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Extended Abstract

# The Precarization of Journalistic Labor: Debating News Ethics in the Age of New Media

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## Abstract

The conditions of news production for journalists are debated over David Harvey's concept of accumulation by dispossession in the neoliberal period. The flexibilization of journalistic labor, which includes journalists and communications students in the growing precariat throughout the world, has accelerated the facilitation of capital exploitation through media and social mediations and commodifying the circulation of global information. Journalistic ethics is faced with many questions, old and new, linked together in the new age of media. The code of ethics that addresses reporters who produce the news within the rational organizing of the news industry help make invisible the conditions of production and workings of a system that alienate journalists' news through its form of debate in the liberal/pluralist paradigm. The mystification that is created by ethical codes hides the conditions of news production from sight while drawing attention to the news and journalists. In this study, we extend the discussion of the conditions of industrial news production and code of ethics to the effects of social media on the news industry over the concepts of the precarity of journalistic labor and accumulation by dispossession, expanding it to new alternatives for the public sphere. Social media networks largely commodify the use of Internet and social media while transforming users' free labor to surplus value. The results that will emerge in the short and long term from this commodification in terms of journalists are discussed in the context of the democratization of news production. This study aims to enrich the discussion of ethics, pivoting on the journalistic labor that becomes flexible through the landscape and conditions of the new media.

## Keywords

Precarity • Accumulation by dispossession • Accumulation through seizure • Journalistic effort • Code of ethics • New media

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*“Assassination is the extreme form of censorship.”*

George Bernard Shaw

Journalism and journalistic ethics are among the most hotly debated issues in Turkey recently. Almost all of the issues that have been discussed are closely related to the production conditions and changing shareholder-structure of news media (Alan, 2015; Arsan, 2015; Aydın, 2015; Çam & Yüksel, 2015; Keten, 2015; Talu, 2012; Tılıç, 2015; Uzun, 2015; Yeşilyurt, 2015; Yücel, 2015). The liberal-pluralist paradigm attempts to explain the emerging contradictions of journalists while debating on the position of the subject of ethical behaviors (Tılıç, 2015, p. 51).

However, when reporters who were placed as the subject of ethical behavior in various studies were asked whether or not this behavior is possible in the existing conditions, their answer to this question was in the negative (Çamuroğlu Çığ, 2012, p. 334; Talu, 2012, p. 453; Tılıç, 1998, p. 241, 2015, p. 51; Williams, 1998, p. 191, 206).

The most crucial question of the ethics debate is whether or not journalists who are expected to carry ethical behaviors and professional ethics as individuals have the freedom to carry these responsibilities. Rights, freedom, and responsibility have always been considered as a whole under the law (Gözler, 2010, p. 185). Freedom is an assumed responsibility (Moressi, 2006, pp. 32–33). The production conditions of the news industry have currently evolved as a hybridization of industrial and post-industrial forms. The journalist works in a rational industrial organization and a bureaucratic hierarchy. Journalists in the post-industrial era who have experience with the opportunities that technological developments and social media have made possible are faced with flexible and uncertain conditions which gradually reduce their specialization.

To reduce ethical journalism to a personal moral issue creates an effect that resembles commodity fetishism. The code of ethics that one expects journalists to implement as individuals is intertwined with company ethics in the state of industrial and post-industrial affairs. Attention, while drawn away from the circumstances of news production, is led to the news and/or journalist. Ethical issues that the system structurally produces can sometimes be overcome by journalists taking a stand on ethics, democracy, or truth (Çığ & Çamuroğlu Çığ, 2011, pp. 43–51).

In the United Kingdom, the report that resulted from the Leveson Inquiry revealed the size of the problem that media’s structure of neoliberal financialization produced, even in the countries with powerful democratic tradition (Leveson, 2012). In competitive tutelary regimes like Turkey where neoliberalism’s trend towards authoritarianism has gotten worse with each passing day, even behavior appropriate to the most basic ethical principles seems like heroism (Tılıç, 2015, p. 56). As emphasized by Kongar (2015, November 28), if the actions of members of the media who serve the public’s right to

have access to true and real information is transformed into heroism, this means that the country can expect some difficult days ahead of them. In the lovely words of Bertolt Brecht (2015, p. 98), “Unhappy the land that is in need of heroes.”

According to Arsan (2015, p. 388), in the process that goes to the formation of media which takes position according to changes in the political and economic hegemony and that puts their existential interests to the forefront, the ethical violations of journalists who produce information on social reality have a major share of the attitudes and disorganization that exclude occupational professionalism. Arsan (2015, p. 390) and Keten (2015, p. 249) emphasized the need to increase the number of readers and viewers of the news who claim it as a right and a public interest. The rights to receive news and to be informed, which is the basis of democracy for citizens to make decisions concerning their lives, is extorted in an environment that gradually decreases the quality of members in the mainstream media where effort that complies with the most basic ethical principle is counted towards heroism (Uzun, 2015, p. 395).

Precisely at this point, social media networks carry the potential that could enable the possibility of a more democratic, ethical, and collective media production. As stressed by Enzensberger, developing this potential may open the way to a new theory of media (as cited in Yeşilyurt, 2015, p. 79). In an article by the current study’s authors on the conditions of industrial news production, *Ethics of the News Industry and Journalism*, the ethics of journalism was discussed based on their conceptualizations of inverted-pyramid news stories, rationalization, loss of responsibility, commodity fetishism, and the public sphere (Çığ & Çamuroğlu Çığ, 2011, pp. 25–61). In order to re-conceptualize news production in the phase of crossbreeding industrial and post-industrial conditions, the role of media and social media in the process of capital accumulation is discussed in the following section in terms of the concepts of *primitive accumulation* and *accumulation by dispossession*. The precarity of journalistic work as a result of change in the news production process is discussed in the second section while being related to the new media. In order for social media to be able to implement journalistic ethics and shape social media as an alternative media and theory, we the authors will debate through the critical method the conditions of production and the results that these conditions can and do reveal.

### **Primitive Accumulation, Accumulation by Dispossession and the News Media**

In the first volume of Marx’s *Capital*, he conceptualized the coincidental start of the accumulation of capital through “primitive accumulation” (2013, pp. 686–689). Marx’s description separated from liberalism’s ethical parable that distinguished humility from laziness. This distinction is also very important from the perspective of discussing our walkthrough of journalists’ ethical responsibilities. According to this issue, the origins of capitalism, while providing a moral excuse in the present time, separated the worker and capital owner from each other on the axis of good and bad.

According to Marx, the essence of being human is not an abstraction that exists individually within each person; it is in fact *a combination of social relationships*. This argument is the fundamental issue of who we are when discussed also from the perspective of journalists who are questioned as being moral individuals. The mode of production establishes desires, lifestyles, and intentions; in short, it establishes subjectivity and is also established by the same subjectivity (Read, 2014a, p. 42–49).

Pre-capitalist relations were comprised of a dispossession based on roughness and violence while evolving into the capitalist mode of production (Ekman, 2014, p. 89). Primitive accumulation forms the transition point between rights and violence. While feudalism converted specific forms of violence into the universality of law, a second conversion was experienced through the loss in daily relationships that was made possible by the law of violence (Foucault, 2000, pp. 396–398; Read, 2014a, pp. 52–53).

This conversion refers to two dimensions that need to be taken into consideration in the discussion of ethics from the perspective of news media. The news media, together with the state, plays a role in the neoliberal capitalistic process of accumulation that eases and naturalizes the transition between rights and violence. Secondly, social media's capacity to process and analyze mass data uses a format that facilitates the accumulation of capital and carries its sophisticated dimension. The news media's commodification processes continuously "seize" internet users and their data (Ekman, 2014, p. 99). The news media, by way of seizure, is both somebody who naturalizes the accumulation as an ideology as well as a direct perpetrator. The "Mülksüzleştirme Ağları (n.d.)" (Network of Dispossession) ([mulsuzlestirme.org/index.html](http://mulsuzlestirme.org/index.html)) is archived through a public database, and the accumulation process by dispossession they have performed when developing media, finance, and construction companies in Turkey are being mapped.

What is described through primitive accumulation emerges as the basic accumulation strategy in many fields during the neoliberal period; it is the process of deprived of the means of production and labor and of the means to regenerate one's subsistence (Costa, 2014, p. 152; De Angelis, 2014, pp. 89–91; Glassman, 2014, pp. 165–167; Magdoff, 2014, pp. 299–315; Midnight Notes Kolektifi, 2014, pp. 277–299; Read, 2014a, pp. 241–277, 2014b, pp. 39–105). Primitive accumulation can be said to have occurred at each point that commodifies conditions which allows either the privatization of common property rights or the manufacture and remanufacture of subsistence (Luxemburg & Bukharin, 1972; Read, 2014a, pp. 50–51). This accumulation strategy that is evident in the neoliberal capitalist phase and became inherent to it is explained through the David Harvey's *Accumulation by Dispossession* (2004).

The practices of accumulation of the neoliberal period that gave back the potential of class to the capitalist elite<sup>3</sup> was in the appearance of the process of accumulation through an ongoing naturalization. The accumulation practices that emerged in countries like China or Russia in the transition to capitalism have been reasonably designated through initial or primitive concepts. However, the accumulation process, the scope of which has continued to expand while stretching the rights of the social welfare state in northern capitalist countries, is designated through the concept of accumulation by dispossession. There are four main components that characterize accumulation by dispossession: privatization, financialization, crisis manipulation, and redistribution through the state and government (Harvey, 2012, pp. 79–84).

Privatization includes the process of complete seizure of genetic material, natural resources, cultural forms, and even the commodification of intellectual creativity and history, as well as the commodification of public services, goods, and places. Redistribution through the state has transformed the state into the most important perpetrator in the phase of repairing and reconstructing class rule (Harvey, 2012, pp. 80–84). At this point particularly in Turkey, increasing interventions are associated closely with financialization through the deregulation of media and the state's neoliberal transformation while going to the media and State Press who have formed the underlying crisis of the ethical debate.

It lasts as a similar debate in the world; yet in spite of the media's structure of financialization and the government's transformation, interventions such as public relations, spin doctors, and so on are carried out through different vehicles in countries where journalists are more organized and where democratic institutions, policies, and state of law are more internalized. Usually financialization relationships, which include the state, media, and politicians, take place within the network; when these relationships emerge, they create indignation in the public, are investigated by law, and trigger important ethical debates (Leveson, 2012).

In all areas where the four components that Harvey stressed have come to life, the news media plays a very important role both as the perpetrator and also in the stages of these processes being naturalized, justified, and legalized. Fuchs (2011, pp. 163–223) discussed this process and the media's role in it in the context of the relationship of the media and the information economy with new imperialism. Zizek (2013, p. 9) explained in Persian the role of mainstream news media, which is a part of the hegemonic ideology, in opposing threats that are directed towards global capitalism: "Vernem nihaden," which means to kill and bury someone, then grow flowers on their corpse to destroy the signs.

<sup>3</sup> For discussions related with the theoretical and practical views of the neoliberal accumulation practices please see Harvey (2005, pp. 65–81, 142–152; 2012, p. 74), and Wacquant and Akçaoglu (2014, pp. 68–70).

Ekman (2014, p. 99, 108) classified the structural and ideological dimensions of media's process of accumulation by dispossession under two headings: *news media and the naturalization of accumulation by dispossession* and *the seizure of daily online activities*. The news media in some cases is the direct perpetrator of privatization and financialization. Perpetrations that are dispossession networks are seen in some of the projects in the Turk Media Owners Network [Türkiye Medya Sahipleri Ağı] (Mülksüzleştirme Ağları, n.d.). Those who struggle for rights, which also include large global-scale social campaigns against accumulation by dispossession, are unable to obtain a significant political legitimacy in the mainstream news media (Ekman, 2014, pp.103–107).

Another important dimension in the media's process of accumulation by dispossession emerges in how it puts its hands in daily online activities. Violence, which is inherent in the process of accumulation through dispossession, emerges as a potential objective/symbol also in the surveillance that is performed on networks for commercial purposes (Ekman, 2014, pp. 108–113). In neoliberal network communities where accumulation by dispossession is used as a strategy of systematic accumulation, journalists have also been deprived of their means of production and democratic right to renew their own livelihood. The processes of journalistic labor change dramatically.

### **Capital Accumulation over Networks and the Precarization of Journalistic Labor**

Neoliberalism in every region it contacts and is applied makes the labor market flexible. As inequalities gradually increase, a fractured view of the global class<sup>4</sup> emerges. Precarity, according to Guy Standing (2014, pp. 21–26), involves depriving individuals of seven types of work-related assurances: job market security, employment security, job safety, quality remanufacture assurances, income security, and security of representation. These days, new professional groups are being added daily to those deprived of these rights (Buyruk, 2015; Vatansever & Gezici Yalçın, 2015; Yeşilyurt, 2014).

In Turkey, a large number of news media personnel are employed without a press card through contracts outside of Press Labor Law #212. The intern process is overly long and they are employed mostly without pay or security during their internship. Job security for reporters and journalists is almost non-existent (Keten, 2015, pp. 235–236). In the 1990s, The deep hierarchical organization that was experienced in media conglomerates played an important role in establishing authoritarian order in the media and its renewal (Keten, 2015, p. 237). The vast majority of news media outside of the aristocracy could not prevent the devaluing of their qualifications in the face of new technologies that had been developing through constantly changing conditions in an extremely competitive market. Work safety is also one of news media's most absent headlines in Turkey.

<sup>4</sup> For discussions on class related to the precariat, please see Zizek (2013, pp. 18–20) and Inan (2012, pp. 20–21).

Work hours and conditions are irregular. Because there are few reporters and journalists who are employed in accordance with the Press Labor Law, protection is not guaranteed against accidents at work or illnesses. Journalists who do not have the yellow press card are the target of frequent police brutality. Renewing qualifications and income security is not possible in uncertain times. In the years of deregulation, the moguls of the financialization media first targeted trade union organizations and their job security (Keten, 2015, pp. 234–237). In the post-industrial stage in Turkey, news media personnel were transformed into those whose effort was made precarious, who had weak bargaining power against their boss and no job security, who were forced to individually develop their relationships and skills appropriate to new technologies in an extremely competitive environment, who had to put their boss's political and economic interests in front of their own professional reputation and code of ethics, and who had no intellectual independence or right to professional response.

Tanıl Bora described the precariat as the new version of the 19th century proletariat (Demirkent & Baykan, 2010). Taking a manufactured risk in order to make the situation's flexibility desirable by the labor force, freedom was used as a practical symbolic force as well as the threat of unemployment from entrepreneurship discourses.<sup>5</sup> The socio-psychological pressure mechanism was made passive while forcing all operating conditions to be accepted through fear of becoming unemployed. Individuals who live in constant anxiety and fear of losing can be defined as the precariat, depending on their position within the relations of production (Vatansever & Gezici Yalçın, 2015, pp. 48–49).

Journalists and students of communication faculties go through the process that makes labor precarious in capitalism's post-industrial stage both in Turkey and the world. After the process of the second wave of media deregulation in the 1980s, the expansion and development of news media technology as well as daily communication experienced an intense dispossession phase in the capital accumulation process of intellectual output, information, and knowledge (Cote & Pybus, 2014, pp. 241–271; Fisher, 2014, pp. 119–151; Fuchs, 2015a, pp. 11–45, 229–411; 2015b, pp. 54–91, 97–313; Prodnik, 2014, pp. 301–367).

In the Web 1.0 era, internet sites and the extensive use of email grew to an enormous size in the areas of effectiveness and interactivity through the introduction of social media platforms; this was followed by the evolution of the internet in Web 2.0. Journalistic activities were the first to adopt and closely follow these technologies, especially communication technology. Therefore, the internet and the above-mentioned tools re-established the activities of journalistic method and programs while hybridizing the old technology and methods. Along with other aspects, one can say that journalistic activities were undertaken and more existent within this growing environment.

<sup>5</sup> For discussions based on the concepts of deregulation, freedom, and flexibility, please see Berardi (2009, p. 76).

Harvey (2015, pp. 99–100) highlighted that technology, among the fundamental contradictions of capitalism, has devalued business and people, too: The future of journalistic ethics is written over the backdrop of capitalism’s rapid evolvement. The predecessors of the new institutions of technology that now lie torn and in tatters, in Schumpeter’s famous words, started a “whirlwind of creative destruction... Who benefits from the fruits of creativity and to whose hills does the impact of destruction descend?” (as cited in Harvey, 2015, pp. 107–108).

Quinn Norton (2015, May 29), an internet journalist, said:

It is difficult to make a living as a journalist in the 21st century; however, the world as a committee has simplified the newest, most profitable model in the past few years: tracking viewers. The pages of news sites are following you on the behalf of dozens of companies: social services, data vendors, analysis companies, it uses everything and we are used by all of it ...surveillance and security; I have made a career for myself by explaining the what and how, but the rights of my readers have been technically violated as much as possible while they are reading.

Christian Fuchs (2012, pp. 143–144; 2014, pp. 157–163) explained the capital accumulation model of social media in parallel to the model of media advertisement where Dallas Smythe’s viewers were sold as a commodity to advertisers.

According to Marx, labor creates added value through production. In social media, the exploitation of surplus value is experienced in part through programming, updates, and hardware, and software developers over the actualization of marketing activities. The exploitation of surplus value is eked out through the production of user-generated content from the users of Web 2.0.<sup>6</sup> Users’ information, data, relationships, and communications are sold as commodities to advertisers. Advertisers who have purchased this profile data are able to know users’ personal information and online behavior and can thus do targeted advertising (Fuchs, 2012, pp. 144–145).

Norton’s previous quote shows that the news media produces added value in this way. The use also by states and governments of user data collected from social media platforms has been discussed through the leaked documents of Snowden and Assange. The new internet bill that was described in England in November 2015 includes provisions to security forces that allow them to track extensive users without a court order (Keeble-Gagnère, 2015). The bill shows that data obtained through trade monitoring and social media surveillance will be used as a tool by governments and political powers to shift the balance of freedom and security.

The bill was discussed with sliding concerns under an ambiance that the ethical reasoning of journalists would have to be dependent on political power. With this bill,

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<sup>6</sup> Profit= added-value/(fixed capital + fixed users fees + fees paid for employees wages). see Fuchs (2012, p. 145).

online activities of journalism will be able to be monitored, and the right to protect the confidentiality of news sources could be jeopardized. Also, these daily online activities come to mean that users who have been dispossessed of theirs for capital accumulation will also be able to be dispossessed of their right to receive news. The fight of journalism and freedom of the press, through the resurgence in the paradigm of surveillance and security with digital opportunities, has become dangerous and open to punishment. Such challenges and ethics of practice are a struggle for civil rights overall, similar in form to the 19th-century struggles that transcended the liberal paradigm. The great lawsuit of the proletariat generations in the 19th century withstood being regarded as a needless, useless mob; it was a struggle of being deemed as people and citizens (Demirkent & Baykan, 2010). Ignoring the real issue that produced the problem while trying to solve the ethical problems that arose in relation to the new model of capital accumulation resulted in trying to find solutions that searched for practical solutions, such as developing social media guidelines that described the new world of media to reporters and landed at the origin of the emerging problems (Ward, 2015). It is also important to look for practical solutions to these problems, but this is only the visible tip of the iceberg.

The new media's model of capital accumulation is flexible and reducible for the news media; for journalists, it means a much greater work load, a loss of the effectiveness of qualifications, and the compulsory development as individuals of many new skills. The dispossession of online user labor has been included in news production. This situation is summarized in the words of Snapchat's news director, Peter Hamby: "We had been filming events and interviews with one or two cameras. On Snapchat, everyone's camera is ours" (Kılıç, 2015). Also, the news industry is gathered in the hands of the platform much less in the post-industrial phase. As an individual user's universal access to public spaces increases, those spaces are privatized just as much (Zizek, 2011, p. 491). Kılıç's writings summarized the same situation: "Social media giants such as Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat have managed to make themselves indispensable in the lives of those who read the news. The platforms are few in number; they have the only word in the news industry" (Kılıç, 2015). Journalists are faced with the threat of their profession, qualifications, efforts, and skills becoming dysfunctional.

Economists are sharply divided over the exact timing of the threat from robots and other forms of futuristic technology... [Journalism is also among the professions that will be affected.] The Internet wiped out countless newspapers, and new technology could kill even more journalism positions. Webb, a former journalist at Newsweek and the Wall Street Journal, said the next culprit will be algorithms that allow news outlets to automatically create stories and place them on websites without human interaction. Robot journalists are already writing thousands of articles a quarter at the Associated Press (Egan, 2015, May 13).

Algorithms can be performed through various codes of editorial intervention: “The editorial can occur through algorithms or human editors in the practice of online journalism” (Oremus, 2015). Code writers are also now as capable of producing journalism as a reporter (Roper, 2015). In the stage of making labor precarious, the most basic journalistic values, such as ethical codes, democracy, and freedom of the press, are likely to be dominated (Salcito, 2015). The new media ethical codes that will be created based on a liberal paradigm will consolidate this process intertwined with business values (Yeşilyurt, 2014, p. 117). Social networks for journalists who are a part of the precariat are vehicles that are not included in business networks: “The mission is to achieve competitive advantage and build a reputation in order to be more ‘employable’ and more successful” (Fuchs, 2015c, pp. 147–148). To debate a network while overlooking capital accumulation practices imbues the concepts of creativity, information publicity, levelness, freedom, and democracy with a fetishistic character. It is clear that the networks carry this potential, but in order to realize this potential, media employees and all citizens must debate the mutual struggle for the common good and fundamental reforms that are in the interest of the public directed at the logic of companies’ accumulations and governmental control mechanisms (Fuchs, 2015c, p. 150).

### **Conclusion: Ethics Debate and Alternatives for the New Public Sphere**

In the neoliberal age where accumulation by dispossession is a basic strategy and capitalism has turned into an ideology, the capability of authoritarianism, surveillance, and the security and state of emergency paradigms to increase has been highlighted by many thinkers. The escalation of the security paradigm in the whole world through the state of emergency that was announced immediately following the Paris Attacks that took place in France along with increasing governmental conflicts within the sphere of capitalism seem to verify these estimates. Michael Foucault (2008) argued that the result of neoliberalism’s acceptance of the market as the lone perpetrator can evolve to a lawless, competitive, and confrontational stage in which expendability has been naturalized. The security paradigm’s dispossession of rights that had been earned against the government can perhaps be contested through universalization as a mere struggle for rights overall. Freedom of the press and journalists’ basic ethics codes are the most important tool in the struggle that will be made for civil rights.

Therefore, it is very clear that the ethics debate will be a very urgent future discussion in the days ahead. It is an important step to fit the context of fundamental reforms that will take the structural problems of the system to the center while removing this discussion from the liberal paradigm’s individual level. Social media has the public-sphere potential of being able to strengthen these steps. However, the antagonistic reality of social media challenges the basic assumptions of classical liberalism (Fuchs, 2015b, p. 357).

The history of alternative media, as [Fuchs \(2015b, p. 657\)](#) emphasized, is the history of labor that exploits the self voluntarily. Media, social media, internet and alternative media are conflicting because the era and society we live in is conflicting ([Fuchs, 2014, p. 206](#)). The need is felt for major reforms based on public interest and principles of ethics in order to be able to develop alternatives for a new public sphere and to overcome these conflicts. It is possible to overcome the antagonisms of social media and internet technology through economic and political reforms based on these elements.

[Fuchs \(2015b, p. 369\)](#) on this point suggested creating a “public service social media” that would be able to implement the new media’s communicative potential: Media reforms could create a groundwork of reforms that could implement ethical principles as discussed in this study and that are made taxable to support projects (a portion of which are non-profit) from the incomes of participating budgets, crowd funding, major media, and social media companies who can support the non-profit projects of citizens. Clearly there is a need for a minimal democratic groundwork so the unity of government and corporations, as well as the power focuses, can be questioned in order for people to bring these things to life in Turkey. According to [Fuchs \(2015b, p. 369\)](#), liberalism is its own limit and imminent criticism. The media ownership structure, which is the facilitator and perpetrator of accumulation by dispossession, when coupled with the precarization of journalistic labor, causes the erosion of democracy and the basic principles of the rule of law as well as peoples’ right to information to be seized for the continuation of capital accumulation. This erosion is more pronounced in countries such as Turkey, and it has become an act of heroism to adhere to even the most basic ethical principles of behavior.

As a result of labor’s precarity in the era of social media, journalists are rendered incapable of thinking when they are systematically being pacified. However, the ethical responsibility that each individual carries in times like these is not to disappear from the scene due to structural or global problems; on the contrary, it is to evolve to a much more important and historical responsibility. If one follows Foucault, who described the expendability of neoliberalism based on the expendability of totalitarianism, the subjective responsibility of each individual for the conditions is clearly that much more significant. What [Arendt \(2009, p. 299\)](#) said about Nazi Germany’s normalization of evil is also true today: “In fact, the handful of people who can still distinguish right from wrong have only motioned to their own judgment, and this they have done freely.” It was the usual conditions above that people who lived at the time when things like freedom of the press and the public’s right to information were seized by the concepts of competition, desire for profit, and individual interests through ethical codes and the transformation that was experienced in the media during the process of deregulation. As Arendt said, “We witnessed the wholesale collapse of all entrenched moral standards in public and private life...in the years of thirties and forties” (cited in [Coşkun, 2013, p. 115](#)).

These extraordinary circumstances, just as they apply to media professionals, encompass all citizens whose network data, private and public information, relationships, and forms of communication have been dispossessed. In this context, a struggle for civil rights will appear again on the horizon. The future of concepts such as journalistic ethics and freedom of the press have been written to social media networks whose capital is rapidly evolving. As should lastly be noted, individual responsibility has not been eliminated to emphasize the structural and global character of the problem while carrying out this ethics debate: “Because these offenses are mass crimes both in terms of the number of perpetrators and victims, in terms of the degree of responsibility, the proximity or distance of those who were participants in a crime to the murderer who actively killed the victim is of no importance. On the contrary, generally the farther one’s distance to the person who used the murder weapon with their own hands increases the degree of responsibility (Arendt, 2009, p. 252).

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