

The 2009 Tetsuo Najita Distinguished Lecture in Japanese Studies

# Crime and Responsibility: War, Indiscriminate Bombing, and Mass Killing

Dr. Yuki Tanaka

Hiroshima Peace Institute, Hiroshima City University

---

February 3, 2009, 3:30pm

Social Sciences Building, Room 122

---



Sponsored by the Japan Studies Committee  
of the Center for East Asian Studies



Reception immediately following



A B-29 bomber surveys Hiroshima, September 1945

#### About the Tetsuo Najita Distinguished Lecture in Japanese Studies

Tetsuo Najita is the Robert S. Ingersoll Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus in History and East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. The Committee on Japanese Studies at the University of Chicago established this lecture series in honor of his contributions to the field of Japanese Studies.

In his lecture Dr. Tanaka will examine the question of the criminality of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the responsibility of American political and military leaders who were closely involved in the decision-making and execution of the order to drop the bombs. Criminality is examined in accordance with international law effective at the time that the bombs were dropped and in the light of the Charter of the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal.

Dr. Tanaka will also examine the history and present situation of indiscriminate aerial bombing of civilian populations. He will examine how the use of this tactic started, what kind of military logic was used to justify it, and why it is still being widely sanctioned despite the fact that large numbers of civilians are repeatedly victimized in various war-torn regions of the world. He further explores how we should utilize the result of the International Peoples' Tribunal of Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to increase understanding of the fact that killing civilians is a crime against humanity, regardless of the asserted military justification.

#### About the Speaker

Yuki Tanaka is Research Professor at Hiroshima Peace Institute of Hiroshima City University. Since the mid-1980s he has been concentrating his research on war crimes and is the author of several books, including *Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation* (2001) and *Hidden Horrors: Japanese War Crimes in World War II* (1997).