

JRFM 2021, 7/2 CALL FOR PAPERS

Media, Power, Religion

Reconfigurations in Postcolonial Societies

Media have always been contested spaces which express and shape people's lives and realities. They contribute to forming structures of oppression and of resistance, can facilitate social change, create alternative realities, or provide a venue to imagine different forms of living together. Media, the spaces they create and the spaces we create through them, are part and parcel of power dynamics in societies shaped by competing interests.

Today it is easier than ever to access media productions from a wide range of cultural contexts and tune into the digital lives of a vast part of humankind. What remains often hidden is that the media we prod-use and the voices we decide to listen to shape our horizon, our perception of the world, and of the people we encounter. Media, their uses and users, have played a major role in maintaining colonial power imbalances and they continue to be dominated by the west in postcolonial times. Whereas certain media forms and practices impose a western perspective (in terms of cultural and linguistic values, political domination, economic relationships ec.) on postcoloniality, other media forms, and different ways of using them, provide spaces for creating and expressing postcolonial subjectivity. In the past as in the present, perceptions of 'religion', what it is or does (symbols, practices, resources for participation etc.), have provided key resources for these dynamics.

Thus in this issue of **JRFM**, we want to explore the reconfigurations of media, power and religion in postcolonial societies. We are interested in analyses of the implication of media (broadly understood) in social and political configurations, especially regarding the relationships of power, 'religion' and cultural dynamics in postcoloniality and/or drawing on indigenous resources (Africa, South America, South and South-East Asia, indigenous communities), in present or past contexts. We invite analyses of how individuals, communities, social institutions, or political actors use or have used media to support or subvert existing social structures and structures of power drawing on religious resources, motifs or concepts. Giv-

en this focus on postcoloniality, we encourage a broad understanding of ‘religion’ as emerging from the cultural context under investigation and appropriate for the questions asked.

Questions may include, but are not limited to:

- How are media used to foster resistance, but also structures of oppression? What role do religious dimensions play in such media discourses?
- How do media producers draw on religious dimensions to promote socio-political agendas? Can continuities be observed between colonial and postcolonial times?
- How can media be a space to imagine and realize socio-religious ideals such as a peaceful society?
- How are traditional or indigenous resources of critique or resistance expressed in contemporary media engagement with socio-cultural issues?
- How does the entanglement of media and religion create powerful structures of affect in collectives?
- What theoretical or methodological questions emerge in the study of media and ‘religion’ in postcoloniality? In how far are concepts and theories developed in this field in a primarily western context applicable or change when focusing on diverse cultural contexts?

We are interested in scholarly discussions or scholarly/practitioner co-produced case studies from diverse cultural contexts, and we ask that authors keep a diverse cultural audience in mind in their discussions. In addition to the traditional essay, we also encourage the submissions using alternative media formats (e.g. photo essay or articles that use video/audio recordings).

The issue also includes an open section for articles on other topics linked to the profile of **JRFM**. The deadline for all submissions is 28 February 2021. Contributions of 6,000–8,000 words (including notes) should be submitted for double-blind peer review through the journal homepage www.jrfm.eu. We kindly ask authors to register and consider the instructions for submitting contributions, especially the stylesheet. Publication is scheduled for November 2021. For questions regarding this call for papers or the submission and publication process, please contact the editors of the issue, Philippe Bornet (philippe.bornet@unil.ch), Stefanie Knauss (stefanie.knauss@gmail.com), and Alexander D. Ornella (alexander@ornella.info).