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Global Modernity and Media in the Asia-Pacific: China and Australia

This special issue will feature theoretical and empirical perspectives on how communication trends implicated in, and impacted by, characteristics of contemporary global modernity can be situated in a regional and comparative context. ‘Global modernity’ is neither a singular phenomenon, nor one that merely has discrete national variants. Instead, by placing contemporary trends in a regional context, this issue enables a perspective on how ‘multiple modernities’ both co-exist and can be understood as increasingly connected in complex ways. Internationally, work that has sought to explore social change as a product of transformations in modernity has centred on a number of significant phenomena that have intensified with the rapid diffusion of new media. These include the interplay of global connectivity and local cultures, histories and governance; the rise of communications and ‘soft power’ as an increasingly important aspect of sociopolitical relations; linked and mutually shaping processes of privatization and individualization that implicate social as well as economic life; diasporic population movements within and across national borders, linked to processes of rapid urbanization; and the interlinked re-organisation of social and communicative relations in which networked communication technologies have played a central role.

This issue focuses on the question of how contemporary China can be positioned vis-à-vis such phenomena, and the degree to which these provide a perspective on both social change within China and its changing international role. It also focuses in particular on the role forms of communication and representation figure within such processes by engaging with how these contribute to intensifying transnational connections between China, Australia, and the rest of the world.

Communication, Politics and Culture invites expressions of interest for a special issue on Global Modernity in the Asia-Pacific: China and Australia. We anticipate that contributions will be grounded in relevant theory that engage with the issue themes, and apply these themes to relevant case study materials. They may engage with, but are not
limited to:

- Comparative analysis of the relationship between media and social transformations in China and Australia;
- The relationship between contemporary processes of media change and shifts in social relations;
- The role of digital media practices as a form of ‘soft power’ and their impact for China’s place in the contemporary world;
- Practices of diasporic media production and use, and their contribution to the emergence of new local and transnational audience sectors;
- The role of social media in negotiating forms of contemporary identity, place and social relations;
- Contemporary practices of journalism in shifting social and political contexts.

Papers will be selected and authors notified following the submission of abstracts and their review by the issue editors. It is expected that papers will be written in English. Please send a 300-500 word abstract for consideration to David Nolan (d.nolan@unimelb.edu.au) by 1 March 2015. Full papers of 5,000-6,000 words will be due on 1 June 2015, and will be subjected to a double-blind peer review process.

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