Media Policy Paradigm Shift in Turkey: Rethinking Neo-Authoritarian Media Systems in the Age of Neo Liberalism

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Abstract: This article has aimed to open a discussion on the rethinking a neo authoritarian media system in the age of neo liberalism as a case of Turkey's media experiences. In this context, this study deals with the media policy paradigm shift in the Republic of Turkey since 1980s. According to a recent report of the European Journalism Centre (2010:4); although in the wake of a recent democratization wave in the country, there have been some positive elements in the media such as sporadic emergence of some critical perspectives even in some notoriously biased media outlets, which may change this bleak picture, the structural factors which shape the media practices (ownership concentration, working conditions of the journalist, etc) are too rigid and therefore it is too early to become optimistic. In this context, some aspects of these democratization processes are taken from the candidacy of European Union. Despite these positive developments in the doorstep of the European Union, Turkey's media experience is heavily based on ownership structure and journalistic routines are far away from the democratic media system. Therefore, Turkey's media experiences are characterised as a sample of neo authoritarian media system with ongoing media policy transformations, for instance privatization of media companies as much as possible, breaking monopolies and the fundamental change of the public broadcasting service is in the context of media policy. This observable change depends on the two overlapping development in Turkey's democracy. On the one hand, the landscape of national media spaces has been affected by the political and economical conditions; especially after the two financial crashes (in 2000 and 2001) Turkey's media has followed a re-structure by means of ownership and control. On the other hand, Turkey's media experiences have been affected by governmental changes. Before the economic crises Turkey's democracy was governed by a coalition and after the economic crises Turkey's government changed by the national elections in 2002. Thus this article seeks to answer two interrelated questions: Where does press freedom stand in Turkey decades after the Justice and Development Party's policies began? And what does Turkey's media transformation tell us about our understanding of mass political media systems? In this study by using comparative analysis, and incorporating political science literature that offers typologies of non democratic systems of governance, this article demonstrates that contemporary Turkey's media find much in common with authoritarian regimes across the world and are not *sui generis as* some have argued.

Keywords: Normative Theories of the Media; neo – authoritarian media system; Turkey

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Introduction

This article examines, by means of a case study, media policy paradigm shift in Turkey and in this context, rethinking neo authoritarian media systems in the age of neo liberalism. The article has focused on the recent trends in media ownership in Turkey and their impact on media pluralism and journalistic autonomy in the context of media policy paradigm shift in Turkey since 1980s. Therefore, this study analysis focuses mainly on the ever-intensifying processes of ownership concentration and its reflections on the media world in Turkey. In this context, the article investigates both the allegations and the growing evidence of political and business instrumentalization [1] of the media in the hands of cross media giants in Turkey. I argue that this kind of coupling of business, media, and political sectors constitutes an ever more prominent feature of the national media spaces in Turkey and can be regarded as an indicator of its gradual "Italianization"[2] of the Turkish media practices.

The landscape of Turkish media has been rapidly undergone "social", "economic" and "political" transformations since 1980s. These ongoing "changes" have two faces. On the one hand; "privatization of public communication companies", "liberalization of the media market" and "deregulation / re - regulation" imperatives came into being on the media sector since 1980s. In this context, despite very significant rise in the number of media outlets, the level of ownership is high in both the national newspaper and television markets, and has increased during the last three decades. Moreover, cross ownership has emerged as a major problem on the freedom of the press. On the other hand, Turkish national media spaces faced a serious threat on the freedom of the expression, especially since 2002. The national media space of Turkey is almost collided with the pressure of

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[1] Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004, p. 37) use the concept of instrumentalization to describe "the control of the media by outside actors–parties, politicians, social groups, or economic actors seeking political influence, who use them to intervene in the world of politics". However, the authors quickly add that the media "can also be 'instrumentalized' for commercial purposes," opening the door for a broader understanding of this concept, which was also adopted in this study. In this study, media insturmentalization is understood as a form of control exercised over the media in order to achieve particular economic and /or political goals.

[2] In the early 1990's, Slavko Splichal (1994, pp. 145-146) writing primarily about East Central Europe, discussed the "Italianization" of the media. However, in this context he was referring more to the politization of media and the integration of media and political elites, as opposed to the dominance of the media by one person or political coalition. Thus, the comparison with Turkey is not as salient. In the Turkey's national media sphere this term, "Italianization", called "yandaş medya".

government at that time. Since the country became a candidate of the EU in 1999, Turkish democratic rights in general, and freedom of expression in particular, have occupied a great deal of political media space both in Turkey and abroad. Internationally, discussions concerning the limits of media pluralism, tolerance of ethnic/cultural diversity, the structural changes of media ownership and freedom of expression in Turkey often centre on questions related with state censorship and legislative constraints. Moreover, these debates have intensified after the election of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) in November 2002. Although an intensive period of parliamentary reforms geared toward conforming to the pluralistic and democratic ideals of the European Union began [1], in practice, major hurdles that limit democratic rights and attacks on freedom of expression persisted (Christensen, 2010, pp. 177-178). In this context, the financial crises and then as a result of the general elections in 2002 and with the change of the government, media's role and the functions have been re-defined. Although, Justice and Development Party's official self definition is a "conservative democrat", the founder of the Party has originated from the Islamist ideology and movement of Islamic political thought. In this respect this is the resurgence of the old but important political conflict(s) in the political scene of Turkey. This conflict is between "Islamist" versus "Modernist" or say to "Kemalist" political thought. Although, the political tensions have been centralised between Islamist and Kemalist political thought since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, these political tensions, which is to be the case, never polarized in the history of Republic of Turkey. On the other hand, that conflict is between the government and the secular media structure in Turkey. Especially this conflict has been seen as the government pressures on the "secular" media. In this context, the effects of Justice and Development Party's effects on the Turkish media also reached the public service broadcaster (Turkish Radio and Television – TRT).

Methodologies of this Study: Reading a Neo Authoritarian Media System in the Context of Turkey Media Experiences

In the book "*Four Theory of the Press*"; Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956) begin their comparative analysis of media systems with a simple, but important,

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[1] But In practice, attacks on freedom of expression persisted, and incidents such as the legal cases in 2005 against the Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink and author Orhan Pamuk for expressing their political views on the Turkish state and its minorities, were the focus of international attention.

question: "Why is the press as it is?" This fundamental question underlying the article's analysis of the Turkey's media structure is the same: Why is the Turkey's media structure as it is? In order to be able to answer this question, the writer of this article, will first try clarifying the following issues. (1).Which political, economic and especially legislative change have influenced the situation and operation of the media since 1990s? To put this question differently: How were the process of liberalization and globalization trends affected within the national media field and how the process of transition affected the relationship between media and government? (2).What are the key components that can serve as the basis for identifying changes in a particular historical period?

In order to be able to answer these questions, this study focuses on four aspects: State control over the operation of media companies (the influences of the states as an important media owner), support for the media, the integration and intertwining of the media and political-economical power elites and guaranteeing the credibility of media institutions. This study is based on the Jay G. Blumler and Michael Gurevitch (1995, pp. 59-72) discussion on the relationship between media systems and democracy nexus. A similar methodological framework for comparative media systems has been put forwards by Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004, p. 21) in the "Comparing Media Systems". In Hallin and Mancini's opinion, the analysis should embrace four aspects of the media systems: The development of media markets (primarily the high circulation of media markets), political parallelism (the level and nature of links between the media and political parties) and the development of professionalism in journalism especially the level of state intervention in media system. Based on the variation on these dimensions, Hallin and Manchini (2004, p. 22) developed three models for the comparison of the media systems in Western Europe and North America. These models are: (1) Polarized Pluralist or Mediterranean Model, for Southern European Countries like France, Greece and Italy. (2) Democratic Corporatist or North/Central European Model like Germany, Netherlands and Scandinavian countries. (3) Liberal or North Atlantic Model like United States, Great Britain and Canada. The four dimensions that developed by Halin and Mancini might be useful in delineating and analysing the main features of the media systems also in the context of "de-westernize" media system like Turkey. As Esra Özcan (2007, p. 3) has explained it;

"Considering the geographical clustering that appears in their work the similarities that the Turkish media system shares with that model is not surprising. The intellectual ties that were established with French literary cultures at the end of the

19th century, a similar Mediterranean culture and the long tradition of paternalistic and clientalistic politics had their impact on the development of media system in Turkey as in other Southern European countries". (Özcan, 2007, p. 3)

The characteristic features of Turkey's heavily concentrated and paternalistic traditions like the other media experience such as in the Southern European countries has emerged a paternalistic and clientalistic media structure. On the other hand, the interdependence between political and media elites and the strong clientelistic relations that characterize the Turkey's political system are identified as the main factors. As Hedwing de Smaele (1999, p. 173), media systems are given shape not only by economic but also political and cultural factors. In this context, I will analyze the "problems" facing the media system of Turkey, especially the problems facing journalists and the institution of journalism of Turkey, by addressing four interrelated phenomena: (1) The concentration of media ownership and its threats to the media pluralism in Turkey. (2) Media owner's efforts on the freedom of expression. In this context, the ill-defined relationships between media owners and the governments. (3) Government legislation that affects the rights and working conditions of news workers. (4) Political parallelism, the level and nature of links between media and political parties, and clientelistic relations which affect a freedom of expression. In this regard, Daniel Hallin and Stylianos Papathanasopoulos (2002, pp. 184-185) point out "parochial peculiarities" as a key reason for threat to the pluralism of the media. For Hallin and Papathanasopoulos (2002, pp. 184-185); "the dichotomy between the liberal perspective, for which democratization of the media is purely a matter of the elimination of state interference, and the critical political economy perspective, which has focused on the control of media by private capital, but has until now not been very sophisticated in its analysis of variations in the relation capital to the state, political parties and other institutions. Political and economic institutions do not develop separately, and it is crucial that we develop analytical tools that cut across this dichotomy." (Hallin and Papathanasopoulos, 2002, pp.184-185)

As Hallin and Papathanasopoulos (2002, p. 185) emphasised, although the overlooking theoretical approach such as critical political economy can be used as useful tools for the analysis of national/regional media systems, there is a need for more context-bound research and theoretical implementation. Therefore this study is based upon a "more context-bound" research and theory. As Christian Christensen (2007, p. 180) argues; "this is particularly true in the case of work form or about Turkey, a country which as a subject of academic research, has

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found itself caught in an intellectual and theoretical no-man's land located somewhere between south-eastern Europe and the Middle East". In this regard; as a candidate country of European Union, the Turkish media experience not only in relation to those of geographically, politically, economically dimensions but also historically proximate nations/regions aspects of the media systems. This approach, which will be the primary focus of this article, is to use the Turkish media experience to re-evaluate or reframe arguments concerning media in advanced industrial democracies. Therefore, in an effort to position the Turkey's media experience, it is argued by communication scholars, helps to "internationalize" and "de-westernize" media theory. These are termed in the John Nerone's (1995, p. 38) arguments. According to John Nerone (1995, p. 38); "the possibility of authoritarianism in communications is present wherever the authority of power exists and is exercised to limit or suppress or define people's thoughts or expressions". This view is debated by other communications scholar like Colin Spark, John Downing and Kaarle Nordenstreng who look to the Russian and East European experience to confirm the malevolent influence of commercial/private capital on the media. This view has argued; the power of state and the power of private capital, having on equivalent (of course) negative effects on the health of Habermas's public sphere theory. This view sees the "systemic continuity" between new and old media systems (quoted in Becker, 2004, pp. 141-142). The question of "who owns the media" has always occupied a prominent place in discussion concerning journalistic freedom, media performance and their social roles. As Dennis McQuail (2000, p. 198) reminds, the argument about a causal link between media ownership and the nature of their operation is not necessarily grounded in Marxist philosophy but can be regarded as a "commonsense axiom" summarized in Herbert Altshull's "second law of journalism" stating that "the contents of the media always reflect interests of who finance them." (McQuail, 2000, p. 198) Even if the will of the owners is only one factor determining the content and performance of the media, the issue of media ownership has always been considered of crucial importance for a democratic society. In the case of Turkey, national media spaces are very noticeable in terms of not only having the paradigmatic shifted of media policies but also an understanding of neo authoritarian media systems in the age of globalization.

The aim of this article, on the one hand, is to examine both of the government and media relationship nexus more closely and analyze the Turkey's media market in a broader context of the theoretical debates about the impact of ownership and

internationalization on media pluralism and performance. On the other hand, government pressures on the freedom of expression since 2002 and reflections on the media pluralism. I will analyze media pluralism and ownership structure of Turkey's national media space and then I will offer suggestions as to how the present situation in Turkey could open the door for the further refinement of research on, and regarding theory nationally and regionally specific media.

Turkey's Media in Transition: Media Ownership, Market Concentration and Democracy

Turkey's media experience stems from the macro economical and political transformations that have been occurring since 1980s. Specially, 1980s has a major role as reported by Altuğ Akın (2010, p. 2);

"The coup d'etat of 1980s the third one after the military interventions of 1960 and 1971, opened up the decade with harsh political implications. All political parties and the Constitution were eradicated; the left and right movements of the 1970s were dissolved while many members were imprisoned by the Junta; almost all civil society organizations, including labor unions and professional associations were banned. The ideological framework of the previous decade (socialist/communist/left vs. Islamist/nationalist/right) was replaced with state supported neo liberalism, which was represented by the Motherland Party (Anap), the winner of the 1983 elections." (Akın, 2010, p. 2)

Turkey's intention was the integration of neo liberal economic programme in the 1980s. And, as a result of the third military coup in 1980, the door was opened to the neo liberal policy agenda. This change in the Turkey's political, economical, cultural and sociological scenes has been free market domination in place of State's regulatory power. This observable change in the Turkey's media experiences follows the global trend. According to Richard D. Murphy (2007:5); "in terms of media and communication technologies, many of the structural network and relationships of capital began to surface in different countries around the world in the 1980s, as nation changed their telecommunications structures and policy to eliminate trade barriers, promote competition and create opportunities for economic development". In this context as Hernan Galpherin (1999, p. 629) asserts that; "questions of media access, diversity, ownership and content regulation define the type and quality of public sphere at work within a nation or region, because the

media have become the key scarce in the struggle over publicness in contemporary political systems". These observable changes in the contemporary political systems have always been a several aspect as Richard A. Gershon (2007, pp. 22-24) has explained that several aspects of this new political agenda; (1) the common motivation for such regulatory and economic reforms was the perceived inefficiency of central planning and government-protected monopolies. (2) Which were characterized by poor financial performance, overstaffing and dependency on government subsidies (3) poor export performance However, as Hernan Galpherin (1999, p. 630) asserts that; while exemptions and side agreements regarding the cultural industries abounded in regional trade agreements, marking the tensions between economic initiatives and cultural sovereignty, the restructuring of media and telecommunications markets nevertheless exploded in the 1990s. In fact to nurture and guide this process, on January 1 1995, the World Trade Organization was created and tasked with enforcing international trade agreements and setting a global agenda for privatization and liberalization while removing protectionism. As Richard Murphy (2007, p. 6) asserts that the creation of the World Trade Organization coincided with an unprecedented number of mergers and acquisitions among transnational media corporations which aggressively pursued the opportunities that privatization provided. At the same time Turkey followed a second global trend that was directly related with the telecommunication and media sectors. As Altuğ Akın (2010, p. 3) has noted, this action paved the way for the deployment of these technologies and infrastructures for economic interest. From being controlled by a public service monopoly, TRT, with only one channel to a staggering 270 television channels crowding the airwaves in the early 2000s, this signified, four times as many as in neighbouring Greece. After the approval of the commercial channels entrance in the media sector in 1994, major changes took place in the national media spaces regarding its structural characteristics, particularly the new ownership structures. Until 1990's, the Turkey's media ownership structure has been divided into two branch basically. Public service broadcaster, TRT (***Turkish Radio and Television***) has dominated in the radio and television that operates as a state monopoly while heavily Istanbul-based private owners have dominated by printing and publishing. As Doğan Tılıç (2000, p. 1) emphasised; "After the 1980's, the ownership structure in the media of Turkey changed dramatically". Traditional media ownership which is based on family enterprises or journalist-owner structure was replaced by one of the "new ownership" model. According to Tılıç, almost every journalist has complained about the "negative" influences of the new ownership structure. This new model

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represents extreme commercialization and it's seen to be directly influencing both the communication process and individual journalists. In fact, the true shift in media ownership in Turkey, came in the mid-1980's has been followed the shift to free market policies was a core element of the broader changes that took place in Turkey like other liberal democratic countries, especially Greek media experience after 1980's (Leandros, 2010, p. 886). As Christensen (2007, p. 182) has noted, from the studies on media in south-eastern Europe, Latin America and Turkey, a number of issues, or similarities, as key: (1) The rapid and sometimes uncontrolled spread of free market policies and ideologies, (2) The general perception in the population of a link between the free market and the democratization process, (3) The development of (and changes within) journalism and the mass media before, during and after the advent of free market policies, (4) The importance of the notion of "clientelism". This is especially true for the Turkey's media experience. After the 1980's, transition from highly centralized economy, heavy military influence and the state-run media, to a more free market economy with privately owned newspaper and television stations, was seen by some as a moment for hope (Christensen, 2007, p. 182). Although, neo liberal media policies have perceived as the democracy and the freedom of expression by a number of scholars such as M. Lütfullah Karaman and Bülent Aras (2000, p. 46)[1], Turkey's media power has concentrated in the hands of few media "moguls". At that time, media's power was abused by owners. Even during the financial crises of late 2000 and early 2001 in Turkey the "knock-on" effect on the journalists were devastating. In the period of the financial crash, between 3000 and 5000 journalist and media workers lost their job (Christensen, 2007, 193). As Aslı Tunç (2004, p. 310) puts it, "the media owner has the last word in Turkey". As Oxford Business Group (2004, p. 145) has noted, for Turkish media conglomerates, broadcasting was primarily a means of wielding the political and economic muscle. Despite Turkey's national media space, profits in the media business were pessimistic compared to the vast investments attracted to the sector throughout the 1990s-2000s, numerous large industrial holdings, had not hesitated to join the fierce competition. According to various scholars (Adakli, 2001, pp. 161-162; Catalbas, 2000, pp. 127-132; OBG, 2004, p. 145; Sönmez, 1995, pp. 4-6), this "rush to media business" was an attempt motivated by intent at exploiting not only the media's cultural influence, but also potential political benefits as well. Involvement in Turkish media allowed the companies to gain state

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[1] For instance, M. Lütfullah Karaman and Bülent Aras (2000, p. 46) have noted, have noted that, during the 1990's the development of private media systems in Turkey led to a number of changes to oppressive "legal norms established earlier on under the monopoly of state control".

loans and provided them with a tool to pressure the government. In this atmosphere, the concentration of power (economic, political and symbolic) in the hands of a few media conglomerate was inevitable. Furthermore, as the media business consolidated towards the early 2000s, the revenues increased as well as the economic expectations facing the companies from their owners and shareholders. Thus, ratings and advertisement revenues turned out to be the sole determinants of the dominant profit-oriented media rationale[1].

Media ownership usually has direct implications for the character and the extent of media pluralism, which is largely believed to be an essential condition for the functioning of the democratic public sphere. Despite the important role that media play in shaping public opinion and the democratic process, the word of "pluralism" hasn't been clearly explained neither in media policies nor in the implementation of regulation through neo liberal policy paradigm. That phenomenon was obviously observed in Turkey. As Gillian Doyle (2002, p. 11) puts it; "Pluralism is generally associated with diversity in the media; the presence of a number of different and independent voices, and of differing political opinions and representations of culture within the media". Media pluralism is recognized as a special regulation issues by European Union and defined as "... is a concept that embraces aspects such as diversity in the ownership of media outlets, and variety in the sources of information and in the range of media content available to the public" (sees the more details in Commission of the European Union, 2007, p. 5). For instance, European Convention on Human Rights has got a special regulation on media pluralism. Especially, under the Article 10 of this policy document, democratic states are obliged to protect and to take positive measures for diversity of opinion in the media. Furthermore, protection and improvement of media pluralism have been the important dimensions of the European Union's media policy agenda. In this regard, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the Commission of the European Union, as seen in many reports and resolutions, have underlined the crucial democratic role of the media and related need for pluralism, tolerance and openness (Leandros, 2010, p. 886). Nevertheless it is a well documented fact that European Union tried and finally failed to harmonize European media, not

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[1] For instance, creative programming strategies of the early years of commercial broadcasting, diversity of the television content and especially the amount of information-related programs diminished dramatically.

only external but also internal[1], pluralism regulation since-1990s (Haurtcourt, 2007, p. 168). As Alison Hartcourt (2007, p. 12) has explained;

"The European Union's media market regulation is part of an umbrella regulatory framework for communications. Significantly, the EU's framework for the communication sector is rooted in industrial policy. Principal concerns have been the drive for capital investment and correction of the trade imbalance with the United States."

According to Hartcourt (2007, p. 12), the European Union sees media policy as an apparatus of Europeanization process by conducting harmonization of national media policies[2]. In this context, observable changes in the media policy paradigm of Turkey, on the one hand, are based on the candidacy of European Union. As Miyase Christensen (2010, p. 178) has explained; "since the country became a candidate to the EU in 1999, Turkish democratic rights in general, and freedom of expression in particular, have occupied a great deal of political media space both in Turkey and abroad". Especially, media pluralism in Turkey has been a great deal of interest at the international level. To say that, discussion concerning the limits of media pluralism, tolerance of ethnic-cultural diversity and freedom of expression as complementary aspects of the media systems in Turkey often centre on questions related with state censorship and legislative constraints (Christensen, 2010, p. 178). Although the relationship between Turkey and European Union affects Turkey's media policy paradigm shift and in this regard, ongoing privatization as harmonization practices of Turkey's national media policies with European Union, other several factors are very important hauls for the limits of the pluralism of Turkey's media. Especially media owners and the government's relationship nexus has been affected in the Turkey's national media spaces. Although, the European Union's. (2008, p. 14) "*2008 Country Progress Report*"; suggest that "open debates continues in the national Turkish media on a wide range

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[1] Media pluralism has distinguished two main forms. There are "external pluralism" and "internal pluralism". External pluralism is defined by pluralism of media ownership and internal pluralism is defined by the pluralism of media contents. Internal and external pluralism is the complementary dimension of freedom of expressions.

[2] As Alison Hartcourt (2007, p. 160) have puts it, from the mid-1980s, a gradual pattern of market liberalisation, regulation and deregulation began to emerge in the countries under observation (his research is based on Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and Spain media experiences). Three key regulatory overhauls of national media policies can be distinctly marked as occurring just after the EU's 1986 Single European Act (SEA), the 1989 Television Without Frontiers Directive and during the mid-1990s. The SEA may not have been a direct catalyst of media market liberalisation; however its liberal market philosophy was extremely significant. Following the 1986 SEA, many European Countries liberalised their media market.

of issues, including those perceived as sensitive by Turkey's society in terms of Habermasian "public sphere theory", Turkey's national public sphere goes to "re-feudalisation"[1] by media owners. Although the media experience of Turkey, never a unique example and also in recent years the technological, economical and social facets of globalization and have affected media ownership structures all over the neo liberal democracies but a question, "how to regulate the media market?" become increasingly important dimensions in the state of the Turkey media policies. Especially after the financial crashes, November 2000 and February 2001, of the Turkey's economy and in this respect Justice and Development Party's coming to the power, that question has become more important since 2002.

Rethinking Neo Authoritarian Media System: Turkey's Media Experiences as a Case Study

As Christian Christensen (2007, p. 182) notes, from the studies on media in South Eastern Europe, Latin America and Turkey, a number of common issues emerge. Most relevant one of these commonalities is the rapid, as an observable in a number of cases sometimes uncontrolled, spread of free market policies and ideologies, and a general perception of a link between the free market and the democratization process. As a result of this "uncontrolled spread of free market policies and ideologies", in the media landscape of Turkey, media giants have emerged.

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[1] Habermasian concept of "public sphere" is commonly employed to signify the open realm of rational public discourse and debate, a realm which is conceptually linked with the very democratic process and in which individuals can freely discuss everyday issues of common concern. In his innovative work, Habermas (1989) intriguingly traces the historical development of public sphere from the Ancient Greece to the present. For Habermas the gradual spread of capitalism allowed an emerged of a distinctive forms of public sphere; "the bourgeois public sphere" (Tsekeris, 2008, p. 12). However, that form of public spheres has been "structural transformations" over the ages. In this context as Habermas (1989, p. 121) have note it, the term of "re-feudalisation" aiming to comprehensively demonstrate the overwhelming interweaving of the public and private realm, as well as the complex way in which public affairs have been sequentially and structurally transformed into occasions for displays of the powers that be, rather than into real sites of productive and useful contestation between opposing arguments, policies and viewpoint. As Charambolos Tsekeris (2008, p. 16) have explained; "Contemporary media cultures are characterised by the progressive privatisation (or even 'atomisation') of the citizenry and the trivialization and glamorisation of questions of public concern and interest. The hijacking of communicative questions by monopolistic concerns seemingly converts citizens into consumers (of information and images) and politicians into media stars protected from rational questioning".

Some aspect of the rapid growth of handful Turkish media giants is similar to the "second tier media firms" of newly industrialized South American countries that gained visible national and regional dominance since 1990s[1]. But this liberalization programme was undertaken to create opportunities for big business and relieve government of some of its burdens, not deepen democratic participation (Murphy, 2007, p. 8). This trend especially was seen in the national media landscape of Turkey. Although the number of newspapers, magazines, radio channels and television stations has increased steadily in Turkey, this hasn't provided a media pluralism.

Print Media and Ownership Concentration

According to most recent report of European Journalism Centre (2010, p. 1); "mainstream media in Turkey is plagued with severe problems". In the national media spaces of Turkey; 70 percent of the media (including national newspapers, radio stations and television channels and national internet services) are owned by few cross-media groups. Nationalistic rhetoric and self-censorship is paramount and media are vulnerable against political powers (the military, religious communities, bureaucratic elites, governments etc). Intervention of the government is usefully political practices; political parallelism and clientelism is very prevailing in the daily routines of the Turkey's media experience, the relationship is between media and government is far away a democratic media system. As Andrew Finkel (2000:152) has noted it; "the media in Turkey embody a number of paradoxes. It is both the victim of rights abuse, the clarion of reform, yet, an industry that understands well the methods of a lax business environment". As Edwin C. Baker (2007, pp. 120-121) has explained; "Concentrated communicative power creates demagogic dangers for a democracy, reduces the number of owners who can choose to engage in watchdog roles, may reduce the variety in perspectives among the smaller group of people who had ultimate power to choose specific watchdog projects and multiplies the probable conflicts of interest that can muzzle these watchdogs" (Baker, 2007, pp. 120-121).

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[1] As Richard Murphy (2007, p. 6) have explained, these transnational developments have largely supported the national and regional dominance of some of the most powerful "second tier media firms" of newly industrialized nations such as Brazil's Globo, Mexico's Televisa, Argentina's Clarin and Venezuela's Cisnero's Group that have extensive ties and joint ventures with the largest media TNC's as well as Wall Street's investment banks. The cultural and political power that these media groups well and the economic integration they enjoy are firmly rooted in laisez-faire agreements and clientelism established early on with the state in most Latin American countries.

In this chapter, I'll focus on phenomenon of the "media moguls" and the related problems of the media "insturmentalization" which is usually associated with the concentration of communication power into the hands of a few cross-media groups, to say that a few hegemonic powers in the national media and public sphere, in Turkey. That hegemonic powers, in the national media landscape of Turkey, activities have been expanded to the other sectors beyond media such as tourism, finance, automotive industries, construction and infrastructure equipment since 1980's. The national media landscape has been heavily dominated by large multi-sectoral groups such as Doğan Media Group, Turkuaz, Ciner Group, Çukurova Group, Doğuş Group and Feza Group. All of the major commercial channels, radio stations, internet service providers and national newspapers belong to these media holdings. Moreover the distribution of print media is in the hands of Doğan Group's company "Yay-Sat" and Turkuaz Group's company "Turkuaz Dağıtım Pazarlama". Therefore, "free marketplace of ideas" is subject to these large conglomerates in Turkey. Indeed, these large conglomerates are also active in many other sectors. Especially those sectors depend on or heavily affected by the government's decision or regulation. Therefore, owners of the media have seen the media vulnerable for their interest, for instance against the political power, government, bureaucratic elites, military, etc. In this respect, the media have been used as a "defensive weapon" by media owners against rival politics or business concern. Table 1 is shows national media markets in the period of 2010-2011, and then I'll make an analysis of ownership and control structure in the mainstream media groups.

Table 1. Ownership Structure and Newspaper's Average Daily Circulation in the National Media Landscape of Turkey

Newspapers	Average Daily Circulation 2010-2011	Owner
Hürriyet	447.327	**Doğan Media Group** **Doğan Publishing Holding**
Referans	65.719	
Milliyet	162.306	
Radikal	67.715	
Posta	494.299	
Vatan	130.291	

Fanatik	191.602	
Hürriyet Daily News	4.843	
Iz Ruk v Ruki **(Published and distributed in Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan since 1992)**	20.000	
Expressz **(Published and distributed in Hungary since 1994)**	100.000	
Oglasnik **(Published and distributed in Croatia since 2000) Oglasnik is a serial advertisement newspaper and took a 60 percent in the Croatia's media market.**		
Sabah	338.490	**Turkuaz Media Group**
Takvim	115.917	
Fotomaç	206.581	
Yeni Asır	30.558	
Habertürk	256.551	**Ciner Media Group**
Zaman	865.419	**Feza Media Gorup**
Today's Zaman	5.778	
Akşam	143.359	**Çukurova Media Group**
Güneş	101.411	
Alem	65.664	
Tercüman	54.099	
Total Daily Newspaper Circulation	**3.965.123**	

(http://www.ejc.net/media_landscapearticle/Turkey.html,http://www.turkmedya.com.tr,http://www.cu kurova.com.tr,http://www.dmg.com.tr,http:www.turkuazyayın.com.tr).

Although Turkey's population is increasing steadily, newspaper circulation is lowest degree and moreover, concentrated ownership is very high degree. After the drastic developments that came about in the 1990s set the scene for the birth of the Turkish media industry which was characterised intensified financial maneuvers with the lack of proper regulation (Akin, 2010:4). As a result of these conditions, the national media spaces of Turkey have been characterised by concentrated ownership, the establishment of cross-media monopolies, unregulated integration (in both vertically and horizontally) along with diversification in different sectors. Turkey's media landscapes was dominated by only five cross media groups; three share more than 76% of all national media revenues in different branches (publishing, broadcasting, magazines and so forth). On the other hand, Turkey's media monopolies and the government's relationship is complex and symbiotic because government in Turkey expected obedience while the media owners expected a commercial gain. In this context, as it aspires for full European Union membership, Turkey is still struggling with freedom of expression, raising questions whether it can ever join the European Union or will simply remain a suspended bridge between East and West. Indeed, Turkey's recent history revealed that these two examples of Dogan Media Group and Turkuaz Media Group are very remarkable cases for the government and the media group's relation. For instance, Doğan Publishing Holding is the largest and the most prominent media giant in Turkey. Doğan Publishing has got approximately 60 percent of all the Turkey's media. But in 2009, Turkey's media king pin returns to the ranks despite scandal. Although Doğan Yayin Holding (Doğan Publishing Holding), the country's largest media group, was fined 3.8 billion liras (approximately 2.5 billion dollars) in September 2009 for tax evasion, on top of another 862,4 million liras (approximately 583 million dollars) fine in February 2009. Company is challenging those penalties in court; a tax court overturned $520 million in February 2010. Officially retired in January, handing post to daughter Arzuhan Doğan; Dogan will remain as honorary president. His four daughters own shares worth about 450 million dollars apiece in the holding company; not reflected in his net worth. Doğan Publishing Holding's newspaper (Hürriyet, Radikal and Milliyet) accused the government of Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan of using the tax charge as a way to silence a press critical of the government. Erdogan has criticised Aydın Doğan and his media companies for unfair reporting and called on his AK Party members to boycott his newspapers (http://www.reuters.com). After this tax penalty, adverse columnists like "Emin Çölaşan" and "Bekir Coskun" have been dismissed by the Group. For rethinking of neo authoritarian media systems in the age of neo

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liberalism, another remarkable case was Turkuaz Media Group and the government relations. Turkuaz Media Group was newly established in the Turkey's media. After the financial crashes in 2000-2011, Group has bought Sabah (Turkey's second larger circulated newspaper) and television channel –ATV- from the Tasarruf Mevduatı Sigorta Fonu (SDIF-Savings Deposit Insurance Fund) Çalık Holding owns Turkuaz Media Group. Çalık Group has connections with ruling party (Justice and Development Party). For instance, the Chief Executive Officer of the Group (Berat Albayrak) is the "son-in-law" of the Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan. Çalık Group bought Sabah and A TV. The Group took a loan for the process from publicly owned banks, Halkbank and Vakıfbank. Another cross-media company, Feza Media Group, is the case of Islamic media which rase after 2002 in Turkey. Feza Group is the Islamist-Liberal community which has close and complex relationship with the Islamic sect leader Fettullah Gülen. Gülen's community has affected the government. At the same time Gülen movement is increasingly visible through the work of a range of institutions across the world.

In Turkey, the rise of the Islamic movements during 1980s was also the result of the dissent generated by top down modernization, radical state secularism and the official ideology which rendered groups invisible that do not fit into officially tailored definitions of a modernized society. (Özcan, 2007, p. 4) Following the liberalization and commercialization of the 1990s, Islamic Groups and the discourse has risen in the public sphere. But this trend has led to the way of political and ideological polarization in the national media space of Turkey. As Ayşe Öncü (2000, p. 302) has explained, this can also be attributed to the increasing interaction among the journalists and opinion makers belonging to different ideological camps in the roundtables and other televised forms. However, some of the Islamic newspapers and television channels which were more conservative at their inception have become more liberalized towards the end of the 1990s, due to the need for competition for advertising revenues and for a broader audience appeal. Nevertheless Feza Group is not a unique example of the Turkey's Islamic media. Yeni Şafak (average daily circulation is 100.000 in 2011) is owned by Albayrak business group and also this media group has connections with ruling party (Justice and Development). The Islamic Vakit (average daily circulation is 50.000 in 2011) is more radical and sensationalist in content and has been prosecuted several times (http://www.ejc.net). Another Islamic newspaper is Milli Gazete (average daily circulation is 50.000 in 2011) is the voice of Milli Görüş which has been the fundamentalist Islamic political tradition in Turkey that aims at

substantial restructuring of the state in compliance with the maxims of Islam. Other media groups in Turkey such as Cumhuriyet (average daily circulation is 50.000 in 2011) which is not entirely owned by any multi-sectoral group. Therefore, it is only one example of independent newspaper in the Turkey's national media sphere.

The dominance of cross media giants in the media world in Turkey is not only limited to control over the national newspaper market but also other branch of media sector such as television and advertising.

Ownership Concentration in the Television Sector

With over 25 million television-owning households, the Turkey's broadcasting market is one of the largest in Europe. In 2011, there were more than 400 television stations in the country, 23 of which were national and 16 were regional ones. All of the national television channels are also in cable and satellite too. Despite the large number of outlets, the multi sectoral groups again are the main actors in the private broadcasting market. A significant feature of the Turkey's broadcasting field since its liberalization in 1990s is the marginalization of the public broadcaster (TRT-Turkish Radio and Television). Although the early years of de-regulated Turkish media were celebrated by the majority of the population and the prevailing democratic expectations from the commercial channels in Turkey were mostly rooted in the democratic discrepancy of the public service broadcaster, commercial channels haven't been a source of democratic media system and media pluralism. Therefore as Christian Christensen (2007, p. 183) has pointed out, the media honeymoon in Turkey was short lived. This is partly based, on the one hand on speed with which the Turkish business world recognized the myriad possibilities (economically and politically) offered through the control of media channels was not matched by swift, effective action on the part of Turkish government to regulate and increasingly hyper-commercialized, oligopolistic system. On the other hand, lack of detailed regulation on the cross media ownership and sector specific regulation led to the concentrated ownership in Turkey.

Table 2 shows ownership and control structure of the television sector in the national media spaces in Turkey. Although, average audience share and rating levels have important aspects of understanding the hegemony of cross-media giants in Turkey but audience measurement methods are very questionable. For example survey which was conducted on the families in Turkey was based on old variables

which changed modernization process in Turkey. Therefore, the article has preferred an analysis on television ownership and control structure in Turkey.

Table 2. Ownership and Control Structure in the Television Sector

Television Channel's	Owner
Kanal D	**Dogan Publishing Holding**
Star	
CNN-Türk	
TNT	
A TV	**Turkuaz Media Group**
Show TV	**Çukurova Holding**
Sky Türk	
Haber Türk	**Ciner Media Group**
NTV	**Doğus Holding**
NTV SPORT	
Samanyolu TV	**Feza Group**
Kanal 7	**Islamist Sect Milli Görüş**
Channel 24	**Sancak Media Group**
TRT (public broadcaster)	**State**
Fox TV	**News Netherlands Company**[1]

(http://www.ejc.net)

Public service broadcaster, TRT, has followed a diversification strategy since 2006. After the period of governmental change, Turkey's public service broadcaster entered a restructuring period in both structure, especially growing and dissemination, and content change. According to Raşit Kaya (1999, p. 7), the ideological background of TRT, as it came into being in 1964, was development by "modernization" and "development" paradigms that dominated the country and benefited from United States financial aids. TRT's mission is to create ideological support from public for state policies. This assumption that the public service broadcaster as conveyors of the state's ideology has always been valid. However, as Akın Altuğ (2010, p. 6) has noted, the vastly elitist, evidently from "top to bottom" and by large homogenizing broadcasting policies of TRT, did not meet the cultural, political and social demands of the majority of Turkish public. Therefore, TRT's improving strategies with 11 national and 2 international channels[2] is only

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[1] Formerly Ihlas Group's TGRT Channel's 51 percent share has been sold to News Netherlands Group Company owned by Rupert Murdock in September 2006. (http://www.ejc.net).

[2] TRT's divertisification strategy is based on audience segmentation. Therefore this transition has called from broadcast to narrowcast or thematic broadcasting strategies. TRT has 11 national television channels: TRT-1 (general), TRT-2 (art and culture), TRT-3 (live broadcast from the Turkish National Grand Assembly and youth and youth, sports, music programs), TRT-4 (education), and TRT-Müzik (music channel). TRT has also one regional television channel TRT -GAP

remain the rise of the channels but this did not nurture pluralism in the media and especially these trends didn't bring democratic communication possibilities. Therefore the diversification process of TRT is a new concentration in the Turkish media by state. As a result of concentrated ownership Turkey's media have got some internal problems. The outcome of this situation, during the last 25 years, has been a very biased and extremely nationalistic media landscape, and all attempts of independent journalism practice (despite some positive developments) remain dangerous.

The news coverage of mainstream media quite often depends on the degree to which the published news would serve the business interests of the conglomerates which own the media outlets, and that, of course, is closely linked to the impact of news on the position of the established interest groups. In this environment media outlets adopt strategic editorial policies and become pro-government, pro-military or sect-oriented (http://www.ejc.net). This is the other but related aspect of the media pluralism that I'll address in the next section.

Become a Journalist in the Highly Concentrated Media World

The characteristic feature of Turkey's heavily monopolized media and its connection with the working conditions in the media world has paved the way to a number of internal problems. As Robert McChesney (2000, p. 26) has explained; "the corruption of journalistic integrity is always bad, but it becomes obscene under conditions of extreme media concentration". In the faces of Turkey's media experience, this old-term problem in the Turkey's media structure has been intensified since 1980s. After the period of the new media owners entered the Turkey's national media world, journalistic practices and working conditions of the journalists changed fundamentally. This radical shift in terms of organizational power resulted in the owner's total control over editorial policies, resource allocation, employee salaries, promotion and dismissal of staff and especially appointment of the editor-in-chief and other editor (Tunç, 2004, p. 5). For instance, as Aslı Tunç (2004, p. 5) has explained; those chosen editors –in chief swiftly

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(especially targeted southeastern region of Turkey Anatolia) and two international channels TRT-Türk (especially targeted to Europe, United States of America and Australia) and TRT-Avaz (especially targeted Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia). According to European Journalism Centre's report (2010, p. 4) in January 2009 as a part of new democratization process initiated by the government, Turkey's first full time Kurdish Channel, TRT-6, was launched. This channel has targeted Kurdish citizens who lives in Turkey.

began to serve their bosses as managers, losing their independent journalistic judgements, enjoying their upper middle-class lifestyles with astronomical salaries and concurrently guarding financial interests of their bosses and acting as spokespersons on their behalf. These trends have reflections on the journalistic routines by editorial hegemony. Editorial hegemony prevails in all major media outlets; news is overruled or bent in accordance with the desire of editor-in-chief who takes hints from the media owners. On the other hand, the rights of journalists and correspondent's "vis-à-vis" editorial staff are not protected. In terms of salaries, working conditions and lifestyles young media workers who are committed to truthful reporting suffer from very precarious work conditions. Some aspects of these working conditions are related to the journalist unions which were under attack by new media owners. As Christensen (2007, p. 190) have assets, from the very early years of the commercial media boom in Turkey trade unions were under attack by corporate owners. According to reports of International Federation on journalist and European Federation on journalist (2002, p. 4) has pointed out; "At the beginning of the 1990s, workers of two major newspapers, Hürriyet and Milliyet, resigned from the union because of pressure from the employer". This situation is assessable as a "contradictory continuities" in the Turkey's media world. As Christensen (2007, p. 192) has explained; "If blunt tactics such as threatening journalist with job termination should they fail to leave the union did not work, most newspapers and television owners in Turkey made sure that their employees stayed in line via a raft of other anti union strategies".

In fact the most common of these was the complicated tactic of breaking the larger media company into myriad subcontracting mini companies. Therefore the journalists found themselves by subcontracted companies with only a handful of staff (Christensen, 2007, p. 192). On the other hand, to forming complicated employment structures media conglomerates in Turkey reduce the power of journalist by taking advantage of a number of other legal loopholes. Cross-media giants in Turkey forced all their employees to sign a clause (No: 1475 Labour Act) of the law governing relations between employers and employees, instead of Clause 212 (Act on Labour Management in the Press) of the same law that grants special benefits to journalist such as early retirement and high minimum wages (see Özkırımlı, 2004, p. 171) while Clause 1475 basically reduced the journalist to the level of ordinary workers and invalidated privileges of being a journalist (Tunç, 2004, p. 5). In this context, the journalist was made a fragile against owners. As a result of this fragility, journalist was to float into poverty line. Especially during

the period of financial crises in Turkey, there was fragile massive unemployment. As Ziya Öniş (2003, p. 15) has explained;

"The striking magnitude of the crises may be illustrated by the fact that GNP in real terms declined by 9.4 per cent during the course of the year. The result was a dramatic drop in per capita income from $2,986 to $2,110 per annum and a massive increase in unemployment by 1 million people. The crises moreover, had a deep affect on all segments of society. Highly educated and skilled employees also lost their jobs in large numbers. Small and medium-sized business was severally affected, resulting in widespread bankruptcies and layoffs. The crisis also led a major increase in the number of people living below the $400 per month poverty line and the $200 per month subsistence line" (Öniş, 2003, p. 15).

Ziya Öniş (2003, p. 15) has emphasised on the massive unemployment of highly educated and skilled workers during the financial crises, this assessment is especially true for the journalists in Turkey. For Christensen, the knock-on effect of the crises for journalists in Turkey was devastating. (Christensen, 2007, p. 193) Massive unemployment process, with 5000 journalists, has destructive affect in the media world. However, as Aslı Tunç (2003, p. 9) have emphasised, the financial crisis to rid themselves of unwanted or troublesome staff under the guise of economic necessity is used by the media owners. Indeed, during the economic crises in Turkey, the increasing control of the power of media owners has experienced significant developments. As Christensen (2007, p. 193) has emphasised, "savage cut-backs in staffing levels mean that jobs are even harder to find than before and with much lower salaries". Therefore, before economic crisis the journalists had already had a limited job throughout the crisis, it has become much more difficult. As Christensen (2007, p. 193) have emphasised;

"This coupled with the lack of any union or labour support means that journalists are in a weak position in terms of their professional independence. As if this level of corporate pressure were not enough, however, news workers in Turkey must deal with attacks on their independence and freedoms from another powerful actor: The state". (Christensen, 2007, p. 193).

There are important clues to reconsider the neo authoritarian media systems in the communication policy and the legal framework in Turkey. In the next section, I discuss communication policy and legal framework for the rethinking a neo authoritarian media system in Turkey.

Rethinking a Neo Authoritarian Media Systems in the Spiral Between State and the Ownership: Legislative Framework and Freedom of Expression in Turkey

In the tradition of authoritarian government, the legal regulations are also often produced by the aforementioned forms of re-authoritarianism. Although depending upon to the candidacy of the European Union, the democratization process has gained an important dimension in the Turkey's legislative frame; Turkey is the very remarkable case for this re-authoritarianism in the national media space. According to Miyase Christensen (2010, p. 182), parallel to Turkey's candidacy bid to the European Union from December 1999 onwards, a gradual change could be seen as reform packages affecting both the legal frameworks and structural elements in political and economic domains were adopted[1]. However, Turkey's media policies and some aspects of the freedom of expressions regulation have been considered as a reflection of state-centric modernity. As Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçduygu (2005, p. 12) have explained, the process of the making of Turkey constitutes a "state centric modernity" with four defining elements: (1) a strong state tradition, (2) national developmentalism (3) an organic vision of society (for instance societal affairs were organized monolithically to serve the national interest, not individual rights and freedoms) and finally (4) republican model of citizenship (for instance the primacy of national interests over right and freedoms) all of which came to be destabilised, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s. As a result of this, state-centric modernization has produced banal nationalism and state-controlled media discourse. As Miyase Christensen (2010, p. 181) has emphasised;

"State-controlled media discourse and everyday mediations of banal statism and nationalism have played significant roles in this process. Rather than constituting two disparate domains in Turkish social reality, popular culture and politics remained very much interlinked: Clandestine political deliberation found diverse avenues of articulation in the various forms and spheres of popular culture" (Christensen, 2010, p. 181).

As Christensen (2010, p. 181) has emphasized, state centric modernization formed a state-controlled media discourse and banal nationalism in the daily practices of the national media. For Christian Christensen (2007, p. 195), the role of the Turkish state in the suppression of the free speech has been well documented.

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[1] In this context, a number of amendments were made to the Turkish penal code in relation to human rights issues, such as the ratification of Protocol 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Indeed, it is the combination of state and corporate influence that must be considered in order to fully comprehend the problems facing Turkish Journalism. For Andrew Finkel (2005, p. 24), who is a journalist in Turkey for most of the 1990s and who was charged under the Turkish Penal Code, a journalist in Turkey faces several threats not only from media owners and state but also from internal organization of the media companies. In this context, Finkel (2005, p. 24) has assessed this as follows; "Indeed, a strategy only to criticize the state and not consider the corporate cultures of media organizations themselves had led to an erosion of press freedom and legitimated bad practice". However, until 1990s the state was the central agent that the limiting of freedom of expression and the restrictions were primarily based on the Article 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code (outlawing communist and socialist propaganda), Article 163 (against Islamist propaganda) and other more general articles restricting the expression of certain ideas and discourses (Christensen, 2010, p. 182). But these ongoing restrictions gained a new dimension with the new amendment which came into effect on 1 April 2005, Article 301. However, following an outcry from a number of groups, especially including many journalists, the Turkish parliament had a review and possibly amended on the code. However, this Article was changed in April 2008 and the Turkish parliament adopted a number of amendments geared toward enhancing freedom of expression in relation to Article 301. For Miyase Christensen (2010, p. 183) this changed as a result of "a development which has been a priority within the Accession Partnership Agreement with the European Union". Article 301, especially section (1) and (2), was seen as a remarkable case for the rethinking of neo authoritarianism. In its current form, Article 301 (Insulting being a Turk, the Republic, the organs and institutions of the State) reads as below (quated in Christensen, 2010, p. 183): (1) A person who publicly degrades the Turkish nation, the State of the Republic of Turkey, The Turkish Grand National Assembly, the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the judicial bodies of the State, shall be sentenced to a penalty of imprisonment for a term of six months to two years. (2) A person who publicly degrades the military or security organisations of the State shall be sentenced to a penalty in accordance with the first section. (3) The expressions of an opinion for the purpose of criticism do not constitute an offence. (4) The conduct of investigation for such offence shall be subject to the permission of the Minister of Justice.

Article 301 was taken together with other substances (for instance Article 125, Article 278, Article 329, Article 336 etc)[1], journalist in Turkey are facing stiff legal regulations. So much so that as Christian Christensen (2007, p. 195) has reported; "under this legal guidelines, it would be virtually impossible for investigative journalists to, for example, expose political or military corruption, or to implicate a public official in criminal activity, without running the risk of themselves being convicted of a crime."

These ongoing restrictions in Turkey have gained a new aspect with the new broadcasting law which has come into effect in 2011. Although Turkish broadcasting legislation came into effect in 1994 and after the passing of the broadcasting regulations, concentration of the media sector intensified and commercial media content increasingly became more banal (Aksoy and Robins, 1997, p. 1941), with the new law Prime Minister was given the authority to stop television broadcast for national security or the establishment of the public order. But with this regulation Prime Minister has gained a control on the national media space in Turkey.

On the other hand, media pluralism or democratic communication a possibilities have never been a special arrangement in Turkey's broadcasting legislation. Especially in the Turkish broadcasting legislation ownership rules are only for radio and television. The lack of cross-media regulation has profoundly shaped the Turkish media sector. In this context Turkey's media regulation is like Spanish case (Llorens, 2010, p. 850). But, ownership regulation is based especially on the capital limits (shareholder limitations). Consequently, the private broadcasting Act in 2011 established that no individual or institution could hold more than %50 of the shares of one television or radio stations, this condition covers the foreign investors. The idea behind this regulation was that protecting each company's ownership pluralism was a necessary step to avoid any threat to external pluralism. It was also a way to protect internal pluralism; no single company could have completed control over a private television broadcasting licence, because minimum of two shareholders are required. However, in the national media spaces of Turkey this regulation was not enough for protected media pluralism forms, external or internal, because Turkey's media structure is characterised by heavily concentrated

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[1] Articles 215, 216 and 217 of the Turkish Penal Code, which crimanilize offences against public order, also contribute to a restrictive environment leading to prosecuations based on the expression of certain political views and opinions (Chirstensen, 2010, p. 183).

ownership. And moreover media owners in Turkey have used alternative ways for the by-pass of this regulation practices.

Conclusion

To sum up, recent Turkish history has been shaped by the equally pervasive forces of "continuity" and "change". For Miyase Christensen (2010, p.194); change was brought about by the dictates of an increasingly capitalistic global economic order and Turkey's search for a place in it; in this context the constituent elements of this change in the axis of the emerging European Union membership, cultural globalization and a greater demand for democracy and social change. On the other hand; continuity which is the force that shaped the near past of Turkey, is also materialized in the form of the persistence of nationalism in some factions, a nepotistic relationship between state and capital, and a heavy handed military and patriarchal articulations of national and cultural allegiances in the public domain. In this context, as a result of structural reforms in the 1990s and 2000s not only economic sector but also social and cultural domain that aiming a harmonization process to European Union, contributed to the reshaping of the country's socioeconomic and cultural landscapes that yielding new agendas, new relations of interest and new/revived sensitivies in the public domain (Christensen, 2010, p. 194). In this regard, Turkey's media experiences have been heavily affected by the transformation process of the States. Parallel to the States transformation process, national media landscape of Turkey since the late 1980s has been heavily affected and changed. The Turkey media system has been transformed by the entry of big industrial and merchant capital into media scene and by the "savage deregulation" of broadcasting. As a result of this changed, cross media ownership and media concentration emerged. In most cases, as seen in the national media spaces of Turkey, important media companies followed diversification strategies and in this respect, extending their activities in different sectors of the industry. There were also a number of general conglomerates that incorporated media outlets in their wider economic empires. Today, despite a large number of media outlets, a few leading players dominate the scene and account for about over 70 % of the television and national newspaper market. Therefore, the oligopolistic dominance of the media market limits structural pluralism and constitutes a threat to the diversity of information that is desirable in a democratic society. Furthermore, given the opinion-forming power of the media, increased influence of cross-media giants, has generated fears and allegations of preferential relationship with some

members of the political elite. In this regard, as Miyase Christensen (2010, p. 195) have emphasised; "the general problems faced by journalist in Turkey, today are the result of combination of factors, namely hyper commercialization, clientelism, a patrimonial relationship between the media and state, lack of unitization of journalists and lack of job security". However, as observed in the Turkey's national media spaces, regulatory responses to the problems of media concentration and cross ownership were contradictory and ineffective. On the one hand, the law that abolished state monopoly in television gave priority to existing media companies in granting a license and, more importantly, the Supreme Court of Radio and Television (RTUK) failed to establish enforceable licensing and contact rules. Even when legislation existed, media owners tend to ignore it. But the Turkey's media experiment is not a unique example. As Christian Christensen (2007, p. 196) has said that, "as we have seen, the similarities between Greece and Turkey, for example, are striking: authoritarian histories, military interventions, restrictive media legislation, rapid market liberalization, clientelism and populist journalism". In his article on the Greece media experiment, Nikos Leandros (2010, p. 886) has pointed out, "the interdependence between political and media elites and the strong clientelistic relations that characterised the Greek political system are identified as the main factors behind the ineffective and contradictory nature of media regulatory policies". In this context, the national media landscape of Turkey has shared same conditions. However, just there are similarities between Turkey and proximate nations such as Greece, Portugal and Spain so there are a number of key differences. Most obvious differences between these countries, Turkey, unlike the southern European neighbours, is not a member of the European Union. In this context, as observed in Turkey's neighbours experiment, the rapid developments in the democracies and the national economies were linked directly to the European accession[1]. As Nikos Leandros (2010, p. 900) has pointed out; "following infringement procedures by the European Commission, the Greek government was forced to abolish conditions that excluded the owners of media companies from public procurement". In this context, Turkey's membership of the European Union together with the realization of the gains may be important in the context of ensuring media pluralism and democratic communication order could be observed. Where the Turkish case can add to our understanding of regional media systems and development, therefore is in a comparison between the transitions from

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[1] As Christian Christensen (2007, p. 196) have emphasised, it is noteworthy that membership of the European Union for Greece (1981), Spain (1986) and Portugal (1986) came only 7 in the case of Greece, 11 Spain and 12 Portugal years after their respective military / authoritarian regimes ended.

authoritarian regimes to European Union membership that have taken place in countries such as Greece, Spain and Portugal, and the ongoing developments in the Turkish media and socio-political arena (Christensen, 2007, p. 197). In this regard, it would be interesting to ask, how does freedom of media pluralism regulation originating in the Athens stand-up "vis-a-vis" those originating from Ankara. In the context of media pluralism and democratic communication order that a same question, the media and the democratization of international consideration of the establishment of a pluralistic structure reminiscent of that will be an important stopover.

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