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1. REACH-ing Out Newsletter Updates

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ICA China hosts collaborative event with ICA France

Report by Mengxiao Zhu

On November 27th, 2024, the 99th USTC Communication Forum lecture series session was held at the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC). This event featured Dr. **Zhao Alexandre Huang**, Associate Professor in the Department of Information and Communication Sciences at Université Gustave Eiffel and representative of the International Communication Association (ICA) France Chapter. The event was hosted by the Department of Scientific and Technological Communication at USTC and supported by the ICA China Chapter.

Professor Jianxun Chu, Party Secretary of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Professor Mengxiao Zhu, the founding chair of the ICA China Chapter, were in attendance.



Dr. Huang delivered an insightful lecture titled "Exploring Digital Panda Diplomacy: How the Appeal of a Nation's Brand is Constructed?" In his talk, he highlighted that public diplomacy seeks to influence foreign public opinion and shape national identity. In China, public diplomacy is government-led, with external publicity a vital approach. In the era of social media, Chinese media are constantly looking for ways to soften China's national image as a rising global power. A prime example is the combination of traditional panda diplomacy, social media, and strategic expression through platforms like X. Dr. Huang's research revealed that online panda engagement is highly politicized within China's public diplomacy framework. Following the lecture, participating teachers and students actively engaged with Dr. Huang on topics such as how love for pandas might foster affection for China and the risks of the increasing commercialization of pandas as political symbols. Professor Mengxiao Zhu, on behalf of the Department of Scientific and Technological Communication and the ICA China Chapter, presented Dr. Huang with a commemorative plaque in appreciation for his contribution.

ICA China Chapter launches Global Cultural Exchange Survey

Report by Di Zheng

A major global survey initiative is set to launch in May 2025, spearheaded by the ICA China Chapter in partnership with Renmin University's Global Opinion Research Center and the University of Science and Technology of China's Communication and Data Science Lab. This comprehensive study will investigate diversity, cultural conflicts, and cross-cultural exchanges. In an innovative approach to research design, two sections of the survey questionnaire are open for competitive proposals from ICA chapter members worldwide. **Researchers affiliated with ICA Chapters are encouraged to submit proposals addressing specific research questions aligned with the study's focus on cultural dynamics.** Successfully selected proposals will be integrated into the final survey instrument. For further information, contact ICA China Chapter leader Di Zheng: zhangdi204@gmail.com.

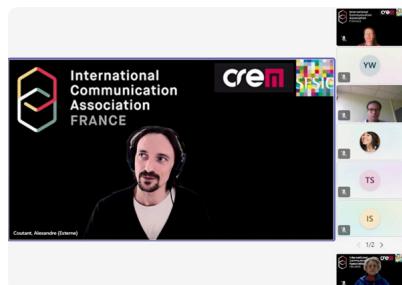
ICA France Hosts Webinar on Beyond Borders: Insights on the Expatriation of French Academia

Report by Angeliki Monnier

On January 17th, 2025, ICA France held its 3rd webinar on the expatriation of French scholars.

The expatriation of French academics reflects the broader context of increasing global academic mobility, driven by various factors such as personal and professional development, international collaborations, and the search for better working conditions.

This webinar explored these issues through the testimonies of two French scholars who have chosen to expatriate: Alexandre Coutant, professor in the Department of Social and Public Communication at the University of Québec in Montreal (UQAM) in Canada, and Sandrine Roginsky, professor at the School of Communication at UCLouvain in Belgium.



Their stories provided insights into the motivations behind their decisions, the challenges they faced during the integration process abroad, and the opportunities and constraints that expatriation offers, both academically and personally. These testimonials provided valuable perspectives on the realities of academic expatriation and its implications for research and teaching. For this 3rd ICA France webinar, 47 participants registered. Some of them attended in person, while others asked for the recorded session, which is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmZ3e2H11IU>

To activate the automated translation of the subtitles: Go to Settings at the lower part of the video, "activate subtitles," select subtitles' language "French", then select "automatically translate", select target language "English"

ICA France's next event is scheduled for March 17th, 2025, in Metz, France (on site), on the theme "Violence and Resilience in Times of Hardship: Perspectives for Communication Research". Main keynote speakers: **Stacey Connaughton**, Purdue U, Purdue Policy Research Institute, USA/ICA, and **Ekaete George**, U of Port Harcourt, Nigeria/ICA Nigeria. For any questions, contact: angeliki.monnier@univ-lorraine.fr

ICA Nigeria Hosts Webinar Maxwell McCombs: A Tribute to the Legacy of Agenda-Setting Theory

Report by Ekaete George

The International Communication Association (ICA) Nigeria Chapter 8th Quarterly Seminar Series (QSS) was held in collaboration with Bingham University, Nigeria, on Thursday, 19 December 2024 at 3-5 pm WAT. The 8th QSS-themed **Maxwell McCombs: A Tribute to the Legacy of Agenda-Setting Theory** celebrated his foundational work on agenda-setting theory and his contributions to advancing communication studies. The Seminar theme covered the following subthemes: (i) Agenda setting: A legacy, (ii) Agenda-Setting in contemporary contexts: digital platforms and AI, (iii) Agenda-Setting applications to global communication and social change for Climate Justice, Social Justice, and Public health, and (iv) Agenda-Setting: existing challenges, emerging areas, and future research. The QSS was facilitated by **Ekaete George** (Chair of ICA Nigeria).

Dr. **Comfort Bulus** (Department of Mass Communication, U of Jos), speaking on the subtheme Agenda-Setting in contemporary contexts: digital platforms and AI, explored how the agenda-setting theory has transformed in its application to media and society. During her presentation titled Directions for agenda-setting research, Dr. **Lei Guo** (School of Journalism, Fudan U) paid tribute to Maxwell McCombs, not just as a distinguished scholar but also as a great educator and a mentor who

introduced her to the world of agenda setting. Dr. Guo proposed the future directions of agenda-setting theory that involves a centrifugal trend, a centripetal trend, and a densifying trend. She recommends examining these three trends in relation to the network agenda-setting research. Dr. **Chris J. Vargo** (Information Systems, Leeds School of Business) presented Media agenda-setting as a thermometer for social order to examine agenda-setting research directions requiring more attention. He highlighted the concept of astroturfing agenda setting as a powerful tool that needs to be studied and their effects effectively measured. In his presentation, Weaving the Narrative: Role of agenda-setting theory in shaping public opinion and Influencing Society, Dr. **Muhammad Yousaf** (Centre for Media & Communication Studies, U of Gujarat) examined the evolution of media effects before and after agenda-setting. He explored how agenda-setting complements other communication theories and reinforces narratives that influence society. Dr. **Desmond Okocha** (Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Bingham U) made a presentation highlighting the legacy of Maxwell McCombs, his contributions to agenda-setting theory, and the application of agenda-setting in the context of Africa. As it moved from colonial governments to emerging governments, the African continent experienced the use of the media to promote the political ideologies of the political actors and controllers of the media. But emerging media are necessary areas for further research and investigation into the application of agenda setting in the African context.

ICA Indonesia partners to support the Global Communication Knowledge Conference

Report by Nia Sarinastiti

The ICA Indonesia Chapter contributed to the World Public Relations Forum (WPRF) organized by the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communications Management and hosted by the Indonesia Public Relations Professional Association (PERHUMAS). WPRF brings together practitioners, academics, and industry leaders worldwide. The 2024 World Public Relations Forum (WPRF) theme was 'Purposeful Influence for the Common Good.' The event was held in Bali from November 19-22, 2024. The ICA Indonesia Chapter was one of the academic partners that supported the "Global Communication Knowledge Conference." ICA Chapter Lead for Indonesia, **Dorien Kartikawangi**, acted as coordinator of all academic events and was also one of the judges for the Best Paper awards. ICA Indonesia Chapter Secretary, **Irwa Zarkasi** provided support as a breakout session moderator. ICA Indonesia Vice Secretary, **Nuning Indah** and Treasurer **Nia Sarinastiti** also joined the event to provide support during the session(s).



ICA India organizes two plenary panels on exploring global and national perspectives in communication and media studies

Report by BP Sanjay

On December 14-15, 2024, the ICA India Chapter partnered with the Department of Journalism at Berhampore University to commemorate its 50th anniversary. This collaboration featured two plenary sessions at the International Conference on "Media at Crossroads: Identity, Inclusion & Representation in the Digital Age." The first, "Global Perspective: A Comparative Analysis of Journalism, Media Education and Research," featured 10 scholars from Australia, Canada, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nepal, Oman, Thailand, and the USA. The second plenary session, "National and Regional Perspectives on Journalism and Mass Communication Education in India," featured five scholars from universities in India. Both panels generated an exchange of ideas and knowledge, underscoring the ICA India Chapter's commitment to play a pivotal role in organizing academic initiatives, reinforcing its commitment to advancing the discipline - globally and regionally. Both panels were moderated by ICA India Chapter leader Professor B. P. Sanjay from Manipal University.





ICA Kenya Chapter Kicks off #ICA75 Regional Hub Conference

Report by Wangeci Kanyeki

On Friday, 17th January 2025, in Nairobi, Kenya, the ICA Kenya Chapter held its first Regional Hub Conference planning meeting for the #ICA75 Annual Conference. The Local Organising Committee (LOC) members are drawn from ICA Kenya Chapter members and neighboring Universities in Nairobi that offer communication programs. The meeting, chaired by the ICA Kenya Chapter chairperson, Sr. Prof. A. L. Lando, resolved to adopt the general annual theme: Disrupting and Consolidating Communication Research. The Call for Papers for the three-day conference will run from Thu 12th – Sat 14th June 2025, released on 24th January 2025. In addition to expanding the #ICA75 Annual conference sub-themes to reflect the local context, the Nairobi Hub will have a special session for postgraduate students from various Universities to reflect on scholarship. Emerging scholars from multiple disciplines will also have a session. The Committee also resolved to continue the "Live from Nairobi Hub" tradition, which links the Nairobi Hub with the ICA conference in Denver, including addresses from the ICA leadership, REACH Leadership, and a Hub-to-Hub panel collaboration with Nigeria, among other planned collaborations.

Related Content

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Added 05-03-2024

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