
Appendix I An Interpretation of Russian soldiers' culture: Methodology

Introduction

In Part III of this study, it was explained that based on the model of Winslow it was possible to reconstruct the culture of the army. Winslow has stated that the description of this particular culture is most complete, when it is analyzed on three levels, namely: (1) the military, political and social elites' perception of the ideal soldier (how he should act); (2) how a Russian soldiers' life actually takes place in reality (how he actually acts); and (3) how the soldier behaves during a moment of crisis (how he should not act). Consequently, it is a study of the expected, the actual and the unexpected aspects of a soldier's life. In Part III, we have reconstructed two aspects of the Russian soldiers' culture, namely the ideal or mythical aspects of the Russian soldier and the actual or realistic aspects of Russian soldiers' life. In this appendix, we will explain the methodological background used in order to justify the 'reconstruction' exercise made in Part III. This appendix will, therefore, be subdivided into three sections. In a first section some epistemological remarks are made that set the general context of how we build our knowledge of the Russian soldiers' culture. Basically, this first section treats aspects of hermeneutics or knowledge based on interpretation and the qualitative method used in social sciences. In a second section, the specific methodology is explained of how the ideal or mythical soldier was reconstructed. In the third and last section, the method used in order to give a realistic view on Russian soldiers' life.

Hermeneutics, interpretative knowledge and Quantitative versus qualitative method: some epistemological remarks⁵⁰⁵

The analysis of Russian soldiers' culture that is presented in Part III of this study is basically a qualitative analysis of Russian soldiers' culture. This means that it is an interpretative or hermeneutic oriented research. Hermeneutic research has a long tradition and goes back to the- mainly German- romantic philosophers of the beginning of the nineteenth century. The origins of hermeneutics have gone together with the foundation of the so-called '*Geisteswissenschaften*' (the arts, *geesteswetenschappen*). In fact, this project can be seen as a counter-movement against the ideas and the mentality of the Enlightenment with its optimism and unconditional belief in the possibilities of the ratio and scientific progress. The supporters of the 'counter-Enlightenment' wanted to show that there were sources of knowledge other than those based on- what they labeled 'the empirical and deterministic methods' of the natural sciences. According to these thinkers, works of art, literature, culture etc. asked for another method and another way of thinking in order to understand them. Therefore, they introduced the method of 'Verstehen', which they preferred over the method of 'Erklären'. What is essential in this philosophical movement is to understand that a monistic, one-dimensional-cause and effect-explanation of products of human creativity was not acceptable

⁵⁰⁵ These remarks are based on: Peter Watson, *A Terrible Beauty, The People and Ideas that shaped the Modern Mind*, London: Phoenix Press, 2000, pp. 26-39, and André Klukhuhn., *De geschiedenis van het denken, filosofie, wetenschap, kunst en cultuur van de oudheid tot nu*, [The history of Thinking, Philosophy, Science, Art and Culture from the Ancient Times until Now], Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2003, pp. 47-83.

anymore. It was said to be inaccurate for products of human creativity and, more general, for human behavior. As a result, they stressed the importance of perspectivism, interpretation, contextualization, and the limits of human language in order to express and explain human objects of art or human thoughts and emotions. In other words, instead of **monistic thinking** they proclaimed the possibility (or rather the necessity) of **pluralistic thinking**. Consequently, different interpretations of the same object could (and should) exist beside each other, depending of the perspective of the observer. Or, as the late Hans-Georg Gadamer-one of the modern hermeneutic thinkers- has written:

“An interpretation has in view to make a life or a work understandable by showing that it contains a certain direction. The direction or the significance is made explicit in an interpretation ... Every interpretation is a game that is characterized by movement that make others to move. Interpretation implies a heuristic circle from prejudice to understanding, a circle that takes the form of a spiral. An interpretation is based on the history of former interpretations, and it continuous the history. To interpret means to ask the questions which are in the game of the interpreter, and what these questions might mean for him.”⁵⁰⁶

This basically philosophical discussion also had its consequences for the social sciences. The qualitative versus quantitative oriented research discussion exists also in the social sciences and, as P. Swanborn expressed, ‘never the twain shall meet.’⁵⁰⁷ It is far beyond the goal of this thesis or this methodological section, to go into depth about the discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of both the quantitative and qualitative method in the social sciences. Both methods co-exist, and both methods have built up a scientific credibility (and legitimacy). It is, however, interesting to oppose both methods and show the ‘points of contrast’ between them, as a choice for one or other method has far reaching consequences. In fact, the characteristics of the qualitative method as presented by Swanborn, give the basic epistemological reference cadre for this study of the Russian soldiers’ problem.

	Quantitative method	Qualitative Method
Basic philosophical view on men and the world	Mechanistic, of which the functioning can be explained based on universal laws. Realism, ‘social facts’	An overly unpredictable process in which men creates the situation in which he functions in interaction with others. Idealism, ‘social constructions’
Epistemological point of view	Reductionist, studied from ‘outside’, with the eyes of the researcher	Holistic, studied from ‘inside’, with the eyes of the participant
Regulating ideas	Objectivity, falsification, theoretical foundation	Perspectivism, interpretation, ‘credibility’
Empirical cycle	Description in terms of relations between variables- explaining in causal terms-prediction- general theory	Description in terms of concepts, types and phases-intentional explaining (explaining is understanding by the researcher of the social process based on the intentions and behavior of the participants- prediction is no goal-

⁵⁰⁶ André Klukhuhn, *De gescheidenis van het denken, filosofie, wetenschap, kunst en cultuur van de oudheid tot nu* [The history of Thinking, Philisophy, Science, Art and Culture from the Ancient Times until Now], Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2003, p.54.

⁵⁰⁷ P.G. Swanborn, *Methoden van Sociaal-Wetenschappelijk onderzoek* [Methods of Social Scientific Research], Boom: Meppel, 1987, p. 341.

		open and flexible working method not based on theory
Choice of subject	Principally: unlimited, practically : problems that can be modeled: based on structures and processes	Situations of interaction on the micro-level, in situation where actors give significance to their behavior and their interaction with others
Units	Respondents, groups	Situations, incidents
Relations between the researcher and the participant	Researcher is outsider	Researcher is participant
Strategy	Experiment, survey, etc. the researcher creates a structured situation	Field research, analysis of documents, natural, real life situations.
Data sources	Most of the time one, reactive	As much as possible (triangulation), non-reactive
Data-analysis	Quantification, after data recollection	Non-quantification, at the same time as the data recollection
Reportage	Verbal, mathematical, tables and graphical language.	Verbal, literary language, focused on convincing the reader.

Table 18: The opposition between the quantitative and qualitative method

(Source: adapted from P. G. Swanborn, *Methoden van social-Wetenschappelijk onderzoek [Methods of Social scientific Research]*, Boom: Meppel, 1987 (nieuwe editie), pp. 352-354)

The choice between the quantitative and the qualitative method is in our case based on two elements. Firstly, our choice is determined by **the nature of the object of our study**. As we study organizational culture of the Russian military and we subscribe a semiotic approach to the concept of culture, an interpretive, qualitative method of research is suitable. This is mainly motivated by the study of the work of the anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Especially his seminal book ‘The Interpretation of Cultures’ has influenced this choice.⁵⁰⁸ In Geertz’ (semiotic) approach to culture, it is the purpose to aid the reader in gaining access to the conceptual world in which the subjects under research live so that he can communicate with them. It is in a way an attempt to penetrate in an unfamiliar universe of symbolic action. In order to obtain this goal, the researcher has a double task. He has to uncover a conceptual structure that informs our subjects’ acts and to construct a system of analysis in whose terms what is generic to those structures, what belongs to them, will stand out against the other determinants of human behavior. In other words, we have to provide a vocabulary in which what symbolic action has to say about itself can be expressed. ‘The vocabulary’ and ‘the conceptual structure’ that explains Russian soldiers’ culture is based on the interviews done among Russian soldiers and the analysis of documents (or so-called *zaiavlennyie*). Once we have executed Geertz’ method for interpreting a culture, we compare our results with the ideal-types of the post-modern soldier and the post-modern military organization, presented in the Part I of this study. Comparing our findings with an ideal type is perfectly compatible with Swanborns’ chapter on qualitative research.⁵⁰⁹ Secondly, our choice for a qualitative research method is based on **the material and practical possibilities of the researcher**. It is almost impossible, certainly for a foreign researcher, to get access to the Russian barracks and to organize a survey that has a more or less representative character. Therefore, other possibilities were tried in order to make a ‘snapshot’ of the Russian military mentality.

Having made and motivated our choice for a qualitative method of research, we must now also take into consideration the consequences of this choice. In the former paragraph, we

⁵⁰⁸ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic books, 1973.

⁵⁰⁹ P. G. Swanborn, *Op. Cit.*, p. 342.

have said that we have explained the Russian soldiers' culture. However, we would have better said that we made an effort, an attempt to explain this culture. We acknowledge that our findings are basically **an interpretation (or an induction)** of the Russian soldiers' culture, which is essentially **pluralistic**. We are also aware that the personal perspective of the researcher has played a role in the construction of our interpretation. We also acknowledge that we rather have tried to **convince** the reader, rather than 'to provide evidence' essential in the (natural) scientific tradition. Having said this, it need no further explanation that the findings of this study are based on 'social facts' and on 'what is said about these social facts'. In this sense, this study has certainly scientific relevance and legitimacy.

Russian Formal Military Culture: The Construction of the Mythical Soldier

The official and ideal picture of the Russian soldier is analyzed by reconstructing the image of the 'mythical Russian soldier'. This analysis is mainly based on **newspaper analysis**. Views of the military, political and social elites were selected in order to reconstruct the idealized Russian soldier. Three types of elites can be found for this exercise. Firstly, press articles have been analyzed in which several spokesmen, responsible for the personnel branch of the military establishment, make comments on the personnel crisis as it occurs in the stratum of (conscript) soldiers. These spokesmen come from all of the agencies who are involved in the recruitment of soldiers and who are responsible for the implementation of the mobilization policy. The most important officials are the people who represent the President, the Ministry of Defense and/or the General Staff. Moreover, voices from the Recruitment and Mobilization Branch of the General Staff, the Medical Branch of the Russian Armed Forces, and officers from the Prokuratura may not be neglected in the official reconstruction of the ideal Russian soldier. Secondly, official voices are underscored by views from the public: individuals as well as institutions (for example political parties, NGO's, academe). These voices, expressed most often in newspapers and academic papers, supplement the ideal image of the Russian soldier; Finally, drawing upon discussions with several Russian officers, academics, and leaders of NGO's, as well as 'ordinary' people in the street, a certain rhetoric is deduced that confirms a 'coherent' image of the Russian soldier.

List of newspapers, weeklies and monthlies consulted

Argument
Argumenti I Fakty
Armeiskii Sbornik
Armiia
Itogi
Izvestia
Kommersant-Daily
Kommersant-Vlast
Komsomolskaya Pravda
Krasnaia Zvezda
Military Thought
Moscow Times
Moskovskie Novosti
Moskovsky Komsomolets

Nezavisimaya Gazeta
Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie
Novaya Gazeta
Obshchaya Gazeta
Ogonyok
Orientir
Pravda
Sevodnya
St.-Petersburg Press
Vlast
Voennia Myslvoennii Vestnik
Voennia Znania

Russian Informal Military Culture: Soldiers' Life in the Barracks

Russian soldiers' reality is reconstructed on the basis of 50 life-history interviews of Russian soldiers and the content analysis of 50 so-called *zaiavlenyie* [declarations or statements].⁵¹⁰ These interviews were mainly taken in St.-Petersburg in the period March-July 1998. All of the soldiers who were interviewed frequented the Soldiers' Mothers Organization from St.-Petersburg which is a non-governmental self help group that counsels soldiers and their families about problems they experienced connected with the military establishment.

Life-history interviews of Russian soldiers

The 50 soldiers were interviewed in Russian. Most of the time there was a representative of the Soldiers' Mothers Organization present during the interviews. This representative was a psychologist or a medical doctor. It is clear that this was a form of control over the interviews, but the presence of the representative of the Soldiers' Mothers Organization was explained by the vulnerability of the soldiers and the traumatizing effect of the interviews on the soldiers. Whenever the interviewee used slang language, further explanation was asked to him or the representative of the Soldiers' Mothers explained the word. Whenever a certain situation or a certain element in the interview was not clear to the interviewer, further explanation was asked to members of the Soldiers' Mothers Organization or was discussed with the family of the interview.⁵¹¹

The profile of the Russian soldier that is deduced from these interviews is NOT representative of all Russian soldiers.⁵¹² Due to the controversial nature of this study, it was impossible to build a sample that was representative of the Russian military forces. Two basic methodological problems occurred: (1) the sample was not a systematic random sample; and (2) the sample had an inherent bias as most of the interviewed soldiers had negative experiences in the Russian Army.

Soldiers and their relatives do not like to speak about their military experiences and they only reluctantly volunteered for long interviews about their military experiences. The

⁵¹⁰ These interviews and 'declarations' are listed below. An example of a *zaiavlenyie* is attached in annex

⁵¹¹ I especially want to thank Annemarie Gielen, a Dutch member of the Soldiers' Mothers Organization of St.-Petersburg and a specialist in Slavonic languages who assisted me whenever language problems occurred.

⁵¹² See for the methodological consequences of this type of research: Alf Ludtke (editor), *The History of Everyday Life, Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

respondents' and their families' attitudes are understandable. In the first place, military issues are considered as confidential or secret in Russia as they were during the Soviet period. Secondly, because most of the soldiers interviewed had something to hide from the authorities they were nervous about being interviewed, since most of them had tried to escape from the system. The interview sample is subsequently based on the goodwill of those young men and their parents who were ready to speak at length about their military experience. This specialized sample is not representative of the Russian population as a whole. There is a sampling bias in that the sample population will more likely be soldiers who come from lower socio-economic status backgrounds (which mean that they are usually less wealthy, undereducated, underprivileged and have limited influential social connections- or the lack of so-called social capital). The soldiers' sample is also not representative of the divisions which comprise the Russian armed forces. For instance, most of the interviewees came from the Leningrad Military District, which has many Army and Navy units, but there is no subdivision in the Army or the Navy units whatsoever⁵¹³.

The reluctance with which soldiers speak about their life in the barracks had an impact on the way that the interviews were conducted. The interviews had an open format in which the soldier was asked to speak freely about his experiences; only from time to time did the interviewer ask specific questions.⁵¹⁴ It was not possible to tape-record the interviews as this could jeopardize the interviewee's personal safety. Sometimes it was not even possible to take notes during the interviews as this made the interviewee nervous and less cooperative. Many interviews were thus written down immediately after the interview had taken place.⁵¹⁵ Many topics were considered taboo as they touched upon sensitive elements in the private life of the individual. Such topics included, for example, the soldier's personal fears, frustrations, personal imperfections, sexuality, past social environment, and inability to cope with the military system and co-peers in the barracks. All of the soldiers who were interviewed frequented the Soldiers' Mothers Organization from St Petersburg which is a non-governmental self help group that counsels soldiers and their families about problems they may have had that are connected with the military establishment. Subsequently, interviewees as a rule had negative experiences which may have biased, or certainly shaped their stories and perceptions of the army. The feelings of frustration of the soldier were most often so deeply rooted, that great care must be taken in drawing conclusions on the basis of his testimony. The testimonies fell into two categories which can be labeled 'defeatist' and 'idealist'.⁵¹⁶ Some soldiers' narratives were driven by pessimistic feelings of revenge, while

⁵¹³ Soldiers coming from the other 15 'uniformed' power institutions were not selected for the interviews. This means concretely that conscripts serving in the Ministry of Internal Affairs or the Border Troops were not allowed to participate in the interviews. (On the 16 uniformed power institutions see: Aleksandr Xramchishin, *shestnadsat' armii I ni odnoi parallel'noi*, in: *Otechestvennye zapiski*, *Armiia I voennaia organizatsiia gosudarstva*, Vol. 9, Nr. 8, 2002.)

⁵¹⁴ A guide-line of questions is presented below.

⁵¹⁵ These methodological limitations were also met in the case of another study of Russian Mafia practices. Vadim Volkov explained: "I had to learn speed writing because a tape recorder was out. I explained that, as a sociologist, I was interested in general patterns, schemes, and examples and that I had no interest in who killed whom and sought no information that would put him or myself at risk. During the interviews, I could ask any question, but my respondent answered only those he wished. It was agreed that he would simply ignore the questions he considered inappropriate." See: Vadim Volkov, *Violent Entrepreneurs: the Use of Force in the Making of Russian Capitalism*, Cornell University Press, 2002, p.16

⁵¹⁶ The defeatist and idealist narratives of the soldiers can be related with the terminology used by Nancy Ries who studied Russian culture as it is constituted through talk. Nancy Ries detected two formats of narratives that were typical Russian, **litanies** and **cants**. In the litanies (and laments) the speaker enunciates a series of complaints, grievances, or worries about problems, troubles, afflictions, tribulations, or losses, and then often comment on these enumerations with the poignant rhetorical question ("why is everything so bad with us?"), a sweeping, fatalistic lament about the hopelessness of the situation, or an expressive Russian sigh of

others were motivated by optimistic feelings of wanting to change the system. The interviews are therefore never neutral or objective, but had their own subjective ‘black or white’ undertones. These elements were taken into account by the researcher while reading and analyzing the testimonies. In fact, using the terminology of Gie Van Den Berghe, these interviews must be considered as ‘Ego Documents’, which have to be treated with a specific methodological care.⁵¹⁷

Nevertheless, provided that if one takes these methodological reservations into account, it is possible to give an interpretation of the Russian soldier’s life based on these interviews.⁵¹⁸ This resulting reconstruction of a Russian soldier’s life compares favorably to other anecdotal accounts of life in the Russian barracks. The interviews will therefore be underscored by other Russian scientific studies, Western and Russian journalistic accounts and ‘confidential’ and ‘personal’ conversations with officers, that confirm the narratives given by the soldiers’ themselves.

In addition to the narrative description, a deeper analysis will be proposed that will explain the ‘unusual’ form of life in the barracks. The researcher observed that life in the barracks is seen NOT as ‘abnormal’ or ‘irrational’ behavior, but as a normal consequence of the organizational context in which these soldiers are living. Soldiers’ behavior and soldiers’ culture is a rational answer to the physical and organizational environment in which they have to live. In other words, as John Hockey puts it, all the unofficial practices of soldiers’ behavior:

“...can be seen as solutions to particular problems recruits encounter. All these solutions are officially deviant in that they either contravene written military law, or disobey verbal directives given by superiors.”⁵¹⁹

Interview topics

The ‘questionnaire’ with open questions was produced in order to have a guideline for the interview. As already explained, this is only a guideline as the interview was actually steered by the respondent who autonomously decided which question he wanted to answer and which not. He also decided upon the subjects he wanted to talk about extensively and which subjects he decided to ignore. The most important part of the interview was the soldier’s military experience (or soldatskie byt’), the day-by-day life experience in the barracks, and the strategies of surviving the system. (Part two and three of the questionnaire). General opinions about the military system and the developments of these ideas were a second important

disappointment and resignation. Litanies help to constitute a recognizable Russian stance. This Russian stance is a posture that expresses particular perspectives, values, desires and expectations. The antipode of the litany is the cant format. It is a pious, self-satisfied, promotional genre which epitomized much official propaganda and many other realms of public speech. Cant is a genre of power discourse, expressing a stance associating or identification with the institutes of authority and may be associated with the “official story” (See Nancy Ries, *Op. Cit.* 1997, pp. 84-88).

⁵¹⁷ Gie van Den Berge, *Getuigen, een case-study over ego-doucementen*, [Witnesses, a case-study on ego-documents] , Brussel: Navorsings- en Studiecentrum voor de geschiedenis van de Tweede Wereldoorlog, s.a. Gie Van Den Berge defined Ego documents as ‘documents’ in which the ‘author’ testifies about himself and his experiences For the methodological considerations about ego documents see especially his methodological chapter. (pp. 13-72)

⁵¹⁸ “atomization can only be avoided by using a certain degree of induction, by using a more general and consequently a fatal generalizing interpretation cadre. Historical facts can only be understood and be interpreted by identifying laws, by structuring and classification” (*Ibid.*, p. 17. My translation.)

⁵¹⁹ John Hockey, *Squaddies, Portrait of a Subculture*, (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1986), p. 50.

subject in the questionnaire. The least important item was the so-called demographical and personal questions. The order of the questions in the questionnaire as presented below is facultative as the order of the questions was mainly dictated by the circumstances of the interview and the co-operation of the respondent.

1. Experiences in the armed Forces (soldatskie byt') [day by day experience of the soldiers]

- First contacts with military authorities: prizyvnaia komisiya, meditsinkaia komissia (voenkomat) [conscript commission, medical commission (military committee)]
- Importance of formal procedures: passport, voennie biljet,...[military card]
- First impressions in the armed forces: contacts with officers, sergeants and soldiers
- Boot Camp, Units,...Organization of boot camp and of the unit
- Food situation, Living conditions, health situation in general and in personal situation
- Money: the importance of money (gifts of parents), soldiers' pay, begging
- System of dedovshchina: how they were introduced in the system, who were the dedy [grandfathers], how had they to act, what were the 'informal rules', Violence in the ranks: beating, violent rituals, suicide, sexuality...
- Reaction of the officers and sergeants on the system of dedovshchina and the occurrence of violence.
- Arbitrariness in the armed forces
- Contact with the home front: letters, telephones, vacation, visits,...
- Contacts with medical doctors, priests,...
- Experiences in the military hospitals, medical treatment, general ideas of 'sickness and health'

2. soldiers' strategy of survival

- Draft evasion, undergoing the military system, desertion, life experiences as a deserter, implications of desertion on the long term.

3. General impressions and opinions about the Armed Forces

- The armed forces in general (expectations versus experiences, change of opinion), the draft as a system, alternative military service, Conscious objection, the professional army,...
- The opinion of the parents about military service. Change in opinion?
- Kto vinovat'? Chto delaet? [Who to blame? What to do?]

4. Demographic and personal questions

- Date of birth
- Place of birth

- Place of living
- Education
- Family Situation-Marriage-Children-Parents-Sisters/Brothers
- religion
- Service in the Armed Forces: duration, Unit,

List of respondents

Number	Place	Name	Date
1	St.-Petersburg	Vadim	15 March 1998
2	St.-Petersburg	Vladimir	16 March 1998
3	St.-Petersburg	Sacha	17 March 1998
4	St.-Petersburg	Vadim 2	18 March 1998
5	St.-Petersburg	Vadim 3	18 March 1998
6	St.-Petersburg	Keshcha	21 March 1998
7	St.-Petersburg	Keshcha 2	24 March 1998
8	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 2	25 March 1998
9	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei	26 March 1998
10	St.-Petersburg	Vladimir 2	27 March 1998
11	St.-Petersburg	Viktor	27 March 1998
12	St.-Petersburg	Vladimir 3	27 March 1998
13	St.-Petersburg	Petr	28 March 1998
14	St.-Petersburg	Keshcha 3	29 March 1998
15	St.-Petersburg	Dr Lydia	29 March 1998
16	St.-Petersburg	Dr Anna	30 March 1998
17	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 2	31 March 1998
18	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 3	18 May 1998
19	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 2	19 May 1998
20	St.-Petersburg	Vadim 4	20 May 1998
21	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 3	21 May 1998
22	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 4	22 May 1998
23	St.-Petersburg	Andrei	22 May 1998
24	St.-Petersburg	Andrei 2	23 May 1998
25	St.-Petersburg	Vladimir 4	23 May 1998
26	St.-Petersburg	Igor	23 May 1998
27	St.-Petersburg	Keshcha 4	24 May 1998
28	St.-Petersburg	Igor 2	24 May 1998
29	St.-Petersburg	Andrei 3	25 May 1998
30	St.-Petersburg	Petr 2	25 May 1998
31	St.-Petersburg	Aleksandr	26 May 1998
32	St.-Petersburg	Andrei 4	27 May 1998
33	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 4	27 May 1998
34	St.-Petersburg	Denis	20 June 1998
35	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 5	1 July 1998
36	St.-Petersburg	Nikolai	1 July 1998
37	St.-Petersburg	Nina	1 July 1998
38	St.-Petersburg	Petr 3	2 July 1998
39	St.-Petersburg	Nikolai 2	2 July 1998

40	St.-Petersburg	Igor 3	2 July 1998
41	St.-Petersburg	Vladimir 5	3 July 1998
42	St.-Petersburg	Andrei 5	4 July 1998
43	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 6	6 July 1998
44	St.-Petersburg	Petr 4	6 July 1998
45	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 5	7 July 1998
46	St.-Petersburg	Denis 2	26 July 1998
47	St.-Petersburg	Vital	11 October 1998
48	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 3	2 November 1998
49	St.-Petersburg	Aleksandr 2	1 December 1998
50	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 7	14 December 1998

Contents analysis of the declarations (or zaiavlenyie)

When young men visited the Soldiers' Mothers Organization in St.-Petersburg, they were asked to fill a declaration file or a so-called *zaiavlenyie*. In this questionnaire personal and demographical questions were asked. Secondly there were questions about the health condition of the respondent and the reason for the visit of the Soldiers' Mothers Organization. Finally, the experiences of the soldiers were asked after in an open question. The Soldiers' Mothers Organization is a self help group and a lobby group which want to give personal advice and help for soldiers. Therefore the questionnaire is rather detailed about the socio-demographic questions. For ethical and deontological reasons, this kind of information was barred before the contents analysis of the military experiences of the soldiers could start. Only the forename of the respondent and the date when the interview took place was registered as no identification of the respondent could take place. On a weekly basis the Soldiers' Mothers Organization collect about 300 declarations. From these declarations ten of them were randomly selected in order to start the contents analysis. The most important elements in the context of this study were, as noted in the 'interview section' the day-by-day experiences of the soldiers (*soldatskie byt'*), the strategies of survival, and the general opinions about the armed forces.

List of declarations (Zaiavlenyie) used for Contents analysis

Number	Place	Name	Date
1	St.-Petersburg	Vital	19 March 1998
2	St.-Petersburg	Denis	19 March 1998
3	St.-Petersburg	Viktor	19 March 1998
4	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 2	19 March 1998
5	St.-Petersburg	Sacha	19 March 1998
6	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 3	19 March 1998
7	St.-Petersburg	Aleksandr	19 March 1998
8	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei	19 March 1998
9	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 2	19 March 1998
10	St.-Petersburg	Denis 2	19 March 1998
11	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 2	26 March 1998

12	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 3	26 March 1998
13	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 4	26 March 1998
14	St.-Petersburg	Vital 2	26 March 1998
15	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 5	26 March 1998
16	St.-Petersburg	Denis 3	26 March 1998
17	St.-Petersburg	Keshcha	26 March 1998
18	St.-Petersburg	Aleksandr 2	26 March 1998
19	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 3	26 March 1998
20	St.-Petersburg	Igor	26 March 1998
21	St.-Petersburg	Denis 4	17 May 1998
22	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 6	17 May 1998
23	St.-Petersburg	Nikolai	17 May 1998
24	St.-Petersburg	Vadim	17 May 1998
25	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 4	17 May 1998
26	St.-Petersburg	Vadim 2	17 May 1998
27	St.-Petersburg	Denis 5	17 May 1998
28	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 7	17 May 1998
29	St.-Petersburg	Igor 2	17 May 1998
30	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 4	28 May 1998
31	St.-Petersburg	Igor 3	28 May 1998
32	St.-Petersburg	Nikolai 2	28 May 1998
33	St.-Petersburg	Igor 4	28 May 1998
34	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 5	28 May 1998
35	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 8	28 May 1998
36	St.-Petersburg	Keshcha 2	28 May 1998
37	St.-Petersburg	Igor 5	28 May 1998
38	St.-Petersburg	Igor 6	28 May 1998
39	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 5	28 May 1998
40	St.-Petersburg	Sacha 6	8 July 1998
41	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 9	8 July 1998
42	St.-Petersburg	Aleksei 6	8 July 1998
43	St.-Petersburg	Denis 6	8 July 1998
44	St.-Petersburg	Vital 3	8 July 1998
45	St.-Petersburg	Aleksandr 3	8 July 1998
46	St.-Petersburg	Nikolai 3	8 July 1998
47	St.-Petersburg	Vadim 3	8 July 1998
48	St.-Petersburg	Igor 7	8 July 1998
49	St.-Petersburg	Viktor 8	8 July 1998
50	St.-Petersburg	Igor 3	8 July 1998