

## An Evaluation of “Libertarian Media Approach”

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### Abstract

In the second half of the twentieth century, the movements of the globalism and the acceleration of technological developments in the world have brought about the change of ideological structures. One of the greatest factors of this change is the increase of liberal ideology effectiveness. Liberal ideology and thought have influenced social economic and political structures effectively and this influence has shown itself in the media sector. This situation caused the libertarian media to become effective. With the influence of liberal thought, the media has been shaped and corporatizations have started in the sector. With liberal thought, the media has gone out of the public monopoly and has become free and commercialized. The large extent of emancipation in the media sector has affected transparency by causing some complexities. Monopolization led to the emergence of large media factions. With the structuring of media agencies; In both written and visual media, falsified, self-interest and interest-based news have been published. The measures to be taken in order to prevent the loss of density, monopolization and transparency in the media emerged by this new structuring will be tried to be put forward.

*Keywords:* Globalism, libertarian media, public monopoly, media sector.

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## “Liberter Medya Yaklaşımı” Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme

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### Özet

Yirminci yüzyılın ikinci yarısında, küreselleşme hareketleri ve dünyadaki teknolojik gelişmelerin hızlanması ideolojik yapıların değişimini beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu değişimin en büyük faktörlerinden biri liberal ideoloji etkinliğinin artmasıdır. Liberal ideoloji ve düşünce, sosyal ekonomik ve politik yapıları etkin bir şekilde etkilemiş ve bu etki medya sektöründe kendini göstermiştir. Bu durum özgürlükçü medyanın etkili olmasına neden olmuştur. Liberal düşüncenin etkisiyle medya şekillenmiş ve medya sektörü de kurumlaşmaya başlamıştır. Liberal düşünceyle, medya halk tekelinin dışına çıkmış ve özgürleşip, ticarileşmiştir. Medya sektöründe büyük ölçüde özgürleşme, bazı karmaşıklıklara neden olarak şeffaflığı etkilemiştir. Tekelleşme, büyük medya gruplarının ortaya çıkmasına neden olmuştur. Medya ajanslarının yapılanmasıyla; hem yazılı hem de görsel medyada, tahrif edilmiş, kişisel çıkar ve ilgi alanına dayalı haberler yayınlanmıştır. Bu yeni yapılanma ile ortaya çıkan medyada yoğunluk, tekelleşme ve şeffaflık kaybını önlemek için alınacak önlemler bu makalede öne sürülmeye çalışılacaktır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Küreselleşme, liberter medya, özgürlükçü medya, kamu tekeli, medya sektörü.

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## Introduction

Since the media reflects the social structures of the relationships of individuals and institutions, when we analyze the communication instruments, we can understand the social, political and economic condition of society. When we consider the Liberal Media Approaches, we should consider the theories of the “*Four Theories of the Press*” by Siebert and et.al (1963), which the world has widely used and respected, in the field of Media Theories. In making this evaluation; based on the work of Fred S Siebert and his colleagues, Denis McQuail (1987; 2014) added the “*Theory of Development Instrument*” and “*Participatory Democratic Media Theory*” to these theories based on new political, social and economic changes and transformations. We will consider these theories in the evaluation of the “Libertarian Media Approach”.

In this study, when we look at the evolution of media over time, from the Renaissance until today, we will look at the media theories in various systems until reaching the “Libertarian Media Approaches” or “Libertarian Media” while bringing about the changes that the media has undergone in various social change systems. Media and Communication describes the relations and the results of a living condition within itself and its relations with other conditions. Liberal democracy cares freedom. This thought based on the principle that individuals, groups, communities, companies act freely in their own thoughts and logic without any intervention of authority. According to this understanding, when individuals, institutions and companies in the community move their own extraction without state intervention, society reaches the best point in terms of both freedoms and production. Within the current system, the individual remains vulnerable and under pressure. Since individuals have driven to economic crises, the system is now directed towards the concept of libertarian democracy. According to the judicial decisions of the European Court of Human Rights<sup>1</sup> and the Copenhagen criteria<sup>2</sup>, Liberal Democracy is based on the following criteria:

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<sup>1</sup> The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) is an international tribunal established in 1959 under the Council of Europe an international organization. In case of a breach of fundamental rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights and its, additional protocols; the court is a jurisdiction where individuals, groups of individuals, legal entities and other states can apply within certain procedures and rules. 47 members of the Council of Europe recognize the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights. The Court is located in Strasbourg, France.

<sup>2</sup> At the Copenhagen Summit on 22 June 1993, the Council of Europe agreed that the enlargement of the European Union would include Central Eastern European Countries. The summit also cited the criteria that countries applying for candidacy must meet before being admitted to full membership. These criteria were grouped into three groups: political, economic and community legislation.

- Respect for human rights
- Stable and institutionalized democracy
- Constitutional state and superiority of law
- Political-social pluralism
- Respect for minority rights

### **Libertarian Democracy and Media**

Libertarian democracy is not always successful in securing the conditions of survival and continuity of individuals, organizations and the media. Recognition of the rights to liberties is not sufficient for the exercise of these rights.

Human rights cannot be effectively implemented without the provision of social justice and the minimum access to human rights. A Conservative Democracy, in which the state is not responsible for social security and educational services, cannot have a relationship with the concept of libertarian democracy. Contemporary democracy and contemporary media, contemporary human beings, human rights and human life, cannot take place with liberal or conservative democracy, but only with liberal democracy and social democracy and the Liberal Media. The media, unlike other service sectors, have a political, social and cultural character beyond their economic dimension. The media, which is the most important mass media tool that transmits information and provides the flow of news, has the characteristics of creating a public opinion in societies and directing the masses.

### **Libertarian media**

The emergence of the libertarian media is based on the libertarian idea that the power of authoritarian governments must be taken from the center and taken to the public. With the beginning of classical democracy, the interventions of the state in economic life were limited and the rights granted to the people reached a wide range. The most important of these rights is freedom of thought and expression.

The liberalization trend, which started in the 1980s in the world, combined with the technological developments and turned the media into a big industrial sector. The governments following liberal policies removed the monopolies on the economy and went on to privatize. In the same way, this situation has shown itself in the media sector. The decrease in public broadcasting has led to a rapid development in the field of private broadcasting. As a result, the media sector has become a multi-dimensional structure. As a commercial field of activity, the media has taken a structure and shape according to the principles based on

advertising, work sharing and specialist in the conditions that liberalist and democratic values come to the forefront and in the conditions that the Free Market Economy predicts. As a result of this change, the Media Sector has been uncontrollably strengthened under the influence of neoliberal policies. One of the most important situations caused by conditions of competition is; the high property concentration and monopolization that liberalism rejects at the level of thought is that it has occurred in the media sector.

### **Fulfilling of the political functions of press/media**

In order for the media to perform its political function, first of all, the field of communication must be very well organized. The scope and nature of freedom of expression, the extent of freedom of communication, the state of political power-media relations, capital-media relations, press / media monopolies, the professionalism of the media are only possible if the media perceives and fulfills the public duty.

On the basis of political communication, the necessity of political liberalism, which includes broadly defined freedom of communication, which does not contradict individual rights and freedoms, arises. The concept of pluralism, which regulates the conditions in which political liberalism and diversity can live together (Mouffe, 1999) constitutes a basis for political communication.

Some theorists express political liberalism and its communication system in terms of Deliberative Democracy and Conductive Democracy. Libertarian and pluralist democracies are the product of the dissemination of the means of communication and the universalization of the information by means of communication. The transformation of classical democracies into modern democracy defines the change in the definition and content of the concept. The media-communication system, which is based on the emerging market system in the second half of the 20th century, has been an important factor in this change of democracy.

### **Media theories and freedom of press**

In evaluating the Liberal Media Approach, we need to mention the theories of media. Media is a concept that has a strong relationship with the political, economic and social structure of the society. As these structures change, the media takes on new forms. Depending on the changing social values, different theories are developed on the media. I mentioned this in the introduction. The theories in Siebert, Peterson and Schramm's "Four Theories of the Press" are authoritarian, liberal libertarian, Soviet totalitarian and social responsibility theories. In the course of time, Denis McQuail has developed the Developmental Tool Media Theory and

Participatory Democratic Media Theory, based on the aforementioned theories, in the context of new political, economic and social changes. As a result, Denis McQuail developed his own theories. (Peerson and Scharamm’s ,1963)

### **Authoritarian media theory**

The authoritarian understanding is expressed in the “Patriarchal Management Ideology” where absolute authority is accepted, in which every authority is in power of father. This patriarchal system of thought, which began in the family, has evolved and matured into the management structure of the society. In the political structures dominated by the authoritarian understanding, when the relationship between the individual and the state is examined, the state comes before the individual.

The smartest people of society manage the state. In the governances where the name is effective, the authoritarian media theory is valid. Media is under the orders of political will. The media serves the interests and continuity of authority and there is a one-way communication flow from top to bottom. The authoritarian thought that dominates the medieval management concept has found its sub-structure in the state definition of Plato's work which called “State”. In his work “Prince”, Machiavelli considered that all non-ethical ways, including persecution and oppression are legal to protect the state's security and existence.

### **Libertarian media theory**

The starting point of this theory is undoubtedly the liberal political thought system and the understanding of freedom that develops with this system. Freedom of expression is one of the ideas of developing freedom. Liberal Theory argues that the rational method that people need to reach to the truth is the media in which all opinions are discussed. Libertarian or Liberal Theory can be explained by the fact that the press is mostly in the power of private enterprise.

The basic principles for the mass media, which are foreseen by the Liberal Theory, can be summarized as the fact that broadcasting is not subject to any permission, not subject to any restriction, pressure or censorship and all publications, except for endangering country security, can be carried out without being subject to criminal system. Liberal theory highlights rationality. This theory recognizes that people can make mistakes and have the ability to correct these mistakes. This view based on freedoms attaches importance to the need for plurivocality.

### **Social responsibility media theory**

Since Liberal Media Theory does not give the desired answer to society expectations, “Social Responsibility Media Theory” has emerged in the USA. In 1947, the Commission of the Hutchins<sup>3</sup> conducted a study on the situation of press freedom in practice and prepared a report. According to this report;

- There is a contradiction between the freedom of the press and the responsibility of the press in the application of traditional press freedom.
- The faults and passions of the press have spread out of the private area and become a public danger. The press is free but it also fulfills public service.
- Due to the commercial and technological innovations in the press, some individuals and groups have less access to press.

In the new approach that emerged as a result of the Hutchins committee report, the principle of independence of the press and its duties towards society are aimed. Those who hold the media, who are in charge of providing communication, are obliged to fulfill the expectations of the society. In addition to the transmission of news, it should also work towards the dissemination and development of culture and art. For the healthy functioning of democracy in society; the crime elements such as violence and social turmoil in the media should take place as little as possible.

### **Soviet totalitarian media theory**

The Soviet press was organized in a new way in the 1920s in the framework of the principles put forward by Lenin<sup>4</sup>, based on the Marxist doctrine<sup>5</sup> along with the Soviet power. As a means of producing media, culture and ideology, the transfer of thought in accordance with the world view of the ruling class in society and its generalization with the knowledge or

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<sup>3</sup> In 1942, in the US, at the Britannica encyclopedia director's meeting, the Rector of the University of Chicago, R.M Hutchins, was commissioned to investigate the American press. As a result, the Press Freedom Commission, founded by Hutchins and known as the Hutchins Commission, has emerged.

<sup>4</sup> Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, known as Lenin (22 April 1870, Simbirsk- 21 January 1924, Moscow), the Russian socialist revolutionary, the leader of the October Revolution, the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, is the Russian Communist Party / Bolshevik leader. Lenin is also a writer of scientific socialism after Marx and Engels as the author of Marxist theoretical and philosophical writings. Lenin's greatest aim was to create a proletarian world revolution from the uncompromising class contradictions of capitalism and to lead the historical formation of human society in which there were no social class antagonisms.

<sup>5</sup> Marxism is the system of Marx's ideas and doctrines. Marxism will rise above the classical German philosophy, classic British political economy and French socialism, which are interwoven with French revolutionary doctrines. Armed criticism, that is, the use of criticism as a weapon, was the method by which Marx was based.

ideology produced and transmitted by other institutions is a harmonious approach to the Marxism.

According to the basic assumptions of the theory, it is legitimate that the censorship is accepted and that the members of the press carry criminal responsibility for the crimes committed against the state. The state determines power. Power is the monopoly of the working class with the ownership of basic means of production. Economic life depends on a central structure that everyone has to obey. The political life is under the control of Communist Party. Historical materialism and dialectical materialism which are the official ideology of the state, deemed the application of oppression legitimate when necessary.

### **Development tool media theory**

In terms of changes in the economic, social and political spheres, McQuail saw the inadequacy of the “Four Theory of Press” proposed by Siebert and his colleagues, and developed two new theories based on media theories. These theories argue that the economic, technical and professional resources of developing countries are different from other countries. These theories are based on the idea that the development tool theory can be used for the purpose of social development.

### **Participatory democratic media theory**

The media has evolved as an extension of the Liberal Theory in response to the emergence of monopolization tendencies and the centralization of the publishing institutions established in accordance with the social responsibility norms and the emergence of bureaucratization. The theory aims to participate in management and is based on the idea of establishing a horizontal, equal and equitable approach instead of a top-down organization and communication.

### **Media and Politics**

The media, which is an important factor of social life, has begun to evoke political phenomena, controversial subjects, art and public events more in our developing and changing age.

Rapid technological development in the media increases the power of the media and makes the media very powerful. Today, the media sector has become an accessible field for the large capitals. The powerful media has gained much value in every case as politicians, the only determinant factor influencing politics. One of the biggest methods of resource allocation for media capitalization is privatization. The diversification of the fields in the media sector



into different areas and the growth of capital have realized the privatization of media channels in the public monopoly (Bostancı, 1998).

Regarding the media sector, the most important problem at the point of implementation of the policies determined by governments and states is the obstacles to the establishment of pluralism in the media. Public opinion researches are taken into consideration by the politicians and follow the public in order to learn the agenda of the public and to develop policies in this direction. These studies transfer their work through the media to determine trends. They make the media as an instrument to policy and indirectly influence the free operation of the media. According to my evaluation, Libertarian Media Approaches do not function fully freely.

### **Monopolization trends in media**

In order to maintain the accumulation of capital and to reach the means to increase this accumulation, media bosses have embarked on activities that have paved the way for the intensification of property through their media organizations. Media bosses use their media outlets as tools for other businesses to work. Monopolization trends have led to the emergence of economic and political relations between the media and the owners of power. In this period, the aim of pluralism, which is the product of liberal thought, was departed. Monopolization tendencies have become the determinants of media ownership. The fact that media organizations have become a political and market regulation tool in the hands of media bosses forces the protection of liberal philosophy's pluralism and competition. This situation raises the risk of monopoly and property concentration.

The use of media establishments by media bosses as tools for their other jobs has changed the relationship between media and power. The fact that media organizations have become a political and market regulation tool in the hands of media bosses has raised the risk of monopoly and property concentration. This sets the stage for the abolition of democracy, pluralism and freedom. This threatens the basic principles of liberalism. As a result of the change in the forms of ownership in the media, the capital owners have used media bosses and media through media organizations to secure and increase their capital accumulation. This situation has changed the relations between media and power. The changes in media ownership nowadays are a feature that prevents plurivocality. These changes are the result of monopolies that threaten the environment of democracy and freedom. The 20th century was a century of world politics and economic interests. The desire of the media to adapt to new

technologies, to increase circulation and to monitor events led to capital shortage. Thus, small-scale media institutions were destroyed. Some media organizations have merged and created new media organizations. Large-scale media outlets and their bosses had a voice in the market and in the political arena. The rise of Cem Uzan in Turkey, for example, is good example for the above mentioned discussion. In this case, as a result of the privatization policies that gained momentum in the 1990s, the Uzan family has been at the forefront of privatization tenders by using both their relations and the advantages of having private television channels.

The monopolization of the media completely affects the media function, disrupts the libertarian media approaches, and completely destroys the function of transmitting objective information. The monopolization of the Media destroys and distorts all information that flows and reflects to the public. It is seen that the monopolies in the media disrupt the information flow related to the whole society. Besides, in order to talk about neutrality and freedom in the sense of news and communication and libertarian media, it is necessary to be outside of monopolization and material oppression. From this point of view, although the increase of media tools is seen as positive, the fact that these are in the hands of a few people makes impossible to have pluralism and freedom of information. Along with monopolization, the media has been active in many areas<sup>6</sup>. Politicians do not ignore this and use it for their own interests. Thus, I believe that they have used the media for broadcasting in accordance with their interests and they harm the Libertarian Media Approach.

### **MacBride report and libertarian media approach**

When we evaluate the Libertarian Media Approaches in today's conditions, in the 21st. century; as a result of the monopolization in the media sector and as a result of this, it is not possible to write, broadcast and communicate with the free will in the media as well as the local and international platforms. In 1980, in response to the distribution of international news, the Sean MacBride<sup>7</sup> 13 Report, which New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) presented to UNESCO; drew attention to the future of these days and the monopolization of the media thirty-five years ago. In addition, it mentioned that the consent to

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<sup>6</sup> With the concentration and monopolization of capital of Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, media has become an important force for the shaping politics and society in directing politics.

<sup>7</sup> Seen MacBride (26 January 1904-15 January 1988) International politician. He started his political career in Ireland and later worked in various international organizations. Some of them are the United Nations, the Council of Europe and Amnesty International. In 1974 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. MacBride was born in Paris and is the son of President John MacBride. He studied law and attended IRA activities.

repression in terms of content regarding the violation of the rules of impartiality of the liberal media.

### **Conclusion**

The political elements want to limit and control the media's range of action to keep media power and to dominate the media. Political power, whatever the form of government, wants the support of the media. For this to happen, they resort to different methods and want to connect the media themselves by imposing sanctions. Although the pressures and the audits produced vary, the practice of censorship and supervision by laws are the most commonly used methods.

When I evaluated the Liberal Media Approach with the above work and the ideas and elements put forward, I saw that; First of all, we are faced with the fact that the media cannot be independent of politics. The relationship between media and politics is an ongoing process, whatever management system is in power.

In totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, the media acts as the voice of the political power and the media. In liberal and democratic regimes, laws and regulations come to the forefront. The environment in which independent and neutral media organizations are located is shaped according to the structure and thought of power.

Situations ranging from monopoly to cartelization affect the relationship between media and politics. The movement of the media to notice and inform the public should be evaluated in the context of its relation to politics. The fact that politicians act in order to disseminate their thoughts, propaganda and cultures reveals media imperialism. The Press is independent. This freedom includes the right to information, dissemination, criticism, interpretation and creation of works. The use of press freedom in accordance with the requirements of a democratic society can only be limited for the protection of the reputation and rights of others, public health and morality, national security, public order, public security and territorial integrity, prevention of crime or the disclosure of state secrets, ensuring the authority and impartiality of the judicial power. The conditions of monopolization and cartelization in the communication sector lead the libertarian media to great danger and it takes the media away from the realism. This should be prevented by legal arrangements and some dissuasive measures.

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