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International Perspectives

Center for International Education

LU YAN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

Professor Lu Yan traveled to Japan in June to give talks at Kansai University and participate in a roundtable at the 12th Asian Studies Conference Japan (ASCJ).



Lu Yan, left, at lunch with her co-panelists at Rikkyo University, Tokyo

Established in 1886 as Kansai Law School, Kansai University developed into a well-known 10-college university by late 20th century. In 2002, the Center of Excellence (COE) was founded within its Graduate School of Letters to attract top graduate students in Japan and from other Asian countries. In April 2008, Kansai University founded the Institute for Cultural Interaction Studies (ICIS), an interdisciplinary research center that sponsors COE's Cultural Interaction Studies Program. One outcome was a collection of articles from an international symposium held at Kansai University in 2006, which included one of my articles on Sino-Japanese relations.

I arrived in Osaka on June 12 to begin my 10-day visit with five assignments by my host. On June 13, I gave an ICIS Faculty Seminar titled "Racial Hierarchy's Critique and the Critique's Limit: 'Acculturation' as an Analytical Construct in Social Science and History." Participants included both faculty and graduate students of COE, and lasted longer than planned due to many questions. On June 15, I was invited to join COE graduate students and faculty to participate in an "ICIS Seminar" at a mountain-top villa. On June 18, I presented another talk to graduate students at ICIS, titled "Frog that Jumps Well: Doing History Research in the United States." On June 20, my host and I were joined by four other scholars to present our pre-conference roundtable to the graduate students at Kansai University. Then we boarded Shinkansen (bullet train) in the evening to Tokyo for the 12th ASCJ, to be held next day at Rikkyo University.

An equivalent to the annual meetings of AAS (Association for Asian Studies) in the United States, ASCJ since its inauguration has been attracting scholars all over the world. Our roundtable, titled "Approaching the Paradoxical Neighbors: How China and Japan Engaged Each Other between the Two Sino-Japanese Wars (1895-1945)," features one recently published book by Prof. Demin Tao, director of ICIS and my host at Kansai, and my first monograph, *Re-understanding Japan: Chinese Perspectives 1895-1945* (Hawaii 2004); five other Japanese, Chinese, and Canadian scholars joined the roundtable to critique the books. Our roundtable

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was well-attended and attracted many questions. It was an exciting moment for me to engage direct dialog on my work with scholars from Japan, Russia, Korea, and other parts of the world.

These academically rewarding activities would be impossible without the timely support of CIE grant, of course. I wish to extend my deep gratitude to CIE for its energetic promotion of international engagements, which enriches UNH resources and enhances UNH's status in the age of globalization.

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