

SNAPSHOT OF A LIFE

MARIA GRAZIA CUTULI



FACTFILE

NAME:	Maria Grazia Cutuli
NATIONALITY:	Italian
WORK:	Reporter, war correspondent
PASSION:	Journalism
DATES:	Born 1962 19 th November 2001: killed in an ambush on the way to Kabul

A HIGH PRICE TO PAY

19th November 2001: Maria Grazia Cutuli killed on the way to Kabul.

Maria Grazia Cutuli, a 39-year-old reporter from the Italian newspaper "*Il Corriere della Sera*" and three other journalists, Julio Fuentes (Spanish) and two reporters of the Reuters' Agency, Hurry Burton and Azizullah Haidari, have been killed in an ambush. They were travelling to Kabul when some men, bare faced, stopped them. They tried to say that they were innocent, that they were journalists. But it wasn't enough: they were brutally carried off. Maybe it was just the fact that they were journalists that stirred up the homicidal fury of the assailants.

Journalists don't fight this war with weapons, but just with their pen and paper. Every day they have to fight to gain news because this is their mission. And it's this mission that pushes journalists to risk every day more and more. They control information, they search for proofs, they reveal the real life conditions of the people that live in those lands where there is nothing but war. But it's thanks to their job that it is possible for us to know and understand what's happening all around the world.

Nothing is sure, every hypothesis can be proved groundless, everything is

covered by a thick fog. Also the identity of the assailants is not sure: they can be confused ex-Talibans Reorganised Integralistes, or ... whatever.

The fact is that maybe those men had seen the journalists as a threat against them and their ideals. Journalists are in fact the symbol of freedom of speech and thought, of communications. They are the witnesses of real facts and the expression of values and principles that go against the Taliban rule. To let them pass would have meant to let these principles in. Thus, that's the reason why the assailants liked it better to kill them.

But as I have already pointed out, nothing is really sure.

The only one thing that we know for sure is that the journalists' dead bodies have been found.

They had been tortured, stoned up to death and finally shot in the shoulders, like only hopeless men with no more ideals could do to their worst enemy.

A high price to pay for the duty of reporting the news, Maria Grazia's life passion.

November 22, 2001

Irene Brucini 5 B/L

"BYE. YOU GO! I'LL SEE YOU IN KABUL" **THE LAST EVENING WITH MARIA GRAZIA**

It was Friday evening, Maria Grazia was in the one and only hotel of Jalabad where all reporters take lodgings.

She was gay, she was joking with her colleagues. The biggest chance of her life was waiting for her!

She was relaxed. After a lot of hard work the dream of a life was getting near: she would go to Kabul, to the core of the tragedy.

She had made a lot of important reportage about the Middle-East during her young career, she knew very well this area, every tribe, every balance among the clans, and that evening she knew also that, in the next days, in the country where she had carried out her passion for journalism, her life would change.

It's Saturday morning, nobody believes that leaving will be possible, then some good news come: the most dangerous stretch on the way to Kabul is free, it'll be possible to get there!

A lot of reporters leave the hotel for Kabul, but Maria Grazia and her colleagues decide to wait. They watch the others go away from the windows of their rooms.

On Sunday morning the same: they want to be sure that the danger is over and the way completely free!

On Monday, when in Italy a lot of people are reading the last scoop of Maria Grazia - her discovery of glass tubes of nerve gas, an arsenal of poison in the base of Al Qaeda - the troupe decide to leave for Kabul: the colleagues who left two days before have confirmed the good news.

Maria Grazia is ready. It's time! She doesn't want to be left behind. She leaves the hotel, she wants to follow her passion and her dreams. Monday morning, a few hours later: the racking violence of hate catches her life!

MARIA GRAZIA CUTULI

Elsa Esposito IV BL

