



## INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE

# “MILITARY AND WAR JOURNALISM FROM THE USSR TO RUSSIA: FIELD PRACTICES AND LEGAL REGULATIONS”

## PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

**Moscow, 15 April 2014**  
*Chayanova str., 15 (RGGU)*

*Working languages: Russian and English*

**150** years  
of humanitarian action

## **“MILITARY AND WAR JOURNALISM FROM THE USSR TO RUSSIA: FIELD PRACTICES AND LEGAL REGULATIONS”**

The media have an important role to play in covering conflicts, violence and the challenges faced by vulnerable groups. At time, reporting on these issues can influence the humanitarian situation on the field. Focused on media treatment of armed conflicts and other situations of violence, the International round table will deal with the figure of war reporters from the USSR to Russia but also a comparative perspective.

Gathering academics (RGGU, Franco-Russian centre for social sciences, Journal Pipss.org\*, Journalism Faculty of Moscow State University, etc.), professionals (journalists and war reporters from different media, Union of Journalists of Russia), representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), State officials, etc., the event will be devoted to media in armed conflicts and other situations of violence both from a theoretical and practical point of view. It will examine how war journalists work on the field and assess the tensions and compromises between rights and duties, which is required to ensure media coverage and security threat. The participants will also discuss International Humanitarian Law rules related to the status of journalists and war correspondents, the role of the ICRC and other organizations in the protection of journalists.

Before embarking on a reflection about the contemporary period and in order to assess the transformations since the end of the USSR, this participants will come back to the history of war journalism in the XX<sup>th</sup> century. During the First World War and the Great Patriotic War but also in Afghanistan, military journalists played a crucial role in documenting the conflicts, though they worked in hard conditions. Witnesses and historians will reflect on the specificity of war journalism in the Soviet context and on the specificity of war censorship in the Soviet Union compared to ideological constraints in Western countries during the wars. Since the fall of the USSR, the Russian media field has experienced an opening and a liberalization which have applied to war journalism. The numerous armed conflicts that broke out in the post-Soviet area (in particular, in North and South Caucasus, but also in Tajikistan and Moldova, etc.) raise the question of their media frameworks. War is a time when tension arises between the principle of freedom of the press, on the one hand, the institutional control measures on the media on the other hand. The round table will come back to new realities and the difficulties of war journalism in the post-soviet period.

How did the position of war reporters evolve since 1991? What information do journalists get from the military, and which alternative sources of information on military questions are available (civil society, etc.)? What are the main security threats on journalists when doing their work on the field? How did the new political and economic realities transform the organization of the military press organs? How the diversification of the online media, the use of new technologies of information and communication affect military journalism?

The round table will offer a unique occasion to think collectively about the new challenges and new perspectives of war journalism in the XXI<sup>st</sup> century and about norms and regulations available to protect journalists.

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\* See: <http://pipss.revues.org>

## PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

9.30                    **Registration**

10.00 – 10.15        **Opening ceremony**

10.15 – 12.00        **First panel**

*«Media, violence and conflict reporting»*

**Themes for discussion:**

- **status of journalists and war correspondents under International Humanitarian Law, protection provided for by conventional and customary rules;**
- **main challenges of conflict and other situations of violence reporting;**
- **relations of media and the military, the State, non-state actors, International Organizations;**
- **role of the International Committee of the Red Cross (hotline, general role on protection issues for civilians and prisoners of war, etc.); National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, other organizations.**

12.00 – 12.20        *Coffee break*

12.20 – 14.00        **Second panel**

*«The history of military and war journalism in Russia»*

**Themes for discussion:**

- **military and war journalism during the WWI;**
- **military and war journalism during the Great Patriotic war;**
- **military-oriented mass media (Krasnaia Zvezda newspaper, Sovetskii Voin journal, etc.);**
- **the “commandeered” journalism phenomenon (prikomnadirovannaia zhurnalistika);**
- **media coverage of military issues during times of conflict (war in Afghanistan, etc.).**

14.00 – 14.45        *Lunch*

14.45 – 16.45        **Third panel**

*«Evolution of the media in the post-Soviet period»*

**Themes for discussion:**

- **liberalization of the media in the post-Soviet period;**
- **transformation of the statutes of military press organs, reconversions between the civil and military press organs;**
- **alternative sources of information on military subjects (civil society, etc.).**

16.45 – 18.00

Forth panel



*«Profession of journalist on dangerous assignments: challenges and trends»*

**Themes for discussion:**

- **evolution of military communication policy, reformation of press services, creation of new military media, use of new technologies of information and communication in war and military journalism, diversification of the online media;**
- **legal regulation of work of journalists in dangerous missions, State responsibilities, protection of journalists in dangerous missions, other States practices;**
- **preparedness of journalists to dangerous missions, training, responsibilities of media.**

18.00 – 18.30

**Summary discussion**

18.30

*Reception*