



DIJ Forum

Thursday, 13 October 2011, 18.30 h

Christoph Wulf, Free University Berlin

Shoko Suzuki, Kyoto University

What is a Happy Family? German and Japanese Case Studies

In this forum we will present case studies from our research on family happiness in Japan and Germany. Carried out by international research teams from Free University Berlin and Kyoto University, this study presents transnational and transdisciplinary ethnographic findings.

Some of the main research questions are: How do people experience family happiness and when do they feel happy? In what way do narratives influence and create feelings of happiness in families? What sorts of ritual performances do family members use to create feelings of togetherness and happiness? What is the role of religious practices, gifts, and meals for the creation of communal feelings and of feelings of happiness at family celebrations?

To answer these questions, we research how German families celebrate Christmas and how Japanese families celebrate the New Year's holiday. We want to find out what the similarities and differences are in the staging of "happiness" in Japanese and German families and identify transcultural elements of happiness in families. These include elaborate dinners, exchanges of gifts, religious practices, collective narratives, time spent together, etc.

Shoko Suzuki is Professor of Pedagogy and Philosophy of Education at the Graduate School of Education, Department of Educational Science at Kyoto University and a member of the Science Council of Japan. Her research interests are training and learning as art (*techné*) in the premodern society, the international comparative studies on risk performance and happiness.

Christoph Wulf is Professor of Anthropology and Education and a member of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Historical Anthropology, the Collaborative Research Centre (SFB) "Cultures of Performance", the Cluster of Excellence "Languages of Emotion", and the Graduate School "InterArts" at the Freie Universität Berlin. His books have been translated into 15 languages. For his research in anthropology and anthropology of education, he received the title "professor honoris causa" from the University of Bucharest.

The lectures will be given in English. Admission is free, but please register with: forum@dijtokyo.org
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