



THE ORIENTAL SOCIETY OF  
AUSTRALIA  
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY N.S.W. 2006

**A.R. Davis Memorial Lecture**

The Oriental Society cordially invites members and guests of the Society to the A.R. Davis Memorial Lecture. This is the most important event in our calendar and we have the pleasure of a presentation by Emeritus Professor Hugh Clarke for this most auspicious occasion.

**Date: Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

**Time: 5.00pm to 6.00pm**

**Venue: Quadrangle Philosophy S249, The University of Sydney**

**Speaker:**

Emeritus Professor Hugh Clarke

**Presentation title:** A place for Okinawa: Japan's changing perceptions of its southern islands

**Abstract:**

For many of us living outside Japan the mere mention of Okinawa evokes visions of the devastating, final land battle of the Pacific War. Others, alternatively, might call to mind Mr Miyagi and the karate kid. For most Japanese today Okinawa is an exotic sub-tropical playground — a wonderful place to visit, but not to live in because the American bases make life there too dangerous. The Okinawans themselves tend to see their prefecture as a dislocated outpost of Japanese culture struggling to preserve the vestiges of a fading native tradition. Throughout its history Okinawa has been trying to find its place — first, in the context of East Asia, as the Ryukyu kingdom; then as an integral part of the 'home islands' of the Japanese empire; more recently as a contributor to the rich diversity of Japanese culture. Invariably, the fate of the Okinawans has been determined by external forces beyond their control. In this talk, after giving a brief sketch of Okinawan history and culture, I consider changing attitudes to Okinawa, the birth of Okinawan studies and the appropriation of aspects of Okinawan culture into a new composite Japanese identity.

**Biography:**

Hugh Clarke is Emeritus Professor of Japanese at the University of Sydney and is currently a visiting professor at Waseda University in Tokyo. He has research interests in Japanese language and literature and in Okinawan Studies. His Ph.D. from the University of Sydney was on the comparative phonology of Japanese dialects. He taught Japanese at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London from 1972 to 1978 and from 1978 to 2005 at the University of Sydney (Chair of the Department of Japanese Studies). He is co-author of *Colloquial Japanese* (Routledge) and has published several articles on Okinawa in the Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia.

**Our web site:** <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/publications/JOSA/>

After the presentation a dinner will be held at the Spicy Sichuan Restaurant  
1-9 Glebe Point Road Sydney.NSW Tel: 9660-8200  
Time: 7:00-

**Enquiries:** Please contact Seiko Yasumoto by 24<sup>th</sup> August to confirm your attendance at the dinner.  
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