CEACOP VIRTUAL SEMINAR

The Ho-rak Debate:
How Korean Neo-Confucians Understood Human Nature and Heart-Mind

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zoom registration

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Abstract

This talk explores the evolution of Korean Neo-Confucianism during the late Chosŏn period, specifically examining the Ho-rak debate—one of the two most important philosophical debates that took place in Confucian Korea along with the Four-Seven debate. The debate dominated the Korean intellectual discourse since the late seventeenth-century until the early twentieth century, and it centered around some key philosophical concepts of Neo-Confucianism, including original nature (本然之性), the pre-reactionary stage of the heart-mind (未發), and luminous virtue (明德). The intellectual discourse exemplifies the dynamic development of Korean Neo-Confucianism, which deeply integrated the core tenets of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism within the historical and social fabric of Chosŏn. By scrutinizing the definition, development, and the philosophical implications of the Ho-rak debate, the talk aims to illuminate how Korean Neo-Confucians navigated their distinctive path while grappling with the multifaceted theoretical and practical challenges of their time.

About the Speaker

Suk-yoon Moon is Professor of Philosophy at Kyung Hee University. After completing an intensive training in Classical Chinese at the Taedong Center for Eastern Classics, he received Ph.D. in philosophy from Seoul National University with the thesis titled "A Study on the Development of the Horak Debate in Late Chosŏn." He is the author of two books: *Ho-Rak Controversy: Formation and Development* (2006) and *The Asian Conception of Heart-Mind: Philosophical Debate on Xin (Heart-Mind) in East Asia* (2013). His recent publications include "From the Toegyeseonsaeng Munjib to the Authentic version of ToegyeJeonseo" and "Cheonmun's response to 'Je Hancheonsihu' by Namdang Han Won-jin focusing on the 'Cheonmunsabaekrok' by Choi Seok" among others. All his publications are in Korean.