Dr. Wang Xiaolin (born in 1963) is a specialist in Chinese and Japanese intellectual history. He studied at Xi’an University of Foreign Languages and has an M.A. and a Ph. D. in Japanese language and literature from Kyoto University. He is presently Associate Professor at the Department of Chinese, Translation and Linguistics at City University of Hong Kong. He has published extensively in the field of Chinese and Japanese intellectual history and has recently completed a book on the formation and development of “national studies” in Japan.

“National studies” (guoxue 国学) became a hot topic in China in the 1990s. Since then “national studies masters”, “national studies academies” and “national studies classes” have mushroomed all over China. The craze for reading the ancient classics has become an interesting social phenomenon. China’s economic growth has resulted in stronger cultural and political confidence. Beyond this, at least three different questions are pertinent for the discussion about national studies in China: Do national studies in China pre-suppose a “nation state”? Is the scope of national studies in China limited to Confucianism? What kind of spirit or faith does national studies in China try to foster?

These are questions that are not easy to answer, but to ignore them would raise even more questions. In order to facilitate a rational understanding of the discussion about national studies in China, Dr. Wang will focus on the origin of the notion of national studies in China and its relationship to similar studies in Japan. Analyzing their characteristics, he will at the same time reflect on what kind of problems national studies in China are likely to face.

Welcome!

Time: Wednesday December 7, 5 pm.
Venue: Stockholm University, Kräftriket, building 3, Gröjersalen.