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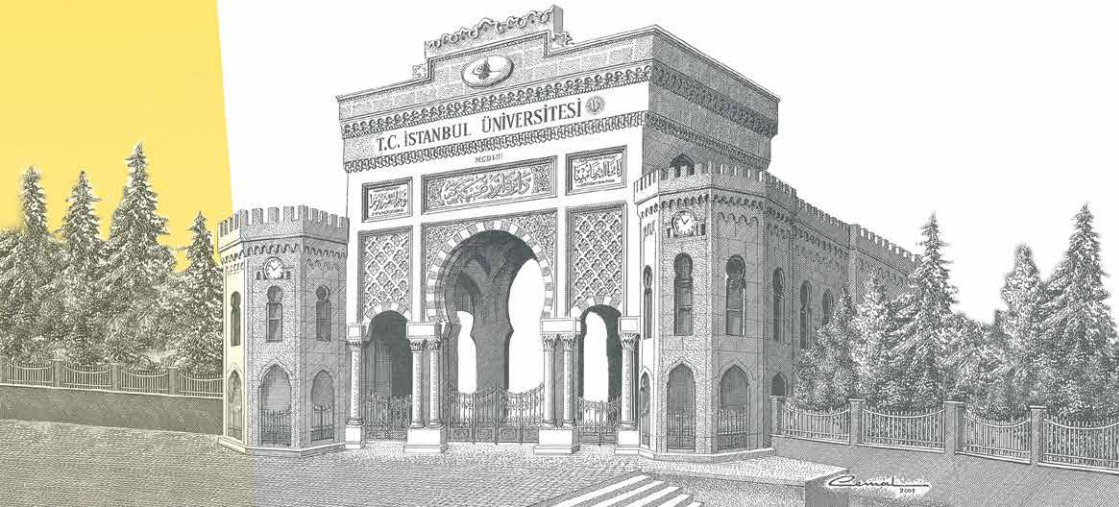

READING THE RELATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND SPACE IN THE CONTEXT OF GOFFMAN'S "STAGE" CONCEPT

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Category: Social Media

Abstract: It is clear that power struggles are actively defined and reinforced through land and/or space domination throughout human history. Today, said struggle continues on the level of anonymous identity through internet technology and its most important extension, social media. Active domination (and/or occupation) based on space has been replaced by a new use of identity which refers to our definitions of power and symbolic identities concerning space. Along with pinpointing of location through social media, it is possible to symbolically use spaces to attire our anonymous identities with power, wealth and happiness. This study aims to critically approach the relation of new media, space and identity through the "stage" concept of Goffman's dramaturgical theory. Goffman as a sociologist analyzing social interaction, explains that people live their lives as actors performing on stage. This explanation is reciprocated in social media use more than it has been in perhaps any other period of history of communication, benefitting from the comfort of anonymous identity construction. In brief, the main premise of this study is that the relationship of the individual with space through social media cannot be examined independently from their relationship with the identity aimed to be achieved. Therefore, the relation of space that is becoming clearer day by day shouldn't be isolated while discussing the problematic of identity. Concordantly this study will put the relationship of space and identity on social media through critical hermeneutic reading by using netnography. According to Kozinet, "Netnography is ethnography that bridges the century-old method of Bronislaw Malinowski and Franz Boas with the reality that many teens conduct more of their social life on Facebook than in the schoolyard, that new moms get much of their information not from their family or friends, but from new mom web forums, and that, in many workplaces, bloggers and tweeters are the most important sources of industry news and opinions". Drawing from netnography which makes it possible to analyze and understand all content such as video, photograph, symbol etc. on the internet in their cultural context, with their linguistic features and in their natural environment, the main aim and extent of this study will be to critically read the relationships and behaviors within the frame of the study subject.

Keywords: Social Networks, Erving Goffman, Multiple Identities