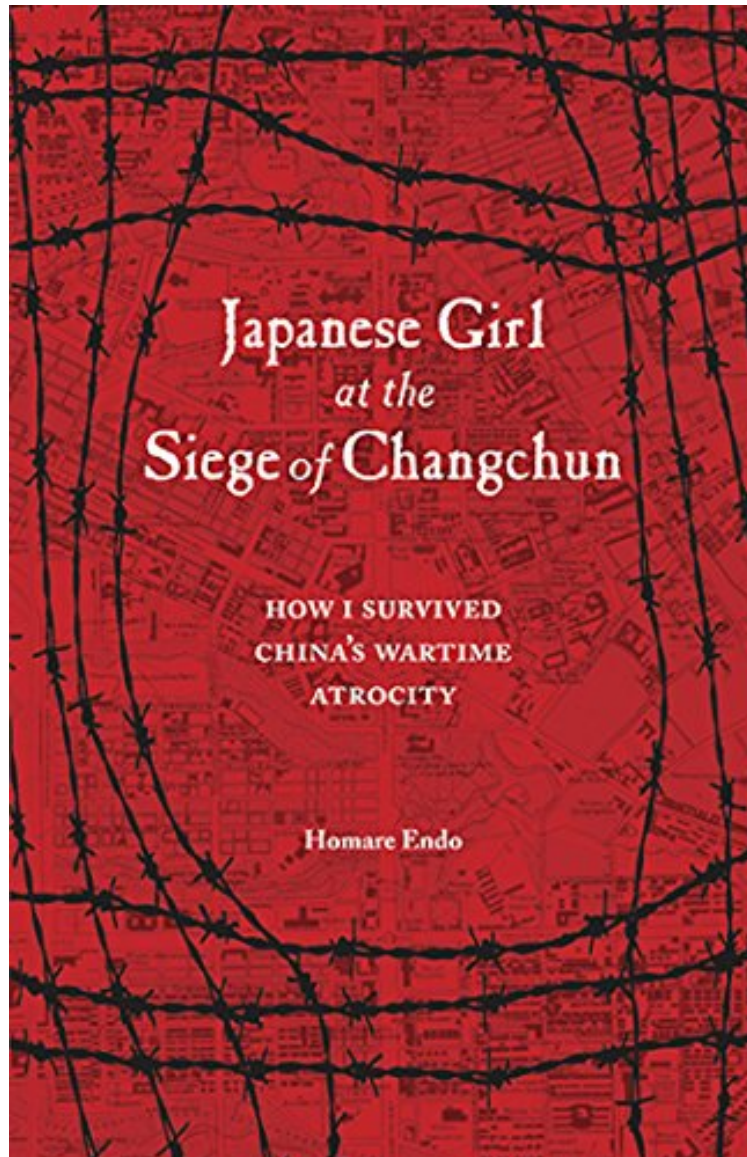


(Free and download) Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun: How I Survived Chinas Wartime Atrocity

## Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun: How I Survived Chinas Wartime Atrocity

*Homare Endo*

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**Homare Endo : Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun: How I Survived Chinas Wartime Atrocity** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun: How I Survived Chinas Wartime Atrocity:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Harrowing Account of a Wartme AtrocityBy William L.

Brown

The subtitle of this book, *How I survived China's wartime atrocity*, is what enticed me to acquire it and read it. I couldn't put it down. The author is a Doctor of Science, director of the Center of International Relations at Tokyo University and Graduate School of Social Welfare, and professor emeritus at the University of Tsukuba in Japan. Initially I found this story to be so bizarre that I had some concerns about its authenticity. (1) Is there really a University of Tsukuba in Japan, and if so how prominent is it? (2) Was there really a vicious siege of Changchun, and exactly what happened there? A bit of quick research led me to discover that the University of Tsukuba was established in 1973 and even boasts three Nobel Prize Winners, two in physics and one in chemistry. It is reportedly one of the oldest national universities (established by the Japanese Government) and also one of the most comprehensive research universities in Japan. So, it is genuine. As for my second question, yes there was a siege of the city of Changchun, China in 1945. In 1932 the capital of Manchukuo, a Japan-controlled puppet state in Manchuria, was established in Changchun. The Nationalist Chinese army was trapped in the city by the Communist Army in a last-ditch effort to destroy the remnant of the Nationalists and secure China for the Communists. This siege was remarkable in that essentially none of the hundreds of thousands of civilians in the city were allowed to leave, and no food or water were allowed into the city. As a result, many died of dehydration and starvation. Estimates of the death toll range from 100,000 to 600,000. The author sets the number of deaths at around 300,000. The author, Homare Endo, was only four years old when the military blockade of her home city began. Her father was an esteemed producer of pharmaceuticals, primarily an anti-heroin drug that he invented called Giftol (gift, German for poison, plus toru, Japanese for removing). Giftol enabled millions who were hooked on heroin to be freed from the addiction without the pain of going cold turkey. In China, where many people smoked heroin as others might smoke cigarettes, Giftol created an astonishing demand and Endo's father became a very wealthy man. Sadly, although his wealth was earned honestly it marked him as a target for the Russian, North Korean and Chinese Communist soldiers. The soldiers claimed to be on the side of the working class, and they viewed him as part of the hated wealthy class (the bourgeoisie). Endo has offered her memoirs not to expose a forgotten scandal in China's history so much as to reconstruct how she survived the terrifying events she experienced as a child. The result is a difficult read, because the torments that she endured throughout the siege were brutally severe. Since she was Japanese, her Chinese classmates blamed her for the Japanese occupation that their families endured in the previous years. A high point of her story is her account of a school teacher who saw in her great potential and who told her classmates that, as a four-year-old, she could not possibly have contributed to the Japanese occupation of their homeland. Much of the success of her family's escape from Changchun was due to her father's reputation as a highly devout man who took good care of the workers in his factory. Even though he lost millions to the marauding armies of undisciplined soldiers, he never lost hope and protected his family and friends against overwhelming odds. He is truly the hero of this story. I strongly urge anyone who is interested in the history of the Asian people to read this book. It is riveting in its detail, a highly emotional account of a harrowing experience that a young child endured. In addition to this book, she has written at least eight books recounting her experiences in China and her views on Chinese history. Sadly, I think this volume is the only one that has been translated into English.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating and horrifying account of atrocities against Japanese during the beginnings of China's cultural revolution

By Carol C. The story was fascinating and horrifying. It seemed to be told with a bent for hyperbole -- so even if fully true, it often came across as exaggerated or biased, rather than objectively written. The author survived these atrocities as a young child, so perhaps the story is accurately told from her perspective, but I felt that I was reading propaganda rather than an objective account. That said, the story certainly needs to be told and the author makes clear that the Chinese government has done nothing to tell the story. One hears plenty about the atrocities the Japanese inflicted on the Chinese in the years preceding WWII. It was enlightening to hear about atrocities inflicted by the Chinese on Japanese residents.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. China's Atrocity Through a Child's Eyes

By Emily A. Homare Endo brings to light the plight of Japanese caught in China during WWII and I am astonished at her ability to recall in intricate detail the ordeal that she and family went through. It was heartbreaking to read about how these Japanese were treated horrendously. Endo, a girl of five when the war started watched as her father's successful pharmaceutical factory be taken over by the warring factions of the Nationalists and the Third Army. Her father is the maker of Giftol, an effective drug for opoid addiction and the Chinese relied on this drug to help the multitude of people addicted to opium, her family was forced to stay in China while other Japanese families were evacuated. But at a certain point, evacuations ceased and those left behind banded together. Unfortunately, they were forced to flee Changchun to Qiazi, a no-man's land. It was like a concentration camp where they fought to find place to sit amid bodies of the dead and dying. This part of her story is very graphic and gut-wrenching. For me, this is a fascinating book for several reasons. Her father, Takuji Okubo, had such an indefatigable person who believed in being kind to the extreme. There is a saintliness in his efforts to protect his family and the other Japanese who were traveling with him. Endo's mother is also a remarkable person. Years younger than her husband, she nevertheless was stalwart and comforting even as she watched her children slowly starve. I am also acutely aware that in war, the ones who suffer most are not the persons who make the decision to start one. It is the soldiers who are following their orders and civilians who suffer and perish as collateral damage. And it doesn't matter whether people, like the Japanese in WWII,

are the aggressors, their people suffer just like Endo's family who were trapped in China where they were sandwiched between the Communist wave and the retreating Nationalists. I feel honored that Homare Endo shared her story with the rest of the world.

Over 150,000 innocents died of starvation in Changchun, northeastern China, after the end of WW2 when Mao's army laid siege during the Chinese Civil War. Japanese girl Homare Endo, then age seven, was trapped in Changchun with her family. After nomadic flight from city to city, Homare eventually returned to Japan and a professional career. This is her eyewitness, at times haunting account of survival at all costs and of unspeakable scenes of barbarity that the Chinese government today will not acknowledge. Homare Endo was born in China in 1941 and is director of the Center of International Relations at Tokyo University and Graduate School of Social Welfare.

"Reveals the power of official history to write its own story and exclude what troubles that narrative." *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal* "Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun is an important work, a reminder of humanity's boundless potential for compassion or cruelty, once war forces a fight for survival... [It] vividly captures the psychological and physical trauma of surviving war... Endo's memoir is also a call to action. Its part of a history that has been deliberately ignored, and deserves to be remembered." *The Japan Times* "There are things written in this book that are difficult to repeat aloud haunting moments that stun the reader and stick in his or her mind long after the book is closed... Even today, no Chinese publisher has been willing to publish this book for fear of retribution. That's what makes *Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun* so important. It reveals a truth hidden for so long and brings to light stories of the people who suffered, the people who were forgotten... Its a reminder of how far human apathy can sink, the destructive power of selfishness and the necessity of empathy. Its a reminder of how far people will go to survive and how much farther they will go with hope of a better life. Its a monument to the truth and a memento to the forgotten dead." *The Daily Nebraskan* "[*Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun*] is a fascinating, harrowing story of resilience and struggle that has been overlooked by most people and historians. It is a story that needs to be told, in order that it will not be repeated." *Lost In Translation blog* "A chilling yet inherently fascinating and intensely personal memoir, *Japanese Girl at the Siege of Changchun* is exceptionally well written, organized and presented." *Midwest Book*