

Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien

DIJ Forum

In its series of public lectures, the German Institute for Japanese Studies will present on

Tuesday, 09 December 2008, 18.30 h

Myung Koo Kang
Professor, Seoul National University

Representing Family in East Asia Television Drama: China, Japan and Korea

This paper analyses how television dramas in Korea, Japan, China, and Taiwan, portray family relationship. It investigates the questions of how TV representations of families relate to actual families in these four countries and what can be learnt from these representations about society and ongoing social changes. A number of differences between Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Taiwanese family images result from the analysis. While Japanese TV dramas tend to represent the 'post-familial family', Korean TV dramas cling to more traditional family ideals. TV images of Chinese families exhibit a higher degree of gender equality than the other two.

Taken together the TV dramas examined in this project shed light on the often discussed dichotomy of individualism vs. collectivism and its connection with Western societies, on one hand, and East Asian societies, on the other. It can be demonstrated that the collectivism of East Asian societies is not an aggregate of a single nature and that family is not the most essential value in those societies as generally argued. Therefore, when interpreting modes of representation of this sort, it is important to take into consideration the particularity of modernization process and the material condition in each society.

Myungkoo Kang is a Professor and Director of Communication Studies at the Seoul National University. His publications include books and articles on discourse politics of modernization and politics of Journalism in various referred journals. He has been leading a research team on oral history on the beginning of broadcasting in Korea. He published several works on the first Korean television and the Cold War in the 1950s.

Currently he is working on a book project, a cultural history of consumption in Korea, focusing on the material and cultural conditions of modern life since Korean War in the early 1950s. He has served as editorial board member of academic journals, including Cultural Studies, Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, Global Media and Communication, etc.

The lecture will be given in English. It will take place on **Tuesday, 9 December 2008** at 6.30 p.m. at the DIJ. Admission is free, please register with Ms. Dinkel at the DIJ.

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