3rd Conference on Digital Data and Human Sciences (DRDHum 2024)
Digital Research Data and Human Sciences in the Age of A.I.

The Wanders of the Invisible World

Astrology and magic-superstitious beliefs on social networks

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In the complex web of contemporary society, an increasingly widespread phenomenon is beginning to be rather conspicuous: a sharp contrast can be observed between the decline of traditional religious practices and the increasingly evident rise of beliefs, from the most classical to the most exotic, of a magical or superstitious nature. Such a dichotomy is jarring, and stimulates reflections of various kinds: not only can it serve as a witness to an ongoing cultural change, but it could also be a way of highlighting the dynamism and variety of spiritual and philosophical perspectives that are developing, in a subterranean and non-institutionalised manner. Energy crystals, tarot cards, wicca, just to mention a few of the most widespread and growing phenomena to date, are now a leitmotif for many social networking users, especially Instagram and Tik Tok, in inverse proportion to the number of traditional believers. In this context, Adorno's foundational work comes to mind, in which he analysed the irrationality of the horoscope, using it as a litmus test to describe contemporary society. The textual analysis developed refers to 1950s America, a world that was totally different in many respects, certainly including technological and communicational ones, which is why the aim of this work is to verify whether the conclusions reached by the Frankfurt author remain valid today. The aim of this paper is to verify whether Adorno's approach remains valid in the contemporary context. Analysing the Italian context, we intend to replicate the methodology employed in "The Stars Down To Earth" taking as reference four Italian-language Instagram profiles dedicated to horoscopes, selected on the basis of their popularity. These profiles will be subjected to a netnography with the aim of building a dataset of texts, to cover the duration of an entire year (2023). These texts will then be compared and cross-analysed with the intention of trying to find recurrences or dissonances, in order to deepen our knowledge of the beliefs behind this practice in today's context.

Keywords: #Astrology #Religion #Supersition #Digital Methods #Metaverse

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