

Philosophical Reflections on Media Ethics in the Dissemination of Religious Culture in the Self-Media Era

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Abstract: Based on the deep integration of self-media technology empowerment and religious cultural communication, this study systematically analyzes the ethical dilemma and governance path of religious communication in the digital era. The study finds that the openness and low threshold characteristics of self-media platforms lead to ethical anomie phenomena such as the dissolution of authenticity, frequent privacy infringement, infiltration of extremist thoughts, and lack of social responsibility in the dissemination of religious information. By constructing a four-dimensional analytical framework of "technology-subject-system-audience", it is revealed that the root cause of the problem lies in the conflict between technical logic and humanistic values, the structural imbalance of communication subject literacy, the lag of the regulatory system and the audience's cognition. The "sound wall effect". Based on comparative research, this paper proposes ethical norms with "authenticity, respect, and publicity" as the core, and constructs a four-dimensional normative system including legal regulation, industry self-discipline, technical governance, and education guidance, so as to provide a theoretical reference and practical path for the ethical construction of religious and cultural communication in the digital age.

Keywords: Self-Media Communication; Religious Culture; Media Ethics; Normative System; Algorithm Governance; Communication Ethics

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's era of rapid development of digital information, self-media has become an important force in the field of information communication, profoundly changing people's lives, communication and access to information. With its remarkable characteristics such as fast communication speed, wide coverage, strong interactivity and low threshold, self-media has broken the communication pattern of traditional media and given more voice to ordinary people (Tang, 2019). Under the vigorous development of self-media, the dissemination of religious culture has also ushered in new changes and opportunities. As an indispensable cultural phenomenon in the development of human society, religion carries rich spiritual connotations and values, and has had a profound impact on the evolution of human civilization. The traditional way of disseminating religious culture mainly depends on the activities of religious sites, the

distribution of religious books, and the words and deeds of religious figures. However, these communication methods are often limited by time, space, and communication subjects, and their scope and influence are relatively limited. The emergence of self-media has opened up a new path for the dissemination of religious culture. Through various self-media platforms, religious organizations and believers can quickly disseminate rich and diverse religious and cultural content such as religious teachings, religious activities, and religious art to audiences around the world in various forms such as text, pictures, audio, and video, greatly expanding the scope and depth of religious and cultural communication. For example, some religious groups conduct real-time live broadcasts of religious ceremonies through livestreaming platforms, attracting the attention of a large number of believers and non-believers. Religious figures have set up accounts on social media to share their religious insights and spiritual experiences, and have interacted with the vast number of netizens, thus promoting the dissemination and exchange of religious culture (Posavac & Posavac, 2002). However, while self-media has brought many conveniences and opportunities to the dissemination of religious culture, it has also caused a series of complex media ethics issues. Due to the openness and autonomy of self-media, the main body of communication presents the characteristics of diversification, and it is difficult to effectively guarantee the quality and authenticity of the communication content. In the process of disseminating religious culture, some self-media may spread some unconfirmed religious rumors, superstitious content, and even extreme ideas in order to attract attention and pursue traffic, which will not only mislead the public's perception of religion, but also may have a negative impact on social stability and harmony. For example, some self-media accounts spread sensational religious prophecies or mystical content in order to attract people's attention, causing panic and misunderstanding among the public; Some people with ulterior motives use self-media platforms to spread religious extremism, incite religious hatred, and undermine social order (Chen, 2023). In addition, the arbitrariness and fragmentation of self-media communication can also easily lead to the distortion and misinterpretation of religious culture, so that religious culture loses its original spiritual connotation and value in the process of dissemination. Regulating the dissemination of religion and culture in the era of self-media and strengthening the study of media ethics and norms have become an urgent need for current social development. From a social perspective, regulating the spread of religious culture is conducive to maintaining social stability, promoting ethnic unity and cultural harmony.

As an important social and cultural force, the content and manner of religion have a direct impact on social values and moral customs. By regulating the dissemination of self-media, we can guide religious culture to integrate into society in a positive and healthy way, and play a positive role in promoting social harmony and improving the moral quality of citizens. From the perspective of the development of religion itself, a good communication environment and standardized communication behaviors are conducive to the inheritance and development of religious culture (Zhou & Feng, 2019). In the era of self-media, religious culture needs to adapt to the development of the times with the help of new means of communication, but at the same time, it also needs to maintain its own purity and seriousness. Only through standardized dissemination can we avoid the interference of undesirable factors in the process of dissemination, ensure that it can be accurately conveyed to the audience, and realize the sustainable development of religious culture.

2. MEDIA ETHICS AND NORMS FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF RELIGIOUS CULTURE AT HOME AND ABROAD

In terms of media ethics and norms for the dissemination of religious culture, Table 1 shows that The integration of religious communication and media in the United States is deep, and the norms of the news media industry, such as those of the American Professional Journalists Association, affect religious reporting, and pay attention to preventing the spread of extremist ideas; European countries have their own characteristics, with the British media following industry self-regulation, France emphasizing the separation of religion and secularity, and Germany focusing on protecting the rights and interests of religious minorities. In reporting on religion, China's traditional media adhere to the principles of respecting freedom of belief, objectivity and neutrality, respecting customs and traditions, and abiding by laws and regulations, and constantly improve their own religious literacy (Liang et al., 2022). The self-media industry at home and abroad is also actively exploring self-discipline, such as the United States We-Media Alliance to formulate norms and train practitioners, and Europe pays attention to cooperation with religious institutions; The establishment of relevant organizations, the formulation of self-discipline conventions, the establishment of credit systems, and the development of training activities in various parts of the country have provided many references for media ethics and norms in the dissemination

of religious culture in the era of self-media.

Table 1: (a) Comparison of Domestic and Foreign Religious Communication Norms

Dimension	US SPJ Code of Ethics	European Religious Communication Norms	Chinese Religious Affairs Regulations
Core Principles	Emphasize truth, accuracy, objectivity, fairness, independence, and responsibility. For example, in religious reporting, strive to present a balanced view by interviewing multiple religious perspectives.	In the UK, media follow industry self - discipline with principles of fairness and balance in religious reporting. France emphasizes the strict separation of religion and the secular, and media report on the relationship between religion and society while respecting religious beliefs. Germany focuses on protecting the rights and interests of religious minorities.	Guarantee freedom of religious belief, and media must respect this right. Reports should be objective, neutral, and avoid discrimination against any religion.
Regulatory Approach	Mainly rely on industry self - regulation. The SPJ's Code of Ethics serves as a guiding standard for media professionals.	A combination of legal constraints and industry self - regulation. In the UK, industry self - regulatory organizations like IPSO play a role. France has media laws restricting the content and form of religious dissemination. Germany enforces anti - discrimination laws in religious media reports.	Government - led legal supervision. Media must abide by relevant laws and regulations, such as the "Religious Affairs Regulations", and report religious content in accordance with the law.
Content Restrictions	Prohibit the dissemination of content that promotes religious extremism, violence, and hatred. Ensure that religious reports are not distorted or one - sided.	In the UK, avoid causing unnecessary harm to religious beliefs and believers. France restricts content that overly promotes religious doctrines or ceremonies. Germany prohibits discriminatory reporting against any religious group.	Prohibit the dissemination of religious extremism, cult - related content, and unrecognized religious activities, organizations, and figures.

Table 1: (b) Comparison of Domestic and Foreign Religious Communication Norms

Dimension	US SPJ Code of Ethics	European Religious Communication Norms	Chinese Religious Affairs Regulations
Typical Cases	For example, in some religious - related news reports, the media adheres to the SPJ's principles. When reporting on religious events, it presents comprehensive information from different religious sources.	In the UK, media reporting on religious controversies follows the fairness and balance principle. France's media reports focus on the relationship between religion and society. Germany's media ensures that reports on religious events respect the feelings of all religious groups.	In China, WeChat's religious content review mechanism adheres to the "Religious Affairs Regulations", and content that violates regulations is not allowed to be disseminated.

The United States has a high degree of religious pluralism and a long history of religious and cultural dissemination and media integration. After the rise of mass media, radio and television became important channels for evangelical Christian evangelical churches to preach widely. In the Internet era, religious organizations use self-media platforms to publish content and live ceremonies to interact with audiences through official websites, social media, and live ceremonies. U.S. news media industry norms, while not specifically designed for religious communication, have far-reaching implications. The Code of Professional Ethics of the American Professional Journalists Association emphasizes the principles of truthfulness, accuracy, and objectivity, prompting the media to ensure the truthfulness of the content in religious reporting, avoid favoritism and distortion in multi-party interviews, and pay attention to protecting the privacy and religious feelings of believers. The United States also attaches great importance to preventing the spread of religious extremism and cults, laws and regulations prohibit the dissemination of relevant content, and Internet platforms have strengthened review and management, taking measures and reporting violations when they are discovered (Yin et al., 2023). The practice of media ethics in the transmission of religious culture in European countries has its own characteristics. Europe has a rich religious history, with Christianity playing an important role and Islam developing with immigrants in recent years. The UK media follow industry self-regulatory guidelines, such as the Code of Conduct developed by the Press Complaints Commission (later replaced by IPSO) to regulate

religious reporting, emphasizing fairness and balance, by inviting representatives of different religious groups to discuss Controversial topics promote dialogue and understanding (Hou et al., 2021). France emphasizes the separation of religion and secularity, the media law restricts the content and form of religious transmission, prevents excessive religious interference in social and public life, and media reports focus on the relationship between religion and society. Germany attaches great importance to the protection of the rights and interests of religious minorities, restricts the dissemination of religion by the media through anti-discrimination laws, and fully considers the feelings and needs of different groups in reporting, so as to promote religious harmony and social stability. Traditional Chinese media adhere to the principle of respecting freedom of religious belief in their reporting on religion, the Constitution guarantees citizens' freedom of religious belief, and the media treats all religions objectively and equally, avoiding conflicts caused by reporting, and truthfully introducing religious festivals to show cultural characteristics. Adhere to an objective and neutral position, comprehensively present the views of all parties on religious events, and conduct interviews with multiple parties on controversial topics. Respect religious customs and traditions, report on ceremonies, and know the taboos in advance. Abide by laws and regulations, report in accordance with the "Regulations on Religious Affairs" and other norms, do not disseminate unapproved content, and do not promote extremist and cult ideas. At the same time, traditional media improve the religious literacy and professional level of practitioners through training and inviting consultants. In the era of self-media, industry self-discipline is crucial to regulating the dissemination of religious culture. The American We-Media Alliance has formulated strict norms, required truthfulness and accuracy in the review content, prohibited malicious hype and other behaviors, imposed penalties for violations, and organized training to enhance practitioners' religious awareness. In Europe, for example, the German self-media industry association cooperates with religious groups, and religious groups provide guidance, and the associations formulate norms to regulate the conduct of ritual reporting. The self-discipline of China's self-media industry has been continuously improved, and associations have been established in various places (Wang et al., 2020). The WeChat public account content specification advocates the alliance to formulate a self-discipline convention, requiring compliance with religious policies and regulations, and disseminating positive content. Toutiao We-Media Alliance has established a credit system to evaluate account performance, and uses technology to monitor and review illegal

content. The domestic self-media industry association also improves the religious literacy and professional ethics of practitioners through training and exchanges.

3. THE PHENOMENON OF RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL TRANSMISSION IN THE ERA OF SELF-MEDIA

3.1 The Relationship Between Self-Media and the Dissemination of Religious Culture

As an emerging form of communication, many characteristics of self-media have a profound impact on the dissemination of religious culture and give a new look to the dissemination of religious culture. The main body of communication is civilian and diversified. In the era of traditional media, the dissemination of religious culture is mostly led by religious institutions and professionals, and the participation of ordinary people is limited. After the rise of self-media, this pattern has been broken, and ordinary believers and non-believers can use personal self-media accounts, such as WeChat public accounts, Weibo, Douyin, etc., to share religious insights, activity experiences and other content (Sun et al., 2024). This not only enriches the perspective of communication, but also injects new vitality into the dissemination of religious culture. For example, the stories of spiritual practice shared by ordinary believers can resonate with non-believers and allow non-believers to intuitively experience religious culture. Scholars and culture lovers interpret religious culture from a professional perspective and expand the depth of communication. The content of the dissemination is rich and diverse, involving religious doctrines, rituals, art, history and other fields. There are a large number of articles and videos interpreting religious teachings on the media, helping believers deeply understand the connotation of religion, such as explaining the "Four Truths" and "Twelve Causes" of Buddhism in an illustrated and textual way and other doctrines. Religious ceremonies have also become an important part of the dissemination, and live videos of Christian Mass, Islamic worship and other ceremonies allow believers who cannot attend in person to feel their solemnity and sacredness. Religious art, such as religious music, paintings, sculptures, etc., is widely disseminated in self-media, bringing people a unique cultural experience. The dissemination of religious history helps people understand the development of religion in the form of vivid stories and biographies. The fast speed and wide range of communication are the significant advantages of self-media in

disseminating religious culture. Traditional communication methods are limited by time and space, and information dissemination is slow and the coverage is narrow. Relying on the Internet, self-media can realize the instant release and rapid diffusion of information. Once there is an important religious event or event, the relevant information is instantly spread around the world (Wang et al., 2019). For example, the live broadcast of a large-scale puja in a temple can be watched in real time by believers and followers around the world through mobile phones and computers, which greatly improves the influence and dissemination efficiency of religious culture, and promotes the understanding of religious culture among people with different cultural backgrounds. Strong interactivity is the new vitality brought by self-media to the dissemination of religious culture. The transmission of traditional religious culture is mostly one-way transmission, and there is little interaction. On the self-media platform, the communicator and the audience can interact in real time, the audience expresses their opinions through comments, likes, and forwards, and the communicator replies in a timely manner, which enhances the sense of audience participation and makes the communication more in line with the needs of the audience. Under religious and cultural accounts, believers can communicate around doctrinal understanding and spiritual confusion to form a good interactive community, and communicators can adjust their communication strategies accordingly to improve the communication effect (Liu et al., 2023). However, the openness and low threshold of self-media communication also bring challenges to the dissemination of religious culture. The quality of the content is uneven, false information and misleading content appear from time to time, and some self-media spread unconfirmed rumors, superstitious content and even extreme ideas for eyeballs, affecting the healthy spread of religion and culture. At the same time, the trend of fragmentation and entertainment is easy to distort and dilute the connotation of religious culture, weakening its seriousness and depth. Therefore, how to pursue advantages and avoid disadvantages and standardize the dissemination of religious culture in the era of self-media has become an urgent problem to be solved.

3.2 Modes and Forms of Propagation

The modes and forms of religious culture on the self-media platform are rich and diverse, and they are deeply integrated with the characteristics of the self-media, which affects the scope of communication and the audience's experience. The live broadcast mode is becoming more and

more popular in the dissemination of religious culture. With the help of video, voice and other technologies, live religious broadcasts provide an intuitive religious experience for believers and interested groups. Buddhist temples broadcast live during major puja ceremonies, presenting real-time scenes such as the solemn atmosphere of the scene, monks chanting sutras and praying for blessings, and believers visiting the shrines, and the audience can interact through barrages and comments, ask questions, pray for blessings or share their feelings. This not only allows believers who are unable to attend to participate in religious activities, but also attracts the attention of non-believers and enhances their intuitive understanding of religious culture. The Taoist temple broadcasts the Taoist priest practice and the Jiao ceremony, which also helps the audience understand the Taoist practice method and ritual connotation. In addition, the live broadcast also opened up a new way for religious education, and religious figures interacted with the audience in real time to answer questions through live broadcasts, teaching the scriptures and imparting knowledge. The social network model has become an important support for the dissemination of religious culture (Fei et al., 2020). On social platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, and Douyin, religious groups, personalities, and believers have set up accounts to share religious knowledge, spiritual insights, and photos and videos of activities. The WeChat public account of Buddhism regularly publishes interpretations of classics and teachings by senior monks, and believers can leave messages and exchanges; In the Weibo Religious Topic Super Talk, believers and culture lovers actively share their experiences and discuss issues, forming an active religious social community. This model not only disseminates religious knowledge, but also helps believers build mutual trust and enhance the cohesion and sense of belonging of religious beliefs. The religious education model has undergone profound changes in the era of self-media. New media technology has made religious education diverse, interactive, and targeted, and personalized education programs can be formulated according to the degree and level of faith of believers. Educational videos produced by religious institutions explain religious doctrines, history, and culture in vivid pictures and popular language to attract audiences to learn. Religious schools offer online courses on self-media platforms, invite well-known professors to teach, and provide systematic learning opportunities. Online Q&A and discussion sections facilitate learners' communication and improve learning effectiveness and motivation. In the era of self-media, there are multiple forms of religious and cultural communication, and in addition to traditional text and pictures, audio and video have become

important communication carriers. Audio is suitable for disseminating religious culture in fragmented time, such as religious music, lecture audio, etc., which people can listen to when commuting and exercising. Videos attract audiences with their vivid images and strong appeal, and short videos of religious culture on short video platforms are popular for presenting the essence of religious culture with exquisite pictures, creativity and concise content, such as Buddhist meditation and Taoist health preservation (Hui et al., 2023). Religious and cultural documentaries and micro-films are also widely disseminated on self-media platforms, showing the connotation and charm of religious culture in depth.

3.3 Presentation of Typical Cases

Taking the spread of Buddhism and Christianity on self-media platforms as an example, we can clearly gain insight into the actual situation of the spread of religious culture in the era of self-media. In terms of Buddhism communication, the official account of Douyin "Shaolin Temple" is very representative. The account uses short videos to show the unique charm of Shaolin Temple, and attracts a large number of users by filming temple buildings, martial arts performances, monks' spiritual life and other content, and many videos have hundreds of thousands or even millions of likes, and the comment area is enthusiastically interactive. For example, the video of the warrior monk's stick performance, with superb martial arts, wonderful pictures and passionate music, shows the breadth and profundity of Shaolin martial arts, and triggers the audience's discussion of Shaolin culture and Buddhist spirit. In addition, the account also displayed Buddhist activities through live broadcasts, allowing the audience to feel the solemn atmosphere of Buddhism and enhance the intuitive experience of Buddhist culture. The WeChat public account "Xuecheng Master" is also an important case of Buddhist cultural dissemination. The official account was founded by Venerable Xuecheng to spread the teachings and share his thoughts. Regularly published lectures, interpretations of classics, spiritual stories, etc., guide believers to understand the spiritual connotation of Buddhism with simple words and vivid cases. For example, the article on "compassion" illustrates its importance and cultivation methods through short life stories, which has aroused widespread forwarding and discussion among believers, forming a good interactive community. The official account also set up a Q&A session to answer the confusion of believers in their practice and strengthen the connection with believers. In terms of Christian communication, the WeChat public account of "Hymn Network" focuses on the dissemination of hymns, and

pushes the audio, video, lyrics, behind the story and theological meaning of the hymn every day. Christian believers often find solace by listening to hymns. The Christmas-themed hymn album launched during the Christmas period expresses praise and gratitude for the birth of Jesus Christ with beautiful melodies and sincere emotions, which is warmly welcomed by believers, and has a high number of shares and likes. Some Christian personal accounts on Douyin, believers share their testimonies of faith, telling about the changes that faith has made in their lives, which resonates and attracts the attention of non-believers, such as a believer sharing his story of finding hope because of his faith in a difficult situation, which touched many viewers (Zhou, 2023).

4. THE ROOT CAUSE OF ETHICAL PROBLEMS IN THE SPREAD OF RELIGION AND CULTURE IN THE ERA OF WE-MEDIA

4.1 Constraints on the Characteristics of Self-Media

The openness of self-media gives the public equal rights to disseminate information, breaking the information monopoly of traditional media, but also increasing the difficulty of supervising the dissemination of religious culture. On self-media platforms, anyone can publish religion-related content without strict review, which makes it possible for some communicators who lack professional religious knowledge to spread inaccurate and erroneous information. Some bloggers who have not received formal religious education interpret religious doctrines only on subjective assumptions, which can easily mislead the audience and undermine the authority of religious doctrines. The low threshold of self-media also provides an opportunity for unscrupulous elements to spread false religious information, disrupt social order, and undermine religious harmony and stability, such as fabricating religious rumors to cause public panic. The autonomy of self-media enables the communication subjects to disseminate religious culture according to their own wishes, which stimulates the vitality of communication, but also leads to the excessive pursuit of personal interests and attention by some communicators, and the neglect of social responsibility and ethical norms. In order to attract fans and traffic, some self-media use exaggerated and vulgar communication methods to entertain and commercialize religious culture (Tang, 2019). For example, making funny videos that spoof religious ceremonies and characters seriously undermine religious dignity; Some self-media also excessively implant advertisements, reducing the dissemination

of religious culture to a commercial marketing method, deviating from the original intention of communication. Although the rapid dissemination of self-media has improved the efficiency of the dissemination of religious and cultural information, it has also led to the lack of sufficient verification and verification of information, resulting in the rapid spread of false and bad information. Once false religious information is released, it will spread widely in a short period of time due to its extremely fast spread, causing adverse effects, while the speed of refuting rumors often lags behind, and it is difficult to eliminate the negative impact. The rapid dissemination of self-media also makes it difficult for communicators to think deeply and analyze the content, and it is easy to spread one-sided and extreme views, causing social contradictions. In the dissemination of controversial religious topics, communicators may be in a hurry to express their views and fail to make a comprehensive and objective analysis, which may lead to quarrels and conflicts between believers of different religions.

4.2 Limitations of Communicator Literacy

The ethical problems in the dissemination of religious culture in the era of self-media are largely due to the limitations of the communicator's literacy, which are mainly reflected in the lack of religious knowledge and weak moral awareness. Many self-media communicators lack systematic and in-depth study of religious knowledge. Religious culture is rich in connotation, involving doctrine, doctrine, history, philosophy and other aspects. Some communicators disseminate without sufficient research and understanding, resulting in errors and deviations in the content. When disseminating Christian content, there may be misinterpretation of basic doctrines such as the Trinity; When spreading Buddhist culture, it is possible to confuse the philosophies and methods of different sects and confuse the audience. Some communicators do not have an accurate grasp of the historical background and cultural connotation of religion, and if they do not understand the specific historical, social, and cultural background of religion, they will not be able to accurately explain its meaning and development context, which will affect the audience's comprehensive understanding of religious culture. Some self-media communicators have a weak sense of morality and lack a sense of responsibility and mission when disseminating religious culture (Yin et al., 2023). In order to attract attention and gain traffic, they deliberately disseminate sensational and exaggerated religious content, and create false hot spots, such as fabricating supernatural incidents in religious holy places, misleading the public, and destroying the environment for the

dissemination of religious culture. Some communicators lack respect for different religious beliefs and cultures, have prejudices and discrimination, one-sidedly emphasize the superiority of their own religions, belittle other religions, and cause religious contradictions and conflicts. Some disseminators also use the dissemination of religious culture to carry out improper commercial activities, defraud the audience of money, and damage the reputation of religion.

4.3 Imperfection of Regulatory Mechanisms

The imperfection of the regulatory mechanism is an important reason for the ethical problems of religious and cultural communication in the era of self-media, which is reflected in the regulatory subjects, laws and regulations, and technical means. There are problems of unclear responsibilities and difficulty in coordination among regulatory entities. In the era of self-media, the dissemination of religious culture involves multiple departments, such as religious affairs, internet information, culture, public security, etc., but the division of responsibilities of each department is not clear enough, and there are overlapping functions and gaps. Religious affairs departments lack the technology and manpower to supervise self-media, making it difficult to comprehensively monitor the content disseminated; Although the internet information department has the technology to supervise the network, it lacks professional knowledge of religion and makes it difficult to accurately judge ethical issues. As a result, in actual supervision, various departments are prone to pass the buck to each other, and it is impossible to form an effective regulatory force. When dealing with information on religious extremism disseminated by self-media, religious affairs departments and internet information departments often have unclear responsibilities, resulting in problems that cannot be resolved in a timely manner (Qin, 2020). There is a lag and imperfection in laws and regulations. With the development of self-media, the form and content of religious and cultural communication are constantly innovating, but most of the existing laws and regulations related to religion were formulated in the era of traditional media, which is difficult to meet the needs of self-media supervision. Current laws and regulations are not clear and detailed in their provisions on the subject qualifications, content review standards, and punishment measures for violations of religious and cultural transmissions on self-media platforms, and lack standardized management measures for emerging forms of communication, such as religious live broadcasts and short videos. This makes it difficult for regulatory authorities to effectively crack down on

illegal dissemination. For example, some self-media accounts that have not obtained qualifications conduct religious live broadcasts, but it is difficult for the regulatory authorities to stop and punish them. The lack of technical means is also a shortcoming of the regulatory mechanism. The information on self-media platforms is massive and spreads rapidly, and it is difficult for existing technical means to comprehensively and analyze the content of religious and cultural communication in real time (Huang et al., 2018). The current content moderation technology mainly relies on keyword filtering and manual review, which is prone to misjudgment and omission, and it is difficult to identify obscure and deformed negative religious information. Manual review faces problems such as large workload, low efficiency, and strong subjectivity, and cannot meet regulatory needs. Some self-media accounts use homophonic words, symbols, and other methods to circumvent keyword filtering and spread religious extremist thoughts, which is difficult to detect and deal with in a timely manner by existing technical means. The technology for analyzing user behavior on self-media platforms is also immature, making it difficult to warn and prevent negative communication behaviors in advance.

4.4 Audience Perception Bias

In the era of self-media, the audience's cognitive bias of religious culture is becoming more and more obvious in the process of communication, mainly due to the fragmented dissemination of information and the limitations of their own cognition, which brings many problems to the accurate dissemination and understanding of religious culture. The information dissemination of self-media platforms is fragmented, and religious and cultural information is no exception. Religious teachings, stories, rituals, and other content are divided into short fragments and disseminated, lacking systematization and integrity. When the audience receives this fragmented information, it is difficult to deeply understand the religious and cultural connotations. On short video platforms such as Douyin, short videos about Buddhism may only capture a sentence or a short story fragment from the scriptures, making it difficult for the audience to comprehend the profound teachings and philosophical ideas behind it in a short period of time, and it is easy to have a one-sided understanding of religious culture, simplifying and superficializing it, and failing to grasp the core spirit (Gao et al., 2024). The cognitive limitations of the audience themselves also lead to misunderstandings of religious culture. There are differences in the knowledge level, cultural background, and life experience of different audiences, which affect their understanding

and acceptance of religious culture. Some audiences lack basic religious knowledge and are prone to confuse religion with feudal superstition, such as believing that religious belief is to pray to gods and Buddhas, fortune-telling and appearance, distorting the essence of religion and hindering the normal spread of religious culture. Some audiences are limited by their own values and ways of thinking, and have prejudices and rejection of religious cultures (Yanqiu, 2021). Under the influence of scientism or pragmatism, some people believe that religion is backward and superstitious, and refuse to understand and accept religious culture, which hinders the spread and exchange of religious culture. The audience's blind acceptance of religious culture also has undesirable consequences. Some audiences, without in-depth thinking and rational judgment, blindly follow the trend of religion and may fall into the trap of extremism or cults. Cult organizations use self-media to disseminate false religious information to deceive people, and some audiences who lack the ability to discern are brainwashed and engage in acts that endanger society and themselves (Lyu & Zhang, 2025). For example, some cult organizations recruit members through self-media, resulting in the breakdown of some people's families, property losses, and even life-threatening conditions. Cognitive biases of the audience can also affect social harmony and stability. When the audience misunderstands or blindly accepts religious culture, it is easy to cause contradictions and conflicts between people of different religions. Some people make inappropriate remarks on self-media platforms, attacking and slandering other religions, leading to tensions between religions and affecting the atmosphere of social harmony. In multi-religious countries and regions, religious conflicts caused by audience cognitive bias have a serious impact on local economic development and people's lives.

5. THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEDIA ETHICS AND NORMS FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF RELIGIOUS CULTURE IN THE ERA OF SELF-MEDIA

5.1 Determination of Ethical Principles

In the era of self-media, the establishment of scientific and reasonable ethical principles is of great significance to ensure the healthy and orderly dissemination of religious culture, and these principles are the cornerstone of standardizing communication behavior, safeguarding religious dignity, and promoting social harmony. Among them, the principle of authenticity requires disseminators to ensure that religious information is true and

reliable, and that there must be an accurate basis when disseminating information and strictly verify the source of information; The principle of respect runs through the entire process of communication, and communicators should respect the beliefs, cultures, traditions, doctrines, rituals, and beliefs of different religions, as well as religious figures and believers; The principle of responsibility emphasizes that communicators should recognize the social impact of communication behavior, actively disseminate positive content, guide the audience to establish correct concepts, be responsible for the consequences of communication, and maintain objectivity and neutrality on controversial topics (Tong, 2023). The principle of moderation requires communicators to reasonably arrange the content and frequency of communication according to social needs and audience acceptance, avoid excessive commercialization and entertainment, disseminate doctrines that are easy to understand, resist extremist religious thoughts and behaviors, and maintain the seriousness and sanctity of religious culture.

5.2 Construction of the Normative System

Constructing a normative system for the dissemination of religious culture in the era of self-media is a systematic project, which needs to be coordinated from multiple levels such as laws and regulations, industry self-discipline, and internal management to ensure that the dissemination of religious culture is carried out on a healthy and orderly track. This is shown in Figure 1. At the level of laws and regulations, it is necessary to speed up the improvement of the relevant legal system to provide a clear legal basis and norms for the dissemination of religious culture. At present, China has promulgated a series of laws and regulations related to the management of religious affairs, such as the Regulations on Religious Affairs, but with the development of the self-media era, these laws and regulations have a certain lag in responding to new problems and challenges in the dissemination of religious culture. Relevant legal provisions should be further refined and improved, clarifying the qualifications of entities for the dissemination of religious culture on self-media platforms, the standards for reviewing the content disseminated, and the punishment measures for violations (Che et al., 2024). It stipulates that only religious organizations, religious figures, or self-media accounts with relevant qualifications that have been certified by the religious affairs department can carry out religious and cultural dissemination; For illegal acts such as disseminating false religious information, infringing on religious intellectual property rights, and advocating religious extremism, it is necessary to clarify the

specific legal responsibility and punishment, increase the cost of violating the law, and form an effective legal deterrent.

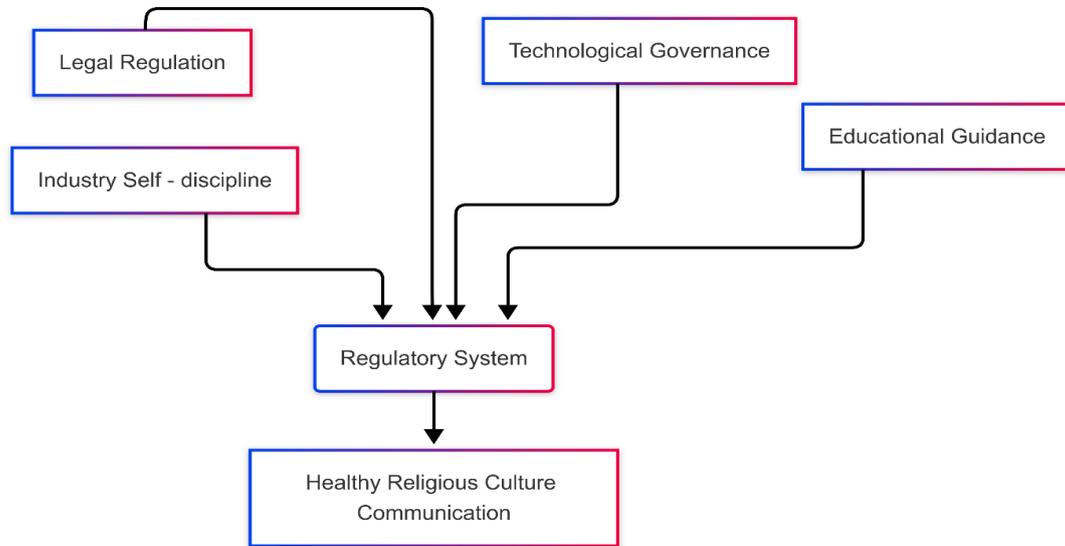


Figure 1: A Framework for the Transmission of Health Religion and Culture

Government departments should strengthen the force of regulation and law enforcement of the dissemination of religious culture through self-media, establish mechanisms for coordinated supervision by multiple departments, strengthen communication and cooperation between departments such as for religious affairs, internet information, and public security to form a joint regulatory force, religious affairs departments conduct professional review and guidance, internet information departments use technology to monitor, manage, and handle violations, and public security departments should combat illegal and criminal conduct, and should also periodically carry out joint law enforcement to ensure the effective implementation of laws and regulations. Industry self-discipline is also crucial, the self-media industry needs to improve self-regulatory organizations, formulate norms covering content review, communication behavior, ethical standards, etc., require practitioners to follow the principles of truthfulness, objectivity, and fairness, respect different religions, protect religious intellectual property rights, and self-regulatory organizations should strengthen the management, supervision and punishment of members to maintain industry order. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the training and education of self-media practitioners, popularize religious knowledge, laws, regulations and ethical norms through holding a variety of activities, improve their religious literacy and professional ethics, and cultivate a sense of social responsibility and mission. Religious organizations and institutions, as important entities

of communication, should strengthen internal management, complete internal communication management systems, establish special departments to strictly review the content of transmission, strengthen education and guidance for religious persons and believers, increase their media literacy and communication capacity, and guide believers to treat communication rationally (Liu, 2024). In addition, religious organizations and institutions should actively cooperate with self-media platforms, establish good communication mechanisms, give feedback on problems and jointly solve them, so as to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results between self-media platforms providing technology and channels, and religious organizations providing knowledge and resources, and jointly promoting the healthy dissemination of religious culture.

5.3 Establishment of Safeguard Mechanisms

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the ethical principles and normative system for the dissemination of religious culture in the era of self-media, it is important to establish a sound safeguard mechanism covering supervision, education, technology and other levels. In terms of regulatory safeguard mechanisms, the government needs to clarify the responsibilities of departments such as religious affairs, internet information, culture, and public security, and strengthen coordination and cooperation to build a comprehensive regulatory system. The religious affairs departments review and guide the religious professionalism of the content disseminated, the internet information departments use network technology to monitor and handle violations in real time, the cultural departments assess the cultural value and social impact of the content that guides the transmission, the public security departments combat illegal and criminal conduct, and each department ensures that the transmission is lawful and compliant through regular joint law enforcement inspections (Zhu, 2024).

As the basis for improving the quality of communication, the education safeguard mechanism should systematically teach religious knowledge, communication skills, ethical norms, and laws and regulations to self-media practitioners through holding training classes, seminars, and lectures, inviting religious experts, senior media personnel, and legal professionals to give lectures, and carry out case analysis and practical drills, so that they can correctly respond to all kinds of communication scenarios (Yanqiu, 2021). The technical support mechanism uses advanced technology to improve the efficiency and accuracy of supervision, develops and applies

an intelligent content review system, and uses artificial intelligence and big data analysis to review various forms of communication content in real time, and timely warns and handles illegal information; Establish a platform for monitoring and analyzing religious public opinion, grasp public attitudes and reactions, and provide a basis for decision-making; Use blockchain technology to record and verify the creation, dissemination and use of religious and cultural works, protect copyright, and prevent infringement and abuse.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study focuses on the media ethics and norms of religious and cultural communication in the era of self-media, and deeply analyzes its communication situation, ethical dilemmas, root causes and coping strategies. We-media has given new vitality to the dissemination of religious culture, with diverse communication subjects, rich content, fast speed, wide range and strong interactivity. Live broadcasts, social networks, new media education and other modes have made the dissemination of religious culture more distinctive, and cases such as the "Shaolin Temple" Douyin account and the "Xuecheng Master" official account have fully demonstrated the positive role of self-media in the dissemination of religious culture. However, there are many ethical dilemmas in the current spread of religion and culture. The authenticity of the information is doubtful and misleading to the public's perception; Repeated violations of privacy and rights; the spread of bad and extremist ideas, threatening social stability; Commercialization and vulgarization are serious, ignoring social responsibilities and undermining religious dignity. At the root of the problem, the characteristics of self-media, the quality of communicators, the regulatory mechanism and the audience's cognition are the key factors. The open, autonomous, and rapid dissemination characteristics of self-media bring regulatory problems; Communicators lack knowledge and morality; Unclear responsibilities of regulatory entities, lagging laws and regulations, and insufficient technology; The audience is affected by information fragmentation and its own limitations, and is prone to misunderstanding and blind religious belief, which affects social harmony. Therefore, it is necessary to construct a scientific media ethics and normative system. Establish the principles of authenticity, respect, responsibility and moderation, and improve norms from multiple dimensions of laws and regulations, industry self-discipline, and internal

management. Improve laws and regulations, clarify communication standards and penalties; promote industry self-discipline and strengthen practitioner training; Religious organizations regulate themselves and cooperate with self-media. At the same time, establish supervision, education, and technical support mechanisms, clarify responsibilities, strengthen education, and use technical means to ensure the effective operation of the system.

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