Abstract of the talk

The contemporary Chinese society has witnessed ongoing complex institutional and cultural reconfiguration, driven by the transition from the socialist planned economy to marketization and the later deep engagement of globalization and neoliberalism. Facing the increasing uncertainties of the market, family members in post-reform China have to stick together as economic safety net, emotional harbor and spiritual fortress. This resurging but modified familialism, is not an exact replication of traditional familialism, but definitely different from family modes featured by individualism in Western contexts. This mosaic familialism is featured by a sequential symbiosis between parents and children facing financial constraints and unforeseeable uncertainties with a lack of social safety net. At the same time, patriarchal Confucianism is rejuvenated to a certain degree and women’s traditional wife and mother’ role is once again stressed, if not glorified; and the neoliberal discourse articulating personal choice and responsibility, but not individual right, stands by seamlessly.

About the speaker

Yingchun Ji is the Eastern Scholar Professor in the School of Sociology and Political Science at the Shanghai University. Dr. Ji obtained her Ph.D. in the sociology department at UNC-Chapel Hill. She has served as Guest Editor for Journal of Marriage and Family and Chinese Sociological Review in recent years. She was a visiting fellow in the School of Demography, Australian National University, and the School of Social and Behavioral Science, Nanjing University in 2016. Her research interests include family sociology, social demography, gender studies, and quantitative and mixed methods. Dr. Ji has published in journals of multiple disciplines, such as Journal of Marriage and Family, Population Studies, BMC Public Health, Chinese Journal of Sociology, and Chinese Sociological Review. Much of her research is dedicated to family and gender issues in the Asian institutional and cultural context. Currently, she is writing a book with Routledge on reinstitutionalization of marriage in contemporary China.