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NEW FORMS OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM IN THE XXI CENTURY: WHAT TO EXPECT SOON

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The article deals with the history, definition, challenges, and possibilities of investigative journalism. The attention is focused on the problems, challenges, and the future developments in investigative journalism worldwide and, in particular in Ukraine, that determine this genre in media systems today. Based on the analysis of recent articles and in-depth interviews with the journalists, it shows how the practice of investigative journalism has changed and what could be the future trends in the genre.

It pays a particular attention to the recent developments in investigative journalism and discusses why they can provide a fruitful ground for the new renaissance of the genre.

Key words: investigative journalism, new forms, trends, Ukraine, U.S. journalism.

Introduction.

The challenges and future of investigative journalism (hereinafter – IJ) have been widely discussed by the scholars in the West. For instance, former journalist Brad Houston describes the transformation challenges of the American press, H. de Burgh outlines both the history of IJ and its current status quo. In Ukraine, the attention to this genre of journalism by the researchers is still weak, notwithstanding the fact that the number of investigative stories has increased since the Revolution of Dignity. Nevertheless, a few important studies may be outlined here. For instance, American journalist Cheryl Reed studied contemporary investigative journalism in Ukraine. Researchers O.Hlushko and V.Suschenko wrote about the definitions of IJ and its legal particularities.

The purpose of the article is to analyze last challenges and the recent developments in IJ, and to discuss the most important possible future trends.

The task of the article is to describe a range of new forms, that shape IJ over the last decade, and analyze possible future developments in the genre.

Results and Discussion. Investigative journalism has long been considered as one of the most important genres of journalism. Investigative journalists point out that investigation requires strong skills and knowledge that can be only gained after years of practice in media. Nevertheless, there is no clear, overarching and generally accepted

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definition. Already several generations of scholars and media professionals took dozens, if not hundreds, attempts to find out the most applicable definition of this genre, but discussion continues.

One of the earliest definitions of IJ was formulated by Anderson and Benjaminson, who described it as a «sustained and systematic work of moral and legal transgressions, conducted by persons in positions of power» [1,]. It was emphasized that IJ requires more time and resources than ordinary journalism [2, 3-4].

Ettema and Glasser call investigative journalists «custodians of conscience» in the book named «Custodians of Conscience: Investigative Journalism and Public Virtue.» They added that IJ is an «adversary of officialdom» or, in another words, watchdogs [3].

It is also a reporting about «publicly relevant abuses that certain individuals and organizations want to remain secret» [4, 377]; it shows that something is wrong, based on a suspicion of wrongdoing, rather than simply reporting in a more passive and disinterested way [5, 114].

Kovach and Rosenstiel [6, 146-147] proposed one of the most overarching definitions:

Original investigative reporting involves tactics similar to the ones used by the police. It uncovers information not before gathered by others in order to inform the public of events or circumstances that might affect their lives. Interpretative (investigative) reporting develops as the result of careful thought and analysis of an idea as well as dogged pursuit of facts to bring together information in a new, more complete context that provides deeper public understanding. Reporting on investigations develops from the discovery or leak of information from an official investigation already underway or in preparation.

The three motivations that prompt journalists to do investigations are to expose injury and injustice, reveal information that would otherwise remain hidden and promoting reforms to correct a wrongdoing. It serves as a deterrent to democracies by exposing what remains hidden.

Taking everything into account, it is worthwhile to mention a definition formulated by the non-governmental organization «Investigative Reporters & Editors,» which is succinct in its nature and overwhelming. It defines it as a «reporting, through one's own initiative and work product, of matters of importance to readers, viewers or listeners. In many cases, the subjects of the reporting wish the matters under scrutiny to remain undisclosed.»

As a result, we should acknowledge that the nature of IJ is multifaceted: it involves original research that usually lasts for weeks, months, and even years; lot of data and analyses; it is expensive etc. [7,].

From Powerful Watchdog to What?

Without some brief historical considerations of the genre developments, it is impossible to discuss properly today's status quo and hypothesize over what might be the future of investigative journalism, particularly in Ukraine.

The origins of investigations in mass media could be traced to Renaissance England (to times even before the advent of the printing press). Author Doug Underwood believes that sixteenth-century religious reformers from England involved methods and approaches later adopted by the journalists. Most traits of their prophetic tradition, Underwood writes, such as «the spirit of righteousness, moralism, the purity of values, the call for spiritual and ethical renewal, and the fierce sense of corruption abounding everywhere, - areas typically found in today's best investigative reporters or crusading editors» [8,19-32].

Some scholar date IJ back to the year 1819. John Tyas, a Manchester correspondent for the Times, used investigative reporting techniques to report about the Peterloo Massacre, which happened in 1819. He was «one of the first who has gone out in search of information rather than merely writing up whatever falls into his lap» [5, 40].

The second spiral of development occurred in the 1850s due to the work of another the Times correspondent William Howard Russell, who reported about the Crimean War. He reported not only about what and when happened, but also about such issues as «inadequate preparations of the military, insufficient food and lack of shelter, situation on the fleet, the superiousness of French medical service, and the negligence and ignorance of British military command» [5, 39-40]. He reported about issues that are of public interest and that wanted to remain unknown.

Later British reporter W.T. Stead wrote investigations about fraud and corruption. Stead carried detailed preliminary research before going to the field, where he used undercover and other techniques to receive firsthand experience [5, 45]. These methods are still widely favored by the journalists. His investigations not only unveiled the negative sides of society but led to legislative changes. His stories had a powerful impact. For instance, after he published a story about child prostitution, the legislators adopted a law raising the age of consent to 16 years.

From the beginning of the XXth century and until the First World War, a group of American journalists engaged in IJ to uncover corruption and the deals of big businesses, the so-called trusts, and monopolies. One of the most famous investigators was Ida Tarbell, who wrote a series of investigations about the biggest oil company – Standard Oil – for McClure's magazine. Tarbell was a «leading muckraker of the progressive era ... and pioneered investigative journalism» [9, xiv]. «The History of Standard Oil,» which she published in 1904, brought about the dissolution of this monopoly and forced Congress to adopt an anti-trust law—the famous Clayton Antitrust Act.

The last important example is the famous Watergate scandal, which prompted first in-depth academic research of the field.

In the last decade of the XXth century, the situation has changed. Under pressure from a range of factors, mainly cultural, political, economic, and technological, and due to the loss of advertisement costs, IJ started to decline [10, 1900]. As a result, newspapers had to cut journalism jobs and to close investigative units. This had seriously hit the watchdog's role of the media.

New media owners, oriented at profit making, neglected costly IJ [11, 225]. In the last five to ten years, IJ's viability was questioned. The confidence in its capabilities was challenged by the growing number of disinformation and fake news. Digital technologies, social media, the spread of fakes have challenged IJ's function of providing the public with accurate and credible information.

Local reporting collapsed in the United States, and to a lesser extent in the United Kingdom. In Hungary, it has virtually been eliminated, explains journalist and author Dean Strakman. A quarter to a third of the newsroom workforce was eliminated, growing areas where there is no local news at all, the so-called «news deserts.» Local news used to be the backbone of fact-checking in the U.S., says Starkman, and the main source of investigating schools, city administration, police etc. The main reason is the migration of advertising to online, primarily to Facebook and Google [12].

In Hungary local news has been monopolized by the government friendly elites and are subsidized through a corrupt state ad-buying system. «The authoritarian FIDESZ government relies on rural support where news is entirely in pro-government hand,» says Starkman.

But still, there are some hopes. Theory of cyclical patterns, developed by the George Washington University scholar Mark Feldstein, may be a useful explanation. According to him, IJ has a cyclical nature: when a critical mass between supply and demand is reached it flourishes. The first one depends on new technologies and media competition, whereas the latter on public interests in the exposes [13].

Three New Models

Even though the number of investigative teams has decreased, and investments have been cut by the owners, it seems to be as viable as it has never been, especially in Ukraine. Even new technologies, which formerly posed a threat to its existence, provided a fruitful ground for new forms of investigative journalism and allowing journalists from different countries work independently and collaborative on transnational projects. In general, three new forms and trends, that determine the developments of the genre, might be distinguished.

The change of how investigative journalism is done was tremendous. First, while in the previous century investigations were mostly done in established traditional newsrooms by a pool of assigned staff journalists, today investigative journalists create independent non-profit organizations devoted specifically to implementing investigative techniques. In Ukraine, almost all investigative outlets are non-profit organizations. Second, these non-profits started to form regional and international alliances or consortiums. The level of collaboration increased. Third, there is a growing number of freelance, or independent investigative journalists, who may write stories for free, but usually, apply for grants from funds and other media organizations.

First, there is a growing number of investigations that are done by non-traditional independent not for profit outlets, created by teams of journalists. These organizations displace traditional newsrooms. Whilst in the previous century IJ was an estate of the traditional media companies, today it is created by detached outlets that receive funding either from funds, or through crowdfunding.

However, they lack the scale of traditional investigative newsrooms and do not have other sustainable sources of income, except for the mentioned above and some advertising [12].

Second is a collaboration. Digital technologies that undermined investigative journalism in the previous decade, gave new opportunities in this one. «Investigative journalism has crossed the borders,» writes Armenian journalist Kristine Aghalaryan [14], and it resulted in lower transaction costs for doing cross-border investigative projects. With new technology, investigative journalists could do investigations worldwide, in transnational teams, and distribute them in as many countries as necessary. Therefore, investigative journalism is no longer locked up in a single country, it is a multinational phenomenon. Today, the most influential investigations, like the Panama Papers, a leak of almost 11.5 mln documents and a network of 190 investigators [15], are done by international teams. This teams, moreover, include not only professional journalists, but also data scientists, experts, potential civil contributors and others [16, 29].

New digital technologies may play a democratizing role, writes Manuel Castells in his network communication theory. It became practically possible to link different levels

of data and people across the world to challenge established flows of information and to replace them with more open and democratic.

In a world of ever-increasing media manipulation by government and business, it is even more important for investigative journalists to use technology and connectivity to reveal hidden truths. Networked journalists are open, interactive and share the process. Instead of gatekeepers they are facilitators: the public become co-producers. Networked journalists 'are «medium agnostic» and «story-centric.» The process is faster, and the information sticks around longer [17, 147].

Investigative journalists unite into international teams on a permanent basis. Here we can mention two important organizations, namely OCCRP (the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Network), ICIJ (International Consortium of Investigative Journalism), GIJN (Global Investigative Journalism Network). OCCRP is an international consortium of investigative NGOs, media organizations and individual investigators, who work largely in Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and partially Central America. It is the only international investigative union specializing in reporting on organized crime and corruption. For instance, it investigated corruption in Russia—the Magnitsky act and money laundering schemes, the Russian Laundromat; worked on the Panama Papers; published stories on Milo Đukanović, a Montenegro President and Prime Minister. The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists includes 200 investigators, 100 media organizations from 70 countries. It reports on the following issues: cross-border crime, corruption, and the accountability of power. It reported about tobacco companies tax evasion, crime syndicates, cartels, lobbyists etc [18].

Recently a cross-border investigative project n-vestigate has been found by German foundation N-Ost to help journalists from Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine conduct cooperative, transnational research and strengthen investigative journalism culture in the region [19].

There are also organization, which provide support and assistance to investigators. A notable example is the Global Investigative Journalism Network, an association of investigative nonprofits, whose aim is to «support, promote and produce investigative journalism» [20].

Permanent collaborative projects are not the only option. More journalists start to form ad hoc, temporary projects with a purpose to investigate a single case or a person.

Third, today investigative journalism, which had previously required a lot of teamwork and large newsrooms as a source of specialized knowledge, can be exercised by individual journalists, or, as described by Brad Houston, «lone practitioners» [7, 47].

The demand from the public is also rising. Investigative journalism «may be entering a period of renaissance,» thinks David Boardman, an advisory board member for the Center for Investigative Reporting and ProPublica [7, 54]. Whereas because of the rapid increase in the number of untrue stories, or because of the lack of qualitative information, the public starts to realize the importance of investigative journalism.

Public attention towards investigations—the demand component—is extremely important for investigative outlets, since the efficiency of their exposes, the strength of their watchdog role is dependent upon the reaction of the public. No matter how powerful, revealing, and system-changing the results are, without a scrupulous attention from the public it is weak. The society, thinks the executive director of N-Ost Hanno Gundert, has

to react on the accusations with legal actions [14]. In any case, the public is an essential component of journalism overall.

Conclusion

The digital technologies, economic difficulties, political, cultural and other conditions, the advent of social media have had a powerful impact on investigative journalism and its forms. In the beginning, it was undermined by these changes, due to the growing number of nonprofessional outlets, blogs, the disappearance of the traditional press. The new flows of information replaced traditional ones, including investigative journalism as one of the most expansive genres of journalism in all respects. But over time investigative journalism was reshaped to comply with the new requirements. Traditional newsrooms were replaced by more flexible nonprofits. Competition between newsrooms was replaced by cooperation with national and international outlets. Whilst in the previous century the public was only a receiver of information, today it serves as a stories' supplier, as well as a co-producer. In contemporary conditions, Harold Lasswell's model of communication should be revised. Now communicators and the audience can play a different role. The audience can also serve the roles of communicator by producing its own messages. Social media and blogs are its primary medium. A lot of journalists work either independently or collaborate with others on an ad hoc basis. The primary sources of funding are grants and crowdsourcing.

The future of IJ is still unknown, but it is most likely that the current trends will remain valid. First, the role of data science will increase. Data collection will be easier and will take less time. As of today, researchers at Stanford University work on the new open code programs that will simplify research process. New datasets will be available for journalists. Second, IJ will focus on hyperlocal and international topics. The degree of collaboration between journalists from different countries will increase. Competitive newsrooms will have to join forces, use secure communications and sophisticated data analysis tools to produce international stories, such as the Panama papers. Third, new tools will become available to citizen journalists.

Investigative journalism will have to think about new forms of financing, since the one it has today is too unsure, and the commercial ad market will be foreclosed for the investigators. Public financing of IJ could be an answer, but it is the next step of development [12].

Artificial intelligence is also another step for IJ. OCCRP's founder Drew Sullivan believes investigative journalists must learn how to use automated systems like bots and deal more effectively with readers and viewers. IJ should provide more interactive experiences for readers, for instance some graphical interfaces, where readers can explore underlying data [21].

Sullivan concludes: «We need to reinvent investigative reporting in new and innovative ways.»

This article describes only a portion of the current and future trends in the IJ. Subsequent research should pay more attention to individual phenomena, such as application of artificial intelligence and interactive tools, as proposed by Sullivan, and public financing, as underlined by Starkman. It also has to look for similarities and differences in IJ across the world and explore individual media systems. Further research should also concentrate on how data science can improve IJ and play a positive role in safeguarding the watchdog role of the press.

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НОВІ ФОРМИ ЖУРНАЛІСТСЬКОГО РОЗСЛІДУВАННЯ У XXI СТОЛІТТІ: НАЙБЛИЖЧІ МАЙБУТНІ ВИКЛИКИ

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У статті розглянуто історію, виклики та можливості журналістики розслідувань як жанру журналістики. Акцентується увага на проблемах, викликах та майбутніх формах журналістських розслідувань у світі та в Україні. На основі аналізу останніх статей та експертних інтерв'ю з журналістами продемонстровано, як змінювалася журналістика розслідувань і які майбутні тенденції присутні в жанрі. У першій частині подано короткий аналіз визначень поняття «журналістика розслідувань» та аналіз основних етапів розвитку жанру, а саме з XVII ст. і до сьогодні.

У другій частині проаналізовано три основні форми журналістики розслідувань: колаборативна журналістика – об'єднання зусиль журналістів з різних видань та країн для роботи над однією темою (наприклад, справа Panama Papers), створення журналістських громадських організацій, які працюють над розслідуваннями завдяки зовнішньому фінансуванню та збільшення кількості незалежних журналістів-розслідувачів, які працюють самостійно над темами. Важливим поштовхом до розвитку журналістики розслідувань у світі та Україні є створення міжнародних організацій, таких як OCCRP, ICIJ тощо.

Також акцентовано увагу на змінах, які відбулися у журналістиці розслідувань за останні два десятиліття.

У третій частині на основі аналізу сучасних тенденцій та інтерв'ю з представниками міжнародних організацій журналістів-розслідувачів розглянуто майбутні особливості функціонування журналістики розслідувань. Серед останніх особливо важливими є нові форми фінансування журналістики розслідувань, наприклад публічне фінансування програм розслідувань суспільними телерадіокомпаніями. Також серед основних завдань є створення нових інтерактивних форм презентації розслідувань, які дозволять читачам заглибитися у процеси роботи над темою, мати доступ до всіх документів та брати активнішу участь у процесі викриття осіб та організацій, які вчиняють неправомірні дії. На важливу увагу заслуговує необхідність у майбутньому ширшого використання штучного інтелекту як для полегшення та прискорення роботи над розслідуваннями, але також і для вдосконалення самих розслідувальних методик.

Ключові слова: журналістика розслідувань, нові форми, тренди, Україна, журналістика розслідувань США.