

# WeChat Ethnography

*New Practices and Limits  
of an Emerging  
Research Method*

**PART II**  
February 9-10  
2023

ORGANIZED BY  
**Pascale Bugnon (UNIGE)**  
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Onsite registration by February 6

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Zoom ID **670 0684 2591**

passcode: **915747**

**INSTITUT CONFUCIUS**  
**FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES DE LA SOCIÉTÉ**



**UNIVERSITÉ  
DE GENÈVE**

## Program

**Thursday, February 9**

<b>9:30</b>	Welcome speech
<b>9:30-10:00</b> (online)	<i>To Face the Coming of An Era of WeChat Ethnography – An Awareness of Anthropologists on the Cultural Transformation in the World</i> Xudong Zhao (Renmin University)
<b>10:00-10:30</b> (online)	<i>Digital ethnographers as a (perhaps) forgotten guest: the case of a teacher-student chat during Covid-19 lockdown in China</i> Michela Bonato (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)
10:30-10:50	Coffee Break
<b>10:50-11:20</b> (onsite)	<i>Beyond Quanzi: Digital Production of Queer Sociality and Spaces in Shanghai</i> Jiannan Shi (Department of Sociology, University of Cambridge)
<b>11:20-11:50</b> (onsite)	<i>Between the “Virtual” and the “Real”: Benefits and Challenges of Using WeChat to Research Chinese Queer Sojourners in France</i> Cai Chen (Université Libre de Bruxelles)
<b>12:00-13:30</b>	Lunch
<b>13:30-14:00</b> (online)	<i>Applying WeChat Ethnography to politically sensitive topics</i> Yue Wang (Tampere University)
<b>14:00-14:30</b> (onsite)	<i>Handling Online Intimacy: Some Methodological Uses and Limits of Islam-Related WeChat Groups in China</i> Pascale Bugnon (HES-So/Confucius Institute, University of Geneva)
<b>14:30-15:00</b> (onsite)	<i>Researching Nomadism and Ritual Practices in Peripheral China through WeChat Ethnography</i> Aurore Dumont (Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcité – GSRL)
<b>15:00-15:20</b>	Coffee Break
<b>15:20-15:50</b> (onsite)	<i>Space Modalities of Chinese Academies in Contemporary China and the Implications for Modern Society</i> Jie Shu (Université Paris Cité, Institut Français de Recherche sur l'Asie et l'Est (IFRAE))
<b>15:50-16:20</b> (online)	<i>Studying Mobility without Moving: Pandemic-Era China Research and Social Media</i> Tami Blumenfield (University of New Mexico & Yunnan University)

## Friday, February 10

<b>9:30-10:00</b> (online)	<b><i>Building A WeChat Group: Smart Phone Use and Elders' Community among China's Migrant Grandparents</i></b> Min Zhang (School of Ethnology and Sociology, Minzu University)
<b>10:00-10:30</b> (online)	<b><i>Coming of Social Media and Transformations of Long-distance intimacies : A WeChat Ethnography in China</i></b> Ting He (Renmin University)
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	Coffee Break
<b>11:00-11:45</b> (hybrid)	<b><i>Re-constructing Transnational Relationships in Cyberspace : Employing WeChat to Mediate Qingtian (青田) as a 侨乡(qiaoxiang, sending area)</i></b> Mette Thunø (Department of Global Studies, Aarhus University) & Yiwen Wang (Aarhus University/University of Amsterdam)
<b>12:00-13:30</b>	Lunch
<b>13:30-14:15</b> (online)	<b><i>Evaluation of Fully Automated Translation in Social Media: An Ethnologic Study of WeChat</i></b> Haina Jin (Communication University of China) & Zhiyan Li (Communication University of China)
<b>14:15-14:45</b> (online)	<b><i>Is WeChat a Feasible Tool for Conducting China-based Ethnographic Research Under the Platform's Censorship?</i></b> Ningjie Zhu (Center for Advanced Security, Strategic and Integration Studies, University of Bonn)
<b>15:00</b>	Concluding remarks

## Additional information

Location	Institut Confucius Route de Lausanne 266A 1292 Chambésy / Geneva, Switzerland
Zoom link	<a href="https://unige.zoom.us/j/67006842591?pwd=MTdyMDFvMG5BVmRHTTFzYUpNMGc1Zz09">https://unige.zoom.us/j/67006842591?pwd=MTdyMDFvMG5BVmRHTTFzYUpNMGc1Zz09</a>
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