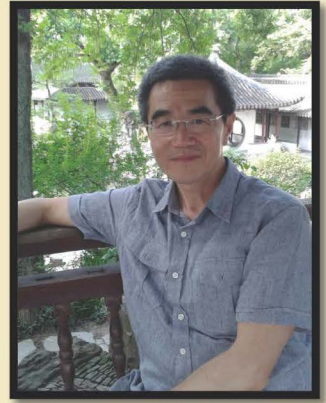


**Intergenerational Intimacy:
A Redefinition of Filial Piety and
Descending Familism in Rural North China**
A Lecture with Dr. Yunxiang Yan (UCLA)
Thursday, October 22, 2015, 12pm to 2pm, PL-4005
Location is in CSUSB's Main Pfau Library, 4th Floor



The emergent intergenerational intimacy represents a breakthrough in the Chinese traditional family culture, which required that intimacy be suppressed in order to maintain discipline, hierarchy, and the efficiency of the family as a corporate group, and the omission of obedience in parents-adult children relationship has effectively redefined the norm of filial piety. This dual development continues, instead of contradicts, the above-mentioned trend featuring the decline of parental authority and the rise of individual awareness and youth power; yet, they also played a positive role in resolving some problems in intergenerational relationships and reached to the reconciliation, instead of fission, of the two generations. The single most important factor that turned the dual development to the positive side is the centripetal power of the child(ren) in the third generation that draws the attention, love and care from the grandparent and parent generations alike, brings them together in multiple ways, and motivates all adult members of the family group to work extra hard toward the common goal of raising the perfect child who bears the hope of the entire family group. This leads to the rise of descending familism in which the trinity of three generations adapts to different forms of household structure to make the family work better, family resources of all sorts flow downwardly, and more importantly, the foci of one's existential meanings of life has also been shifted from ancestors to the grandchild(ren).

This lecture is free and open to the public.

A native of Beijing, Yunxiang Yan was forced to drop out of school at the age of twelve and spent the subsequent twelve years working as a shepherd and farmer in two Chinese villages during the Cultural Revolution period in China. He returned to school in 1978, earning a B.A. in Chinese Literature and a M.A. in Folklore and Mythology from Peking University, and a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from Harvard University. He has previously taught at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Johns Hopkins University and is currently Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Center for Chinese Studies at UCLA. Unpacking and understanding the moral experiences of ordinary people in the fast-changing world today constitutes the abiding theme in his anthropological career over the last twenty-plus years, and his research interests include family and kinship, economic anthropology, social change and development, cultural globalization, and the individual-society relationship. He is the author of *The Flow of Gifts: Reciprocity and Social Networks in a Chinese Village* (Stanford UP, 1996), *Private Life under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949-1999* (Stanford UP, 2003), and *The Individualization of Chinese Society* (Berg, 2009) and Guggenheim fellow in 2010-2011. He is working on a book manuscript about individualization and moral changes in post-Mao China.

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