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## Editors' Note

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Our current issue opens with a special section titled “Word, Image, Sound,” edited by Matthew Engelke, which charts new directions in the study of religious life and experience. Each of the essays in this section move beyond considerations of doctrine and belief to build on a phenomenological appreciation of concrete practices and their social consequences as these impact the category of religion and the embodiment of religious life.

The section brings into focus religion’s *sensory* domain, examining the power of sound, song, spoken word, image, and infrastructure to enhance and alter the affective register of religious practice and performance. The essays examine communities of Muslims—the pageantry of preaching in Egypt and the politics of loudspeakers in Senegal—and of Christians—plans for a “National House of Prayer” in Zambia, Pentecostalist singers’ claims to be the “Rwandan voice,” and controversies over religious tracts in Myanmar—to demonstrate that religious belief cannot be disentangled from the materiality and embodiment of its practices. “Word, Sound, Image” thus contributes to a powerful set of perspectives on the tangled relationship between communities of faith and public imaginaries.

In “Morality and Freedom” Alyssa Miller investigates Manish Msamah’s recent anticorruption campaign in Tunisia, titled “I Do Not Forgive!,” to highlight the dilemmas posed by coercive forms of reconciliation oriented around claims of transitional justice and forms of procedural democracy. Meanwhile, Jairan Gahan examines the red-light district of Tehran in 1922 in the essay “The Sovereign and the Sensible” as a site from which to rethink the relationship between ideas of sovereignty and Islam too often eclipsed by ideas of moral governance in Iran in the *longue durée*.

Finally, our Kitabkhana considers Faiz Ahmed’s *Afghanistan Rising: Islamic Law and Statecraft between the Ottoman and British Empires*, which argues for a renewed look at *intra-imperial* politics through a consideration of Afghanistan as a crucial if underexplored borderland. Contributors to the book forum approach Afghanistan—and Kabul in particular—as a key geohistorical terrain for the study of Islamic intellectual history and of the twentieth-century transformation of networks of social thought and political practice. They explore both the interconnections and the novel socio-technological constraints that have rendered Afghanistan a fulcrum for broader shifts in anti-colonial thought, new formations of practical solidarity, and the reconceptualization of “Islamic law” well into the postcolonial present.