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## A B S T R A C T S

Victoria Dos Santos, Eduardo Cruz

*Materiality, Religion and the Digital: A Theoretical Exploration of Material Religion in Immersive Platforms*

This article proposes that the material dimension of religion can be articulated and experienced online. Considering that religion is an embodied phenomenon which relies on material elements, this paper will particularly focus on religious practices taking place in immersive virtual platforms in order to comprehend how the material dimension is manifested by users in their everyday life. Through a theoretical analysis, we propose that 3D social virtual worlds efficiently enable users to experience key material aspects such as embodiment and space, due to their high levels of immersivity, interactivity, and agency, by embodying avatars in customizable spaces. Meyer's theory of mediation, Hoover and Echchaibi's Third Spaces of Digital Religion, and Campbell's theory of Religious–Social Shaping of Digital Technology (RSST) allows us to center the discussion on how religions are practiced and experienced by individuals and communities through various mediation practices, and how digital media acquires more affective meanings when they are involved in religious pursuits.

*Keywords: digital religion, digital materiality, material religion, digital embodiment, virtual reality.*

Tobias Friesen

*The Precarious Relationship Between Embodiment and Digital Religion*

This article presents a critique of the prevalent notion that the digital realm is characterized by a condition of disembodiment and excarnation. In order to substantiate its argument, this article initially presents an example of the discourse surrounding the disembodiment thesis, namely Richard Kearney's considerations of touch in the digital age. In this context, the article uncovers a dominant discursive framing of harmonization vs. over-problematization. It then proceeds to examine the work of Thomas Fuchs and his phenomenological critique of virtuality, which also emphasizes the aspect of disembodiment. Lucy Osler presents a counterargument to the thesis of disembodiment, simultaneously contributing to both

phenomenological and embodiment research. Following Osler, this article argues that embodiment is inherently precarious and that the digital sphere requires a theory of multiple modes of embodiment rather than the creation of a dichotomy between embodiment and the digital. The article concludes with some theoretical considerations of digital religion and theological reflections on the possibility of an online Eucharist, a topic that was prevalent in Christian theology during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Keywords: embodiment, disembodiment, phenomenology, digital religion.*

Antje Roggenkamp

*Presenting, (Re)Constructing and Arranging Medieval Artefacts from Non-religious and Religious Contexts: Challenges in the Digital Age*

The influence of digitalised images on individual and societal life has become considerable. The digital media revolution exercises a particular impact on the way we engage with works of art. In contrast to other educational institutions, museums structure the relationship to the past primarily through the arrangement of objects and artefacts, and they ensure that religious and non-religious cultural heritage is preserved.

However, the emergence of digital technologies is changing the self-image of museums. Even though digital copies are playing an important role for presenting medieval artefacts, there are still hardly any criteria to determine their use in museums. In this regard, the present study begins with a practice-orientated re-reading of Walter Benjamin's classic essay "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility". Benjamin's essay focuses on the aura of an original work of art, which changes when it is technologically reproduced. In a practice-orientated re-reading, Benjamin's aura can be considered from different aspects: as practices of describing, seeing and comparing. From this perspective, a deeper re-reading takes these practices as a starting point for developing further criteria: modes of presenting, (re)constructing and arranging. As a result, the application of these practices and criteria opens up new perspectives not only for engaging with works of art and their technologically reproduced copies, but also for digital copies.

Two case studies will be used to examine whether and to what extent the criteria gained by re-reading Benjamin's essay are suitable for facilitating the accessibility of artefacts through digital copies. The chosen artefacts date from the period

to which Benjamin ascribes the largest dense aura – the Middle Ages: the Bayeux Tapestry and the Halderner Altar.

*Keywords: practice-theoretical approach, (religious) works of art, original artefacts, Bayeux Tapestry, Halderner Altar, (religious) materiality, digital copy, mechanical produced copy.*

Aída Velasco Morla

*How Is TikTok #Interreligious? An Inductive Thematic Analysis*

This study analyzes how TikTok allows users to make interreligious practices visible and share them, highlighting the coexistence between different religious traditions. Through the platform, creators showcase scenes of daily coexistence, interreligious events, and mixed ceremonies, while also denouncing the discrimination and disapproval associated with interreligious relationships. Three main themes were developed using inductive thematic analysis: Interreligious Sentimental Relationships (67.9%), Interreligious Experiences (21.8%), and Interreligious Facts and Information (10.3%).

The study suggests that TikTok acts as a space for self-representation and interreligious connection through the hashtags #interreligious and #interfaith, overcoming echo chambers and increasing the visibility of interreligious content. The creation of religious content on TikTok materializes faith and expands the individual-group-Sacred interaction to a global environment, where religious practices are shared and reinterpreted.

*Keywords: interreligious, interfaith, TikTok, thematic analysis, diversity.*

Tijana Rupčić

*Deus Ex Machina: Exploring Theological Implications of AI in Video Game Narratives*

The study of artificial intelligence (AI) and religion, particularly the concept of God within video games, is a rich field that explores how digital spaces can reflect and shape philosophical and theological discourses. Ever since their first introduction to the public, video games have often been a unique medium for exploring

complex narratives and are tied to the different expressions of religion and spirituality. The integration of AI characters or deities into video games challenges the traditional understanding of divinity and intelligence.

This article examines the imaginaries of AI and God in two video games, *Galerians* (1999) and *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream* (1995), focusing on how these elements are used to construct narrative worlds and reflect cultural perceptions of technology and the divine. In these games, the AI characters that gained consciousness started embodying god-like characteristics, such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, raising questions about free will, predestination, and the nature of consciousness. These representations draw from existing religious traditions while also pushing the boundaries of theological thought, suggesting new interpretations of divinity in the context of advanced technology. The article will also closely examine the concepts of emotions that AIs in *Galerians* and *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream* “experience.”

The author relies on a game-immanent approach through detailed analysis of the aforementioned games in order to explore how the imaginaries of AI and God converge, offering insights into the evolving relationship between humanity, technology, and spirituality.

*Keywords:* artificial intelligence, video games, spirituality, *Galerians*, *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream*.

Nadja Furlan Štante

*Women's Environmental Peacebuilding – From the Lense of Post-colonial  
Theological Ecofeminism*

In a broader context, this paper focuses on the need to address environmental issues and include women's voices and actions in the context of interreligious dialogue – more specifically, to create a venue for women's engagement in environmental peacebuilding through interreligious encounters and dialogue. First, the phenomenon of religious environmental peacebuilding is introduced as an emerging field that views conflicts over environmental resources (environmental injustice) as an opportunity for the conflicting parties to cooperate with one another and ultimately work toward a lasting and sustainable peace. A brief overview of two examples of good practices of women's movements for environmental peacebuilding (Navdanya and the Green Belt Movement) and their contributions are briefly analyzed. From this perspective, the question arises: is Western Christian ecotheology listening to the ecotheological perspectives and practices of the Global

South? Furthermore, it addresses the importance of including women's voices and actions (from the Global South and the Global North for mutual enrichment), which are often left out of interreligious dialogue, but could also find their place in religious (environmental) peacebuilding. This paper follows the ecofeminist thesis that the exploitation of the earth (ecological crisis) is closely linked to the marginalization, exploitation, and abuse of women. From this perspective, perceptions and critical perspectives of environmental injustice and the importance of women's engagement in environmental interreligious peacebuilding are brought together.

*Keywords: interreligious dialogue, ecofeminism, ecological justice, environmental peacebuilding.*

Primož Krašovec, Anja Zalta

*Religious Diversity and the Problem of Systemic Racism in the Context of Global Migration: A Case Study of Tunisia's Treatment of Sub-Saharan Black Christians*

The article is based on several months of research into the process of racialisation of sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia. The starting point of our research is the speech of Tunisian President Kais Saied in February 2023. In light of the new negotiations with the EU on support for migration management in the Mediterranean, the president emphasised how important it is for Tunisia to be and remain Arab and Muslim. The sub-Saharan migrants who come to Tunisia are black, many of them are also Christians. The Tunisian case of racialisation of migrants is similar to the dynamics of systemic racism in EU. Our thesis is that racialisation is part of a more complex dynamic determined by the capitalist mode of production, which, due to its internal contradictions, simultaneously demands and excludes human labor power. We argue that the permanently excluded represent a surplus population that, because it is not disciplined by capitalist markets, is considered dangerous and thus falls under the jurisdiction of the police. This process of policing surplus populations represents contemporary systemic racism, with »race« being the result of said process and not determined by its biological, religious, ethnic, or cultural characteristics. We support our thesis with a field study. It consists of qualitative interviews with Tunisian experts and three personal narrative interviews with sub-Saharan migrants from Cameroon.

*Key words: black Christians, religious diversity, sub-Saharan Africans, religion, surplus populations, systemic racism, migration, the Tunisian case.*



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## POVZETKI

Victoria Dos Santos, Eduardo Rodrigues da Cruz

*Materialnost, religija in digitalno: teoretično preučevanje materialne religije in potopitvenih platform*

V članku zagovarjamo, da je materialnost religije moč izraziti in izkusiti na spletu. Ker je religija utelešen pojav, ki se naslanja na snovne elemente, bomo s preučevanjem verskih praks, ki se odvijajo na potopitvenih virtualnih platformah, ugotavljali, kako se ta materialnost kaže pri uporabnikih v njihovem vsakdanjem življenju. V okviru teoretične analize predpostavljamo, da lahko tridimenzionalni navidezni družbeni svetovi učinkovito omogočajo uporabnikom doživljanje ključnih materialnih vidikov, kot sta telesnost in prostor, saj zagotavljajo visoko raven potopitve, interaktivnosti in dejavnosti z utelešenjem v avatarjih v prilagojenih prostorih. Preko teorije mediatizacije Birgit Meyer, teorijo tretjih prostorov digitalne religije Hooverja in Echchaibija ter teorij religiozno-druženega oblikovanja digitalnih tehnologij (RSST) Heidi Campbell bomo razpravo osredinili na vprašanje, kako posamezniki in skupnosti izražajo in doživljajo religijo skozi različne prakse mediatizacije, in prikaz, kako digitalni mediji pridobivajo bolj emotivne pomen, kadar so vključeni v religiozne dejavnosti.

*Ključne besede: digitalna religija, digitalna materialnost, materialna religija, digitalna utelešenost, navidezna resničnost.*

Tobias Friesen

*Krhki odnos med utelešenostjo in digitalno religijo*

Avtor v članku kritično obravnava prevladujoče mnenje, da digitalni svet zaznamuje stanje breztelesnosti in iztelesenosti oziroma ločenosti od telesa. V podkrepitev svojih argumentov najprej analizira enega izmed diskurzov, povezanih s tezo o breztelesnosti, in sicer razmišljanja Richarda Kearneyja o dotiku v digitalni dobi. V tej analizi izpostavi prevladujoči diskurzivni vzorec harmonizacije na eni strani in pretiranega problematiziranja na drugi. Nato obravnava delo Thomasa Fuchsa, ki v svoji fenomenološki kritiki virtualnosti prav tako poudarja vidik brez-

telesnosti. Lucy Osler podaja protiargument tezi o breztelesnosti, s čimer hkra-  
ti bogati tako fenomenološke raziskave kot raziskave o breztelesnosti. Po zgledu  
Osler avtor zagovarja stališče, da je utelešenost inherentno krhka in da bi bila di-  
gitalnemu svetu bolj kot ustvarjanje dihotomije med utelešenostjo in digitalnim  
potrebna teorija o različnih modusih utelešenosti. V zaključku avtor poda nekaj te-  
oretičnih razmislekov o digitalni religiji in teoloških refleksij o možnosti spletnega  
obhajanja, kar je bila v krščanski teologiji med pandemijo covida-19 pogosta tema.

*Ključne besede: utelešenost, breztelesnost, fenomenologija, digitalna religija.*

Antje Roggenkamp

*Predstavljanje, (re)konstruiranje in postavitve srednjeveških artefaktov iz  
nereligioznih in religioznih kontekstov: izzivi v digitalni dobi*

Vpliv digitaliziranih podob na življenje posameznika in družbe je danes že zelo  
izrazit. Revolucija digitalnih medijev še posebno spreminja način, kako spozna-  
vamo in doživljamo umetniška dela. Za razliko od drugih izobraževalnih ustanov  
muzeji strukturirajo odnos do preteklosti pretežno preko razpostavitve predmetov  
in artefaktov ter skrbijo za ohranjanje tako religiozne kot nereligiozne kulturne  
dediščine.

S pojavom digitalnih tehnologij se samopodoba muzejev spreminja. Čeprav  
imajo digitalne kopije pomembno vlogo pri predstavljanju srednjeveških artefak-  
tov, še vedno ni skoraj nobenih kriterijev, ki bi urejali njihovo uporabo v muze-  
jih. Raziskavo zato začnemo s praktično naravnano reinterpretacijo klasičnega  
eseja Walterja Benjamina »Umetniško delo v času svoje tehnične reprodukcije«. *Benjaminov esej* poudarja avro izvirne umetnine, ki s tehnično reprodukcijo blede. V praktično naravnani reinterpretaciji lahko Benjaminovo avro obravnavamo z različnih vidikov: kot prakse opisovanja, ogledovanja in primerjanja. V poglobljenem ponovnem branju njegovega eseja v tej perspektivi jemljemo te prakse kot izhodišče za razvijanje dodatnih kriterijev, ki vključujejo načine predstavljanja, (re)konstrukcije in postavitve. Uveljavljanje teh praks in kriterijev tako odpira nove vidike ne le doživljanja umetniških del ter njihovih mehanskih reprodukcij, temveč tudi digitalnih kopij.

Z dvema študijama primerov bomo preverili, ali in v kolikšni meri kriteriji, izpeljani iz nove razlage Benjaminovega eseja, ustrezajo večji dostopnosti artefak-  
tov preko digitalnih kopij. Izbrani umetnini izvirata iz obdobja, ki mu Benjamin

pripisuje najbolj zgoščeno avro – srednjega veka. To sta tapiserija iz Bayeuxa in oltar iz Halderna.

*Ključne besede: praktično-teoretični pristop, (religiozna) umetniška dela, izvirni artefakti, tapiserija iz Bayeuxa, oltar iz Halderna, (religiozna) materialnost, digitalna kopija, mehanska kopija.*

Aída Velasco Morla

*Kako je TikTok #medreligijski? Induktivna tematska analiza*

Avtorica v raziskavi preučuje, kako TikTok omogoča svojim uporabnikom izražanje in izmenjevanje medreligijskih praks ter sodelovanje v njih, pri čemer poudarja sožitje različnih verskih tradicij. Ustvarjalci na tej platformi predstavljajo prizore vsakodnevnega sobivanja, medverske dogodke in mešane obrede, obenem pa razkrivajo diskriminacijo in neodobravanje, povezano z medverskimi odnosi. Na podlagi induktivne tematske analize vsebin je avtorica opredelila tri glavne teme: medverske čustvene odnose (67,9 %), medreligijske izkušnje (21,8 %) ter medreligijska dejstva in informacije (10,3 %).

Raziskava kaže, da TikTok deluje kot prostor za samopredstavitev in medreligijsko povezovanje prek ključnikov #medreligijski in #medverski, s čimer presega vlogo zgolj odmevne komore in povečuje prepoznavnost medreligijskih vsebin. Ustvarjanje verskih vsebin na TikToku materializira vero in širi interakcijo med posameznikom, skupnostjo in Svetim v globalno okolje, kjer se verske prakse izmenjujejo in na novo tolmačijo.

*Ključne besede: medreligijski, medverski, TikTok, tematska analiza, raznovrstnost.*

Tijana Rupčić

*Deus ex machina: preučevanje teoloških implikacij umetne inteligence v narativih videoiger*

Študije umetne inteligence in religije, zlasti koncepta Boga v videoigrah, predstavlja bogato raziskovalno področje, ki preučuje, kako digitalni prostori odražajo in sooblikujejo filozofske in teološke diskurze. Videoigre so že vse od svojega na-

stanka edinstven medij za raziskovanje kompleksnih narativov, ki je povezan za različnimi izrazi religije in duhovnosti. Vključevanje likov umetne inteligence ali božanstev v videoigre postavlja na preizkušnjo tradicionalno razumevanje božanskosti in inteligence.

Avtorica v članku preučuje imaginarija umetne inteligence in Boga v dveh videoigrah, *Galerians* (1999) in *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream* (1995), pri čemer se posveča zlasti vprašanju, kako se ti elementi uporabljajo za oblikovanje pripovednih svetov in kako odražajo kulturna doživetja tehnologije in božanskega. V obeh igrah so liki umetne inteligence, ki so pridobili zavest, začeli utelešati božanske lastnosti, kot so vsemogočnost, vsevednost in vseprisotnost, kar odpira vprašanja o svobodni volji, predestinaciji in naravi zavesti. Te upodobitve se naslanjajo na obstoječe verske tradicije, hkrati pa širijo meje teološke misli in nakazujejo nove interpretacije Boga v kontekstu napredne tehnologije. V članku je tudi podrobno preučeno pojmovanje čustev, ki jih umetna inteligenca v videoigrah *Galerians* in *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream* "občuti."

S podrobno analizo igranja lastnih elementov in notranje zasnove avtorica ugotavlja, kako se imaginarija umetne inteligence in Boga zblížujeta, s čimer ponudi vpogled v razvijajoči se odnos med človeštvom, tehnologijo in duhovnostjo.

*Ključne besede: umetna inteligenca, videoigre, duhovnost, Galerians, I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream.*

Nadja Furlan Štante

*Ekološko mirovništvo žensk – skozi prizmo postkolonialnega teološkega ekofeminizma*

V širšem kontekstu se članek osredotoča na sintezo okoljskih vprašanj ter vključevanja glasov in ukrepov žensk v okviru medreligijskega dialoga – natančneje, na ustvarjanje kreativnih prostorov za sodelovanje žensk v procesu ekološke izgradnje miru preko medreligijskih srečanj in dialoga. Najprej je predstavljen fenomen ženske religijske izgradnje ekološkega miru (ženskega ekološkega mirovništva) kot nastajajočega področja, ki konflikte glede okoljskih virov (okoljsko nepravilnost) obravnava kot priložnost, da sprte strani medsebojno sodelujejo in si na koncu skupaj prizadevajo za trajnostni mir. Nato sledi kratek pregled dveh primerov dobrih praks ženskih gibanj religijske izgradnje ekološkega miru (Navdanya in Green Belt Movement) in analiza njihovega doprinosa.

S tega vidika se zastavi vprašanje: ali zahodna krščanska ekoteologija upošteva ekoteološke perspektive in dobre prakse globalnega juga? Pri tem je izpostavljen pomen vključevanja žensk (z globalnega juga in globalnega severa za medseboj-

no obogatitev) v medkulturne in medreligijske ekološke iniciative. Članek sledi ekofeministični tezi, da je izkoriščanje narave (ekološka kriza) tesno povezano z marginalizacijo, izkoriščanjem in zlorabo žensk. S te perspektive so združene zaznave in kritični pogledi na ekološko (ne)pravičnost ter pomen vključevanja žensk v ekološko medreligijsko mirovništvo.

*Ključne besede: medreligijski dialog, ekofeminizem, ekološka (ne)pravičnost, ekološko mirovništvo žensk.*

Primož Krašovec, Anja Zalta

*Religijska raznolikost in problem sistemskega rasizma v okviru globalnih migracij: študija primera tunizijske obravnave podsaharskih temnopoltih kristjanov*

Članek temelji na večmesečni raziskavi procesa rasizacije podsaharskih migrantov v Tuniziji. Izhodišče naše raziskave je govor tunizijskega predsednika Kaisa Saieda iz februarja 2023. V okviru novih pogajanj z EU o podpori pri upravljanju migracij v Sredozemlju je predsednik poudaril, kako pomembno je, da Tunizija je ter ostane arabska in muslimanska. Podsaharski migranti, ki v velikem številu prihajajo v Tunizijo, so temnopolti. Številni med njimi so tudi kristjani. Tunizijski primer rasizacije migrantov je podoben dinamiki sistemskega rasizma v evropskih državah. Naša teza je, da je rasizacija del kompleksnejše dinamike, ki jo določa kapitalistični način produkcije, ki zaradi svojih notranjih protislovij hkrati zahteva in izloča človeško delovno silo. Trdimo, da so trajno izločeni presežno prebivalstvo, ki zaradi tega, ker ga kapitalistični trgi ne disciplinirajo, velja za nevarno, zato spada pod policijsko pristojnost. Ta proces policijskega obvladovanja presežnih populacij predstavlja sodobni sistemski rasizem kot poseben način državne politike, pri čemer je »rasa« rezultat omenjenega procesa ter ni določena s svojimi biološkimi, verskimi, etničnimi ali kulturnimi značilnostmi. Svojo tezo podpremo s terensko študijo. Sestavljajo jo kvalitativni intervjuji s tunizijskimi strokovnjaki in trije osebni pripovedni intervjuji s podsaharskimi migranti iz Kameruna.

*Ključne besede: temnopolti kristjani, religijska raznolikost, podsaharski Afričani, religija, presežno prebivalstvo, sistemski rasizem, migracije, tunizijski primer.*