

INTERVIEW WITH ATDHE MULLA

Pristina | Data: February 8, 2018

Duration: 4 minutes

Present:

1. Atdhe Mulla (Speaker)
2. Aurela Kadriu (Interviewer)
3. Donjetë Berisha (Camera)

Transcription notation symbols of non-verbal communication:

() – emotional communication

{ } – the speaker explains something using gestures.

Other transcription conventions:

[] – addition to the text to facilitate comprehension

Footnotes are editorial additions to provide information on localities, names or expressions.

Atdhe Mulla: Atdhe Mulla, photographer.

Aurela Kadriu: Can you tell me if you remember the summer of 2007?

Atdhe Mulla: I remember the summer of 2007, at the time I was in Prague, Czechia, studying. Every summer and every winter I came back... I also came in the summer, like every other summer to go out and... it was nothing, I mean, there was no alert of when it will happen, or what will happen. It was still *higher politics* [in English], the UN, and we were all waiting to see what would happen there first.

Aurela Kadriu: OK...

Atdhe Mulla: I think that by December 2007 things cleared up more or less, when, where and how, you could then project when, what would happen. So, I remember 2007, like, I came back as any other time from Prague and I spent it... yeah... like any other time... *everything as usual* [in English].

Aurela Kadriu: Do you remember when was the first time you heard or understood that Kosovo would declare independence?

Atdhe Mulla: Mm...It was around December. I returned again in December from Czechia, it was because of my graduation project, I knew that something was cooking. And so I came here on December 10, the *UN Assembly* [in English] had a meeting, and it came to a *deadlock* [in English], nothing was agreed upon. And people just went out in the city and protested in front of the government, like, “What is happening?” And since then, when I returned, my friends told me, “Be ready because around February something will happen.” And in fact this was also connected to some interview that the late Bajram Rexhepi, the Prime Minister, gave, when he leaked it [*leak* in English], in an interview, so more or less the date was known, but nobody knew the [exact] date.

Aurela Kadriu: Can you tell us where were you on independence day? What did you do?

Atdhe Mulla: On Independence day I woke up at 9:30, the night before I went to bed at 7:30 am (laughs). Since we did not know the day when it would happen, we also went out that night, people went out in cars, with flags, we still didn’t know the Kosovo flag, so the national flag was there, *of course* [in English]... and so we went out to take pictures, more or less, we knew that something was cooking the next day... and we ended up in cafés, in bars, with people from the international community, with ministers, nobody could tell who was who.

I woke up in the morning that day and we went out to take pictures, I had to finish my graduation project (laughs).

Aurela Kadriu: What can you tell me from that day, since you were out in the public space and saw what happened?

Atdhe Mulla: It was very cold (laughs)... Everyone begins with, “It was very cold” (laughs). I have another thing, it was... February 17, it was -17 [degrees]. It was very cold and we went around the city not knowing what was happening, when it was happening, how it was happening. It was a bit of confusion, a lot of international media, I had my dilemma whether I should be at the parliament, should I have the historic moment [captured in a photograph], or should I stay with people in the city. And so I know we saw it on the television, I was in a café with friends photographing people celebrating, and then I left for, I tried to go into the parliament. At the parliament it was... impossible to go in at that moment, at that moment it already had been declared, people had already started to arrive at the parliament, and there it had already started to happen.

Nothing, I photographed, I photographed, I went up and down, I went here and there, at some point I got in the car and went to Graçanica just to see what was happening, you know... we went around... to see what was in fact happening and... yeah. Until 4AM the next day at the square, the square was... I have never seen it dirtier [*dirty* in English] in my life, and then everyday people were just going out, they would come from all parts of Kosovo, to celebrate.

For me it was a bit... I don't know. It was work, at the same time, but I also had that moment when I stopped for a second and said, “Wow” you know... with my friends and so on, it's happening! That day was a bit like, I don't know how to put it... now when I look back [it was] *as any other day* [in English], it was a working day...(laughs) I was working, you know...

Aurela Kadriu: Do you remember how the situation in Graçanica was?

Atdhe Mulla: We went and we tried to look at how... there was Reuters, all the world media and now, you know... you wanted to seize that *angle* [in English] too, to look at ... nothing, we went and you know, nothing, the city was normal... *nothing* [in English]... so we went and cruised around with the car, we wanted to go and take pictures and do something, we saw that there was nothing interesting, so we went back again.

Aurela Kadriu: OK...

Atdhe Mulla: A little bit without a plan.

Aurela Kadriu: This is good, thank you so much. This was it....

Atdhe Mulla: Alright, nice.

