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Killed in action: female investigative reporters, war correspondents and local journalists, and the risk of death or becoming a victim of violence

”Each time a journalist is killed the truth dies with them”

(Afghanistan, 2011)

“Let’s celebrate heroines before they become victims”

(Kleeman, 2012)

The issue of the potential and actual threats to persons professionally working as journalists is becoming the subject of growing interest for media representatives, organisations of press journalists and researchers into the phenomena that accompany the process of gathering information and spreading news. The long tradition of legally binding restrictions and limitations to this profession is commonly known and has been thoroughly described, while the characteristics of the extralegal limitations to the freedom to inform tend to focus on conventional forms of interfering. These mainly encompass economic and political conditions, perceived as the sources of such pressures (Pokorna-Ignatowicz, 2001; Szynol, 2007). These are rooted in objectively existing connections, as no editor operates in a vacuum but is also an element that takes an active part in relations with the world of politics and the economy, which results in certain forms of dependency and limitations. Interference in the operations of editors and the work of journalists can be exemplified by the instances of advertisers who influence the content, form and time of publication of certain materials, or various attempts to prevent the publication or broadcasting of undesirable content. Analyses of such issues have been dominated by political or commercial aspects, although the catalogue of methods to limit the operation of the press applied in practice is neither exhaustive nor closed.

Over recent decades, the work of journalists has become increasingly characterised by growing risk, in particular in the case of investigative re-

porters and war correspondents. This applies to men and women alike. Risk is, to a certain extent, an intrinsic element of the activities of both these professions, yet the scale of infringements of personal inviolability has recently increased to an unprecedented level when compared to a few decades ago. This increase also applies to the growing number of deaths of investigative reporters and war correspondents suffered in the course of performing their professional duties and in their leisure time, but strictly related to their professional activity. The growing number of attacks on women journalists is another sign of the times, which may mean that the principles of how to treat press representatives, particularly women, performing their duties, that used to apply in the past, have been eroded. Aggressors treat female investigative reporters and war correspondents as brutally and ruthlessly as their male colleagues. Acts of sexual aggression are increasingly frequent, making the job of female journalists even more difficult. Although the percentage of deaths of female journalists is relatively low, this issue has been noted and deserves serious treatment. It is beyond doubt that the phenomenon of active aggression towards women journalists, increasingly often resulting in their death, is an indivertible trend.

The essential thing is to answer several research questions. Is the rising incidence of attacks and deaths among female journalists a consequence of the increasing ruthlessness of attackers who seek to eliminate obstacles regardless of the victim's sex? To what extent have women created this situation themselves, going boldly into areas of activity that were traditionally reserved for men? Does their sex increase the risk faced when performing their tasks? Do killers and kidnappers see them as an easier target? Finding answers to the above questions will be facilitated by an analysis of the literature and source material in the form of the statistics kept by the organisations acting on behalf of the media and research results.

* * *

When Senator Hiram Warren Johnson spoke in the debate on the participation of the US in the First World War on February 3, 1917, he did not expect a part of his speech to be remembered by generations to come. He emphasised the use of disinformation as a weapon of modern warfare. His statement that "in war, truth is the first casualty" was frequently quoted with reference to armed conflicts all over the world. The efforts of the

fighting sides were limited then to the manipulation of information, or embargo on news from the frontlines of successive wars. Truth might have been a casualty in those times, but not the journalists trying to write about the atrocities of the trenches. For a long time the fighting sides treated journalists as impartial observers. The situation began to change dramatically in the second half of the 20th century, when successive conflicts started to bring increasingly numerous civil casualties, including journalists. In the late 20th century, and over a dozen or so years of the 21st century, the number of press representatives, first and foremost investigative reporters and war correspondents, who have died in the line of work calls for concern for the issue of the increasing risk of this profession. Although the statistics of different non-governmental organisations differ in the exact number of casualties, they provide an excellent illustration of this growing problem. According to The Committee to Protect Journalists, 1,054 journalists died from 1992 to mid-April 2014; most died in 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2013 (CPJ, 2014). The International Federation of Journalists quotes the number of over 1,000 media employees murdered between 1997 and 2007 (Antosiewicz, 2008). A slightly lower number of journalists killed in successive years is given by The World Association of Newspapers (Table 1).

Table 1

Journalists killed while performing their duties in 1998–2010, according to The World Association of Newspapers

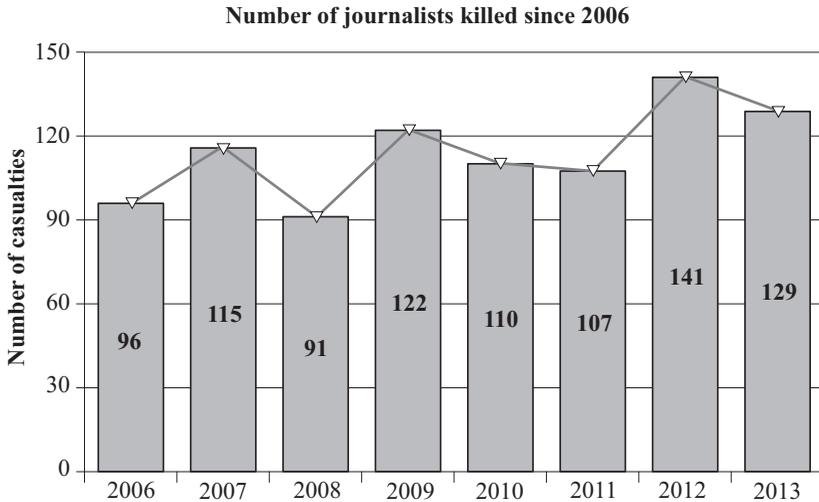
Year	Casualties	Year	Casualties
1998	28	2005	58
1999	70	2006	110
2000	53	2007	95
2001	60	2008	70
2002	46	2009	99
2003	53	2010	66
2004	72		

Source: The World Association of Newspapers, <http://www.wan-press.org>.

The Press Emblem Campaign (PEC) recorded a significantly higher number of casualties among media employees over a comparable period of time (Graph 1 below). According to the PEC, 609 journalists were killed over the period 2009–2013, which means that on average 122 jour-

nalists died each year, accounting for one journalist dying every three days. 2014 is likely not to bring a breakthrough in this tragic trend, as 34 media employees had died by mid-April 2014 (*Media*, 2014).

Graph 1. Journalists killed in 2006–2013



Source: Press Emblem Campaign, <http://www.presseemblem.ch/5037.html>.

These grim statistics demand that the above quotation by Senator H. W. Johnson be revised, as now the truth dies every time a journalist is killed (*Afghanistan*, 2011). The above statistics seem to show that attacks against media people have become a more effective measure to influence the range and quality of the news than the embargoes on news applied in the past. Additionally, the constant threat may discourage some journalists from touching difficult or dangerous subjects owing to the risk related to them. In the context of repeated assaults on media employees, Barry James observed that “every journalist killed or neutralised by terror is an observer less of the human condition. Every attack distorts reality by creating a climate of fear and self-censorship” (James, 2002).

This disturbing trend has persisted, despite different documents proclaiming security guarantees for journalists and war correspondents, initiated by the provisions of Geneva conventions, additional protocols and customary international law. Their stipulations equate journalists and civilians as regards the scope of their right to protection during armed con-

flicts. The parties are called to refrain from attacking journalists and war correspondents are granted the status of prisoners of war, should such need arise. Numerous significant provisions of international law include Resolution 1738, adopted by the UN Security Council in 2006, which calls for providing protection to journalists and other media employees performing their duties in areas of armed conflict (*Resolution*, 2006). The same document calls for parties to respect the professional independence and rights of journalists. In the same vein, the Medellin Declaration, adopted in May 2007, touches on the issue of ensuring security to journalists (*Medellin*, 2007). In 2011, UNESCO organised a meeting devoted to ensuring security to journalists and limiting the impunity of those who attack media employees and prevent them from performing their professional duties (*Afghanistan*, 2011). Dozens of further casualties among investigative journalists and war correspondents clearly demonstrate that these provisions are not respected. For instance, in Mexico alone, 77 journalists were killed over a decade of war between the authorities and drug cartels. The Philippines witnessed a tragic event on November 23, 2009, when 58 individuals, including 34 journalists, were executed in the Maguindanao massacre (*Afghanistan*, 2011). The Middle East is another highly dangerous place to work for media employees. Sherry Ricchiardi observes that more media employees died in Iraq than during the two decades of war in Vietnam, but estimates vary here as well. According to the Reporters Without Borders organisation, 74 correspondents and press collaborators have been killed in Iraq, while The International News Safety Institute from Brussels estimates that there were as many as 93 casualties there (this number accounts also for interpreters and drivers working with journalists). An intermediate number of 80 casualties among media employees is indicated by The Committee to Protect Journalists (Ricchiardi, 2006b). These estimates need to be supplemented by the 22 persons who were kidnapped in 2004–2006 (Ricchiardi, 2006a).¹

¹ S. Ricchiardi points to the attempts to ensure security to journalists deployed in conflict areas by large media corporations that allocate considerable means (millions of dollars) for this purpose. The employees of rich media enterprises are provided protection by specialised agencies, adequate training, bullet-proof vests, armoured vehicles and accommodation in hotels located in relatively safe regions. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about security measures in the case of other journalists or correspondents, in particular freelancers (Ricchiardi, 2006a).

A relatively new problem is posed by the repeated instances of aggression against female investigative journalists and war correspondents. Data collected by The Committee to Protect Journalists shows that the percentage of female media employees killed while performing their professional duties could amount to seventeen percent per year (Table 2).

Table 2

Female journalists killed while performing their professional duties in 1992–2013 according to The Committee to Protect Journalists (%)

Year	Total casualties among media employees	Percentage of female journalists killed	Year	Total casualties among media employees	Percentage of female journalists killed
1992	44	2	2003	42	2
1993	56	9	2004	61	5
1994	66	6	2005	48	17
1995	51	14	2006	57	14
1996	26	12	2007	70	6
1997	26	0	2008	42	2
1998	24	8	2009	74	12
1999	36	0	2010	44	0
2000	24	0	2011	47	2
2001	37	5	2012	74	4
2002	21	5	2013	70	6

Source: Compiled by the author (no data for 2014) on the basis of “1054 Journalists Killed since 1992”, CPJ, <http://cpj.org>.

The issue of the actual threat to women working as investigative journalists or war correspondents has emerged relatively recently. It should be borne in mind that in the beginning professions related to the press were reserved solely for men. In ancient times accounts of war, considered as a typically male occupation, were given by Homer (*The Iliad*) and Thucydides (Peloponnesian War). War correspondents in modern times were also male, for instance Howard Russell reporting for *The Times* on the Crimean war, or Roger Fenton’s photo reports from the Crimean frontline (Bajka, 2008, p. 236–239). Occasional attempts at war coverage performed by women date back only to the late 19th century. Kathleen ‘Kit’ Blake Coleman was among the first female journalists reporting on the events of the Spanish-American war over Cuba in 1898. Angela Mae Ness

observes, however, that her accounts were not the typical coverage of frontline events, but rather showed the conflict through the lens of human issues (Ness, 2012, p. 9–10). Another person to propagate women working as war correspondents was Martha Gellman, covering the Civil War in Spain in 1937. Her dispatches emphasised not only the civil casualties of warfare, but also the fate of those who survived this difficult period (Ness, 2012, p. 9–10).² The situation was similar with women entering the circle of investigative journalists. Nelly Bly (real name, Elizabeth Jane Cochran) was among the first to do so. Her journalistic investigation into a mental institution for women, concluded with the series of publications under the collective title of *Ten Days in a Madhouse* in October 1887, was also the first attempt at undercover journalism by a woman. Ida Minerva Tarbell was equally popular in those times. She became famous on account of an investigation into the monopolistic practices employed by The Standard Oil Company, owned by John D. Rockefeller Sr., against their competitors. In 1902–1904 she published the results of the nearly two-year long investigation in a series of nine articles, and then in the book entitled *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (Adamczyk, 2012, p. 88–92).

Regardless of the topics covered by female investigative reporters and the difficult wartime conditions, female journalists could feel relatively safe. One of the few recorded incidents concerns an assault on the renowned British reporter, Lady Florence Caroline Dixie. From 1881 she

² Women quickly became known as war correspondents. Among the most renowned is Margaret Fuller, considered to be one of the first professional correspondents in the world, who provided *The New York Tribune* with coverage of the war effort of French troops and the invasion of Rome as early as 1849.

Mary Roberts Rinehart sent reports from the frontline of the First World War. Sigrid Schultz, the first woman in charge of the *Chicago Tribune* branch in Berlin from 1925, was called a 'dragon lady from Chicago' by Hermann Goering. Dorothy Thompson was among the first correspondents expelled from Germany by Adolf Hitler (in 1940 she was acknowledged the second woman, after Eleanor Roosevelt, with the greatest prestige and power). The pantheon of the most renowned and appreciated correspondents encompasses also Anne O'Hare McCormick (the first woman to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for reporting in 1937), Margaret Bourke-White (who covered the struggle in North Africa in the Second World War, and then in Korea), Margaret Higgins (a war correspondent in Korea and Vietnam), Gloria Emerson (who covered the war in Vietnam), and Susan Meiselas (famous for her coverage of the wars in Chad, Cuba and Nicaragua) (Ricchiardi, 1994; Ricchiardi, 1998; Ness, 2012).

was a correspondent of the London daily *The Morning Post*, which received her reports from the First Boer War and later from the English-Zulu conflict. On March 19, 1883 *The New York Times* reported an attack against F. C. Dixie. The assaulters were two men dressed up as women, who threatened the reporter with a knife and tried to strangle her (Anderson, 2006, p. 122; *A Dastardly*, 1883).

The second half of the 20th century marks a turning point in this respect. Successive instances of aggression directed against female investigative reporters and war correspondents increasingly often resulted in their deaths, dramatically changing the sense of security experienced by women in this difficult and risky profession. Neither the above-mentioned international regulations, nor the good morals that require that women are properly treated, protect them from violence or risk to their lives. Gender, which used to be an advantage in dangerous situations, became insignificant and women have come to be treated equally to men over recent decades.

The first war correspondent to be killed while performing her professional tasks was Dicke Chapelle. Her colourful biography and awe-inspiring achievements place her among the best reporters working in the areas of armed conflicts. Born on March 14, 1919 in the US as Georgette Meyer, she was fascinated by aviation from childhood. Thanks to her husband she learned the intricacies of photography which allowed her to work for such renowned periodicals as the *National Geographic*, *Life* and *Look* (Ricchiardi, 1994). She learned the basics of reporting during the Second World War, developing them over the course of conflicts in Korea and Vietnam. She took some dangerous jobs. Working for the Research Institute of America she was commissioned by the *Life* to take pictures during the events in Hungary in 1956. She was detained by the Russian Army at that time, and kept in appalling conditions for seven weeks. In January 1957 she was put on trial for illegally entering Hungary, convicted and expelled from the country and prohibited to return (Ness, 2012, Warnes 2011). A year later she was reporting from Lebanon. Before going to Vietnam she wrote a memoir titled *What's A Woman Doing Here?* On October 11, 1965 she went to the area of fighting between US troops and Vietcong. On November 4, 1965 she was on a patrol with a Marine platoon during Operation Black Ferret. Chapelle was fatally hit in the neck by a piece of exploding shrapnel. The picture of the dying D. Chapelle, taken by Henri Huet, a photographer for the Associated Press, was published by US newspapers and her obituary was pub-

lished on the front page of *The New York Times* (Ricchiardi, 1994; Ricchiardi, 1998; Ness, 2012).³

Jill Carroll, a freelancer who worked as a stringer for *The Christian Science Monitor* (and collaborated with the *US News & World Report*, *American Journalism Review* and the Italian news agency ANSA before that), was more lucky. Going to the Middle East, she was aware of the threat to journalists, as evidenced by the text she published in the *American Journalism Review* in early 2005 talking about a new form of terrorist threat, namely kidnapping, including the kidnapping of media employees. In her article she mentioned 200 foreigners kidnapped in Iraq, including a group of journalists (Carroll, 2005, p. 54). On January 7, 2006 J. Carroll was kidnapped in the street when going for a scheduled interview with a Sunni politician, and her interpreter was killed in the ambush prepared by the kidnappers. Revenge Brigades admitted to the kidnapping and within a week presented their demands. The kidnappers would release the kidnapped journalists in return for the release of all the women imprisoned in Iraq (Cabe, 2008). Owing to the efforts of the authorities and the editor of *The Christian Science Monitor* J. Carroll was indeed released and she later admitted to having been treated well by the kidnappers (*Kidnapped*, 2006).

Media circles all over the world have recently been shaken by a sudden death of award-winning American war correspondent Marie Colvin, considered to be one of the legends of the British media (*Marie*, 2012). During her career she frequently worked in the hottest flash points, going to the most dangerous corners of the modern world. Her dossier featured interviews with the most controversial politicians and leaders of different states and organisations, such as Colonel Gaddafi and Yasser Arafat. She reported on the Kosovo Liberation Army battles with Serbs and wrote about the Arab Spring. As a member of an elite British war correspondents corps from the 1980s, she was reporting and publishing materials about conflicts, frequently finding herself in difficult situations. While in

³ Not only was D. Chapelle the first female correspondent killed in action, but also the first US reporter to die in Vietnam. She received numerous awards for her professional achievements, including the George Polk Award awarded by the Overseas Press Club, the title for the Photograph of the Year awarded by the National Press Photographers Association and the Distinguished Service Award from the US Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association. Her life and tragic demise were commemorated in a book, a song and a documentary (Simkin, 2014).

Chechnya, she had to flee from Russian troops (Flood, 2013). During the 1986 bombardment of Tripoli she lost her teeth; and when covering the Tamil uprising in Sri Lanka in 2001 she lost an eye, hit by a piece of a shrapnel (Ricchiardi, 2000; Deptuła, 2012). On many occasions she took the most difficult and risky tasks, going beyond the expectations of her editors. For instance, in 1998, she was the first correspondent to go across the frontline in Eritrea. She was also the only journalist to remain to witness and describe the fate of refugees in East Timor (Brenner, 2012). As pointed out by Sherry Ricchiardi, these were not spontaneous actions by Colvin. She believed that female journalists have the same right to tackle risky but socially significant tasks as their male colleagues. She expressed her views in an article published in *The Sunday Times* under the significant title: *Courage Knows No Gender*: “do women report wars differently from men? The question used to make me bristle. It irritated me to think that I would be judged as a woman war correspondent rather than as a writer, taking the same risks and covering the same story as my male colleagues” (Ricchiardi, 2000; Colvin, 2012). Her courageous decisions should not be misinterpreted for unnecessary bravado. In November 2010, in her speech to commemorate the death of 49 British journalists, she said: “what is bravery, and what is bravado? Journalists covering combat shoulder great responsibilities and face difficult choices. Sometimes they pay the ultimate price” (Two, 2012; Remnick, 2012). She knew that it was the journalist facing a difficult situation who had to answer the question of whether the topic was worth his or her own life (Włodek, 2012). Her final mission was a job in Syria in February 2012, from where she reported via satellite telephone for *The Sunday Times*, BBC, Channel 4, CNN and ITN. When the situation in the Syrian town of Homs, where she found herself alongside other journalists, became too dangerous, her supervisors instructed her to immediately leave the area of military operations. Realising the horror of the situation in the town being shelled by government forces, she wrote in one of her last Facebook posts: “I think reports of my survival may be exaggerated” (Birrell, 2012). She died on February 22, 2012 in a makeshift media centre in Homs, the town administered by the Syrian opposition that came under a barrage of missiles and mortars from government forces (*Fearless*, 2012).⁴ Colvin believed it important to write

⁴ Colvin’s body was transported from Syria owing to the help of the pro-government army and the assistance of Polish and French authorities (Maslin, 2012). Colvin received numerous, prestigious awards for her professional achievements. Among

about what war really is. Her life is proof that she was ready for the ultimate sacrifice in the name of this ideal (Ricchiardi, 2000a).

Several months later journalistic circles were shaken by yet another report, this time of the death of a renowned Japanese war correspondent. Mika Yamamoto started her adventure with professional journalism in 1990, working for satellite television station Ashai Newstar. From 1995, as a freelancer she collaborated with Asia Press International (API), and from 1996 with the Japan Press association (Blake, 2013). Using a video camera, she shot many materials from areas of different conflicts (Afghanistan, Uganda, Kosovo and Iraq). Her colleagues thought her to be a calm, even-tempered person who was well prepared to work in this difficult profession. In her everyday work she followed the principle that one's life was worth risking for the purpose of showing to the world the suffering of innocent women and children in areas of war (Birmingham, 2012). Being a freelancer, however, she put herself at more risk than other correspondents employed by large media corporations, who were guaranteed all kinds of assistance should anything happen to them, for example in the case of kidnapping. The tragedy happened on August 20, 2012 in the Syrian town of Aleppo, where Yamamoto was working on a report with her husband. They came across the troops of the regime who fired at them. As a result of gunshot wounds in the neck Yamamoto died at a nearby hospital. She was the 39th casualty among journalists killed since the outbreak of the Syrian war (Birmingham, 2012; Blake, 2013).⁵

One of the most recent widely reported deaths suffered by a female journalist working in an area of conflict was the murder of acclaimed Ger-

other things, she was listed among 150 fearless women by the *Newsweek* weekly, *Red Magazine* awarded her a title in their Hot Women of the Year 2012 awards. In 2011 she featured on the list of the Faces of the Year, created by BBC (Kleeman, 2012). A collection of her articles, entitled *On the Front Line*, was nominated for the Orwell Award (Flood, 2013). The International Press Institute (IPI) awarded her the posthumous title of World Press Freedom Hero (Blake, 2013). After she died, the idea emerged of establishing The Marie Colvin Center for International Reporting at Story Brook University.

⁵ In 2001 Yamamoto wrote about repression against women in Afghanistan. She received numerous awards for her achievements, both while she was alive and posthumously. Among others, she received the Vaughn-Uyeda Memorial Prize for her international coverage, the posthumous title of World Press Freedom Hero and Japan National Press Club Special Award. She is also commemorated in the Journalists Memorial of the Newseum (*Journalist*, 2013; *Japanese*, 2013; Blake 2013; Women, 2012).

man photojournalist, Anja Niedringhaus. In the 1990s she worked for the European Pressphoto Agency in Yugoslavia. She suffered her first injuries there. First, she was shot by a sniper and a few years later, in 1997, a passing police car broke her foot. While working during the conflict in Kosovo she drove into a mine. In 1999, alongside other journalists, she found herself at the site of heavy bombardment by NATO forces at the border of Albania and Kosovo (Woodruff, 2006). From 2002 she worked as a photojournalist for the Associated Press. She was the only woman in the eleven-strong AP team that won the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News Photography for coverage of the war in Iraq (Henry, 2014). Her tragic death occurred on April 4, 2014 in Afghanistan, where Niedringhaus was covering the presidential election. An attacker shot at her car riding in a motorcade. The attacker turned out to be a local police commander. A Canadian journalist, Kathy Gannon, travelling in the same car, was seriously injured.⁶

Among investigative women journalists, one of the most famous cases of contract killings was the death of Irish reporter Veronica Guerin. She started her professional life working in public relations. She went into journalism in 1990, starting as an economic journalist. She worked for the *Sunday Business Post* and *Sunday Tribune*. She took up investigative journalism in 1994 when she started writing for the Sunday newspaper with the greatest circulation in Ireland, the *Sunday Independent*. She mainly investigated organised crime, and in particular illegal operations of drug traffickers and local gangs. Her informants were both police officers and repentant criminals. For the first time she was targeted by the mafia in October 1994, when her house was shot at while she was playing with her son. In January 1995 she opened the door to a man who shot her in the thigh. Guerin treated both incidents as the retaliation of criminals for articles she had published. Several months later the reporter was brutally beaten by John Gilligan, considered to be a mafia boss. To intimidate her even more, he called to threaten her son with rape and threatened to kill her (O'Reilly, 1998, p. 120–121).

Victoria Guerin was killed on the outskirts of Dublin on June 26, 1996. She was driving her private car coming back from a court trial in Naas. When she stopped at a crossroads, two attackers on a motorbike shot her

⁶ Niedringhaus received numerous and prestigious awards – Pictures of the Year International, Best of Photojournalism, Clarion Awards (Henry, 2014).

five times, causing fatal injuries to her chest and neck. According to The Committee to Protect Journalists, she was the 24th journalist killed while performing their professional duties that year. William A. Orme Jr., CPJ Executive Director observed that “although on average a journalist is killed once a week, Guerin’s death came as a shock, as it occurred in a democratic society where such murders are unique” (Marron, 1996).⁷ This was the first assassination of a journalist in Ireland, which Prime Minister John Bruton called “an attack against democracy” (*Veronica*, 2000). Victoria Guerin died two days before a conference in London where she was scheduled to present a paper entitled *Dying to Tell a Story: Journalism at Risk* (Depuis, 2009, p. 89).

Another, equally acclaimed investigative reporter was Anna Stepanovna Politkovskaya, born in New York to a family of diplomats working for the United Nations. In 1975 she returned to the USSR to study journalism and having graduated took up work in *Izvestia*, and then in *Obshchaya Gazieta* and *Novaya Gazieta*. In her articles she documented torture, mass executions, kidnappings and Russian soldiers’ practices of selling the bodies of killed Chechnya fighters to their families to be buried according to Islamic principles (Anna, 2009; Lokshina, 2008). Thanks to her frequent journeys to Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan she made numerous acquaintances that were valuable for a journalist. The topics of her publications quickly made her an enemy of the Russian authorities and the military. She accused Vladimir Putin of “state terrorism” (Schepp, 2006). Repeatedly threatened with death, in October 2004 she was poisoned aboard a plane flying to Beslan, where she was to negotiate with terrorists. Officers of the Federal Security Service were suspected of poisoning her as they accompanied her on the plane and offered her tea (Politkovskaya, 2004; Finkelstein, 2008). She was murdered on October 7, 2006, shot to death in the building where she lived. A lengthy trial gave no clear answer as to who carried out, and who contracted this attack.⁸

⁷ The shock caused by the journalist’s death mobilised state services to organise an operation against drug dealers on an unprecedented scale. In October 1996, the police arrested the first suspects, including those suspected of commissioning the journalist’s murder (a total of 150 persons were eventually arrested). Both Guerin’s assassins were sentenced for life. The Parliament changed the principles of how to conduct investigations against mafia bosses (McDonald, 2006; Lynch, 2003).

⁸ Politkovskaya received a multitude of awards, including: Amnesty International Global Award for Human Rights Journalism, International Women’s Media Foundation Courage in Journalism Award, Olof Palme Prize, Golden Quill Award and the Guillermo

On account of the limited scope of this publication it would be difficult to give detailed accounts of all the instances of aggression against, and killings of women journalists all over the world. The number of these tragic events in recent decades exceeds the general perception of this phenomenon, as evidenced by the table with a selection of the most famous murders, kidnappings and assaults on women journalists (Table 3).

Table 3

Cases of assaults and killings of female journalists

Year	First and last name	Editor	State	Kind of aggression
1989/ 2003	Mabel Rehnfeldt	ABC Color	Paraguay	assaulted, threatened with death and kidnapping of her daughter
2000	Jineth Bedoya Lima	El Espectador	Columbia	kidnapped twice, raped and tortured
2003	Veronica Cabrera	America TV	Iraq	died as a result of a bomb explosion under the car
2007	Zakia Zaki	Radio Peace	Afghanistan	shot to death
2007	Oralgaisha Omarshanova	Zakon i Pravosudiye	Kazakhstan	missing
2009	Maria Esther Aguilar Cansimbe	El Diario de Zamora	Mexico	missing
2011	Ana María Yarce Viveros Rocio Gonzáles Trápaga	Contralínea Televisa	Mexico	kidnapped and murdered
2011	Yolanda Ordaz de la Cruz	Notiver	Mexico	kidnapped and beheaded
2011	Maria Elizabeth Macias Castro	Primera Hora	Mexico	kidnapped and beheaded
2011	Lara Logan	CBS	Egypt	sexually assaulted
2012	Regina Martinez	Proceso	Mexico	beaten and strangled later
2012	Natasha Smith	Blogger	Egypt	sexually assaulted
2013	Rahmo Abdulqadir Farah	Radio Abudwaq	Somalia	shot to death
2013	Yara Abbas	Al-Ikhbariya TV	Syria	shot to death
2013	Tetiana Czarnowol	Ukraińska Prawda	Ukraine	assaulted and beaten

Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of Day, 2003; Lima, 2006; Woodruff, 2006; BBC, 2007; *Journalists*, 2008; Arvide, 2011; Warner, 2011; Hyvönen, 2011; *Murder*, 2011; Thanki, 2012; AP, 2013.

Cano World Press Freedom Prize posthumously awarded by the UNESCO (Finkelstein, 2008; Lokshina 2008). On May 20, 2014 another verdict was passed concerning her murder. The court found five defendants guilty of perpetrating the murder, while altogether six men were involved in the attack. One of them is already serving sentence.

The above table demonstrates that the targets of attacks are women investigative journalists, correspondents and journalists in local media who become inconvenient for criminals due to the subjects of their publications. Women have become the target of violence on a par with men – they are kidnapped, tortured and cruelly killed, as evidenced, among other things by the report *Shooting the Messenger: Journalists targeted by all sides in Syria*, published in 2013 by Amnesty International to celebrate World Press Freedom Day (*Shooting*, 2013). The high percentage of women journalists in the above-quoted statistics not only stems from the unprecedented ruthlessness of attackers and disrespect for women. It clearly follows from the increasing emancipation of women journalists and their entering a realm of activity that used to be reserved for men. Courage, accompanied with a belief in equal rights, even in the most dangerous forms of the journalistic profession, obliterates differences in gender in the perspective of attackers. That is the reason for such great ruthlessness in how aggressors treat women journalists. Jenny Kleeman notes that the world frequently appreciates the achievements of women journalists and praises them only after they die (Kleeman, 2012). This may be the price for equal rights in journalism to be paid by contemporary women who want to be able to do what they think is right.

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Zabite w akcji – dziennikarki śledcze, korespondentki wojenne a ryzyko śmierci lub bycia ofiarą przemocy

Streszczenie

W artykule omówiono problem zagrożeń wobec kobiet wykonujących zawód reporterek śledczych oraz korespondentek wojennych. Przedstawicielki obu wspomnianych grup pracowników mediów mają niejako wpisane ryzyko w wykonywaną przez

nie działalność, jednak skala naruszeń nietykalności osobistej wzrosła współcześnie do rozmiarów niespotykanych jeszcze kilkadziesiąt lat temu. Ów wzrost dotyczy również liczby przypadków pozbawienia życia reporterek dochodzeniowych oraz korespondentek wojennych podczas wykonywania przez nie obowiązków służbowych lub w czasie wolnym od pracy, ale pozostających w ścisłym związku z prowadzonymi przez nie działaniami. Znakiem czasu są coraz brutalniejsze ataki na kobiety-dziennikarki, co może świadczyć o zdegenerowaniu funkcjonujących w minionych stuleciach zasad odnoszenia się do przedstawicieli prasy wykonujących swoje obowiązki służbowe, a w szczególności do kobiet. Coraz częściej odnotowywane są akty agresji mające podłoże seksualne, co dodatkowo utrudnia dziennikarkom wykonywanie ich pracy. Ilustracją tez zawartych w artykule są dane statystyczne obrazujące ten problem oraz przedstawione w ujęciu chronologicznym krótkie charakterystyki najbardziej znanych w środowisku dziennikarskim ofiar przemocy wobec reporterek śledczych i korespondentek wojennych.

