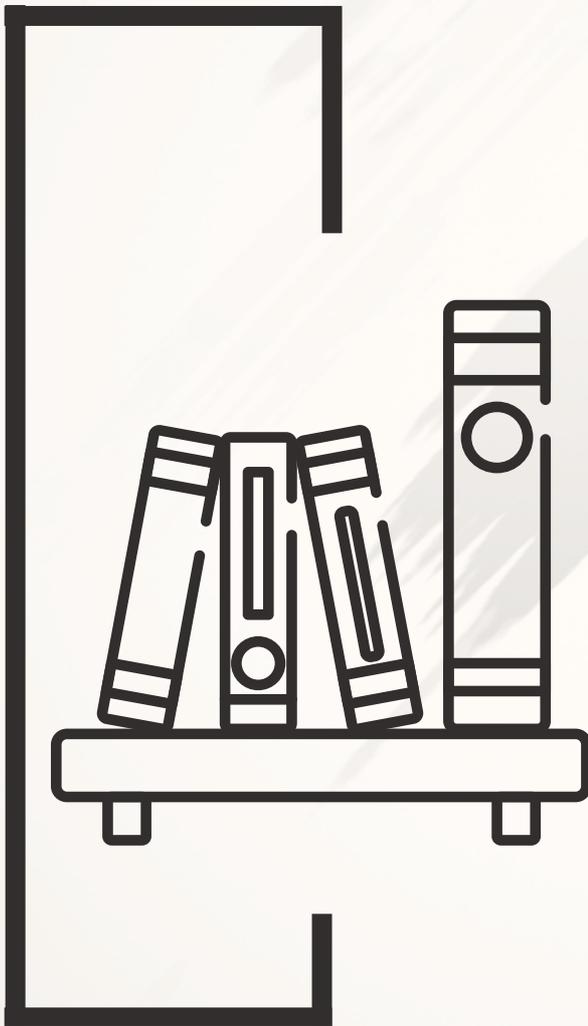




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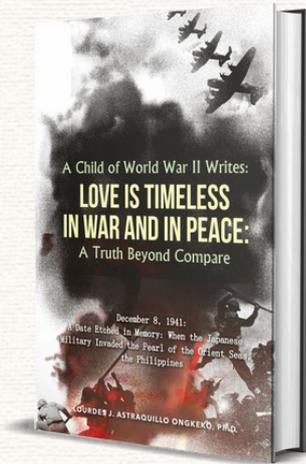
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CLASSIC REVIEW

NON - FICTION

A CHILD OF WORLD WAR II WRITES

By Lourdes J. Astraquillo-Ongkeko, Ph.D.



A Child of World War II Writes: **LOVE IS TIMELESS IN WAR AND IN PEACE:** A Truth Beyond Compare

By Lourdes J. Astraquillo-Ongkeko, Ph.D.

RATING: 4/5



Lourdes Ongkeko's short memoir is a fascinating look at the Japanese occupation of the Philippines through the eyes of a child.

With its florid, somewhat old-fashioned prose, Lourdes Ongkeko's *Love Is Timeless in War and Peace: A Truth Beyond Compare* is a riveting account of the author's World War II experiences during the Japanese occupation of Baguio City in the Philippines.

The story opens with a literal bang as bombs start dropping down on Baguio City on a seemingly normal day. Ongkeko recounts the fear she felt when she realized that the brutal reality of war had finally arrived at what she had always believed was a haven for her and her loved ones. She describes the frantic desperation of her father to prepare a secret bomb shelter for their family and the terror of the next few days as she and her neighbors are confronted by the presence of invaders in their homeland. Then, she tells of how a semblance of normalcy gradually returns to their lives, though it is always underlined by the knowledge that the enemy is now living amongst them.

One of the most fascinating parts of the book is the author's experience of learning the Japanese language. This pursuit is initially encouraged by her father as he believed that being able to communicate with their oppressors would actually help them in their plight. Ongkeko learns how to speak Nihongo so well that she goes on to win a competition. Unfortunately, she does not go into a lot of detail about her relationship with her Japanese teacher, Mr. Tachibana, but they were apparently close enough that he came to her aid when she was too weak to walk home after a long stay at a hospital. What she leaves unwritten is tantalizing in its mystery.

As a memoir, the book is sadly too short to allow readers to be fully immersed in Ongkeko's tale. But what is on the page is something that will definitely linger long in the mind due to the simple power of a child's truth.