



DIGITAL NATIVES: LANGUAGES AND RITUALS

by Antonio Spadaro



Abstract

The Net and the culture of cyberspace pose new challenges to our ability to formulate rituals and to create and listen to a symbolic language that speaks of possibility and of signs of transcendence in our lives. The participation in the digital environment is not indifferent to the way in which the human being lives his own spirituality and life of faith. We have to identify some key issues considering the common use of certain «apps» (applications) which have a deep impact in our way to do/see/understand things. New technologies not only shape the way we live, but also the way we orient and express our spirit and our relationship with God. How has the search for a meaning changed in the time of search engines? We need an meditation which is also the fruit of faith that releases from itself a cognitive boost at a time of the Net. Perhaps the time has arrived to consider spirituality as a kind of inner hacking, something that breaks the system asking for meaning.

Antonio Spadaro, is a Jesuit and directs the review «La Civiltà Cattolica». He works on languages in contemporary culture. In 1998 he founded the association of creative writers BombaCarta (<http://www.bombacarta.com>). He is a literary critic and has written *La grazia della parola. Karl Rahner e la poesia* (Jaca Book 2006), *Abitare nella possibilità. L'esperienza della letteratura*, I (ivi 2008) and *L'altro fuoco. L'esperienza della letteratura*, II (ivi 2009). He curated the Italian edition of the works of G. M. Hopkins (Rizzoli 2008), Walt Whitman (Ancora 2009) and Flannery O'Connor (Rizzoli 2011). For the last decade he has looked at digital culture from the theological and anthropological perspectives. He blogs at <http://www.cyberteologia.it> and has written books on the evolution of the net. His most recent work is *Cybertheology. Thinking the faith at a time of the net* (Vita e Pensiero 2012).