
Monogràfic

Media, Religion and the Digital Age

Mitjans de comunicació, religió i l'era digital

Medios de comunicación, religión y la era digital

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The digital environment is changing forms of religiosity and has enhanced the interactivity and creativity of traditional communities on the web. While some authors believe that religion occupies a residual place in the classic mass media, others claim that the 2.0 environment is fertile ground for the consolidation of digital religion with more widespread leadership and a greater degree of participation by the faithful. Mobility, an absence of hierarchy, multimediality and global dissemination are just some of the dimensions of the Internet that make the religious message more accessible, widespread, and relevant in a world in which there is so much else on offer.

The intention of this issue of *Trípodos* is to carry out a detailed analysis of the presence of the religious message on the Internet with particular emphasis on the world of social networks and applications.

Religions seem to be revitalized by the challenges of the web 2.0. While religious reaction seemed muffled with regard to what some authors consider the decline of religion and the devastating secularization that followed 9/11, religion has once again come to occupy a privileged place in the media, and its existence is increasingly crucial, either because it is perceived as an element of conflict or seen as a positive factor for social cohesion.

The increased presence of religion is not only seen in the growth of news coverage in the mainstream media, but the need to articulate religion through the new virtual reality has become a major challenge for religious communities that do not want to be left out of the new digital forum.

The first paper, by Alexander G.J. Tkach, is entitled "Faithapps.net: Measuring the Dispersal of Religious Smartphone Applications". He offers an organized

structure for analyzing which religions are represented and how often they are represented in comparison to each other. He presents a method for accumulating and organizing religious smartphone apps across smartphone platforms.

“Uses and gratifications of a Spanish Project of digital prayer: Rezandovoy” is a case study by Xabier Riezu, from the Universidad of Deusto. He discusses a digital prayer service in Spanish used by 40,000 speakers and applies the paradigm of uses and gratifications to faith, within the context of digital media.

“Religion through the Local Media on Twitter: the Holy Week in Malaga” by Carmen Cristófol (Universidad de Málaga), F. Javier Cristófol (Esic Marketing & Business School), and Francisco Javier Paniagua (Universidad de Málaga) is the third contribution. It addresses the question of how Twitter is used as a new resource for the transmission of religious values, in particular during Holy Week in the city of Malaga in Andalusia, Spain.

“Brands as new forms of religiosity: the case of the World of Red Bull” by Samuel Gil, José Antonio Palao and José Javier Marzal (Universitat Jaume I de Castelló) deals with the notion that the transformation of the religious and the reenchantment of the profane is also present in consumption, which is acquiring a growing ontological function. The paper identifies and analyses brands as a new form of religiosity due to their essential role in the lives of individuals and society, going beyond their commercial nature and positioning themselves as constructors of meaning, bringing world views together and making sense of reality.

Finally, Lucio Adrián Ruiz, from the Internet Vatican Service, deals with “New Evangelization, New Technologies. Evangelization in the Digital Age”. With the assumption that new culture is not simply an acquisition of technology but real cultural change, the author explores 10 risks in the digital age and calls for “digital inculturation”.