UK - China Media and Cultural Studies Association (UCMeCSA)

was established in London in 2014. It aims to provide a communication platform for international scholars in the landscape of media, communication, and cultural studies. To combine diverse research interests in media, communication and cultural studies, UCMeCSA collaborates with Lancaster University Confucius Institute, School of Media, Film and Music, University of Sussex, Department of Languages, Translation and Communication, Swansea University, School of Film, Television and Media Studies, University of East Anglia, School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, Cardiff University, School of Media, Communication and Sociology, University of Leicester, Department of Media Arts, Royal Holloway, University of London, School of Communication and Design, Sun Yat-Sen University, School of Journalism and Communication, Anhui University, China Media Observatory, Università della Svizzera italiana and look forward to any further-to-come mutual cooperation to enrich research dialogues between China and the West. Set out to achieve research excellence, UCMeCSA has been cooperating with *Intellect* and *Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network* to develop our own publication. We dedicate to foster collaboration across international universities and work to support prospective students and scholars in relevant disciplines. We also aim to approach broader audience through engaging with various critical and creative media practices.

UK - China Media and Cultural Studies Association 3rd Biennial Conference – Digital China: Media and Social Change – is host and generously sponsored by the School of Media, Communication and Sociology, University of Leicester. We thank Professor Jason Hughes, Dr Qian (Sarah) Gong, Dr Athina Karatzogianni, Dr Yimei Zhu, Dr Yujie (Julie) Chen, Mr Andy Sarratt, Ms Carla Starmer, Mr Daniel Carrison, the conference organising committee, the conference volunteer team, and our guest speakers for their wholehearted support.

Tianyang Zhou

President of UCMeCSA

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The University of Leicester is a leading university committed to international excellence, world-changing research and high quality, inspirational teaching.

The School of Media, Communication and Sociology was established in August 2016, arising from the merger of two internationally reputed departments: the Department of Media and Communication and the Department of Sociology. Both departments have illustrious histories in the two disciplinary fields they represent.

Media and Communication at Leicester celebrated 50 years of cutting-edge research in 2016. When founded as the Centre for Mass Communication Research in 1966, it was the first centre of its kind studying mass communication. As one of the longest-established academic centres specialising in the study of media and communication, it has been the fastest-growing department of the kind in the United Kingdom. It was the first department in the country to offer a taught postgraduate degree in media and communications, with the launch of the Mass Communications MA in 1978. Today, Media and Communication at Leicester draws on a long and successful history in the teaching and research. In July 2016, it hosted the annual conference of the International Association of Media and Communication Research. Over 1,200 delegates from across the world attended this prestigious event. Following the conclusion of the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, it placed 15th overall for media research in the country, with 82% of research articles and books being rated as "world-leading" or "internationally excellent". It is also ranked 15th in the UK in the Complete University Guide 2019 with an overall score of 96.1%, and ranked 50th in the world for Communication and Media Studies in the QS World University Rankings for 2018.

Sociology at University of Leicester linking high quality teaching and research is well-recognised and contributes to a rich learning environment. The Sociology department at Leicester was one of the first of its kind in the UK. Established in 1952, it played a central role in the history of the subject nationally and internationally. The Sociology department is committed to academic excellence, intellectual diversity, good teaching and ensuring that the student experience is not only interesting and challenging in its own right but also provides a vital foundation for future employment. It makes use of teaching methods that encourage independent learning in a supportive environment and in an atmosphere of mutual respect. It is an open and friendly department, and the degree programmes are designed to meet the needs of a very diverse group of students and to help them to develop their own interests and talents.

Conference Organising Committee

Wei Cui, Co-director (University of Leicester)

Tianyang Zhou, Co-director (University of Sussex)

Yuxin Liu, (University of East Anglia)

Zhenghan Gao, (University of Leicester)

Zhiyao Liu, (University of Leicester)

Runze Ding, (University of Leeds)

Dr Shuhan Chen, (University of Leicester)

Conference Volunteer Team

School of Media, Communication and Sociology, University of Leicester:

Ziyue Dong (Media and Advertising MA)

Wenqi Li (Digital Media and Society MA)

Andi Guo (Media and Advertising MA)

Tian Shen (Digital Media and Society MA)

Xin He (Media and Public Relations MA)

Daining Wu (Digital Media and Society MA)

Qinya Hou (Media and Public Relations MA)

Jiayin Zhai (Media and Advertising MA)

Anting Hu (Digital Media and Society MA)

Zishan Zhao (Media and Public Relations MA)

Jiawen Li (Media and Advertising MA)

Guest Speakers

Professor Jason Hughes is the Head of the School of Media, Communication and Sociology, University of Leicester. He has a broad range of research interests, all of which stem from his core engagement with relational/processual sociology: that is, sociology which focuses on social processes, human relationships, and which is centrally concerned with how the stuff of the social world "comes to be". Thus far, Professor Hughes has extended this engagement with relational/processual sociology to three key areas: consumption and regulation; sociological practice; and work, emotions and identity. Professor Hughes is the chair of the editorial board for Human Figurations and has acted as guest editor for the journals Crime, Media and Culture and The Journal of Workplace Learning, and Historical Social Research. He previously served on the editorial board of Work, Employment and Society, and currently he is a member of the editorial board for Historical Social Research. Professor Hughes is one of three members of the Board of the Norbert Elias Foundation, and he is a member of the Intoxicants and Intoxication in Cultural and Historical Perspective research network convened from the University of Cambridge, the Moral Panics Research Network based at Brunel University and the Figurational Research Network based in The Netherlands.

Dr Cara Willis is an associate professor in Department of Communication, Texas A&M University. She is an interdisciplinary scholar whose work spans the fields of mobile communication, critical studies of technology, media studies, China studies, and women's and gender studies. Her research examines the mutually constitutive nature of new media technologies, modes of power, and the intersections of multiple axes of identity, including gender, class, and place (urban/rural). She is concerned with *socio-techno* practices, or how technology is integrated into existing social practices, thereby opening up spaces for individual and collective agency as well as the retrenchment of modes of domination. She is especially interested in how socio-techno practices emerge among groups that are socially or economically marginalized. To study these processes, she employs qualitative methods, including ethnographic fieldwork and participant observation, interviews, case studies, and textual analysis. She is the author of Technomobility in China: Young Migrant Women and Mobile Phones (NYU Press, 2013).

Manya Koetse is a China social trend watcher and the editor-in-chief of *What's on Weibo,* a website providing social, cultural & historical insights into an ever-changing China. She is a writer, public speaker, and consultant (Sinologist, MPhil) on social trends in China, with a focus on Chinese online media and digital trends, popular culture, and gender issues. Manya's experiences in China have resulted in an ongoing strong connection with this country, its language, people and culture. Her academic interests are in social media and digital culture in China, popular culture, nationalism, and Sino-Japanese relations. She is also interested in women's & gender issues, and likes to concentrate on what is happening at the margins of (international) society.

Dr Yan Wu is a senior lecturer in media and communication, College of Arts and Humanities at Swansea University. Previously, she worked as an intern journalist for both the Xinhua News Agency and China Central Television. She was regularly contributing feature stories for national broadsheet newspapers including The Guangming Daily, The Legal Daily, China Business Times and China Daily (in English). She also worked as a lecturer in International Journalism at the Communication University of China. She is interested in the role of journalism in a global context and how information communication technologies have reshaped journalism as a profession.

Dr Hongwei Bao is an assistant professor in School of Cultures, Languages and Area Studies, University of Nottingham. He is currently co-director of the Centre for Contemporary East Asian Cultural Studies (CEACS). He is a member of the Centre for Critical Theory (CCT), Institute for Screen Industry Research (ISIR) and Asia Research Institute at Nottingham. He holds a PGCHE (Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education) and he is Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, UK. Dr Bao is interested in mediated cultural politics in a transnational Chinese context, including but not limited to: gay identity and queer politics, social media and community media, and film and filmmaking. His research primarily focuses on queer film, community media, and political activism in contemporary China. Dr Bao is the

author of Queer Comrades: Gay Identity and Tongzhi Activism in Postsocialist China (NIAS Press, 2018).

Dr Yimei Zhu is a lecturer in School of Media, Communication and Sociology, University of Leicester. Before taking up the lectureship, she worked as a research associate in University of Leicester. Previously she also worked as a post-doc research associate for Mitchell Centre for Social Network Analysis, University of Manchester. Dr Zhu has extensive experience using survey methods and quantitative analysis and she is interested in developing innovative research methods to collect online data. Dr Zhu has a broad research interests studying new media from sociological perspective—how new technology changed the way people think and behave (attitudes and experiences).

Dr Yujie (Julie) Chen is a Lecturer in School of Media, Communication and Sociology at the University of Leicester. She is a Leading founder of AI Network, Leicester Institute of Advanced Studies at University of Leicester (2018-2020). Prior to her appointment at Leicester, she spent fourteen months as a Post-doctoral Researcher at the Chinese University of Hong Kong studying the emerging types of digital employment in China, Singapore, and Vietnam, and their implications for the local economy and culture. Dr Chen studies and writes about digital labour issues, particularly focusing on how interplay among technologies, cultural contexts, and existing socio-economic structures impacts on the experience and perceptions of digital work and how workers' lived experience with media and information technologies help them construct their own narratives.

Professor Jinghan Zeng is the UK Director of Lancaster University Confucius Institute and Chair Professor in China and International Studies at the Lancaster University. Prior to his appointment at the Lancaster University, Professor Zeng was the Director of the Centre for Politics in Africa, Asia and the Middle East (AAME) and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is also an Associate Fellow in the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University

of Warwick and a Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy. His research lies in the field of Chinese politics with more specific interests in domestic politics of China's rise. He is the author of The Chinese Communist Party's Capacity to Rule: Ideology, Legitimacy and Party Cohesion (2015). His academic papers have appeared in Journal of Contemporary China, International Affairs, Contemporary Politics among others.

Carwyn James Morris is an ESRC funded post-field PhD candidate at LSE in the process of writing up his PhD thesis. He conducted long-term ethnographic fieldwork in Beijing, China, in 2017 and 2018. He was embedded in migrant food, anti-eviction and youth communities in the physical and digital spaces of Beijing and used these experiences to understand the geography of government power in Beijing. During his time in Beijing he was enrolled at Renmin University of China. He completed his Master's in the LSE Anthropology Department, on the program MSc China in Comparative Perspective, where his dissertation was on the educational attainment of left behind children in China, Mexico and the Philippines. Following on from this he worked as a Research Assistant at the LSE Asia Research Centre, and then as a Brand Strategist with Flamingo, a cultural consultancy, in Shanghai.

Tianyang Zhou is a sessional lecturer in the School of Media, University of Brighton. He obtained a Master's degree in Globalisation and Communications from the University of Leicester in 2014. Currently, he is writing up his PhD thesis on the politics of Chinese gay male digital culture at School of Media, Film, and Music, University of Sussex. His research interests include Chinese internet studies, digital culture, celebrity studies, gender and sexuality, queer theory, assemblage theory, online activism research, and feminist ethnography. He is chairing the postgraduate network of Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association (MeCCSA). He is also a correspondent for UK Chinese Journal and the founder of UK-China Media and Cultural Studies Association (UCMeCSA).

welcome

Conference Agenda

Stamford Court, University of Leicester, 16th January, 2019

09:00-10:00	RD	Registration	
10:00-10:10	HM	*Welcome Speech by the Head of the School of Media, Communication and Sociology, University of Leicester*	Professor Jason Hughes
10:10-10:15	HM	*Welcome Speech by UCMeCSA*	Mr Tianyang Zhou & Ms Wei Cui
10:15-11:15	HM	*Keynote Lecture 1: Social Media and the Ordinary: Affect, Aspiration, and Transformation in Contemporary China*	Dr Cara Willis
11:15-11:30	HL	*Coffee Break 1*	
11:30-12:30	SS	Panel 1 – Digital Activism and Digital Culture	
	HM	Panel 2 – Digital Fandom and Internet Celebrities	
12:30-13:30	HL&SS	Lunch	
13:30-14:30	HM	*Keynote Lecture 2: A Decade of Weibo: The Rise of China's Social Media*	Ms Manya Koetse
14:30-14:45	HL	*Coffee Break 2*	

| 14:45-15:45 | SS | *Panel 3 – Productivity on/and Chinese Social Media* | |
| | HM | *Panel 4 – Digital Media in Everyday Life* | |

| 15:45-16:00 | HL | *Coffee Break 3* | |

| 16:00-17:00 | SS | *Panel 5 – Informatisation and Commercialisation* | |
| | HM | *Panel 6 – Power, Governance and Surveillance* | |

| 17:00-17:15 | HL | *Coffee Break 4* | |

| 17:15-18:15 | HM | *Roundtable discussion on "Digital China: Media and Social Change"* | Dr Yan Wu
Dr Hongwei Bao
Dr Yimei Zhu
Dr Yujie (Julie) Chen
Mr Carwyn James Morris |

| 18:15-18:45 | HM | *Concluding Remarks & The Best Paper Award* | Mr Tianyang Zhou &
Professor Jinghan Zeng |

| 18:45-19:15 | HL | *Wine Reception* | Ms Yuxin Liu |

| 19:15-21:00 | SS&HL | *Dinner and Social Event* | |

*Room Code – RD (Registration Desks); HM (HobyMowsley); SS (Shearsby); HL (Hospitality Lounge)

Panel Agenda

Panel	Panel 1 **Digital Activism and Digital Culture**	Panel 2 **Digital Fandom and Internet Celebrities**
Room	Shearsby	HobyMowsley
Presentations	Detecting Offensive Language through Language Features on Social Media: A Case Study of Cyberbullying on Sina Weibo *Wanqi Li, University of Nottingham*	Slashing Harry Potter: A Negotiation of Gender and Sexuality in Chinese Harry Potter Slash Fan Fiction *Ming Zhang, Bournemouth University*
	From the Consumer Activist to Consumer Citizen: Re-examine Video-based Social Media and Consumer Activism in China *Zizheng Yu, Cardiff University*	The Ritualistic and Phatic Fan Communication on Weibo *Dr Mingyi Hou, Tilburg University*
	Digital Activism, Slacktivism and Collective Identity: China's LGBTQ Activism and #Woshitongxinglian# on Weibo *Xing Huang, University of East Anglia*	Recurrence of Women's Morality and Reproduction of Patriarchal Culture in the Digital Culture of China: Take Ayawawa for Example *Wenjie Ding, Goldsmiths, University of London*

Panel	Panel 3 Productivity on/and Chinese Social Media	Panel 4 Digital Media in Everyday Life
Room	Shearsby	HobyMowsley
	Beyond a Pirate of Twitter: Media Professionals' Bold Attempts on Sina Weibo *Ruosi Lan, University of Sydney*	Digital Discrimination Among Young Chinese: The New Metaphor of Digital Media *Songyin Liu, London School of Economics and Political Science*
Presentations	Social Media and Negotiation of Professional Norms in Chinese TV Journalism *Yuxin Liu, University of East Anglia*	The Reinterpretation of Online Civility: An in-depth study on Young Chinese Adults' Social Media Use *Dr Shuhan Chen, University of Leicester*
	Wandering Internet Celebrities: Beauty Bloggers and Precarious Platforms of Social Media *Zexu Guan, Leiden University*	What Are You Looking for: Understanding the Uses & Gratifications of Blued in Mainland China *Dr Yunbo Chen, Jinan University* *Runze Ding, University of Leeds*

Panel	Panel 5 Informatisation and Commercialisation	Panel 6 Power, Governance and Surveillance
Room	Shearsby	HobyMowsley
Presentations	The Hangzhou Court of the Internet: A New Type of Public-Private Partnership *Alice Mingay, BPP University*	Internet Utilisation and Subjective Social Justice *Dr Dong Zhou & Dr Jinyu Zhu, Shanghai Jiao Tong University*
	Unmatured Commodification, Unintegrated Structuration-A Study on the Content in Three Chinese Diasporic WeChat Public Accounts *Professor Kangjie Liu, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies*	The Internet in China: Power Relations and Public Debates *Dr Qingning Wang, University of East Anglia*
	The Motivation and Decision Patterns of Chinese Internet User's Personal Information Exchange in the Digitalisation Era: The Moderating Effect of Golden-mean Thinking and the Impact on Ambivalent Attitude *Professor Chao Liu, Min Chen & Fang Rao, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies*	Visuality, Virtuality and Mass (Self)Surveillance in China and the West *Professor William A. Callahan, London School of Economics and Political Science*

Presentation Abstract

Panel 1: Digital Activism and Digital Culture

1. **Detecting Offensive Language through Language Features on Social Media: A Case Study of Cyberbullying on Sina Weibo**

    Wanqi Li, University of Nottingham

    Abstract: Existing studies point out that the growth in the use of social media has offered new ways of cyberbullying. Because of a more open environment, users tend to adopt morphs of words on social media, leading to cyberbullying which causes serious consequences. Against this backdrop, there is a lack of a framework to decide what might be considered as cyberbullying, or what the features of cyberbullying via social media might include. Therefore, for research into cyberbullying content on social media, for example, a sociolinguistics analysis and a thorough understanding of cyberbullying linguistic features is required.

    For the current research, the main research question is what are the linguistic features used during the processes of social media cyberbullying. Based on the theoretical framework of LPP and LMT, the author has chosen Sina Weibo as a case and uses content analysis to study offensive language features and frequencies on the basis of more than 1,000,000 contents. The findings of this project contribute to the refinement of theories and benefit academics in the areas of media and cyberbullying, media regulation and governance, especially theories on the management of offensive information and behaviour. Furthermore, it provides insights into the functions of language and new technology in shaping social norms and values, and on the role of social media companies in regulating communications. The project outputs will also help policymakers to gain wider insights into cyberbullying problems on social media, and help them plan concrete policy and regulatory steps.

2. **From the Consumer Activist to Consumer Citizen: Re-examine Video-based Social Media and Consumer Activism in China**

    Zizheng Yu, Cardiff University

    Abstract: 2014, was the year of short-video in China. Since then, short-video-based social media users (Such as Miaopai, Douyin, etc.) have been able to produce short videos and even live

broadcast their lives or reality shows for the public. Furthermore, users have been able to interact with the anchor through the use of instant comment. Today these short-video-based social media platforms have become one of the most frequently-used ways for Chinese consumers to assert their legal rights. In other words, the emergence of video-based social media platforms in China has encouraged more consumers to pick up their cell phones as weapons, and record short and streaming videos against merchants and relevant government departments, for gaining their equal consumer rights and urging for the reformation of governmental regulation of specific markets. For instance, property owners choose to upload short videos about housing quality problems on different types of video-based social media apps to argue strongly for their consumer rights.

Based on the latest principle characteristics of the Chinese social media landscape, does the latest digital technology (mainly video-based) in several popular social media really empower Chinese consumers to protect their legitimate consumer rights, and promote the constructive progress of civil society and the incoming "consumer sphere" in China? This research aims to answer these research questions, and review the relationship between short-video technologies and consumer activism, by interviewing online consumer advocacy groups and analysing the short video contents of significant consumer activism cases in several popular short-video based social media platforms in China.

3. **Digital Activism, Slacktivism and Collective Identity: China's LGBTQ Activism and #Woshitongxinglian# on Weibo**
Xing Huang, University of East Anglia

Abstract: On 13th April 2018, an online hashtag movement, #Woshitongxinglian# (#我是同性恋#, #Iamgay#), was launched on the biggest Chinese social media network, Weibo. By posting with the hashtag, Chinese activists attempt to fight against the extremely-strict censorship of the government and large media corporations targeting online homosexual content. Over 40 thousand posts were seen within the first week. This movement is possibly one of the most significant events to successfully bring LGBTQ discourse in front of the public in the relatively conservative social and cultural society of modern China. The hashtag phrase itself is also a strong statement, marking the formation of a collective homosexual identity. Based on this case study, the author is in the early stages of designing a PhD research project, aiming to rethink the relationship between digital activism, particularly minor political behaviours described by

scholars as slacktivism, and collective identity. In addition, the author will explore how activist activities are carried out on social media and the struggles made by the LGBTQ community in this particular political and cultural environment in China, bridging established Western activism and identity theories with Chinese practices, as both of them remain highly sensitive in the society. In this paper, the author will mainly introduce two parts of his work: 1) the nature of the hashtag movement and its social background and 2) the methodological approach that will be applied to achieve the research goals.

Panel 2: Digital Fandom and Internet Celebrities

4. **Slashing Harry Potter: A Negotiation of Gender and Sexuality in Chinese Harry Potter Slash Fan Fiction**

Ming Zhang, Bournemouth University

Abstract: Slash fan fiction, a fan-generated literature centring on male-male romantic and/or erotic relationships based on characters from media texts, is widely circulating in Chinese cyberspace. Chinese slash fan fiction based on Western literature, TV drama and film is increasingly popular nowadays. Within the academic tradition which focuses on "the reception of Western texts in non-Western cultures" (Hellekson and Busse 2014, p.2), this paper attempts to contextualise Chinese Harry Potter slash fan fiction practices in order to examine how Chinese female slash fans represent and negotiate gender and sexuality issues.

This paper will first provide a brief introduction of Chinese slash fan fiction and associated previous academic studies, followed by a discussion of the various ways Chinese female fans use to represent and negotiate the hegemonic gender inequality and heteronormative cultural discourses through a close reading of a specific Chinese Harry Potter slash fan story and its readers' comments on the internet. Finally, this paper will suggest how the internet can be seen as a sphere where Chinese female slash fans can express their pleasures and desires obliquely to the patriarchal gender and sexuality norms of Chinese culture and society.

5. **The Ritualistic and Phatic Fan Communication on Weibo**

Dr Mingyi Hou, Tilburg University

Abstract: This study explores the communicative practices of celebrity followers on Weibo. Being a subcategory of media fans, celebrity followers in the Chinese online world are criticised for

either verbal aggression or undiscriminating celebration. Their extensive use of abbreviations is also mystified as encrypted language, reinforcing the perceived cliquishness of fandom communities. While previous cultural and communication studies have de-stigmatised fandom by demonstrating fans' agentive and participatory activities in consuming popular culture content, this study attends to human-technology interactions (Pennycook, 2018) by exploring how digital media as semiotic technologies enable and constrain fans' meaning-making and social practices (Djonov and Van Leeuwen, 2018). Through a digital ethnographic approach (Varis, 2016), this study finds that fans interpret Weibo's popularity metrics and algorithms into strategic communicative practices, with the aim of boosting positive publicity and increasing media visibility for their idols. This gives rise to highly 'ritualistic and phatic' (Blommaert, 2018) fan discourses, which sometimes involves the employment of social bots and cyborgs. Fan communication, as such, is distinguished from previous forms of fan discourses (e.g. fanfictions and fanzines); characterised by a high level of inter(textual) productivity (Jenkins, 1992, 2006). This study suggests that digital media is transforming fandom in contemporary China from a culture reliant on fans' identification with celebrities' biographic narratives to a culture requiring fans' algorithmic literacy and labor.

6. **Recurrence of Women's Morality and Reproduction of Patriarchal Culture in the Digital Culture of China: Take Ayawawa for Example**

Wenjie Ding, Goldsmiths, University of London

Abstract: The 'theory of romantic relationship' of Ayawawa, who is a famous Chinese cyber-celebrity focusing on giving love advice, is a relatively new and topical gender cultural phenomenon in the current digital society, reflecting Chinese society's deep conceptual crisis of family, marriage, and gender. This study uses the patriarchal theory at the macro-level, combined with the feminist theory at the meso-level and ambivalent sexism theory at the micro-perspective, employing the method of critical discourse analysis to reveal the re-feudalisastion of and multiple dominance towards women in the current social network environment. This study finds that Ayawawa's discourse system embraces traditional Chinese family ethics and gender concepts with a new attitude, uses the conversion of scientific discourse to shape the authority, and uses ambivalent sexism as its affective logic. In this system, Ayawawa uses rhetorical techniques to construct women's dwarfing subjectivity, constantly revising the traditional "female virtue" into an illusory "feminism" and "gender equality", showing the status quo of

gender in China and the ideology linked to the reproduction of patriarchy that Ayawawa's discourse system represents.

Panel 3: Productivity on/and Chinese Social Media

7. **Beyond a Pirate of Twitter: Media Professionals' Bold Attempts on Sina Weibo**
    Ruosi Lan, University of Sydney

Abstract: This study looks at whether media professionals' news production work on Sina Weibo is similar to what happened on Twitter and shows a sign of Americanisation in general media development. Three hypotheses are examined in this thesis: First, the journalists identify news stories contributed by ordinary Sina Weibo users as convenient news sources in their posts; secondly, Weibo journalists help boost the distribution of the news content which considered too sensitive for the traditional media to publish; finally, the claim of Americanisation is not supported by evidence in the news production on Sina Weibo. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of strategically selected media professionals' Weibo posts were conducted to portray their news-production behaviors on Sina Weibo. The quantitative analysis collected the news posts of three sample accounts of media professionals on Sina Weibo, categorises them into original posts and reposts, and calculated the proportion of each category in support of the first hypothesis. Also, this research conducted a qualitative case study on a contentious Weibo news topic to prove the authenticity of the second hypothesis. Finally, the comparison between the results of the afore-mentioned two analyses and the findings of Twitter studies is conducted to show that Americanisation is not a highlighted tendency in China's social media development. The findings of this study suggest Weibo creates a special form of resistance to China's opinion control, in which the media elites and ordinary Internet users stand together.

8. **Social Media and Negotiation of Professional Norms in Chinese TV Journalism**
    Yuxin Liu, University of East Anglia

Abstract: This paper investigates how social media has changed Chinese mainstream journalists' perception of professional norms and their roles as gatekeepers. Before the arrival of social media in journalism, journalists in China understood their role to be that of gatekeepers who had the authority to choose the news and then publish it to the public, and professional keeping norms including objectivity, autonomy, accountability and immediacy. Based on interviews with

mainstream journalists and content analysis on Weibo and Wechat, this paper argues that journalists often choose Wechat to communicate with friends or their colleagues and form the inner-working group to talk about their work issues, while they use Weibo to find news resources and communicate with their audiences. Additionally, I found that the truth and objectivity of news in social media has decreased, because everyone can become a journalist. They also deem that the control online is looser on Weibo and Wechat. However, the objectivity and the truth of news can also be increased to some extent, because different people have different opinions, and then journalists can review these opinions, know the whole development of the event, form their own ideas and judge the facts using their professional experience. Moreover, there is no doubt that immediacy and autonomy have been increased, and journalists have more opportunities to publish or repost the news in which they feel interested. Furthermore, accountability has not changed on social media, and journalists continue to guard the truth of news, not reposting news on which they cannot check the real facts, providing help to citizens and preserving their role as mouthpiece of government. These findings help us to critically reflect on the political role of journalism in China today. While on the one hand we can observe a move towards the democratisation or attempts of journalists to challenge government. We also see the online censorship from the Chinese government and that the negotiation of professional norms is based on the standard of political supervision.

9. **Wandering Internet Celebrities: Beauty Bloggers and Precarious Platforms of Social Media**
   Zexu Guan, University of Leiden

Abstract: Using in-depth interviews and ethnography, this research explores the relationship between beauty bloggers, one type of the content producers on social media, and multiple platforms of social media in contemporary China. Scholars of media studies argue that these platforms exploit the free labor of users without offering users the control over the platforms or economic rewards. Such research usually centers on Western-based social media, like Facebook, and users' connection with one single platform, with scarce attention to the non-Western context and users' relationship with multiple platforms. However, the plurality and competition between social media platforms in China, like Weibo, Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and so on, create a more complex and dynamic ecosystem for professional content producers whose careers heavily rely on social media, although they are not officially employed by these platforms. In front of the fierce competition, they try to gain the biggest audience under the conditions of uncontrollable social media platforms, non-transparent algorithms, and limited human resources. By

investigating the relationship between beauty bloggers and multiple platforms of social media, this research reveals what the plurality and competition of social media mean for digital laborers in a non-Western context. I argue that, the plurality and competition of social media cause double effects for beauty bloggers: through enhancing the competitiveness and instability, they raise the thresholds for being professional bloggers, while slightly extending the career of beauty blogger. In doing so, this article discusses how the Chinese experience of digital labor helps us to platform capitalism.

Panel 4: Digital Media in Everyday Life

10. **Digital Discrimination Among Young Chinese: The New Metaphor of Digital Media**

   Songyin Liu, London School of Economics and Political Science

Abstract: The Chinese Internet industry has been transforming at an incredible rate since 1994, leaving the digital-marginalised senior group far behind. Elder people are often teased for being clumsy in their Internet use by the young. However, the younger generations in China who were brought up in the Internet era are also discriminating against their peers' different use of the Internet or mobile Internet products such as social media, video websites and online community apps. This digital discrimination chain among young people can be seen in almost every genre of Internet product, therefore, the so-called digital gap and digital class exists not only between different generations and social-economic background, but also inside the groups with similar age and education levels. In this case, previous studies of the digital gap can no longer explain such a phenomenon of digital discrimination.

Adopting in-depth interviews with young Chinese Internet users who look down upon their peers' Internet product choices, this paper aims to comprehensively understand the social-cultural causes of this digital discrimination chains in terms of the rhetorical tradition of communication theory. Furthermore, this paper tries to reveal how digital media act as a sign of cultural capital and becoming a key component in what Randall Collins has called interaction ritual chains, in the Chinese Internet context.

11. **The Reinterpretation of Online Civility: An In-depth Study on Young Chinese Adults' Social Media Use**

   Dr Shuhan Chen, University of Leicester

Abstract: Reflecting on the promotion of developing a civil (wen ming) society in China, this paper presents a qualitative study that took place among young Chinese WeChat users, with a focus on exploring their interpretation of online civility with the use of WeChat. By conducting in-depth interviews and post-elicitation among 37 young Chinese university students, the researcher able to look at their WeChat posts and invite them to reflect on their online practices. Even though participants expressed difficulties in identifying a clear lines between civil (wen ming) and uncivil (bu wen ming) online practices, while pointing out online civility they frequently referred to creating a clear and positive online environment for others, explained as spreading 'positive energy'. In contrast, uncivil online practices were frequently related to spreading 'negative energy', 'disseminating disinformation', 'privacy overexposure' and 'inappropriate online comments'. By taking the social, cultural and political context into consideration, this paper presents further explanations on why the notion of 'positive energy' plays an essential role in shaping young Chinese adults' interpretation of civility in the online environment.

12. What Are You Looking For: Understanding the Uses & Gratifications of Blued in Mainland China

Dr Yunbo Chen, Associate professor, Jinan University;
Runze Ding, University of Leeds

Abstract: Given the increased popularity of the LBRTD gay platform and the overwhelming user numbers in China, the current literature examining these platforms' usages and Chinese SMM practices are limited. Gay platform use among SMM remains poorly understood.

To fill this gap in the literature, the purpose of the current study is to describe the specific user gratifications of these gay platforms in mainland China and to expand and reflect on the broader range of social, economic, and political issues that are present among the LBRTD platforms.

The current research adopted a two-study approach to answer these two research questions. Adopting a uses and gratifications approach, study 1 was a pilot study and an online survey. Motivations for Blued use reported in the pilot study through open-ended descriptions were coded into 32 items in the online questionnaire. An exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation revealed seven uses and gratifications: sexual sensation seeking, social approval, social networking, interactive fantasy, killing time, romantic relationships, and health information search. Three items were dropped from the factor structure due to low primary factor loadings.

In study 2, using an ethnographic lens, factors of user satisfaction obtained in the first study were closely associated with relevant political, economic and cultural backgrounds.

China has just introduced General Rules of Examination and Approval of Online Video Content, which reflects that the development of LGBT culture in China is a long and hard way to go. There should be further studies exploring the interactive practices on LBRTD gay platforms and the intertwining of specific political, economic and policy factors in China.

Panel 5: Informatisation and Commercialisation

13. The Hangzhou Court of the Internet: A New Type of Public-Private Partnership

Alice Mingay, BPP University

Abstract: The Hangzhou Court of the Internet is an online court platform with specific jurisdiction over e-commerce cases, established on 18 August 2017. Crucially, every part of the case, from prosecution to decision implementation, is executed online, and as such, the move has been repeatedly hailed in Chinese and Western media as an unprecedented step in extending digital legal reforms. Alibaba is providing the digital platform in use, including offering Alipay for identity verification, using Taobao and T-mall transaction records as evidence and storing court records. Although it is unsurprising to see mention of Alibaba in connection with e-commerce innovation in Zhejiang, it is nonetheless intriguing that further informatisation implemented by the government and judiciary appears to be co-opting its assistance.

My paper focuses on the significance of this development as a public-private partnership (PPP). Although China has demonstrated a strong tradition of PPPs over recent decades, providing technology for digital administrative services is still an emerging area within this and has only a sparse administrative framework. As an example of this, I shall contextualise the Court's development against broader reforms, and assess what digital administrative PPPs can reveal about legal reform and changing modes of governance. I argue that Alibaba's involvement in this court is indicative of its increasing regulatory authority, and as such, the government's decision to collaborate with such an influential actor in creating and preserving market order requires a different understanding to that of traditional PPPs.

14. Unmatured Commodification, Unintegrated Structuration -A Study on the Content in Three Chinese Diasporic WeChat Public Accounts

Professor Kangjie Liu, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies

Abstract: The Chinese diasporic media are globally distributed with a long history, but current research on their social media is extremely insufficient. Most research projects only focus on their newspapers, or web media. Rare studies reveal insightful stories of diasporic media on the mobile Internet. On the other hand, the Canadian media scholar Vincent Masco's "Commodification, Structuration and Spatialization" framework has been accepted by Chinese academia, but rare experimental research sustains his idea in the Chinese media, especially the contemporary diasporic Chinese media. This paper analyzes the media content of representative Chinese diasporic social media, three Japanese Wechat public accounts (Tokyo New Youth (京东新青年), Lu Ri (旅日), and This is Japan (这才是日本), using Masco's framework. Content analysis and textual analysis were conducted on their contents between January and March 2017 (N=1101), including the top-ten most-read and most favorable articles. Research results show, (1) the unmatured production-exchange processes on information suggest a partial commodification model in these accounts, (2) the Japanese coverage is more that 52%, while the articles reporting on China only occupy between 1% an 2%. This suggests the highest form of spatialization-glocalization, and (3) the advertisements reflect an incomplete structuration in the Japanese Chinese-diasporic communities. Finally (4), the unmatured commodification and the unintegrated structuration might result in an uncertain future for diasporic Wechat public accounts. This could be one of the examples revealing some in-depth stories on the contemporary Chinese diasporic media.

15. **The Motivation and Decision Patterns of Chinese Internet User's Personal Information Exchange in the Digitalisation Era: The Moderating Effect of Golden-mean Thinking and the Impact on Ambivalent Attitude**

Professor Chao Liu, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies
Min Chen, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies
Fang Rao, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies

Abstract: The rapid development of the digital age has spawned a large Internet user community in China. It is a common decision-making dilemma in the life of Chinese Internet users when they transfer personal information in exchange for value-added services provided by commercial organisations. Internet users and enterprises must face contradictions and challenges in personal information protection and exchange, the social responsibility of enterprises and the commercial value of user information. Li Yanhong, CEO of Baidu, a Chinese Internet giant, once said, "Chinese

people are willing to exchange convenience or efficiency with privacy." Is that so? Through in-depth interviews with Chinese Internet users, this paper applied grounded theory to reveal the behavioral classifications, psychological motivations, influencing factors and decision-making patterns and inter-group differences of personal information exchange among Chinese Internet users in the real situation of providing and exchanging personal information for value-added services. Through a questionnaire survey, this paper examined the effect of the multi-party thinking, integration, harmony and other Golden-mean thinking on the personal information exchange behavior of Chinese Internet users. With the reality of the interweaving of local Internet consumerism and the traditional social and cultural psychology of Chinese Internet users, this paper explains the unique mechanisms for the evolution and resolution of contradictory attitudes in personal information exchange decisions. From the perspective of practice, this paper puts forward strategies and suggestions for personal information protection, social responsibility regulation of enterprises and user information management.

Panel 6: Power, Governance and Surveillance

16. **Internet Utilisation and Subjective Social Justice**

    Dr Dong Zhou, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

    Dr Jinyu Zhu, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Abstract: From a cognitive perspective, Internet utilisation influences cognitive processes and as an environmental stimulus it contributes to the formation of specific cognitive architecture. The internet is flooded with information overload of uncertainty and vagueness; this affects people's rational thinking and leads to the fragmention of rational cognition. In this context, emotions play a major role in social justice judgments. This study employs a national survey with 8154 respondents to empirically evaluate the impact of internet utilisation on subjective social justice in China. Empirical evidence supports the notion that Internet use generates a significant negative effect on individual perceived social justice (in general, -6%). Residents that use the Internet more frequently exhibit a lower level of perceived social fairness and the negative effect is stronger for rural residents. For checking theoretical robustness, multi-level estimations with aggregated measures as well as comparison tests with traditional media were applied and the results consistently support our findings.

17. **The Internet in China: Power Relations and Public Debates**

Dr Qingning Wang, University of East Anglia

Abstract: This paper explores three types of key power relations involved in the public debates in China's online spaces, and discusses what they mean for the use of the Internet in China. Online public debates in China are growing year by year, with many academic studies have been drawn up to discuss the control-versus-resistance relations between the Chinese government and Chinese Internet users; fewer studies have been drawn up to examine more widely in terms of other power relations involving in. This paper identifies three types of key power relations in China's online public debate worth paying attention to, as they form the developing dynamic of the online space. They are: (1) government-public power relations that has been well-explored in the current academic debates, but need to be looked at from beyond the traditional control-versus-resistance lens to explore other emerging trends, such as engagements from the government; (2) power relations between social and political elites who try to claim their status from offline to online, and non-elites who try to use the Internet as a public sphere that disregards status altogether; (3) power relations between media organisations that intend to expand their influence from offline to online, and users that treat these media organisations in contradicted ways. This paper discusses how the exchanges of conversations in the online debates in China are caused by multiple interests and contentions, involving multiple players, thus making the power relations multiple. It is through studying of those multiple power relations that we can develop further understanding of the dynamics of China's online space.

18. Visuality, Virtuality and Mass (Self)Surveillance in China and the West

Professor William A. Callahan, London School of Economics and Political Science

Abstract: The main argument of this essay is that to understand the future of the international politics of digital media, we need to look to China. Certainly, it is common to focus analysis and critique on the US/West, especially after Snowden's revelations about the NSA; yet we will see how China is at the cutting edge of digital media and surveillance practices at home and abroad. Most analyses of surveillance look to technology; yet this essay explores the "culture of surveillance," where surveillance is a social practice. International relations scholars typically focus on cybersecurity; but this essay examines how surveillance is part of a social-ordering and world-ordering. Comparisons typically frame the issues in terms of an East/West distinction where Westerners prize individual privacy and Chinese value social order; this essay, however, shows how issues of privacy and order are shared, and that they are political rather than cultural.

Rather than employ an East/West distinction, it looks to the Foucault/Deleuze historical schema of three models of social-ordering--the pre-modern society of sovereignty, the modern society of discipline, and the contemporary networked society of control. The society of sovereignty looks to walls and censorship, and is exemplified in binary inside/outside logic of the Great Firewall of China. The society of discipline looks to how the Panopticon promotes self-discipline and self-censorship, and is exemplified by Beijing's total surveillance project in Xinjiang. The networked society of control employs a mix of state-led, corporate-led and user-led surveillance, what I call "inter-veillance," that is expressed through voluntary performances on the web, especially in China's emerging Social Credit System. The conclusion is that these are political rather than technical or cultural issues, and that it behooves us to see how Beijing is exporting its inter-veillance practices through BRI's Cyber Silk Road project.

Transport

The conference venue will be **Stamford Court, Leicester.**

The full address is:

Stamford Court, Manor Road, Oadby, Leicester, Leicestershire, UK

Postcode: LE2 2LH

Route1: London Heathrow Airport to Leicester Stamford Court

Step 1: Heathrow Airport National Express (London) to St. Margaret's Bus Station (Leicester), around 2.5 hours by coach.

Step 2: St. Margaret's Bus Station (Leicester) to Stamford Court:

Option A: 20 minutes by taxi, the fare is around £7.5.

Option B: walk 5 minutes to Haymarket Bus Station, then by Bus 31/31A/31E (17 minutes) to Meadowcourt Road Bus Stop, then a 15 minutes walk to Stamford Court.

Route 2: London City Centre to Leicester Stamford Court

Step 1: London St Pancras International Railway Station to Leicester Railway Station, around 1 hour and 10 minutes by train.

Step 2：Leicester Railway Station to Stamford Court,

Option A: 10 minutes by taxi, the fare is around £6.

Option B: by Bus 31/31A/31E (13 minutes) to Meadowcourt Road Bus Stop, then a 15 minutes walk to Stamford Court.

Route 3: Birmingham Airport to Leicester Stamford Court

Step 1: Birmingham Airport National Express to St. Margaret's Bus Station (Leicester), around 1 hour by coach.

Step 2: St. Margaret's Bus Station (Leicester) to Stamford Court:

Option A: 20 minutes by taxi, the fare is around £7.5.

Option B: walk 5 minutes to Haymarket Bus Station, then by Bus 31/31A/31E (17 minutes) to Meadowcourt Road Bus Stop, then a 15 minutes walk to Stamford Court.

Route 4: London Gatwick Airport to Leicester Stamford Court

Step 1：Gatwick Airport Railway Station to London St Pancras International Railway Station, around 1 hour by train.

Step 2：London St Pancras International Railway Station to Leicester Railway Station, 1 hour and 10 minutes by train.

Step 3：Leicester Railway Station to Stamford Court,

Option A: 10 minutes by taxi, the fare is around £6.

Option B: by Bus 31/31A/31E (13 minutes) to Meadowcourt Road Bus Stop, then a 15 minutes walk to Stamford Court.

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Jubilee Taxi	0116 247 0123
Victoria Cab	0116 270 6655

Uber is available in Leicester.

Hotel Information

1. College Court

Address: Knighton Road, Leicester, LE2 3UF (1.3 miles from Stamford Court).

2. Premier Inn Leicester City Centre

Address: 1 St. Georges Way, Leicester, LE1 1SH (2.8 miles from Stamford Court).

3. ibis Leicester

Address: St. George's Way, Constitution Hill, Leicester, LE1 1PL (3.1 miles from Stamford Court).

3. Ramada Encore Leicester City Centre

Address: 86-90 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1GE (3.1 miles from Stamford Court).

4. Mercure Leicester The Grand Hotel

Address：73 Granby Street, Leicester, LE1 6ES (3.1 miles from Stamford Court).

5. Belmont Hotel Leicester

Address：De Montfort St, Leicester, LE1 7GR (2.7 miles far from Stamford Court).