

## AHSN – September 2012 e-Newsletter

AHSN WEB-SITE: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/humourstudies>

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### 19TH AHSN COLLOQUIUM, UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE CITY CAMPUS, 7-9 FEBRUARY 2012 -- UPDATE

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At the close of the Call for Proposals, the Co-Convenors for the 19th Colloquium reported nearly matching the previous record of 40 proposals to present for the 2012 Colloquium at the ANU. Sincere appreciation to all who took the time and trouble to submit and apologies for any teething troubles you experienced with the new on-line submission site. It is admittedly not the easiest of systems! While results of some reviews are not yet finalized, clearly this is going to be an excellent meeting once again.

Michael Ewans and Michael Meaney have created a google map for the Newcastle Colloquium which, courtesy of Will Noonan (our webmaster now Dijon-based), is now embedded in the AHSN website on the Events>Information page.

For readers' convenience, essential information about travel follows in the next item and information about equipment for presenters in the following one.

*Please do NOT FORGET TO REGISTER in order to attend the Colloquium, whether you are a presenter or a delegate. Registration form is available at the AHSN website on the Events>Registration page.*

Looking forward to seeing everyone in lively downtown Newcastle next February and best wishes from me as I take off for September-November at the University of Bologna!

Jessica

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### AHSN XIX NEWCASTLE 7-9 FEBRUARY 2012: TRANSPORT TO NEWCASTLE

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*By rail:* Take through train from Sydney to Newcastle, and alight at Civic Station. If coming from Brisbane or other points north, alight from your Countrylink service at Broadmeadow and take a local electric train back in to Civic. The Quest apartments are less than ten minutes' walk west from Civic Station.

*By air:* Newcastle Airport, Williamtown, is 27k from the CBD. You will need to take a shuttle bus or a taxi (expensive) to your accommodation.

*By road from Sydney and points south;* take the F3 north from Wahroonga, exit to the Newcastle link road, follow it east into the city until it becomes King St and brings you to the area shown on the map.

*Reminder:* This Colloquium starts with the welcome to delegates and first keynote at 2 pm Thursday 7 February. If you can't get to the conference venue by then in one half-day from where you live, we respectfully suggest that you travel to Newcastle on Wednesday and book in to Quest for the Wednesday night as well, so you do not miss the opening half-day.

If you have any transport problems please contact Michael Ewans on 0434 902 350 or 02 4948 2747 who will help if he can.

Michael Ewans and Michael Meany  
*Colloquium Co-Convenors,*  
*AHSN XIX Newcastle 'Humour and Creativity'*

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## **AHSN XIX NEWCASTLE 7-9 FEBRUARY 201: EQUIPMENT INFORMATION AND ADVICE**

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The Newcastle conference differs from venues for the some recent Colloquia in that the two adjacent spaces for presentation of papers are both fully equipped lecture theatres. Facilities are listed below. If you need something not included, please email [Michael.Meany@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Michael.Meany@newcastle.edu.au) to discuss your needs.

EQUIPMENT for 'LECTURE THEATRE' (60 seats)  
AND for 'SEMINAR ROOM' (30 seats):

- \* Benchtop computer, internet access (+ Powerpoint display)
- \* Overhead projector
- \* DVD/VHS player
- \* High quality audio reproduction (ceiling loudspeakers)
- \* Visualizers (**please note!** Sheets of information may be displayed from paper documents, not acetate transparencies)
- \* Your own laptop can be plugged into the system (Michael Meany will be on hand before all sessions to assist)

While printing facilities (fee payable) are available on the ground floor of University House, we suggest you prepare and bring your own 40 copies of handouts for a plenary session (fewer for a parallel). The timetable to be posted later will show whether a paper is scheduled for plenary or parallel.

**NOTE: The whole second floor of University House (where the conference is being held) has wi-fi.**

Michael Ewans/Michael Meany

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## **SEMINAR ON THE CULTURE OF PLAY IN CHINA BY DR CHRISTOPHER G. REA, POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW, ANU, AT UNSW, SYDNEY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2012**

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Chris Rea of the Australian Centre on China in the World, ANU, and the Department of Asian Studies, The University of British Columbia was one of our 2012 Keynote Speakers at the ANU last February. He will give a seminar entitled: "Worlds of Play: The Fall of a Chinese Dynasty and the Rise of a Culture of Fun" at the University of New South Wales, Kensington Campus, on 14 September from 11-12, in Lecture Theatre, Matthews 102.

**Please contact Dr Debra Aarons, AHSN Review Panellist,  
for more information: [d.aarons@unsw.edu.au](mailto:d.aarons@unsw.edu.au)**

### **Abstract**

Play is not a term historians typically apply to dynastic collapse,

but it was a pervasive ethos in Chinese entertainment culture from the last years of the Qing empire through the early years of the Republic of China (ca. 1890s-1910s). This talk explores how youxi (play, game) became a dominant motif both in print media, which saw a fad for "playful" journals, and in urban popular culture, which in the 1910s saw the emergence of amusement "playgrounds" (youxi chang) from Shanghai to Singapore. In literature, play was expressed through parodic verse and essays, whimsical commentary, and fantastical novels that envisioned ideal futures for China. Parody also allowed prominent writers like Liang Qichao, Li Boyuan, and Zhou Shoujuan to apply their classical literacy to new forms of literacy—that is, to the concepts, buzzwords, and realities of the present day. Artists invented new forms of visual wordplay, such as "comical characters," while calligraphers resuscitated the palindrome poem as an antidote to modern utilitarianism. Popular culture became more playful, meanwhile, thanks to new visual technologies such as funhouse mirrors, trick photography, peep shows, and the cinema of attractions, as Chinese enthusiastically embraced novel looking technologies. In this talk, Christopher Rea opens up a new historical narrative for modern China, and argues that the ludic impulse has been an pervasive, if overlooked, element of Chinese modernity, from the fin-de-siècle moment up to the present.

#### **About the Speaker**

Christopher G. Rea (Ph.D., Columbia) is Assistant Professor of Modern Chinese Literature at the University of British Columbia. His research interests include the literary, print, and cinematic cultures of the Chinese-speaking world from the late nineteenth century to the present, with a particular focus on late Qing and Republican China. His recent research, editing, and translation projects include the book *Humans, Beasts, and Ghosts: Stories and Essays, by Qian Zhongshu* (Columbia, 2011), and special issues of the journals *China Heritage Quarterly* (June 2012), *Renditions* (Autumn, 2011), and *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* (Autumn, 2008). He has also published articles in Chinese and English on Chinese cinema, drama, poetry, and fiction. In 2012 he is in residence at the ANU as a Postdoctoral Fellow of the Australian Centre on China in the World, completing a book on the cultural history of laughter in modern China.

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#### **MEMBER NEWS: MAHMUD FARJAMI, DOCTORAL STUDENT, SAINS UNIVERSITI PENANG, REPORTS ON HIS WEBSITE FOR IRANIAN SATIRE -- iTANZ**

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<http://www.itanz.net/aboutus/>

iTanz is a professional website for Persian humor and satire. Persian (or Farsi) is the official language in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, and several million people around the world speak Persian. Launched in 2006 and a popular website for all Persians interested in humor, satire, irony, jokes and cartoon, as well as studies on these subjects (*tanz* = satire in Farsi).

Mahmud Farjami is founder and editor-in-chief of iTanz. He is an Iranian journalist, satirist, stand-up comedian and humor scholar. A group of Iranian and Afghan satirists, cartoonists and bloggers also publish their works on this website, honorarily.

iTanz is intended to be the best world source for achieving and studying Persian humor and satire, and thousands of humorous links, texts and

pictures, as well as studies about humor, have been published on the website since its launch. This content is categorized as:

*Political and social satire:* The main website content showing the basic policy of iTanz --liberation! Over ten writers have published their works on iTanz in this section since 2007.

*iTanz link dump:* The primary and first launched iTanz section: users find interesting humorous content on the web and publish the link with a short description on iTanz.

*Jokes:* Persian jokes and humorous short anecdotes are published in this section, as well as Persian translation of foreign ones. All are categorized by subject.

*Gallery:* Iranian and non-Iranian cartoons and caricatures, humorous pictures and photos of prominent satirists in different categories.

*Articles:* A reliable collection of the best articles and studies about humor, satire, cartoons, irony, and comedy. Most have been collected from online sources, edited and republished under the author's name (with mention of the original source).

*Suggestions:* iTanz authors introduce a humorous book or a comedy movie/theater that they have read/seen recently and propose comments to others.

*Multimedia:* Humorous clips, music and sounds, produced by iTanz.

*Humors:* A section for who are interested in humor, entertainment and fun. Yes, we are so cool!

*Quotes:* Humorous and satiric short quotations from celebrities like Mark Twain, George Bernard Shaw, Woody Allen and others are published as a lesson on a blackboard every day. Welcome to Academia!

*Editorial:* Editorials by the editor and other iTanz colleagues.

*Satirists:* An archive of biographies of the prominent satirists and cartoonists as well as young up-and-coming ones. A far more reliable source than Wikipedia!

*Links:* Addresses of hundreds weblogs and websites which publish humorous content can be found in this page, categorized and updated.

*Fan page on Facebook:* iTanz on Facebook has thousands of fans who use it and publish humorous content on it.