



Seventy Years after the Asia Pacific War: Interrogating Japan's War Responsibility

「アジア太平洋戦争終結70年：問われ続ける日本の戦争責任」

Nobuyoshi Takashima

Professor Emeritus, University of the Ryukyus

Commentator: **Hyung-Gu Lynn**

Associate Professor, UBC Institute of Asian Research

Date: Thursday, October 15, 2015

Time: 4:00 – 5:30 pm (Reception to follow)

Location: Room 120, C.K. Choi Building

*Supported by the Institute for Asian Research, Department of Asian Studies and
Department of Language and Literacy Education*

About the Event: “Prime Minister Abe’s recent statement on the 70th anniversary of the end of the Asia Pacific War reflected a revisionist view justifying Imperial Japan’s colonialism and violence. The general acceptance of the statement stems from Japan’s postwar failure to scrutinize its war responsibility. This has led well-meaning activists and educators to position Japan solely as a war victim. My fieldwork conducted with schoolteachers, however, has clearly revealed Japan’s role as a victimizer in Southeast Asia. It has also raised contentious questions: How could Japanese soldiers as “ordinary” people commit such atrocities? Why have some Southeast Asian political leaders expressed forgiveness for Japan? How do we come to terms of young people’s refusal to take on Japan’s lasting responsibility?”

About the Speaker: **Nobuyoshi TAKASHIMA** is Professor Emeritus of the University of the Ryukyus in Japan. He has worked as a high school social studies teacher, a teacher educator, and an author of history textbooks. In the 1970s, he began conducting research on the Imperial Japanese Army’s atrocities committed in Southeast Asia. He has also investigated Japanese civilians’ sufferings during the Battle of Okinawa and the politics of history textbooks in Japan. Since 1983, he has organized an annual study tour for Japanese teachers to learn about Imperial Japan’s invasion of Southeast Asia.