

国際社会におけるジャーナリズムの役割の再考
—— 基本的な概要と理論的枠組み

Rethinking the Role of Journalism in the International Society :
Basic Outline and Theoretical Framework

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Abstract

Throughout the history, journalism in general and international journalism in particular came to be one of the most serious concerns. Since the advent of the Internet widely spreading throughout the world journalism has gained more interests among young people as well as in other generations.

This paper is an attempt to capture the complicated realities about journalism in its wide sense as a profession with a great influence upon all aspects of human life everywhere by giving some insight upon journalism's history, concept, role and theories. In order to give new outlines to what we are already used to in our everyday life, different media are used in a daily current of interactive practices.

Any society with true democratic performance needs to create a healthy environment of freedom for the real process of public opinion in several directions. The role of journalism here is to represent a proper environment to adopt the process of public opinion making and to help in introducing it to the people in addition to the administration of it.

Here is an unassuming introduction to the definition and the history of journalism followed by a brief account of how journalism takes part in the development of public opinion built in any society. Then, there is a screening of most of the theories that cover the world of journalism and showing description of how far theories can lead journalism to real democratic practices in any free society.

1. Introduction

Most of us start the day by reading a newspaper, listening to radio news reports or TV news programs. During the day time we may follow news stream on the Internet using smart phones or personal computers. In the evening and at the end of the day, we may see or hear more media commentators or analyzing various local and even international information and issues.

Journalism has a great role in every society in the world and in any epoch. Man always needs all possible information throughout different news media for the best choice for any decision on both private and public levels. Cultural aspects of human society require from every participant to constantly seek all new information which helps in the process of daily performances and decision making. Only journalism has a general role to deliver in mass numerous types of knowledge and information in the public sphere to every participant in the society with various kinds of media reaching more people than any other institution in society. Thus, we cannot ignore its strong power and influence upon every part

of the society.

Journalism is one of the most powerful elements in any society in the world and it can practice strong influence upon the process of public opinion granting a steady process towards a free and democratic world.

2. Definition and history

Journalism, a term derived originally from the Latin term '*diurnalis*', means '*journée*' in French and 'daily work' in English. It designates the flow of information, knowledge, opinion and news on a constant base. This is happening every day and everywhere around the world in all languages throughout various media forms, i.e., paper, audio, video and even electronic.

The history of Journalism refers to the history of human beings. The man in his nature is disposed to his curiosity to know all of what is going on around him and more. Knowledge could give total security to man regarding his life, society and the world. The early man started to practice journalism by simple paintings on the stones of the caves to tell mainly about his manifestation of life and culture. Later, we find most engravings and drawings on the walls of the ancient temples in Egypt, China, India and other nation ruins giving a clear form of the first phase of journalism.

Papyrus paper in ancient Egypt was some kind or form of publication in its first stage all over the history and the world. Before discovering the papyrus, man used to write on stone or wood plates and leather sheets to record the knowledge, news and information.

By discovering the paper, printing machine, radio broadcasting, satellite broadcasting and the Internet, journalism came on with more power and influence upon all aspects of life.

Later, the journalism system adapted more methods of performance that can be classified mainly in its paper journalism system, broadcasting journalism system, and electronic journalism system.

Journalism in its modern form can be divided into sub-forms with more specialties and high quality performances. Some of those forms are Advocacy journalism, Broadcast journalism, Investigative journalism, Photojournalism, Sensor journalism, Yellow journalism, etc. Each form of journalism has its definitive field of coverage and role to fulfillment.

Modern history of journalism started in various dates with each form of journalism. During the 14th century, handwriting 'News Sheets' was one of the pre-forms of the current newspaper in Italy at first and later in England and Germany. Those kinds of sheets were demanded by the upper class, rich people and large merchants who had a strong desire of getting prompt and constant news about what was going on in the world around them. Gradually, printed journalism spread more to the public with its low cost and simplicity.

In 19th century journalism, services have been developed accordingly with new technology in fields of information traffic, text processing, etc. Audio and video broadcasting systems have made countless changes in the world. They played such a great role in broadcasting journalism to become the strongest competitor to paper journalism.

The IT revolution helped greatly in the development of contemporary journalism and all of its forms and sub-forms. Information traffic came to its minimum of nearly zero in time. One can send a

report from the Far East to the far west in a few seconds and receive a report in even less time. Electronic journalism opened the door for more freedom of speech. Journalism now cannot be separated from the Internet which overcomes all borders, languages, cultures and ethnics.

Today, journalism plays an increasing role in our life and has strong influences on most public opinions and decisions in all official as well as non-official levels. It is the indicator of how far the countries practice freedom.

20th century journalism has seen a tremendous development, especially in most man interests within the circle of one's community and all the other communities interrelated to the interaction between them and the events of individual interests.

3. Journalism role in modelling the Public Opinion

There is no doubt that the relationship between journalism and politics from its beginning characterized with a continuous feud because journalism's spread of knowledge and enlightenment by broadcasting opinions and various views may produce threats to many of those who are in power.

In the contemporary world, the scope of free speech has been increasing in advanced countries while in the case of developing countries; it is still struggling against dictatorship and false democratic systems.

Journalism stands as a key element in modeling and guiding public opinion. Its fast act rhythm and information dissemination makes any man eager to obtain as much as information that give him a clear image and logically built on what is going on around him from facts to analyze. Moreover, it can help to develop the ideas and the formation of certain opinions about what is going on the holistically, whether at the local or global level in a real perspective.

The term public opinion is given its meaning with reference to a multi-individual situation in which individuals are expressing themselves, or can be called upon to express themselves, as favoring or supporting (or else disfavoring or opposing) some definite condition, person, or proposal of widespread importance, in such a proportion of number, intensity, and constancy, as to the probability of affecting action, directly or indirectly toward the concerned. (Floyd, 1937)

Therefore, to build public opinion requires existence of freedom and responsible journalism that can possess great responsibility to enlighten society on events or social issues and provide the facts that help to spark human desire to express opinion and create desired conclusions.

Free journalism enjoys a conscious active role, where it has a complete influence on public opinion, through a number of different tools and means depending on the size of the awareness of those who establish it and its staff.

Journalism has an honorable message to the global community which requires social and moral commitment to fundamental elements of its sustaining pillars. It is a cornerstone of any public opinion which is expected to be active and capable by adopting a transparent and civilized policy to be able to create positive trends and widespread controversies in society on multiple and important issues.

It is known that any civilized society has several institutions overseeing the conduct of the political, economical, cultural and other affairs that require being there and those who can convey issues

in a realistic vision to the activities carried out by government institutions and others. Here comes the role of journalism to provide people with facts and information in order to create an active and influential public opinion against any unaccepted autocracy practices.

Public opinion in any democratic society may vary in several directions and this is normal for a society driven by the mechanism of democracy and diversity which is one of the main features and is an unblemished indication of evading any case of agitation and undesirable consequences. In the advanced countries where public opinion is effectively appreciated, it is significant that, governments place excessive concerns on the views of its public opinion. Every so often, active public opinion can cause a collapse of a cabinet, change of a bill, or even modification of some laws. Public opinion orientation there is a political and cultural tradition. The relationship between journalism and public opinion is a firm and important relation that can help building peace and stability to create a solidarity and civilized society within a real democratic institution.

4. Theories and Journalism

Throughout history we find a large set of theories that explain the development of journalism and its role in society, besides its relationship to the ruling power. In general, here is an introduction of the most prominent theories which interpret journalism in its wide concept and role:

a. Authoritarian

This theory came up in the 16th and 17th centuries in England. It is based on the philosophy of absolute power of a ruler, the government or both together. This is demonstrated in the theories of Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, and Hegel with the purpose of protecting and establishing more firmly the government's policy holding power. Thus, most of those who are working in the journalism industry must be the most appreciated by the ruler and have to owe commitment to him and his government. In addition, the government imposes control on all forms of journalism as newspapers, TV-broadcasting etc., and bans of any kinds of criticism to the whole of the political system and public officials. This is to keep journalism as a tool only to support and promote government policies. The theory here gives all rights to the elite who control the state and guide the people who are considered not able to practice the process of political decision-making.

In the light of this theory, free speech is determined by the level of the national leadership at that time.

b. Libertarian

Specifically, this theory dates back to the 18th and 19th centuries and mainly to the Renaissance when a number of European thinkers formed many principles against the authoritarian ideas. The English thinker John Milton (1608- 1674) was one of the most influential and impassioned defender of free speech and freedom of the press. He emphasized free speech is one right of the natural rights of all human beings. John Locke had referred to freedom as doing anything permitted by law. He opposed restricting freedom of the press strongly that forced the British parliament in 1665, to revoke the law of press control.

c. Social Responsibility

Dennis Maquil, communication theorist, summarizes the basic principles of the theory of social responsibility mainly in some aspects, such as Journalism that must accept and implement certain obligations towards society. These obligations can be achieved through commitment to transfer information in truth, accuracy and objectivity. To carry out these obligations journalism must be organized autonomously and should avoid anything that urges to crime, violence and social disorder or any direct insults to minorities. It must reflect the diversity of views. Public intervention can be justified in the public interest.

d. International Responsibility

This theory calls journalism to be in a more positive role in international struggles regarding the humanity issues. It demands more transparency practices of all currents which control the contemporary international society and control the lives and destiny of millions in the world.

e. Democratic Participant

This theory is the latest addition to journalism theories and most vulnerable. It lacks so far to the real presence. This theory works in advanced liberal societies. It calls for decentralization far from political parties and the democratic parliament after their obvious failure to develop human life for maintaining peace, security and welfare.

In the field of journalism, there still are more theories struggling towards each other and to other social theories elsewhere in order to achieve high performance journalism in both the domestic and international spheres.

5. Conclusion

History gave a rich scene over many centuries in both authoritarian and libertarian theories that were not the right choice for free and democratic societies.

In any civilized society journalism has a right, duty and responsibility at the same time. Hence, its media has to bear various obligations towards society such as honesty, objectivity, equilibrium and accuracy.

Journalism may depend on the self-management of mass media within the framework of the law. Mass media must be a pluralistic base to reflect the diversity of views and ideas in the community by providing the opportunity for all throughout all forms of journalism. The nations in general could enjoy the right to expect from mass media higher performance levels and to interfere in media affairs could be justified in order to achieve the public welfare.

All forms of journalism ought to have accountability towards society in addition to responsibilities to all it produces on all levels. They might achieve well-balance between the interests of the individuals and the groups as well as the private interest and the public.

One-third of the world's population lives in countries where there is no free speech where no democratic systematists. Doubtless, international society needs to provide more room for media's new framework development to cope with the recent demands define the objectives and functions of the media according to philosophy and values of world civilization.

While there are vast amounts of questions about information quality provided by mass media,

different approaches among the theories can help in construct more firm journalism relating to culture and social structures for powerful social integration and development.

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