

Memories of China and Taiwan during World War II
(interview by Justin Kuo)

1. What provoked China into entering WWII?

Japan made some cheap excuses about China attacking and capturing a Japanese soldier as a reason for declaring war on China. The Japanese had a great ambition of conquering the world, which drove them to start invading China.

2. Was the invasion successful?

At first, the Japanese were very successful at defeating the Chinese. This was partly because the Japanese had better weapons and technology and also because China had just fought a civil war.

3. Which parts of China did Japan conquer?

Japan chose the important cities in China as their main targets. The Japanese attempted to take over the countryside many times, but were always defeated there because of their lack of knowledge of the land. Although they took control of some of the cities near China's coast, they never got past that to conquer the rest of China.

4. Did Japan seek to conquer other parts of Asia?

Japan wanted to control all of Asia. The Japanese also took over parts of Korea and Taiwan in addition to invading China. However, when the Japanese took over, they treated the people living there cruelly. This is why many Korean and Taiwanese people still hate the Japanese today. Like their campaigns in China, the Japanese tried to take control of the countryside in Taiwan but always failed.

5. Why were the Japanese unable to reach the countryside of Taiwan?

When Japanese soldiers tried to cross the mountains and enter the countryside in Taiwan, most were killed. This was because the native Taiwanese that lived in the mountains were informed of the situation by their friends living in the cities under Japanese control. Since they used to be headhunters a while ago, these natives were extremely successful at terminating the Japanese. They sought to help by setting dangerous traps specifically designed to kill Japanese soldiers. The natives themselves would kill Japanese soldiers silently by using blowguns and poisonous darts. They also used a type of "hit and hide" tactic to kill large bands of Japanese soldiers. They would fire large numbers of arrows from treetops at passing soldiers and then hide behind leaves while the soldiers fired recklessly and run out of ammunition. When they heard the firing stop, the natives would jump out of the trees and quickly kill the shocked Japanese soldiers with large daggers. Legions of Japanese soldiers were killed because of the natives' effort to drive the invaders out.

6. How was Japan defeated at the end of WWII?

Japan gradually lost more and more people as time passed. Since

Chinese troops outnumbered the Japanese a hundred to one, they were able to destroy the Japanese after a series of battles. While Chinese armies were almost always loaded with fresh troops and reinforcements, the Japanese rapidly diminished in number. Before atomic bombs were dropped in Japan by the U.S., Japan had been crushed by the Chinese and was prepared to surrender.