



INDEXING IDENTITIES ON RELIGIOUS FACEBOOK MEMES: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This study examines how Facebook memes are used to index religious identities through semiotic analysis. It employs qualitative content analysis to interpret signs and symbols in 62 Islamic religious memes from Facebook. Charles Sanders Peirce's conceptual framework of icon, index, and symbol guides the analysis. The findings reveal four meaning categories in memes: symbolic, indexical, contextual, and intertextual. Symbolic meanings arise by associating religious concepts with icons. Indexical meanings are created through contextual connections between signs and objects. Contextual meanings rely on shared knowledge and experiences within religious groups. Intertextual meanings integrate religious themes with popular culture. The diverse semiotic resources in memes allow signaling religious affiliation, highlighting customs, and asserting moral perspectives. This research provides insights into how online communities creatively leverage memes for identity construction using semiotic modes. It demonstrates the emerging role of memes in digital discourses on religion and culture. Further studies can apply this approach to explore identity negotiation and meaning-making in diverse virtual spaces.

Keywords: Religious Memes, Facebook, Semiotics, Charles Sanders Peirce, Icon, Index, Symbol.

INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, social media platforms have become prominent avenues for identity expression and social interaction (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Through careful curation of profiles, posts, and connections, users actively shape their online identities to navigate social norms, achieve self-presentation objectives, and align with specific communities (Marwick & boyd, 2011). As participatory cultural artifacts, memes enable engagement in shared discourses, fostering a sense of belonging and reinforcing communal bonds (Shifman, 2013). Religious memes are specifically utilized by online communities to communicate ideas, critique societal conventions, and forge social ties centered around shared spiritual identities and values (Chen & Brown, 2020).

Semiotics provides a theoretical framework for unraveling the layers of meaning within multimodal communication, including images, signs, and symbols (Barthes, 1977). Multimodal analysis examines the interplay between textual, visual, and cultural modes of communication to understand meaning-making (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). This study adopts Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, especially his triadic model, to analyze how religious identities are indexed through signs and symbols within Facebook memes. Peirce emphasized examining relationships between sign vehicles, objects represented, and meanings produced (Peirce, 1931-1958). This approach reveals how religious memes employ verbal and visual cues to express religious viewpoints and signal communal belonging.

Lantowa, Marahayu, and Khairussibyan (2017) present a comprehensive overview of semiotic theory, methods and applications in their book on using semiotics in literary research. They outline core semiotic concepts and analytical techniques which inform the semiotic analysis framework used in this thesis. Their work provides relevant background knowledge on semiotic analysis approaches within the humanities (Lantowa et al., 2017).

Susilawatin, Baharuddin, and Fitriana (2021) utilize semiotic analysis to examine symbolism within the soundtracks of the film *The Lion King*. Through their analysis of iconic, indexical and symbolic signs in the music, they demonstrate how semiotics can unveil layers of meaning in media texts. This research provides a valuable example of applying semiotic analysis to interpret symbols and meaning in visual media, similar to the approach used in this study of religious memes (Susilawatin, Baharuddin & Fitriana, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODS

This qualitative study utilized virtual ethnography to gather data from public Facebook groups focused on Islamic religious humor and memes. A total of 62 religious meme images were collected through observation of online interactions and discourse within these groups.

The memes were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, guided by Charles Sanders Peirce's conceptual framework of icons, indices, and symbols. The analysis involved identifying meanings constructed through signs, symbols, cultural references, and humor within the multimodal meme images.

Key themes were extracted through careful examination of the textual elements, visuals, layout, coloring, and integration of cultural symbols within the memes. The goal was to provide insights into how religious identities are indexed through the strategic coordination of diverse semiotic resources.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As highly shareable multimedia artifacts, memes have become deeply embedded within digital cultures and online self-expression. This proliferating format encompasses a wide spectrum of genres and purposes, including an emergent subset focused on religious themes and communities. Religious memes represent participatory grassroots communication shaped by and tailored for individuals exploring spiritual identities and perspectives online.

This article presents key analysis and conclusions from a qualitative study examining how religious identities are indexed through Facebook memes using semiotic analysis. By unpacking the meanings and symbols manifest in this memetic content, the research sheds light on the roles religious memes play in constructing identity and meaning in contemporary digital spaces.

Findings

A. Multilayered Meanings in Religious Memes

A dataset of 62 Islamic religious memes shared on Facebook groups provided the basis for a systematic semiotic analysis utilizing Charles Sanders Peirce's conceptual framework categorizing signs into icons, indices, and symbols.

Four primary categories of meaning emerged from the multimodal memes combining textual, visual, and cultural symbolism:

1. Symbolic Meanings

Symbolic religious memes use recognizable images, characters, or composites to represent abstract concepts, values, and beliefs. The symbology provokes more complex philosophical or spiritual interpretations connecting the signs to broader religious principles.

For example, one meme depicts a character staring intensely, accompanied by a caption that humorously refers to a scenario where the character is observing someone who is about to sleep without reciting Ayat Al-Kursi, a significant verse from the Quran believed to provide protection.



Figure 1: Symbolic meme

The meme depicts a character staring intensely, accompanied by a caption that humorously refers to a scenario where the character is observing someone who is about to sleep without reciting Ayat Al-Kursi, a significant verse from the Quran believed to provide protection.

Table 4.3: Analysis of Symbolic #2

No	Element	Representament	Object	Interpretant	Type of Signs
1	Image	Image of a character staring intently	Action of going to sleep without reciting Ayat Al-Kursi	Humor and recognition of neglecting spiritual practices.	Icon
2	Caption	"the jinn watching me to go to sleep without reading ayat al kursi"	Action of going to sleep without reciting Ayat Al-Kursi	Caution and awareness of potential consequences associated with neglecting the recitation	Index
3	Symbolic Presence	The presence of the jinn in the meme	Spiritual consequences, reminders of the importance of religious practices	Symbolic representation of unseen forces, spiritual influences, and cautionary reminders	Symbol

The sign vehicle is the image of the character staring intensely. This is the physical representation that acts as the sign to be interpreted.

The object that is being represented by the sign vehicle is the act of someone going to sleep without reciting Ayat Al-Kursi. The image serves as a signifier for this action.

The meaning produced in the mind of the interpreter (interpretant) is a humorous depiction of the potential consequences or dangers of going to sleep without reciting Ayat Al-Kursi. The intense stare suggests the vigilant presence of supernatural forces, reminding the viewer of the importance of reciting the verse.

This meme exemplifies Peirce's triadic process, where the sign vehicle (image of staring character) represents an object (not reciting Ayat Al-Kursi before sleep) and creates an interpretant (humorous acknowledgement of associated consequences) in the viewer's mind. The interplay between the sign, object, and interpretant reveals the layered symbolic meaning being conveyed.

Overall, this triadic analysis breaks down the meme by identifying the signifying components based on Peirce's semiotic theory. The analysis demonstrates how the meaning-making process involves the interaction between the representamen (sign), its object, and the interpretant produced in the viewer's mind. This aligns with Peirce's conceptual framework.

The meme utilizes multiple signs to convey its symbolic meaning. The image of the jinn staring intently represents a vigilant presence and serves as an iconic sign. This visual representation connects to the object of neglecting to recite Ayat Al-Kursi before sleep, symbolizing the potential consequences and dangers of such neglect. The caption further reinforces this symbolism as an indexical sign, pointing directly to the act of neglect and creating an interpretant of awareness.

2. Indexical Meanings

Indexical meanings in religious memes are generated through direct visual or textual connections between signs and specific religious contexts. They rely on immediate recognition of real-world religious associations.

A meme showing an extreme close-up of muscular feet soles is captioned "After one month of Taraweeh prayer." For Muslims knowledgeable about tarawih, special lengthy Ramadan night prayers, this text points to the intense physical rigor and endurance demanded by the extensive worship. The exaggerated visual serves as an index of this implied physical exertion.



Figure 2: Indexical #1

Table 2: Analysis of Indexical #2

NO	Element	Representament	Object	Interpretant	Type of Signs
1	Visual Image	muscular sole of human feet	Representation of the physical outcome	Visual impact and recognition of exaggerated feet	Indexical
2	Caption	"after one month of taraweeh prayer"	Indication of the time period and prayer practice	Humorous suggestion that engaging in taraweeh prayer for a month leads to the depicted exaggerated physical result.	Indexical

Sign Vehicle: The sign vehicle in this meme is the picture of a muscular sole of feet. It is a visual representation that serves as a symbolic representation of a particular concept or idea.

Object Represented: The object represented by the sign vehicle in this meme is the physical transformation or physical effects of engaging in taraweeh prayer for one month. Taraweeh prayer is a voluntary prayer performed by Muslims during the month of Ramadan. It involves additional prayers performed after the evening prayer (Isha) and is known for its long duration, usually consisting of multiple units (rak'ahs) of prayer. The meme implies that engaging in taraweeh prayer for a month results in the depicted physical transformation of the feet.

Meaning Produced (Interpretant): The meaning produced, or interpretant, of the meme is a humorous exaggeration or satire regarding the physical effects of engaging in taraweeh prayer for one month. The meme suggests that engaging in taraweeh prayer leads to such an intense workout that even the soles of the feet become muscular and well-defined. It plays on the idea that taraweeh prayer is physically demanding and requires endurance, humorously exaggerating the potential outcomes of the prayer.

The meme aims to convey the physical demands associated with taraweeh prayer. Taraweeh prayer is known for its longer duration and numerous rakahs (prayer cycles) performed during the Islamic month of Ramadan. By showcasing a muscular sole, the meme symbolizes the physical exertion and endurance required to complete the extended taraweeh prayer sessions. The muscular appearance of the sole serves as a visual representation of the strength and resilience needed to engage in the repetitive movements of prayer for an extended period. It highlights the idea that the act of performing taraweeh prayer entails a significant physical effort, challenging the worshipper's stamina and endurance. The caption "one month after taraweeh prayer" emphasizes that this muscular transformation is the result of consistently participating in taraweeh prayer over a month. It implies that the physical demands of the prayer regimen have contributed to the observed muscular development in the sole.

The meme humorously highlights the physical exhaustion resulting from a month of taraweeh prayer. The indexical meaning arises from the direct association between the tired

feet image (indexical sign) and the caption mentioning taraweeh prayer (indexical sign). Viewers familiar with the practice can relate to the depicted exhaustion, as the indexical signs connect the image to the specific experience of engaging in taraweeh prayer for a month.

3. Contextual Meanings

Contextual religious memes leverage insider cultural knowledge and communal experiences, relying on familiarity with religious practices and norms to interpret the intended meaning.

One meme depicts a man heading to attend Friday Jumma congregational prayer wearing sandals, contrasted with his return wearing different shoes, humorously implying they were stolen during the prayers. This contextually conveys the common annoyance of stolen slippers at mosques, especially relatable for Muslims sharing that communal worship experience.



Figure 3: Contextual #1

Table 3: Analysis of Contextual #1

Element	Representament	Object	Interpretant	Type of Signs
First panel	A man wearing sandals	Going for Jumma	Identifying with the act of going for Jumma prayers	Iconic
Caption	"Going for Jumma"	The act of going for Jumma prayers	acknowledging the person's intention to attend Jumma prayers based on the caption	Indexical
Second Panel	A man wearing shoes	Coming back from Jumma	representation of a man wearing shoes	Iconic Sign
Caption	Coming back from Jumma"	The act of coming back from Jumma prayers	completion of the Jumma prayers and the person's return, as indicated by the caption;	Indexical

Sign Vehicle: The sign vehicle in this meme is the two panels, each showing a different footwear choice. The visual representation of the man wearing sandals in the first panel and then wearing shoes in the second panel signifies a change in his choice of footwear.

Object: The object represented in this meme is the act of the person stealing slippers or shoes. It humorously suggests that the person takes advantage of the absence of their owners during Jumma prayer to steal their footwear.

Interpretant: The interpretant of the meme is the meaning produced or the message conveyed to the audience. The meme humorously portrays the person as a thief, indicating that they use the opportunity of Jumma prayer to steal slippers or shoes left unattended. The contrast between the man's choice of footwear in the two panels adds to the humor, implying that he has stolen someone's shoes while they were attending Jumma.

The meme utilizes the sign vehicle of the two panels showcasing different footwear choices to represent the act of the person stealing slippers or shoes during Jumma prayer. It conveys an interpretant that humorously highlights the behavior of theft and the irony that it can occur when people are engaged in religious activities.

The meme conveys contextual meaning by tapping into specific cultural practices and adding a humorous twist related to stealing slippers or shoes. It draws on the cultural context of attending Jumma prayer, a significant congregational prayer in Islam, and the cultural norms associated with it. The meme humorously addresses the behavior of stealing footwear that can occur during Jumma prayer, where individuals typically remove their shoes or slippers before entering the mosque or prayer area and leave them unattended. The meme's humor lies in the irony of the situation, as it highlights the unexpected act of theft during a religious gathering. By contextualizing the meme within the shared knowledge and understanding of Jumma prayer and the potential risks associated with leaving footwear unattended, it engages with cultural nuances and experiences, eliciting a lighthearted response from individuals familiar with these aspects of the cultural context.

4. Intertextual Meanings

Intertextual memes connect religious themes to external references familiar within pop culture, scripture, or current events. By relating their content to wider cultural texts and artifacts, these memes take on additional layers of meaning.

One meme casts the superhero Spiderman as a representation of the guiding protection offered by the Islamic texts of the Quran and Hadith in the lives of believers. This creative intertextual reference links the Quran and Hadith's spiritual guidance to Spiderman's heroic qualities and powers within popular culture.

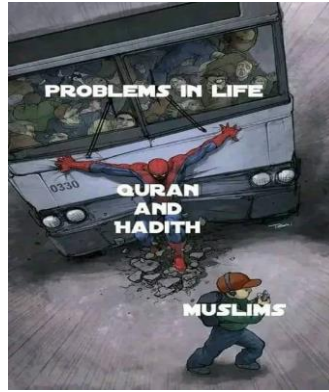


Figure 4: Intertextual #1

Table 4: Analysis of Intertextual #1

NO	Element	Representament	Object	Interpretant	Type of Signs
1	Image	Image of bus labeled "problems in life"	Challenges and difficulties faced in life	Represents the idea that life is full of problems	Icon
2	Image	Image of kid labeled "Muslims"	Muslims/believers facing life's challenges	Depicts Muslims confronted by problems in lifeovercoming fear of Dajjal	Icon
3	Image	Image of spiderman labeled "Qur'an and hadith"	Guidance from Islamic scriptures and traditions	Conveys the message that Qur'an and hadith can help Muslims overcome problems	Icon
4	Context	Bus about to hit kid but stopped by spiderman	Islamic teachings protecting believers from life's difficulties	Suggests Qur'an and hadith can shield Muslims from problems and adversity	Index

Sign Vehicle: The sign vehicle in this meme is the image of a bus labeled "problems in life" about to crash onto a kid labeled "Muslims." However, the bus is stopped by Spiderman, who is labeled "Qur'an and hadith."

Object: The object represented in this meme is the concept of problems or challenges in life that Muslims may encounter. It highlights the potential difficulties or dangers that Muslims face.

Interpretant: The interpretant of the meme is the meaning produced or the message conveyed to the audience. The meme metaphorically suggests that the teachings of the Qur'an

and hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad) act as a protective force, represented by Spiderman, preventing or mitigating the impact of problems or challenges faced by Muslims.

The meme contains intertextual meaning through its connections to other texts and cultural references. One such intertextual element is the inclusion of Spiderman, a popular fictional superhero from Marvel Comics known for his bravery and ability to protect others. By incorporating Spiderman into the meme, it creates an intertextual reference to the heroic attributes associated with the character. This reference symbolically represents the power and protective qualities of the Qur'an and hadith, central texts in Islam. The meme acknowledges the significance of these religious texts and their role in guiding and supporting Muslims. Additionally, the meme alludes to the concept of "problems in life," a universal theme found in various cultural narratives, literature, and personal experiences. By combining these intertextual elements, the meme conveys the message that Islamic teachings, represented by Spiderman, can provide strength and guidance to Muslims in overcoming challenges they may face. The intertextual connections deepen the meme's meaning and resonate with individuals who are familiar with both the cultural references and the significance of the Qur'an and hadith in Islamic faith and practice.

B. Indexicalization of Religious Identities

The study classified four central ways religious memes serve as indices of Muslim religious identity, based on their symbolic content and contextual references:

1. Religious Symbols

Direct visual symbols like depictions of worship practices, scriptures, holidays, and figures represent familiar touchstones of Muslim religious identity. For instance, a meme showing individuals dressed up for the Eid holiday indexes their performance of cultural and religious identity.



Figure 5: Religious Identity #1

The meme indexes religious identity through celebrations or holidays by utilizing various signs to represent the connection between the individual depicted and their religious identity. The image of a guy with fancy clothes and glasses standing proudly serves as an iconic sign representing an individual during a special occasion. The caption "7 years old me on eid" further emphasizes the specific celebration or holiday, which is Eid.

The reference to Eid as the celebratory event is an indexical sign that directly points to a religious occasion within the Islamic faith. Eid is a significant religious festival in Islam, typically celebrated by Muslims worldwide. It symbolizes unity, joy, and the culmination of a period of fasting or a significant religious observance.

The portrayal of the individual with fancy clothes and a proud stance suggests a strong sense of identity and connection to their religious community. The attire and proud demeanor act as indexical signs, representing the cultural and religious significance associated with dressing up and expressing pride during festive occasions, such as Eid.

The mention of being "7 years old" in the caption adds a personal and nostalgic touch, further indexing the individual's religious identity and the importance of the celebration during childhood. It reflects the sentimental value and memories associated with religious celebrations, which contribute to the formation of a person's religious identity.

By showcasing the individual's appearance, the mention of Eid, and the personal reminiscence of childhood, the meme semiotically indexes religious identity through celebrations or holidays. It signifies the connection and pride individuals feel in their religious community, specifically in the context of religious festivities such as Eid, and how these experiences shape their religious identity and sense of belonging.

Overall, the semiotics of the meme effectively conveys the indexing of religious identity through celebrations or holidays by utilizing visual, linguistic, and contextual signs to signify the connection between the depicted individual and their religious affiliation during festive occasions.

2. Cultural References

References to shared customs and experiences around Islamic practices, challenges, names, and cultural markers create indexical links to communal elements of Muslim identity. Memes dealing humorously with awkward prayer incidents or Ramadan struggles represent widely relatable references within the tradition.



Figure 6: Religious Identity #2

The meme index religious identity through the portrayal of religious challenges, specifically related to the anticipation of breaking the fast during Ramadan. Semiotically, we can analyze the meme in terms of its signifiers, signifieds, and the indexical relationship between them.

The meme features a character with a drooling expression, accompanied by the caption "that five minutes before iftar when you can smell the food." The signifier of the drooling expression conveys the intense desire and anticipation for food that occurs during the final moments before breaking the fast. The caption further emphasizes this experience, referring to the specific time before iftar, which is the meal eaten to break the fast during Ramadan.

The signifieds lie in the meanings or concepts associated with the signifiers. The drooling expression and the caption represent the physical and emotional challenges faced by individuals during the fasting period. They symbolize the struggle of restraining oneself from food and drink for an extended period, while being tantalizingly close to the moment of iftar.

The indexical relationship in this meme is established through the connection between the signifiers and the signifieds. By associating the drooling expression and the caption with the experience of waiting for iftar, the meme indexes the religious challenges encountered during Ramadan. It conveys the anticipation and the difficulty of resisting temptation while observing the fast.

Semiotically, this meme indexes religious identity by highlighting the unique challenges faced by individuals practicing Ramadan. It represents the physical and psychological struggles of fasting, the self-control required to abstain from food and drink, and the longing for the moment of iftar. Through humor and visual cues, the meme captures the shared experiences of those observing Ramadan and conveys the determination and resilience required to overcome these challenges.

3. Social Commentary

Memes commenting on current events, politics, and social issues from a religious viewpoint allow individuals to assert how their Muslim identity shapes their perspectives and moral alignments. Contrasting reactions to LGBTQ issues and Islamic holidays conveys stances based on religious values.



Figure 7: Religious Identity #3

This meme can be semiotically analyzed to explore how it signifies the prohibition of LGBTQ+ in Islam while simultaneously indexing religious events through political events. The visual elements of the meme include Drake's annoyed expression, a social media post supporting LGBTQ+ rights, Drake pointing, and a social media post about Eid Mubarak.

Semiotically, the meme utilizes indexical signs to signify the intersection between religious beliefs and political events. Drake's annoyed expression in response to the social media post supporting LGBTQ+ rights indexically represents the conflict between Islamic teachings and support for LGBTQ+ rights. It signifies the disapproval or rejection of the idea of accepting LGBTQ+ individuals within the framework of religious beliefs.

To fully interpret the intended message of the meme, it is essential to consider the broader context of Islamic teachings on homosexuality. Islam traditionally prohibits same-sex relationships, and this context informs the tension and refusal expressed in the meme. The meme draws on the socio-political discussions around LGBTQ+ rights and highlights the conflict between religious beliefs and contemporary political attitudes.

The social media post supporting LGBTQ+ rights symbolizes the broader political discourse around LGBTQ+ inclusion and equal rights. In the context of Islam, it represents a clash between societal trends and religious teachings that prohibit homosexuality.

The meme employs intertextuality to contrast the refusal of the LGBTQ+ support post with the subsequent panel showing Drake pointing towards a post about Eid Mubarak with a smile. This intertextual contrast indexes the shift from the political event to the religious event. It suggests that religious events, such as Eid, are prioritized over political issues, reflecting the importance of religious identity in the face of conflicting societal trends.

Through the semiotic analysis of this meme, it becomes evident that it signifies the prohibition of LGBTQ+ in Islam while simultaneously indexing religious events through political events. It reflects the complex interplay between religious beliefs and societal debates, shedding light on the tension between religious teachings and contemporary political attitudes towards LGBTQ+ rights.

4. Online Subcultures

Adoption of vernacular meme styles popular in Muslim online spaces signifies in-group cultural capital and religious affiliation. Islamic-specific reaction meme formats represent participatory cues tailored to resonate with and index identity within niche Muslim subcultures.



Figure 8: Religious Identity #4

The reaction meme image features a character wearing a kufi hat with the caption "no thanks, that's haram brother," serves as an index of religious identity through its usage of

semiotics and the context in which it is employed. Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols and how they convey meaning, plays a significant role in understanding the message conveyed by this reaction image. The visual symbolism of the character wearing a kufi hat, a symbol associated with Islamic culture and worn by Muslim men, serves as a visual cue that indexes Islamic religious identity. Additionally, the caption "no thanks, that's haram brother" adds a linguistic element, as it uses the term "haram" to refer to actions forbidden in Islam, establishing a connection to Islamic religious beliefs and practices. By employing this reaction image in various situations where someone rejects or disapproves of something due to religious reasons, individuals are signaling their religious identity and expressing their adherence to Islamic teachings and values.

The usage of reaction image becomes a shorthand way to convey a religiously motivated refusal or objection, allowing individuals to communicate their religious identity and engage in discussions related to Islamic beliefs and practices. Through the combination of visual symbolism, linguistic elements, and contextual usage, this reaction image serves as an index of religious identity, particularly within the framework of Islam, by effectively conveying specific religious beliefs and values associated with the image and its accompanying caption.

Discussion

The discussion section of the research focused on the meanings identified in religious Facebook memes and the roles that memes play in constructing religious identities. The findings highlighted various aspects of religious memes, including the use of religious symbols, cultural references, social commentaries, and their connection to online religious communities and subcultures.

The analysis revealed that religious memes employ recognized religious symbols to index religious identities, reflecting shared beliefs and values within specific communities (Shifman, 2013). Cultural references in memes, such as experiences, challenges, names, and clothing, are used to communicate religious affiliations and negotiate religious identities online (Marwick & Boyd, 2011).

The presence of social commentaries within religious memes allows individuals to express their religious perspectives on societal issues, reinforcing their religious identities and reflecting the self-constructed nature of online identities (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Additionally, the study emphasized the significance of online religious communities and subcultures in religious meme usage. Islamic reaction meme images, designed for communication within Islamic online communities, serve as an index of religious identity, contributing to the formation and reinforcement of these communities (Chen & Brown, 2020). Overall, the research demonstrates that religious memes play a crucial role in indexing religious identities through the utilization of symbols, cultural references, social commentaries, and their association with online religious communities. These findings contribute to existing literature on online identity construction, the cultural significance of memes, and semiotic analysis of visual communication.

In conclusion, this research deepens our understanding of the dynamic relationship between social media, memes, and religious identities (Barthes, 1977; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). It highlights the power of memes as cultural artifacts to convey religious beliefs, foster

a sense of belonging, and engage in social and cultural discourses. The findings have implications for practitioners and scholars interested in exploring the role of digital communication in shaping and negotiating religious beliefs and practices in contemporary society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has examined religious memes found on Facebook and their significance in representing cultural meanings and identities. By utilizing the concepts of Charles Sanders Peirce, the study has provided insights into how these memes contribute to the construction of communal identities. The analysis revealed that religious memes reflect a shift towards decentralized communication, where regular users have the power to shape discussions about religion in the digital world. However, this also poses challenges in terms of content moderation.

Furthermore, the semiotic study has shown that religious Facebook memes function as multimodal indices of religious identities online. The visual, textual, and cultural elements within these memes create indexical connections that signify belonging to specific groups, affirm shared experiences, and express religious perspectives. The use of religious symbols visually represents faith identities, while cultural references convey customs associated with religious identities. Additionally, social commentaries within these memes indicate how religious identities influence moral viewpoints. By adopting the online vernacular, religious communities can establish intimate connections within their subcultures.

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