

The Process of Exiting Geographical Spaces from Oriented Mono-Text in the Networked Society (Circles and Shifts)

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Received: 18 November 2018

Accepted: 12 November 2019

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Given that the *geographic space* is a social production/reproduction, it is known as a social phenomena that is made by the *society*. We can call it a *text* or a *spatial text* because the humans - as the logical being - are authors of spatial text, so this spatial text (geographic space) is a significant and complex phenomena. The transition of geographic space of one status to another is a sign that shows geographic spaces are the dynamic phenomenon. All of geographic spaces are driving toward new status and conditions because they are not a fixed and static phenomenon but they are a social production. All of the social texts are dynamic because “society” as their base is a dynamic phenomenon. So, geographic space is a dynamic text as well. The spatial text of those geographic spaces which have been made by wider and more varied societies, are also more varied.

On the one hand, geographic space is the outcome of social, political, cultural, economic processes, while on the other hand, discourses on geographic space try to intertwine this process toward their regimes of truth, structures, visions, and purposes. So the “discourses” play an important role in the processes of writing spatial text or geographic spaces. Each of the agriculture, industrial, and information era has created its own special geographic spaces. In the network society and the information era, worldwide information and communication technology has provided a context to create the micro-discourses. Cosequently, it has provided a context for their shifts. The moving toward ‘network society’, has to be accompanied by changes in the text of geographic spaces. Communication of varied micro-discourses is one of the characters of ‘network society’. This micro-discourse can affect the geographical texts. This article intends to answer this question: What drives geographic spaces from ‘oriented mono-textual’ space to ‘oriented multi-textual’ and then ‘oriented inter-textual? And how?

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2. Review of Literature

Based on the Foucaultian notion of "power" and "discourse," it can be said that the micro-discourses derive geographical spaces from 'oriented mono-textual' space to 'oriented multi-textual' and then 'oriented inter-textual'. Foucault considers discourse as the social and historical state of society, and believes that we are dealing with major prohibitions and types of discourse that condemn one aspect of the meaning and give the priority to another (Sajjadi & Dashti, 2009, 86). "Each type of discourse creates a special space for action, which is what Foucault calls" areas of possible choices" (Dreyfus & Rabynv, 1997, 156). The networked society - by its uncontrollable nature - not only provides the areas of possible choices, but also enables the micro-discourses to become more powerful and influential discourses. The network society's space has provided a more globalized and dynamic communication platform for the flowing of information, wealth, and power among social networking levels; by making a link among 1- places, where activities (and the people who execute them) are located in, 2- communication networks that link these activities and 3. The theme and geometry of the information flows that form the activities with the certain purpose and function. (Castells, 2004). A networked society is a society of unequal and incompatible languages whose common criteria are abandoned in favor of pluralism (Tajik, 2008: 134). In the Foucault's concept of power, power is deeply rooted which is based on the understanding of the productive form of power, its regulation, and its decentralized or networked and dispersed nature throughout the society "(Nazari, 2011, 345) and the notion of power. It has a social network and can be found in all areas of society and human relations (Ibid 346). It reflects and generates the power and displacement at any level. The space of flows has provided the "possibility" that micro-discourses change and create spatial texts which can switch geographical spaces into 'oriented multi-textual' and then 'oriented inter-textual' ones.

3. Method

The methodology of this paper is a logical-analytical one. At first, the basic concepts of discussion (space, discourse, network society, dialogue, and monologue) are described. Then, relationships among basic concepts have been determined in many theories including Manuel Castells's network society theory and Michel Foucault's power theory.

4. Results and Discussion

The network society is the society that is made by networks, communications, and media. So, in this society, the monopolization and control of governments on information and communications is fading. In fact, the network society provides a context for the formation, presentation, and the spread of discourses. These discourses enter to the monologue-mono-discursive circle and they break this circle. The breaking of this circle allows varied discourses to participate in the processes of the product of geographic space. Because any discourses have their special "regimes

of truth” and structures, so being of varied discourses in ‘oriented mono-textual’ geographic spaces will drive them toward ‘oriented inter-textual’. The ‘discourse’ converges political, social, economic, and cultural processes toward its purposes and visions by producing essential organizations, systems, structures, and necessary spaces. Discourses on geographic space show their symbols in the geographic space, so the operating diverse discourses on space can make its spatial text more varied and can derive them toward a space that has the ‘inter-textual’ characteristic. Effects of diverse discourses on geographic spaces are different because the power of discourse in geographic space is dependent on political, social, cultural, information, and the communication conditions of that space.

This paper showed that the monologue-mono-discourse circle creates a mono-text geographic space; the multilogue-multidiscursive circle creates a multi-textual geographic space; and dialogue- interdiscourse circle creates an oriented inter-textual geographic space. The basis of these creations is the pluralism of information, civilization, and the network media nature of the network society.

5. Conclusion

Using global information and communication technologies form “network society” (Castells’s theory) provides contexts to dialogue for varied and numerous discourses and micro-discourses. With the increasing varied and numerous discourses and micro-discourses and the number of power centers, this process shifts oriented mono-text spaces to oriented multi-text spaces and finally oriented inter-text spaces. (Of homogeneity, to heterogeneity, of mono to multi). In the network society, the hard boundaries (red lines) of micro-discourses have been faded by the shifting micro-discourses; The process which is providing combined discourses has soft and orange lines instead of hard and red lines. These discourses can be known as the “inter-discourses”. Thus, the changing hard boundaries of discourses to soft boundaries drive pure and local geographic spaces toward inter-textual and global geographic spaces that have soft and orange boundaries.

Keywords: Network society; Discourse; Geographical space.

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