

Abstract

The thesis **Modern Witchcraft and Alternative Spirituality in the World of Digital Media** explores the understanding and perceptions of how witchcraft-practising users of the social media platform TikTok interact with witchcraft and neo-pagan content on said platform. Through in-depth interviews with witchcraft-practising respondents, the thesis aims to explore how their views, religious beliefs and daily routines are influenced and shaped by this content. The thesis focuses on content creators' perceptions of the prevalence of misinformation, the use of spiritual themes and pagan symbolism for right-wing politics, but also discusses perceptions of the development of a trend of conspirituality and the commercialisation of witchcraft, which is conditioned by the rise of social networking and algorithmic formulas and has caused witchcraft to cross over into the mainstream cultural and social spheres. The theoretical part of the thesis introduces witchcraft and alternative forms of spirituality within the historical setting and their modern forms, as well as in the realm of popular culture and its manifestations. The thesis then discusses feminist and social movements based on witchcraft and spiritual beliefs. The chapter goes on to discuss the post-factual society and the spread of misinformation. It then illustrates examples for the use of pagan symbolism within various right-wing ideologies. The final chapter discusses alternative spirituality on social media, discussing the TikTok platform and the algorithmic dissemination of videos, highlighting examples of popular posts across the platform. Finally, the theoretical section discusses the commercialization of witchcraft.

The subsequent practical section provides a theoretical setting of the research aim and its methodology. It shows the course of the research and finally the results of the data analysis. Based on the findings, it further answers the research questions, presents discussions and limitations of the research and offers a final summary at the end of the thesis.

Keywords

witchcraft, neo-paganism, spirituality, TikTok, feminism, conspirituality, post-faktual society, tradwives, cottagecore

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