



Comparative Asian Research Network

Monthly Lecture Series on Issues and Research in the Asian Region

Organized by the Department of Japanese Studies, CUHK

Taking responsibility for the war? Hirohito and MacArthur, September 27, 1945



All are Welcome!!

Speaker: Dr. Peter Mauch

Western Sydney University

Date: 04 October, 2017 (Wednesday)

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Talk & Q&A Session)

Venue: Room 401, Leung Kau Kui Building, CUHK

Language: English

Abstract:

The September 27, 1945 meeting between Japan's Shōwa Emperor and Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) General Douglas MacArthur, has attracted little attention in English-language histories of Japan's postwar occupation. Most do little more than reproduce the iconic emperor-and-MacArthur photograph which emerged from this meeting. A select few histories – including the Pulitzer Prize-winning works of John Dower and Herbert Bix – suggest that Hirohito at this meeting studiously avoided any mention of responsibility for the war that had been fought in his name. This paper draws on recently-declassified Imperial Household Agency source materials as well as the extensive Japanese-language literature to suggest otherwise. It argues that the emperor indeed offered to take full responsibility for World War II, and it offers some concluding thoughts concerning the significance of this meeting.

No registration necessary.

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