DISRESPECTED

– a study concerning the journalist profession in Kosovo: corrupt employers, unfair working conditions and forgotten journalistic ideals.

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Title: Disrespected – a study concerning the journalist profession in Kosovo: corrupt employers, unfair working conditions and forgotten journalistic ideals.

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Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study is to investigate how the journalist profession is challenged when the media in Kosovo is intruded by political and business interests and what happens to television journalists and editors; professionals who fight for their right to produce news. The intention with the study is to describe, discuss and analyze the results found in this study around the obstacles faced within the journalist profession in Kosovo caused by the intrusion of political and business interests in journalistic work. One has to also consider that Kosovo is a new state, having weak mechanisms for protecting the rights of journalists and editors.

Research method: In this study, the qualitative interview has been used as research method to collect empirical data and to get an idea of the personal experiences of Kosovo journalists.

Limitations: This study does not present an investigation into the Kosovo media landscape as a whole and does not give other parties involved in journalistic work (for example media owners, politicians and advertisers) the opportunity to express their views. Further, the voices of rural journalists and editors are not included. Finally, interviewees mainly work as television journalists and editors, reflecting the fact that media consumption in Kosovo is almost exclusively by viewing television.

Results: Results suggest that Kosovo journalists and editors are held back in their profession due to political and economical influence on their work. This is carried out in the form of threats and blackmailing in which an external political or economical force personally threats the journalist or editor or threats to pull back financial support unless positive media coverage in a specific media is delivered. Journalists and editors are thus not able to carry out their role as watchdogs and are put in a position in which they feel unsafe and disrespected.

Suggestions for future research: For future research, it would be interesting to look into “the other side” of the media, i.e. advertisers, political elite and media companies in Kosovo. A more comprehensive study could maybe shed a broader light on the Kosovo media problems and possibly find some solutions for the future of the existing problems. It can also be interesting to look at international interference in the journalist profession in Kosovo.

Keywords: Kosovo, journalist profession, media, influence, self-censorship
List of acronyms

EU = European Union, an economic and political partnership between 27 European countries.

EULEX = European Union Rule of Law Mission, a civilian mission launched by the EU with the aim to support the Kosovo authorities in the rule of law area (police, judiciary, customs).

ICO = International Civilian Office, provider of international support to Kosovo. Its aim is to support Kosovo’s European integration and support the full implementation of Kosovo’s status settlement.

KTV = Koha Television, a national private television channel owned by the Surroi family.

KFOR = Kosovo Force, a NATO-led peace-keeping force present in Kosovo since 1999.

NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization, an intergovernmental military alliance. Its member states agree to mutually support each other in case of an attack.


PTK = Post Telekom Kosovo, the postal and telecommunications authority in Kosovo.

RTK = Radio Television Kosovo, public television in Kosovo.

RTV 21 = Radio Television 21, a private television in Kosovo owned by the Kelmendi and Sereçini families.

UN = United Nations, international organization with the aim to facilitate cooperation in international law and security, economic development and human rights, among others.

USAID = United States Agency for International Development, a United States government agency providing economic and humanitarian assistance.
Preface

I had lived in Kosovo for almost a year when I realized what my bachelor thesis should focus on. As a student in media and communication, I was not only interested to get to know the situation of the media in the country I was living in, I also noticed that it was very different from the media in my home country of Sweden. Daily reporting in Kosovo was all about telling the audience what had happened that day and the majority of the stories were told from only one perspective and without any critical undertone. One had to turn to another media to get the other side of the story. I got a strange feeling that the fingertips of the journalists were somehow being controlled by something or someone and it soon became fairly clear to me that media was closely connected to politicians and different businesses as the reporting changed over time depending on the political situation or changes in the business climate.

Scholars have argued that the media plays an important role in monitoring the actions of the government and helping the citizens to keep themselves informed about the events in society, reporting on government activity, economy, business and culture. In the modern Western world, the media are fairly free and independent of political or economic pressure and are more or less free to report on and criticize those in power without reprisal. But this is not the case everywhere. In less developed countries, heavy political and economical influence on the media is still more than common. In Southeast European countries, communism dictatorship or war was a reality not long ago. This study focuses on the media in the Republic of Kosovo, where the media is still heavily influenced by political and business interests. Bearing in mind previous research on the importance of journalistic integrity as well as what ideal journalism really means, research in this study sheds light on the obstacles that Kosovo broadcast journalists face in their professional life because of influence on the news content.

In this study, nine broadcast journalists have been interviewed in order to come closer to their actual personal experiences. I thank them all for their engagement in and positive attitude towards this study, despite busy schedules and fear of being caught of telling a complete stranger about corrupt bosses, unethical working conditions and forgotten journalistic ideals. I also thank Blerina Bojaj, who successfully translated the few interviews that were carried out in Albanian. Finally, I also thank my tutor Göran Palm for comments and criticism along the way. You have been invaluable in the process of writing the thesis.
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The Republic of Kosovo’s location in Europe

Picture source: NE.se (2012)
Map of the Republic of Kosovo

[Image of a map of Kosovo]

Official map of Kosovo (Albanian language).

The maps are not relevant for the results of this study but are only supposed to be helpful for the reader to know where Kosovo is located. A more detailed background on Kosovo can be found in the introduction.
1. Introduction

According to liberal theory, journalists are expected to provide a forum for debate and information as well as to act as so called ‘watchdogs’ of state and government. Furthermore, there are a few certain norms and ideals that journalists are supposed to uphold. In an ideal world of journalism, a journalist is a critical, independent, active member of society who acts accordingly. (Voltmer & Rawnsley, 2009, Louw, 2005, Curran, 2002, Nygren, 2008, Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007 and Strandberg & Månson, 2009). But it is not always that simple. Scholars critical of the liberal theory (Norman & Chomsky, 1988) argue that there are certain interests in society, political or economical (specified by Nygren, 2008b, Palm, 2002, Picard, 2002), that influence the journalist profession. It has been argued that such pressure is present in all societies of the world, even in modern, democratic states where one would expect media stability and transparence (Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston, 2007, Voltmer, 2009 and Bahaguna, 2010) but in many less developed countries, this pressure seems to be especially visible. McQuail argues that this pressure is not always something bad (McQuail, 2010).

In Kosovo, the post-war landlocked country in the Western Balkans, media is considered to be highly influenced by political and economical pressure. The journalist profession is heavily challenged when media accepts financial support from politicians and businesses in exchange for positive media coverage and media influence. Kosovo is located in the heart of the Balkan Peninsula in Southeastern Europe, bordering Serbia to the North and East, Macedonia to the South and Montenegro and Albania to the West. Kosovo has about 2 million inhabitants and the capital is Prishtinë. Other important cities are Pejë, Mitrovicë, Prizren, Gjakovë and Gjilan. (Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2012). The Republic of Kosovo declared its independence from the Republic of Serbia on February 17th 2008. Over thirteen years have passed since the NATO bombings, putting an end to the Kosovo war between Serbian military forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (the Kosovo Albanian organization protecting the interests of ethnic Albanians) as well as the ethnic cleansing of Kosovars led by the ex-President of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milošević. After the defeat of the Republic of Serbia in 1999 Kosovo came under United Nations administration. International organizations like the UN and the EU as well as hundreds of non-governmental organizations rushed to help build up the war-torn Kosovo, which included supporting the development of a free, independent and professional media. (Judah, 2008).
1.1 Problem discussion and aim of study

Media in countries all around the world are influenced by political and economical pressure. This study focuses on the very same problems in the country of Kosovo, which in comparison with modern democracies in Western Europe and countries like the United States has undeveloped laws protecting the basic idea of journalism and weak mechanisms trying to hold back political and economical influencing on journalism. How is the journalist profession carried out in such circumstances? The aim of this study is to investigate how the journalist profession is challenged when the media is influenced by political and business interests. Journalists and editors are interviewed to get closer to their experience. The intention with the study is to describe, discuss and analyze the interview results, shedding light on obstacles faced within the journalist profession in Kosovo caused by the pressure of political and business interests.

1.2 Research questions

My main research question: In what way do journalists in Kosovo face obstacles while trying to carry out their profession, considering the high level of political and economical pressure on the media?

I also aim to answer the following question: How do Kosovo journalists themselves look upon their profession and how do they handle the obstacles? How is the news content and the watchdog role influenced in Kosovo considering the circumstances?

1.3 Limitations

This study does not try to investigate the media landscape as a whole and not all parties that are involved in journalist work on a daily basis are included. Furthermore, there has been no intention to present any conclusions about how journalists’ generally feel about their work situations but the study is strictly focused on the obstacles journalists and editors face while carrying out their profession, taking into consideration influence by political and economical forces. Please also note that this study does not include journalists in rural areas since all interviewees report from Prishtina-based (the capital of Kosovo) media and that interviewees in this study mainly work as television journalists and editors, reflecting that media consumption in Kosovo is largely a television consumption.
1.4 Disposition

In order to appreciate the results and analysis in this study, it is first of all important to have some background information. In chapter 2, Background, the history of the Eastern European media is and the situation of Balkan media is shortly described. This helps to put the reality of media in Kosovo in a broader perspective. A short overview of the Kosovo media landscape and different actors trying to influence the Kosovo media are presented as well a few examples of threats against journalists in Kosovo. The background also stresses that there is a gap between ideal and reality concerning journalism in Kosovo. In chapter 3, Looking back; theory and previous research the liberal theory of the journalism profession is presented, which argues that journalism is about providing a forum for debate and to monitor those in power. On the contrary, the critical research presented in chapter 3 argues that there is no such thing as ideal journalism. Journalism is rather constructed in a market-driven society full of different stakeholders wanting their share of positive media coverage. McQuail’s theory of the media as player in a field of social forces is the main theory in this thesis and the main theoretical starting point. In chapter 4, How to get under their skin; research method discussion, the research method (qualitative interview) is presented, discussed, criticized and put into the context of the study. Further, the interview content, the interviewee selection process, the question of interviewee anonymity, validity, reliability, translation and transcription is presented and discussed. In chapter 5, The truth and nothing but the truth; results and analysis, the empirical data is presented. The interviewees come to life. The results of the study are discussed and analyzed with the help of theory and previous research. In chapter 6, Final discussion, the results are further discussed and conclusions are drawn to answer the research questions. The results are put into a broader context. The usability of the study is discussed and suggestions for further research are presented.
2. Background

In order to appreciate this study as a whole, an introduction to the history of Eastern European media and the situation of journalism and media in Kosovo is necessary.

Disrespect against journalists is a global problem. We are willing to believe that freedom of speech, freedom of the press and respect for the journalist profession exists and we want to believe that it exists everywhere. But media freedom cannot be taken for granted in the year of 2012, even in countries that are considered democracies. Journalists face threats or even death all over the world. Is media freedom an illusion? Located below is a chart putting the cards on the table, showing the yearly total of journalists killed around the globe between 1995 and 2011 while doing their job.

![Yearly total of journalists killed since 1995](chart.png)

**Yearly total of journalists killed since 1995.** (Reporters without Borders, 2012a).

At the time of publishing this study, 23 journalists have been killed and 163 journalists have been imprisoned around the globe in 2012, according to the Press Freedom Barometer 2012 put together by Reporters without Borders. (Reporters without Borders, 2012b). In Western Europe, 84% of the press is considered free in the year of 2012. (Freedom House, 2012a). Only 39% of the press is considered free in Central and Eastern Europe/Eurasia in the year of 2012. (Freedom House, 2012b). According to Bahaguna, some legitimate reporting in today’s Europe still continues to never see the day of light and in many countries, legal framework to protect press freedom is weak. (Bahaguna, 2010). Freedom House classifies Kosovo as “Partly Free”. (Freedom House, 2012c).
2.1 The history of Eastern European media

The history of the media in the country of interest in this study, Kosovo, is linked to the media history of Eastern Europe. Palmer argues that media in Eastern European nations like Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and former Yugoslavia was strongly linked to the politics of the former communist system as the majority of media in these countries were controlled by the Soviet Union. The purpose of the media in Eastern Europe was to function as a channel for publicity activities, propaganda and indoctrination. As soon as new political elite took control, the media trotted along as an obedient publicity machine. Palmer argues that this was an on-going reality because “never did the iron fist of government entirely release its grip on the media machinery it harnessed to control its peoples. Vigorous censorship was enforced; outside media [...] were not permitted. Strict obedience to party lines by the media was expected” (Palmer in de Beer, 2009:215).

It was not until the region as a whole experienced liberation of dominant politics that independent, private media businesses emerged as a result of citizens’ growing demand for freedom of expression but also as part of the economic reforms taken on to save Eastern Europe from economic disaster. Surprisingly and interestingly enough, journalists who until then had been both trained by and controlled by their respective governments, had problems letting go of the system of obedience. Despite new conditions of greater freedom of expression, many did not know how to handle their sudden right to criticize those in power and ended up following the politicians around like they had always done. Others were caught in between. Palmer argues that “while Eastern Europe’s nations have written constitutions guaranteeing freedom of expression and of the press, as well as information laws that offer journalists some access to government information, overt government control has been replaced with self-censorship, as well as political and financial pressures that create a difficult climate for journalists” (Palmer in de Beer, 2009:216). Despite the fact that no Eastern European government officially owns any part of the media landscape, serious reprisal can await the journalist who dares to seriously criticize political figures. Palmer argues that the ex-Communist governance style still hinders media reforms, especially in regions like the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Journalists continue to work without economical safety and editorial independence, leaving them exposed to threats, intimidation and bribes (Palmer in de Beer, 2009). Bahaguna argues that economic struggle and concentration of media ownership should be considered as two very real threats towards editorial independence and
press freedom in Eastern Europe. (Bahaguna, 2010). Palmer stresses that “the fortunes of the media of Eastern Europe are closely tied to the political fortunes of its governments” (Palmer in de Beer, 2009:216), leading to even the media sometimes sliding back into the authoritarian patterns that is used to be part of before democracy emerged in the region.

2.2 Zooming in on the Balkans

Previous research argues that the whole Balkan Peninsula suffers from unstable and corrupt media. In 2005, Lani argued that “today’s Balkan press is more an extension of politics than a representative of public opinion. A good part of the media continues to be controlled by powerful political groups” (Lani, 2005:42). Lani further stresses that the financial instability of the Balkan media leads to it becoming victims of economic pressure from governments and companies, stating that “the media face capitalist trends and financial pressure from sources such as foreign capital as well as problems of distribution, transparency, ownership, labor policy and corruption” (Lani, 2005:48).

Thus, journalists in the Balkans have to deal with both political pressure on the media as well as threats and influence from their own bosses and editors as a result of economical weakness and corruption. Lani comes to the conclusion that the unstable relationship between freedom and responsibility which Balkan media faces is a reflection of the Balkan societies, in which the idea of democracy is often understood more as rights than responsibilities. (Lani, 2005).

2.3 Short overview of the Kosovo media landscape

Today, Kosovo has eight national daily newspapers, each with a circulation of only between 25 000 and 35 000 copies per day. Considering that Kosovo has about 2 million inhabitants, the print media landscape is still very small. TV remains the primary source of information. 86% of the surveyed in a study (1104 interviewees) state that TV is the main source of information and 7% turning to print media for information. Kosovo has three national TV stations – RTK, RTV 21 and KTV. (OSCE, 2010).

When it comes to the print media, Zweeden argues that the newspaper circulation has to go up in order for Kosovo’s media to even be able to play a role as watchdogs. (Zweeden, 2007). The OSCE argues that the very low circulation of newspapers in Kosovo is linked to the small amount of in-depth analysis and investigative reporting. (OSCE, 2010). Looking at the bigger picture, the development seems to have gone a bit up and down since the declaration of
independence in 2008. Reporters without Borders put Kosovo in the 92nd place in its 2010 Freedom of the Media Index (Reporters without Borders, 2012c) while it was ranked 75th in the world in 2009. (Reporters without Borders, 2012d). In 2011-2012, Kosovo had yet again moved up the list, ranking 87th in the world. (Reporters without Borders, 2012e).

2.4 Pressure on media in Kosovo

The situation in Kosovo is far from different. A few years after the end of the Kosovo war in 1999, Limani (2004) argued that Kosovo media cannot carry out its important role in society based on the fact that the media itself is still undeveloped (2004):

“Being the most important forum for public discussion, the press must be free and independent in order to create a possibility for the public to judge as independently and as objectively as possible. In post-war Kosovo society, which has begun to head towards a Western-oriented democratic society, this is a difficult endeavor. In addition to the process of reconciliation between Albanians and Serbs, there is a set of political and economic problems related to the building of new institutions and a new societal system requiring the support of public discussion. This discussion takes place actively in an argumentative way in the press, which should therefore contribute to building a new society, but which itself is still in the process of establishment and has no tradition” (2004:1).

The report “Still not too late for press freedom” published by Reporters without Borders in June 2010 on the Kosovo media stresses the fact that neither financial nor editorial independence is guaranteed in Kosovo. (Reporters without Borders, 2010f). Political pressure on the media remains a problem. The amount of foreign investment in the sector is low, allowing political groups to “blackmail through advertising”, forcing the media into giving them positive media coverage by supporting them financially with advertising. Because of this, the financial and editorial independence suffers. (Reporters without Borders, 2010g).

Alongside Reporters without Borders, the Organization for Co-operation and Security in Europe (OSCE) realizes that on-going political media corruption is the biggest problem in Kosovo media as there “is a tendency of Kosovo institutions, including both the central government and municipal authorities, to exercise control over the media” (OSCE, 2010:7).

Robert Gilette (2006), the former Temporary Media Commissioner of Kosovo from 2003 to 2006, spoke at an EES discussion in June 2006 with the theme “Media Matters:
Professionalizing and Regulating Media in Post-Conflict Bosnia and Kosovo”. He summarized the situation of the Kosovo media which is still valid today.

The task of building a body of democratic media law and regulation becomes even more challenging where the rule of law in general is at a low ebb and corruption and oligarchy prevail; where the trauma of ethnic conflict is still fresh; and where the formative experience of most young journalists is not journalism school, where one learns the crafts of fact-based reporting and analysis, but war. In Kosovo and Bosnia, after a slow start and years of effort, the enabling environments for media are now in place, but they remain vulnerable to continued political turmoil and generic weaknesses in the rule of law throughout the region. Moreover, even when it is established, there is no assurance that a diverse and independent media sector can be maintained over time (Gilette, 2006:3).

Despite the fact that there has been quite a few years since the end of the war, looking at some of the cases of threats against journalists suggest that few things have changed:

- On October 19th 2001, journalist Bekim Kastrati was murdered in an ambush. A few years later, on June 3rd 2005, journalist Bardehul Ajeti was seriously injured in a shooting attack near Prishtina, the capital of Kosovo. He later died from his injuries. (Reporters without Borders, 2012h).

- On September 23rd 2004, investigative journalist Fatmire Terdeci was injured in a shooting in central Kosovo, most likely because of her reporting on corruption and organized crime. (Reporters without Borders, 2012i).

- In 2010, Reports without Borders protested against the case of journalist Sebahate Shala. During a news conference prior to parliamentary elections in December 2010, she had questioned if two members of the political elite who were being investigated for suspicion of corruption and murder at the time could really be let running in the up-coming elections. Afterwards, individuals supporting the two politicians had sent threatening text messages to Shala and as her employer did not do anything to protect her and even criticized her for having behaved unprofessional and stupid at the conference, Shala saw no other way out of it than to leave her job. (Reporters without Borders, 2012j).
• On March 27th 2012, several intruders entered a newspaper office after the newspaper had published an article on oil companies in Kosovo and the quality of their fuel. The intruders threatened the editorial staff and an unknown caller threatened to put a bomb in the building where the office was located. (Reporters without Borders, 2012k).

A consequence of a weak rule of law system in Kosovo has led to journalists still working without any proper laws, rules and regulations to protect them and laws controlling media advertising in Kosovo are weak or non-existent, leaving journalists and editors in a dilemma, trying to avoid upsetting those who feed them economically and thereby risking cutting of the branch they are sitting on. (Reporters without Borders, 2010f).

2.5 The gap between law and reality in Kosovo

Media freedom is supposed to be guaranteed in the Republic of Kosovo under the constitution that went into force on June 15th 2008, four months after the declaration of independence from the Republic of Serbia. Chapter 2, Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, Article 42, Freedom of Media (Official website of the Kosovo Constitution, 2012) says:

1. Freedom and pluralism of media is guaranteed.

2. Censorship is forbidden. No one shall prevent the dissemination of information or ideas through media, except if it is necessary to prevent encouragement or provocation of violence and hostility on grounds of race, nationality, ethnicity or religion.

3. Everyone has the right to correct untrue, incomplete and inaccurate published information, if it violates her/his rights and interests in accordance with the law.

Despite the fact that Kosovo, among many other less developed countries and emerging democracies, has adopted laws and regulations protecting the idea of journalism, discussions among scholars point to the notion of it being more a question of beautiful words on a paper (Palmer in de Beer 2009, Herman & Chomsky, 1988, Bahaguna, 2010 and Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston, 2007, among others) and results in this study suggest that journalists in Kosovo carry out their profession in a reality far from freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of the media altogether.
3. Looking back; theory and previous research

In order to appreciate the empirical results and the analysis in this study, previous research on and different theories around the journalist profession are crucial. Liberal, traditional theory represents a notion of ideal journalism while critical scholars argue that the reality of journalism is nowhere close to the very same ideal. The theoretical starting point in this thesis has its roots in the critical theory and especially in McQuail’s notion of the media in a field of different influential social forces, presented and discussed in the very end of this chapter.

It is argued that journalists create a world of meaning as “the mass media, especially in their journalistic role, can help citizens learn about the world, debate their responses to it and reach informed citizens about what courses to adopt” (Dahlgren in Palm, 2002:43). Furthermore, journalistic ideology focuses on the process of producing meaning. Benson & Neveu, on the other hand, state that ”journalists are structurally condemned to produce – variably, depending on the period and outlet – under political and/or economic constraints. [...] Journalistic production is always strongly dictated by the social, especially political or economic, conditions in which it is organized.” (Benson & Neveu, 2005:50). Benson & Neveu further discuss that the major contradiction in being a journalist is the simple fact that what journalists’ themselves see as ideal practice and ethical correctness is very often just not profitable as “the journalist ideally wants to be the stalwart servant of the truth at any price, but [...] belongs to a paper that bears a price” (Benson & Neveu, 2005:51). In this chapter, it becomes clear that liberal traditional theory sees the journalist as someone who should help the society informed by reporting the truth while scholars critical to the traditional theory claim that journalists are organized in a structured system of different internal and external pressures in which it is tampered with the truth to suit different interests. There seems to be a difference between ideal journalism and the actual reality of journalism. For this thesis, the traditional theory is taken into account when analyzing the results, but the critical perspectives and especially McQuail’s notion of the media organization as active in a field of different social forces (see 3.8) becomes the theoretical starting points in this study.

3.1 The role of media in society

Modern scholars argue that the media remain a dominant actor in political and social life across the world, crucial for both authoritarian and democratic regimes. According to Voltmer
& Rawnsley, the media should fulfill two basic main functions in a society. First, they should provide a forum in which all opinions can be heard and discussed and function as a forum for political debate in order for the citizens to make informed, political decisions. Second, the media should have a ‘watchdog’ role and monitor the actions of the government in order to stimulate government accountability and transparency. (Voltmer & Rawnsley, 2009:234-235).

3.2 Criticism of liberal theory

Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky targeted criticism of the traditional theories around the role of the media in society. In their book Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media published in 1988, they present what they call the “Propaganda Model”. While traditional theory see the media as independent monitors of the government and providers of different forums for discussion and information, Herman & Chomsky view media as businesses wanting to sell products (readers and audiences) to other businesses (advertisers) instead of staying faithful to providing the public with news. According to Herman & Chomsky, systematic propaganda is required in order for mass media to function as the system for communicating messages to the public, taking into account the fact that we live in a world built upon economic interests. Simple put: the media is a privately operated propaganda machine serving the political and economic elite. (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

3.3 The journalistic profession, ideal and integrity

Nygren focuses on the modern journalist profession in Nyhetsfabriken – journalistiska yrkesroller i en förändrad medievärld (“The news factory – the journalistic profession in an altered media world”) published in 2008. He defines three different stages of the journalist profession. The basic stage defines the journalists’ place in the daily production of news. It focuses on how the newsroom is organized and what kind of news is produced. The basic stage sheds lights upon what the journalist is supposed to produce in order to fill the medium with content. The second stage focuses on the invisible or visible values, norms and routines that are part of the journalistic profession. Journalists adapt to the certain culture that dominates the newsroom and produce news accordingly. The third stage defines the ideals and values that all journalists share which gives a meaning to the job and to their personal development. The goals and policies of the specific company also find their way into the newsroom as guidelines to how news is done in that company. (Nygren, 2008a:54).
Kovach & Rosenstiel (2007) published *The Elements of Journalism – what newspeople should know and the public should expect* in 2007, a result of a project started by journalists back in 1997, aiming to create an overview of the journalistic basic principles which upon the journalist profession is resting. One part of the journalist profession includes the kind of relationship that journalists establish with the society. Kovach & Rosenstiel present an Anglo-Saxon model that has come to dominate the journalism in Europe, arguing that the primary goal of journalism is to provide people with the information they need to be free and in control of their lives. (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007:4-5). Voltmer & Rawnsley (2009) also stressed this. Strandberg and Månson (2009) further argue that journalists have to hold on to their integrity because it is strongly linked with the trust of society:

Strong journalistic integrity is crucial for reliability. Those who monitor the society also have to withstand being monitored. Having integrity means to be honest, to act based on conviction and have the ability to resist pressure. A journalist being considerate while working in the field is important in earning trust from the public. Trust in the media and media employees is a result of following the professional rules. The most important asset in the newsroom is trust. It takes a long time to build trust and it can be destroyed in no time. With low trust and bad reputation follows declining circulation as well as reduced listening and watching. Individual violations damage all colleagues and the news media as a whole. (Strandberg & Månson, 2009:131, translation by author).

Kovach & Rosenstiel present a few journalistic ideals which the journalist profession should include. Journalism’s primary obligation is to tell the truth and show their loyalty towards the citizens, always bearing in mind that verification is the heart of the journalist profession. Journalism has to give the news fair proportions, to be independent from what it is monitoring, to function as a monitor of power, to provide a forum for public criticism and to turn the strange and unknown into something interesting and relevant. Finally, the journalist profession has to give journalists the permission to think on their own (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007). Based on a survey with 1149 U.S. journalists, Beam (2006) argues that media workers’ job satisfaction is linked with the employers’ professional and journalistic goals and priorities. He argues that journalists seem to be less satisfied when working for highly profit-oriented organizations and more satisfied with their work if they notice that their employers value honest and decent journalism. (Beam, 2006).
3.4 “The Fourth Estate” – the idea of journalist as watchdogs

Louw talks about mainstream, liberal journalists seeing themselves as members of a “Fourth Estate”, being “active participants tasked with making sure the legislative, executive and judicial players do not abuse their power or become corrupt” (Louw, 2005:29). Louw argued that journalists’ acting as watchdogs in liberal democracies was one part of their role as The Forth Estate, the term originally proposed by The Times editor at the time, John Delane, in 1852. Back then, The Times reported working-class political unrest directed at the oligarchy and kept stressing that reform was better than revolution and that the liberal oligarchy at the time should be turned into liberal democracy. The oligarchy was not happy with reporting on unrest, which led to tensions between The Times and the conservatives. John Delane wrote an editorial in 1852 about the role in liberal democracies he thought the press should have:

The first duty of the press is to obtain the earliest and most correct intelligence of the events of the time and instantly by disclosing them to make them the common property of the nation. The press lives by disclosures … bound to tell the truth as we find it without fear of consequences – to lend no convenient shelter to acts of injustice and oppression, but to consign them to the judgment of the world… the duty of the journalist is the same as that of the historian – to seek out truth, above all things, and to present to his readers not such things as state-craft would wish them to know, but the truth as near as he can attain it. (Delane in Louw, 2005:61).

According to traditional liberal theory, the main democratic role of the media is to always check on the state and without fear expose any abuse of its official authority to the public. Curran (2002) further explains the journalistic watchdog role from a traditional perspective:

The watchdog role is said in traditional liberal theory to override in importance all other functions of the media. It dictates the form in which the media systems should be organized. Only by anchoring the media to the free market, in this view, is it possible to ensure the media’s complete independence from the government. Once the media becomes subject to state regulation, they may lose their bite as watchdogs. Worse still, they may be transformed into snarling Rottweilers in the service of the state. (Curran, 2002:217).

3.5 Gate-keeping and social control in the newsroom

Research on newsroom processes started in 1949 when the David Manning White asked an anonymous telegram editor to write a diary on how he selected the telegrams the way he did. White analyzed the material and named the telegram editor "Mr. Gates" in his research and his position as telegram editor as ”gatekeeper”. Later research during the 1950s, following the
footsteps of White, showed that the way editors selected news had to do with both external factors like the context in which a specific media company was active as well as internal factors like in what way the newsroom and its editorial staff was organized. (Nygren, 2008a:36). In 1955, Warren Breed published an analysis of social control within the newsroom. Breed argued that the newsroom is a highly authoritarian institution where the bosses expect to be obeyed and the employees do not want to get in trouble with the editors – resulting in the risk of news being produced to please the newsroom culture rather than the democratic needs of the citizens:

The newsman's source of rewards is located not among the readers, who are manifestly his clients, but among his colleagues and superiors. Instead of adhering to societal and professional ideals, he re-defines his values to the more pragmatic level of the newsroom group. He thereby gains not only status rewards, but also acceptance in a solidary group engaged in interesting, varied, and sometimes important work. Thus the cultural patterns of the newsroom produce results insufficient for wider democratic needs. Any important change toward a more "free and responsible press" must stem from various possible pressures on the publisher, who epitomizes the policy making and coordinating role. (Breed in Nygren, 2008a:37, translation by author).

Gaye Tuchman argued in 1978 that “news production is an institutionalized process taking place in an organized manner with the news having a strong link to legitimate sources. News do not exist “somewhere out there” in some sort of independent “reality” – news only become meaningful in an organized context. This context contains not only the producing newsroom but also what it is in sight of the news organizations’: the sources” (Tuchman in Palm, 2002:33, translation by author).

Anthropologist Herbert G. Gans published *Deciding what’s news* in 1980 after observing the editorial processes at several big television networks like CBS and NBC as well as news magazines like Time and Newsweek in the end of the 70s. He formulated an analogy about news production being similar to the production processes in a car factory:

The news rooms practice a kind of serial journalism; every story passes through several hands before it reaches the audience. Journalists’ themselves describe their organizations like production lines. A producer said: it is like screwing nuts on bolts. The factory analogy might not be completely correct; but producing a news programme is just like building a car because they are both composed by different parts. (Gans in Nygren, 2008a:40, translation by author).
Scholars have tried to formulate ways to describe the way in which newsrooms around the world produce the news that feeds the citizens. But it constantly comes down to one thing: power. Or as Monck expresses it, having in mind all those editors who faithfully want to follow the journalistic ideals and values; “editors may want professional esteem, but their proprietors want something else: power – the power to make or break governments, the power to have their opinions heard, the power to set the public affairs agenda” (Monch, 2008:177). With this in mind, it is important to stress that journalists are stuck in between a series of interests on their mission to create news. The media many times creates the way we see the world based on what kind of information it provides us with, which leads to it playing an important role in the agenda-setting process. McCombs and Shaw argued already in 1972 that “the media does not tell people what to think, but what to think about” (Gibson & Römmele, 2008:477-478).

3.6 “Free Western media” also fails

Nations around the world, even in modern democracies in Western Europe and the U.S., have all formulated laws and regulations protecting the idea of ideal journalism and the legal systems often give journalists access to official documents that can only be found behind the doors of government buildings. But is Western media really as free as it seems? Already in 1988, Herman & Chomsky criticized the sunshine illusion of Western freedom of speech and freedom of the press (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Bahaguna (2010) further argues that withholding official information from the public leads to citizens not being able to keep themselves fully informed in order to evaluate the performance of the people they have chosen to represent them. She argues that, despite the fact that democracy is established in almost all European countries, press freedom remains an illusion as “public representatives […] have a tendency to forget who has a right to access official information: the public” (Bahuguna, 2010:243).

In the United States, the failure of the watchdog role has been criticized. Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston (2007) criticized how the American media seemed to temporarily lose its watchdog role when reporting on the war in Iraq, largely reporting the reality of the war as the Bush administration had scripted while choosing to not report on other sides of the war. Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston state in their book that they want to stimulate what they call a seemingly endless debate about the responsibility of the American press. According to them,
their argumentation could apply to any critique aimed towards media in developing countries, stressing that “many critics have accused the press of aggressively – and inappropriately – setting the political agenda. Others say that the press is largely the lapdog of government” (Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston, 2007:12). Voltmer referred to the American reporting before and during the Iraq war as “a recent example of the failure of the press to act as a watchdog” (Voltmer, 2009:141).

3.7 Further criticism – what influences the media?

Both external and internal factors influence the media content - laws and regulations, technical development, advertisement, sources, the shape of the media system and the journalists themselves being only a few of them. (Shoemaker & Reese in Nygren, 2008b).

3.7.1 External factors

The media is part of society’s ideology and culture. The media directly or indirectly continues to shape, re-shape or keep alive the different values, ideologies and cultures of the society it is part of. Depending on what values, ideologies or cultures that are considered strong and true, the media content varies. The media is also influenced by the society’s laws and regulations, depending on a society’s way of organizing and following the different media laws and other regulations relevant to shaping the media. For example, the state continues to finance some sort of public service sector in some democracies. The extent to which private media exists in a country is also a result of influence from the legal system. The media content also changes depending on the technical conditions in which the media has to work. The digital revolution and the network society change the conditions. Journalistic integrity remains important to journalists; when it comes to the journalistic content, journalists themselves do not want to become influenced by neither advertisers nor the public. Finally, the journalists’ source remains a strong influence on the media content. The sources continue to use PR-consultants to create a positive image in the media. The media is crucial to both politicians and businesses in order for them to create the image they want the public to see. (Shoemaker & Reese in Nygren, 2008b:30-32)

3.7.2 Internal factors

In many democracies, journalist organizations gather and protect the rights of journalists. In Western Europe, media companies continue to enter into bigger media groups to share and protect interests (political or ethical) and ideas. The way in which each media company is
built up also influences the way it produces news. In general, media companies have also become more profit-oriented. Invisible routines, norms and rules influence the production of news. On the one hand, there is the formal way in which things are done in the newsroom, including how the media company has organized itself as well as the routines that have been around for years and bosses who know how to keep the company on the track which suits them. On the other hand, several invisible norms and routines that can be found “in the air” somewhere between the journalists themselves and the formal organization of the workplace continue to influence the everyday professional life of journalists. Finally – the journalists themselves do influence their own work. Depending on their own values and experiences, social background and education influence how they produce news and what kind of journalists they are destined to be. (Shoemaker & Reese in Nygren, 2008b:32-34)

3.7.3 Advertising in the media

John McManus discusses one of the economic factors that might influence the news content in *Market-Driven Journalism*, published in 1994. News organizations and journalists cooperate with four different external factors – the public, the stakeholders, the advertisers and the information market. According to McManus, profit requirements pushes the news content to fit the interests of company owners and stakeholders which in reality means that the newsroom only selects those sources and stories that make advertisers, among others, happy, leading to news becoming less and less informative:

> Market journalism values the attention of the wealthy and young over the poor and old because news selection must satisfy advertisers’ preferences … Market journalism … is often an integration of informational poverty… displaced and often distorted information in favor of whatever… would attract attention at the least production cost. (McManus in Palm, 2002:67).

Picard (2002) explains why advertisers and media are so constantly bound together. According to him, “advertisers are critical to the success of commercial media because they provide the primary revenue stream that keeps most of them viable. Broadcasters, trade magazine publishers, and newspaper publishers exhibit the highest level of dependence on advertising income among media firms.” (Picard, 2002:122). In other words, this means that advertisers do not provide financial resources to certain media in order to keep them alive – they do it so that they can pursue their own interests and purposes. In short, the relationship between media and advertisers symbolizes an exchange of giving and getting. (Picard, 2002).
3.8 The media in a field of social forces

McQuail (2010) argues that theoretical explanations of media and what it does has to keep a number of relationships in mind, not only relationships between different parties inside of the media itself but also the connections insider parties have to external interests. Media organizations do have important sets of relationships within itself but one should not forget that it also, on a daily basis, has contact with the outside world; this is not only the place from where it receives and finds the material that becomes the news content but also the space in which different parties with various types of interests are located, may it be advertisers, audiences, politicians or owners. Below, please see the figure “The media organization in a field of social forces” by McQuail (McQuail, 2010:280).

![Figure 1. “The media organization in a field of social forces” by McQuail (2010:280).](image_url)

Although the different actors outside of the media organization are classified as “pressures”, McQuail argues that they do not necessarily have to be holding back individuals or groups within the organization itself. He stresses that “some can be sources of liberation, for instance, by way of alternative sources of income, or government policy protection of their task. Some of the forces cancel or balance each other (such as audience support against advertiser pressure or media institutional prestige against external institutional or sources pressure). Lack of external pressure would probably indicate social marginality or insignificance”
What McQuail seems to be trying to point out is that outside pressure is not always bad but on the contrary something that media organizations needs in order to function and to know that they are still being “consumed”.

3.9 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented a number of different perspectives, theories and previous research in order to better understand the journalist profession. The media plays an important role in this space as it keeps the debate alive between the public and the state. Several scholars have discussed what the journalist profession is all about. While Voltmer & Rawnsley (2009), Louw (2005) and Curran (2002) stress that journalism is about providing a forum for debate and monitoring the actions of the government, resting on perspectives by Nygren (2008a), Kovach & Rosenstiel (2007) and Strandberg & Måanson (2009) about the idea of a journalistic ideals, integrity and values, Herman & Chomsky (1988) criticize Western traditional theory for seeing the media as independent monitors of the state and providers of forums for debate, arguing that the media is more like any other business, wanting to sell products (readers and audiences) to other businesses (advertisers). It has been argued that social control carried out in newsrooms and the process of gate keeping are important factors influencing news production and agenda-setting (Breed in Nygren, 2008a, Tuchman in Palm, 2002, Gans in Nygren, 2008a, Monch, 2008 and Gibson & Römmele, 2008). Further, advertisers, rule of law, sources and the journalists themselves influence the media, as stressed by Shoemaker & Reese in Nygren (2008b), McManus in Palm (2002). Picard (2002) argues that advertising in media is a question of giving and getting between advertisers and media and that this delicate relationship rests on the fact that we live in a market-driven economy where everything bears a price. It is important to criticize the notion of free and independent media around the globe, especially when it is stressed that both internal and external forces have influence on it and there has been argued that it has failed (Bahaguna, 2010, Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston, 2007, Voltmer, 2009). Finally, the figure by McQuail (2010) gives an overview of all factors influencing the media, arguing that influence is not always bad. The theoretical approaches presented in this chapter are in one way or another important to have in mind when analyzing the results of this study but McQuail’s notion of the media being influenced by many different social forces remains the main theoretical starting point in the analysis and discussion.
4. How to get under their skin; research method discussion

In this chapter, I present and discuss the research method chosen for the study and it is explained how the empirical data was collected. Furthermore, I discuss the problems faced during research, taking into account that the research with a sensitive topic was carried out under rather complicated circumstances. Finally, I critically and broadly discuss the chosen research method.

4.1 The qualitative interview as research method

In this study, the qualitative interview has been used as research method. This study aims at investigating the obstacles, caused by political and economical pressure and influence, that television journalists’ face in their profession as well as how their journalist profession can be carried out in the Kosovo media context. By using the qualitative interview research method, I hope to get under the skin of the journalists and to create a deeper meaning based on how each interviewee sees the reality around them. Kvale argues that the qualitative interview research method “aims to bring out nuanced descriptions of reality”. (Kvale in Ekström & Larsson, 2000:53, translation by author). Krag Jacobsen stresses that the qualitative interview as research method gives the researcher quite structured material, which helps later on in the analysis process while trying to compare the data.

The method has many advantages – it requires a lot less time than the informal interview and it is not so much dependent on the questioning skills of the interviewer. [...] The process itself always guarantees that interviews that are structured enough to be compared to each other. At last, the method allows new and spontaneous aspects to turn up during the interview itself. (Krag Jacobsen, 1993:19, translation by author).

Krag Jacobsen further stresses that the researcher has to gather enough material as “the interpretation of the material has to be sustainable and authentic. This is why, in order to draw general conclusions, a researcher normally conducts several interviews with several different interviewees in order to gather sufficient material” (Krag Jacobsen, 1993:18, translation by author). In order to get an idea of the personal views of Kosovo journalists, the qualitative interview was chosen for this study. Ekström & Larsson (2000) argue that theoretical generalizations can be made in research if a majority of interviewees are in line with the theoretical starting points in a study. Although, considering the fact that only nine interviews were carried out, I do not feel that I have too much space to generalize the results in this
study. It would be wrong to argue that the results presented in this thesis would be true for all Kosovo journalists. This study just gives one way of understanding Kosovo broadcast journalists and their situation.

4.2 Interview content

Interviews in this study were generally focused on the journalist profession as a whole and specifically put into a Kosovo context, focusing on journalists’ ability to carry out the journalist profession in Kosovo. The interview questions were focused on investigating how the journalist profession was challenged in the Kosovo context and what this in reality meant to active journalists in the field. This included the obstacles faced in their daily work caused by political and economical pressure. Interviews evolved around a few central themes; the journalist profession, political and economical influences on news production as well as the work place reality in which Kosovo journalists are active.

4.3 The interview process and transcription

All interviews for this study were carried out in person in Prishtina, the capital of Kosovo. Only a few of the interviewees agreed to meet for an interview in their offices, most of them preferring to meet in public. Noisy premises were sometimes worrying and disturbing considering the fact that all interviews were being recorded. Although the fear of not getting all of the material properly recorded was constant, sitting down close to the recording device and asking the interviewee to speak a bit louder and clearer became a solution. After noticing that interviewees in general were uncomfortable with me, as a researcher, taking on the leading role in the conversation, I decided to hold the interviews as informal as possible. Interviewees received a copy of the interview questions before-hand and could freely read them and answer them in any order they liked. The interview questions were created with the research questions in mind and on purpose designed with three general discussion themes at the beginning to start off a conversation which finally led to specific questions in the end. Because of the general discussion themes in the beginning, many interviewees had already answered the specific questions at the end. During interviews, it could happen that the interview questions were slightly modified depending on the interviewee. Each interview lasted 30 to 55 minutes, depending on how fast and accurate the interviewees could express themselves. All interviews were successfully recorded with a recording program on my laptop as well as successfully transcribed. Olsson (2008) argues that transcribing all interviews just like they are has several advantages. In the actual interview situation, the interviewer is too
busy listening to the interviewee and keeping the conversation alive that important facts and statements might slip away. By transcribing the material, the researcher gets the chance to get to know both the interviewees and the material itself better, which helps when presenting and analyzing the data later on in the writing process. (Olsson, 2008:93). The interviews are grammatically weak because of the fact that neither the translator nor the interviewees were native English speakers. Therefore, when using the empirical data in this study, I have changed quite a lot of the material to become grammatically correct but without changing the information.

4.4 The art of finding interviewees

In order to create reliability and credibility in this study, interviewees were chosen relatively broad. Although the main focus was on journalists, interviewees with positions as editors or other relevant positions have been chosen interviewees. The majority of the interviewees were working in the broadcasting sector with various types of work tasks and hierarchical rang at Kosovo’s three different national television channels. Positions include daily news journalists, investigative journalists, editors and news anchors. Nine interviewees were chosen for the study. Eight interviewees are working in the broadcast media sector in Kosovo and one interviewee is working as an investigative journalist at a newspaper. Five men and four women were interviewed with various ages and experience. All interviewees had been working as journalists more than five years at the time of the conducted interviews.

I have already revealed that the majority of people in Kosovo chose to watch television to inform themselves about current news and events. Therefore I chose to focus on television journalists as they remain those professionals producing the most consumed news stories in Kosovo. One can assume that television stations in Kosovo have different views and perspectives on the journalist profession and journalism depending on the way they are functioning. Therefore, in order to increase the credibility of this study, both private and public television stations were part of this study. I chose the interviewees based on the idea that I wanted the interviewee group as a whole to broadly represent the television journalism in Kosovo, what Ekström & Larsson call “variation sample” (Ekström & Larsson, 2000:56, translation by author), the idea being that an interviewee group broadly represents a certain phenomenon or variable.

Getting in contact with the interviewees was harder than expected. Letting aside the fact that it was very difficult to find information on how to get in contact with the television stations
and the employees (there were no official numbers or e-mail addresses on websites), I also quickly noticed how things worked in Kosovo; getting in contact with people required private acquaintances, being the only way to get people to trust you. I tried going to one of the television stations office unannounced which turned out to be a failure. No one would talk to me or even let me in uninvited. Luckily, through private acquaintances I managed to find my first interviewee, a journalist working in private television. Journalists at different television stations seemed to know each other. All interviews but two were organized successfully through private acquaintances, which were organized via e-mail or a personal visit to the relevant television station upon invitation. Ekström & Larsson (2000) call this way of getting in contact with interviewees “snow ball selection” (Ekström & Larsson, 2000:58, translation by author) which basically rests on the idea that a snow ball starts rolling. In other words, not all interviews were confirmed from the beginning but rather it is a successive process getting on contact with and agreeing on interviews with interviewees as time passes by.

In Kosovo, it turned out to be a time-consuming and complicated task, involving many coffee drinking sessions with different people that were in one way or another connected to the people I was interested in to interview. In detail I had to explain the aim of my work and where it would be published – but most importantly - who would read it. Back in Sweden, the process maybe would have been different. Media has their own websites where one can contact journalists, editors and owners by telephone or e-mail. In Kosovo, it matters a lot who you are and what you want. Trying to carry out research in the Kosovo context completely changed the “normal” way of contacting interviewees. As a researcher, I wonder if I managed to find the right interviewees for my study at all. Finding interviewees was more a question of coincidence than a carefully planned activity but there was really no other way to do it considering the circumstances.

4.5 Anonymity guarantee: “You are safe with me”

Considering the nature of the interview questions (see Annex 2), the interviewees were given the choice to remain anonymous. At the beginning of each interview, interviewees received a letter informing them about a guarantee for anonymity (see Annex 3), each of them signed by me as the researcher. If translation was needed in a particular interview situation, the translator also signed this guarantee letter. The interviewees kept this signed letter. Three out of nine interviewees agreed on an interview but without giving their permission to publish their names. Despite this, all anonymous interviewees were completely open with their names
and workplace to me as a researcher and to the translator as we were doing the interview. Some interviewees even encouraged me to publish their names big; they wanted their opinions and quotes to become published in a way that everybody could see it. Kvale argues that when it comes to anonymous interviews, “a conflict between confidentiality and important principles for research develops (Kvale in Ekström & Larsson, 2000:71, translation by author). Despite this, I assumed before conducting interviews that it would be easier getting in contact with interviewees if I promised them anonymity, yet again considering the nature of the interview questions. Kvale stresses that promising total anonymity to interviewees often leads to interviewees speaking more freely (Kvale in Ekström & Larsson, 2000:71-72). After finishing the thesis and after having discussions with the tutor and the examiner, I decided to keep all interviewees anonymous in the end. The tutor and the examiner argued that there was no point in letting some interviewees be anonymous and publish the names of others as it would become confusing to the reader. Thus, all interviewees in this study are anonymous and are quoted like “Journalist A/B/C etc claims that …”.

### 4.6 The importance of criticizing the source

I tried to give the interviewees, especially the ones who wanted to remain anonymous, a feeling that they could feel safe with me and speak freely. Still, I sometimes got the feeling that some of the interviewees did not take the interview serious because of the nature of their answers. Some of the interviewees seemed to speak generally about the journalist profession and not revealing so much about their personal experience. Instead of expressing themselves in the words of “I have experienced that…” often stories and experiences were told with beginning to talk about “Journalists here” or “Some journalists experience that…” in a more impersonal manner. Often, journalists and editors spoke about a specific situation that had happened, referring to other people, while both body language and the rich amount of details expressed suggested that it happened to nobody else but themselves. I could never even think of blaming them for lying, but in general, as a researcher, I got the feeling that sometimes people were not telling the entire truth even if they were protected by the anonymity guarantee. Looking back, there is still nothing I could have done differently. Even if I wish that I had been able to get in contact with exactly the people I wanted to interview, circumstances forced me to be happy with the people that actually agreed to meet me and make the best of it.
4.7 Using translation

All interviewees were Albanian native speakers. I had been living ten months in Kosovo at the time of the interviews, understanding quite much of the spoken and written Albanian and also being able to make myself understood on a basic level. Despite this, conducting interviews for academic purposes in a language I only knew on a basic level would have been foolish. Hiring a professional translator turned out to be both difficult and expensive. Three interviewees were not able to speak English, which is the working language in this study. Through private acquaintances I met Blerina Bojaj, a young woman working for a management development firm in Prishtina. Her English was quite strong, translating from Albanian to English during the interviews and also providing translation help during transcription of the same material. Blerina translated two interviews. As mentioned before, Blerina also therefore signed the guarantee for anonymity. The interview with journalist C, news anchor and journalist at Radio Television Kosovo (RTK) was held in Albanian and was translated by journalist H, another interviewee. The interview with journalist C was organized very sudden and Blerina did not have the opportunity to translate that day. The interview with journalist C went well but looking back, I question if it was a good idea to let an already interviewed person translate as the interview became more like a three-way discussion instead of a proper interview with an objective translation. A problem with translation is that, as a researcher, one can never be sure that the words of an interviewee are translated correctly. Even if the translator is good, small words that are not translated because they are considered “unimportant” are sometimes the really important words making a difference.

4.8 Criticism of research method

First of all, I would like to stress that the number of interviewees in this study (9) makes it difficult to make any broader theoretical generalizations. I am also aware of that I am running the risk of giving a very simple and maybe one-faced view of the Kosovo media situation, as I present and discuss around many actors (politicians, advertisers, media owners) that are involved in the professional life of Kosovo journalists and editors but I do not let them come to life by giving them a place in the thesis where they can express themselves. In short, I do not take into consideration the views of advertisers, politicians etc, but considering that every thesis has time and word limitations; unfortunately I could not investigate more deeply. Still, the aim of the thesis was to investigate, discuss and analyze the journalists’ positions and get closer to their personal experiences.
4.9 Summary

This study was carried out in Kosovo and the empirical data was gathered through interviews with nine Kosovo broadcast journalists and editors. Seven interviews were conducted in English and two interviews were carried out in Albanian with the help of a translator. I chose to do a qualitative study as the aim of the study was to get closer to the experiences of Kosovo broadcast journalists concerning political and economical pressure on the media. I consider the study to have both validity and reliability because of the fact that interviews were carried out based on previous research and sufficient data was gathered in order to make at least some broader conclusions. I am aware of the fact that I am running a risk of presenting a fairly simple picture of a situation that is far more complex.
5. The truth and nothing but the truth; results and analysis

Below the results of the empirical study are presented and analyzed with the help of the relevant theories and previous research from chapter 3. In this chapter, empirical quotes make the interviewees come to life and conclusions can be drawn about the circumstances in which Kosovo journalists are carrying out their profession.

In Kosovo, a free and independent media is supposed to be in place after years of intensive support by the international community. Still, thirteen years after the end of the Kosovo War and over four years since the declaration of independence, the reality of media in Kosovo remains unstable and corrupted. The results of the empirical study are presented below and show that all of the three fundamental rights regarding media written in the Constitution of Kosovo are disregarded. Surprisingly, even the international community seems to actively take part in keeping the media in this unstable state, when it, at the same time, reports to the outside world how it is trying to fight media corruption and instability to make Kosovo a more democratic society. Interviewees in this study claim that being a journalist in Kosovo means a lot other than freedom, rights and independence - results suggest that journalists and editors are used as instruments in a complicated system built up on corruption and instability. Kosovo’s rule of law system and institutions seem to like the notion of the free journalism that is presented in Western liberal theory and have proudly adopted laws protecting freedom of the press and freedom of speech, but as one takes a closer look on the reality of journalists in this tiny Balkan country, it all just seems to come down to a game of copy and paste that does not fit the political, economical and social reality in Kosovo.

5.1 Being a journalist in Kosovo – a complicated position

All interviewees agree that the role of the journalist is to encourage debate and inform the public in such a way that they are truthfully informed about the political, economical and social development in society, confirming the idea of journalists as presenters of truthful information and providers of a forum for debate, stressed by scholars such as Dahlgren in Palm (2002), Voltmer & Rawnsley (2009) and Kovach & Rosenstiel (2007). Only a few of them argued that being critical of those in power is another duty of the journalist, as argued by Voltmer & Rawnsley (2009). On the other hand, all interviewees claim that the reality of being a Kosovo journalist ever hardly involves feeling backed up by their editors or feeling...
free to publish anything that they might think is an important story, especially those involving scandals in politics. Results suggest that it is hard to uphold the journalistic integrity stressed by Strandberg & Månson (2009) because journalists constantly are being forced to represent published material that has been changed against their will. Further, the whole idea of journalism as a profession with all its values and principles (Nygren, 2008) is compromised when journalistic ideals are disrespected. Based on the results in this study, it can be questioned if a journalist profession even exists in Kosovo. It seems like it is more a question of which journalists are strong enough to withstand negative consequences of actually just carrying out their profession. Those who are not strong enough become victims to a vicious circle of self-censorship based on fear and insecurity, also described by Palmer (cited in de Beer, 2009).

Journalist A works at private television KTV, which claims to be independent. According to A, journalists face different problems depending on what news institution they work for. Alongside all other interviewees, A argues that most of Kosovo media are hardly independent and free news institutions. (Journalist A, 2011). Journalist A states that working for an independent institution gives journalists the opportunity to write and publish fairly freely while working for an institution that is dependent on the support of external governmental or economical sources are very much limited in what they can write and publish without facing serious problems. In reality, it means not being able to be critical in one’s news content as it might hurt or upset those who are part of the story one wants to publish. “We are in a little place with a lot of economical, political and social problems so it is hard to be a journalist also in cases where you have to be subjective. […] The role of the journalist in Kosovo is very complicated” A states. (Journalist A, 2011).

The majority of the influence on the news content that external powers try to exercise is almost always directed at editors at a certain news institution. In the long run, editors influence what their journalists write depending on relations they have with external governmental and economical sources. Palmer (cited in de Beer, 2009) stresses exactly this phenomenon when he states that despite the fact that private, independent media has emerged in Eastern Europe and that there are laws to protect the idea of journalism, government control as well as economical pressure on media still remains a problem. It is the sort of problem that journalists are involved in but fear to mention and certainly do not know how to
solve. Journalist A and the majority of interviewees in this study have direct experience with this phenomenon. “Where I used to work, they had criticized the government before but after a while, after Thaqi\(^1\) came to power in government, things […] changed. He had a lot of ads in the newspaper. In exchange, the newspaper started to write positively about the government and now, the newspaper’s opinion is more than clear”. (Journalist A, 2011). Based on what Palmer argues in 2009 and what Journalist A states in 2011, one could argue that the conditions in which Kosovo journalists work have not changed remarkably even after the emergence of private and independent media. The idea of the media as a propaganda machine that the political elite can use ruthlessly for their own interests is still a reality in Kosovo. It is also a question of advertising. Any media needs money to survive and private media lives of advertisement money. One has to remember that also in Kosovo, every published story bears a price and that the media operates in a market-driven society (read more about this in the section 5.6).

5.2 Official information – for whom?

Bahaguna (2010) further illustrates this problem when arguing that powerful, public figures seem to forget the fact that normally, citizens in a country have a right to access official information. One way for citizens to keep up to date with the most important official information is to follow political, economical and cultural events in the media. But how is this possible when the media itself is manipulated and held back from official information?

Journalist B works at a privately owned newspaper, Koha Ditore. One of the major problems that Kosovo media faces is struggling to keep the control of setting the agenda. “Kosovo is a small place with a lot of issues that journalists should be focused on and sometimes it is a kind of very, very strange, let's say, competition in Kosovo which you cannot probably find in other places, when government and media are competing about who sets the agenda” (Journalist B, 2011). The way in which the government is trying to control the agenda is by holding back official information – a crucial source of information for journalists to be able to carry out their role as watchdogs. Journalist B says that “the right to have access on information is absolutely not respected. We have the law on having access to official documents […] but we don't have the mechanism that classifies the documents” (Journalist B, 2011). According to B, this leads to the government taking total control over documents that

\(^1\) Hashim Thaqi is the prime minister of Kosovo since 2008.
should be completely open, referring to the fact that they are confidential. (Journalist B, 2011). B also stresses that officials have other excuses for not giving out official documents; blaming it on the fact that Kosovo has unstable institutions with unfinished databases and archives is just one of them, despite the fact that building functioning mechanisms for storing documents finished years ago. Journalist C, news anchor and journalist and Radio Television Kosovo (RTK) states that “information in Kosovo is blocked. It is a problem and we are discussing this with the government. You need your own channels to get to official information. It is a very serious problem.” (Journalist C, 2011).

Alongside journalist C (2011) also journalist D (2011) claims that getting to the facts is sometimes easier said than done. Journalist D works at the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) in Kosovo with the debate show Jeta në Kosovë (Life in Kosovo), produced by BIRN but broadcast on the national TV station Radio Television Kosovo (RTK). Journalist D says that the Kosovo society is small and that everyone knows each other. Even in those cases when people want to step forward and tell a story, for example on corruption, close ties to other people involved in that story prevents them from speaking as it could upset someone in their circle of friends and colleagues. If governmental employees responsible for giving out official information protect their circle of friends and colleagues instead of doing what they have to according to law, it leads to negative consequences for journalists. Based on fear of what might happen if a certain story gets published, people think that it is better to keep quiet, thus creating problems for journalists trying to dig out the truth. (Journalist D, 2011).

As mentioned in chapter 3, section 3.6 and 3.7, previous research on newsroom processes (Nygren, 2008a, Tuchman in Palm, 2002, Gans in Nygren, 2008, Monch, 2008) shows that it is important to remember that journalists have to deal with many different actors before they can create news. Every story passes through many hands before it is published for the audience to enjoy and actors all have their own interest in maybe changing a story. In the agenda-setting process, the problem of withheld official information has to be taken into account. It can be easy for journalists in some more developed parts of the world to take official information for granted as a source of information – this is not the case in Kosovo. Results suggest that receiving official information on request is a rare situation. Does this mean that it is the official institutions in Kosovo that set the majority of the agenda, since they are so reluctant to share official information? McCombs and Shaw argued that “the media
does not tell people what to think, but what to think about” (Gibson & Römmele, 2008:477-478). If journalists in Kosovo would receive official information like they should, maybe this would be true. But the reality is different. Maybe in the case of Kosovo, it is the government who tells the people what to think about, since journalists are in a position in which they can only share the small amount of information that they actually get.

5.3 Confused journalists and ‘sold’ editors are everywhere…

Journalist D, alongside a few of the interviewees, argues that the job as a journalist or editor in Kosovo involves a lot of problems because “the society came after the war and people, maybe in the beginning, did not understand the role of journalists” (Journalist D, 2011). There is a difference between knowing what the journalist profession consists of and actually understanding how it is supposed to be carried out in reality. The words of journalist D (2011) can maybe confirm that the reason why Balkan media has such trouble with the relationship between freedom and responsibility has to do with Balkan societies and how they see democracy more in terms of rights than responsibilities (Lani, 2005).

Journalist E used to work for the British news organization BBC. Since twelve years, E works as a journalist for Zeri i Amerikës (Voice of America), an international public broadcaster with headquarters in Washington D.C, USA and owned by the federal government of the United States. Journalist E’s editors are also based overseas. The Zeri i Amerikës 30-minute news programme is broadcasted on the Kosovo national television channel RTV 21 but financed by headquarters in Washington. Journalist E stresses that being financed from abroad helps tremendously to be a free and independent journalist and states that “there is a huge difference between international and national media in Kosovo. International media have no financial problems; the amount of independence of international journalists is much higher than for national journalists” (Journalist E, 2011). Journalist E claims that since the editors are in Washington D.C, they have no chance of influencing E since “they have no idea what is going on here. I am their eyes and their brain here”. (Journalist E, 2011).

Both journalists B and E believe that Kosovo journalists seem to have misunderstood their own professional role and that they seem to be missing the point of journalism sometimes. Furthermore, alongside Limani (2004) who stresses that Kosovo media has no tradition, journalist E claims that there is still a lack of professional journalism in Kosovo as “the
media, I am talking about democratic media, after the war, they are very young and the level of professionalism, is as it is, like a young baby. [...] They need to be fed… be taken care of, we have to teach them, to give them experience” (Journalist E, 2011).

Journalist F, news anchor and journalist at the public television channel Radio Television Kosovo (RTK), stresses that it is important to remember the fact that Kosovo gained independence not long ago and that one cannot compare Kosovo’s journalism with the journalism carried out in countries like Germany for example. (Journalist F, 2011). Journalist E and Journalist C both believe that Kosovo journalists have to realize that they lack professionalism before anything can improve. The lack of proper journalism education is also a problem. Journalist E states that “as far as we are ready to admit that – then we will be ready for something better, to go forward”. (Journalist E, 2011).

It is worth to mention in this section that it is important to remember that confused journalists and sold editors truly exist everywhere. It is easy to blame the obstacles faced by journalists in Kosovo on the corrupt politicians and businesses as well as the undeveloped state of the country in general, but this would be very unfair, considering the fact that Western, developed media also fails to provide truthful information to the citizens and a serious forum for debate (Bennett, Lawrence and Livingston, 2007, Voltmer, 2009). Not to mention, Western governments also hide, change or are reluctant to share official information. (Bahaguna, 2010). The Western media should not be seen as some sort of sunshine illusion of perfect journalism as argued by Herman and Chomsky (1988). Scholars have more than clearly argued that Western media occasionally also lacks professionalism which is why one should be careful when judging the young state of Kosovo.

5.4 …but good journalism does exist in Kosovo!

According to journalist E, the degree of professionalism that can be achieved depends on the actual approach journalists themselves have towards journalism. E claims that one can do good journalism if one manages to find a way past all the obstacles. E also admits that “honestly, with some of the local media it is very difficult because they depend on state money […] some of them depend on big companies, corporate, groups of interests and of course, their own interests too” (Journalist E, 2011). Despite stressing that it is very difficult for some of the local media to find a way around obstacles, journalist E states that good, hard-
working journalists and editors do exist in Kosovo. “A good journalist is always a good journalist. He is not ready to be sold.” (Journalist E, 2011). According to E, a good and professional journalist will always be able to overcome obstacles by using the journalists’ strongest weapon - words. Journalist E claims that with the right words, journalists can even overpower their own editors. E states that “editors are not smart… they are sold”, pointing out that editors who accept outside pressure have lost their ability to make decent journalistic decisions. (Journalist E, 2011).

5.5 Corrupt media owners and politicians destroy journalism…

Leaving confused journalists and sold editors aside for a moment, results indicate that media owners are to blame for many of the problems in the Kosovo media. Journalist G works as a journalist and editor at RTV 21, which claims to be independent. “The directors, the bosses of the media are so much into the politics and they have their interests in politics as well because a lot of money is coming from the government in Kosovo through advertising” (Journalist G, 2011). Journalist G says that in RTV 21, where G works, most management members are former journalists and G expresses disappointment with the bosses’ behavior. “Usually, they think they know everything and you are still learning. […] The boss […] usually says, listen, this is not the way, you know, the good journalism is. Stuff like that. […] Pretending to teach you what is proper journalism! They do not want to, let’s say, admit that they protect the government because they have their interests” (Journalist G, 2011). Journalist H, investigative journalist at “Pa Rotlla” (Answer directly), produces investigate stories for the talk show financed by private funds but broadcast on Radio Television Kosovo (RTK). Journalist H is critical of all Kosovo media in general and does not trust private television at all. According to journalist H (2011), private television is nothing but a game of revenge and money (2011):

KTV, for example, is against the government. It has to do with revenge. One of the owners, Veton Surroi, has been very unsuccessful in politics here. He has tried many times to get into parliament but has failed every time. No one has voted for him and now he is critical of the government. You can never be a good journalist if you are on a mission for revenge. Veton has been behaving like a cow from Australia; you know the procedure of iron branding? Some people act like animals. If you touch them, they scream. (Journalist H, 2011, translation by author).

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2 Iron branding is sometimes used to identify cattle on a cattle farm.
Journalist G argues that the involvement of media owners in politics leads to a difficult dilemma for journalists and editors because “obviously […] they have difficulties to choose between the professionalism and the interests of their bosses and because of the market here – it is not very good, the journalists […] usually choose to listen to their bosses, even if they don’t like it because they have to keep their work”. (Journalist G, 2011). Journalist G and Journalist D, among others, argue that neither media owners nor politicians in Kosovo seem to understand the role of journalism. If they would, they would have much more respect for the professional role of journalists. They would also have much more respect for laws trying to prevent external sources from influencing the news content. Not understanding and respecting the idea of a free and independent media leads to very negative consequences on the journalist professionalism and the society as a whole.

5.6 …but one cannot blame them!

Journalist E argues that blaming the government for wanting to influence the media or blaming journalists for wanting to become part of the political elite would be unfair (2011):

“You cannot blame the government; you cannot blame someone who wants to use you to influence the media. It is their job. It is the job of every government… to influence the media. They want to do that, but it is the matter of the tools they are using to do that. If they are well-prepared to do that in a sophisticated way, that is good for them, that is their job. But if they use the tools, the financial aspect or intimidation, that is… unacceptable. […] But honestly, there are some media in Kosovo that are prepared to accept that […] to come closer to the government, to get some money, some favors… advantages” (Journalist E, 2011).

Shoemaker & Reese in Nygren (2008b) as well as McQuail (2010) have argued around the different factors that influence the media content – everything from politicians and businesses, laws and regulations, the citizens, technical developments and advertisement to values and principles within the newsroom, the shape of the media system and the way in which a news organization is organized all contribute to how the news content is produced. One has to accept that these forces all have their interests and one has to remember that the media remains an important part in any society for exchanging information and opinions. Shoemaker & Reese state that the media is very important to both politicians and business as it can help them to create an image they want people to see (Shoemaker & Reese in Nygren, 2008b) and what can be done to stop it? One can only assume that the relationship between politicians and media owners has always been strong and that it will always be strong in Kosovo. It
maybe is just a question of how strong it is and how visible it is. At the end of the day, regardless of country, journalism is not something that is ‘there’, something that can be taken for granted or something that is free of charge. Journalism is something that is produced by employees (journalists, editors) and owners (may is be private or public). Citizens pay to read the newspaper or watch a television channel; every medium carries a price tag. Although one, in an ideal world of journalism, wishes a reality in which journalists can be watchdogs and be able to write whatever they like without having to face negative consequences, real life journalism is far from that. Benson & Neveu (2005) discuss exactly this phenomenon; what journalists think is ideal journalistic practice is very often not profitable and in this context, journalists’ running after the truth just becomes too expensive. Journalist G claims that this is frustrating as it leads to not being able to concentrate on a story more than a few days because it is written off as too expensive. G argues that this becomes a serious problem for journalistic integrity. (Journalist G, 2011). Although both the industry and scholars values honest quality journalism, we live in a capitalist world. McManus (cited in Palm, 2002) argues that it is a fact that media and politicians are in a relationship of giving and getting; they need and want each other because they benefit from each other economically. In a market-driven world, we will maybe have to accept market-driven journalism. Picard (2000) argues, with the Western media industry in mind, that newspaper and magazine publishers as well as broadcasters have the highest dependence on advertising. The situation is no other in Kosovo. Everything costs and keeping in mind that Kosovo is a poor and economically undeveloped country, one cannot expect the media industry, being so young itself, to also be completely economically independent. Picard (2000) argues that in the relationship of giving and getting, the notion of advertisers or governments giving financial help just to be nice (helping newspapers and broadcasters to ‘survive’) is an illusion – advertisers want something back, they want positive coverage and guaranteed advertisement or they leave.

Exactly the same situation is a reality in Kosovo. Journalist G argues that “in the beginning of 2000, just after the war, it was much better because the media was financed by the foreign sources like USAID. They used to, you know, write and do everything because everything was covered and controlled by the internationals here” (Journalist G, 2011). Journalist G argues that as international help organizations stopped controlling the media, so did proper

3 “Internationals” is an informal word used for international help organizations present in Kosovo and also for the individuals who are employed by these organizations.
journalism. Kosovo media owners had to figure out ways to carry their own costs and with almost all of them being linked to the government in one way or another, government or business control of media became the unenviable development. Journalist G describes it as an ongoing process in which editors and media owners find different routes that all create various obstacles in journalists’ professional life. (Journalist G, 2011). Journalist I who works as a journalist at the public national television channel RTK, has also noticed that reporting in Kosovo has become even harder since the declaration of independence based on the fact that international funding decreased, claiming that “after the Thaqi government came to power, it is impossible to be objective or to be a critical, independent journalist. Every medium has their own people that fight to protect political figures” (Journalist I, 2011). In reality, it is not so much about protecting politicians; it is about giving them positive coverage so that they provide financial support in return. The conclusion: There are few independent media in Kosovo because there are not enough financial resources. Living of someone else’s money is the only solution, even if it means breaking whatever code or norm or value that represents journalism. And even if a certain medium has financial resources enough to provide for itself, political control of media happens everywhere, even in the most developed and democratic countries. One should not forget Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston (2007), Curran (2002) and Voltmer (2009), all stressing how even the American press from time to time fails to act as a watchdog and becomes the lapdog of the government.

5.7 Journalist: an instrument without security

Taking these circumstances into account, if a journalist in Kosovo still wants to protect the values of proper journalism, there will be risks. As mentioned in the background chapter, there are several examples of journalists being fired or threatened because they were not ready to become “instruments”. Journalist E (2011) stresses that politicians and companies also in Kosovo are using journalists as instruments to earn money or fame. Journalist G argues that “bosses of the media and the government […] should be more professional – leave the job to the professionals, to trust them […] and not use them as tools to make money” (Journalist G, 2011). Journalist G further expresses frustration vis-à-vis the bosses’ based on the fact that G does not feel professionally respected at all when G is constantly being used as an instrument for money. According to G, having to ask the editor about every little sentence or story line in order to not get in the way of their private interests severely hurts the identity and integrity of the journalist, as stressed by Strandberg & Månson (2009). Kosovo journalists seem to have
only two alternatives; like it or leave. (Journalist G, 2011). Journalists can let themselves become the instruments of media owners (and maybe even learn to enjoy the benefits of it, which according to Journalist C (2011) includes expensive cars, paid vacations and invitations to fancy events) or they have to count on maybe one day having to clean out their desk and be out before the end of the day. Journalist H stresses that the majority of journalists in Kosovo are working without a contract, making the situation even more unstable as it leads to a reality in which “a boss can fire you any time he wants. And how can I be a good journalist without a contract?” (Journalist H, 2011).

Journalist G states that “there is no specific law to protect the journalist. There is a law to protect the freedom of speech but the law here is usually […] only on paper. It is not respected, mainly by the government. They do what they want usually. Someone can just, you know, attack a journalist and no one… you know, even cares about it” (Journalist G, 2011).

With Western media industries and active journalist organizations protecting the rights of journalists in mind, journalist H states that there is no such journalist organization in Kosovo. (Journalist H, 2011). There are some organizations that have been created with the aim to protect journalists but according to journalist H “it is just a bunch of old journalists from Tito’s time and the offices have been created to have a phone, a desk and nothing more” (Journalist H, 2011). The fact that there are no protection mechanisms for journalists in Kosovo leaves the journalists to their own fate in a very disturbing way. Journalist D shares a frightening example of reprisal when digging to deep into a story (2011):

I was attacked when I was doing a piece in the Peja region, I was with a driver, with our colleague and with a camera man. We were there to shoot a story because someone told us that there is a piece to write and a man came and attacked us, I have this […] That was when I said, I will stop here. I will stop here. I had finished journalism faculty, and I said, why did I go to journalism faculty? This is not a good job for me. And people, […] family, they said, come on, leave, we will help you, do not go anymore, but no, I mean, after one week, I, of course, I cannot stop, because […] I love my job” (Journalist D, 2011).

Journalist D (2011) gives the impression that the attack made D think about how far one would go for a story. Some of D’s corruption stories have been published without any

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4 Peja is the third biggest city in Kosovo.
5 Journalist D shows a bruise from the attack.
reaction neither from the people nor the Kosovo institutions. In times like those, journalist D has questioned if it has been worth risking one’s life for a story that no one appreciates. D argues that it is the reactions that matter; the story is “finished” when a story leads to a reactions and reactions lead to action. (Journalist D, 2011).

Journalist G explains that journalists in Kosovo have to make a decision about to what extent they are willing to challenge the invisible unethical rules of media owners. When coming back to the office with a story, there are three ways a story can be published. First, there is the original piece, turned in by the journalist. Rarely, stories are published in this version. Second, there is what Journalist G (2011) calls the “soft version” in which critical details are removed to not upset individuals in the story. Third, there is “No”, which means that the editor decides to not publish the story at all. This, journalists have to carry out their professions based on what is “allowed” in their specific workplace and if they for any reason would do otherwise, they are putting themselves in a position where protection is lacking as “the police and all the institutions are not professional enough to carry out an investigation if something happens to you” (Journalist G, 2011). Journalist G also states that trying to find a new job after one has been kicked out of work based on inappropriate writing or behavior is very difficult because the market is small and the bosses know and talk to each other. (Journalist G, 2011).

If one would compare what has been said in this section with the notion of ideal journalism argued by traditional theory, one will be shocked. There is a huge gap between ideal and reality when it comes to journalism in Kosovo. One can understand why journalists take what is written in the laws and regulations of Kosovo about the freedom of the media and freedom of the press as some sort of joke. If one takes a closer look on the traditional theory, stressing what journalism and the journalist profession is all about, one will not find anything like that in Kosovo. What one might find is a hardcore version of McQuail’s figure of the media organization in a field of social forces (see 3.8).

5.8 International interference in journalistic work

Journalist H is deeply disturbed by the way local and international actors get in the way of investigative journalism. According to H’s experience, the greatest pressure on Kosovo journalists comes from organizations such as ICO and EULEX as well as from foreign embassies, because they all have their share and therefore their interests in the giant system of
corruption in Kosovo. Journalist H claims that the reason why so many big international help organizations like EULEX, ICO and the NATO-led peace-keeping force KFOR are still in Kosovo after so many years is because they all want to extend their mandates. Journalist H states that some individuals working for international organizations are present in Kosovo to not only make honest money (with salaries being fairly high for employees working for such organizations mentioned above) but also to collect benefits, referring to internationals voluntarily being part of corruption. (Journalist H, 2011). Journalist H expresses disappointed with the editor-in-chief and the international organizations because H does not feel protected at all. Journalist H argues that “the internationals are my biggest disappointment. They talk twenty-four-seven about building a democratic country, how the rule of law should be created, how the society should be improved, how we should fight corruption… but in reality they are just a bunch of mafia partners” (Journalist H, 2011). Journalist H recalls a situation when one of the very critical programs on corruption was stopped due to international interference. Journalist H had revealed a case of corruption when international mafia, together with the local mafia, had stolen 15 million euro from the Post Telekom Kosovo, PTK over a period of time. Journalist H claims that “the first episode was broadcasted because my editor-in-chief did not have the time to see it prior to broadcast. As I was preparing the second episode, the chief of the ICO calls my boss, they spoke indirectly and they banned the episode” (Journalist H, 2011). This was a “peaceful” way of stopping the episodes. There are more aggressive means out there. Journalist H recalls a break-in at the office a few years ago:

“Because of a revelation concerning the international and local mafia, burglars came into our office and stole all the cameras, all the editing equipment. They burned our studio and our house. No embassy reacted. No journalist organization reacted. The police know who did it. […] Five days ago we had a new break-in. They did not take anything but a candid camera and were looking for our phone tapping equipment. […] I do not want money. The only thing my colleagues and I need in this country is technical support” (Journalist H, 2011).

Going to court after every encounter with editors, politicians or burglars is pointless because “there is no one to protect you. Mechanisms that exist in Kosovo are used against journalists, not to their benefit. How am I supposed to be able to reveal corruption in Kosovo if even the judges and courts are corrupt and use their mechanisms against you?” (Journalist H, 2011).
5.9 So who is to blame?

Despite the fact that journalists and editors in this study have expressed criticism of media owners, corrupted politicians, greedy internationals or anyone else that might want to stand in their way; they are surprisingly enough also fairly critical of their own professional behavior. Journalist C (2011), journalist E (2011) and journalist H (2011), among others, argue that Kosovo journalists can only blame themselves for the unfortunate situation of Kosovo media. “As long as journalists do not understand their own role in our society, we will have the problems we face today. We have ourselves to blame for accepting the pressure that is put on us” (Journalist C, 2011). C argues that it is possible to carry out the journalist profession in Kosovo, but only if journalists themselves are brave enough and willing enough to protect their professional standards and fight against obstacles that hinder them professionally. Journalist C states that there is a lack of courage among Kosovo journalists and stresses that “it is all about courage. When you have a paper in your hand, all the evidence for a story… you just got to do it, but most of us do not dare” (Journalist C, 2011).

Journalist H (2011) goes back to the old days of Eastern European media and argues that the problem of instability in Kosovo media has its roots in the Balkan wars during the 1990s. H states that Balkan journalists themselves are to blame for the media problems in the region and in Kosovo but also for the violence and wars, confirming a lot of what Palmer in de Beer (2009) explained in chapter 2, section 2.1.

“Journalists are just as guilty as Slobodan Milosevic when it comes to the Yugoslavia wars during the 1990’s. Instead of being critical of the regime and courts that had punished people because on their opinions, their political views, journalists became part of the regime. They triggered hatred, they triggered violence. Because of these journalists, ethnical groups started hating each other. They have played a very negative role and the situation today is not much better than it used to be” (Journalist H, 2011).

According to journalist H, what characterizes the problems in Kosovo today is an extension of the triggering of violence and hatred back in the 1990s; Kosovo journalism is still a game of triggering, manipulating and being somebody’s lapdog. H claims that “journalists themselves have chosen to become influenced by politicians” (Journalist H, 2011).
5.10 Conclusion: the journalist profession does not exist

The majority of interviewees are willing to go as far as saying that the journalist profession does not exist in Kosovo. Journalist I stresses that even the basic questions of who, where, what and when that all journalists build their stories around are compromised with. In cases where a certain story might be considered harmful to publish as it is, a way of still running the story is to simply change the basic questions evolving around the story. (Journalist I, 2011). Journalist I shares an example of when an editor on purpose chose to both censor important background information in an article and change the relationships between the actors involved in the story. The story had evolved around the fact that a non-governmental women’s organization in Kosovo had criticized the Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi for not officially reacting against the arrest of former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) members carried out by the European Union Rule of Law Mission present in Kosovo (EULEX). As the journalist came to the editor with the story, the editor at the media outlet in question, being a supporter of Hashim Thaçi, changed the story to evolve around that the women’s organization were being critical towards EULEX recent actions in Kosovo and not even mentioning Hashim Thaçi. Journalist I argues that interference like this happens in regular reporting so one can only imagine what happens if journalists try to investigate something more deeply. Journalist I further states that “it is known that the Thaçi government can influence the editorial policy of RTK. This happens because […] RTK is financed by the government and automatically, it is easier for the government to have influence” (Journalist I, 2011).

Journalists in Kosovo face a reality in which they are told and promised according to the law that they can write and report on anything of value if they think it is important, but when the content is about to get published, something always gets in the way. Kovach and Rosenstiel’s (2011) idea that journalists should have permission to think on their own becomes completely destroyed in this context. Or as Journalist I expresses it, “when you know you cannot publish it, why try in vain?” (Journalist I, 2011), stating that the journalist profession is destroyed and that proper journalism does not exist in Kosovo at all. Journalist I stresses the absolute frustration and feeling of shame when an important story becomes completely changed by editors prior to broadcasting. Journalist I’s name will still be presented in the byline as the responsible journalist for the specific story. The people who were involved in the story notice how it has been changed and raise their eyebrows towards I’s work, despite the fact that journalist I had nothing to do with the changes. When this happens, journalist I states that “I
feel like a peace of shit”. While interviewing journalist I, it becomes clear that I is very frustrated with the situation. Both journalist I and journalist G express negative opinions about their employers and are angry with them for not valuing their decent journalistic work. It is interesting to see the clear link between the journalists’ opinions and the previous research by Beam (2006) arguing that media workers tend to be more satisfied with their work place when the employer values honest and decent journalism. But getting the editor or media owners to understand this link is easier said than done. Ultimately, journalist I (2011) explains the survival method of journalists in Kosovo when situations like this come across them in their professional life:

> Usually in storms, if you want to survive you have to crouch if you do not want the storm to catch you, because if you get up you will be destroyed. You will be destroyed in this period when the journalist is attacked but if you want to survive, you have to crouch until there comes a time when you can work. […] You protect your principles, your work, you do not want to compromise. […] You cannot develop yourself as a journalist. […] You have to be quiet, follow local events; you do not have opportunity to make noise until this time passes. When the time passes, you can do your mission. (Journalist I, 2011).

The question is how journalists are supposed to carry out their profession when almost all of their journalistic ideals are put aside as a result of a complete media corruption chaos. Several scholars (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, Voltmer & Rawnsley, 2009, Strandberg & Månson, 2009, Dahlgren in Palm, 2002, Delane in Louw, 2005, Curran, 2002, Breed in Nygren, 2008, Tuchman in Palm, 2002, Gans in Nygren, 2008, Monch, 2008) have stressed the important relationship between the journalists and the citizens and the relationship between the journalists and their editors. One can assume that every journalist holds Nygren’s (2008) three stages of the journalist profession dearly. In Kosovo, they are all destroyed because of influence by political and economical actors. When external and internal forces burst into the newsroom, may it be in person or via telephone or e-mail, demanding changes in the news content, Nygren’s first and second stage of the journalism profession (newsroom organization, production of news content, visible and invisible journalistic norms and values, newsroom culture) is heavily disturbed and as soon as journalists and editors no longer are in control of the news content, they wonder if their work is important at all and feel betrayed, forgotten and disrespected. Thus, the third stage in Nygren’s definition (values and ideals that gives meaning to the job and personal development) also becomes pointless and empty. On the one hand one can assume that journalists are powerless in their profession because they are “just
the journalists” and editors are just as powerless because they are “just the editors”, both of them being controlled by powerful media owners or government officials. On the other hand, it has been argued that journalistic integrity is crucial for reliability and that it is vital for journalists to stand against pressure no matter what. There is a simple logical link between acting professionally and earning the trust of citizens, which leads to increased listening and watching. (Strandberg & Månson, 2009). Despite this, it is interesting to see how media owners and government officials never completely let go of their iron first and keep on swiping around the media as their money-making machines and propaganda machines, although everybody could benefit from doing the opposite and thus create a stable, honest and independent media. And when all comes down to it, can we even talk about Kosovo journalists being able to act watchdogs? Does the idea of watchdog journalism presented by Louw (2005) even exist in Kosovo? Can it exist considering the circumstances? Results suggest something completely different, namely a culture in which critical journalism is rewarded with serious negative reprisal by those who are criticized. When looking at journalism with the traditional theories as starting point, it can be argued that it is easy to think of journalism that is something isolated in the sense that journalists find news outside the newsroom and produce them inside the newsroom without being disturbed by anything or anyone. Traditional theory argues what ideal journalism is, what journalists should do and somehow takes for granted that journalism function according to the ideal. Turning to critical theory, it is far from that simple. Several scholars critical of traditional theory argue that ideal journalism is an illusion but instead, journalism is a product shaped by external and internal actors who have different interests. Further, Western journalism should not be viewed as an ideal. McQuail (2010) describes the media organization as an active player in a field of social forces (see 3.8). One has to accept that media organizations are active players in a system of giving and getting, of using and being used. The journalists and editors, management and technical employees are all working inside the four walls of the newsroom but this does not mean that they are working isolated. Outside the newsroom, different groups of interests are all trying to set up a connection with the inside to be able to steer what is produced. Although McQuail call these different groups of interests “pressures”, he argues that they are not all bad for the media itself but instead something that any media organizations needs in order to function. McQuail probably had Western media in mind when creating his figure but the notion of the media organizations as a player in a field of social forces is also true for Kosovo. Results suggest that the different relationships developed
between the different actors are even more visible in Kosovo. Although it is not spoken out loud about it, it is so very clear that these relationships exist. It is enough to glance at the reporting in the different television channels or talk to different journalists to get an idea of who supporting who. But something is missing in the figure by McQuail. In Kosovo, results suggest that there is a huge international influence on the news content. McQuail has not taken this aspect into consideration in his figure. In the case of Kosovo, journalists not only have to be aware of pressure from inside their own work place (editors, media owners and other management) as well as from outside pressure (laws and regulations, political pressure, economic pressure, advertisers, social groups) – it seems like international actors also try to have a saying in the business of Kosovo journalists.

5.11 Summary

The rights concerning freedom of the media, guaranteed in the Kosovo constitution, are violated every day in Kosovo. Journalists and editors seem to suffer the most, stuck between their own professional standards and the demands of both internal and external forces trying to influence the news production. Journalists and editors are used as instruments in a complicated system build on corruption, instability and disrespect for the journalist profession. Surprisingly, results suggest that although the professional ideals and standards of journalists and editors are disrespected on a regular basis, the unfortunate situation of Kosovo media can also be blamed on the journalists and editors themselves as they continue to accept the pressure carried out by media owners, politicians and advertisers. Results suggest that only the brave and consistent journalists who seriously protect their professional standards are strong enough so stand against influence from different directions. One interviewee even blames the international organizations present in Kosovo of being part of corruption and being one of the greatest threats against local Kosovo journalism. At the same time, several interviewees have expressed very positive opinions towards international presence and their monitoring of Kosovo media, especially around the time of the end of the war when the United States provided both technical and financial help as well as actual mentoring and monitoring. The interviewee working for foreign media controlled by the United States expresses happiness about this, arguing that working for foreign media means not becoming too much influenced by local pressures. But not everyone is working for foreign media and the general situation seems to have changed since the time of the war when Kosovo media enjoyed support from especially the United States. Today, results suggest that there is no
point in going to court to settle a case of disrespect against the notion of free media as the courts themselves are not doing anything due to a weak and corrupt rule of law system. Still, Alas, the majority of Kosovo journalists are working under constant fear of becoming threatened by people they have upset with their stories and losing their jobs. Therefore, a culture of self-censorship, in which the journalist publishes what is politically correct instead of critical in order to decrease the risk of becoming punished, has become the solution.
6. Final discussion

In this chapter, the final discussion takes place. I try to answer the research questions and present the conclusions drawn in the study.

Thirteen years after the end of the Kosovo war and more than four years after the declaration of independence, Kosovo journalists still have to deal with a number of serious obstacles when carrying out their profession. Local politicians, editors, media owners, members of the international community (who, ironically, among others, are there to help Kosovo build democratic and transparent media) and surprisingly, even the journalists themselves, seem not to understand and certainly not to respect the basic principles and values of journalism which seriously challenges and damages the journalistic profession in Kosovo. Journalism is not something one can take for granted in the year of 2012. And it is certainly not something that is free, not in Western civilization and certainly not in Kosovo where journalists and editors are controlled by those who feed them economically, may it be via private or public funding. Political and economical pressure on media is a fact and it creates very serious problems for Kosovo journalists in terms of respect for the journalist profession. All media in Kosovo claims to be independent but when listening to the people who fight for their right to produce news, the journalists and editors, a different story is told, involving media corruption, bad working conditions and completely forgotten journalistic ideals. Another very interesting finding is the amount of international influence on Kosovo media – while some interviewees have praised the support of especially the United States in helping to build a stable and functioning media, other interviewees are very critical to the international presence in Kosovo, arguing that they are just as corrupted as any local politician.

Please find the most important conclusions drawn of this study below:

1. Journalists and editors have to be aware of who is financially supporting their media or who is close to the media owners and then avoid publishing anything that might be upsetting to them. If the government is providing financial support by advertising in the media, there is a great risk of journalists losing their watchdog role as they are not supposed to publish anything negative about the hand that feeds them.
Private and political interests intrude on the journalist profession in a system built on the idea that business connections, political power and family ties are more important than professional standards. Laws and regulations are adopted to protect the freedom of speech and the freedom of the press but in reality nothing more than beautiful words on pieces of paper is the result (Palmer in de Beer, 2009, Journalist G, 2011, Journalist H, 2011 among others). The most common way for actors to influence news content is to threat to pull back advertising if something gets published that is not pleasing to a certain politician or businessman.

Obstacles that journalists are facing on a daily basis are a result of a complete hierarchy always giving up their principles because of pressure and influence from above. Politicians and businessmen are at the top of the hierarchy because they have the money. It is as simple as that. On a daily basis, journalists receive comments from their editors what they can publish and not. It happens frequently that a story gets changed many times before it is ‘politically correct’ to publish without upsetting anyone. It also happens that the basic “who, what, where and when”-questions are completely changed which leaves the journalist with representing a story that he or she did not write from the beginning. Just like journalists, editors are stuck between political and economical pressure and their wishes to follow journalistic ideals and at any price report on the truth. Sadly, media owners, who are influenced by politicians and business men, control what the editors are letting through to publish. Media owners need money to ensure the survival of the media.

Is it possible for journalists in Kosovo play a watchdog role in Kosovo considering these circumstances? A quick answer would be “No”. Journalists have to be prepared that their stories are changed completely or not published in the original version due to pressure from interest groups. Despite the changes, journalists still have to be prepared to have their names in the byline and represent something they did not write. Some journalists do not mind this and there is a price to pay for those who do. If a journalist, against all odds, manages to publish an original story that might upset any important supporter or financial source, they run the risk of being threatened or thrown out of work. There is no journalist organization protecting the rights of journalists or guaranteeing their security. Interviewees in this study claim that they do not feel safe or respected in their profession. They all try to represent and protect the basic principles of journalism and argue that it is important for Kosovo journalists to take their watchdog role seriously. Looking more deeply into the problem, the
circumstances of political and economical influence on journalistic work leads to the majority of journalists ending up in a position in which they feel unsafe and insecure, turning to self-censorship as a solution to protect themselves from reprisal.

2. Journalists cannot expect a warm greeting and a professional behavior when asking for official documents. Authorities will try to hold back information which can only be received if the journalists have private contacts.

If journalists have troubles getting official information on request, who really sets the agenda in Kosovo? Is it the authorities who are holding back official information to avoid giving the public an idea of what is going on in government buildings or is it the editors and media owners who decide to not publish an original story because the information is upsetting to anyone that is an important financial supporter? Or is it the journalists themselves who, despite the fact that they might have all the facts for an important, scandalous story at hand, choose to not publish it because they are afraid of losing their job?

3. Journalists are critical of politicians, businessmen and media owners. But they are also critical of themselves. They are critical and disappointed because of the simple fact that their profession is not understood and not respected. Still, interviewees stress that it does not come as any surprise to them that internal and external factors and actors want to influence their work.

At a first glance, the empirical results suggest that the reason why Kosovo media is so unstable is because neither journalists and editors nor media owners, nor private business owners nor politicians completely understand the journalist profession. This may have to do with the fact that Kosovo’s journalistic education is very young and weak. The media industry is also very young, most of the print- and broadcast media being established just shortly after the war. On the other hand, when looking at the problems that journalists and editors face on a daily basis in their journalist profession, empirical results suggest that people who are in a position to influence journalists and editors basically do this because they do not have enough respect for the profession. They also do not seem to think that the link between trust and consumption (the theory of strong citizen trust in media leading to high media consumption) is more important than personal interests.
It can be concluded that a lack of respect for the journalist profession is a key factor behind the obstacles that Kosovo journalists and editors face every day. The empirical results suggest that even Kosovo journalists themselves are a problem in this equation, not having enough respect for their own profession. Journalists and editors all over the world are trying to stay faithful to their professional standards while politicians and businesses are trying to get their piece of the cake. There is nothing surprising with politicians and businesses trying to influence the media, on the contrary, journalists and editors and external parties like politicians and business men are in need of each other, both for economic purposes and news content (see McQuail’s figure in chapter 3, section 3.8). But it is tempting to steer away from professional standards when Kosovo itself is a very poor country to begin with. “Forgetting” the professional ideal for a moment to make a personal gain is a common situation in Kosovo and it hurts the journalist profession severely. Results suggest that a culture of accepting bribes is present. Interviewees argue that some journalists do accept bribes and put their professional standards aside for a specific story or report. Please note that results do not in any way suggest that all media workers in Kosovo are part of existing corruption or enjoy the benefits of bribes, but instead try to stress the fact that corruption exists and that it is seen as something disturbing but inevitable.

4. The results surprisingly suggest that there is an interesting relationship between Kosovo journalists and the international presence in Kosovo. While some journalists are supportive of the internationals and even work for them, others are very negative. What does this mean? And why are some nations more involved in Kosovo than others, for example the United States?

Some interviewees are supportive of the international presence and praise some of their actions since the war (for example, the US-funded help organization USAID financed the start-up of television channels RTV 21 and KTV). One interviewee even works for US-financed media, based in Kosovo, and thinks that it is fantastic to not be influenced by local politicians. Another interviewee is very negative of the general international presence and sees it as one of the greatest threats against Kosovo stability. What does this say about international presence, especially the presence of the United States in Kosovo? On the one hand, Journalist H, who is negative to the international presence, is critical because H feels that they have too much influence on the journalistic work. On the other hand, journalist E,
who works for a media financed by international funds, claims that it is good to work for an organization that does not have any influence on the journalistic work. How does this influence the news content? Is the reporting by journalist E maybe even pro-American? What does the United States government get out of it? And why is the biggest U.S. foreign military base since the Vietnam War located in Kosovo, near to oil pipelines sponsored by the U.S.? (World Socialist Website, 2012). Although it is not presented in the theory chapter, during my time in Kosovo I noticed the great amount of United States presence in Kosovo and it is interesting to discuss the influence of United States in Kosovo in general based on the fact that some results in this thesis speak against each other. For example, when choosing a new president in Kosovo during spring 2011, private television caught the current U.S. ambassador to Kosovo, Christopher Dell, having private SMS conversations with the assistant of the local politician Behgjet Pacolli, whom he thought would be suitable for the job, advising the assistant on how to precede during the voting process in the Assembly Hall to ensure victory. Private media reported that it had been known that the U.S. Ambassador was supporting that specific person. It became a big scandal and the U.S. ambassador blamed the Kosovo media of violating his privacy. Is it acceptable for a foreign ambassador to get mixed up with local politics? In the case of Kosovo, this is reality. (Reporters without Borders, 2012). Members of the European Parliament criticized Dell for his behavior but higher EU officials did not want to comment. (EU Observer, 2012). Shortly after, Pacolli had to step down when the election was considered unconstitutional. Pacolli claims that when the U.S. ambassador presented the name of the new president, Atifete Jahjaga, he uttered the words “you have to accept this because you will lose a great friend and the U.S. agenda for Kosovo” to Pacolli. It is worth to mention that Jahjaga had had good relations with the U.S Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and that she had been educated at the FBI Academy in the United States. (B 92, 2012). What does all this say about U.S. influence in Kosovo? And what does it mean for Kosovo journalism when so much of Kosovo politics are influenced by the U.S.?

Despite all the obstacles that journalists and editors are facing, the problems in Kosovo should also be discussed from another perspective. Several scholars have argued that influence on the media is something completely normal in the sense that it pays off for both parties (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, McManus in Palm, 2002, Picard, 2002). Influence is needed although it gets in the way of ‘perfect’ journalism. Interviewees in this study have confirmed that although their work is constantly being influenced, it would be strange and unfair to blame the people
who are trying to influence them. It is the job of politicians and advertisers to reach audiences and one way of doing that is through the media (see McManus in Palm, 2002 and Picard, 2002). Blaming media owners and politicians for destroying the idea of proper journalism can be unfair because of the fact that the media is very much dependent on financial support and politics, may it be independent or dependent media. Journalism is not something that floats around in the air but something that is created with money and news content. One cannot ignore the fact that modern journalism is part of a market-driven society in which everything has a price tag. Liberal theory has argued that the media should be completely free of influence, that it should be a forum for debate and that it should act as a watchdog. The notion of perfect journalism in a perfect world is very attractive but it does not function in real life. Scholars that have criticized liberal theory have argued that the media cannot ignore political and economical influence. This is the reality. But it does not mean that media owners, politicians and business men can behave any way they like. Interviewees in this study stress that internal and external pressure on media is fine but that it is the unethical way in which they try to carry out influence destroys the journalist profession. Interviewees claim that the methods they are using (threats, blackmailing etc) is heavily inappropriate behavior and absolutely unacceptable. For journalists and editors, it is not so much about the politicians wanting to influence the news content - that is normal. It is also not so much about having to change a few things in a story to please an advertiser – it is done by the media all over the globe. At the end of the day, it is important for journalists and editors that their profession is understood and respected and that what they do is considered important. Corrupt employers, unfair working conditions and forgotten journalistic ideals does not take any society to a more democratic, transparent and stable level and journalists and editors are upset with their situation because they feel disrespected.

I want to end this final discussion with a comment about the future. Palmer argued that “it remains to be seen, as many of these nations6 step into the world stage as they seek membership or have joined the European Union, whether media and freedom of expression reforms, now part of their constitutions but unevenly supported by their governments, will one day be actual reality” (Palmer in de Beer, 2009:216). Only the future can tell if Kosovo journalists and editors will ever be able to enjoy the benefits of free media and freedom of expression that has been guaranteed in their constitution.

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6 The nations in Eastern Europe and Eurasia.
Finally, due to word and time limitations, this study has only focused on the perspectives of journalists and editors and the obstacles they face while carrying out their profession under internal and external political and economical pressure. For future research, it would be interesting to investigate the other side; digging into the Kosovo industry of advertising, political elites and media owners to further get an idea of how this part of the society sees its relationship with freedom of the press, freedom of speech and journalism. It could give a broader view of the problems that the Kosovo media faces. Maybe in a more comprehensive study, one could be able to find some solutions to the current problems. Further, it could be interesting to deeper investigate the actual international influence on Kosovo media and how this changes the media content. It would also be interesting, in the field of maybe political science, to dig deeper into the meaning of U.S. influence on Kosovo politics.
7. References

7.1 Printed sources


Bennett, Lance, Lawrence, Regina G and Livingston, Steven (2007). *When the press fails: political power and the news media from Iraq to Katrina*. University of Chicago, Chicago, USA.


## 7.2 Electronic sources


7.3 Interviews


8. Annex 1 - List of interviewees

The following individuals were interviewed for this study.

“Journalist A”. Journalist at private television Koha Television (KTV).

“Journalist B”. Journalist at Kosovo daily newspaper “Koha Ditore”.

“Journalist C”. News anchor and journalist at Radio Television Kosovo (RTK).

“Journalist D”. Journalist working for the TV show "Jeta në Kosovë” (Life in Kosovo) produced by Balkan Investigate Reporting Network (BIRN) and broadcast on national television channel Radio Television Kosovo (RTK).

“Journalist E”. Journalist at “Zeri i Amerikës” (Voice of America), owned by the federal government of the United States, editors based at headquarters in Washington D.C. The local version of Voice of America broadcasts on Kosovo national television channel Radio Television 21 (RTV 21).

“Journalist F”. News anchor and journalist at Radio Television Kosovo (RTK).


“Journalist H”. Investigative journalist at “Pa Rotlla” (Answer directly), financed by private funds and broadcast on Radio Television Kosovo (RTK).

“Journalist I”. Journalist at private television Radio Television Kosovo (RTK).

The following interview guide was given to interviewees before conducted interviews.

The journalistic role: What does the journalistic profession include, according to you? How can the journalistic profession in Kosovo be carried out? Is it possible to be an informing, critical independent journalist?

Criticism towards political influence on Kosovo media: Scholars argue that free media creates a free society. The international community has criticized the influence that political groups and different businesses or business people seem to have on Kosovo media. Is this fair criticism? How can this influence be seen in media, according to you?

Working as a journalist: What is it like working as a journalist in Kosovo? Do you feel respected professionally? Do you feel limited or held back in your profession?

What do you feel is your most important task as a journalist?

How would you describe your role as a journalist – are you a “what, where, who, when” - reporter or of more “critical nature”, a critical investigator?

Do you sometimes feel like you would like to be more critical in your job? Explain what makes you not go any further in your investigation?

Describe a situation from your job as a journalist when you were disappointed with your supposed role as a journalist and why. What holds you back?

What would you change in your role as a journalist today if you could and why?

Have you ever experienced difficulties in the process of searching for the facts, for example not getting access to official information?
10. Annex 3 - “Guarantee for your anonymity”

The “Guarantee for your anonymity” was given to all interviewees to ensure them that their anonymous answers would not be published in this thesis. Please note that some of the information has changed. Also, the name of the tutor has changed since handing out the anonymity guarantee. Ernesto Abalo was the responsible tutor during 2011 during the time of research in Kosovo. When I started writing the actual results and analysis in 2012, Göran Palm was the responsible tutor.

I, Anna Wiman, Swedish media and communications student at Linnaeus University in Sweden, currently work on my bachelor thesis on the media landscape in Kosovo. I hereby guarantee that answers on interview questions given to me in an interview situation that I might use in my bachelor thesis will NOT be traceable to a specific person. Questions and answers will be of general nature without implying who is employer or boss. This means that what you tell me is kept completely anonymous. What is important in my bachelor thesis is the type of answers I get – the name of the interviewee or his/her workplace are not relevant and will not be published. The interviewee will be coded as A, B, C, D, E or similar. Keeping your answers anonymous is not only of importance to you but also to me – I am expected to act professional in my future role as journalist / media employee. In Sweden, not respecting the rules of anonymity in research work leads to not passing the bachelor thesis and having difficulties finding a job in the media field. That means – if I break this guarantee, I would severely hurt myself and my professional career. Therefore, I hope, with the guarantee that I will keep your answers strictly anonymous, you will be able to speak freely with me about both positive and negative experiences in your job as a Kosovo journalist.

My tutor is Ernesto Abalo. His responsibility is to provide me with support and mentoring for my bachelor thesis. His e-mail address is ernesto.abalo@oru.se and his telephone is +46 19 30 34 95.

Thank you. Sincerely,

__________________________________________________
Anna Wiman