



Visualizing Kin: Representing kinship and family in contemporary Asia

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In the last few decades dramatic changes have taken place in visual cultures across Asia with the introduction of digital technology and the accessibility of cameras, particularly the presence of the camera on mobile phones. The explosion in the production of images has been coupled with dramatic changes in both the accessibility and the circulation of images. The omnipresence of cameras, innovations in the camera technology (both still and video), and the circulation and sharing of images raises questions about the changes that have come about in the way kin relationships are visualized. The workshop 'Visualizing Kin' will look at the ways kin or family are visually represented in contemporary Asia. In this workshop we would like to focus not only on photography and video but also on a broad range of visual or multisensorial media forms such as film, paintings, cartoons, drawings, and even genealogical charts. We would also like to look at the multiple sites in which such visualizations of kin may take place, ranging from domestic spaces, studios or courts of law, to internet sites, and whatsapp groups.

We would like to start from a broad perspective on kinship, family, home and relatedness - all understood as culturally defined within a certain society. While biological and legal dimensions might be foregrounded in certain contexts, in others kin terms might be extended to wider groups or might refer to "chosen kin". The focus on Asia is particularly significant given that often in emic and etic perspectives, Asia is characterized by close kin and family relationships. Thus, family and kin figure prominently in definitions of so-called Asian values and certain forms of the family such as 'joint families' are considered as traditional or prevalent in large parts of Asia. Looking at visualizing kin in contemporary Asia will, we hope, challenge and complicate some of these associations and bring newness to our understandings of kinship in Asia.

Potential issues to be addressed:

- How are families constituted through visual artifacts in different sites such as the home or a court room?
- How have different stages of the life cycle such as childhood, marriage, old age or death been visually represented and marked iconographically across Asia? At the same time, how are the relationships of mother-child / parent-child, siblingship or conjugality represented?
- How has the visualization of these events and phases of life changed over time with a new focus on a period of courtship, or honeymoon trips being increasingly highlighted?
- How has the memorializing of kin using the visual changed?
- How have different media technologies altered the visualizations of kin?
- How are taste and visual preferences tied to class, caste or social change?
- What has the influence of migration and mobility been on the ways in which kin are visualized?
- How have visual technologies participated in violence, particularly violence in intimate relationships?

We would like to invite presentations dealing with these topics. Please send an abstract till 31/03/2016 to cisca@cas.au.dk