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Table of Contents

- 01 **Crowdfunding a New Church - A Multimodal Analysis of Faith-Related Giving Rhetoric on Indiegogo**
Adam J. Copeland
- 19 **Renegotiating Shari'a-Based Normative Guidelines in Cyberspace - The Case of Women's 'awrah**
Sabine Damir-Geilsdorf & Leslie Tramontini
- 45 **The Ahmadiyya in Germany - An Online-Platform as a Multi-Functional Tool**
Lauren Drover
- 63 **Discovering the Digital Authority - Twitter as Reporting Tool for Papal Activities**
Damian Guzek
- 81 **Internet and Kyais in Indonesia - Negotiation of Authority in a Mediatized Environment**
Fazlul Rahman
- 107 **Attitudes Towards Women's Participation in Public Prayer Among Jewish and Muslim Websites**
Oren Steinitz
- 125 **Review: Cybertheology - Thinking Christianity in the Era of the Internet**
Frank Bosman



Discovering the Digital Authority

Twitter as Reporting Tool for Papal Activities

Damian Guzek

Abstract

This article focuses on Pope Francis activities on Twitter and understanding the way of using this kind of social media by religious authorities. By examining Francis's tweets from half a year of his pontificate (from September 13, 2013 to March 16, 2014), the author offers an in-depth overview of methods for studying the presence of religious authority in the digital world. In fact, he faces both the rapidly growing Heidi Campbell's Religious Social-Shaping of Technology analytic frame and the grounded theory approach. Conducting the research the author shows that Pope Francis's Twitter can be treated as a good example of 'religion online' based on specific strategy to extend religious authority from the real to the virtual world.

Keywords

Pope Francis, Digital Authority, Twitter, Tweets, Religion

1 Introduction

On Monday 11th January, 2013, during the ordinary consistory in the Apostolic Palace, Pope Benedict XVI announces in Latin his resignation from the office of the bishop of Rome. While the Pope was proclaiming his will, Giovanna Chirri, a correspondent of Italian Press Agency ANSA twitted 'B 16 si è dimesso' (*B 16 to resign papal office*). The election of his successor took place in the period from 12 till 13 March 2013. Just few days after, the newly established Pope Francis started to tweet in a regular way.

The presence of the Holy See in a virtual world has never been as important for the Catholic Church as it is nowadays. John Paul II initiated the access of the Vatican State to the Web by calling the Internet a 'New Forum for Proclaiming the Gospel' (John Paul II, 2002). Thanks to his encouragement the Holy See has opened for affirmation of the Internet from mid 1990s. In fact, the

Internet, which had been presented as a tool of revolution, with its potential of transformation of the society in a positive way (Rheingold 1993), found its right position both in the structure of Catholic proclamation of the faith and the information on the papal activities. Since the Pope Benedict XVI platforms such as Twitter or Facebook began to be used as a normal way of communicating with the users. In fact, the so called iPope has not been switched off even when the Pope decided to resign.

In this article the author focuses on the Francis's tweets in order to see how the papal authority is presented and shaped online. While ignoring the phenomena of an online religion, conducted research concerns on the issue of a religion online, described by Christopher Helland (cited in Krüger 2005, p. 2) as a 'religious websites, which seems to provide only religious information and no interaction'. From this point of view, tweets can be treated as a result of negotiated papal digital image that help to understand how the digital factory of the Vatican State works, and what are the key issues for producing the papal presence in the virtual reality.

It is important as many of the previous studies on new media and journalism found that Twitter was not used as a reporting tool. Instead of that, journalists used to mark out some content from their news company web pages and promoted it via their Twitter (Vis 2013). Twitter's potential for journalists brought Twitter into a rapid area of research. It should be associated with a provision of 'a mix of news, information and comments, usually connected to current reality but without an established order (Hermida 2012, p. 2).

Finally, the role of Twitter in unexpected situations is changing from the platform of publishing the breaking news to the importance puzzle of social action, and social change.

This study begins with a short introduction on religious authority and its digital emanation. The author discusses the issue of understanding the religious authority and articulates the key research questions on the pope's digital authority. Then he presents the theoretical field and mixed methods approach essential for the conducted research. Through a detailed analysis of 135 Pope Francis's tweets from period from 13th September 2013 – 16th March 2014, he explores how the supreme authority of the Catholic Church exists in the virtual space of selected social media.

2 Digital Authority

Studies focused on religious authority online sparked under the ethnographic or narrative analysis of single communities (Introvigne 2000). Early research on the issue of religious authority involved in the online activity were focused on a spread of religious information and 'loss of control over religious materials' (Dawson 2000, p. 44.). The presence of religious authority in the virtual reality was recognized as a challenge of proliferation of alternative voices in a religious discourse. Debbie

Herring (2005) speculated that, in particular cases, moderators of online groups could gain the legitimacy of spiritual authority.

On the other hand, the results of the Barker's (2005) study have questioned the potential of Internet in creating new religious authority, and emphasized the empowerment of traditional one. According to his research, strongly hierarchical religious cults do not only supervise the online activity of their members, but also infiltrate online groups of their members and control the flow of information.

The Latin *auctoritas*, which refers to the word 'authority', has a connotation with such attributes as 'impact', 'meaning', 'denotation', 'power' and 'action' (Mikołajko 2004, p 25). Heidi A. Campbell (2010a) noticed that regarding to the key term 'authority', within studies of computer-mediated communication and the Internet, it remains undefined. The terminological confusion consists of a range of understandings such as individuals, units with position of power, roles of official structures, broad 'moral' or 'ethical' authorities. Therefore, the state of intuitive understanding of the term causes the fact, that Campbell draws on Max Weber's 'pure types of legitimate authority' (traditional, legal-rational, charismatic), which give the explanation of authority legitimization as a belief system (Weber 1958).

Taking into account that religious authority differs from the pure types noted by Weber, it must be emphasized that the nature of religious authority is based on supernatural activity or a designated structure that supports the communication with god or gods (Chavez 1994). As Anna Mikołajko (2004) states the religious authority means a specific feature of social impact based on the relationship between some people, units, institutions, norms, values and *sacrum*.

The focus of this study is to analyze an issue of the Pope Francis's presence on Twitter. For the Catholic Church the Pope is a supreme ruler and the highest instance in matters of faith and morality. It means that all of the narrations that work on many levels of Catholic perspective need to fit with the one approved by the Holy See (Code of Canon Law, c. 216, 331). The exploration of the field of Internet, that transformed the traditionally considered papal authority into a digital representation of His Holiness, can answer the general questions:

1. RQ1 Does the computer-mediated communication create some special features of papal authority?
2. RQ2 What is the strategy of the Twitter use by the Pope?

Discussing these questions based on the data helps to discover the function of digital authority and Twitter as its reporting tool. Yet it has to be considered that a sense of term 'digital' represents the world belonging exclusively to computers, while 'analogue' means an expression of our experience of the real world (Feldman 1997).

3 Methods and Materials

Research conducted in the virtual reality is treated ambivalently by the scientists. Some of them are great enthusiasts of the studies conducted online and do not notice the methodological problems. Clair Hewson (2003), is even euphoric about the easy access to the various research groups present in the Internet. Looking at the issue of online presence of a religious authority with a special focus on the Pope Francis activity on Twitter, one can speak, without a doubt, about a methodological challenge that the author of the article takes up by combining certain research procedures.

Twitter is a tool largely affecting the perception of the world. The short form of 140 characters, which can be placed in one message, makes the recipient's level of consciousness narrowed down to an 'environment of constantly fragmented updates' (Vis 2013, p. 29). This restriction radically reduces, the otherwise unlimited by the number of characters, message of Christian teaching. The clear plus of this phenomenon should be, however, the fact that the basic ideas of Christianity can very easily come down to slogans and appeals - for example, 'Jesus is Lord' (Romans 10: 9).

Responding to the research questions the author based the conducted analysis on two methods: content analysis with use of the categorization keys developed based on the analytic frame of the religious-social shaping of technology approach by Heidi Campbell, and content analysis based on methodological procedures of grounded theory. The combination of different methodologies while examining the same phenomenon, described by Norman Denzin (1970) as a methodological triangulation, allowed to increase the accuracy of the results. The research procedure was based on manual coding. In addition, the author used a random telephone interview with a representative of the Polish KAI (Catholic Information Agency) as a way to reflect on the obtained results¹.

The survey covered 135 Pope Francis's tweets, which appeared on the English version of the @Pontifex profile in the period from 13 September 2013 until 17 March 2014. Importantly, all the studies tweets had an original character, thus avoiding the frequent in the recent studies problem of retweeting (Boyd, Golder, Lotan, cited in Vis, p. 31). The choice of the researched half a year has a double justification. Firstly, as indicated by the pilot study, at the beginning of the pontificate the Pope's Twitter was characterized by a schematic and clear reproduction of the Pope's public speeches. Beginning the analysis of the six months after the inauguration of his pontificate allowed to specify a valuable and unique material for research. At the same time, the material proved to be

1 The author failed to hold conversations with representatives of the Press Office of the Holy See and the Secretariat of the State.

sufficient to apply for the accuracy of quantitative data obtained from the content analysis and the qualitative data obtained in the course of grounded theory.

Content analysis of the papal tweets was based on the codes, some of which corresponded to the different stages of analytic frame of the religious-social shaping of technology (Campbell 2010b). The code book was designed based on the following categories:

- ‘connotation’ – was divided in the code book in four ways: ‘neutral’, ‘positive’, ‘negative’, ‘mixed’. Determining an overtone allowed to assess a general nature of the papal messages and emotional impression with regard to the specific issues such as wealth, charity.
- ‘frame’ – was divided into ‘internal’ and ‘external’. This allowed to reveal whether the discourse has a motivating potential primarily to the recipients inside the Catholic world, or those who are outside the system.
- ‘doctrine’ – there were three categories distinguished: ‘not applicable’, ‘according to the doctrine’, ‘against the doctrine’. Category of the doctrine appears to be important especially with intra-Catholic perspective, because it allows to assess whether the digital authority correspond with the real one. The thread, stated by Campbell, also turns out to be significant here. She stated that religious values by going online often require reinterpretation and to adapt to the new environment (Campbell 2010a).
- ‘interaction with new media’ – there have been distinguished three basic variants of examining computer-mediated communication tools based on Campbell’s (2010b) proposals: ‘acceptance and appropriation’, ‘rejection and resistance’, ‘reconstruction and/or innovation’. This distinction allowed to ask a question about the attitude of the Pope to the new digital technologies.
- ‘communal discourse’ – considered as a narrative within the community about the use of the medium. Narrowed to the person of the Pope it was divided into three basic variants: ‘prescriptive’ (mandating a definite relationship to the subject), ‘officializing’ (indicating the way to use the object), ‘validation’ (confirming the identity of the community).
- ‘type of message’ – based on the earlier pilot study four categories were distinguished: ‘appeal’, ‘statement’, ‘question’ and ‘question with answer’. Their analysis allowed for clarification of the way in which the authority communicates with the network users.

As mentioned before, content analysis was supported by a study with the assumptions of the grounded theory. This means that at the beginning of the analysis the author did not appoint the key categories, but with the progress of the study, he adopted the dominant categories (Charmaz 2006). This allowed to distinguish a narrative of religious character and social threads related to the current

world events. It should be clarified that under the triangulation method the categories, which have emerged in the course of qualitative analysis of tweets, were also treated in a quantitative way. This allowed the quantitative approach of the subject of papal Twitter, and of the values that emerged from his individual tweets.

The analysis with an assumption of grounded theory was conducted in a specific context of the research. First of all, Twitter was considered as microblogging that broadcasts short daily burst messages (of maximum 140 characters), deriving the importance of sender and focusing on his current activities or state of mind. Thinking of such object religious Twitters gained the importance with the general interest of Catholicism in cyber world in December 2012, when Benedict XVI, as the first pontifex in history, started twitting. Prior to his access, few cardinals set up personal profiles, in order to be in touch with their readers, or simply to communicate own will through a new platform of communication: Angelo Scola and Seán Patrick O'Malley in May 2009, Willem Jacobus Eijk in June 2009, Georg Pell in August 2009, Juan Luis Cipriani in July 2010, Francisco Robles Ortega in August 2010, Donald Wuerl, Gianfranco Ravasi, Odilo Scherer and Wilfrid Fox Napier in July 2011, Christoph Schönborn in November 2011, Alfonso López Trujillo and Roger Mahony in January 2012, Lluís Martínez Sistach and Luis Antonio G. Tagle in March 2012, Timothy Dolan in April 2012.

Just after the resignation of Pope Benedict, his Twitter account was deactivated, until the newly established pope would wish to go on with the @pontifex profile. After all, Benedict's tweets were forwarded into the internet archive, which may be accessible via the webpage. Comparing the way of managing the papal Twitter of Benedict XVI and Francis a typical schematization may be assigned to the Benedict's tweet and first half a year of Francis's tweeting. What is important, the only gap in Benedict's tweets appeared in context of his resignation. Nowadays, Twitter activity is present among many Catholic leaders, whose affiliation and function needs to communicate in different ways. But the issue of selecting the most effective tools matching the type of message stays unresolved.

Theoretical perspective of the study that determines the used methodologies can be defined by two approaches. Firstly, the author adopted that, according to the grounded theory belonging to constructivist approach, each theoretical interpretation leads not only to the reflection of the world, but also to the production of its interpretative image (Charmaz 2006). Secondly, the author adopted the epistemological postulate of the religious-social shaping of technology approach, that any religious community is 'not simply constrained by the internal logic of a technology and left only with the option to accept or to reject the medium' (Campbell 2010b, p. 187). From this point of view it can be assumed that such religious authority like the Pope could not reject new forms of technology outright, but rather he may undergo a sophisticated negotiation process based on his preaching obedience and personal ideas.

4 Findings

As a part of the undertaken study, 135 Pope Francis Tweets were tested using both quantitative as well as qualitative approach. In the first part of the description the author focuses on the quantitative data relating to, *inter alia*, the overtone, frameworks of the topic presentation, references to the doctrine. He also indicates the percentage of a particular topic and values present within. Next, the author reconstructs the selected threads based on qualitative data. The whole is the material for the subsequent interpretation.

The first question to be asked when analyzing @Pontifex tweets concerns overtones. What is the tone of papal statements? Are there problems which stand out against other issues?

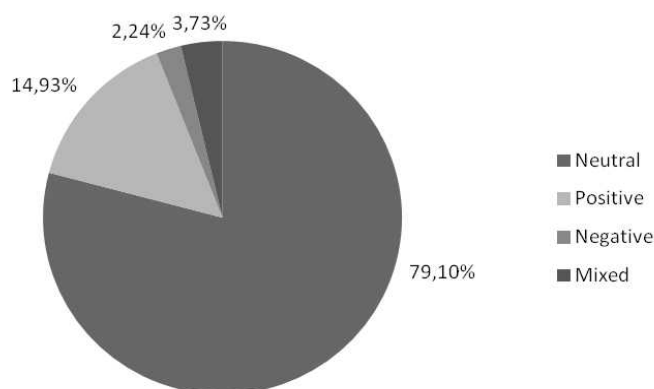


Fig. 1: Overtone of the papal tweets (%)

When analyzing Pope's statements in the studied period, the dominance of the neutral descriptions ($n = 135$, 79.10%) and a relatively significant presence of positive expressions (14.93%) can be seen. Tweets with negative or mixed connotations are less than 5.95%, which is slightly (1.47%) more for the ones of a mixed content. In addition, it should be mentioned that the few statements with a strongly negative overtone (2.24%) boil down to three areas: the problem of immigrants coming to Lampedusa (October 12, 2013), wealth (October 29, 2013) and war (On January 18, 2014). In the group mixed statements three out of the five tweets are on the issue of the Christ's place in personal life, or the proper form of prayer. Only one tweet refers to the global social situation, contrasting the 'globalization of indifference' with the 'globalization of solidarity' (October 26, 2013).

Twitter is one of the commonly available tools. Thanks to its functioning following the religious authorities in cyberspace does not cause problems, which can be seen, among others, on the example of the Pope or Dalai Lama (@DalaiLama). Problematic turns out to be the issue of the target group, to which the authorities address their entries. Is papal Twitter, therefore, a tool to

communicate the content to the members of the Catholic Church, or is it used to communicate to all the interested parties?

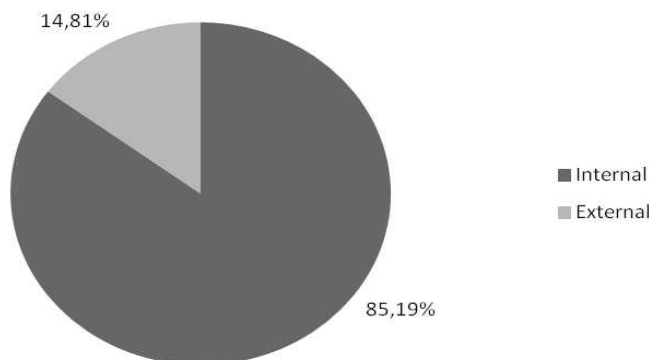


Fig. 2: Frame of the papal Twitter (%)

Given that messages can be based on the intra-Christian context, which means that, they are linked to the religious issues and arguments, the studied material is in the vast majority related to the *universum* of the Catholic world (n = 135, 85.19%). It is true, that in the content of tweets, there are no direct quotations from the Bible, yet the whole is based on the significant participation of topics from the area of faith, religious practice and doctrinal content.

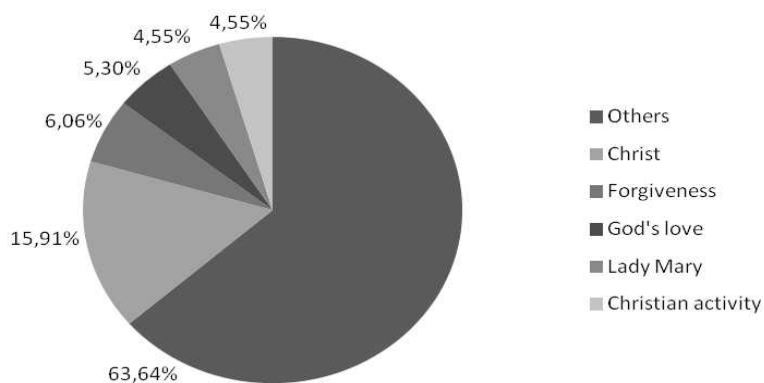


Fig. 3: Most common topics of the papal Twitter (%)

The quantitative juxtaposition of the most common themes, that the Pope Francis raised in the studied period, is opened by the person of Jesus Christ (n = 135, 15.91%), followed by four less important issues occupying 20.45% and as much as 46 other topics that occupy a total of 63.64 % of the study material.

Table 1 Content of the papal tweets according to category (%)

n=135			
Christ	15,91%	Church	0,76%
Forgiveness	6,06%	Communication	0,76%
God's love	5,30%	Mariage	0,76%
Lady Mary	4,55%	Neihgbours	0,76%
Christian activity	4,55%	Elderly person	0,76%
Christmas	3,79%	Christian presecutions	0,76%
Prayer	3,79%	Crucifix	0,76%
Throw-away culture	3,03%	Lent	0,76%
Holiness	3,03%	Faith year	0,76%
People in need	3,03%	Missionaries	0,76%
Trust to the Lord	3,03%	Catholic education	0,76%
Others	3,03%	Talents	0,76%
Spreading the joy of Christianity	3,03%	Eucharist	0,76%
Peace	2,27%	Family	0,76%
Prayer for the pope	1,52%	Confession	0,76%
Money and material thinks	1,52%	Confirmation	0,76%
Hunger	1,52%	Central Africa Republic, South Sudan	0,76%
Baptism	1,52%	Seminars	0,76%
Hope	1,52%	Community	0,76%
Illnes	1,52%	Smiling Christian	0,76%
Sacraments	1,52%	Christian unity	0,76%
Day of consecrated life	1,52%	Mediocre life	0,76%
Worship to God	1,52%	Washington March for Live	0,76%
Typhoon Haiyan	1,52%	Gospel	0,76%
War	0,76%	Mercy	0,76%
		Prayer for Benedict XVI	0,76%

Except of the person of Jesus Christ, the Pope raised the category of forgiveness in its broad sense (6.06%), God's love (5.30%), the person of the Jesus's mother (4.55%) and practice relating to the proper Christian life (4.55 %). Importantly, all raised threads are of a strictly religious character. In fact, 140 characters, which can be used in a tweet, became an occasion for the Pope to initiate the main idea of the sermon. In the Francis's entries there is no shortage of secular subjects, such as assistance to victims of Typhoon Haiyan. Accordingly, as indicated in the Table 1, the contribution of each of them is less than 0.76-3.03% of all the analyzed content.

The fundamental question that must, therefore, be asked is whether the religious content stays in accordance with the teachings of the Church? The question proves to be justified, as in the Pope made statements in the media, which were then corrected by the Press Office of the Holy See, as taken out of context. An example of this is the statement of the Pope, that he made on the plane, about gays (*Who am I to judge?*, July 29th, 2013) ².

2 Details are available from the CNN Web site < <http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2013/07/29/pope-francis-on-gays-who-am-i-to-judge>>.

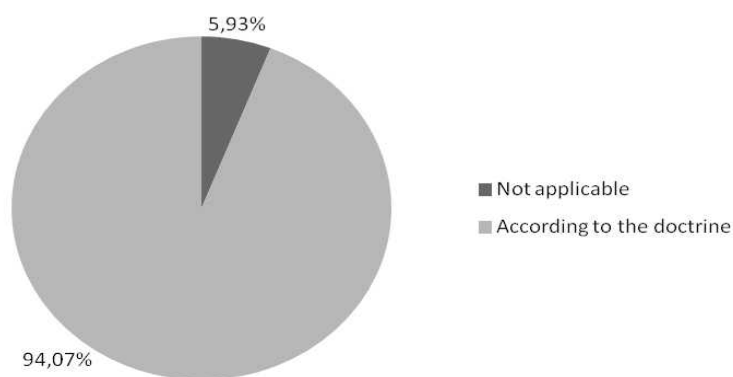


Fig. 4: Tweet's content to Church doctrine (%)

In the light of the aforementioned discrepancy of the Pope’s message and his press service, the doctrinal dimension of the published content proves to be interesting. None of the analyzed statements does not oppose the teaching of the Church. In the case of 5.93% (n = 135) entries the content appeared which cannot be applied to the categories of faith and morality. The remaining 94.07% clearly corresponds with the current teaching of the Church. The character of the papal authority is, therefore, based largely on the contents known to the faithful. The nature of the individual entries should, however, be discussed based on the qualitative data.

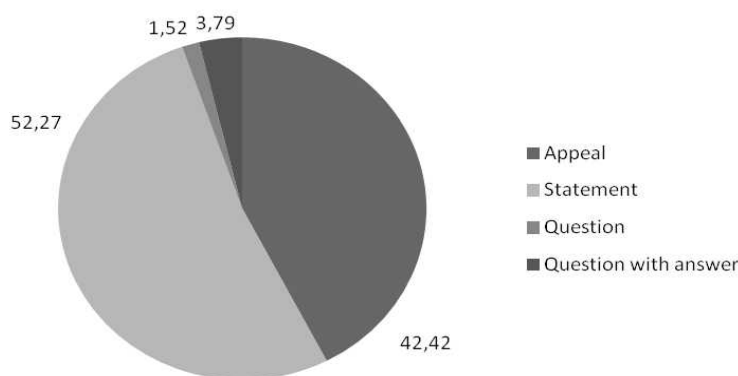


Fig. 5: Type of messages in the papal Twitter (%)

Among the quantitative categories, it is worth noting the type of messages which are, on behalf of the Pope, phrased in tweets. According to the order of occurrence, statements (n = 135, 52.27%) and appeals (42.42%) occur. Less than 5.30% of tweets is based on the questions. Papal Twitter is, therefore, a tool of computer-mediated communication, which encourages the users by a call to action or reflection. From a quantitative perspective, there are two patterns in the values which are raised in such formulated messages (Figure 6).

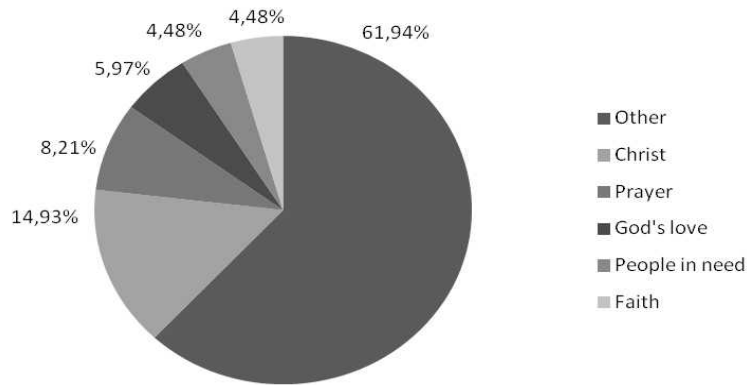


Fig. 6: Key values present in the papal tweets (%)

Against the backdrop of the presented earlier topics of the Pope Francis’s tweets (Figure 3) it can be seen, that in the group of core values, that appear in the papal statements and appeals, there is a significant presence of religious issues (n = 135, 33.58%), but there are also issues related with the help to another person (category ‘people in need takes’ 4.48%). Undeniably, the person of Jesus Christ turns out to be the fundamental value in the discourse (14.93%). In fact, Pope Francis’s narration seems to be more Christocentric than socio-oriented.

By making use of the analytical framework in the area of religious-social shaping of technology approach the answer to the following questions should be given: what is the interaction between the religious community (in the case of this study – a religious authority) and the new media? What is the nature does the communal discourse adopt on digital communication in the opinion of the study groups or entities?

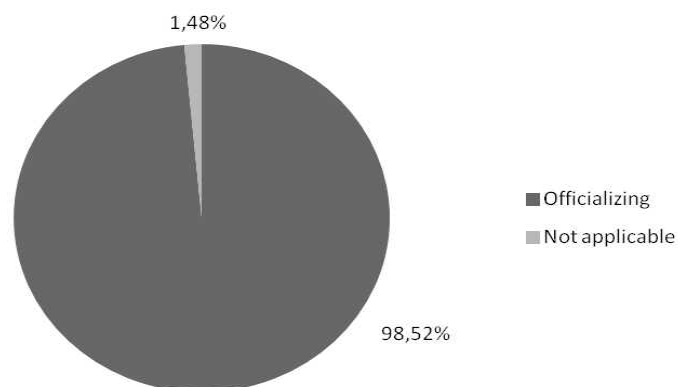


Fig. 7: Communal discourse in the papal tweets (%)

The categories distinguished by Heidi A. Campbell appear in the studied material just as a signal. References to the subject of interactions with new media appear in only 1.48% of tweets (n = 135), the remaining 98.52% have no such references. Identical distribution shows the category of ‘communal discourse’. It should be also added, that the Pope’s narrative addressed to the members of the Catholic community about the use of Twitter, assumes the ‘officializing’ character. This indicates the full acceptance for the use of this communication tool, in the communication reality of the Catholic Church.

The results obtained in the course of quantitative research focused on the domination of the religious over social content. The Pope’s entries on Twitter have adopted the character of a specific extension of the form known as the papal audience pronouncement. The obtained qualitative material follows in a slightly separate direction, pointing primarily to the profound motivations of the Pope concerning his religious and social commitment.

Rarely raised social thematic proves to be extremely strong in its tone. Its main attribute is the category of ‘gift’ and ‘generosity’. The Pope welcomes a distinctive and uncompromising tone, when turning to network users about the assistance to the Typhoon Haiyan’s victims in Vietnam and the Philippines: ‘be generous with prayers and concrete help’ (November, 11, 2013). He reiterates his call later on. That case, therefore, illustrates that the activity of the authority is not limited to a single call.

Francis radicalizes his statements with respect to three issues: the suffering of fellow human beings, waste of resources (food, social engagement), which he defines as ‘throw-away culture’ and concentration on increasing one’s ownership. He comments emphatically on the tragedy off the coast of Italian Lampedusa:

Lord, have mercy! Too often we are blinded by our comfortable lives, and refuse to see those dying at our doorstep. #Lampedusa (October 12th, 2013).

Often he also combines the social categories with the sphere of religion: ‘trust the lord non the possessions’ (November 22th, 2013). These formulas of appeal and statements adopt a fundamental role in rapid analyses which the Pope submit to his recipients. The distinctive formula of his appeal is ‘Let us’ and clearly refers to the element of bond and joint action with the recipients of his messages. In addition, Francis indicates the presence of prayer and spiritual support that he gives to important events in different parts of the world. This is well illustrated by the tweet:

I join the March for Life in Washington with my prayers. May God help us respect all life, especially the most vulnerable (January 22th, 2014).

The categorization of individual tweets and their compilation in certain narratives indicates the specific understanding by Francis of the idea of pastoral ministry. Indeed, the Pope tweets in a manner consistent with current teaching of the Catholic Church, but he introduces new elements emphasizing the attributes of poverty of priests, in addition calling for common prayer:

Let us pray for all good and faithful priests who dedicate themselves to their people with generosity and unknown sacrifices (February 10th, 2014).

Less than a day later, on the first anniversary of the announcement of the decision on the resignation of his predecessor, the Pope urges the Internet users to join his prayers for Pope Benedict XVI, whom he also defines as ‘a man of great courage and humility’ (February 11th, 2014). It is worth noting that the category of humility emphasized by Francis is carried out in a Christian smile. Joy and smile are the opposite of a mediocre attitude and are also a part of promoting Christianity. Francis remarks that he is not able to imagine a Christian ‘who does not know how to smile’ (January, 30th 2014).

The last element, which is worth noting, is the positive attitude of the Pope to the Twitter itself. In October 26th, 2013, the Pope sends a tweet:

Dear Followers I understand there are now over 10 million of you! I thank you with all my heart and ask you to continue praying for me.

His attitude towards the new media including Twitter has a deeper dimension. Francis (2014) sees new media indeed as a tool for meeting and reliable dialogue, about which there is still a lot in, for example, the documents of Vatican Council II (December 4th, 2013).

The relational aspect of the authority points out not only the context of the messages made by an authoritative person, but also the reception on many levels of receivers. Regarding the content of Pope's Twitter from the perspective of professional representatives of Catholic News Agency that are gatekeepers, we may make a few assumptions. Of course they should be verified in a broader audience research, thus the limitation of particular cases may reflect a problematic aspect of the Pope's tweets.

Following the papal Twitter was related to the personal usage, not the professional one. The media agency officer found no source of breaking news in the Francis's tweets. As he mentioned:

If the tweets had appeared just after some event with a type 'I bordered the plan, and I am tired' It would have great meaning (November 4th, 2015).

Instead the 140 characters focus on general problems, which may be called during different activities. In fact the media agency officer, respecting the papal efforts, focused on the wrong way of using the tool, and suggested changing the type of content.

5 Discussion

The aim of the article was to provide the answer to the question: does the computer-mediated communication create some special features of papal authority and what is the strategy of the Twitter use by the Pope? The task was carried out based on the analysis of the papal Twitter combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. With respect to RQ1 the results of the study showed the picture of papal authority typical for the real world. In the case of RQ2 the data indicated the dominance of appeal and reflection discourse. Papal Twitter is mainly addressed to Catholic believers, explores religious and social topics. Messages directed on behalf of the Pope to its users are devoid of any barriers of distance and call for action together with Francis. The Pope himself, however, draws attention to individual issues. Help to the other is treated by him as a challenge for each individual. He calls for generosity, or even giving one's estate to those in need.

The attitude of the studied religious authority to Twitter turns out to be very pragmatic. Twitter is a tool of papal activity, the mere presence of the Pope on the portal does not change, however, his specific style and message. In light of the division proposed by Helland, papal Twitter is a good example of 'religion online'. Studied tweets took the form of short sermons or reflections, providing only the information and formation content. Comments, that accompany individual entries on the @Pontifex profile, and especially questions, do not receive answers. This clearly indicates a misunderstanding of the nature of this tool and bringing it down to a form of another, rapid form of communication to the recipient, and not communication with the user.

Twitter considered as a tool of communicating devotional content, while not as a tool of papal daily affairs, strengthens the misunderstanding of the nature of Twitter. Even if for many believers it's more an emotional aspect to have a direct link to the Pope, the content do not offer such an approach. What is more, the Pope's Twitter is not suitable as an independent channel of preaching the Gospel. The KAI voice, which supports the analysis of the results of the study, highlights the lack of community. It agrees with the idea of Pope Paul VI, according to whom media cannot be treated as a separate way of preaching the Gospel. Where is the cause of such an approach? The surrounding of the Pope, which is responsible for shaping his image and promoting his communication with the world, pursues a specific strategy to extend the religious authority from the real to the virtual world. Although it is safe, it can also bring certain risks.

Regarding the Arab Spring and riots of outraged Manuel Castells (2012) suggested, that if power is exercised in the network society by means of programming and switching off, then the tool of alternative strengths of power need to be based on reprogramming of the power, and destructing of the liaison points. Social media have already proven that it is able to change from an information platform into an instrument of social change (Hussain, Howard 2012). In the case of the Pope Francis, there is, however, no strong alternative operator, which could replace his authority. No response to comments to his tweets prevents the situation of losing control over the content, as mentioned by Dawson (2000). An attempt to alleviate this strange state turns out to be the character tweets themselves.

The Pope tweets in a neutral ($n = 135$, 79.10%) or positive (14.93%) way, definitely avoiding the negative tone (3.73%). It should be connected with the needs of reducing controversy which is generally produced by the form of authority in the Catholic Church. It is characteristic that during the pontificate of Benedict XVI's papal Twitter was based entirely on fragments of his sermons placed by his colleagues. The structure of the Francis's Twitter's content shows a significant attention paid to this channel of communication. Sporadic threads with negative overtones spotted in the course of analysis (immigrants, wealth, war) break out of this trend. Their direct tone may stem from the fact that the papal surrounding treats Twitter as the extension of spontaneity and openness of Francis.

Tweets in 85.19% based on the Christian context do not refer to the characteristic for religious leaders passages in the Bible. Examining the religious authorities on the blogs Heidi A. Campbell (2010b) noted, that Christian texts, especially the Bible, serve a special function in the work of Christian bloggers, because they are treated as a source of confirmation of their authority. Although ultimately digital affirmation of authority occurs more frequently than the affirmation of religious texts. From this perspective, the Pope Francis's attitude is based on the authority of the office, so characteristic for Catholicism.

The realization of this study opens a space for subsequent analyses in the area of digital authority. The author of the study relied on text data in the form of computer protocols, produced in the course of the activities of Pope Francis and his inner circle. The limitations of this project are, therefore, a distinct lack of necessary data needed to analyze the decision-making in the use of the papal Twitter. This could help to answer the question about the factors that determine the shape of papal speeches in the world of social media.

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