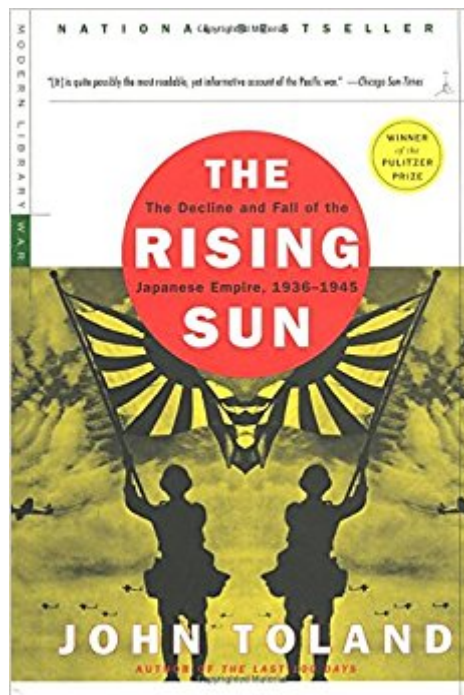


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# The Rising Sun: The Decline And Fall Of The Japanese Empire, 1936-1945 (Modern Library War)



## Synopsis

This Pulitzer Prize-winning history of World War II chronicles the dramatic rise and fall of the Japanese empire, from the invasion of Manchuria and China to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Told from the Japanese perspective, *The Rising Sun* is, in the author's words, "a factual saga of people caught up in the flood of the most overwhelming war of mankind, told as it happened—muddled, ennobling, disgraceful, frustrating, full of paradox." In weaving together the historical facts and human drama leading up to and culminating in the war in the Pacific, Toland crafts a riveting and unbiased narrative history. In his Foreword, Toland says that if we are to draw any conclusion from *The Rising Sun*, it is that there are no simple lessons in history, that it is human nature that repeats itself, not history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"[It] is quite possibly the most readable, yet informative account of the Pacific war." "Chicago Sun-Times" "Unbelievably rich . . . readable and exciting . . . The best parts of [Toland's] book are not the battle scenes but the intimate view he gives of the highest reaches of Tokyo politics." "Newsweek" "Similar in scope to William Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. Toland's book is fresh and dramatic throughout. *The Rising Sun* is not only a blood-and-guts action story, it also presents for the first time a great deal of fresh information." "Chicago Sun-Times"

This Pulitzer Prize-winning history of World War II chronicles the dramatic rise and fall of the Japanese empire, from the invasion of Manchuria and China to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Told from the Japanese perspective, "The Rising Sun is, in the author's words, "a factual saga of people caught up in the flood of the most overwhelming war of mankind, told as it happened--muddled, ennobling, disgraceful, frustrating, full of paradox." In weaving together the historical facts and human drama leading up to and culminating in the war in the Pacific, Toland crafts a riveting and unbiased narrative history. In his Foreword, Toland says that if we are to draw any conclusion from "The Rising Sun, it is "that there are no simple lessons in history, that it is human nature that repeats itself, not history."

An excellent mix of big picture commentary and personal level focus to portray the people, their times and the consequences of their actions. Especially in light of recent events in the South China Sea, this is a useful and necessary read.

Extensive detail on both the Japanese and Allied sides of the military and administrative decisions, actions, successes, and failures. It would have helped to have included more maps of the individual key battles to better be able to follow the detailed narratives. Uncovers the many political power plays and gross misinterpretations which continuously occurred between enemies, allies, and even within each nations' government and military. Boy, is war ever brutal and massively confusing--it's amazing just how screwed up almost everything was, and how much sheer luck played in outcomes.

Detailed and complete narrative. I have no idea how much research John Toland had to do to put this together. But, it has incredibly intimate details of correspondence and discussions between the Japanese figures at the top of the government and those responsible for the lead in to WWII Pacific/China war. An excellent historical document and a must read for anyone interested in the modern Japanese wars

This is extremely detailed and researched. It is intriguing how the author holds the reader and yet builds the story with so much information included. This book ranges between a treatise on the 1936--1945 time frame and at the same time serves as a compelling story of what occurred over the nine years covered. Well done.

Drawing on hundreds of interviews and source material, John Toland has achieved the impossible, to offer a most unique take on the Pacific War: dozens of people come to life in this history book, which more often than not, ends up being more reminiscent of a novel as it takes its reader diving headlong in a journey of palace intrigues, decision making and, ultimately, the carnage of war. The book kicks off with a brief introduction about the Manchurian adventure and the troubles that plagued Japan during the prewar years: the fight between the various cliques that composed Japanese society and the struggle between the military and the civilian government. Soon, the Marco Polo Bridge incident takes place and carnage ensues. The invasion prompts the USA to tighten its embargo on Japan and the rest is known to most readers, ensuing in the turbulent (and fraught) negotiations that climaxed in the attack on Pearl Harbor. Then, Toland covers each and every theater of war from 1941 all the way to 1945, mostly excluding those that took place in the Asian mainland. It is worth noting that the title may be a tad misleading, for one would infer that the book covered several other aspects of Imperial Japan: from its society, to its economy, its administration and its military ventures in the mainland. But alas, it mostly covers the Pacific War, with all its island-hopping, sea battles and whatnot. One is hard-pressed to remember that there is actually fighting taking place somewhere else, for there is scant a chapter about them, mostly at the beginning - before the US' entry into the War - and at the very end, when Chiang Kai-Shek comes into play as the leader of one of the victorious nations. That being said, while I felt somewhat dismayed upon realising it, I still found the book absolutely enjoyable, albeit from a completely new perspective. It is a meticulous tale of the hardships and vicissitudes that plagued men and women, elderly and young, rich or bereft, powerful or otherwise during the war between Imperial Japan and the US, and in doing so is a masterpiece. Regarding the sources and material on which the author draws upon: most of it is source material, for Toland embarked on a long journey in order to interview all sorts of people: from Prince Mikasa, brother to Hirohito and former US President Harry Truman, to your rank and file Japanese and American troops stationed in the Pacific and the civilians that had to endure the hardships of war. The bibliography on which the author relied to write the book, however, might be a bit dated, considering that almost half a century passed since the book saw the light. But it stills feel fresh, with all its vivid and engrossing accounts that, due to its sheer scope, none may equal anytime soon. Finally, Toland deserves praise for his excellent writing skills, for he managed to make what would have otherwise been a cumbersome task - to read about dozens of excruciatingly precise military data and geographical/topological information - a most enjoyable experience. The characters, the highlight of the book, come to life each with his or her own soul and motives, perfectly and captivatingly crafted, their soul forever captured by the author's

masterful writing. It is truly a delight to read. Gripping stories, an abundance of information, a careful attention to detail and a marvelous prose makes reading *The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire (1936-1945)* a completely breathtaking experience, that will haunt you long after you are done with it.

I really enjoy Toland's work. He does a great job of interweaving the overall strategic view with dynamic, first person accounts at the point of action. I felt almost present as his descriptions of events are amazingly clear. The Japanese perspective was new to me. It saddens me to recognize how avoidable the war could have been and yet how inevitable it was because of cultural and racial differences and suspicions.

John Toland's *Rising Sun* gives a unique documentation of the events leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbor from the Japanese perspective as well as the conduct of the war in the Pacific with the opposing viewpoints of the politicians and military. The opportunities to avoid war that were wasted through misinterpretation and miscommunication which could have dramatically altered history are painfully recorded. Needless loss of life of men and women (and children), both military and civilian, makes one appalled at the cost to humanity of war.

Should be the closest to the truth, everybody knows that in a war the first casualty is the truth. Some passages of the book look like a novel but a very good history on why Japan declared the war against the Anglo-Saxon empires, why it was the wrong way, why they were pushed to that point, the way the Japanese people see war and they honor, anyway they helped a lot of nations to gain their independence from the Europeans and Americans, millions of lives wasted, millions of young people from Japan, from America and his allies, and from the innocent people close to the war scenario in Asia and mainly Japan. The decisions taken by Roosevelt / Staling and Churchill, MacArthur, Nimitz, the emperor Hirohito, Japanese prime ministers, all the amazing description of those battles in the seas with these amazing battle ships, air carriers, the latest in the world. The detailed descriptions to the brutal and amazing retreat from the Philippines, Midway, battles for Guadalcanal, Guam, Leyte, Iwo-Jima, Okinawa, the atomic bomb, and finally the consequences for Japan and for the rest of the world from this war.

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