

Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University

NIAS – Nordic Institute of Asian Studies

12th Annual Nordic NIAS Council Conference

# Digital Asia: Cultural, Socio-Economic, and Political Transformations

Lund, 2-4 December 2019

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**PhD course**

Lund University 5-6 December 2019

**Call for conference papers**

Asia has the largest Internet population in the world in absolute numbers, and it is also at the forefront of digital developments in many fields, including governance, entertainment, and e-commerce. The region, however, encompasses a diverse digital landscape that reflects divergent histories, cultures, and socioeconomic and political realities. Proposals should focus on how information and communication technologies (ICTs) are used by, and affect, individuals and communities in their cultural, socioeconomic, and political lives.

We welcome participants from different disciplines within the humanities and social sciences, as well as from the field of area studies. We particularly encourage interdisciplinary approaches. Contributions are welcome that address topics in a particular Asian country, or engage in comparative research on several Asian countries and/or non-Asian countries.

Possible themes and topics include, but are not limited to:

Digital politics and activism; e-governance; civil society and mobilisation; digital diplomacy and international relations; digital economics; platform societies; surveillance and human rights; big data; digital youth cultures; digital media; digital visual cultures; digital religion; digital communities; migration and mobility in the digital age; digital archives; digital ethnography.

## **Conference organisation and format**

The conference runs from 2 to 4 December and will consist of keynotes, panels, and roundtables, while also reserving time for informal discussions and networking. We invite proposals for panels, roundtables, and individual papers on the topics above as well as any related topics. We also welcome suggestions for other formats. The conference offers good opportunities to meet people in the field, network, and informally exchange views and ideas.

The conference is followed by a two day PhD course (5-6 December, see separate announcement below). Participants in the PhD course are expected to also take part in the conference (with or without a paper presentation).

## Keynote Speakers

The following speakers will inspire our proceedings:

- [Larissa Hjorth](#), Distinguished Professor, ECP Director, Design and Creative Practice, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia
- [Pauline hope Cheong](#), Professor, Arizona State University, USA
- [Aim Sinpeng](#), Dr., Department of Government and International Relations, University of Sydney, Australia
- [Florian Schneider](#), Senior University Lecturer, Leiden University, The Netherlands

## Pre-organised roundtables

Participants who submit papers related to the topics of the pre-organised roundtables can also express interest in taking part in the roundtable. The roundtables will consist of 4-5 participants (including the chair) and will take the form of short presentations and discussions.

1. **Internet politics, populism and digital authoritarianism in Asia**, Chair Astrid Norén Nilsson  
Internet and social media have a transformative impact on politics in Asia, including on electoral politics, governance and social activism. Digital authoritarianism appears to be on the rise, and Internet and social media fuel populism by enabling new forms of political communication. At the same time, Internet can offer a space for contestation and dissent. Participants in this roundtable are invited to reflect on the role of Internet and social media in Asian politics today as well as on how this relationship is likely to develop.
2. **Big data and surveillance in Asia**, Chair Darcy Pan  
Debates on the use of big data are largely a trade-off between national security, development and civil liberties, with the former two taking precedence. A conspicuous example is China's engineering of the social credit system that rates citizens on a range of behaviours from their shopping habits to online speech. Singapore is to install surveillance cameras on over 100,000 lampposts that are said to improve people's lives. This roundtable invites participants to discuss emergent forms of data-driven governance and their (un)intended consequences in Asia.
3. **Digital financialisation in Asia**, Chair Nicholas Loubere  
Asia is at the forefront of the digital finance revolution. From the rapid expansion of digital lending in China, to the emergence of 'click farms' in Indonesia; from India's demonetisation to growing and popping cryptocurrency bubbles across the region—in Asia, the digitation of finance and the financialisation of the digital world have gone apace over the past decade. This roundtable will provide a forum to discuss the ways in which digital finance has transformed societies, economies, and politics in Asia from a variety of perspectives.

## **Participation**

Conference participation is open to scholars and doctoral candidates in the social sciences and humanities. We encourage contributions with an emphasis on interdisciplinary perspectives. In case you need to have a letter of invitation for visa purposes please contact the organisers early.

## **Practical information and accommodation**

There will be NO conference fee for paper presenters. The conference organisers will provide two lunches, coffee, and one conference dinner (according to the programme) for those who present papers. Participants are requested to book their own accommodation. There are discount rooms available at the conference venue [Elite Hotel Ideon](#), bookable before 1 October.

## **Deadlines**

Paper, panel, and roundtable abstracts should not exceed 300 words. For panel and roundtables a list of participants should also be submitted.

- **7 June 2019:** Deadline for submitting abstracts (maximum 300 words)
- **15 June 2019:** Acceptance of abstracts by the organising committee
- **15 August 2019:** Deadline for registration
- **1 October 2019:** Deadline for hotel booking at discount rate at Elite Hotel Ideon. Single room 1159 SEK, Double room 1364 SEK (all prices including VAT). Please make your booking with the hotel at <http://www.elite.se> and mention the Digital Asia conference.

Please register via the conference website where all practical information about the conference will be available.

Abstracts should be submitted via e-mail to [Katrine.herold@nias.ku.dk](mailto:Katrine.herold@nias.ku.dk)

**[www.digitalasia2019.com](http://www.digitalasia2019.com)**

## **Organizing committee:**

- Stefan Brehm, Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- Nicholas Loubere, Associate Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- Astrid Norén Nilsson, Associate Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- Paul O'Shea, Associate Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- Darcy Pan, Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- Barbara Schulte, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Lund University
- Marina Svensson, Professor and Director, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- Katrine Herold, Project Coordinator, NIAS – Nordic Institute of Asian Studies
- Karin Zackari, Administrator, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University

**For further information,** please contact

- Katrine Herold, Project Coordinator, NIAS, for general issues related to the NIAS annual conferences, at [Katrine.herold@nias.ku.dk](mailto:Katrine.herold@nias.ku.dk)
- Marina Svensson, Professor and Director, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, for issues related to the academic content of the conference and the PhD workshop, at [marina.svensson@ace.lu.se](mailto:marina.svensson@ace.lu.se)
- Karin Zackari, Administrator, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, for practical information about Lund, accommodation, and visa issues etc., at [Karin.zackari@ace.lu.se](mailto:Karin.zackari@ace.lu.se)

## PhD Course Digital Asia

The conference will be combined with a PhD course where doctoral candidates will present and discuss their research projects with senior researchers as well as with fellow doctoral candidates. This PhD course will focus on theories and methodology when working with and on digital developments. Taking the questions, problems, dilemmas, and decisions of the individual research project as the point of departure, the focus will be on how to work with different sources, how to do fieldwork, how to integrate theory, and how to organise a thesis.

The course can be taken as a 7.5 ECTS credit course (to be approved by the individual student's home university/institution). To receive the credits, doctoral students must attend the conference on December 2-4, the PhD course on December 5-6, submit and present a paper (10-12 pages) drawing on the course readings, and give comments on a fellow PhD student's paper.

Doctoral candidates are also encouraged to present a paper at the main conference. This paper may not be similar to the methodology paper prepared for the PhD course. Students wishing to present a paper at the conference and to attend the PhD course must submit two abstracts.

### Commentators for the PhD Course

- **Pauline hope Cheong**, Professor, Arizona State University, USA
- **Larissa Hjorth**, Distinguished Professor, ECP Director, Design and Creative Practice, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia
- **Aim Sinpeng**, Dr., Department of Government and International Relations, University of Sydney, Australia
- **Stefan Brehm**, Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- **Nicholas Loubere**, Associate Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- **Astrid Norén Nilsson**, Associate Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University
- **Barbara Schulte**, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Lund University
- **Marina Svensson**, Professor and Director, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University

### **Accommodation PhD Course**

There is no fee for the PhD course. For accepted students, the conference organizers will book and pay for accommodation (four nights from 2 to 6 December), four lunches, and one conference dinner (according to the programme).

### **PhD course – Guidelines and reading list**

The course will focus on the processes, practices, procedures, and theories involved when studying digital developments and practices in Asia. Methodology is understood to involve all the considerations when choosing the research question(s), the theories, and actual methods that will be used to address the question, as well as the challenges you encounter in the process of gathering and processing data. The first part of the course consists of your participation in the lectures and sessions that form the Digital Asia conference. The second part of the course will consist of your individual written work, oral presentations, and feedback from and discussion with teachers and course participants. Further information, instructions, and reading list will follow upon acceptance.

### **Deadlines**

To be accepted for the PhD course you need to submit an abstract (should not exceed 300 words) outlining your PhD topic as well as a CV that also should include information about your discipline/area and which year you are in the PhD programme.

- **7 June 2019:** Deadline for submitting abstract (maximum 300 words) and CV
- **15 June 2019:** Acceptance by organising committee
- **15 August:** Deadline for registration
- **1 October:** Deadline for submitting PhD paper, and confirming participation and hotel booking (booking for PhD students is done by conference organisers).

Please note that any cancellation of your participation needs to be done by 1 November otherwise you will have to pay for the hotel room yourself (later cancellation due to your own or close family member's acute medical emergency is accepted with submitted doctor's verification).

### **Your presentations**

You are expected to prepare and present a 10-12 page text about your research in which you draw on and relate to parts of the course readings.

What you write will of course depend on where you are in the research process:

- If you are at the very beginning of defining your study you may choose to write about your considerations regarding the formulation of a researchable question. You might do this by drawing on the course texts as well as by drawing inspiration from a selection of monographs while reflecting on the authors' problem formulation, theories, and methods used, and knowledge production.
- For those who have come a bit further in the research and whose project is well under way, you can present your research proposal as well as further reflections on methodology, use of theory, etc. related to the course texts.

Your text should not present and discuss your research findings in the format of a traditional academic paper or article. The focus should be on reflection and discussion of methodological issues. The point is to discuss aspects of your project that are difficult, or that you are struggling with and where you can benefit from a discussion.

### **Course readings:**

TBA

[www.digitalasia2019.com](http://www.digitalasia2019.com)

**For further information**, please contact

- Marina Svensson, Professor and Director, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, for issues related to the academic content of the conference and the PhD workshop, at [marina.svensson@ace.lu.se](mailto:marina.svensson@ace.lu.se)
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