

學術對談

互聯網研究、國際合作與ICA的進一步 國際化：和汪炳華對談

對談人：汪炳華、邱林川、趙宇超



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(Prof. Ang Peng Hwa)

「在中國和印度，我們都缺乏足夠的合作。合作不是一場零和遊戲。如果你知曉如何合作並創造雙贏局面，人人皆可受益。合作精神至關重要。」

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Dialogue

Internet Research, International Collaboration, and the Further Internationalization of ICA: A Dialogue with Ang Peng Hwa

Discussants: ANG Peng Hwa, Jack Linchuan QIU, Yuchao ZHAO

Abstract

In this dialogue, Professor Ang Peng Hwa reflects on his journey into communication studies and into Internet policy research, from Singapore to the United States, back to Asia at large, and at the global level. From a unique Singaporean perspective that is simultaneously global and multidisciplinary, he discusses his numerous projects since 1994 that have enjoyed wide influence in academic as well as policy-analysts communities such as at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). These also include his recent comparative projects that involve large countries such as India as well as relatively small nations such as Bhutan. Professor Ang sheds light on his various roles in ICA (International Communication Association) including as the main host of ICA Singapore in 2010 and as ICA President. He shares his vision on a further internationalized ICA, on the contributions of regional networks such as AMIC (Asian Media and Information and Communication Center), and on the special need for Asian communication scholars to develop and practice our collaboration skills for better community-building, globally and regionally.

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PA：汪炳華

LQ：邱林川

YZ：趙宇超

LQ：非常感謝您參與這次學術對談。當您成為亞洲首位 ICA 主席時，我們都為此感到非常驕傲。我們會採訪您在 ICA 的工作。但在那之前，您可否跟我們先分享您的研究以及您作為新加坡傳播學者的經歷？您是怎麼開始您的研究生涯的？又如何選擇了這樣一條職業道路？

PA：謝謝邀請。您認為職業道路是一件我可選擇的事，這想法很有意思。同樣有意思的是，當我決定繼續深造的時候，新加坡還沒有傳播學項目。所以我先選擇了法律專業，之後去當了記者，那還是上個世紀80年代的事。後來我前往南加州大學攻讀傳播管理碩士。當時我的計劃是開一家出版社，但我發現傳播學研究實在太有趣，於是決定繼續讀博。

當我再回到新加坡時，剛好有家出版社待價而沽。我想買下，但最終和它失之交臂。1997年我又創辦了一家互聯網創業公司。為了專注研究，我之後又把它賣給了一位朋友。那時新加坡

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和亞洲許多地方一樣，不重視研究。人們說新加坡沒有R&D(研究和發展)，只有D(發展)。但我們一小撮人仍在埋首躬耕於研究領域。

在進行第一份重大研究項目時，我有幸和一位助理教授合作，他後來成為法學院院長。我們獲得一個考察1994年互聯網監管的科研機會，具體要求我們撰寫一份關於新加坡互聯網審查的報告。由於過往這一領域尚屬空白，新加坡政府委託我們研究該如何管理新媒體和新科技。這份報告在政府部門間廣泛流傳，讓我在新加坡「聲名乍現」。之後我把這份報告改寫成論文，發佈在「互聯網協會」(Internet Society)的年會上，這又為我帶來了「昨日重現」般的短暫榮光。

《新加坡的互聯網審查》之所以脫穎而出，重點在於它有一些不錯的數據，使這份報告在當時顯得相當新穎又獨特。因為我們從我所在的大學獲取互聯網數據，校方知道我們在做關於互聯網審查的項目後慷慨相助，比如支付了獨立服務器的開銷；我們也拿到了相當全面的有關審查的數據。我的合著人之後轉去了其他項目，沒有再參與寫作研究論文，我則繼續這份工作。回首過往，依然覺得趣味盎然。我從中汲取的經驗可能就是：時機的重要性。做開創者會帶給你「街頭信譽」，拿到別人沒有的有趣數據亦是如此。即便是新加坡、即便你來自一個彈丸之地，都能找到全球性的興趣點。這個道理映證在這項研究上。

從那以後，我沿著這方面研究的路徑不斷向前，同時定期參加「互聯網協會」會議，在互聯網治理學者中間漸漸有了一些知名度。2003年，「資訊社會世界峰會」(World Summit on the Information Society, WSIS)在日內瓦召開，他們邀請我加入聯合國討論層面。剛好在WSIS前我出版了一本關於互聯網治理的書，時機恰到好處。

此前，我還擔任了我們學院的第二任院長。結束一天繁忙的行政工作後，我每晚10時到凌晨2時連續寫作六個月，促成新書的面世。這本書在聯合國和高階政策制定者間廣泛傳閱，再次肯定了我在互聯網治理研究領域的聲望。

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LQ：和諸如台灣、香港、大陸等華人社會地區相比，在新加坡做傳播學研究是否感覺很不一樣？如果是的話，有哪些區別？

PA：我還不夠了解中港台的情況。但在新加坡，一直有種批評的聲音說，我們進行了太多區域性發展研究，而不是學術研究。可以理解，政策制定者會使用不同的衡量指標來評估學術成果。

同時，新加坡的研究者容易有區域化的或「泛亞」的傾向。我們（新加坡）自視甚小。如果視野僅限於新加坡，你的研究就算很有趣，也很難發表。如果一項研究只是關於新加坡，它的引用次數也很難得以提升。有些資助人甚至表明，他們不會支持只研究新加坡的項目。這就造成了一種壓力：我們得去尋找國外合作者，並且使研究範圍多樣化。儘管研究至少要和新加坡有些關聯，但我們不得不「泛亞」，用本土問題把全球性和區域性討論勾聯起來。

某種程度而言，我們已經出現另一個極端，因為發表上的難度，新加坡的經濟研究數年來鮮有人涉足。你研究印度、中國或者美國，沒有（發表的）問題。但只針對新加坡的研究則很難刊登在國際期刊上。

YZ：新加坡對傳播研究有什麼結構性的支持嗎？

PA：政府提供的支持在增多。比如，剛剛創立了社會科學研究委員會（Social Science Research Council）來推動和新加坡有關的研究。我們也有不同層級的研究經費。非常幸運的是，政府在研究方面投入了大量資金，帶動了本地大學排名。除了資助我們做任何我們想做的課題，社會科學研究委員會也支持關於新加坡的項目。除此之外，還有一些公開資助，但申請難度很大，要求申請者須要具備很高的學術嚴謹度、理論研究深度——不僅僅是應用研究，而是概念性很強、學術上很堅實的研究。

LQ：您能談談推動新加坡高校排名靠前的其他因素嗎？我對此好奇是因為許多中港台的同行都很尊崇南洋理工大學和新加坡國立大學，想從你們的成功中學到更多。

PA：如果我們看它的機制，一個主要原因是招募了優秀的研究者。我所在的學院是個較為年輕的學院，它的海外講師比例是最高的：

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超過一半。我們聘用的人有非常高的學術產出。目前，(每個人)每年平均發表量是3.2篇。這就產生了一個很大的內部壓力，即使對正在爭取終身教職的助理教授而言也是「壓力很大」。

高生產力是一個因素。此外，新加坡——實際上在亞洲其他地方也一樣——擁有重視教育的優勢。人們非常看重學術工作，這也帶來了成功。舉個例子，在ICA會議上我們曾有本科生展示畢業設計成果，使他們的高質量的作品獲得國際曝光度。這要歸功於可能不僅限於新加坡、而是整個亞洲重視教育的文化積澱。

LQ：能和我們分享一下您現在在做的研究嗎？

PA：我現在的研究「兵分兩路」。其中一個受緊迫性議題(譬如對假新聞的濃厚興趣)的驅使。類似地，我開始涉足AI(人工智能)和AI所需的政策研究，因為其所涉及的規則和算法現在還是個黑箱。當有很多公共政策制定需求的時候，這些項目多是受到現實緊迫性的驅動。我們作為研究人員是不能等的，政策制定者也等不起。如果你為了一個完美的結果花費大量時間，你就會錯失良機。決策者需要意見時，你就幫不上忙。

我的另一個研究方向和業界、政府或是社會的實際需求關聯不大。其中一個正在進行的項目起始於2000年我還在牛津研究電子媒體監管的時候。這項研究考察的是諸如類似新加坡這樣小國家的媒介政策。我做這個項目不是為了任何決策機構，而且我也不著急。從某種程度上來說，時間非常充裕。這也是為什麼有些人會討厭資深教授，因為我們推進得太慢了。但我期望的是利用這個項目來探索長期內事情會如何發展，例如媒體公司的盈利能力。

值得注意的是，小國家(地區)的定義往往是相對的。加拿大很大，但和美國比起來就是小的；台灣挺大，但和中國大陸相比就是小的。所以一些在台灣執行的、與中國相關的媒體政策，和加拿大針對美國邊境的政策(比如無線電訊號外溢)都會產生更為廣泛的影響。一些小國家的政策可以應用到更大的實體上。在許多方面，這類針對小國(地區)的研究實際上也是個大項目。

LQ：這個小國家項目真的很吸引人。我聽說您也在研究尼泊爾。尼泊爾也是小國家嗎？

PA：不，尼泊爾不能稱之為小國家，但不丹是。我也在斯洛文尼亞和馬其頓做了一些工作。有意思的是，不少適用於大國的媒體政策並不適用於小國。因為當你有太多的多樣性，每家媒體組織只有極少的市場佔有率時，所有的媒體就會變得又窮又沒有專業性——他們起不了監督者的作用。在需要媒體的地方，你怎麼讓媒體在這種情況下繼續運營下去？這和為滿足信息需求的美國小鎮沒有多大差別。令人驚訝的是，這種相關性超出了我的預期。

LQ：相當有趣。您也在研究像印度和中國這樣的大國，對嗎？

PA：是的，我在印度有個研究當地網絡中斷或停擺的項目，雖然這個項目的規模相對較小。我知道怎樣應對當地的各種情況、進行採訪，所以印度對我而言相對安全。但為了獲得更多數據，我也正在克什米爾做一個調查，那裡局勢非常不穩定，所以我還不知道我能從那裡獲得怎樣的數據。

YZ：在進入像印度這樣的海外大國時，有哪些重要的注意事項？

PA：我經年累月地待在印度，包括一年的學術假期也在那裡渡過。對我來說，印度不算海外，它讓我感到非常自在。但如果你是一個從未去過印度的年輕學者，我的首要建議是找到一些好的本地關係。印度情況有些複雜。他們的私立高校實際上盈利頗豐。因此，對他們而言，促成建立關係的因子往往不是為了做研究，而是為了其他事，譬如授課。在我的經歷中，我有機會和印度頂級商學院——艾哈邁達巴德的印度管理學院 (Indian Institute of Management) 的前主任一起工作，他總是能夠提供充分的地方支持。

在他的幫助下，我在休假期間協助一所學院開創了他們的博士項目。學院裡的每個人都需要在一年時間裡有所發表，形式可以是會議論文或期刊文章。到最後每個人都做到了。一些觀察者可能會對此感到驚訝。我認為如果你「取法乎上」，創建一個強有力的計劃，你應該能夠在印度或其他國家做成一些事。這裡我想

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表達的是，每個國家都有優秀的人才，儘管他們並不總集中於一處。而你必須碰運氣，找到那個合適的合作夥伴。

LQ：您能介紹一下在ICA的工作嗎？幾年前，當您當選ICA主席時，我的華人同事和學生都為您成為主席感到無比自豪。在擔任我們學科的全球領導核心角色後，您現在的感受是怎樣的？

PA：實際上，ICA大部分工作都由委員會完成，所以功勞往往歸於委員會而非我。在某種程度上，領導者可以做一些事，但我會說這受制於一年的任期。很多時候它是團隊工作，例如執行委員會(ICA核心決策機構)的運行。如果我們每個人都做一點額外的工作，那整個團隊的成果就會更多。所以我覺得那些將某些事僅歸功於一個人的說法是不公平的。要組織一場年會需要諸多努力，特別是當選主席和執行主任的付出；但就真正推動整個學科建設而言，這實質上是一個團體的集體貢獻。

自我當選以來，我常聽到的一種普遍性評論是：哦，我可以看到ICA是認真朝著國際化方向邁進的。現在我們在布拉格參加ICA，我認為ICA是真正的國際化了，對吧？但讓我驚訝的是，直到最近依然有人認為ICA只是象徵性的「國際化」。但如今在我當選的事實下，人們才認為這種國際化的努力是非常嚴肅的。

LQ：早在2010年，您在舉辦ICA新加坡年會時就發揮了核心作用。2016年，您又促成了ICA在福岡舉行。您如何看待作為東道主和成為ICA領導者之間的差別？我這樣問是因為ICA還在考慮進入中國，而且可能會有讀者有興趣作為東道主幫忙。

PA：ICA主席可做的事相當有限，因為你只有一年時間。你可以考慮你認為有必要做的事去逐年改進。我們正在學習如何做得更好，例如舞會，一開始並非所有人都喜歡舞會這一項的；兒童託管也很重要。儘管這些不是學術，但後勤細節對ICA年會非常重要。對我而言，食物也是個大問題，真的能夠改變一場會議的面貌。

作為主席，你必須想到這些能夠增進學者交流的小事，而學術的基調則來自會員。說回到福岡，我的主要任務是提高出席率，因為我非常擔心數字會下滑。在過去，ICA出席率的歷史最高紀錄是在倫敦，但之後有所下降。我很擔心這些數字，所以我

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們嘗試更多地向包括主會及前後附屬會議在內的社群推廣ICA。在ICA福岡年會之前，我曾幫助一些同事為會前會募集資金。這也是可以提高出勤率的相對容易的方法。

2010年ICA新加坡的組織工作則更加棘手，好在我有一群很棒的同事，雖然工作繁多，但我們樂在其中。我不知道有多少人注意到我們為食物專門擬了菜單。菜單上的每一道菜都有一個故事——不僅是描述，而是整個故事。此外，我們還邀請了藝術策展人員為我們增添了不一樣的樂趣。

最後我們取得了非常好的效果，並使新加坡亮相於眾人眼前。對其他新加坡人來說，這也意義非凡，因為2007年我們舉辦了世界新聞教育大會(World Journalism Education Congress)時，有人問道：你們怎麼能夠在新加坡召開有關新聞業的教育大會？我們必須向他們展示我們可以做到。這個活動引起大量關注。儘管在審查制度等話題上存在分歧，但我們就新聞學模式和新聞學課程展開了非常好的討論。人們都在談論它。

同樣重要的是，我們向ICA表明，審查的存在並不妨礙依然可以在新加坡開展好的研究。不可否認，新加坡有審查制度，但研究工作事在人為。

LQ：剛當選的時候，您最初的目標是什麼？回顧過去，您認為這些目標都實現了嗎？

PA：我的主要想法是更好地將ICA連接到世界各地，當然重點放在我來自的亞洲；以及怎樣讓亞洲更好地融入ICA，這一點現在可以從ICA區域會議中看到，比如我們2016年及2018年在馬來西亞召開的會議，以及2017年印度、2013年上海所舉行的區域會議。

當ICA走向區域化時，人們會有所顧慮。例如，在非洲，在ICA主席Paula Gardner和Amy Jordan的領導下，我們試圖解決人們對發展中國家研究產出質量的擔憂，因為它們更難發表。但假如你參加這些會議並聽取論文發表，你會發現一些你在ICA年會上很少聽到的非常有趣的想法。

這些區域活動使ICA更加豐富，因為包括發展中國家在內的世界各地同行都對ICA有所景仰。真正重要的是學者之間的思想

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交流，形式則可以表現為各種各樣。所以我試圖與發展中國家的同行以及較發達國家的同行建立聯繫。

回到亞洲，我們在東亞和南亞取得了顯著進步，並且我們正在東南亞開展新的活動，以提高ICA在該地區的知名度。我們現在所做的可以決定未來的規範，比如雙盲審稿。其中一些規範應該是全球性的。但在地區和地方層面，當你將審稿制度化時，這些規範也需要扎根，你會從此中收穫一些非常好的論文、想法和研究。這就是我一直致力於做的工作。從某種程度上，我認為我已經部分實現了這些目標。

LQ：您在ICA最高領導層工作時，有沒有什麼事是您完全沒有預料的？

PA：談不上意料之外，因為這是一份可以慢慢來的工作：你看了，觀察了，你就知道了。加上擔任執行委員會主席，你通過這種集體領導可以有兩年觀察期。

如果真有什麼意外，那應該是2017年聖地亞哥的ICA，那是川普當選後的幾個月。他當時發表了關於移民和禁止部分國家遊客入境的言論。作為一名亞洲人，你可能可以比較冷靜地應對，因為我們過去在許多地方都見過類似的反移民政策，你明白它從何而來，分裂和隔離政策並非新事。

但這不僅是政策，而是當時隨之出現的一種普遍性氛圍。ICA必須處理各種各樣的議題，這是不曾預料的。有時我不確定該怎麼做。但我覺得作為一名外國人實際上也有好處：如果我是美國人，人們會首先質疑我的政治立場。你是共和黨，還是民主黨？你有什麼觀點，為什麼你持這個立場？非常兩極化。作為一個非美國人實際上帶來了一些優勢，形成某種程度上的緩衝。人們會說：好吧，這傢伙不是美國人。他是個努力把大家團結起來的新加坡人。他來自一個小國家。他不會對任何人產生威脅。

這算是不曾料到的事，並且是件好事。另外需要指出的是，ICA發表了聲明幫助人們應對這種狀況。因為這件事發生在中國的新年，所以整個農曆新年期間我都在回覆郵件回應此事。

LQ：您剛剛描述的可能是新加坡戰略定位的延伸。該定位使馬英九和習近平在2015年11月的第一次會面成為可能。新加坡的中立性

可使其在亞洲發揮像瑞士一樣的功能。ICA能夠得益於這獨特的新加坡優勢真是太好了。反思這些經驗，您認為ICA還需要做些什麼使其成為更卓越的專業協會？

PA：還有很多工作要做。ICA還沒有進入亞洲許多地方，許多印度的同行還不知道ICA。當我們在印度組織AMIC（亞洲媒體資訊中心）會議時，一個年輕的講師告訴我，會議費加上交通和住宿花了她一個月的工資，這著實令我震驚。她自己付了錢——一個月的工資啊！我感到非常糟糕。但她覺得她想來學習。印度真的有非常大的需求，印度學者認為知識非常重要。

ICA可以在這方面做得更好，比如，籌集更多資金讓發展中國家的同行前來參會。當然，我的觀點是，研究不但有利於個體，對國家也有好處。作為亞洲人我會這樣覺得。近年來，ICA在亞洲做了很多事，在非洲也是，不過我們仍需要在拉丁美洲投入更多精力。

雖然我們目前的盈利模式是靠銷售ICA期刊，但在開源期刊等其他領域仍有改進的空間，這是另外一件需要關注的事。現在的年會辦得不錯，我們以一種健康的方式創收，但問題是我們如何使用這些錢、以及我們在多大程度上能用這些錢來調整會費。這不是個簡單問題，雖然至少目前看上去，人們是願意付錢的。

從長遠來看，我們希望ICA期刊能成為開放的期刊，但出版收入可能減少。接下去要做什麼？一方面，ICA需要財政穩定；另一方面，當非洲同儕也能閱讀ICA期刊，引用量就會上去。在布拉格，一些非洲會員告訴我他們從開放期刊資源中受益。我們南洋理工大學和加拿大IDRC合作開展了一個項目，為主要來自於發展中國家的研究人員提供科研能力培訓。他們可以使用我們大學的資源，下載期刊，並且利用這些期刊產出了不少優秀的研究成果。其中一人剛贏得了ICA分會的獎項。IDRC項目還有導師計劃，成功培養了新一代研究人員。

還有很多工作要做。但首先我們需要把信息發佈出去。另一個我們真的應該關注的領域是，如何讓我們的研究產生更大的影響？這說起來容易做起來難。怎樣讓世界知道我們已經做了有影

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響力的工作？它是在影響政策還是告知大眾？我們如何才能在這方面做出改進？這不僅取決於發表篇數和引用次數，還取決於學界之外的實際影響力。

LQ：您如何看待ICA附屬期刊，比如《傳播與社會學刊》？現在我們有ICA附屬的中文、德文和法文期刊。您怎麼看這個發展？您認為我們應該優先考慮把哪些語言的學術出版物引入ICA？

PA：這當然是非常積極的發展。至於其他語言，我會建議阿拉伯語和印度語。出於不同的原因，中東和印度具有特殊的重要性。比如，在印度，印度語報紙的銷量有數百萬。所以我認為ICA有空間吸納更多的語言，雖然這些期刊的質量需要達到一定的水平。儘管現在說這些為時尚早，但我們還需要評估期刊的影響力，了解它在未來是如何發展的。

LQ：對於華人傳播學者，不僅是中港台澳而是全球的華人學者，您有什麼建議嗎？我們如何通過ICA和類似的專業協會做出更好的研究，產生更多的社會影響，並且更加高效地建設學術社群？

PA：我的建議是，我們應該以解決全球性問題為目標。這不一定非得是很宏大的問題。它可以是一個公式，但答案是每個人都在尋找的。這就是一個全球性問題。答案可以非常小，但如果每個人都看到它並且使用它，那麼你就解決了一個全球性問題。你需要知道，人們在問什麼問題？對ICA來說，理論議題更為重要。我們應該關注理論而不僅僅是數據收集或觀察。作為亞洲人，我們必須調整思維。收集數據後，我們必須把它帶回到理論中去。你可以在ICA上看到很多這樣的例子，許多教授非常擅長使用理論。

至於社群建設，它可以是本土的亦或是全球的。ICA的一部分是「A」，意味著聯盟。我們的美國同行非常善於建立和領導專業協會。在亞洲很多地方，我們沒有那麼擅長。儘管美國人被認為是個人主義者，而亞洲人是集體主義者，但我們實際上經常會看到相反的情況。有時，我覺得我們的亞洲同儕可能競爭意識過強了，我一直看到我們彼此之間沒有那麼好的合作。在中國和印度，我們都缺乏足夠的合作。合作不是一場零和遊戲。如果你知曉如何合作並創造雙贏局面，人人皆可受益。合作精神至關重要。

互聯網研究、國際合作與ICA的進一步國際化

在這方面，我們也需要回饋社群。我們在大學裡做的很多事雖然花費甚少，但它建立了這個社群，這也是我們學術公民身份的一部分。比如，你應該幫助ICA或其他專業機構審查提交的論文。這不僅有利於你個人學術的成長，也為整個學術圈的發展做出了貢獻。

LQ、YZ：非常感謝！

汪炳華教授著作選

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Academic Dialogue with **Ang Peng Hwa**

Internet Research, International Collaboration, and the Further Internationalization of ICA: A Dialogue with Ang Peng Hwa

PA: ANG Peng Hwa

LQ: Jack Linchuan QIU

YZ: Yuchao ZHAO

LQ: Thank you very much for joining this dialogue. We are all very proud when you became the first ICA President based in Asia. We will ask you about your work in ICA. But before then, could you first tell us about your research and your experience as a Singaporean communication researcher? How did you start? How did you choose this career path?

PA: Thanks for inviting me. It's interesting that you consider the career path as something chosen by me. It's also interesting because, when I went for further studies, there was no communication program in Singapore. So I did law instead and then practiced as a journalist. This was in the 1980s. Then I went to pursue my master's at the Communication Management program at University of Southern California. My plan then was to start a publishing house, but I found communication studies so interesting that I went on to do a PhD.

I returned to Singapore and there happened to be a publishing house for sale. I looked into buying it, but it didn't work out. I also launched a dot-com startup in 1997, although I later sold it to a friend, which allowed me to stay focused on research. Back then, like many parts of Asia, in Singapore there was little emphasis on research. People said in Singapore there was no R&D (research and development), there was only D. Still, the small group of us carried on.

I was lucky in my first major research project that I was working with a fellow assistant professor, who later became dean of a law school. We were given a commissioned job to look at Internet regulation back in 1994. This was a report on Internet censorship in

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Singapore. We were commissioned by the Singaporean government to study how new media and technologies should be regulated because there was a gap of research on Internet. The report was widely read within the ministries, creating my 15 minutes of fame in Singapore. Then I turned that report into a paper for the annual conference of the Internet Society, which gave me another 15 minutes of fame.

This report, *The Censorship of Internet in Singapore*, stood out because it had some good data. Back then this was quite new and unique. This was because we had Internet data from my university and, knowing about our project on Internet censorship, the university helped us with data such as costs for a separate server; we had quite comprehensive data relating to censorship. My coauthor did nothing of the research paper and he eventually moved on to other things. I continued this line of work. It's interesting to think back and look at how it developed. The lesson here is probably timing. Being the first gives you street cred, so does having some interesting data that others don't have. Even though it's Singapore, even though you come from a smaller locale, there is global interest. And the study received global attention.

Since then, I continued working on this and attended regularly Internet Society conferences. I became known among Internet governance researchers. In 2003, there was the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva. They invited me to join at the UN level. I had a book on Internet governance that came out before WSIS. The timing was very good.

Before this point, I also became dean of the school, the second dean of my school. After the busy day's work, every night from 10 pm to 2 am, for about six months, I was writing this book. The book came out and was widely read within the UN and high-level policy people. That affirmed my reputation in the Internet governance studies circle.

LQ: Is it quite different to do communication research in Singapore, as compared to Chinese societies such as Taiwan, Hong Kong or mainland China? If so, what are the differences?

PA: I'm not sure about China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, but in Singapore there is the critique that we are doing too much regional development

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instead of scholarly research. Policymakers use different metrics understandably.

Meanwhile, researchers in Singapore tend to have more regional or pan-Asian inclination. We see ourselves as small. If you just look at Singapore, it's going to be difficult to get published even if you do interesting work. If it's only about Singapore, it will also be hard to boost citation counts. I know funders who say that they will not support projects that are only about Singapore. So there is pressure to find foreign collaborators and to diversify the research scope. We must be pan-Asian, although the research should at least have some relevance to Singapore, connecting global and regional discussions with local issues.

In some ways, we have gone the other way round because, for a few years, there was no one studying Singaporean economy as it's hard to get published. You study India, China, or USA, no problem. But Singapore alone would be hard to justify publication in international journals.

YZ: What structural support do you have in Singapore?

PA: The government is giving more support. For instance, they just started the Social Science Research Council to boost research relevant to Singapore. We also have different tiers of research funding. We are really lucky that the government puts some serious money into research, which contributes to the rise in the ranking of local universities. Besides providing money so we can do the research including topics on whatever you want, the Social Science Research Council that supports projects relevant to Singapore. There are also other grants that are open but very difficult to get. You need high academic rigor. You need theory, not just applied research, but things that are conceptually strong and academically solid.

LQ: Is there something else that contributes to the high ranking of Singaporean universities? I'm curious because many colleagues in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland look up to NTU and NUS, and would like to learn more about your success.

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PA: If we look at the mechanics of it, a main reason must be the hiring of good researchers. My school, because it was a newer school, had the highest proportion of foreign lecturers: more than half. The people we hire have very high research output. Currently, the average number of publications is 3.2 articles per year. This is a very stressful level, even for assistant professors undergoing tenure.

The high level of productivity being one factor, I see also that Singapore — and other parts of Asia as well — has an advantage in that we value education. People are much more serious about academic work, which contributes to success. For example, at the ICA conference we have undergraduates presenting their final year projects, very high-quality work receiving international exposure. It's a credit to the culture that has been built up, which is probably not just Singaporean but Asian.

LQ: Can you tell us more about your ongoing projects?

PA: I have two tracks of research, one being driven by the urgent such as the intense interests in fake news at the moment. Similarly, I have started to work on AI (artificial intelligence) and the policies necessary for AI because the rules involved, the algorithms, are a black box. Such projects are driven by the urgency of the situation, when there are lots of needs in public policymaking. We as researchers cannot wait, and the policymakers cannot wait, either. If you take your time in order to get a perfect research out, then you will miss the action. You wouldn't be helpful when policymakers need advice.

My other type of research has little to do with practical needs of the industry, government, or society. One of my ongoing projects started in year 2000 when I was based in Oxford, studying the regulation of digital media, which examines media policy in small states, i.e., countries of small size, comparable to Singapore. I'm not doing this for any policymaking body, and I'm not in a hurry. In a way it's a luxury of time, which is why some people find senior professors annoying because we move too slowly. But I'm expecting to use this project to discover how things will turn up in the longer run, for example, with regard to the profitability of media companies.

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Note that the definition of a small state is often relative. Canada is big, but in relation to the USA is small. Taiwan is big, but in relation to China, is small. So some of the media policies that Taiwan implements in relation to China, and what Canada does next to the US, such as the overspill of radio signals, have broader implications. Some policies in small states can apply to larger entities. This project on small states is therefore in fact a big project in certain ways.

LQ: This project on small states is really fascinating. I heard you also worked on Nepal. Is Nepal also a small state?

PA: No, Nepal wouldn't be, but Bhutan would be. I've also done some work in Slovenia and Macedonia. The interesting thing is that some media policies applicable to big states would not apply in small states because when you have too much diversity and each media organization has a tiny market share, then all media become poor and cannot be professional. They don't function as watchdogs. How do you keep the media going in this situation, where they need the media? It's not so different from even small towns in the US, in order to meet the information needs. So there's surprise of greater relevance than I expected.

LQ: Really interesting. You've also worked on big countries like India or China, right?

PA: Yes, I have a project on India, although it's relatively small, looking at the Internet cut or network shutdowns there. I know how to get around and do interviews, so I find it is relatively safe. But to get more data, I'm also doing a survey, which is in Kashmir in fact, and it's pretty unstable there. So I'm still waiting to see what I can find from there.

YZ: What are the important things that we should do while going into a big foreign country like India?

PA: I have been in India for years. I was on sabbatical there for a year. To me, it's not a big foreign country. I'm quite comfortable in India. But if you are a young scholar, who has never been to India, my first advice is that you find some really good local connections. The Indian situation is a bit complex in the sense that their private higher

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education system is actually quite profitable. So the incentive is not for doing research, but for other things like giving classes. In my case, I had the opportunity to work with a former director of the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad, a top business school in India. He always gave ample support.

With his help, I spent my sabbatical with an institute in order to start its PhD program. Every member of the institute needed to publish something in one year. It could be a conference paper or a journal article. At the end, everyone delivered, which might have come as a surprise to some observers. I think if you aim for the best, to create the strongest program, you should be able to get something done, in India or other foreign countries. I would say that countries everywhere have good people, although they are not always concentrated in one place. You have to try your luck and find the right partner.

LQ: Excellent. Could you tell us about your ICA work? A few years ago, when you were elected ICA President, my Chinese colleagues and students all felt so extremely proud with you becoming ICA President. How do you feel now, after serving in this central role of global leadership for our discipline?

PA: Actually a lot of the work in ICA is done by committees. So it's a credit to the committees, not to me. To a certain extent that the person who's leading can do some things, but I would say this mostly happens in just one year. Most of the time, it's group work, for instance, in the Executive Committee. If each one of us does a little extra work, then the group as a whole achieves more. So I don't think it's really fair to say that something happened just because of one person. Putting together the annual conference requires a lot of effort, especially from the President-Elect and the Executive Director. But in terms of actually driving the discipline, it's really a collective effort of a group of people.

Since I was elected, a very common remark I encountered was: oh, I can see ICA is really serious about being international. Now we are in Prague for ICA, I think ICA is truly international, right? But to my surprise, until recently some had still thought ICA was only symbolically international. But now, with me being elected people think this internationalization initiative is quite serious.

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LQ: Back in 2010, you also played a central role to host ICA in Singapore. Now you've also worked hard to put together ICA Fukuoka in 2017. How do you see the differences between being a local host and being an ICA leader? I'm asking because ICA is still thinking about going into China, and there might be some readers who are interested in helping out as local hosts.

PA: As a President, a lot of things you can do are quite limited because all you have is a year. You can think about what you feel is necessary in order to make improvements year by year. We are learning to do better, like dance parties, which not everyone liked at the start. Then, childcare is important, too. Although it's not academic, such logistical details matter greatly for ICA annual conferences. For me, food is a big deal, and food can really change the complexion of a meeting.

As a President, you must think of such little things that support intellectual exchange. The academic tone is set by the membership. Back in Fukuoka, my main task was to drive the attendance because I was very concerned that the numbers would decline. In the past, historically the highest ICA attendance was in London, but after that it went down. I was concerned about the numbers. Thus we tried to publicize ICA more to our community, both the main conference and the pre-conferences as well. Before Fukuoka, I helped some colleagues to get funding for some pre-conferences, which was a way to drive attendance. That was relatively easy.

I would say the organizing part in 2010 ICA Singapore was trickier, although I had a fantastic group of colleagues. It was a lot of work, but we enjoyed ourselves. I don't know how many people noticed that we had menu written for the food. And every item in the menu had a story, which wasn't just description, but a whole story. Also, we invited art exhibition people to have different things added onto the fun.

We have very good outcomes out of it. People saw Singapore. And for other Singaporeans, this was also important because, in 2007, we organized the World Journalism Education Congress. And we had people asking: how you could hold an education congress about journalism in Singapore? We had to show them that could be done. The event drew much attention. Despite the differences on topics such as censorship, we had very good discussions on models of journalism and journalism curriculum. People talked about it.

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Similarly, it is important to show ICA that you can do good research in Singapore despite censorship. There's no denying there's censorship in Singapore, but we can still do good work.

LQ: What were your initial goals when you were elected? Looking back, do you think you have met those goals?

PA: My key ideas were to better connect ICA to different parts of the world, of course with emphasis on Asia where I come from, as well as better involvement from Asia to ICA that can be seen now especially through the ICA regional conferences, for example, in Malaysia (2018; 2016), India (2017), and Shanghai (2013).

There are concerns when ICA goes regional. For instance, in Africa under the leadership of ICA Presidents Paula Gardner and Amy Jordan, we tried to address concerns about the quality of research outputs in developing countries in general because it's harder to get them published. If you join these conferences and attend the presentations, you will find really interesting ideas that you seldom hear at ICA annual conferences.

The regional events enrich ICA because colleagues, including those in the developing world, look up to ICA. What really matters is the exchange of ideas among researchers, which can take many forms. So I've tried to connect with colleagues in developing countries as well as those in the more developed ones.

Back in Asia, we've made notable progress in East Asia and South Asia, and we are working on new events in Southeast Asia, in order to raise more awareness of ICA in the region. What we now do can determine future norms such as double-blind peer review. Some of these norms should be global. But at the regional and local levels, they also need to take root when you practice having people to do the reviews and you get some very good papers, ideas, and research coming out from the process. That's the kind of work that I was trying to do. And to some extent I think I have achieved some of these goals.

LQ: Was there something completely unexpected when you served in ICA top leadership?

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PA: I can't think of much that qualifies as the unexpected because it's a job you ease into: you see, observe, and you know. Chairing the executive committee being President, you have two years of observation through such collective leadership.

If there was anything unexpected, it would be during the 2017 ICA in San Diego. This was a few months after Trump was elected. He then put out those statements about migration and about banning travelers from certain countries. Being an Asian, you could be a little calm about how to respond because we could observe similar anti-immigration policies in many places in the past. You understand where this came from, the fragmentation and division policies that were not new.

It was not just the policies though, but the general atmosphere that emerged around that time. There were multiple issues ICA had to tackle, which I didn't expect, and there were moments when I was not sure what to do. But I felt that being a foreigner actually was useful. If I were American, people would have first questioned my political stance. Are you Republican or Democrat? What's your view and why you take this position? It was so polarized. Being someone who's not American actually brought some advantage, some kind of cushion. People could say: well, okay, this guy is not American. He's Singaporean trying to help bring people together. He's from a small country. He's not a threat to anybody at all.

That was unexpected in a nice kind of way. A side note was that ICA was putting out a statement to help people cope with the situation. But this happened on Chinese New Year's Day. So I had to respond to emails throughout the Lunar New Year period.

LQ: What you just described was perhaps a continuation of Singapore's strategic positioning, which made it possible for Ma Ying-Jeou to meet Xi Jinping for the first time in November 2015. The neutrality of Singapore allows it to function almost like the Switzerland of Asia. It's great ICA can benefit from this unique Singaporean advantage. Reflecting on these ICA experiences, what do you think remains to be done to make ICA even greater as a professional association?

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PA: A lot remains to be done. ICA still hasn't reached into many parts of Asia. Many Indian colleagues still don't know it. When we organized an AMIC (Asian Media Information and Communication Centre) conference in India, a young lecturer told me to my shock that the conference fees plus transport and hotel had cost her one-month salary. She paid for it herself. One-month salary. I felt so terrible about it. But she felt she wanted to come to learn. So there's a real hunger in India. Knowledge there is a very big deal.

Probably ICA can do better on this front, for instance, raising more funds that would allow colleagues from developing countries to come to our events. Of course, my view is that research is good not just for individuals but also for countries as well. That's where I come from as an Asian. In recent years, ICA has done a lot in Asia, and increasingly so in Africa, although we still need to do more in Latin America.

There is room for improvement in other areas such as open access journals, although our current model depends on the revenue from selling ICA journals. That's another thing to look at. The annual conferences right now are doing well. We are making money in a healthy way, but the question is how we use that money, and to what extent we could use it to adjust the fees. It's not a simple issue though because it seems that people are prepared to pay, at least for now.

In the longer term, we expect our journals to become open access and the publication revenues will drop. What to do next? On the one hand, ICA needs financial stability. On the other hand, when colleagues in Africa can access our journals, citations would go up. Here in Prague, I've met some Africans who told me they benefited from open access. We have a project at Nanyang in collaboration with the Canadian IDRC to provide research capacity training to researchers who are mostly from the developing world. They get access to my university and thereby access to journals, based on which they have produced some fantastic research. One of them just won an ICA divisional award. In this IDRC project, we also have mentorship programs, which have succeeded in training new generations of researchers.

There's still a lot to be done. But first we need to get the word out there. Another area that you should really looking at is how to have

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bigger impact for our research. It's easier said than done. How do we let the world know we have done impactful work? Is it influencing policy or informing people? How can we make improvement in this regard, measured not only by the number of publications or citations, but also real impact beyond the academy?

LQ: What about ICA affiliated journals, such as *Communication and Society*? Now we have Chinese, German, and French journals affiliated with ICA. How do you see this development? Which other languages of scholarly publication do you think we should prioritize to bring into ICA?

PA: This is definitely a very positive development. As for other languages, I would say Arabic and Hindi. For different reasons, the Middle East and India have special importance. In India, for example, the Hindi newspapers sell in the millions. So I think there is room to include more diverse languages, although these journals have to reach a certain level of quality. We also need to assess the impact of the journals, although now it's still very early, and we need to see how it develops in the future.

LQ: What suggestions do you have for Chinese communication researchers, in various Chinese societies, not just China, Hong Kong, Taiwan or Macao, but also globally? How can we do better research, have more social impact, and become more effective in academic community building through ICA and similar professional associations?

PA: I'd suggest that we should aim to solve global problems, which doesn't have to be something big. It could be an equation, the answer to which is something that everybody is looking for. That's a global problem. The answer can be very small, but if everybody sees it and uses it, you have solved a global problem. You need to know, what are the questions people are asking? For ICA, theoretical issues are more important. We should focus on theory rather than just data collection or observations. We in Asia have to adapt our thinking. After data collection, we must bring it back to theory, which you would see a lot in ICA, where many professors are very, very good at using theories.

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As for community building, it can be local or global. Part of ICA is the “A”, meaning associations. Our American colleagues are really good at forming and leading professional associations. In many parts of Asia, we are not as good. Although Americans are supposed to be individualistic and Asians are supposed to be collectivistic, we actually often see the opposite. Sometimes I feel our Asian colleagues are perhaps overly competitive. We don’t work that well with each other, which I see all the time. Both in China and India, we don’t collaborate enough. Collaboration is not a zero-sum game. Everybody wins if you know how to collaborate and create a win-win situation. The spirit of collaboration is extremely important.

In this vein, we also need to give back to community. A lot of what we do in the universities involves little money, but it builds the community, which is part of our academic citizenship. For example, you should help ICA or other professional bodies to review paper submissions. It’s not only good for your individual academic growth. It contributes to the entire research community, too.

LQ & YZ: Thank you very much!

Selected Works by Ang Peng Hwa

Please refer to the end of the Chinese version of the dialogue for Ang Peng Hwa’s selected works.