Corporatism in China: A Case Study of Hangzhou Press Media

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ABSTRACT

This research commences by asking why corporatism, this particular political science theory can explain China’s situation especially in the transitional era. We then argue that it loses explanatory power to some degree when applied to China study. We propose the modified theoretical framework as “Party-market corporatism” from the research of media and communication as media more or less reflects China’s current issue. Three prototypes representing Shanghai, Guangzhou and Beijing’s media performance have demonstrated the corporatist features of resistance, compromise as well as collaboration between state and market.

We further test our theory by a case study in one of China’s most representative city--- Hangzhou. The main data for this study is derived from in-depth interviews we conducted in the end of 2008 with fifteen middle- to high-ranking media executives in Hangzhou’s press media groups (Update interviews were done in the mid of 2009).

Through interviews we analyze four aspects of corporatism, including party-ideology, market logic, localizing professionalism and devolution and incorporation strategy adopted by the state towards media organizations.

We surmise from our study that Hangzhou is a city with less resistance feature on repackaging Communist doctrine based on relatively loose control; showing active collaboration feature on interlocking with market as well as owning compromise characteristic of localizing professionalism in a pragmatic way.
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