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# Investigative Journalism and its Influence in the Framework of Social and Institutional of Kosova

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## INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM AND ITS INFLUENCE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL OF KOSOVA

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**Abstract.** Kosova as a state with a new democracy, as in many other spheres, continues to limp through the media. Media operates in accordance with existing market. Current market, meanwhile, affects the journalism, in a way that it makes it more descriptive – reporting, and less investigative. Investigative journalism needs deeper research, while preparation for daily reports from journalists, does not allow them, in the same time to develop investigative journalism, as in the international media where the market is more serious.

However, as much as conditions permit, investigative journalism is being developed in Kosova. A question that arises is how much is its influence in political, economical, social and safety in general trends in the country.

It has been seen and verified that investigative journalism has had an impact, but only after major public reactions. This means that institutions have been inept in this plan. To clarify the role of investigative journalism in Kosova, I have chosen some cases, which will be briefly presented, always based on facts and statements of investigative journalists.

### 1. Fourth power

After three years of studies in the Bachelor degree of Journalism, this year, UBT has started also with the Master program in the field of Media and Communication. While taking in the consideration the development of journalism in Kosova, especially since the end of war and onwards, the opening of the master studies at UBT, opens avenues for a more authentic and advanced journalism. Saving one journalism, as one of the fourth powers of a state, is a national obligation. This is due to the fact that it's only way to experience the democracy in society.

#### 1.1. Journalism, an ideal power, which has the public as mechanism

While other powers, for example, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, measure their strength through the mechanisms of violence, journalism, has the public reactions as the main and the only one mechanism, through which, if used correctly, it can bring big and positive changes. Based on this, journalism is an idealist and moral power and as such should remain. But, the question is, where the journalism stands today: has the media or the journalist earned the moral right to use the public as

mechanism that democratizes society? The answer is quite simple. Our journalist remains captive of traditional journalism, not to say of controlled journalism.

## **2. Ideological lens and the influence of market in journalism**

If in monistic periods, journalist was placed under the ideological lens, today, the same has become the slave of the media market, perhaps as a result of a group, clan or party interests. Defects of “ideological lens”, now are more than clearly, the bad has gone even deeper because journalists have been subjected to the media market. By now the defects of the ‘ideological lens’ are obvious, but the worst has been thickened also from the journalists’ submission to the media market. The second lens made journalists use a large dose of subjectivity, made them become more than simple transmitters and reporters of different events, with different linguistic maneuvers, rather than moral people, whose duty is to save the most important power of the democratization of a society- the public. Among other things, the large number of portals, affected journalism, so it became not a reporter, but only an interpreter.

### **2.1. Impacts of investigative journalism texts**

We see examples that prove this, whenever we open media, although we can’t conclude that there’s no media and journalists, whose haven’t understood their mission in the right way. There are some, who have proven that being a journalist doesn’t mean having a degree, or finding a job and end up with that. First, being a journalist means to be an idealist, then a great researcher, defiant and determined person, who never becomes a prey of any submission. These sparks have been seen also in the post-war Kosovo, but always under the shadow of descriptive and broadcast journalism. However, their effect is experienced, because the use of public factor through the investigative journalism, has forced public institutions to act, and even to overturn harmful decisions. As a result of investigative journalism, the rector of a university was changed, an illegal university which developed its function in hotels, was closed, a president was overthrown, EULEX was also fluctuated, and there have been made many other important changes.

Besnik Krasniqi is a journalist of the daily newspaper "Koha Ditore"<sup>11</sup> in Kosova. He is an investigative journalist, something that he has proven with his articles, which have made positive changes for the public.

For example, in an article, published on January 22, 2014, he wrote the article "Rogue professors of UP".

The story reveals a shocking fact, well disguised, and for which was never previously reported in Kosovo - promotion of academic staff through fraud. Many professors, among them the rector and many deans, by giving money, published their papers in fake magazines, so they could reach a minimum threshold of work, as a condition of receiving certain academic rank, such as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Professor.

This story was followed by many other researches, which found that in this scandal were also involved heads of the Accreditation Agency, members of the Governing Council of the University of Pristina, the staff members of the managements of other public and private universities. Massive protests were organized after the publication of this scandal, which led to the resignation of the rector and the creation

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<sup>11</sup> Daily Newspaper “Koha Ditore”, Rogue professors of UP, January 22, 2014, Pristina

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of a special commission with the mandate to address the issue. First, University forced professors to publish CVs and to present all their scientific work and also the magazines where they have published them.

There was given the commitment to revoke the ranks of all people who achieved something through false publications in magazines. Also, in the selection process and academic advancement, the university decided to recognize as a scientific contribution, only the papers, which were published in indexed international scientific journals.

Another story of journalist Besnik Krasniqi, as investigative as the first one, that has made headlines is "Game with millions of state", a research published on December 16, 2009, in Koha Ditore<sup>12</sup>. The story was written about the largest tender of the Ministry of Education, which dealt with the digitalization of schools. News has made the fact that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo, gave a tender to a consortium that was more than 20 million more expensive than other economic operators who had applied to win the tender. Part of this consortium was IPKO, which was managed by exponents of PDK.

Immediately after the publication of this research, the tender was canceled. Since then, this tender was never revealed again. For this story, he won three awards, from the Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo, the award "Rexhai Surroi", in 2010, and also from Anticorruption, UNDP etc.

Another journalist who gives power to investigative journalism in Kosovo and its influence as the fourth power is Parim Ulluri. His stories have contributed to overturn decisions of state leaders.

On August 12, 2016, in the online newspaper "Insajderi"<sup>13</sup>, he published the article entitled "Green Card – appointed director the girlfriend of Gani Thaçi's son". First, the article talks about more than 100 million euros, earned from insurance companies, as a result of Kosova's non-membership in Green Card. Instead of commitment to the issue, institution leaders appointed their relatives to different duties. Gani Thaçi, brother of the president, was appointed the Acting Director of the Kosovo Insurance Bureau (BKS). Meanwhile, Edona Ahmeti, Kushtrim Thaçi's girlfriend, son of Gani Thaçi, was appointed to the post of director for the Green Card.

The effect of the article, having as a mechanism the fourth power, made Edona Ahmeti to resign four days later, on August 16, 2016. This was reported in the media. Just two months ago, in June, Gani Thaçi was appointed in the position of Acting Director of the BKS.

Another article of investigative journalism is the one which talks about a tender, won by current prime minister's sons. The article was entitled "Isa Mustafa's sons win tenders from Prime Minister Office", published on August 24, 2015, in "Jeta në Kosovë"<sup>14</sup>. Prime Minister's Office, applies a closed tendering procedure to contract a company for vehicle servicing. Through this procedure, they declared as a winner "Makcar" company, which was property of the Prime Minister's sons, Besnik and Arben Mustafa. Five days after the publication of the text in "Jeta në Kosovë", on August 29, 2015, the protagonists of the scandal declared the cancellation from the public contract. In fact, the Prime Minister, Isa Mustafa requested the cancellation of the contract. Three texts were devoted to this problem.

Visar Prebreza is a journalist in the economic field. His investigative articles, have contributed in the opening of investigations against fraud. On July 3, 2013, he published in "Koha Ditore"<sup>15</sup> the article

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<sup>12</sup> Daily Newspaper "Koha Ditore", Game with millions of state, December 16, 2009, Pristina

<sup>13</sup> Online Newspaper "Insajderi", Green Card- appointed director the girlfriend of Gani Thaçi's son, August 12, 2016, Pristina

<sup>14</sup> Jeta në Kosovë, Isa Mustafa's sons win tenders from Prime Minister Office, August 24, 2015, Pristina

<sup>15</sup> Daily Newspaper "Koha Ditore", OSHP selects evidences for a 1.7 million euros tender, July 3, 2013, Pristina

entitled "OSHP selects evidences for a 1.7 million euros tender". Later they started investigation. The owner of the company "Conex", admitted his guilt, while the head of OSHP was accused for abuse, together with some judges of tenders.

The fact that journalism can be developed anywhere, can be told by the stories of journalist, also lecturer at UBT, Musa Sabedini, the winner of the award "Correspondent of the year", for four years.

He discovered the manipulation of a woman with people in need, leading them to death. The case was complicated even for investigators. A woman from Gjilan, because of the desire to have children, did a therapy, as alternative medicine, in Peja. In fact, it was a false therapy, which made the victim believe she was pregnant, a pregnancy that failed before birth. After several trials, the patient died, without accurate diagnosis. After the publication of the article in the daily newspaper "Lajm Ekskluziv", the suspicious woman was arrested, the fraud was detected and she was sentenced.

Case "Afrim Zeqiri," was a multi-year judiciary process etc.

Good investigative journalism continue to make other media and journalists, who are not mentioned in this paper, but it was impossible to get more examples.