Call for Papers: Eurasian Information Age

Conference

October 16th-17th, 2026
Yale University

Perennially understudied, Eurasia – as both a geographical and conceptual constellation – opens up a novel and fertile space for scholarly contributions. This call for papers invites submissions that engage with the region's alternative media, information, and communications histories, bridging past and future frameworks, methodologies and forms.

Before the formation of the Relcom network catapulted the socialist sphere into the Digital Age in 1990, the Tashkent Cybernetic Institute in Uzbekistan served as one of the primary hubs of technoscientific research in the region. From Bulgaria's unique early computing culture and electronic trade with India in the 1970s, to the ghostly half-life of Soviet ternary computing in the Eastern Bloc, we invite research that reflects on, challenges, and subverts dominant paradigms of the Socialist Information Age. The way technoscientific discourses and technologies were received in the Soviet periphery, Central Asia, and the Far East transformed their content in a mutually constitutive encounter. By prioritizing scholarship that explores the outer bounds of what the cybernetic revolution meant for Eurasia and its cultural production of the time, we hope to unearth a range of distinctly alternative aesthetic and technological possibilities that emerged in the region in the latter half of the 20th century, as well as the foreclosed futurities that those possibilities implied. While the paradigm of alternative modernity remains, in our view, too limiting, we ultimately believe that other ways of *relating to* and *being with* technology afford us a valuable counterpoint to our own algorithmically scripted epoch, where the future increasingly appears predetermined and *fait accompli.*
Potential topics include:

- The advent of the Russian internet in Siberia
- Cybernetics in Central Asia
- Early precursors of digital art
- Computer aesthetics (writ broadly)
- Transnational intellectual exchange between Central Asia, China, and other East-Asian nation-states
- Chinese and Soviet experiments with AI
- Central Asian Science Fiction
- Sino-Soviet technological transfer
- Algorithms from al-Khwarizmi to Present
- Akademgorodki of the Far East
- Eurasian ecologies (writ broadly)
- Eurasian Information Age aesthetics
- The transnational development of the Soviet computer

Provisional conference dates:
Friday, October 16th, 2026 - Saturday, October 17, 2026

Send abstracts to eurasianinformationage@gmail.com by **Sunday, March 8, 2026**, 11:59PM Eastern

Queries may be directed to Anna Tropnikova and Sasha Karsavina