

## **Computer Networks Histories**

### **Local, national and transnational perspectives**

14-15 December 2017 Lugano, Switzerland

#### **Organizers**

Association Histoire & Informatique Suisse – Bern

<http://blog.ahc-ch.ch/>

IMeG Institute of Media and Journalism, Università della Svizzera italiana – Lugano

<http://www.imeg.com.usi.ch/>

#### **Aims and scope**

Recently several works in the fields of Internet Studies, Science and Technology Studies and Media Studies have stressed the importance of early local, national and transnational computer networks histories for a deeper understanding of technological and social change in contemporary societies.

This 2-days conference has a triple aim. First, gathering scholars and researchers from a variety of disciplines working on theoretical and empirical analysis of computer networks histories. Second, providing a wide perspective on these histories, including case studies from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania and including international organizations dealing with the control and management of networks: this interdisciplinary and international debate could be useful to compare worldwide experiences and to provide new frames on this topic. Third, the conference aims to develop new frameworks and a space of discussion on the historical role of computer networks, representing the starting point of an international community of scholars.

Potential topics may include, but are in no way limited to, the following:

- The origins and development of computer networks under a local, national, international or transnational perspective;
- Political, economic and cultural representations of computer networks in Western or/and Eastern cultures;
- Comparative analysis of early and late networks;
- Physical infrastructures and materiality of computer networks;
- The political economy of national digital infrastructures;
- Histories of the digitalization of analogic networks;
- The history of failed and forgotten computer networks projects;
- The influence of early computer networks on the development of the Internet and of the World Wide Web;
- The cultural and social history of computer networks communities (e.g. communitarian networks, academic networks, professional networks, civic networks).

All the authors are invited to send an abstract of a max 500 words and a short bio by February 28, 2017 to [nethistories@gmail.com](mailto:nethistories@gmail.com). All invited speakers interested in publish their papers in the journal revue *Histoire et Informatique* are asked to send a paper of max 5000 words by October 30 2017.

## **Conference venue**

The 2-days conference will take place in Lugano, Switzerland, hosted by the Faculty of Communication Sciences of USI - Università della Svizzera italiana (<http://www.usi.ch/>). The organizing committee comes from a collaboration between the Institute of Media and Journalism (IMeG) of USI and the Association Histoire & Informatique Suisse of Bern.

## **Travel grants**

A limited number of travel grants may be available for participants without access to other financial resources. To request travel funding, please add to your proposal the motivation of your request and an estimate of the needed budget.

## **Deadlines**

- 28 February 2017 Deadline for abstract submission
- 31 March 2017 Notification of acceptance
- 31 October 2017 Short papers (max 5000 words) to be delivered
- 14-15 December 2017 2-days conference

## **Keynote speakers**

**Hu Yong** is a professor at Peking University's School of Journalism and Communication, and a well-known new media critic and Chinese Internet pioneer.

Hu Yong is a founding director for Communication Association of China (CAC) and China New Media Communication Association (CNMCA). His publications include *Internet: The King Who Rules*, the first book introducing the Internet to Chinese readers, and *The Rising Cacophony: Personal Expression and Public Discussion in the Internet Age*, documenting major transformations in the Chinese cyberspace.

<http://sjc.pku.edu.cn/English.aspx>

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**Benjamin Peters** is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Tulsa and affiliated fellow at the Information Society Project at Yale Law School. His research focuses on the cultural history and social theory of digital media, with emphases on the former Soviet Union and the West.

Professor Peters has recently published two books: *Digital Keywords: A Vocabulary of Information Society & Culture* (Princeton University Press) and *How Not to Network a Nation: The Uneasy History of the Soviet Internet* (MIT Press) in which he offers an account of the Soviet Union's failed attempts to construct their own national computer networks for civilians during the height of the Cold War tech race.

<https://petersbenjamin.wordpress.com/>

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