Confucius Institute of Rutgers University (CIRU)
Chinese Culture Seminar Spring 2015

“The Sage Calligrapher Wang Xizhi (王羲之 303-361) and the Tradition of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering (蘭亭會) in East Asia”

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Tuesday, March 3, 2015, 12:00 noon
Seminar Room, Confucius Institute of Rutgers University
24 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ

Professor Tao Demin (Ph.D., Osaka University) is professor and current Director of the Institute for Interaction Studies (ICIS) at Kansai University, Japan. He previously taught Chinese and East Asian history at Fudan University and Bridgewater State College. Prof. Tao’s specializes in the History of Sinology and the history of political relations and cultural interactions in East Asia. He is the author of Nihon kangaku shisōshi ronkō : Sorai Nakamoto oyobi kindai (Studies in the History of Japanese Sinological Thought: Ogyu Sorai, Tominaga Nakamoto, and Modernity, 1999), Meiji no kangakusha to Chūgoku (Meiji Sinologists in China, 2007), and he is co-editor of Kindai Nitchū kankei jinbutsushi kenkyū no atarashii chihei (New Horizons in the Study of Modern Sino-Japanese Relations: Focusing on Key Persons; together with Fujito Takao, 2008), Higashi Ajia ni okeru kōeki shisō no hen'yō : kinsei kara kindai e (The Transformation of Public Welfare Thought; with others, 2009), and Taishō kichū Ranteikai Ōsaka kinen : kindai Nihon ni okeru kanboku no seitō (The 100th Anniversary of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering in 1913; with others, 2013).

Abstract: In spring of 1913, groups of China scholars gathered in Beijing, Hangzhou, Tokyo and Kyoto in imitation of the famous original Orchid Pavilion Gathering of 1560 years ago. The original gathering was convened on the day of the Bathing Festival of 353 CE by the eminent calligrapher Wang Xizhi (303-361) who commemorated the event in a most influential preface to the collected poems written by the gathered participants. In this talk, Prof. Tao will discuss the tradition of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering in East Asia and probe in particular the circumstances and motivations that in 1913 led China scholars in four different places in China and Japan to revive that tradition in the modern period.

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