



LECTURE

Tuesday, 30 April 2024, 6–8 pm

Muslim religious practice and social media in Southeast Asia

Martin Slama
(social anthropologist, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)

Introduction: Dorothea Schulz
(social and cultural anthropologist, University of Münster)

The use of social media by Muslims and how Islam is represented on the Internet is an area that has already been heavily researched, with the numerous studies having also helped us understand current trends, dynamics and changes in Indonesian society. But what can we learn from this in relation to more recent changes in Indonesia's religious landscape? To claim that there is a direct causal link between the introduction of social media and religious change would be too short-sighted. The lecture will therefore deal with the question of what religious change in Indonesia actually means, and what role(s) social media play in these processes. The lecture will examine as a possible answer to these questions the change in power structures and notions of authority. Also important is to make a clear analytical distinction between the terms "change" and "transformation".

LECTURE

Tuesday, 7 May 2024, 6–8 pm

Tradition – Innovation – Transformation. Beobachtungen zur öffentlichen Religionspraxis in postdigitalen Zeiten

(Tradition – Innovation – Transformation: Observations on public religious practice in the post-digital era; lecture in German)

Thomas Schlag
(Protestant theologian, University of Zurich)

Introduction: Thorsten Quandt
(communication scientist, University of Münster)

The practice of religious communities has undoubtedly been transformed in recent years by developments in the digital world. Long before the pandemic, digital technologies had greatly increased the communicative demands placed on religious actors, albeit in a rather casual and little-noticed way. It is for this reason that we can observe widespread processes of negotiation that clearly aim to achieve a balance between religious tradition and innovation. This is all the more true in view of the now quasi-religious promises being made by prophets of technology. The lecture uses the Zurich research focus on "Digital Religion(s)" to shed light on how far we can rightly speak of "transformation" here. It will also illustrate how these transformation phenomena are reflected in various religious fields of action, such as new community networking, education and the public presence of religious "agencies", as well as the new challenges that this poses for religious communities.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Tuesday, 25 June 2024, 6–8 pm

Religiöse Praxis im digitalen Wandel. Neue Herausforderungen für Kirchen und Religionsgemeinschaften

(Religious practice in the era of digitalization: New challenges for churches and religious communities; panel discussion in German)

Introduction: Marcel Bubert
(historian, University of Münster)

Participants: Matthias Kopp (press spokesperson of the German Bishops' Conference, Bonn), Natalie Kraneiß (Islamic scholar, University of Münster), Gerald Kretzschmar (Protestant theologian, University of Tübingen), Anna Puzio (philosopher of technology and Catholic theologian, University of Twente)

Moderated by: Joachim Frank
(journalist, Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger)

Whether digital prayers, online confessionals or fatwas available on the internet – changes in religious practice go hand in hand with digitalization. The emergence of new spaces for interaction and new forms of participation have changed how believers can be involved in their religious community. While some see this as a new immediacy that allows for believers to be mobilized, others fear that established structures will be eroded, with fierce discussion sometimes taking place concerning the validity of conventional practices. At the same time, the segmented public spheres of the digital world are seeing the emergence of quasi-religious systems of meaning that may appear to compete with traditional religions. The panel discussion will deal with how different churches and religious communities cope with the challenges of digitalization.