

In 'Cultural Approach to Communication', sociologist James Carey claims that communication actions, including propaganda ones, might be analyzed in terms of ritualistic communication, which 'associates communication with such terms as sharing, participation, gathering, community and having common beliefs (...). Ritualistic concept does not focus on conveying a message within space, but on society's lasting in time; not on the act of sending a message, but on the representation of common beliefs' As regards the research of religious aspects on the Internet, the ritualistic model of communication is important, because it highlights the ritualistic nature and expressiveness of every communication action. Although in this model, the function of conveying a message from a sender to a recipient is maintained, the emphasis is put on the self-learning character of communication and on forming personality and social relations in the act of communication, that is on non-information functions of communication actions. According to Carey, communication is ritualistic because of dominant cultural forms of making social interactions and relying on a cultural set of traditions, myths, symbols and meanings. Ritualistic model refers to the main communication action functions that are socially important, that is, to forming community. Therefore, it has application in the analysis of religious communication, particularly in its ritualistic and symbolic forms. At the core of this sociological theory is the assumption that communication is the basis of social relations and additionally that communication defines the relational aspect between a sender and a recipient. The relational aspect of communication, characteristic of interpretative paradigm, manifests itself in communication models which treat online message, including religious ones, as one of the variants of communication action. The fundamental interpretation of communication understood as reflection of the type of communication in social relations is a typology established by sociologist Denis McQuail and expanded by a typology of models by Tomasz Goban-Klas. The model of coding and decoding a message in social and religious actions manifests itself in paradigm Web 2.0, popularized by O'Reilly & Associates media campaign. Expansion of Internet portals in public life and dramatic change of portaluser interaction types towards the dynamic use of online resources of Internet revolutionized the way various social actions take place. Regardless of functionality of the term online religion, the crucial issue is the plausibility of participation in religious life by forming and engaging human beings in community portals, which are online groups of people connected with one another through religious experiences and interests. The question that also needs to be asked is whether the Net constitutes the space or is rather a kind of substitute of traditional forms of expression and development of religiousness. The doubts mentioned above were investigated in 2017 in a sociological survey of university students. Multiple-choice answers regarding the dimensions of using the Internet for religious purposes were a novelty in comparison with surveys from 1988, 1998 and 2005. 30 % of respondents reported that they searched for the religious content on the Internet within the last six months preceding the survey (categories 'absolutely yes' and 'rather yes' altogether). However, over half of those surveyed indicated that they did not surf the Internet for religious purposes. Values in the correlation test do not show any statistically significant correlation between declaration concerning searching for religious content on the Internet and sex, type of university and size of place of residence.