

# ALBANIAN JOURNALISTS WITHIN THE COMMUNIST STATE DIRECTIVES

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## Abstract

Albanian communist state during the years 1944-1990, as all totalitarian states, regarded the media and especially the press, as a powerful weapon of propaganda for its transmission. And in this sense, seems to Albanian journalists (those years ago) were privileged people, by the system as accompanying interpretive or broker and knockdown of speeches and directives of the party-state, but in fact, it was not always so. Even journalists were subject to the directives of the leadership, like all other strata of Albanian society. These guidelines to change depending on changes in the factors that held power system Albanian dictatorship for nearly half a century. Although it is classified as dictatorial system throughout its existence, the social, political, economic and cultural, which accounted for journalists in the years of his life, has been different. During study treatment of this topic, I will try to present the image of Albanian journalist of the time within society, positioned at predetermined status of the political line of the party-state. The methodology to be used in the preparation of material will be qualitative analysis of archival documents and publications of the Party of Labor of Albania and the dictator Enver Hoxha, as well as news articles relating to them. This paper is part of my doctoral studies; to support the theory would be consistent with the literature that is used for the realization of my dissertation in the field of sociology of Albanian journalism.

## Entry

Since the first months of the Albanian communist government, notice of all public and openly expressed her need to spread the press, through him his propaganda, in as much as possible corners of the country, and help promote the opening of periodicals for any form of social organization (mainly as bodies of mass organizations), which means not only multiplication of the number of readers but also the writers of these media. Hamit Boriçi researcher said that: "*At that time one of the key problems was the provision of staff to the press, his training and qualification, - recalling the fact that journalists of after liberation period, were **followers of illegal press of World War II, "cadres come from partisan ranks, young writers, who embraced ideas of Party ... some of which were written or rarely, some only a part of the school compositions had no taken the pen to do journalism"***"<sup>1</sup>.

Formation of media workers continued later with the opening of a **parallel school of Party**, of which will get "good" followers of leadership speech. And "leader" did not hesitate to turn more attention from the press, after taking power. The first official speech carefully published in a summary of APL, Enver Hoxha holds second in the Youth Congress, April 16, 1945, in

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<sup>1</sup> Boriçi, Hamit (1986), *Editorial and journalistic work, theory and practice of popular press*, University of Tirana "Enver Hoxha", Faculty of Political Science and Law, Tirana. p 9

which he said: "... *In the field of culture and propaganda, at a very short time, our government has done a great job. A wide array of newspapers covered the country. No prefecture today without typography and newspaper. **Front, youth, pioneers, wife antifascist, military, all have their newspapers** ... Radio works best*"<sup>2</sup>. This network was created until 1948 (when it resumes publication the newspaper "Voice of the People" ("Zëri i Popullit")), the most important edition was the daily "Union" ("Bashkimi"), that *in the beginning was a political newsroom, consisting of officials of the Democratic Front (important articles of this newsletter, as well as the "Voice of the people", later, were worked by members of the organizations Party*<sup>3</sup>), ..., - writes Boriçi stressing that - *that stood difficulty operating sectors editorial that **people should be prepared not only by professional, but also ideologically set**...* For this, **quickly the Party sent to the editor cadres young. In the second half of 1945 settled in the "Union" editor began organizing of various sectors of life**<sup>4</sup>. Communist state did not waste time at all in his efforts to strengthen propaganda and transmission line structures ideological state. Just five years after the war, the decision of the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania, dated April 22, 1949, ascertained that **the press was already oriented towards political terms**, as in terms of internal problems, and international ones, while constantly sought perfection of agitation and propaganda content of newspapers and magazines and frequent contacts with the masses. Press was already labeled by the leader as **"collective organizer of the masses"**<sup>5</sup>, and journalists to drop heavy burden to get organized so that **masses be represented as much in press**. In view of this idea was decided to organize **a network of correspondent volunteer workers and peasants**, the idea of creation which is already **far from the requirements for professional journalists**, as seen below:

*"The network of volunteer correspondents extend to any production center work in a cooperative, administration, school, neighborhood, village and military base. Correspondent volunteers are organized in groups for each polling district, locality, village and ward, according to their number. Organizing volunteer network of correspondents becomes a volunteer basis and everyone has the right freely to choose for which he wants to be a correspondent."*<sup>6</sup>

### **Privileges of volunteer workers and peasant correspondents.**

Under the leadership of the party-state authorities, correspondents (people who claim there was no choice except to make "work") who shall: a) *to inform the press about the life, activities and problems of the masses workers and military units, pointing out the shortcomings and successes in work*, and b) *to help spread wide as newspaper and magazine*), tolerated only to the extent that **their writings were immune from censorship organizations and Party or mass organizations**. *"Every correspondent relates directly to the appropriate authority and editorial newsroom each direct job correspondents by writing each particular and gathering in groups occasionally through its messengers."*<sup>7</sup> Libra bent by gravity while reporters and editors of the press center<sup>8</sup>, who, although trying to

<sup>2</sup> "Party of Labor of Albania to the press" publishing house "November 8", Tirana, 1980, p. 71

<sup>3</sup> The same, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup> "The history of "Unit" newspaper", p. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> "ALP to the press", Tiranë. 1981, p. 123

<sup>6</sup> The same.

<sup>7</sup> "Party of Labor of Albania to the press" publishing house "November 8", Tirana, 1980, p. 98.

<sup>8</sup> In a classification that makes reporters that period the scholar Hamit Boriçi in his book *The editorial and journalistic work* (1986), note that: journalists are all employees of the broadcaster press, dealing with

better meet the professional education requirements, and year after year was filled with highly educated staff, primarily related to the branch of the after the profiling in journalism, covering not only the stage, but also elaborate writings mostly amateur correspondents, including instructions to the occasional line of the Party. As noted scholar Colin Sparks: "*In totalitarian societies, all subject groups of elite come under political elite*"<sup>9</sup>. Even elite reporters or editors Albanians had the same fate. It should meet all the requirements of the political elite, and now with a new task: training occasional correspondents in the area where they lived, as occasionally trained him by agitators Agitprop entities

*"From the respective newsrooms of newspapers carried an instructive political work with volunteer correspondents, so that they perform better role."*<sup>10</sup>

### **But correspondents had their share of the load.**

Should not forget **the task of popularizing the party press**, the military press, state press and mass organizations press. Correspondents, being the nearest propagation of the word of the party to the masses, should help **to organize large-scale collective readings**, along with political agitators ... "*The paper should have a plan of this nature so that through articles to put in people's minds, the cadres of the Party, the state and the masses of the people, scientific ideas, scientific discipline* (so communist ideology, was view as scientific by the leader - ed A. R)"<sup>11</sup>. **Watchful eye**, as a professional skill that journalists should enjoy, feed their correspondents imposing Party "*to be incompatible the objective against defects, omissions and errors in the work. They need to discover and without hesitation critical of all actions that are inconsistent with the policy of the Party and the government, violators of state laws, bureaucrats, state violators of social wealth, arrogant and lazy. ... Besides that, the villagers correspondents workers to popularize scale successes in socialist construction, the press announcing the enterprises, cooperatives, divisions, brigades of individuals that work well and are an example to others*"<sup>12</sup>. Leadership, so impose the media workers and topics for which to write. See news item, proposed to be treated of certain behaviors, which were "negative", the morality of the rest of society, and that all the good work across government, the policy in force, so that if followed principle that "bad news is good news", the state institutions would have never news, except for certain persons percussion, and so the news again comes down to the individual level, or maximum on organization level. Thus imposed on journalists, **self-censorship**, and they knew what topics should write, and what topics should not even think, and so, according to propaganda theoreticians is best exercised state control. "*The main way to control the exercise was self-censorship of journalists,*" says Downing<sup>13</sup>.

### **Conclusions:**

Albanian totalitarian state known to use his best weapon of propaganda, press, and elaborate balance of information that go into the newsroom.

When it came to the right transmission line of the Party to the masses, sent items processed in the newsroom, and that previously "get embroidered" best shape possible.

Sources in the party and state, the Albanian journalists, in fact there were resources, but commissioning.

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"journalistic activities", according to role function to perform in the newspaper or magazine, on the radio, on television or in the ATA, they are named: editors and correspondents

<sup>9</sup> Colin Sparks, (2001): *Communism, capitalism and mass media*, Instituti Shqitpar i Medias, Tiranë, p. 56

<sup>10</sup> "*Party of Labor of Albania to the press*" publishing house "November 8", Tirana, 1980, p. 98

<sup>11</sup> "*Party of Labor of Albania to the press*" publishing house "November 8", Tirana, 1980, p.266.

<sup>12</sup> "*Party of Labor of Albania to the press*" publishing house "November 8", Tirana, 1980, p.112.

<sup>13</sup> <sup>13</sup> Downing (1995: 194) cited at Colin Sparks, (2001): *Communism, capitalism and mass media*, Instituti Shqitpar i Medias, Tiranë, p. 68

Writings of party members and committees in districts and regions enjoyed "immunity", they could not be affected by the desk, but will be published as they were, for the reason that in them, become party breakdown directives.

The party had no confidence to leave decomposition and interpretation of her speech in the hands of journalists, and to all orientations should be written by people loyal to prove it. But on the other hand, the work of the journalist as Sparks<sup>14</sup> says, was "to explain, to educate and to help with their writing (party-state) to gain support for the construction of the socialist world".

Directions for journalists always given to a closer connection with "the reality of the masses" of the masses themselves, away from professional opinions to critical scrutiny reality state, the hit to his problems publicly, economic initially and then political.

Therefore, the fact that the basis of information obtained mainly from non-professional people, did not constitute a major problem, as long as the links do not state news ever had, except certain people's percussion, down more news at individual level, to hide behind the facade of the shortcomings of the system.

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<sup>14</sup> Colin Sparks, (2001): *Komunizmi, kapitalizmi dhe mass-media*, Instituti Shqitpar i Medias, Tiranë, fq.81.