The Social and Political Implications of New Media in Asia

New technologies and modes of communication; satellites, smart phones, the internet, social media, virtual spaces, etc., are radically challenging long-standing characterizations of Asian societies. The new media are generating new economic processes (banking, call centers, back-room accounting, the design and nearly instantaneous production and distribution of fashions, appliances, auto parts, and pharmaceuticals, etc.). They are likewise generating new forms of popular culture as well as startling innovations in older media such as film and animation, Mumbai and Korean cinema, and Japanese Manga. At the same time that they are creating new forms and possibilities for domestic and international migration, previously unthinkable international connections and engagements, and political and religious mobilizations, they are also creating new capacities for surveillance, intellectual piracy and warfare, both within Asia, and far beyond it. Clearly, the effects are not uniform, and vary across countries, institutions, generations, classes and geography, and as rapid technological change has always done, raise a multitude of questions regarding social, political and cultural change.

The workshop is intended for doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences who are proposing or in the early stages of conducting dissertation research on the conceptualizations, theories, and the social, political and cultural consequences of the New Media within and across Asia.

The workshop will be limited to 12 students, ideally from a broad array of disciplines and working on a wide variety of materials and in various regions of Asia. It also will include a small multidisciplinary and multi-area faculty with similar interests.

The workshop is scheduled for the days immediately preceding the 2016 AAS annual conference in Seattle. It will begin with dinner on the evening of Monday, March 28, continue for the next two and one-half days of intense discussion, and close with lunch on Thursday, March 31.

The AAS will be able to provide limited financial support for participants including three night’s accommodations, meals and partial “need-based” travel funds. Students are encouraged to approach their home institutions for additional support. It is hoped that participants also will attend the AAS annual conference immediately following the workshop.

Applicants need not have advanced to candidacy but must have at least drafted a dissertation research proposal. Applications are also welcome from doctoral students in the early phases of writing their dissertations. Applications consist of two items only:

1) a current Curriculum Vitae, and

2) the dissertation proposal, or if the research and writing is well under way, a statement of the specific issues being addressed, the intellectual approach, and the materials being studied. Neither the proposal nor statement should exceed 10 double-spaced pages in length using standard-sized fonts. Application materials should be sent as email attachments to Michael Paschal (mpaschal@asian-studies.org) no later than January 8, 2016. Please include “Dissertation Workshop Application” in the email subject box.

Workshop participants will be selected on the basis of the submitted projects, the potential for useful exchanges among them, and a concern to include a wide range of disciplinary perspectives, intellectual traditions, and regions of Asia. Applicants will be informed whether or not they have been selected for the workshop later in January.

For further information about the workshop, or eligibility, please contact Michael Paschal <mpaschal@asian-studies.org> or David Szanton <Szanton@berkeley.edu>. Faculty having related research interests who would be interested in serving as mentors for the workshop also should contact David Szanton for details. Modest supplemental funding will be available to mentors to help offset related costs.