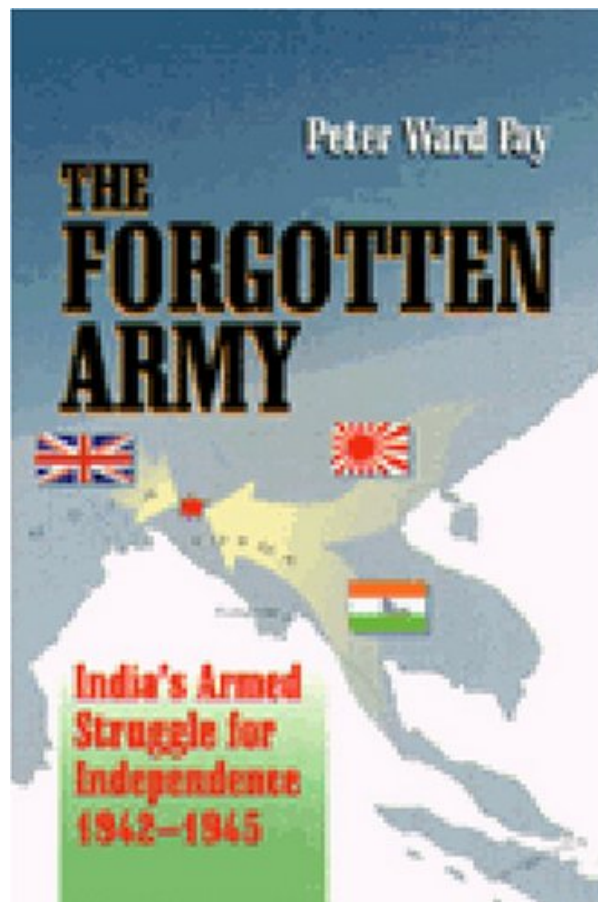
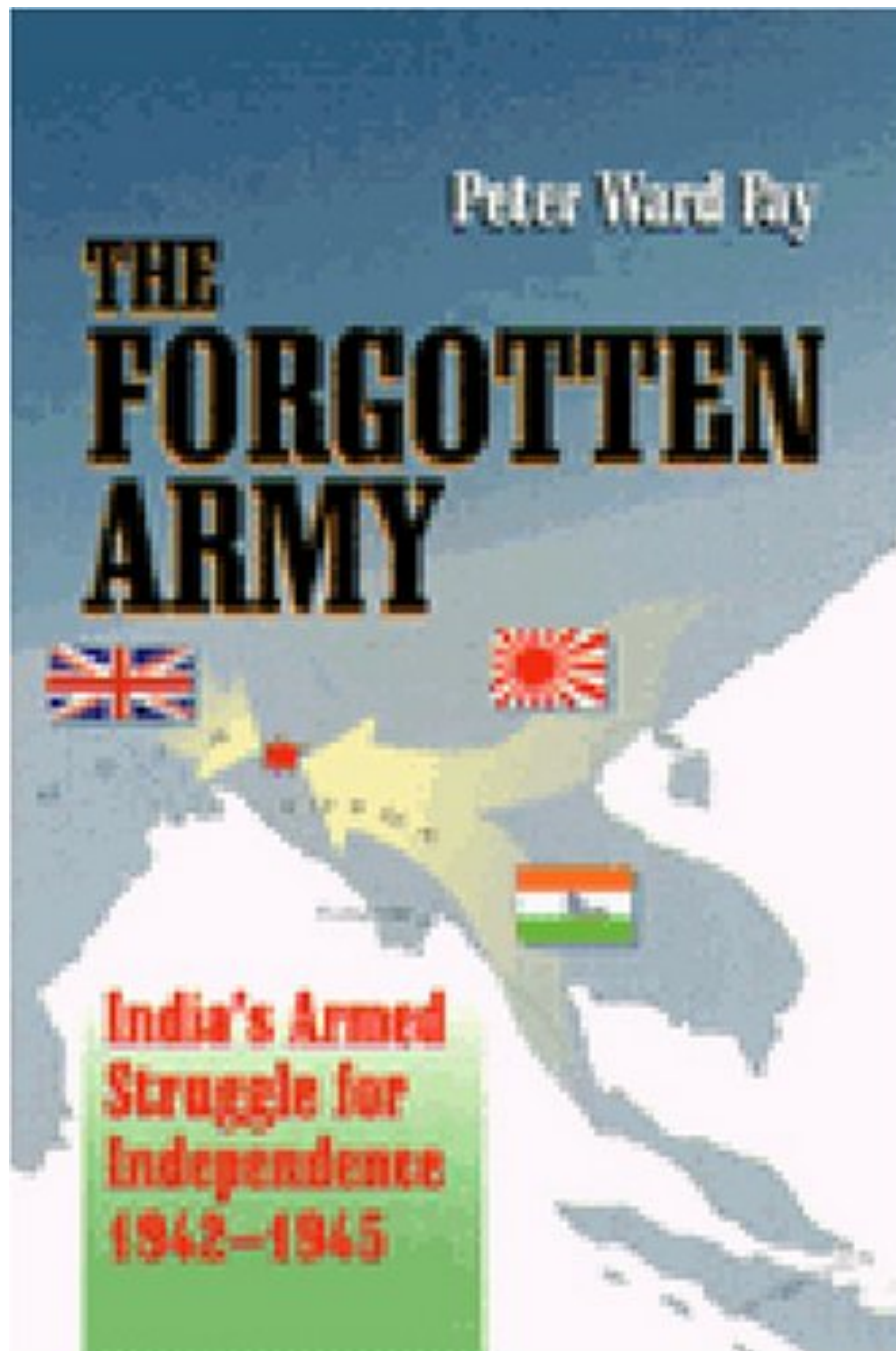


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STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, 1942-1945
BY PETER WARD FAY**



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". . . a well-crafted and thought-provoking mixture of oral history and original research, providing the most comprehensive account yet published of the events leading to the formation of the INA." --Guardian

"Fay has made a magnificent attempt to analyse all the credible information on the history of [Subhas Chandra] Bose's legendary Indian National Army (INA)." --Times Higher Education Supplement

"This fine study of the Indian National Army (INA) seeks to demonstrate this army's significance in the attainment of Indian independence and the termination of the British Empire. . . . Throughout, Fay seeks to explain why 'constant and true' Indians like Sahgal and Swaminadhan chose to fight alongside the Japanese and against the British . . ." -- Pacific Affairs

Peter Ward Fay is Professor of History, California Institute of Technology.

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Most helpful customer reviews

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Understanding the Present, by Understanding the Past: India's Armed Struggle for Independence

By John Church

Written by an American author about the Indian National Army which fought for independence from British colonial rule, *The Forgotten Army* is jam-packed with details that make clear a very complicated political situation as India's National Congress sought independence while the British Prime Minister focused on national survival at home and the Viceroy in New Delhi struggled to maintain control within India and also support the Allied war effort in East Asia. I previously knew the basic outline of Indian nationalist Bose

aligning with the Imperial Japanese Army, but not of the struggle to organize and put an army in the field, nor of the emotional turmoil to INA officers who decided to stand for their country vs their regiment. The Note on Sources is akin to an annotated bibliography and well worth a close read to understand that sources were few and (geographically) far between, because most relevant documents were destroyed in 1945, save a few used during the Court Martial at the Red Fort, Delhi. Highly recommended to understand the rise of nationalism in the world's largest democracy and the impact on nearby Burma.

I read this while traveling in Myanmar and left my copy with my guide in Yangon.

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful.

"JIFs" or Freedom Fighters?

By Amazon Customer

The Indian National Army, and its operations with the Japanese in the Burma theatre of operations during World War II, was long a controversial subject between Indians and British, and generally regarded with curmudgeonly disapproval by the British. The fact is that the issue of collaboration was probably more complicated in the Asia-Pacific theatre than it was in the European theatre. Experiencing the colonial rule of the British, French, and Dutch, many Burmese, Malays, Vietnamese, Sumatrans and Javanese saw the Japanese as colonial liberators. Even in the Philippines, under an allegedly benign American rule, much of the legislature stayed on to work under the Japanese. The Germans, of course, used peoples like the Lithuanians and Ukrainians in order to carry out the "Final Solution", but the situation was somewhat different. Asian nationalists struggling for independence, largely along lines laid for them by Western educations, found themselves betrayed by Western colonial empires who were committed to holding on at all cost (or so they thought until 1942). Fay's book provides a case study of one of the most famous (or notorious) instances of collaboration in the Asia-Pacific theatre. He examines the history of the Indian National Army (derogatorily referred to by the British as "JIFs"--Japanese Indian Forces) through an INA perspective, specifically in interviews with Prem and Lakshmi Sahgal, a husband and wife who found themselves in Singapore in 1942 when the British surrendered to the Japanese--Prem as a captured officer, and Lakshmi as a doctor. Both, disillusioned and fed up with years of British promises of independence that grew consciously or unconsciously caught up in red tape and official footdragging, decided to join the Japanese-affiliated force of Indian soldiers that would reclaim India for the Indians. The rest of the story should be read through their words, providing a much needed other side to the story of the Indian struggle for independence.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

A study in loyalty

By James D. Crabtree

I read this book when it first came out and then went over it again recently. This is excellent history as well as an examination and discussion as to what constitutes treason and what constitutes loyalty.

When WWII broke out India was still a British possession, and just as in WWI India contributed troops to the British Empire's war effort. In the European/African theater Indian divisions served in Egypt, Cyranica, Tripoli, France and in Great Britain itself. In Asia Indians were sent to help defend Malaysia, Burma and Singapore. And it was Singapore, which saw the surrender of over 50,000 Indian soldiers following the lightning-fast Japanese campaign which saw the stunning defeat of the British.

And this is where the Indian National Army comes in. The INA came about because of the efforts of Subhas Chandra Bose (also known as Netaji) and the Free India Association. The Free India Association, made up of overseas Indians not enamored by British rule of their homeland, assumed the role of a government-in exile and the INA its army working alongside the Japanese to liberate India via Burma. Netaji was the supreme leader for both. He had experience being "supreme leader" having spent the first years of the war in Nazi

Germany chumming himself up to Hitler and Mussolini and helping to raise an "Indian Legion" for duty in the Wehrmacht. He appeared in Singapore following a trip from Europe in a U-boat, a transfer to an Imperial Japanese Navy I-boat in the Indian Ocean.

So were the INA members, mostly recruited from the POWs captured at Singapore, traitors to the Crown? They were, after all, members of the Indian Army. Or were they patriots? The British officers of the IA regiments seemed to be in an awful hurry to relinquish their responsibilities to their soldiers.

This is a fascinating work and obviously a lot of work went into this book. I found it a very good read and would recommend it for anyone interested in India and WWII.

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