

2006 China Node APFRN Activity Report

In 2006, the China Node of the Asia Pacific Futures Research Network was active and successful in organizing a series of events in conjunction with the Network's theme "Media, Communications and Futures in the Asia Pacific Region." The Node invited renowned international scholars, filmmakers and activists as keynote speakers at various meetings, which were attended by scholars and students from universities around and beyond the greater Sydney area. It also gave funding to an important conference on media and the internet, held at the University of Melbourne. The Node funded and conducted PhD workshops with guest professors, but was also consistent in opening all its events to postgraduate students. The activities organized not only presented chances for intellectual exchange and networking among the members, but more importantly had provided training for postgraduate students enrolled in Chinese and Asian studies.

The following is a brief list of projects funded, organized and supported in 2006.

1. Doctoral Colloquium with Professor Gary Rawnsley (Nottingham University, Ningbo): "Understanding and Analysing Propaganda." June 21, 2006, UTS, Sydney.

Four travel scholarships were granted to PhD students from WA, Victoria, and Canberra to attend the workshop.

2. Visit of Professor Zhang Xiaoming, author of "The Blue Book of Chinese Communications Policies," from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. An introduction, discussion and dinner reception was organized with invited China scholars and department heads from UNSW, University of Sydney, Macquarie, Western Sydney and UTS.

3. Melbourne ["Internet Domains between China and India."](#) Nov. 3, 2006.

4. Joint seminar with the UTS China Research Group as part of the APFRN 2006 signature event. Presentation by Professor Yingjin Zhang, Director of China Studies at the University of California, San Diego, on "Interdisciplinarity, Crossmediality, and Transcultural Visuality in Chinese Cinema," November 21, 2006.

5. Special Sydney Event: "Documentary Making in China," the China Node component of the APFRN Signature Conference on "*Media: Policies, Cultures and Futures in the Asia Pacific Region*" Guest Speakers and presenters include Dr. Paola Voci, University of Otago, New Zealand; Mr. Cui Zi'en, Beijing Film Academy, independent film maker as well as activist; Dr. Gillian Leahy, University of Technology, Sydney and Dr. Michael Keane, University of Technology, Queensland, Nov. 25, 2006. This event was enthusiastically attended by faculty, students and general public throughout Sydney.

6. The Node has also given student travel scholarship for PhD candidates in Chinese communication studies to attend the Perth APFRN main event. The following are student testimonies to the Node's signature event and travel support:

"Dear Professor Donald and Dr. Zheng:

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Institute for International Studies, UTS, for holding the China Node event " Documentary Making in Contemporary China" last November. I feel so fortunate to attend the event as it has been of great help to my research project. I am currently doing my Ph.D. research on Chinese queer culture at the Faculty of Arts, University of Sydney. It happens that one of the speakers on that day was Professor Cui Zi'en from Beijing Film Academy. Professor Cui is also a well-known queer film director in mainland China and his documentary 'Night Scene' (*Yejing*, 2004) shown and discussed that day is one of the key "texts" for my research. Talking with Professor Cui, and other participants, during and after conference has deepened my understanding of Contemporary Chinese queer community and identity. Also, I like the idea of bringing the Australian counterparts Dr. Gillian Leahy, an Australian documentary film maker, and Dr. Michael Keane from Queensland, to show and talk about their works. The cross-cultural dialogue is interesting and inspiring. It is fascinating to see that the film-makers from both countries are focusing their attention on representations of social reality and the socially-marginalized people. I really like the warm atmosphere of having a friendly and candid discussion and certainly feel very supported for my research project. Meanwhile, the event offers a good platform for documentary film-makers and academics from different cultural backgrounds to meet and to talk about their common concerns. Some of the issues that came up in the discussion, such as reality TV as mock documentary, audience group, media literary and cultural differences, film-maker and self-reflectivity impressed and inspired me a lot. I would say that the forum really opened the gateway to a deep and comprehensive understanding of media and society to me. It happens that my friend May from the Department of Indonesian Studies, University of Sydney, also benefited a lot from the event because of its close relevance to her research on queer Indonesian cinema. . .

Hongwei Bao, University of Sydney."

"Last November I went to Perth for the Media: Policies, Culture, and Future in Asian Pacific Region conference hosted by Curtin University of Technology. At the time I was only two month starting my PhD. I had no chapters written, and was at an absolutely chaotic state of mind in collecting all the reading materials at my desk. Also, I was living on my scholarship and was a shy fresher for Australia. I never thought I could go to a formal conference just in the beginning of my study. However, I was fortunate enough to have received the travel fund from ARC China Node. The fund enabled me to make up the expensive flight all the way from Sydney to Perth. The experience in Perth was splendid. By auditing those lectures from latest media researches, I updated my understanding of the Media in Asian Pacific Region. In addition, because the conference attracted scholars from various disciplines, it also widened my sight in the field. Moreover, it was a precious opportunity to meet and expose myself to established media scholars from all over the world. I am very grateful for China Node to provide me such chance. Another occasion I want to also mention with gratitude is the China Documentary Workshop that China Node funded. It is not an everyday event to expect Chinese avant-garde director like Cui Zi-En to meet established Australian documentary directors. As a student, it was a rare opportunity to get first-hand information from social activists like Cui Zi-En. Even Cui himself remarked after the event that his understanding of the Australian film and television making had been renewed throughout the event. Again, without the funding from China Node, such in-depth cultural exchange would not happen. Thanks!

Zou Peng, University of Technology, Sydney”

There was also a meeting held for any Node members who wished to attend – to discuss how to manage 2007’s theme of Population and Health. Dr David Bray (University of Sydney) and Dr Jingqing Yang (UTS) expressed interest in managing a key event on community and health in contemporary China.
