Chapter 1
Free Media and Democracy in the Age of Globalization:
An Analysis of Turkish Leading Newspaper

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ABSTRACT

The present chapter investigates the evolution of print media in general around the world and with particular emphasis in Turkey with respect to major transformation of freedom of speech, democracy and justice. The other equally important and major focus of this chapter is what causes the print media to evolve when it was long debated that the time for print media is over. In the age of globalization when there are plenty of media round the corner and the terms free media and democracy are contested and debated in different countries. An analysis is presented how a newspaper could work to bring the justice and democracy in a given society as a fourth pillar of the state in a contested environment of new media. Interviews with a print media journalist one who is not working in Turkey and with another one is influential reporter working in Turkey are conducted. The comments of the journalists are ethnographically evaluated and interpreted with storytelling and ethnographic techniques and discourse is presented.

I. HISTORICAL RELATION OF PRESS AND THE STATE

That democracy envisages protection of rights of the masses cannot be stressed enough (Meiggs 1972). The essence of democracy lies in the fact that power is not concentrated at one point; rather, it is distributed among the masses through institutions that are interlined but at the same time do not trespass into exclusive domains of each other (Laski 1980). Three institutions – Parliament, Judiciary and Executive

– were deemed pillars of society because they ensure that every citizen has an equal opportunity to hold any authority accountable while the functions of state run smoothly (Khalid 2013).

The nineteenth century witnessed that press is added as the fourth pillar of the state because it ought to contribute in the process of accountability (Schultz 1998). Explicitly, Wilbur Schramm (1949) elaborated that a message travels through the society on media in a systematic – mathematical – manner. Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) enhanced the spectrum recognizing that media function in diffusion of innovation can be supplemented through social actors.

Media is seen rooted in the concept of accountability since the start but it seems that the media owners wished media to be seen so. Emperor Babur, who ravaged India to set up his dynasty, started the first journal of history, according to some, titled The Journal of Babur or Babur Nama, at the start of which he stated that he meant to put in place a system of accountability and he would never resort to telling lies writing this journal (Beveridge 2002). Having read the Journal, one fails to find anything about account-ability other than accounts of how the emperor always prevailed on all odds and eliminated his opponents.

The pioneer of journalism in sub-continent of India, Hicky, Shabir, G., & Khakan, B. (2005) a drunkard and defaulter, started Hicky Gazette raising the slogan that his newspaper will hold the rulers accountable but the newspaper carried vivid accounts of private life of wives of the rulers and activities of bishops. Similarly, the concept accountability seems to be a misfit with practices of media owners.

Mega mergers of media outlets and brazen commercialization have generated serious doubts about any relation between media and democracy (Thussu 2006). and gave birth to Frankfurt School, one of the most influential schools of thought in media studies (Horkheimer, 1982). Academics and researchers see strengthening of media in countries like China and India where rights of large portions of population remain suppressed (Lee, 2001; Zhoa, 2008). In gulf, growth of media and dynasties go hand in hand, and media safeguards concentration of power (McPhail 2010). Even in the US, having the most vibrant media (market and moguls), (McChesney 2000) elaborates that the media get rich and democracy poor, a total shift in discourse about media facilitating democracy and ensuring accountability.

At a time when media was found creating 'false wants' (Mosco & McKercher 2009) and 'false grati-fications' (Katz, Peters, Liebes & Orloff, 2010), Internet and Computer Technology was projected as a breather of fresh air (Bulkeley 1998). But then there is strong criticism surrounding the policymaking of ICTs that will be discussed in detail in the research thesis. Carnoy, M. and Castells, M. (2001) believe in formation of an 'information society' and Schiller (2007) explains how networks are formed in society.

History of the press media remained for almost the same for nearly 400 years since its inception (Hunt 1850, pp-37). The printing press remain under the sheer control of kings and the church, the first explicit censorship he notes that was in the year 1501 when Pope Alexander the Sixth (Borgia) placed the press under his direct command he further notes that fourteen years later it was formally decreed by the Council of the Lateran, "That No publication whatever should be issued in any place where the church of Rome had jurisdiction" from that year onward it was the first press rules and regulations promulgated in Rome adopted in England and wherever the Church of Rome had jurisdiction.

Professional journalism was never smooth and sturdy from the beginning like any other professionals like law and medicine, but the beginning of 19th Century has seen drastic changes in the contemporary surfaces of the journalism (Banning 1998). Not only have the rudimentary trained journalists proved how badly a reporting could term upside down and how much professionalism is needed in the professions. Banning found quoting Sociologies Wilbert Moore that the process of professionalization is a process in which we scale to describe the different level of professional attainments.

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