

# BBC World News - Japan and World War II

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Saturday marks 75 years since the end of World War II when Japan's Emperor, Hirahito, announced his country's **unconditional surrender**. Even after so many decades **reconciliation** in Asia remains **illusive** with many Japanese seeing their country as a **victim** of US atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At the same time China and Korea view Japan's postwar **apologies** as incomplete and **insincere**. From Tokyo our correspondent, Rupert Winfried Hayes, reports:

At Tokyo's Yasakuni shrine the Narashino Brotherhood has come to bow to the spirits of Japan's wartime leaders. August is a busy month for these far right nationalists. First, they try to get to Japan's Parliament but the way is blocked, so they **crank up** the speakers and begin shouting **abuse**,

"The Liberal Democratic Party is useless", they shout, "You're idiots."

With more and more of her troops landing at Shanghai, pushing on toward Nanking...

Japan committed many crimes during World War II but by far the worst was the Nanjing **massacre**. After the city fell tens of thousands of Chinese soldiers and civilians were **slaughtered**. But not according to Takehiro Ezaki:

First of all, the Nanjing massacre does not exist. The civilian population of the city was **evacuated**. If there was a massacre where did all the dead bodies go? There is no evidence. It's all a lie.



bad language

cruelly killed

dishonest

giving up

increase

mass killing

out and out (total)

peace and trust

removed

saying sorry

sufferer

unreal



*What do you know about World War II?*

*Who needs to apologise for what?*

China is not the only country these groups claim has wronged Japan. Today, their target is Russia.

So, this is another piece of highly **contested** history for Japan's nationalists. Up the street, just here, is the Russia Embassy, and they believe at the end of World War II Russia stole a big chunk of territory from Japan, and today they're here to demand it back.

75 years on the wounds inflicted by World War II remain open and **festering**. Anger is strongest in South Korea where Japan's Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, is a figure of hate and **ridicule**. Last month a Korean artist **unveiled** this statue of Mr Abe **prostrating** himself before a young Korean woman. It symbolises the **begging** for **forgiveness** that Japan has yet to do for the crimes it committed against thousands of Korean women.

The United States which was the **occupying** power in Japan did not want to get into the history question. It wanted everyone to move forward. And, erh, you had, you know, millions, erm, tens of millions, of victims in China and Korea, erh, who had a sense of saying, "Wait a second, wait a second, that's not OK. I'm not ready to move on."

On Saturday, thousands will gather at the Yasakuni Shrine. many will come to pray for a relative, one of the two and a half million Japanese war dead. But others will come here to **pay homage** to the fourteen Class A war **criminals** who are also honoured here. In Seoul, and Beijing, they will see a country that still refuses to face its own past. Rupert Winfield Hayes, BBC news in Tokyo.

asking (praying)
challenged
controlling (land)
going bad
lawbreakers
mockery
pardon
revealed (first time)
submitting
worship (-)