

IACS Workshop

‘Worlding the Digital in Inter-Asia’

Introduction

The digital is received as automatically global, seamless, connected, and connecting. Its mere presence signals a networked existence where global ideas of community and social ordering are rehearsed. As part of its developmental rhetoric, Asia has long staged itself as the application site of the digital, or the location for the cheap labour that performs the tediousness of its production. Much of the thrust of cultural studies and critical thought has either regarded the digital as vastly conceptual, removed from its materiality, or as merely an application, concentrating on the plethora of apps, platforms, and devices that it manifests itself through. In Asia, the attempt has been to justify the region as truly owning the digital moment or to endlessly decode the many deployments of the digital. Enough attention is not paid to the histories of the digital, its materiality, the conditions of embodiment, the affective economies and the political reorientation that it brings to the fore. Thus, intersections of the digital often remain cursory, and the capacity to open it up to larger discourses of cultural and political deliberation often remains underdeveloped.

Scope:

We propose that this fetishisation of the digital (exemplified both by those who see it as a single-point agenda and by those who show a persistent resistance to it), is present in our current cultural studies landscape. In this workshop, we specifically want to focus on the position, location, and temporality of the digital landscape as it interacts with emerging (digital) cultural studies in Asia.

We invite up to 30 participants to engage in a three-step process to look at the call of ‘Worlding the Digital’ in order to create collaborative and collective approaches, frameworks, and networks of working together.

Process:

Step One: Through short presentations, two workshop coordinators will initiate a discussion through which we’ll map the larger landscape of the digital- its materiality, everyday practice, and possibilities as a critical tool for new inquiries.

Step Two: Four “panic objects” are introduced into the situation by four group leaders. Each object embodies a condition of panic that the digital introduces into practice – from classroom activities (like building a MOOC) to larger political movements and cultural projects. The idea is to understand that the presence of the digital in different forms of practice does not allow for an easy reconciliation.

Step Three: The participants divide voluntarily around the group leaders and work together to create a curriculum that helps to address and express anxieties from their own practice and locatedness.

The curriculum is a way of both reframing and making the questions legible to an Inter-Asia audience. It is not just supposed to be a syllabus and a reading list, but a proposition that explains the contexts and the futures of these panic objects. We want to think of curriculum building as a possibility of working together on these topics in the future, through connected classrooms and joint research.

At the end of their group work, each team will present the key aspects of what they develop, to which appointed discussants will respond.

We're looking to build a group of scholars committed to different sites of teaching and research, and interested in exploring together the futures of digital Inter-Asia cultural studies. The workshop on 'Worlding the Digital in Inter-Asia' is an initial effort in this direction.

Prior preparation:

We expect and strongly encourage participants to come with thoughts on the digital in their own classrooms and from their intellectual-political contexts.

To register for this workshop, please click the link below or scan the QR code.

[Register](#)



<https://toto42.typeform.com/to/CFkfDi>

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