

JRFM 2023, 9/2 CALL FOR PAPERS

Here Be Dragons East Asian Film and Religion

Although film production started in China as early as 1905 with DINGJUN MOUNTAIN (DINGJUN SHAN, Ren Jingfeng, CN 1905), the East Asian media landscape largely remained *terra incognita* for almost five more decades. Little of the remarkable output of its film industry was acknowledged by western audiences. This changed in the 1950s: Whereas Chinese cinema was restricted by censorship after 1930 and politically instrumentalized from the early 1950s onwards, Japanese productions which largely depended on US-American standards found their way into Western cinemas. During the 1960s, the dependency on western cultural standards began to loosen, and a self-confident media industry began to deliver an astonishingly independent output with regard to form and content all over Asia. Since the 1990s, South Korea has entered the stage with an ever growing and lively film industry that gained international acclaim.

Nowadays, the film industry is a vibrant element of East Asian popular culture that has become increasingly important on a global level in the last decades. Japanese, and recently South Korean and Chinese films or TV series have a growing and worldwide audience not least because of easier access through streaming services. The many film productions provide a multifaceted arena of highly diverse content that spans nearly all aspects of the cultural developments in the countries. Religion has always played a major role in these contexts in various ways and in accordance with the highly diversified religious landscape of East Asia. This issue of JRFM will explore aspects of this multifaceted relationship between religion and movies or TV series. Contributions might include questions such as:

- How religion and religious traditions are portrayed in East Asian films.
- In what way characters in the films and their plots are guided by religious patterns and traditions.

- How religious iconography is used or referred to in the films.
- How films mirror recent changes in the religious landscape of East Asia.

We invite contributions from scholars from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, including – but not limited to – religious studies, theology, media studies, sociology, digital anthropology, film studies and cultural studies.

The title of this call, “Here be Dragons” has two facets: Firstly, old maps sometimes marked their “white spots” of unexplored territory with this phrase. Secondly, the mythical creature “dragon” is said to be vastly powerful and the current situation shows remarkable power in the creativity, innovation, and, sometimes, unpredictability of the East Asian media scene – not to speak of the immense importance dragons played in East Asian religious and cultural traditions.

The issue also includes an open section for articles on other topics linked to the profile of JRFM. The deadline for all submissions is 15 February 2023. 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 2023. For any questions about the issue or possible contributions, please contact the issue editors: Prof. Christian Wessely (christian.wessely@uni-graz.at), Prof. Franz Winter (franz.winter@uni-graz.at) or Prof. Yoshida Yukihiro (yukihiko.yoshida@keio.jp).