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Race, Discourse and the Colonial Media

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Whether reporting on protest movements or on police violence; on COVID responses in the Global South or on 'foreign wars'; on footballers, or on Shamima Begum or Meghan Markle, the media has continued to produce, perpetuate, and reify colonial and racial discourses. In the heyday of the colonial era, newspapers and periodicals allowed the colonial state to shape public understandings of the state's actions and tempered political engagement and mobilisation by (at best) misrepresenting and (at worst) propagandising the colonial actions of the state. Today, media institutions continue to underplay or outright dismiss claims of racism, while state interventions, whether implicit or explicit, in the running of media institutions allows the media to continue to further racist narratives. The legacies of colonialism continue to fester within media institutions, where racism has become 'ordinary, not exceptional' (Delgado & Stefancic, 2007). The media continues to 'define the rules of the game' (Hall, 1982), possessing the power to influence and shape the public's ideas of who belongs and who doesn't. This panel seeks to explore in more depth the historical and contemporary role of the media in the production and dissemination of colonial and racist discourse and ideology, its impact on the current state of local and international politics, and its complicity with state institutions in upholding coloniality.

Track Classification: Colonial, Postcolonial and Decolonial Working Group