

PLACE, NON-PLACE, MULTI-PLACE AND THE (NON)POSSIBILITIES OF IDENTITY: PHILOSOPHICAL, SOCIAL, AND COMMUNICATIONAL ASPECTS

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Michel Foucault in the text “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias” wrote that “the present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space”. Space, place, and territories are social productions. Territory is a polysemic concept. Place is “events” created by territories, fluid areas of control produced by territorial negotiation (horizontal dynamics) and negotiations between places (vertical dynamics). Space produces places and is produced by places. Moreover, space, place and territories can be seen as the waves of territorialization and deterritorialization in an endless process. It is a form of seizure in the world, an *a priori* for Immanuel Kant, an ontological need for Martin Heidegger. Territory is a space, governed by a set of rules, named “code”. Territorialization is then synonymous of a certain codification, or the symbolical organization of space. Places are created by territorializational dynamics. They are the sum of “events”. The place and its territory is not “natural”, but it is a cultural artifact, a social product linked to desire, power and identity. The changes of the functions of places (what

Foucault called heterotopy) are an important subject of contemporary studies.

There are also many new temporary uses of these spaces and different emerging functions, including new forms of control, access, surveillance, new forms of openness and closeness (passwords, access profiles, etc.). Informational territory creates new heterotopias, new functions for places and a redefinition of social and communicational practices. It is not the end of a concrete place and its territory, but rather, a new meaning, sense, and a function for these spaces. The contemporary meaning of place and space has a visible tendency in creating ambivalence of *sacrum* and *profanum*, which means the secularization of the sacred and the sacralization of the secular. One of the sides of this tendency is sacralizing market and marketing the sacral. At the same time space has become a powerful tool of the ideological mobilization of people. The case which is analyzed in some articles in this issue of *non-places* (factories, department stores, sport complexes, etc.) is an example of absence of cultural references, its denial of a *place*. Also, the cases of textile factory *Drobé*

and supermarket *Prisma* which are found in the above-mentioned papers are good examples of a situation when one version of the *non-place* was changed by another.

Place is an essential dimension of human activity and existence. The place and territory are requirements for such a kind of human activity as subsidiarity, struggle for human rights, relation to Others, public experiences, personal and collective identification ("subjective" aspects of the object of identification) including some new aspects of gender, arts, performance in various contexts, the images and dreams about planning environment, borders disappearance and strengthening, the realization of the biopolitical mechanism. At the same time, the

borders of a place are particularly revealing a line and a space for a social research, especially in the present era of a growing globalization. Border is a place where "past" and "future" are permanently clashed. On the borders of different places there is no inherently determined relationship between the past, the present, and the future. Foucault's idea corresponds with our understanding of space over time and contests the traditional notion of linear time, asserting that concepts of time have been understood in various ways, under varying historical circumstances. A closer analysis of the concept of space and all form of human activity there, is a central focus for contemporary social and humanitarian studies.