

**Kai Wei**  
**MSc in Management of Information Systems**  
**Who Wants to Live Forever?**  
**Towards a Chinese Thanatechnology**  
**Diana Wilson**  
**2016**

### **Abstract**

All cultures have rituals and observances concerning the dead. These range from the appropriate treatment of the corpse up to, and including, delegated methods of mourning. In order to pass knowledge of the dead down through the generations, some cultures have established means and ways revolving around remembrance of, and communication with, the departed. These customs and practices allow people to record, collate, retrieve and read the stories of the dead over thousands of years. Thanatology is the study of such customs and practices and the technologies used are known as thanatechnology. Like all other cultures, the Chinese have traditions regarding death. This research seeks to investigate whether current thanatechnologies based on avatars and social media data are appropriate for the Chinese culture.

Carrying a critical humanism perspective, this dissertation goes through the major philosophies in the Chinese culture environment to review their opinions on the subject of dying, death and bereavement. It analyzes the current projects featuring thanatechnologies using avatars and social media data and concludes that the Chinese culture should be willing to accept thanatechnologies provided certain rules are followed. It also raises a question "Why are there still no similar projects?" and tries to interpret it.