904-1bba-4707-b85f-3ecb21933dac/?utm_term=.1f9aad6f9840

Chang claims that she wishes to tell the story of Nanjing using a *Rashomon* narrative structure. This is a reference to an eponymous Akira Kurosawa film based on a short story by Japanese novelist Akutagawa Ryunosuke.[359] The story of the murder of a samurai and the rape of his wife is told from the perspective of four different characters. What at first appears simple, becomes increasingly complex the more versions of the tale the reader receives. It is the reader's role, Chang says, "to create out of subjective and often self-serving perceptions a more objective picture of what might have occurred."[360] She does indeed divide the narrative into three parts, reflecting the perspectives of the three main groups who were present at Nanjing – Japanese, Chinese and Westerners - but in Chang's retelling, there is very little room for objectivity. Her structural division could equally be labelled, 'Perpetrators', 'Victims' and 'Witnesses'. This exact narrative structure had been used to great effect by Raul Hilberg in 1992. His book, "Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe 1933-1945"[361], uses the same division to indict not just Hitler and the Nazis, but all those who by their silence or inaction were complicit in the Jewish genocide. In Hilberg's assessment, this extended to institutions such as the Catholic Church,[362] and entire nations such as Spain and Turkey.[363]

Chang has similarly grand ambitions when it comes to the application of her own pejorative categories. When she indicts the perpetrators at Nanjing, she is not merely accusing the IJA soldiers who committed the atrocities, nor also the officers who commanded them, but the entire Japanese nation. This begins by her homogenising 'the Japanese' from

[359] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 14.

[360] Ibid. 14.

[361] Raul Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933 – 1945*, (USA: Harper Perennial, 1993).

[362] Ibid. 260-268.

[363] Ibid. 256-258.

the very outset,[364] both as a people and as deniers of the massacre. There are only notional attempts much later in the book to discuss Japanese domestic counter-narratives to denialism.[365] Then, after specifically stating that she has no intention of passing comment on the Japanese national character,[366] she passes comment on the Japanese national character. She thinly disguises her attack as an appraisal of Japan's military culture, which she traces to a national identity forged by a thousand years of social hierarchy.[367] She concludes that Japan's brutal attempt to expand Westward to China was "almost inevitable".[368] Having blamed Nanjing on a thousand years of Japanese military culture and social hierarchy, Chang then sets about tracing the responsibility for the atrocities from the bottom, right to the very top of that hierarchy.

She claims that the actions of IJA foot soldiers, in particular their horrendous abuses of the women and girls of Nanjing, were sanctioned, even encouraged, by their officers. "Either pay them money or kill them in some out-of-the-way place after you have finished"[369] she quotes one officer as telling his charges. The ladder of guilt then extends to the three commanding Generals; Nakajima, Yanagawa and Matsui. For example, Nakajima is described variously as a "small Himmler of a man", "a sadist" and "a beast".[370] The from the generals, Chang's indictment moves upwards to Prince Asaka Yasuhiko, an uncle of Hirohito's who

[364] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 12.

[365] Chang does mention the ground-breaking work of Honda Katsuichi and the testimony of former IJA soldier Azuma Shiro, but focusses not on their efforts to redress the historiographical balance, but on the conservative backlash she claims the men faced in Japan. See; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 211–214.

[366] Ibid. 13.

[367] Ibid. 13-19.

[368] Ibid. 27.

[369] Ibid. 49.

[370] Ibid. 37.

Chang claims had behavioural issues.[371] Asaka was installed by Hirohito in early December 1937 as the commander-in-chief of the army around Nanjing.[372] Chang uses Hirohito's last-minute appointment of Asaka, to connect the actions of the IJA to the Emperor himself - the living embodiment of the Japanese nation. She insinuates that Hirohito, through Asaka, must have at the very least known of the order to "KILL ALL CAPTIVES", and yet did nothing to stop it being carried out.[373] Any reader who was indeed attempting to adopt an objective, *Rashomon*-style assessment of the narrative has very little room to manoeuvre after Chang indicts the man at the very top of a social system dating back a millennium. Unfortunately, her key source for much of this evidence is David Bergamini's 1975 *Japan's Imperial Conspiracy*.[374] By 1997 Bergamini's thesis had already been widely discredited. One reviewer accused Bergamini of "violating every canon of acceptable documentation."[375] Chang herself acknowledges that his thesis was "seriously criticized by reputable historians"[376], albeit a hundred pages after she first cites it. Her decision to use his argument regardless demonstrates just how keen she was to show that 'Japan' had been responsible for the massacre and should therefore be hauled "before the bar of world opinion"[377] in toto.

Having established beyond any doubt the identity of the perpetrators, Chang then went on to establish the Chinese as the victims. There are several large sections of the book

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[371] Ibid. 39.

[372] Ibid. 38.

[373] Ibid. 38–41.

[374] David Bergamini, *Japan's Imperial Conspiracy: How Emperor Hirohito led Japan into war against the West*, (USA: William Morrow and Company, 1971).

[375] David M. Kennedy, "The Horror: Should the Japanese atrocities in Nanking be equated with the Nazi Holocaust?", *The Atlantic*, (April 1998), 6. Accessed online, 5 November 2017. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1998/04/the-horror/306532/

[376] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 177.

[377] Ibid. 15.

describing the plight of the Chinese at Nanjing which are very hard to read, even for one familiar with its horrors.[378] Her writing is particularly affective when recounting the treatment of females by the Japanese troops. Indeed, Chang used the IJA's litany of sexual assault and depravity to great effect both in the construction of her overall narrative and in the positioning of the book within a discourse of trauma. Clearly, her choice of epithet – *The Rape of Nanking* - was not only the most confronting of the possibilities, but also one which directly associated a historical trauma with the trauma of female sexual assault, and the contemporaneous women's rights movement of the 1990s. As Erik Ropers has discussed, the 1990s saw a reframing of women's wartime experiences and their treatment at the hands of invading troops. He argues that *The International Criminal Court* was established in response to a global revulsion at "revelations of mass rape during the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995."[379] Chang, extending the 'hierarchy of victimhood' to the women of Nanjing, quotes prominent American feminist activist, journalist and author Susan Brownmiller as believing that Nanjing 1987-38 was "probably the single worst instance of wartime rape inflicted on a civilian population" worse even than the rape of women in the former Yugoslavia.[380]

Also in the mid-1990s, perhaps due to the effects of the memory boom described above, Asian women who had been subjected to enforced prostitution at the hands of the Japanese state, the so-called 'comfort women', came forward in unprecedented numbers.[381] Chang claims in her book that the IJA's mass rape of the women and girls of Nanjing was the

[378] Part 1, Chapter 4, "Six Weeks of Horror" is particularly gruesome. Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 81 – 104.

[379] Ropers, "Debating History and Memory", 79.

[380] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 89.

[381] Ropers, "Debating History and Memory", 80.

reason that the Japanese state institutionalised a program of forced military prostitution[382] – beginning in the days after the massacre - which would see hundreds of thousands of women face almost unimaginable conditions.[383] Referred to as "public toilets" by their innumerable assailants, many of the women died from injuries sustained, or from disease, or took their own lives.[384] By highlighting the trauma endured by these women, Chang thus connects the action of the IJA and the historical trauma of the massacre with an issue which was receiving much international attention at the time. Indeed, Chang was later to speak specifically for these female victims of Nanjing. In 1999, she contributed a short essay to a volume edited by Ron L. Brooks, *When Sorry Isn't Enough*.[385] The book dealt with several historical/moral/legal issues which were 'live' at that time.[386] Chang's essay titled, less sensationally than her book, "The Nanking Massacre",[387] was in the section dedicated to the issue of the so-called 'comfort women.' It was bookended by a UN Special Report on Violence Against Women, and Japan's official responses to the IJA's actions at Nanjing.[388] It appears then, that Chang was successful in attaching the Nanjing narrative to the broader 1990s discursive framework of human rights violations and violence against women.

She was also not averse to extending the rape analogy which featured in the title of her book. Both in the book and interviews, she often spoke of a double rape; "two related

[382] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 52 – 53.

[383] Ibid. 53.

[384] Ibid. 53.

[385] Roy, L. Brooks (ed), *When Sorry Isn't Enough*, (USA: New York University Press, 1999).

[386] For example, Slavery, Jim Crow, Native Americans, and the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII. See; Brooks, *When Sorry Isn't Enough*.

[387] Iris Chang, "The Nanking Massacre" in ed. Roy L. Brooks, *When Sorry Isn't Enough*, (USA: New York University Press, USA, 1999): 104–108.

[388] Ibid. 101 – 110.

but discrete atrocities,"[389] those being the massacre itself, and the combination of Japanese denialism and Western indifference, through which victims were denied the recognition they deserved.[390] This analogy of the double injury was by the late 1990s something of a traumatic trope, first being used by French lawyer Francoise Rudetzki in 1986.[391] She had been injured in an unsolved bombing in Paris in 1983 and claimed that "victims like her were twice injured, once by the bomb and once by social indifference".[392]

Having established the nature and severity of the pain, the identity of the perpetrators, and the identity of the victims, the most challenging of Alexander's four criteria for Chang was to make the victims of the massacre relatable to a wider Western audience. Released initially in hardback in late 1997, *The Rape of Nanking* sold more than 125,000 copies in the first four months; a record in Basic Books' five decades as a publisher.[393] These spectacular sales figures were no doubt aided by targeted early launches in cities such as San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Toronto and Vancouver. The large ethnic Chinese communities in these cities, perhaps already to an extent engaged and invested in the massacre, were an 'easy sell'. But if Chang wanted her book and the story it told to penetrate beyond these communities, she had to make the story relatable to non-Chinese. After all, the same atrocities had been widely reported in the Western media at the time of their occurrence with no enduring impact on Western historical consciousness – hence Chang's claim the massacre had been 'forgotten'. For Chang's non-Chinese readership to relate to

[389] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 14.

[390] Ibid. 14.

[391] Lacquer, "We Are All Victims", 20.

[392] Ibid. 20.

[393] Burress, "Wars of Memory", 3.

and engage with a Chinese trauma, they needed to have relatable characters, and for that Chang very skilfully introduced the Western witnesses who were in Nanjing.

Chang uses the idea of witnessing at various points in her narrative. Early, when describing the worst excesses of the IJA in the first few days of the massacre, she cites Japanese journalists as being "shocked" and "horrified" at what they saw.[394] If even the perpetrators were horrified by what they witnessed, how could the reader possibly be anything else? However, it was her integration of the foreign nationals into her narrative, as witnesses, heroes, and ultimately as victims, which was to give her account relevance, relatability, and resonance with its Western audience.

Chang devotes forty pages in the centre of her text to "The Nanking Safety Zone".[395] The zone was set up by the city's Western ex-patriate community, modelled after a similar facility in Shanghai.[396] The *Safety Zone* was to provide shelter and services for Nanjing's population, abandoned as they had been by the Chinese authorities. The zone's leadership committee was led by German businessman John Rabe. Rabe had lived in China for thirty years, and refused to abandon his home and his Chinese employees as the IJA approached.[397] It is thought that the *Safety Zone* and Rabe's defiant but diplomatic management of it

[394] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 47 – 48.

[395] Ibid. 105 – 139. Chang's overreliance on the Western witnesses/heroes/victims comes at least partially at the expense of the massacre's Chinese victims. David Macdonald, writing in 2005 asked "If a tree falls in the forest and no Westerners are there, does it make a sound?" See; MacDonald, "Forgetting and Denying", 16. Although there is a lack of Chinese written testimony, Chang is guilty of generally failing to make the Chinese victims identifiable and relatable. She homogenises them in a similar manner to the way she homogenises 'the Japanese'.

[396] The Shanghai Safety Zone was the brainchild of French Jesuit priest, Father Robert Jacquinot de Besange. For a full account of his heroism, see; Maria, R. Ristaino. *The Jacquinot Safety Zone: Wartime Refugees in Shanghai*, (USA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

[397] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 110.

prevented the already horrific death toll from being much higher.[398] He was a prolific author and diarist and kept a comprehensive account of the massacre, written from the very heart of a city under siege.[399] These entries, quoted by Chang, often recounted him roaming the streets at night, seemingly with little regard for his personal safety, with the sole aim of stopping Japanese crimes as they occurred.[400]

Chang used the primary source of Rabe's diaries to add a powerful new voice to the narrative of the massacre. Significantly, that voice was not Chinese, but German, and a Nazi to boot. Rabe was the president of the Nanjing branch of the Nazi Party[401] and it was this authority, and the weight it carried with the Japanese which helped keep the *Safety Zone,* and Rabe himself, relatively safe. During his heroic nocturnal escapades mentioned, his weapon of choice was not a gun but his swastika armband.[402] Iris Chang was quick to highlight Rabe's Nazism and connect it to his disgust and outrage at the actions of the IJA.[403] If even a Nazi was horrified by what he witnessed, how could the reader possibly be anything else? She was equally quick to distance him from the worst excesses of National Socialism. According to Chang, Rabe saw the Nazi Party "primarily as a socialist organisation and did not support the persecution of Jews and other ethnic groups in Germany".[404] Nazi enough then to put

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[398] David W. Chen. "At the Rape of Nanking: A Nazi Who Saved Lives", *The New York Times*, 12 December 1996. Accessed online 6 November 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/12/world/at-the-rape-of-nanking-a-nazi-who-saved-lives.html

[399] An edited collection of Rabe's diary entries and papers was published in German, then English, Chinese and Japanese. See; Chen, "At the Rape of Nanking". See also; John Rabe, *The Good Man of Nanking: The Diaries of John Rabe*, Translated by John E. Wood. (USA: Vintage Books, 2000).

[400] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 118-119.

[401] Ibid. 109.

[402] Ibid. 121.

[403] Chang writes that "even the Nazis in the city were horrified" by the actions of the Japanese, long before she introduces the reader to John Rabe. See; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 6.

[404] Ibid. 109.

Japanese actions in context, but not so Nazi as to discredit his ability to bear witness. Rabe thus became Chang's Oskar Schindler, her 'Good Nazi' in the trauma-drama of Nanjing. She repeatedly drew parallels repeatedly between the actions of the two men in her book.[405] Indeed, she bemoaned the massacre narrative's lack of a filmic equivalent to *Schindler's List*.[406]

There have been arguments posited that Rabe's Nazism makes him a more objective witness to the atrocities than the American missionaries present,[407] and that as a Westerner, his account carries more weight in Japan as it is less easily discredited than Chinese testimonies.[408] Regardless, Rabe's role at Nanjing had long been known but by valorising his actions, his character, and his testimony, Chang thrust him to the centre of the contemporary popular historiography of the massacre. An incidental character in the films released before 1997 – he featured in *Black Sun*, but as a character called John Miller, seemingly not regarded as important enough to warrant the use of his real name[409] - he has assumed a pivotal role in filmic representations of the massacre thereafter.[410] The same is true of Chang's other key Western witnesses, Robert Wilson and Minnie Vautrin.

Wilson was the only surgeon who remained in Nanjing during the massacre. Relegated to an appendix by Xu Zhigeng, he is moved to the very centre of Chang's narrative,

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[405] Ibid. 105. 109. 185.

[406] Ibid. 185. Rabe was to be portrayed on film in a similar light to Schindler, in 2009's *John Rabe* directed by Florian Gallenberger, but Chang would not live to see it. See; Quinna Shen, "Revisiting the Wound of a Nation: The 'Good Nazi' John Rabe and the Nanking Massacre". *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, 47:5, (2011).

[407] Yoshida, *The Making of the Rape of Nanking*, 139.

[408] Shen, "Revisiting the Wound," 677.

[409] For 'pre-Chang' filmic representations of Rabe, see; Berry, *A History of Pain*, 113-136.

[410] See; Kinney, "Rediscovering a massacre". And see: Shen, "Revisiting the Wound", for filmic representations after the publication of *The Rape of Nanking*.

metaphorically and literally.[411] Born in Nanjing but educated in America at Princeton and Harvard, Wilson returned to the place of his birth with his young family in 1935. When the Japanese started bombing the capital in August 1937, Wilson was insistent that his wife and daughter return to the U.S. He was equally insistent that his place was in Nanjing; "He saw this as his duty,"[412] Chang quotes his wife. "The Chinese were his people."[413] This loyalty almost cost him his life on 13th December when a bomb exploded only fifty yards away from the room where he was operating.[414] Undeterred, Wilson continued to treat the wounded at the University of Nanjing Hospital as best he could. Not only did Wilson therefore witness the murder and rape of Chinese men and women in the streets of Nanjing,[415] but as a surgeon, he bore witness to the truly awful injuries of his patients. Chang cites that Wilson was horrified by the charred and disfigured men whom the Japanese had tried to burn alive; by the women who came to his emergency room with their bellies ripped open; and by one woman in particular, who, when she tried to escape from an interment of forced labour and rape, had her head almost severed by three members of the IJA.[416] Again, Chang uses Wilson's position and experiences to contextualise and frame the actions of the Japanese. If even a "jaded war surgeon"[417] was shocked by what he witnessed, how could the reader possibly be anything else?

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[411] "The Only Surgeon in Nanking" is across pages 122- 129 of the 246-page narrative. See; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking,* 122–129.

[412] Ibid. 123.

[413] Ibid. 123.

[414] Ibid. 125.

[415] Ibid. 127.

[416] Ibid. 127 – 128. Film footage of this woman exists to corroborate Wilson and therefore Chang's statements. See; "Magee's Testament", WW2inAsia, *YouTube*, 10 September 2012: 10m25s – 11m05s. Accessed 6 November. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7R5N6qWScU&t=13s

[417] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 126.

Minnie Vautrin, referred to by Chang as "The Living Goddess of Nanking",[418] was an American educator and head of the Ginling Women's Arts and Science College in the old walled city. She was also one of the few Western women to bear witness to the IJA's assault and occupation. Like John Rabe, she was a keen diarist. In yet another Holocaust reference, Chang drew direct comparisons between Vautrin and Ann Frank as she sought to cast another role in the Nanjing trauma-drama. She claimed that "some historians believe" Vautrin's diary, "much like the diary of Anne Frank", will one day be heralded for "illuminating the spirit of a single witness during a holocaust of war".[419] With the benefit of hindsight, it has been Rabe's diary which has received more popular and academic interest, but Vautrin's writings have featured in several standalone texts and edited editions.[420] In *The Rape of Nanking*, Chang is keen to emphasise Vautrin's heroism and selflessness in her defence of her Chinese charges. She saved numerous men from their deaths, and numerous women and girls from sexual assault and death.[421] Vautrin was beaten, and threatened with bayonet and pistol for her actions.[422]

While she does mention several others, Rabe, Wilson and Vautrin, were the three key Western witnesses whose testimonies are utilised by Chang in the construction of her traumatic narrative. That each one behaved in a genuinely courageous and selfless manner is

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[418] Ibid. 129.

[419] Ibid. 129 – 130.

[420] See; Minnie Vautrin, *Terror in Minnie Vautrin's Nanjing: Diaries and Correspondence, 1937-38*, ed. Suping Lu, (USA: University of Illinois Press, 2008). See also; Hua-ling Hu. And Liam-hong Zhang, *The Undaunted Women of Nanking: The Wartime Diaries of Minnie Vautrin and Tsen Shui-fang*, (USA: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010). And see; Suping Lu. *They Were In Nanjing: The Nanjing Massacre Witnessed by American and British Nationals*, (China: Hong Kong University Press, 2004). See also; Hua-Ling Hu, *American Goddess at the Rape of Nanking*, (USA: Southern Illinois University Press, 2001).

[421] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 133 – 134.

[422] Ibid. 134.

beyond doubt, as is their value as witnesses to the atrocities committed by the IJA. Due to the large numbers of Chinese killed, and the poor literacy rates at that time, very few testimonies written by Chinese actually exist.[423] The three Westerns were witnesses and heroes then, most certainly, but not yet cast also as victims. To do this, Chang returns to the members of the *Safety Zone* later in the book to emphasise the toll that their witnessing took on the remainder of their lives.

John Rabe returned to Germany in the middle of 1938, having protected as many Chinese as he could from the IJA. He took with him a reel of film shot by Rev. John Magee, another Safety Zone committee member.[424] The film contained shocking footage of Chinese civilians injured during the IJA's rampage, including Wilson's female patient with the near severed head,[425] irrefutable proof of at least a small percentage of the atrocities. Upon returning to Germany, Rabe showed the film to his employer Siemens and the War Ministry amongst others.[426] This did not, however, have the desired effect. A few days later he was visited by two members of the Gestapo who arrested him and confiscated the film.[427] Rabe was released but his career with Siemens stalled. At war's end he was arrested first by the Soviets, then by the British.[428] By the late 1940s he was close to destitute and surviving, like

[423] There are very few diaries written by Chinese in Nanking; Cheng Ruifang/Tsen Shui-fang was one of the first to be published. Cheng was a teacher and medical worker in the *Safety Zone* and her brief diary from the period was located in 2001 and published in Chinese in 2005. See; "Nanjing Massacre Eyewitness Diary to Be Published", *China.Org* website, 12 January 2005. Accessed online 5th September 2016. http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Jan/117585.htm
An English translation formed part of the 2010 volume containing Vautrin's diary referenced above (132). See; Hu and Zhang, *The Undaunted Women*. This lack of Chinese voices in the contemporary historiography of the massacre has been redressed to a certain extent by the recent collection of oral testimonies of survivors, but written primary sources remain skewed towards a Western perspective.

[424] Xu, *Lest We Forget*, 306.

[425] "Magee's Testament", *YouTube*.

[426] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 190.

[427] Ibid. 190.

[428] Ibid. 191.

so many Germans, on any food which could be foraged or bartered. News of Rabe's plight reached Nanjing and the people he saved had clearly not forgotten his heroism. Regular care packages duly arrived and must have provided him with some comfort in his final years.[429] He died of a stroke in 1950.[430] The extent of his heroism would have to wait for close to five decades and the work of a young Chinese American author to become known to the world.

As the only surgeon in Nanjing, Robert Wilson worked ceaselessly and recklessly. This eventually took a toll and in 1940 he suffered violent seizures and a mental breakdown.[431] He returned to America to convalesce, but never fully regained his health. He continued to suffer seizures and nightmares until his death in 1967.[432] Minnie Vautrin's life after the massacre was as tragic as it was short. Physically and emotionally exhausted, Chang claims what Vautrin saw and heard at Nanjing "took a deeper psychic toll on her than any of the other zone leaders…. had realized at the time."[433] In her last diary entry of 14th April 1940 she complained of being "at the end of my energy".[434] She suffered a mental breakdown two weeks later, necessitating a return to the United States. She tried to kill herself repeatedly whilst on the boat crossing. In May 1941, a year after she left Nanjing, she took her own life.[435]

The careful positioning of the Western witnesses within an understandable and relatable traumatic framework was a masterstroke by Iris Chang. Not only did their presence add valuable source material and powerful Western voices to counter Japanese denialists,

[429] Ibid. 193.

[430] Ibid. 194.

[431] Ibid. 186.

[432] Ibid. 186.

[433] Ibid. 186.

[434] Vautrin in Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 187.

[435] Ibid. 187.

but their individual stories within her overall narrative made an Eastern tragedy accessible for a Western audience. By establishing each one first as a witness, then as a hero and finally as a victim, Chang ensured that Rabe, Wilson and Vautrin are potent characters in the trauma-drama of Nanjing. With their inclusion, Chang satisfies the fourth of Alexander's criteria by ensuring that the victims of Nanjing were relatable to a wider audience. In doing so, her message to her readership was clear; 'In 1937, these Western heroes had borne witness to the horrors of Nanjing, they were appalled by what they saw and heard, and did what they could to hold the Japanese to task for their crimes. Now, it is your turn to do the same.' Iris Chang's plea for the world to bear witness was then willingly broadcast by the American popular media. They were only too happy to promulgate her narrative in the traumatic terms in which it was written.

"Bearing Witness"

Peter Gries has noted that "the Western print media largely either accepted Chang's account uncritically or even actively advocated her thesis".[436] As such, Orville Schell's book review[437] in *The New York Times* can be regarded as indicative of how the *The Rape of Nanking* was received by the American popular press. His review, published on 14th December 1997,[438] the day after the 60th anniversary of the massacre, accepts Iris Chang's version of history without question. Schell either repeats or even embellishes many of the historical claims made by

[436] Gries, *China's New Nationalism*, 83.

[437] Orville Schell, 'Bearing Witness', *The New York Times*, 14 December 1997. Accessed online 31 October 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/12/14/reviews/971214.14schellt.html

[438] Schell, *Bearing Witness*, 1.

Chang, and his 1500 words are infused with the language of trauma. For example, the title of his piece, *Bearing Witness*,[439] is a clear indicator of how the book was understood at the time of its publication. Chang's narrative was read as bearing witness to a historical trauma and injustice; Chang was regarded as speaking for the victims of that trauma; and crucially, the act of bearing witness to a historical trauma was also being asked of the book's Western readers.

Schell, a respected China scholar,[440] emphasises Chang's familial connection to the massacre both in the review's subheading and early in the body of text. He refers to her as "the granddaughter of survivors of the Japanese massacre of Chinese in Nanjing".[441] This statement not only adds legitimacy to Chang's account by emphasising her proximity to the traumatogenic event, it also furnishes her grandparents with status as 'survivors', the appellation having been endowed with traumatic capital in the years following the Holocaust, as discussed. It is, however, only partly true; Chang's maternal grandmother and family fled the capital in November 1937, prior to the Japanese attack.[442] They therefore avoided the worst of the Japanese military's excesses, but most certainly witnessed its consequences as they made their way overland to safety.[443]

After an introduction to the massacre every bit as gruesome as Chang's, Schell's first three quotes from the book are all from Japanese, either members of the IJA or reporters.[444]

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[439] Ibid. 1.

[440] Schell is a former Dean and Professor at University of Berkley, and has written and published ten books about China. See; www.orvilleschell.com Accessed online, 31 October 2017.

[441] Schell, *Bearing Witness*, 2.

[442] Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 65 – 66.

[443] Chang, "Reflections on the Nanking Massacre," 75.

[444] Schell, *Bearing Witness*, 1.

This is unrepresentative of the book because *The Rape of Nanking* features very few quotations from Japanese in comparison to Chinese and especially, Westerners. Schell therefore uses these quotes to establish the Japanese as perpetrators, in their own words. He then repeats Chang's assertion that "so sickening was the spectacle that even Nazis in the city were horrified"[445] before introducing John Rabe as the unlikely Western hero of the piece. Schell then quotes at length from Primo Levi's *The Drowned and the Saved*[446] regarding the connection between denial, traumatic memory, witnessing, and recovery.[447] Levi had died ten years prior, in 1987, but not before becoming one of the most prominent, vocal, and respected Holocaust survivors. Fassin and Rechtman mention Levi's early works as being critical in the promulgation of the traumatic master narrative of the Holocaust in the years immediately following WWII. [448] It is interesting to note that Chang does not mention Levi in her book. Schell's association of Levi's work with Chang's suggests that he views *The Rape of Nanking* to be performing a similar role.

Schell does at least acknowledge that the Chinese government's lack of interest in pursuing reparations stems from their own treatment of their people, noting the CCP's "disinclination to let [the Chinese polis] fully express their sense of long-repressed grievance".[449] This suggests that in Schell's opinion, the cultural trauma of Nanjing is naturalistic and innate, as opposed to politically constructed. However, he is guilty of adopting many of Chang's cultural generalisations. He claims the Japanese remember too little, the Germans too much; and he cites "Asian values" as affecting the way that historical guilt and

[445] Ibid. 2.

[446] Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, (USA: Abacus Books, 1989).

[447] Schell, *Bearing Witness*, 3.

[448] Fassin and Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma*, 18.

[449] Schell, *Bearing Witness*, 3.

shame are manifested more broadly in Asian societies.[450] Schell ends his review by asking now that the story of Nanjing has started to "get out" what form the Japanese repentance for their historical crimes might take?[451] What form of reparation would the perpetrator be expected to pay the victim? So, in only 1500 words, Schell emphasised the Japanese as perpetrators, the Chinese as victims, and Chang's own familial connection to the event and to 'survivors', thereby endowing her account with veracity and potency. And, he further validates the connection between the massacre and the Holocaust by referencing at length one of the Shoah's best-known witnesses and survivors.

A few months later, in February 1998, as Chang's book tour of sixty cities continued,[452] it was becoming clear that both author and book had begun to develop a form of traumatic cultural capital. George Will wrote an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* claiming that "(s)omething beautiful, an act of justice, is occurring in America today concerning something ugly that happened long ago and far away."[453] Will, once heralded by the *Wall Street Journal* as the most powerful journalist in America,[454] goes on. "The story speaks well of the author of the just act, and of the constituencies of conscience that leaven this nation of immigrants".[455] So as far as Will was concerned, not only did Chang's 'bearing witness' to a

[450] Ibid. 4.

[451] Ibid. 4.

[452] Brett Douglas, "Epilogue For The 2011 Edition", in *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II,* (USA: Basic Books, 2011), 236.

[453] Will, *Breaking A Sinister*.

[454] Thomas D'Evelyn, "Will's collection of columns chronicles his conservatism", *The Sunday Telegraph*, 26 October 1986. Accessed online 6 November 2012. https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=5KErAAAAIBAJ&sjid=hPwFAAAAIBAJ&pg=6848,9446339&dq=most-powerful-journalist-in-america+george-will

[455] Will, *Breaking a Sinister*, 1.

historical trauma speak well of her, but America's bearing witness to the horrors of a forgotten Asian trauma through the book spoke to the greatness of the American nation.

Again, Will accepts Chang's position as gospel and her words as sacrosanct. John Rabe, described by Will as a "committed Nazi",[456] is once again likened to Oskar Schindler, and Chang's familial proximity to the traumatogenic event is stressed. Interestingly, Will also links the "fresh interest in the untold story of the Second World War in Asia" indirectly to Tiananmen Square. He claims that June 4th "energised communities of Chinese origin around the world"[457] but fails to address the political dichotomy and contradiction therein. Will ends his op-ed by quoting, as Chang does, Auschwitz survivor and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel that to forget a holocaust is to kill twice.[458] And, in a final traumatic flourish, he claims that "(b)ecause of Chang's book, the second rape of Nanking is ending".[459] This was another review then, steeped in the language of trauma, with Holocaust references abounding, and the use of the double rape analogy. According to the *Washington Post*, the very act of witnessing elevated and validated not only those bearing witness but also the whole society of which they were members.

Only a few months later, in the middle of May 1998, there had been a further, subtle shift in the American popular press' reception of the book and their positioning of Chang and her narrative. Iris Chang was being heralded not just as bearing witness to a great historical trauma, but as providing a form of therapy to its victims. *The New York Times'* James Dao argued that Chang was increasingly finding "herself playing an unusual role: the historian as

[456] Ibid. 1.

[457] Ibid. 2.

[458] Ibid. 2. And see; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, 16.

[459] Will, *Breaking a Sinister*, 2.

healer".[460] He argued that the book had "opened an emotional relief valve for thousands of surviving victims of Japan's wartime aggression".[461] Chang, interviewed by Dao for the article, claimed that her book launches and lectures, "(i)t's like a mass catharsis at every event".[462]

Even by this early stage, it was clear that the book was well on its way to becoming a cultural artefact, capable of being constitutive. Communities of readers were already forming to create their own representational responses to the book, to the historical trauma of the massacre, and to Chang's potent retelling of it. Dao mentions the plans "for a film in Hollywood, a musical in Singapore, and a museum in Los Angeles".[463] He also references numerous artists, poets and songwriters who had been "moved by her detailed account of Japanese brutality to create works of art commemorating Nanking's suffering".[464]

It is clear from these three reviews that the American popular press cited here, received and understood *The Rape of Nanking* from within a discourse of trauma. The book contained a structure and a language which was familiar to both the journalists in question, and the readership of their publications. Chang's plea for victim status and for witnesses to the 'forgotten' traumatic past was accepted by the journalists, and remediated by them for their audiences. All reviews used traumatic labels such as victim, perpetrator, witness and survivor. Writers spoke of healing, catharsis, traumatic memory, testimony and reparation. Even at this early stage, in 1998, it was becoming clear that the Western public was also responding to Chang and *The Rape of Nanking* from within a discourse of trauma.

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[460] James Dao, 'Parent's Nightmare, Children's Quest", *The New York Times*, 16 May 1998: 1. Accessed online 6 November 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/16/books/parents-nightmare-children-s-quest.html

[461] Dao, *Parent's Nightmare*, 2.

[462] Chang in Dao, *Parent's Nightmare*, 1.

[463] Dao, *Parent's Nightmare*, 2.

[464] Ibid. 2.

Communities were beginning to form around the book, and it was inspiring further representations.

If the popular reception was positive, however, the reception received by Chang and her book by the academy was rather less welcoming. Indeed, the academy was quick to point out not only the flaws they perceived in the book,[465] but in the popular media's reaction of it.[466] However, to an extent, academic criticism of the book and the US media's reception of it was irrelevant. The criticism has had little bearing on *The Rape of Nanking*'s commercial success and Iris Chang's enduring influence on the historiography and representation of the massacre. Ropers and others have highlighted the fact that, in the case of Nanjing and similarly contested historical episodes, "academic historians cannot control public debates over past events."[467] And, as Berry noted, it is popular re-mediations, rather than the actual events of history, which often shape and inform perceptions of trauma.[468] As such, *The Rape of Nanking* remains the dominant popular understanding of the historical event. Even Chang's staunchest critics such as Wakabayashi acknowledge that her volume is still the "first point of reference" and her views "remain the established consensus for lay readers".[469]

From her chosen subtitle, through dozens of analogies and references, Iris Chang made a conscious and deliberate attempt to associate, connect, and to an extent conflate the

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[465] For example, Mark Eykholt criticised Chang's crude sense of history and suggested she may have been an unwitting pawn of the CCP. See; Mark Eykholt, "The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II by Iris Chang and William Kirby", Review of *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, by Iris Chang. *China Review International*, 6:1, (1999), 70–73. Joshua Fogel called the book "very angry" and "nonsense". See; Joshua, A. Fogel. "The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II by Iris Chang; Japan's War Memories: Amnesia of Concealment? By George Hicks", Book Review, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 57:3, (1998), 818 – 820.

[466] See; Fogel, *The Nanking Atrocity*, 267.

[467] Ropers, "Debating History and Memory," 92.

[468] Berry, A History of Pain, 112.

[469] Wakabayashi, *Iris Chang Reassessed*, xxii – xxiii.

Nanjing massacre and the Holocaust, the preeminent and defining trauma of our age. *The Rape of Nanking* was peppered with statistical comparisons and quotes from prominent survivors and spokespeople from the Jewish community. In John Rabe and Minnie Vautrin, Chang sought to establish the Oskar Schindler and Anne Frank of the Nanjing trauma-drama. She utilised the Holocaust as both a bridging metaphor, to assist her readers in contextualising the massacre, and as a floating signifier, as she sought to attach and extend a set of predefined values and judgements centred on the Judeocide and the Nazis, to the Nanjing massacre and the Japanese. From the popular press reviews cited above, it appears that the media readily accepted Chang's association, and were happy to assist in the extension of the Holocaust metaphor and signifier to the massacre. Again, perhaps unsurprisingly, some academics were more critical,[470] arguing that there was no serious attempt at genocide by the Japanese,[471] and that comparing Nanjing to Auschwitz was a false equivalence.[472] But what of the Jewish diaspora? How did another powerful and influential community, constituted at least partially around a historical trauma, respond to Chang's symbolic extension?

Iris Chang was clearly not the first to utilise the label 'holocaust' in the advancement of some cause or other, and historically the appropriation of the term has prompted a mixed response from Jewish scholars. Some have claimed that the use of the term in this manner is little more than inappropriate "word napping."[473] Others are more sympathetic, accepting

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[470] As mentioned, David Macdonald wrote a comprehensive point by point article on the problems of Chang and others comparing Nanking to the Holocaust in 2005. See; Macdonald, *Forgetting and Denying*.

[471] See; Kennedy, "The Horror", 7. And see; Fogel, *The Nanking Atrocity*, 277. For the full range of death toll estimates, see; Askew, *New Research*.

[472] Buruma, *The Nanking Massacre*, 8.

[473] Alan Rosenbaum, "Introduction to the Second Edition", in *Is The Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*, Second Edition, ed. A. Rosenbaum, (USA: Westview Press, 2001); 13-14.

that contemporary understandings of genocide and mass killings are very much centred on the Holocaust.[474] Comparisons with other historical or contemporary incidences of mass ethnic violence are therefore inevitable. The Holocaust is in effect a prototype for comparison.[475] Further, David Macdonald has argued that Nanjing may be something of a special case. "While many Jewish groups find invocations of other "holocausts" unacceptable, Nanjing is in some respects an exception, partially because of the vast scale of the atrocities, but also because of the very real problems of denialism in Japan".[476] This denialism - a key contributor to Chang's affective potency throughout her book, and a critical component of the 'double rape' analogy – has at points been prevalent in the ruling political establishment. In particular, denial has been a common trait of the conservative faction of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party, which held power almost exclusively between 1955 and 1997 when Chang published.[477] Macdonald posits that "there is a solidarity between Holocaust historians and Chinese scholars, partially because both are fellow victims of past atrocities, but equally because of shared struggles to promote truth and remembering in the fact of active and pernicious denial movements".[478] Vera Schwarcz, a prominent Jewish American scholar has also made the comparison between the Holocaust and Nanking,[479] so Chang's position does not lack a degree of support from within the Jewish academic community. But what of non-academics? How did the broader Jewish community respond?

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[474] David Moshman, "Conceptual constraints on thinking about genocide", *Journal of Genocide Research*, 3:3, (2001), 432.

[475] Ibid. 432.

[476] MacDonald, "Forgetting and Denying," 7.

[477] Ibid. 8.

[478] Ibid. 9.

[479] Vera Schwarcz, "The 'Black Milk' of Historical Consciousness: Thinking About the Nanking Massacre in Light of Jewish Memory", in *Nanking 1937: Memory and Healing*, eds. Fei Fei Li, Robert Sabella, and David Liu, (UK: East Gate Books, Routledge, 2002), 183 – 204.

Chang claimed anecdotally in an interview prior to the publication of the book that none of her Jewish friends objected to the use of the holocaust appellation.[480] This is, at minimum, somewhat subjective, but there is at least some evidence that Chang's belief was not misguided. She spoke at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in March 1998.[481] So many people came to hear her lecture that a second date had to be hastily arranged.[482] The audience was supportive, sympathetic and encouraging.[483] At no time was her use of the term 'holocaust' condemned or even challenged.[484] Indeed, the historiographical links between the Holocaust and Nanjing have strengthened in the years since *The Rape of Nanking* was published. The University of Southern California's Shoah Foundation began a joint project in 2012 with the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum. There is now an archive of thirty video testimonies of survivors of the massacre, stored alongside the nearly 53,000 testimonies of survivors of the Holocaust and other genocides. With the average age of survivors now 87[485] and fewer remaining with every passing year, it is unlikely that these thirty testimonies will be added to. These testimonies represent a tiny fraction of those killed at Nanjing, yet it is for them to bear witness to the trauma of survivors and victims alike.

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[480] Ami Chen Mills, "Breaking the Silence", *Metro*, 12-18 December 1996. Accessed online 8 November 2017. http://www.metroactive.com/papers/metro/12.12.96/cover/china1-9650.html

[481] The full transcript is available online. "Address By Iris Chang", *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website*, March 1998. Accessed online 8 November 2017. https://www.ushmm.org/research/scholarly-presentations/presentations-and-panel-discussions/iris-chang

[482] MacDonald, "Forgetting and Denying," 12.

[483] See the Q&A comments in the full transcript; "Address by Iris Chang", *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website.*

[484] Kinue Tokudome, "The Holocaust and Japanese Atrocities", in *Is The Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*, Second Edition, ed. A. Rosenbaum, (USA: Westview Press, 2001); 198 – 199.

[485] "The Nanjing Massacre Collection", USC Shoah Foundation, *University of Southern California website*. Accessed online 20th June 2016. https://sfi.usc.edu/collections/nanjing

Conclusion

This thesis offered a theoretic inquiry into the basis of the potency and resonance of Iris Chang's 1997 bestseller, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*. It has argued that the most suitable theoretical approach to understanding the generation, the book itself, and its popular reception, is that of trauma. If viewed as a product of, and ultimately a contributor towards a discourse of trauma, Chang's book can be read and decoded for clues to its affective capacity.

Chapter One asked *Why Nanjing?* In a century full of potentially traumatogenic historical episodes, how and why has the massacre been installed so prominently in the Chinese calendar of traumatic remembrance? It argued that the answer lay in the politics of traumatic representation. Shunned by Nationalist and Communists immediately following the event, the massacre – along with other selected historical traumas - was resurrected with the full cultural authority of the party/state after the death of Mao Zedong. This served the purposes of cultivating a new, nationalistic Chinese identity encouraging loyalty to a faltering CCP. Having uninhibited access to the means of cultural production the CCP was able to inculcate a traumatic master narrative based on the events at Nanjing. Representation was the key to the promulgation of Nanjing as a chosen cultural trauma, with the CCP utilising institutional areas under its control in aesthetic, bureaucratic and mass media areas. This included the preeminent physical representation, the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum. This state-led process is an excellent example of politically-led community formation around trauma, using historical trauma to reinforce the political and social status quo.

Chapter Two asked *Why 1997?* It examined the social construction of trauma discourse in the West over the course of the 20th century. It argued that by the late 1990s, trauma discourse was so enmeshed within Western society and Western thinking that Iris Chang's plea for the status of victimhood was able to resonate profoundly, and be decoded and understood in terms of trauma. Trauma had been transformed over the course of the 20th century from an isolating individual affliction which shattered sufferers, paradoxically to a social phenomenon capable of constituting communities. Whereas trauma victims were once treated with derision and suspicion, by the late 1990s they had become the respected witnesses to the horrors of the age. A fundamental part of this transformation was the construction of a framework of understanding centred on the Holocaust. Again, representation was the key to the decontextualization, universalisation and collectivisation of the trauma of the Jews. The label 'Holocaust' thus became a powerful bridging metaphor and floating signifier which Iris Chang was to use to great effect. The trauma-drama of the Holocaust provided Chang with a representational template, and even comparable 'characters' for the narration of her own trauma-drama centred on Nanjing.

Chapter Three asked *Why Iris Chang's 'The Rape of Nanking'?* This chapter shifted focus to the book itself, and the immediate circumstances surrounding its publication and reception. This included an assessment of Chang's position as a member of the Chinese diaspora, and that diaspora's role in the broader transmission of the Nanjing narrative as a cultural trauma. It argued that the North American Chinese diaspora were a willing carrier group for the traumatic master narrative, using the trauma of Nanjing to strengthen their individual and group identities, and the bonds between their communities – both real and imagined. Chang, through her book, became the preeminent diasporic carrier of the Nanjing traumatic master narrative.

The book itself was carefully fashioned to be read and understood in terms of trauma. It was full of references to hitherto established notions of victimhood, guilt and responsibility, Chang skilfully used the testimonies of Western bystanders, not only to verify her account, but to make the trauma of the Chinese relatable to a Western audience. In John Rabe and Minnie Vautrin, she had her equivalent of Oskar Schindler and Ann Frank, by 1997, both familiar figures in the established trauma-drama of the Holocaust. Chang was thus able to "script, cast and produce a trauma-drama about mass murder"[486] centred on Nanjing, using the Holocaust as her template and her benchmark. She was also quick to highlight her own ethnic and familial proximity to the traumatic event, authority to speak on behalf of the victims now measured by this very proximity. This authority was heralded by the journalists who wrote about Chang's text in the American popular press. They willingly accepted her authority to speak for the victims and with it, her version of the past. They relayed verbatim her plea for modern day witnesses to a historical trauma, and in their own application of a language of trauma encouraged symbolic participation in the originating traumatic experience. And the American Jewish diaspora, rather than rejecting Chang's appropriation of the term 'holocaust', appeared to accept her use of the label, welcoming her into their own trauma centred community.

Jeffrey C. Alexander's social theory of cultural trauma has been the key theory applied to the processes described. It has been applied not only to the 'forgetting' of Nanjing, but also for the first time to its sudden and spectacular 'remembering'. The theory has also been applied directly to *The Rape of Nanking*, arguing that Chang's book amply satisfies Alexander's four criteria to be considered a carrier for the Nanjing traumatic master narrative. The book's

[486] Alexander, *Culture trauma*, 9.

narrative structure allowed it to convincingly project the CCP's politically motivated and constructed trauma claim onto Western society at large.

PhD Possibilities

Due to the word limitations of this thesis, it has not been possible to look beyond the initial reception of *The Rape of Nanking* or to apply trauma theory to the book's enduring legacy. There is therefore ample scope to extend the traumatic reading of *The Rape of Nanking*'s reception to the years from 1997 to 2017. It was clear even in the early stages discussed that the book was developing a form of cultural potency, and that through the book, communities of concerned - and arguably traumatised - readers were beginning to form in areas such as the arts and education. This process only gathered pace after 2004 when Chang's death by suicide added intrigue to her personal narrative, and posthumous authority to her claim for victimhood. An examination of how these communities formed around the trauma of Nanjing through Chang's representation, would be a fruitful one.

In her 2016 volume, *Affective Communities in World Politics*, Emma Hutchison argued the need for a "turn to grief" if the Chinese national community is to move beyond the historical trauma of Nanjing and other damaging episodes from its Century of National Humiliation.[487] There is some evidence to suggest this is occurring on the mainland. The preeminent aesthetic representation of the massacre, the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum has been regularly upgraded since it opened. Its 2007 makeover was far more sophisticated than previous, taking its cues from Holocaust memorials in the West.[488] The

[487] Hutchison, *Affective Communities*, 238-247.
[488] Denton, "Exhibiting the past", 8.

emphasis is now on shared understanding and a common future rather than purely on shock and proof.

There is also evidence of an academic convergence concerning the history of the massacre in East Asia. Scholars from China and Japan are far closer to a measure of consensus on the details of the massacre than ever before.[489] Mainland academics are making the first tentative steps away from the figure of 300,000 dead that has been sacrosanct since the Nanjing Trial of 1948.[490] A CCP more confident of its hold on China, and more confident of China's increasingly important role in the global political economy, perhaps no longer needs to traumatise its polis to encourage their loyalty.

However, given that the CCP lost control over the symbolic production of the Nanjing master narrative when Chang and other overseas Chinese started generating powerful representations of their own, there is a danger the Nanjing narrative has already begun to bifurcate. If one was to return to the airport bookshop cited by Ropers – whether in Denver or Dublin - the blood red spine of *The Rape of Nanking* is still likely to be the only source of information available. Is it possible that mainland Chinese will indeed turn to grief, working through the trauma of Nanjing, while overseas Chinese and the Western reading public still continue to be traumatised by the potency of Chang's dominant popular representation?

[489] Yang, "Revisionism and the Nanjing Atrocity", 625-648.

[490] Ibid. 642-644.

On the 9th November 2004, the body of Iris Chang was discovered in her car on a rural road south of Los Gatos, California.[491] The cause of death was a single, self-inflicted gunshot wound.[492] Her death was a great loss to her family, her friends and colleagues, to the Chinese American community, and to the historical activists who's claim for justice she had mediated so powerfully through her writing. The *Global Alliance*'s Ignatius Ding spoke to the *San Francisco Chronicle,* keen to emphasise the toll her traumatic subject matter took on Chang. He claimed that she "took things to heart" and became emotionally involved in the tragedies she wrote about.[493] The American popular media who had read *The Rape of Nanking* in traumatic terms, read her death in the same manner. Her suicide was compared to that of Minnie Vautrin, both women mentally burdened by the toll their heroics had taken on them.[494] Moreover, Iris Chang was portrayed as "the latest victim of the Nanjing Massacre."[495]

Zhu Chengshan, the director of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum, said in an interview later that November that her book had brought international interest and attention to the museum, and the victims whose deaths it commemorated. "We all think she contributed so much. Her influence won't die."[496] The following year, the museum added a new sculpture to its gardens. The two-metre-high bronze featured a young Iris Chang

[491] Charles Burress, "Chinese American writer found dead in South Bay", *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 November 2004. Accessed online 26 November 2017. http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Chinese-American-writer-found-dead-in-South-Bay-2636071.php

[492] Ibid.

[493] Ding in Kathleen E. McLaughlin, "Iris Chang's suicide stunned those she tried so hard to help – the survivors of Japan's 'Rape of Nanking'", *San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 November 2004. Accessed online 26 November 2017. http://www.sfgate.com/entertainment/article/Iris-Chang-s-suicide-stunned-those-she-tried-so-2634180.php

[494] McLaughlin, "Iris Chang's suicide".

[495] Ibid.

[496] Ibid.

clutching her book, the word 'RAPE' clearly visible above her sleeve.[497] With this closure of the circle of representation, the importance of Iris Chang's contribution to the traumatic master narrative of the Nanjing massacre, was confirmed beyond any doubt.

[497] "Statue of The Rape of Nanking Author Unveiled", *china.org.cn*, 12 September 2005. Accessed online 26 November 2017. http://www.china.org.cn/english/culture/141644.htm

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