

THE 3RD OPEN LECTURE

—hosted by the Center for Comparative Japanese Studies &
Support Program for Improving Graduate School Education

Date: February 15th, 2008 (Friday) 16:00-17:30p.m.

Place: Faculty of Letters and Education No. 1 Bldg. 8th Floor, Rm803

Subject: “Bushido and Confucianism”

Lecturer: HSU, Hsiang-Sheng (Associate Professor, National Chengchi University, Taiwan; Visiting Scholar at Ochanomizu University)

Opening Address: TAKASHIMA, Motohiro (Professor, Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Ochanomizu University; Project Manager)

Moderator: YORIZUMI, Mitsuko (Associate Professor, Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Ochanomizu University)

On February the 15th, Professor HSU, Hsiang-Sheng delivered a speech in a meeting as part of a project by the Center for Comparative Japanese Studies at Ochanomizu University, “A Comparative Japanese Studies Research on Buddhist and Confucianist Thought in Asia.” Professor HSU studied with Professor TAKASHIMA and completed his master’s degree at Ochanomizu University in 1989. Since his master’s thesis on the subject of “the idea of double suicide in Chikamatsu’s works,” throughout his life he has been researching on Japanese people’s view of life and death from various perspectives. He has published many books and articles on the subject in Chinese and in Japanese.

In the speech, Professor HSU analyzed how Confucianism had exerted influence on the formation of Bushido, which is considered to be one of the representatives of Japanese thought and culture, and through the discussion examined the characteristics of Japanese and Chinese thought in a comparative manner. While specifically clarifying Confucianist influences upon Bushido, he concluded that although Japanese people had established Bushido integrating many Confucianist elements, the Japanese thought had become quite different from Confucianism itself; he pointed out that while Japanese people had willingly brought in many advanced thought and culture other than Confucianism from China, they had always selected and transformed these Chinese elements.

Professor HSU’s speech was clear and enlightening. During a 30 minute question-and-answer period after the speech, three master’s students from Ochanomizu University asked their questions on *ON* (a feeling of moral obligation) and the above-mentioned Japanese type of transformation, all of which he answered carefully and politely. The question-and-answer period was followed by a free discussion session, in which the participants had intensive discussion and exchanges of ideas on the difference of spiritual or moral culture between Japan and China and the assessment of NITOBE Inazo’s *Bushido*.

The meeting had been posted in advance in an event announcement section on *Mainichi Shimbun* (*Mainichi Daily Newspaper*, evening edition dated February the 13th, 2008), and was thus attended by a large general public. Also present were our undergraduate and graduate students majoring in ethics and many of the long-term trainees of “moral education” sent from Saitama prefecture. Among our instructors, Professor Laure SCHWARTZ-ARENALES and Professor MIURA, Ken attended the meeting.

In this meeting, the students had an opportunity to learn from a presentation on Japanese thought by an overseas researcher, to which they normally have very little access, and obtain a greater understanding of the issue through asking questions. As the project of the Center for Comparative Japanese Studies, it was quite beneficial because we could explore our approach in comparative studies by examining Confucianism’s influence on Bushido. We hope to continue on a regular basis to hold this type of lecture meetings designed from the comparative perspective on Japanese thought including Bushido, and further promote the international academic exchange and education as well as the communication of the research findings on Japanese thoughts to the public.

(YORIZUMI, Mitsuko)