

Communication economics: A genius view with Veblen

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Abstract. Political economics is a vast field per se. And yet communication becomes an important tool of political economics. Communication is both a part of political economics and it has an economics on its own. Insomuch as communication is an economics, it can be called as communication economics. Because, especially today, tools of communication is in everywhere dominating people's life. The more communication tools are part of daily life, the more firms are interested in this medium. Firms cannot be considered as merely production mechanisms. Firms can also be providing services as well as goods. Given that communication is a kind of service, it has a direct relation with communication economics. This study focuses on the market types that are inhabited in the media sector. Naturally, media sector differentiates in each individual jurisdiction and country, but, in general terms, media sector can be deemed to be emerging the characteristics of an oligopoly model. Being said that, Thorstein Veblen's thoughts will enlighten this study. Because, his thoughts about economics are unique and they are very helpful in order to understand why many sectors cannot be segregated from politics economics, so communication sector does. By the mediation of Veblen's genius ideas like: leisure class, conspicuous consumption etc., it will submit wider sence to communication economics. As a conclusion, this study will briefly examine why communication economics cannot be seperated from political economics by the mediation of Veblen's thoughts.

Key Words: Veblen, politics economics, political economy, communication economics.

1 INTRODUCTION

The basis of capitalism is property relations. The property relations is also about distribution. In that sense, distribution of capital share is the job of market. Mainstream economics mind popularizes the distribution and acts like this way. However, the essence of the job is not as simple as such. There is a tool generally missing that determines main economics politics: communication. This notion can be called as communication economics or media economics which is as important as not to be ignored while the mainstream politics economics is defined.

1.1 Outline

This study focuses on communication economics or media economics from a different perspective. Many studies have been done until today and communication economics is analyzed by the mediation of Marxist economics critically. This study, instead, will examine critically but with a different perspective. As known, communication economics is rather improved by USA. Albeit, Marxist economics takes a good place in Europe whereas, it didn't find an important response in USA. On the contrary, a critical point of

view has been created by USA's unique national and domestic motivations that still protects its stamina against Marxist economics with today's Old Institutional Economics and its founder Thorstein Veblen. For this reason, this study proceeds with three steps. Firstly, it will focus on media economics/communication economics. Secondly, it will focus on the critical economics improved by Thorstein Veblen. Thirdly, it will examine what kind of contribution/critics Veblen can submit to communication economics generally.

2 WHY COMMUNICATION ECONOMICS NEEDS VEBLEN'S GENIUS

One of the most important part how Veblen distinguishes itself from Marxist critical economics is Darwinian elements. Marx did not see that Darwin has developed a premise that there is no teleology in the nature by the mediation of his great perception. Darwin's opinion comprehended as if absolutely weak ones and only powerful ones can survive. According to Darwin, "it all matters to survival that is not the matter of constant superiority, it is the dependance on adoption relatively. Even it is not visible to the naked eye, environment also changes perpetually: today's powerful ones may become the weak ones of tomorrow." (Öncü, 2015: 10). Veblen is truly a methodological Darwinist. What makes Veblen different from many philosophers and makes him create a critical economics stream, does not fall to the same mistakes that bourgeois philosophers do. He separates creature into two categories human and non-human. Human has teleology. In this sense, he describes his scientific aim as to focus on the source of human's teleology and improve its evolutionary theme theoretically in terms of materialism. Thus, Veblen is the first theorist who attempted and achieved this on a large scale.

According to Veblen, there are two rival institutions that occurred in the history of ownership institution. The first one is predatory leisure class and the second one is peaceful productive class. The first one is related with focusing on the objects accumulating for others' labour. The second is related with mastery/workmanship, production and to be served by someone. Furthermore, these two different institution clusters creates two different cultural medium. For instance, commerce played role in the first cultural area and industry played role in the second cultural area. Mostly, the first one yokes the second one. Predatory institutions adopt an approach to capture the solitude of humanity to the others'. And it promotes individualism. However, peaceful institutions have cause to improve a communitarian spirit which tends to 'live and let live' inclination. (Öncü, 2015: 12). The mass media production is produced by an industry that aims to politics economics originated from different results rather than good production for the market. Because media contributes the organization of production, sharing and distribution (Bilgili, 2005: 98).

In that case, media economics or communication economics belongs to sovereign forms of production and distribution. Nonetheless, when looking at three functions once realized, that is, saving messages and knowledge, conveying from distance and updating cultural-political practises, Veblen's two institution can be seen. Namely, both predatory leisure class institutions and peaceful productive class institutions are located in communication economics. Ownership of media institution is equal to predatory leisure class institution in and of itself. Because today media institutions wherever they are located in, either mass media communication or social media communication exhibits as an oligopolistic structure. And an oligopolistic structure can be existed by set aside objects which are produced by others' labour in Veblen's words. Nevertheless, the principle of "conveying knowledge is for everyone and every knowledge can be accessible" aims to give knowledge to people as a peaceful productive class institution also, media ownership stares it in the face as a predatory leisure class institution. Media

does not only reflect a structure of production, it also has a political aspect at the same time. The attempt of approaching economics to the nature science with the 19th century, has made the economics move apart from its political economics nature. However, despite being mathematical breezes in pure economics communication economics, it has not severed politics economics connection completely. Hence, this social reproduction turns into a predatory leisure class institution again by the mediation of media ownership.

Veblen rejected that society have threw a real modernization even to the observable technical progress. On the contrary, he always insisted on the primitive culture existed by everywhere and every time impressed in so-called modern society (Perelman, 2015: 28). The tracks of primitive culture hide the motive of constant accumulation and ownership. And naturally, this ownership is also not valid for everyone. Accumulation and ownership has been gathered by obvious hands even in primitive cultures that left itself into hegemony's audit so-called modern society. For sure, a new hegemonial power has been stepped in that is created by modern society of re-production of social production and audit, to his point. Media economics: In its technological development media economics maintains its function both predatory institution and peaceful institution by taking heritage from primitive society. The economy politics of media economics carrying pieces of predatory culture and peaceful culture can be seen by the trace of Veblen below:

Controlling must be from the top to the below. It must be away from to be asked or to give answer. The power which is true or carries the truth must be deconstructed (Andrejevic, 2014: 58, 59). When media was submitted by its first days, it took a path much pluralistic and widespread of knowledge. But, especially by developing industrial capital, it has evolved to gradually oligopolistic structure. The oligopolistic market structure which conveys the knowledge bottom to top. It's just like conveying what a market produces any kind of goods and says the society 'consume this'. The intellectual knowledge gets deconstruction and it wins a seat into the culture of predatory culture. Because knowledge has lost its pure transfer feature. The sources assemble in obvious hands because of the nature of capitalist economics cause the knowledge assembles in obvious hands either. Wherever the knowledge is scarcity, the more pay for it will have that knowledge. Put it differently, as in the words of Murdoch, dealing the control is not public. Whoever has the source of knowledge and its distribution the one will get to control of media economics. That's why the feature of being predatory institution of media economics predominates. The famous notion of Veblen conspicuous consumption and media economics have a significant bound to each other. Because, displaying oligopolistic market structure media economics feeds the conspicuous consumption. Veblen emphasizes that modern robbery barons just like the American Indians who destroy in large quantities of fortune displaying the prestige (Perelman, 2015: 30). Media economics expects that media users consume the media just like this American Indian ritual. Especially, it could be said that media has been displaced such a transform recently.

Either consuming social media as a time or in the context of conspicuous consumption brings a new predatory leisure class herewith. Media economics is not so different as to commercial sector logically. Commercial sector displays two-faces approaches. The first face shakes his head to the media model imposed from the top to the below, and the second face smiles the administration of information and manipulation styles in large scales. The consequence is matching what tells us about interaction. The first one the new born declared as 'king customers' pious power. The second helps to interaction in order to increase the advertisement (Andrejevic, 2014: 65). In other words, moving just like commercial sector logic media economics submit whatever it wants to the consumers, but manipulating the knowledge. Specially, this effect feels stronger in social media as a new media field. Social media users are declared by new king, however they are suffered from by many marketing methods with advertisements. Not only marketing techniques can be applied by the consumers, but also the consumers are converted by one piece social

experiment tool of marketers. For example, Google serves me a free mail in order to let them make data-mining, if one gives me a permission to Facebook about sending it some information or let it to know my behaviours online (Andrejevic, 2014: 67-75). Predatory leisure class and peaceful productive class emerge once again. The individuals using social media effort make the social media more functional. Actually, they do this by the mediation of both make their use comfortable and show the lacks of service providers. This productivity has been done by social media users cause the submit a contribution a better usage as a peaceful institution. On the contrary to this, social media and the whole media which represent predatory leisure class exploits this productive labour both with aim of resubmit it with different types of marketing techniques and make the lacks remove to let others handle.

Substantial economics structure and the type of making business affects to the production and organization of media (Bilgili, 2005: 100). Today, the notions have been using still like 'conspicuous consumption', 'conspicuous leisure', 'conspicuous waste', 'pecuniary emulation' are belong to Veblen. Even they are not important theories are used by one piece simple slogans, they are important by the mediation of communication economics. Because the class position of crowd of people who are converted by consumer society by the mediation of communication economics is much possible to understand. Veblen has two important situations rather beyond than improved these slogan notions. Firstly, he was the first philosopher who explains, interprets proceedings of human, has put forward his thoughts about the theory of Darwin. Secondly, "Veblen was the first American scientist who seriously criticizes Marxism and neo-classical economics hedonism and methodological individualism." (Önder, 2015: 57, 58). And also, Veblen adopting and criticizing the focus on criticism hedonism and methodological individualism, rejects to look at the economics with this notions. Instead of this, explaining the nature of economics with the notions counted above makes the economics much more evolutionary, thus the nature of human and this nature become concrete.

The power of capital affects all area of our lives. It scatters from the structural changes in media sector and reaches the forms of cultural meanings what media produces (Wayne, 2003 :16). Media economics is not just like related only with what kind of role is played by the media and for it. It is also related with the cultural structures produced by media at the same time. The cultural structures produced is just not for the economics. So as to speak, it doesn't not only to contribute the production of the goods and the services in the market, but also it determines the profile of consumers. Communication economics is also benefited by the discrepancy between financial activities and real activities. The products which are produced by media are actually promoter to consumer society. For this reason, it promotes to consuming in high rates to the goods and services produced by real activities. "Members of groups no longer need to be co-present (in time or place) to collaborate, share information or socialize. Instead new technologies facilitate the creation, maintenance and dissolution of groups among individuals who use different device (such as phones, mobiles [...]) to interact over one or more of variety of channels (audio, video, text) offered by several forums (such as Internet newsgroups [...])." (Hollingshead & Contractor, 2006:114). Now, consumers as a volunteer agent sometimes are promoted by communication economics' dominants in order to feed the incident of real sector's gaining profit.

"New media technologies are no exception. They develop in dynamic environments where users, designers, manufacturers, investors, regulators, distributors and others work out their interrelated and competing interests, cultural assumptions, desires and visions." (Lievrouw, 2006: 246). With regard to new technologies real sector improve to increase new techniques its profit rates. Even new media is seen by to become free for human, innovating new tools to mean people themselves, substantially it makes the market sovereign reinforce. Provoking rival more to raise the profit. "Whether government regulation of new media is desirable or possible is a point of contention in both popular

and academic discourse.” (Mody & Trebing & Stein, 2006: 408). Even there is a government control on the media, in real the government is not regulatory in media economics. The government seems to have a regulation it is not true actually. Because the power of capital causes an effect on government at the same time. “At the same time, global media and interactions have worldwide effects that are in the interest of all nations to regulate.” (Stein & Sinha, 2006: 415). The critical studies on media economics is usually tend to Marxist. In other words, the critical dimension of communication economics generally explains Marxism. When taking into consideration the world economics is steered by USA, generally capitalist economics, privately communication economics can be done from the inside of this country by Thorstein Veblen. Veblen rejects to degrade economics into the market. “If the market is not natural and economics covers more field than market, in that case as soon as the definition of economics will be changed and broadened. Economics moves away being an ‘economics’ as ‘science’ affectation what mainstream economics desire, it will play the role of political economics.” (Özveren, 2007: 18). Not being degraded into economics is important in terms of communication economics. Because communication economics and its all components are coordinated with the market. Why this issue lives like this way must be looked for the dilemma between industry-enterprice of Veblen. While industry a physical notion, is very close to productional engineering, business enterprice is a capitalist organization directly aim to obtain profit.

Briefly, communication economics/media economics tools is a type of business enterprice. Communicatin economics represents itself as if it produced several new ideas for people. And also it convinces people to use its products via its ads. It also represents itself as if it offered many choices to people. However, it actually submits choices to people only if what it wanted to be consumed. Because, it is truly a business enterprice and it is a form of capitalist organization. So, as is all business enterprice, communication economics gains people’s control over by the mediation of promoting conspicuous consumption. In other words, media economics is a tool of conspicuous consumption.

3 RESULTS

Consequently, communication economics is an institution as a matter of fact that in lives. In Veblen’s view, this is a result from sourced by it is a commercial effect. Because, very attempt lives in media economics arised from commercial market and everything is for commercial market.

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