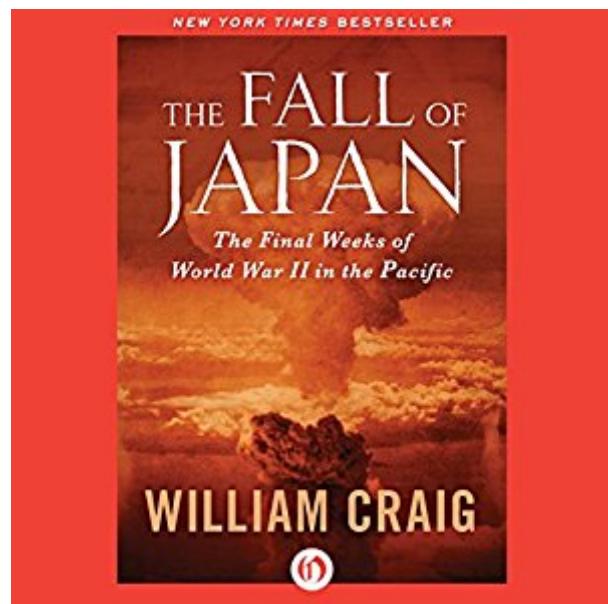


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# The Fall Of Japan



## Synopsis

Told from both Japanese and American perspectives, this thrilling account of the final weeks of World War II in the Pacific has been heralded by the New York Times Book Review as "virtually faultless". By midsummer 1945, Japan had long since lost the war in the Pacific. The people were not told the truth, and neither was the emperor. Japanese generals, admirals, and statesmen knew, but only a handful of leaders were willing to accept defeat. Most were bent on fighting the Allies until the last Japanese soldier died and the last city burned to the ground. Exhaustively researched and vividly told, *The Fall of Japan* masterfully chronicles the dramatic events that brought an end to the Pacific War and forced a once-mighty military nation to surrender unconditionally. From the ferocious fighting on Okinawa to the all-but-impossible mission to drop the second atom bomb, and from Franklin D. Roosevelt's White House to the Tokyo bunker where tearful Japanese leaders first told the emperor the truth, William Craig captures the pivotal events of the war with spellbinding authority. *The Fall of Japan* brings to life both celebrated and lesser-known historical figures, including Admiral Takijiro Onishi, the brash commander who drew up the Yamamoto plan for the attack on Pearl Harbor and inspired the death cult of kamikaze pilots. This astonishing account ranks alongside Cornelius Ryan's *The Longest Day* and John Toland's *The Rising Sun* as a masterpiece of World War II history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It must be remembered that this book was written in 1967. Since then however, the death of Hirohito

has revealed many primary sources which indicate that the emperor and his family were much more implicated in the conduct of the war than the view promoted by Mac Arthur's propaganda. Some authors like Yoshiaki Yoshimi even discovered that Hirohito personally authorized the use of chemical weapons against civilians. For a much more updated study, you should read *Hirohito and War: Imperial Tradition and Military Decision Making in Pre-War Japan* by Peter Wetzler, *The Showa emperor 15 years war* by Akira Fujiwara, *The Showa emperor as commander in chief* by Akira Yamada, *Hirohito And The Making Of Modern Japan* by Herbert Bix or *SHOWA : CHRONICLES OF A FALLEN GOD* by Paul-Yanic Laquerre.

This book covers in fascinating detail the late stages of the war and aftermath of the fall of Japan mostly from the Japanese perspective. The battles between the Japanese leaders over the surrender, which led to an attempted coup, are covered in detail.

This is an excellent account of the weeks leading up to the surrender of Japan in World War II, told from the perspective of both the United States and Japan. I was particularly intrigued by the culture of the Japanese military at the time and its pervasive control of the government. But by the summer of 1945, the military's influence, although still considerable, had begun to wane. Surrender, even after the second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, was not a foregone conclusion. Many within the military wanted to continue to fight to the last man standing. Civilians and the military alike were petrified with fear of what an American occupation would mean for the country. Craig's description of the political maneuvering of different factions within the military and the government creates a lively narrative of intrigue with conspiracies and even an outright revolt by a few of the more radical military officers that failed to garner support from the top brass. The book is a reminder of the effect a dominant military, left unchecked, can have on a civilian government.

I have heard since I was a boy how the Japanese surrender was orderly and civil. I never knew the story behind it and realize what a complex and extensive procedure it was. Millions of soldiers, hundreds of millions of civilians and thousands of square miles across dozens of countries were involved. This book is an excellent read of some of the people and events involved.

Very good book in my view, and it does a superb job of describing the closing days of the war with

Japan, as well as the days immediately following the surrender. My initial impression with the first pages of the book was that this was just going to be a rehash of things already covered by so many other authors. But it truly drew me in with the vivid detail of the mission to bomb Nagasaki, which quite frankly I haven't seen written about in other books in nearly as much detail as the Enola Gay mission to Hiroshima. These pages were riveting. What came next was the very fascinating end game in Japan, which Mr. Craig describes quite well. He never allowed the narrative to get bogged down, and gave just enough backstory on the key figures to give the reader historical context, without getting sidetracked. This I especially appreciated with the American figures like MacArthur, Halsey, Nimitz and Truman. There are great volumes of literature on all of these men, so Mr. Craig wisely did not try and tell their stories. Rather, he told the story of final days of the Japanese Empire and the role that they played in this remarkable series of events. Let me end by saying that I have read an incredible number of military history books from World War II, and this book certainly rates as one of the better ones. Great job by Mr. Craig, and I highly recommend.

Until I read THIS account I had been in a quandary about whether it was necessary to drop the Atom bombs on an obviously defeated Japan. This book suggests (with authentic investigation and documentation) that even after the horrific devastation and human destruction; there still remained a significant number of kamikaze like fanatical military personnel OPPOSED to the surrender and ready to fight. I read this book between Memorial day and the 4th of July. It will forever keep me mindful of the true significance and monumental debt of gratitude we owe to the United States Military VETERANS.

This was a very informative account of the last days of the war in the Pacific during World War II. A good companion book to read in conjunction with this work would be *Marching Orders* by Bruce Lee. In both books is an account of how the Japanese military resisted the surrender, willing to sacrifice all Japanese civilians to death by defending the island to the last man, woman and child. Even after the emperor used his influence to accept the surrender terms (the emperor held only a ceremonial position in the government), there was disagreement among the top military officers. A militant group tried to overthrow those willing to accept peace terms or to assassinate the pro peace group. Also discussed is the deceit on the part of Stalin and on the part of the Chinese Communists in their failure to abide by surrender agreements. Additionally, there was mentioned the efforts on the part of the U.S. to save prisoners of war after the surrender agreement. There was fear that Japanese militants would murder all prisoners of war out of spite and also to keep them from telling

of atrocities committed by the Japanese. As it was, some prisoners of war were murdered before rescue groups could reach them.

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