

Organizers: **Cho, Younghan**, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea
Kim, Nakho, University of Wisconsin-Madison, United States
Chair: **Liu, Shih Diing**, University of Macau, Macau
Discussant: **Hjorth, Larrisa**, RMIT Univeristy, Australia

Asia 2.0: Blogs as Public Media – Blogs as Public Media

This panel looks into theoretical and practical implications of Internet-based communication activities such as blogging for building a robust democracy.

From anonymous social protest organizers in Seoul and youth vote activists in Tokyo to crowd-journalists in Shezuan, uses of blogs often imply that blogging is more than a tool for personal activity or social connection. Rather, blogging might function as a public catalyst in the online discourse ecology which often elicits wide circulation of information as well as various responses in turn.

This panel aims at illuminating diverse cases in which people have utilized blogs for spreading public news, sharing their opinions, building social networks, and mobilizing those networks for civic action, specifically focused on Asian contexts including political and economical conditions, media history and cultural values. We intend to show how blogging constitutes a new public sphere by taking the roles of unofficial journalistic practice, alternative media, social bonds, and democratic movements in their unique social and cultural contexts. To encapsulate such activities of blogging, this panel suggests the idea of “blogs as public media.”

This panel includes topics such as the discussion on the function, organization and future potential of “Social Network Service” run by Japanese local newspaper; the discussion on wife’s usage of blogging as a way of negotiating their social roles; the examination on the narrative of mythicizing an anonymous Internet pundit; and the procedures of how an informal community got involved with a public protest.