

Self in Networks: Public Sphere in the Era of Globalisation

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Abstract : A paradigm shift from capitalism to information technology is discerned in the era globalisation. The idea of public sphere, which was theorized in terms of its decline in the wake of the rise of commercial mass media has now emerged as a transnational or global sphere with the discourse being dominated by the 'network society'. In other words, the dynamic of globalisation has brought about 'a spatial turn' in the social and political sciences which is also manifested in the public sphere, Especially the global public sphere. The paper revisits the Habermasian concept of the public sphere and focuses on the various social networking sites with their plausibility to create a virtual global public sphere. Situating Habermas's notion of the bourgeois public sphere in the present context of global public sphere, it considers the changing dimensions of the public sphere across time and examines the concept of the 'public' with its shifting transformation from the concrete collective to the fluid 'imagined' category. The paper addresses the problematic of multimodal self-portraiture in the social networking sites as well as various online diaries/journals with an attempt to explore the nuances of the networked self.

Keywords : globalisation, network society, public sphere, self-fashioning, identity, autonomy

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