

Call for Papers
 "CRITICAL JUNCTURES" IN DEMOCRATIC MEDIA SYSTEMS
medien & zeit 2/2024

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Critical junctures – seen as short-term events with a lasting impact on developments – manifest themselves historically when social and political conventions are shaken. They make far-reaching consequences based on decisions by individual actors likely (Cappoccia & Kelemen 2007) – not only at an institutional, but also at an economic, political or ideational level (Collier & Munck 2017; Donnelly & Hogan 2012). In any case, *critical junctures* are times of crisis or stress that existing institutions and policies are not (or no longer) suitable to cope with. Thus, they challenge the existing order and generate strong pressure for changes that are abrupt, discontinuous, and path-dependent (Roberts 2015). Such turning points can be challenging for media systems in democratically organized states (McChesney 2007; see also Shepperd 2021; Price 2021; Lamuedra, Martín, & Broullón-Lozano 2019).

In this context, journalism research focuses primarily on changes in news production. Here, for example, digitization should be mentioned, which has led to drastic changes for journalistic practices and for the entire profession. Equally important are the editorial handling of propaganda, dis-, mis- and false information, threats and hate news, or the encounter with recipients or the more active participation of the audience through social media. In a more holistic approach, research into *critical junctures* also considers social, economic, or political contexts. Thus, approaches in communication studies can also focus on effects that affect the entire media system: for example, the change of political systems in and from the late 1980s in Europe, such as the reunification of Germany or the collapse of the Soviet system, but also feminist movements, especially from the 1960s onwards, up to the economic crisis of 2008/2009.

This issue of *medien & zeit* focuses on such *critical junctures* from a communication studies perspective. The aim is to reflect on and discuss specific turning points at the level of actors as well as in institutional and structural form, for individual states, supranational organizations or international contexts. We therefore invite original contributions on this topic, including theoretical as well as methodological reflections and case studies. Topics of interest include:

- National, inter- and transnational *critical junctures*: Which *critical junctures* at the national and/or supranational level were significant for positive or negative developments of democratic media systems?
- Communication historical comparisons: What patterns regarding *critical junctures* can be identified in a comparative, historical perspective? Which cases can be informative for current turning points?
- Democratic and democratic-political structures: What do *critical junctures* in the media system indicate for democratic institutions and vice versa?
- Social, political, economic, and technological developments: Which consequences of *critical junctures* can be identified for society as a whole, for the media system, and for journalistic practices?
- Actor-centered approaches: Which role did actors' actions and agency play in the course of *critical junctures*? What are the implications for democratic developments?

- Audiences and democratic publics: Which *critical junctures* can be identified concerning the role of communicators and recipients? Which role does a critical, democratic public play in *critical junctures*?
- Research and subject history: What is the significance of *critical junctures* in communication studies and in the context of the history of the discipline?
- Narration, public sphere and historiography: How are *critical junctures* narrated in media or historiographic contexts? Which theoretical arguments, for example with concepts of change, hegemonies, etc., could be useful in the discussion of *critical junctures*?

Submissions are welcome in English or German. Submitted abstracts (no more than 500 words and a meaningful title) outlining a prospective contribution will be reviewed by the issue editors. On this basis, authors will be invited to submit full papers (6,000 words including title, abstract, tables, figures, and bibliography). All full papers will undergo a double-blind peer-review. In a possible revision phase after the review, authors can extend the length of the article to a maximum of 8,000 words, taking into account the suggestions of the reviewers and editors. *medien & zeit* is fully open access and does not charge its authors any fees for editing the articles.

Submission of abstracts: 30. June 2023

Submission of full papers: 31. December 2023

Publication of the issue: Issue 2/2024 at the earliest

Please send submissions by email: cfp@medienundzeit.at

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