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The all-volunteer force in the Russian mirror

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The All-Volunteer Force in the Russian Mirror: Transformation without Change

Proefschrift

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door

Joris Jozef Elisabeth Van Bladel
geboren op 30 juni 1966
te Lier, België

To my beloved daughters, Jela and Lara

Acknowledgements

Table of Content

Introduction

'When we say that change should be considered as a sociological problem, we mean that it is men who change, that they do not change passively, and, moreover, that they change in their collectivity, and as a collectivity: not individually, but in their relations with one another and in their social organization.'

(Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg, Actors and Systems, p. 213)

In 1988-89 Soviet military reform became an issue of lively public debate. This happened at the height of «Gorbyphoria» when Mikhail Gorbachev's twin policies of glasnost and perestroika achieved their greatest momentum.[1] It was a time of high hopes and unprecedented, and in some ways unlimited, freedom of speech. Very soon, the army, one of the pillars of the Soviet system and a bastion of secrecy, came under severe attack. Reports of fraud and abuses within the ranks were widely publicized, particularly in liberal newspapers such as *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, *Ogonyok*, *Nezavisimaya gazeta* and *Argumenti i fakti*. The press tested the limits of glasnost when it questioned the competence of the Soviet generals. The army came under greatest fire over such issues as military competence in Afghanistan, peacetime deaths, and the tradition of *dedovshchina* – an informal control and disciplinary system among soldiers -that had apparently grown beyond the control of the officer corps. Horrific stories of immense suffering due to bad leadership and neglect at the small unit level shocked the public. The traditional image of the military organization and of military service crumbled within only a few months. The Soviet military High Command was on the defensive and realized that its institutional power had suffered a serious blow. What seemed to be a rather clumsy and arrogant reaction of the military elite (and yet one which might be quite understandable from the perspective of the 'bureaucratic phenomenon') only accelerated the process of the loss of legitimacy. It was as if the mindset of the generals had remained in Brezhnev's 'golden period', a period characterized by social and political prestige, and an impressive budget.[2]

In this atmosphere, the debate over military service assumed considerable societal importance. Indeed, the fate of the conscript soldier -as a victim of the 1979-89 Afghanistan war, or of brutal hazing and ethnic violence in the barracks- played a catalyzing role in the defense debate. Very quickly, the call for the abolishment of compulsory military service became overwhelming. It began with the students of Moscow State University, supported by the directorate of the university and later by the whole liberal intelligentsia, all asking for deferment of military service for higher education students. Their demand was met in July 1989 by Gorbachev and can be seen as a major defeat for the Ministry of Defense. Soon, the students' protest was joined by parents who did not want their sons to go to Afghanistan or – mindful of stories of peacetime deaths - simply did not want their sons to be victims of army life. The 'anti-service movement' originated in urban areas and among a liberal, western-

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[1] Martin McCauley divides Gorbachev's perestroika effort in three parts, namely perestroika Mark I, Mark II and mark III. The first period (1985-87) was concentrated on economic reform by devolving greater decision-making power to management and labor. The second period (1987-89) was intended to initiate reform from below. It was the beginning of political reform and it gradually revealed the ills of Soviet society. In The third period (1990-91) it was attempted to achieve consensus. It was the period in which Gorbachev acted as the executive president. Martin McCauley, *Gorbachev*, London: Longman, 1998.

[2] Timothy J. Colton, 'Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations in the Soviet Union', in: Timothy J. Colton and Thane Gustafson (Ed.), *Soldiers and the Soviet State, Civil-Military Relations from Brezhnev to Gorbachev*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, p.25-29.

minded community, but spread rapidly across the country and attained a nationalist character. People in republics on the borders of the Soviet Union, especially those in the Baltics and Caucasus, were even more reluctant to fulfil their military obligations than people in Russia. When, finally, young officers openly joined the public campaign against conscription, it broke another psychological barrier within the Soviet High Command. The centuries-old institution of universal, compulsory military service and the myth of the military as the progenitor of 'Soviet Man' and the vehicle of social cohesion was now challenged by public criticism. The Soviet Union collapsed one year after a mass coalition against the draft took shape. In the new Russia of the 1990's the military did not overcome the public's resentment toward it, and the issue of military service remained controversial.

The fact that recruitment was problematic compelled the High Command to adapt its recruitment policy. They were also pushed to do so by vocal military reformers who wanted the abolishment of military service and the creation of an all-volunteer force. So, parallel with the criticism of military service, there was an ever-growing call for a professional army. Therefore, both discussions -the critique against conscription and the discussion about an all-volunteer force - can be seen, at least in the Russian case, as complementary. Until the end of the Soviet Union, the debate over an all-volunteer force was fierce and reflected the divisions within Soviet society. The Soviet High Command, led by Minister of Defense General Dimitrii Yazov, and the 'coalition' of conservative, communist, and statist forces defended compulsory military service. They stood against the liberal, western and democratic forces who supported an all-volunteer force. The debate over military service evolved from a strictly military issue to an all-embracing political debate. The collapse of the Soviet Union did not bring public consensus to the issue and Russia is still struggling with its recruitment policy. The issue of the all-volunteer force, which received an empty promise in 1996, when President Yeltsin signed a decree announcing the abolishment of conscription by the year 2000, has remained a dominant one for the military. Influential officers such as Generals Boris Gromov, Pavel Grachev, Igor Rodionov, Igor Sergeev and others were not opposed to a professional army, in principle. However, they cited the practical obstacles to installing it, and their position remained ambivalent. The economic crisis of August 1998, a flagging anti-draft movement, the Kosovo crisis of 1999 followed by the Second Chechen War put a *de facto* end to the discussion over recruitment and the reform debate in general. It is no longer the hot political issue it was in the 1988-1996 period. The recruitment problem is far from over, however. As demonstrated in the First Chechen war, the Russian participation in SFOR and KFOR, and operations in other so-called hot spots [*goriachie tochki*]. Russia still struggles with a huge recruitment problem and a highly unmotivated contingent of soldiers. The public debate, though, has been silenced and compulsory military service has 'survived' for now.

The debate over military service and the formation of professional armed forces was central in the years of reform from 1988-1998. The fact that professionalization did not occur and that compulsory military service survived, surprised analysts. During the early years of reform - a period which saw Edvard Shevardnadze and Andrei Kozyrev as ministers of foreign affairs- warmer relations with the United States seemed to increase the likelihood of a volunteer military. The end of the Cold War diminished the threat of a massive attack on the Soviet Union. Many Western countries quickly adapted to the changed environment and effected a rapid transition to an all-volunteer force, a 'revolution in Military Affairs' that was closely watched in Russia. How is it possible that Russian decision-makers remained committed to compulsory military service? Why is military service such an enduring institution, capable of withstanding fierce public and political attack, the disaster of several conflicts, and a number of attempts from inside to change it? It is this question which forms the basic problem of this dissertation.

Many explanations are given for this contradiction. In the Russian debate, especially in the generals' arguments against the all-volunteer force, the economic argument prevails. The Soviet and Russian High Command (and, one might add, a number of Western analysts) have consistently repeated the line that an all-volunteer force is only possible to maintain in an affluent country.[3] In the view of other researchers, the Russians' resistance toward structural change in the military is explained as the consequence of the loss of status as a superpower in the international system.[4] In this reasoning, the Russians wanted to maintain their superpower status and a militarized society of which nuclear weapons and a (Soviet type) mass army are the exponents. Did the Soviet army not prove to be successful in the Second World War and was it not able to deter possible invaders afterwards? Another explanation that is offered argues that Russia's refusal to give up its traditional armed forces reflects purely a psychological barrier to change and the basic reason therefore must be found in the historic experience of the Imperial and Soviet State. Each of these factors –or a constraining combination of them- may have influenced the process of change in the Russian military. Indeed, reform in a turbulent social and economic environment is extremely difficult. And Russia has its international reputation to consider. Finally, the Russian military is haunted by its past glories, and is resentful about the 'constant retreat' under Gorbachev and the collapse of the Soviet Union as a superpower. All these factors are, however, not enough to explain Russia's apparent failure to introduce military organizational change. These arguments reduce the Russian military organizational crisis to 'an aggregate of tangible problems' as Crozier and Friedberg warned in a discussion on organizational change:

> "A great deal of energy and money are invested in the study, analysis, and processing of the technical and economic aspects of the problems. But the planners fail to bear in mind that the problems in question exist only through the systems of action designed to deal with them. These systems cannot be reduced to an aggregate of tangible problems. As human constructs, they are never mechanically or automatically responsive to injunctions or decisions handed down from above or relayed through a central regulatory mechanism."[5]

In this study, two alternative (less tangible) arguments are used to explain Russia's inertia in matters of military reform, namely an internal political (institutional) argument and a socio-cultural argument in which the individual in interaction with the organization is highlighted.

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[3] It is revealing, for instance, to note that the Sovet po vnechnei I oboronnoi politike [the Council on Foreign and Military Policy]-a non-governmental research organization led by Sergei Karaganov-issued a book 'Strategiia dlia Rossii: povestka dnia dlia prezidenta-2000' [A strategy for Russia: an agenda for the President in the year 2000] in which chapter 4 is dedicated to military policy and the military organization. In the sixth paragraph of this chapter on 'reforma professional'noi voennoi podgotovki' the authors main argument against an AVF is an exclusive economic one. This is the more interesting because this chapter was the result of several roundtable discussions and other meetings in which many persons participated who dominated the defense discussion in the 1990's. The participants were: A. Arbatov, P. Zolotarev, P. Pomachkin, V. Chilkov (the authors of the chapter), A Belkin, S Karaganov, E Kozhokin, A Mordovin, S. Oznobishchev, D Trenin, V. Tret'iakov, A. Tsalko, (members of a work group on military reform) V Danilov, A. Zakharov, V Manilov, S. Sokut, M Gareev, V. Zorkal'tsev, I.Kovalev, A. Kokochin, V. Lukin, E. Primakov, S. Rogov, U. Rodionov, V. Rubanov, V. Samsonov and A. Sprengel (participants on several discussions) See Sergei Karaganov (Ed.), *Strategiia dlia Rossii, Povestka dnia dlia prezidenta-2000,* Moskva: Vagrius, 2000.

[4] See for instance: G. A. Zyuganov (Ed.), *Voennaia reforma: otsenka ugroz natsional'noi bezopasnostu Rossii*, Moskva: RAU-universitet, 1997.

[5] Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg, *Actors & Systems, the Politics of Collective Action*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 233.

Before detailing these two arguments, the study's use of two concepts, namely 'military reform' and 'military organizational change' need to be defined.

In examining the concept of *military reform* the focus of the study will be on the broad political process relating to the discussion about change in the military structure. Military reform is thus seen in this study as a political concept, which will be detailed in Part Two of this dissertation. It is a typical top-down approach to the phenomenon of organizational change. The problem of the actors and the institutions that are part of the decision-making processes of military reform and the efficiency with which they perform are at the center of attention.

Military organizational change is a broader concept that addresses the global environment influencing change. It relates to a more diffuse and less tangible discussion, certainly in comparison with the political approach. In this study, the concept of military organizational change refers to the socio-cultural context in which military change occurs. This is a bottom-up approach, which complements and balances the top-down view of the politics of change. In the discussion about a possible end to the system of compulsory military service, it is interesting to concentrate on the problem of the drafted soldier. How does the soldier fit into the process of military change? Is he an obstacle or an impetus to organizational change? The way conscript soldiers are seen by the Russian High Command is also discussed. Finally, what is the socio-cultural impact of the soldiers' problem on society at large?

Two basic ideas guide this study. Firstly, the Russian military is seen as a complex, bureaucratic organization. The theory about change in bureaucracies as part of organizational sociology is therefore seen as a fundamental background for this dissertation. Secondly, and this is more controversial, modernization theory - as part of the sociology of change - is taken as a guideline. There has been much criticism addressed at '19th century' ideas about change. Robert Nisbet, Charles Tilly, Immanuel Wallerstein-to mention only the most well known-have attacked modernization theories since the 1970's.[6] However, in this dissertation modernization theory is seen as a valuable reference point for the reason that it has, implicitly, influenced a great deal of work in the field of military sociology- work which can be drawn upon to explain many aspects of change in the contemporary and the so-called post-modern military organization. Moreover, recent world-wide and longitudinal research based on value surveys (which included Russia) provide some evidence for basic assumptions in modernization theory, which give additional ground for choosing this approach.[7]

Alternative arguments to explain the failure of military reform will be developed to examine the research question, which asks: <u>to what extent and in what way have institutional, political and especially socio-cultural factors contributed to the failure of military reform in Russia during the period of 1988-1998? In particular I would like to examine the case of the post-modern 'all-volunteer-force' debate which is the outward manifestation of a widely recognized need for military reform and effective organizational change in the Russian armed forces.</u> In order to investigate this problem, the thesis argument will be divided into the following three parts: Protracted failure: the Russian military and the concept of the post-

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[6] See for instance: Immanuel Wallerstein, *Unthinking Social Science. The Limits of Nineteen-Century Paradigms*, Cambridge: Polity Press: 1991; Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1984; and Robert Nisbet, 'Developmentalism: a Critical Analysis', in: J.C. McKinney and E. A. Tiryakian (Ed.), *Theoretical Sociology*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970, pp. 167-204. For a good review of modernization theory and the critique on it see: Piotr Sztompka*, The Sociology of Social Change*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1993, pp. 129-142.

[7] See: Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, 'Modernization, cultural change, and the persistence of traditional values', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 65, No. 1, February 2000, pp. 19-51; as also Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization*, Princeton: Princeton University press, 1997.

modern all-volunteer force; protest against choice: decision-making in the Russian military; and Cultural encounter: the soldiers' question.

The first part, protracted failure, explains the basic theoretical ideas that support this research and confronts them with the Soviet Russian debate on the conscript v. volunteer issue. The first chapter sheds some light on insights in the (dynamic) interaction between 'the actor' and 'the system'. It concentrates on change of the bureaucratic organization and applies it to the military organization. The main goal is - based on a sociological and Western understanding of professionalization of the armed forces - to provide insight into the model of the post-modern all-volunteer force and the logic of how military organizations evolve toward this type of organization. The long and turbulent history of military organizations as it occurred in the West will therefore be reviewed from a macro-sociological perspective, with a particular focus on the watershed changes of the 1990's. Besides this theoretical approach, the evolution is followed and illustrated with the experience of France, The Netherlands and Belgium –three countries that decided on and implemented the zero-draft in the 1990's –is presented. Some structural military manpower indicators of these countries -sociological and organizational variables- are shown as well as some comments are made on the political discussion that precipitated the all-volunteer army decision. In a second chapter, the Soviet-Russian structural manpower problems are put in context. Therefore the Soviet style mass army is outlined and the Russian structural crisis in manpower policy, based on a comparative view with the experience of France, Belgium and The Netherlands, defined. Finally, the third chapter concludes with a discussion that motivates the approach that is followed in this study. Based on the specific characteristics of the Russian reform failure and structural crisis, the chosen approach, which concentrates on decision-making problems in politics and cultural restraints on the reform effort, is motivated. It gives at the same time the opportunity to discuss the abundant literature on Soviet-Russian crisis in military affairs and links this study with several authors and applied studies in the field of Soviet-Russian military studies.

In the second part, protests against choice, military reform is considered as a problem of political decision-making. Accordingly, the military organization is put in its political context and the theoretical assumptions of effective decision-making are confronted with Russian political life during the turbulent 1988-1998 period. Although the influence, the achievements and failures of Gorbachev are not neglected, this period may be roughly considered as the era which was dominated by Boris Yeltsin. Therefore, the political reality with its specific Yeltsin stamp receives much attention. After the political context is outlined, the various reform plans, as published in the media, are outlined and confronted with ideas of efficient decision-making theory. The goal is to determine the extent to which the political process of reform (the way decision-making bodies were installed and decisions were made) contributed to organizational inertia, bearing in mind the enormous pressures that existed in the period 1988-1998.

The third part, cultural encounter: the soldiers' question, concentrates on the Russian military conscription system as it functioned in the 1990's. It puts the Russian conscript soldier in his socio-cultural and historical context. The hard living conditions, hazing and other realities of the Russian army are the main point of study and are related with specific mass army traits outlined in the first part of this study. Moreover, violence among soldiers is related to the question of violence in Russian society as a whole. It is here that modernization theory is used and a fundamental question is posed, namely: is the post-modern all-volunteer force structure compatible with the socio-cultural conditions in Russia? Is the contemporary soldier a barrier to structural change in the Russian military? In an effort to explore this, findings of field interviews with Russian soldiers are drawn upon.

Speaking with Russian soldiers is still a difficult undertaking. Soldiers are reluctant to speak openly about their army experiences, despite what the coverage of the soldiers' problem

in newspapers may suggest. Through the Soldiers' Mothers Organization in St.-Petersburg however, it was possible to interview personally about fifty soldiers, to participate in several information sessions and to read fifty declarations or -so called *zaiavleniia* -in which Russian conscripts asked for help and revealed many aspects of the life of a Russian soldier [*soldatskii byt'*]. The personal interviews were done in cooperation with a Russian psychologist and a medical doctor, voluntarily working with the Soldiers' Mothers Organization of St.-Petersburg. This method is impressionistic and certainly biased –by the fact that only problematic cases present themselves with the Soldiers' Mothers-, but together with other scientific and journalistic publications, it can reconstruct a picture of contemporary army life in the Russian barracks. The results of these interviews can therefore also be inscribed in the field of 'the anthropology of the soldier'. In Appendix I, an extensive account is given on the methodology used to justify the reconstruction of the Russian soldier.

As mentioned above, this study is led by the question: why is a certain expected policy not implemented? Why has the all-volunteer army not become a reality in Russia? It may be strange to ask why a social event or change did not take place. With this question it is not insinuated that Russia is in one way or the other conditioned by socio-cultural and historical factors that render it incapable of or immune to change. On the contrary, Russia changes permanently and turbulently! Russia has always seemed to be confronted with turbulent change and stagnation at the same time. However, change is neither a linear, nor a chronological event and it is never steered by simple (well-meant) intentions. Organizational change must be first and foremost addressed as a problem of human choices made in the realm of power-relations, of influence, of bargaining, and of calculation. The outcome of an effort to change the military organization depends thus on the results of a 'game' in which the actor is confronted with the system as this fundamentally means: "that it reflects choices made by the actor in order to take advantage of available opportunities within the framework of constraints imposed upon him".[8] The interesting element in this point of view is that "…behavior is never entirely predictable, since it is not determined but, on the contrary, always contingent", which means "*both* dependent on a context, on opportunities and constraints (material and human), *and* indeterminate, hence free."[9] This study wants thus to bring the individual back in, as it is essentially an analysis of human choices made in a turbulent changing environment.

While the specific nature of the Russian context; with its particular tensions and contradictions, are borne in mind, an implicit comparative perspective is employed throughout this analysis. This is an intentional process, based on scientific justified considerations, as traditional authors on Russian historical and military affairs have done before.[10] Nicholas Riasanovky noted that: "In this, as in so many other cases, the evolution of Russia seems to offer a sharper and cruder version of what happened to the west of it?"[11] and Ellen Jones, "…that the Soviet military has some characteristics in common with its counterpart in noncommunist states, while others are unique to the society and political culture in which it is embedded".[12] This implicit comparative approach contains the idea that Russia and the West struggle in essence with comparable organizational problems on which debate is possible. Moreover, it may be clear that a Western model confronted with the Russian case can open

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[8] Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg, *Op.Cit.*, p. 18.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 18 and p. 273.

[10] Chris Lorenz, *De constructie van het verleden, een inleiding in de theorie van de geschiedenis* [The Construction of the Past, an Introduction in the Theory of History], Amsterdam: Boom, 1994 (fourth edition), pp.180-214.

[11] Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, "The Problem of the Peasant", in: Wayne S. Vucinich (Ed.), *The Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Russia*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968, p. 263.

[12] Ellen Jones, *Red Army and Society, a Sociology of the Soviet Military*, Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985, p. xv.

new perspectives on the Russian problems, and that the Russian experience may add something to the theoretical insights that govern the Western scientific discourse on this issue. This mutual 'impregnation' of Russian experience with the western debate and vice versa is seen as an original contribution of this study to the literature on Russian military affairs. Finally and crossing the conventional limits of scientific debate, the hope is expressed that this study can be seen as a stimulus for debate and dialogue on military affairs on both ends of the European continent, wherever eventual borders may have been or are situated.

Part I Protracted Failure: the Russian Military and the Concept of the Post-Modern All-Volunteer Force

'When sufficient knowledge of a system is lacking, reform typically gets bogged down in an interplay of action and reaction in which gradually suffocates all desire for change.'

(Crozier and Friedberg: *Actors & Systems*, p. 232)

Introduction

The objective of this dissertation is to investigate the debates surrounding the professionalization of the Russian armed forces, which took place during the Gorbachev era (1988-1992) in Soviet Russia and the Yeltsin era (1992-1999) in post-Soviet Russia. The attempts that were made by the political and military elites to become a post-modern military organization were fraught with problems and the often stated aim of full professionalization was never achieved. Thus, this thesis investigates what these problems were and why they occurred. I propose that political, institutional, and cultural factors to a significant, if not decisive degree prevented the Russian military to become a post-modern All-Volunteer Force. In order to examine or to test this hypothesis, I have summarized the literature on this topic which includes: firstly political science theories on the nature of bureaucracy which takes into account the factors that affect change in a bureaucratic organization and secondly, the social, political and historical writings on Russia and its military organization and other military organizations in general. Through this analysis it is possible to see that the failure to fully professionalize the Russian military was not, as often thought, primarily an economic problem but it was the result of a combination of factors.[13]

In order to examine what these factors were and how they are inter-related to one another, an analytical framework is constructed which will guide the structure of the dissertation. This framework is based on a sociological model that focuses on the agents and processes involved in (military) organizational change on the one hand and on 'ideal models' (or 'developmental constructs') which provide its conceptual referents, on the other.[14] The

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[13] In order to prevent conceptual confusion, it is necessary to state that throughout this thesis the concepts of 'professionalization' and the 'all-volunteer force' are used as synonyms of the 'post-modern' variant of these ideas. For reasons of style, fluency and eloquence, the adjective of post-modernity is sometimes omitted in this text, while it is always the purpose to indicate the post-modern military organization. This thesis is in its essence a study of the development (or better the non-development) of the post-modern military organization in the Russian Federation! In the second chapter of this part, it will be explained in detail what is exactly meant with the post-modern military organization.

[14] The idea of a 'developmental construct' was proposed by the American political scientist Harold Lasswell in the 1930's in his famous article on the 'Garrison State' in which he intended to 'posit an ideal-type at some future point by which past and present trends can be identified and appraised.' See: Harold D. Lasswell, 'The Garrison State', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVI, No. 4, January 1941, pp. 455-457; and Charles C. Moskos, John Allen Williams and David R. Segal (editors), *The Postmodern Military, armed Forces after the Cold War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p.7. Lasswell's method may counter in some ways the critique of 'presentism' (in German: '*hineininterpreterung*') often exclaimed by historians who say that (sociological) explanations are based on *ex post facto* analysis and have 'a tendency to read history and social reality backwards, measuring change over time from the point of arrival rather than the point of departure'. See on this last point Leon Aron, *Yeltsin, A Revolutionary Life*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000, p. 697.

sociological model used throughout this study is an operationalzed, yet a simplified 'construction' of reality based on personal choices. This model sheds a particular light on military organizational evolution, in general, and on the idea of the professionalization of the armed forces in a post-industrial society, in particular. Subsequently this model is useful because it is capable of describing and explaining key aspects of military organizational change. The use of ideal models, as the principle tools of comparison, forms the fundamental method of analysis in this study. In this respect, the Western experience of professionalizing the armed forces, and the academic discourse associated with it, is both implicitly and explicitly used as a means of comparison with the Russian case.

The purpose of Part I of the dissertation is two-fold. Firstly, an analytical model, addressing change in the military organization and the professionalization of the armed forces in its specific, post-modern environment is developed and explained. This model, which is called 'the triad model of organizational change', is developed from and built upon the Western literature of military sociology and is illustrated by drawing upon the experiences of three European countries: France, the Netherlands, and Belgium. These countries were selected because they decided to introduce the 'zero draft' system of recruitment in the 1990's.[15] Secondly, the structural crisis in Russian manpower policy is defined and explained using this analytical framework. In this manner the main research question of this study, as it is outlined in the introduction of this thesis, is expanded into greater detail and placed into the proper Russian context.

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[15] An implicit goal of the proposed model is to expand the intuitive knowledge of the concept of the '*professional'naia armiia*' through the sociological (post-modern) reading of it, especially for a Russian audience. In several contacts with Russian activists (but also Russian military professionals) it was observed that they never approached the military organization in this way. The purpose is to accept Crozier's and Friedberg's advice, saying that: 'if action is based on adequate knowledge of the context, it can go with the system rather than against it, thus economizing on resources which are inevitably scarce and improving outcome' (Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg, *Actors and Systems, The Politics of Collective Action*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 233). The model was proposed several times before Russian audiences by the author: Joris Van Bladel, '*Professional'naia armiia budushchego I zakat massovoi armii post-sovremennaia organizatsiia, sotsiologicheskie aspekty*' [The Professional Army of the future and the Decline of the Mass Army The post-Modern Military Organization, some Sociological Aspects], in: Elena Vilenskaia and Ella Poliakova (editors), *Materialy seminarov 'V XXI vek bez nasiliia [Proceedings of seminars 'To the XXI Century without Violence']*, St-Petersburg, 15-17 May 1998, St.-Petersburg: Tyskarora, 1998, pp. 16-23; and in a modified form in, Joris Van Bladel, 'The logic of the decline of the modern mass army and the rise of a post-modern all-volunteer force', in: John Lough and Tatiana G. Parchalina (editors), *The First Anniversary of the NATO-Russia Founding Act: Appraisal and Outlook, Documents on the International Conference, 19-20 June 1998*, Moskva: INION RAN, 1999, pp. 138-149.

Chapter 1. Change in Military Organizations: a Conceptual Framework

The process of reform of a complex organization such as the Russian military can be understood in two ways, one may take either a specific political perspective; or a broader, sociological approach. Reform in the narrow sense of the word is the result of political and managerial decision-making, which includes: the conceptionalization of ideas for reform, the process of decision-making, and the implementation of the proposed reform itself. This approach is typically a 'top-down' interpretation based on the assumption that reform is a consciously controlled process which can actively intervene in and alter social reality. In this context reform means the realm of official plans for reform, of which 'Russia' saw at least six since 1989. However, the study of reform as a strictly political and managerial activity can be misleading. The attempt to reform military institutions in the West showed, for instance, that notwithstanding the relatively benign political circumstances and the availability of sophisticated management skills, it has consistently proven to be an extremely complex and difficult process to undertake. Moreover, the Russian experience has shown that military reform has not been governed by a clear and coherent time frame.[16] The complexity, the ambiguity, and even haphazardness of military reform suggest that there is a need in the field to complement the narrow view of military reform with a broader understanding of social change. Social change is a complex and diffuse concept; which is the result of a multi-dimensional process on which active and passive factors (or 'actors' and 'systems') simultaneously intervene. This process is, as the Russian military historian, Mark von Hagen, wrote, "an interplay between objective and subjective factors, or the interaction among structural, conjunctural, and eventual aspects of the historical process."[17]

Both the political and the sociological perspectives shed light on complementary processes and both are therefore necessary elements in the study of military organizational change. If the sociological interpretation itself tempers somewhat the illusion of omnipotent managerial decisions being made, this study never denies that the political process itself is an indispensable constituent of organizational change. Politics, the arena of state power and power-wielding actors, determine the timing and the tempo of reform in the short run. Ultimately, politics decide whether organizational change is a genuine requirement or merely a looming option at any point in time. Notwithstanding this, the *longue durée* and the impersonal, structural, and cultural processes of reform do matter because they delineate or construct the environment in which politics take place. For example, the ways that individuals act in an organization and interact with the broader environment is explained in detail in the first section of Chapter 1.

The second section of this chapter shows how these general processes affect the military organization in general, and in particular, the idea of professionalization. Therefore, a dual 'politico-social' interpretation, as suggested above, of the concept of professionalization is provided. In narrow terms the position of the professional soldier can be seen as the result of day-to-day political decisions. The professional soldier becomes in this sense simply a volunteer soldier who is paid for his survival. In broader terms, the professional soldier can be understood as the ultimate result of a complex process of environmental influences, which is also called 'the process of modernization'. Seen in this way, the professionalization of the

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[16] Stephen White alluded to this in his study of Soviet-Russian governmental campaigns against alcoholism. See: Stephen White, *Russia Goes Dry, Alcohol, State and Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 176-189.

[17] Mark von Hagen, *Soldiers in the Proletarian Dictatorship, The Red Army and the Soviet Socialist State, 1917-1930,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993, p. 4.

armed forces can be understood as a project of modernization, which is related with more fundamental and more difficult to change concepts such as 'mentality' and 'culture'. The latter, complex meaning of professionalization in the armed forces is the main subject of the second section.

Finally, in the third section of this context-setting chapter, the experience of the professionalization of the armed forces will be briefly illustrated. The continental experience of Belgium, France and the Netherlands will serve as examples but not as models. These experiences demonstrate two universal problems: one is the consistently problematic nature of military reform; the other is that professionalization has a 'national specific' character. Donna Winslow warns us in her study of the Canadian military, that the process of organizational change is never "a linear, chronological, or coherent process".[18] These examples should remind the reader that, contrary to the widely held view that the Western experience of military reform was an unequivocal, smooth success story, in reality it revealed both successes and failures. The experiences of the three countries provide examples of how the 'zero draft' was introduced in the 1990s in a post-industrial society, and is an important reference point to which the reality of Russian military reform can be compared.

1. 1.   Change in Complex Organizations

Organizational change is fundamentally the result of a decision-making process, which confront the institutional interests and beliefs that exist within a turbulent, broader environment. Organizational change is the point where 'structure' and 'actor' meet. Therefore the key elements of this study are the actor, the organization and the environment which are all guided by their own logic. These three elements create what is called the 'triad model of organizational change'. In reality they form a complex interacting triad whose constituent elements are difficult to separate and disentangle. Each of these elements requires further explanations and clarification of how they are interpreted and how they are related to each other.

The Rational Actor

An actor is portrayed as a 'social entity'- an individual or a corporate actor- who acts rationally in his/her/its relationship with the organization and the social environment beyond the boundaries of the organization. In his/her/its struggle with the environment, the actor builds a strategy which Crozier and Friedman have called a 'rational strategy'.[19] Based on their empirical study, they attribute the following characteristics to the actor. Firstly, the actor rarely has clear objectives and, even more rarely, coherent projects instead the actor's objectives are diverse, more or less ambiguous, more or less explicit, and more or less contradictory. Secondly, the individual's behavior is nevertheless active. While the actor is always constrained and limited, his/her behavior is never directly determined. Thirdly, the behavior in question is always meaningful. Not only is the actor rational in terms of the objectives pursued, (s)he is also rational in respect to other opportunities which appear and their respective defining contexts on the one hand, and on the other hand to other actors' behavior, their decisions, and the ensuing 'game' between them. Fourthly, this behavior

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[18] Donna Winslow, *Le Régiment Aéroporté du Canada en Somalie, Une enquête socio-culturelle* [*The Canadian Airborne Regiment in Somalia, A Socio-Cultural Survey*], Ottawa: Ministre des Travaux Publics et Services Gouvernementaux Canada, 1997, p. 11.

[19] Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg, *Actors and Systems, The Politics of Collective Action*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980, pp. 24-25.

always has two aspects: offensive (which involves exploiting opportunities in order to improve the actors' situation); and defensive (involving the actors' maintenance and broadening of their liberty (freedom of maneuver) and therefore their capacity to act). Finally, according to Crozier and Friedman, there is no such thing as purely irrational behavior. The very utility of the concept of strategy is that it applies equally to behavior which seems the most rational and to that behavior which appears to be completely erratic. The analyst can discover regularities which make sense only relative to a strategy. Hence strategy is nothing other than the inferred basis *ex post facto* for the empirically observed regularities of behavior. It follows that any such 'strategy' is in no way synonymous with willed behavior, any more than it is necessarily conscious.[20]

The words 'rationality' and 'rational', as mentioned in the fifth point, must be treated with caution. They are sociological concepts not psychological or ethical notions. The idea of the 'rational actor', as a constitutive element of social change, allows for the explanation of social phenomena. It does not make an assertion of an actor's mental state nor the appropriateness of his/her actions. Stating that an individual is 'rational' is completely different from saying that he is intelligent or wise.[21] Moreover, as noted in the first point, it is not because an actor in an organization acts 'rationally' that the overall result of his action is 'rational'. The phenomenon of the perverse, unintended effects of rational behavior is well known in social sciences. It was even noted by R. K Merton as early as 1936.[22] Crozier and Friedberg recommend looking to the actors' perceived opportunities and his/her relation with his/her co-actors, rather than his/her objectives. This is crucial to this thesis.

In conclusion, this section has shown that an actor's behavior is perceived as an expression and consequence of freedom, no matter how limited that freedom may be.[23] Moreover, it reflects choices made by the actor to take advantage of available opportunities within the framework of constraints imposed upon him/her. Change is thus an essential task for which an actor has to find solutions.[24]

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[20] This last element of 'rational behavior' is also described by Anthony Giddens when he cited the work of Erving Goffman: 'It is my belief that any group of persons, primitives, pilots or patients, develop a life of their own that becomes meaningful, reasonable, and normal once you get close to it… It indicates that what looks 'insane' to an outside observer is not quite so irrational when seen in the context of the hospital…As a consequence, they develop patterns of behaviour which seem bizarre to the outsider, but were understandable attempts to cope with the unusual demands of their environment.' (Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993 (Second Edition), pp. 684-685.). An applied study on the military that illustrates this point can be found in: Charles C. Moskos, *The American Enlisted Man*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1970, pp. 64-77.

[21] The notion of the rational actor is often misinterpreted and is the cause of much misunderstanding. 'Rationality' in this study is stripped from every ethical or normative notion. As will be explained in the chapter of the soldiers' question, scientific analysis and political activism, ethics and management, reflection and action all find themselves in a very difficult inter-relationship.

[22] R.K. Merton, 'The Unanticipated Consequences of Purposive Social Action', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1936, pp. 894-904.

[23] Thus, although to a Russian soldier his freedom may intuitively seem to be almost non existent, and whatever the outsider intuitively may say about it, his behavior is the result of freedom and choice! An affirmation can be found in Erving Goffman's well known study of a mental hospital (as an example of closed, public institutions). Even in the strict organized and disciplined life as a mental hospital, Goffman found out that the members 'employs unauthorized means, or obtains unauthorized ends, or both, thus getting around the organization's assumptions as to what he should do and get and hence what he should be' (See: Erving Goffman, 'The Underlife of a Public Institution: a Study of Ways of Making Out in a Mental Hospital', in: Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller, *The Sociology of Organizations, Basic Studies*, New York: The Free Press, 1981 (Second Edition), pp. 280-302.)

[24] For Crozier and Friedberg change is never a 'normal', natural thing: 'It is not the consequence of a supra-individual logic, which may be of an economic, ecological, biological, cultural, or a moral order. These factors may however influence change, but assuming that change is a problem of man does not determine his response to these influences, nor does it imply that he will respond in any way at all.' (Crozier and Friedberg, *Op. Cit.*, p.

The Complex Organization

In the 'triad-model' a basic assumption is that the actor cannot be isolated from the organization in which (s)he acts. It is obligatory to see the actor's strategy in connection with the organization itself. Seen in terms of the strategy of several actors, the organization is in fact a realm of power relationships, influence, bargaining, and calculation. As a result, an actor's rationality can only be understood in the context of his/her relationship with the wider organization. Therefore, the concept of the organization must be outlined and understood.

In this study, an actor's organizational environment is acknowledged as a 'complex organization'. The characteristics of a complex organization are its boundaries; its large size; its high degree of structural differentiation (hierarchy); its high degree of functional differentiation (division of labor); the existence of a system of co-ordinating activities; the existence of rules and procedures which prescribe the responsibilities of all members of the organization; the existence of a network of complex communication; the fact of being an 'open' organization; and the existence of coalitions as constituent elements of the complex organization. [25] The first seven traits are descriptive and do not need further explanation. The last two characteristics are rather interpretations of how organizations function. Crucially, the assumption of an 'open' organization and the coalition hypothesis link the concepts of the 'complex organization' and the 'rational actor'. Following Crozier's fourth point, an actor's strategy is based on adapting to opportunities and the relation with the co-actors, forcing the actor (in the offensive aspect of his strategy) to exploit the organization; while urging him (in the defensive aspect of his strategy) to build coalitions. This relationship requires a closer examination of the 'open organization' and the 'organization as a coalition'.

The Complex Organization as an Open Organization. The open organization hypothesis postulates that there is an interdependence and exchange between the organization and its environment. As a result, boundaries are flexible and permeable.[26] This interpretation, especially as studied in 'contingency theory', emphasizes that an organization's successful adaptation to the environment is dependent on the ability of the top leadership to interpret the conditions confronting them appropriately and to adopt solutions. [27] The degree to which the organization is effective depends on achieving either a balance or compatibility between strategy, structure, technology, the commitments and needs of people, and the external environment. As noted above, this ability must be related to an actor's strategy.

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213) This view of the actor and his place in the system has far-reaching consequences on the perception of the Russian military organization. It means that organizational change in the Russian military can never be qualified as a failure. The perception of a failure of reform is a political interpretation. Change for the sociologist is a difficult process of adaptation based on decisions of the managers, say the high command and political decision makers. Although the outcomes may seem to be awkward and even puzzling, for the planners decisions are always rational. An important task is therefore to understand the rational logic of the high command (in relation with the political management). The insights of Crozier and Friedberg are an important tool to obtain this goal.

[25] See for instance Philippe Manigart, *Les forces armees belges en transition, une analyse sociologique*, [The Belgian Armed Forces in Transition: a Sociological analysis] Brussels: Paul Didier Publisher, 1985, p. 1.

[26] The problem of organizational boundaries is a subject of debate. Some authors speak about 'blurred boundaries' and even the non-existence of boundaries. (See: Richard Scott. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 179-206) Joseph Soeters in his inaugural speech on the Dutch Royal Military Academy paid attention to this subject. J. Soeters, *Verschuivende en Vergruizende Grenzen, Over de doordringbaarheid van organisaties (met toepassing op de krijgsmacht)* [Moving and Pounding boundaries, On the Permeability of Organizations (applied to the Armed Forces)], Breda: Koninklijke Militaire Academie, 1994. In the context of this study, however, the organization in general and the military organization can be distinguished from its environment.

[27] Concerning the 'Contingency Theory', see W. Richard Scott, *Organizations, Rational, Natural and Open Organizations*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1981, pp. 113-115; and Gareth Morgan, *Images of Organizations*, London: Sage Publications, 1986, pp. 48-56.

The concept of the 'open organization' contrasts with that of the 'closed organization'. Given the importance of the closed organization concept in the study of the Russian army, it is essential to clarify this type of organization as well. Indeed, many organizational problems of the Russian military –as for instance constrained human relations between officers and soldiers and among soldiers themselves or the troubled civil-military relations in Russia - can be attributed to the confrontation between the open versus closed concepts. The different ways that people think about organizations can itself demonstrate how organizations are run (and vice versa). Organizational theory and organizational practice are interrelated phenomena, which are in turn culturally and historically conditioned. Before the 1960's organizations were merely studied as closed systems. They were perceived to be on their own, with their own internal logic with no external influences. In this tradition, organizational change was seen as precipitated by and directed from inside. Change was thought to be either the result of rational leadership or natural processes inside the organization. Richard Scott categorized these two sub-currents as 'rational' and 'natural' organizations.[28] The *rational (mechanic) organization* is a type of organization perceived as a collective deliberately designed to attain well-defined and stable goals.[29] It refers to a series of actions that are formally organized and which lead to predetermined goals with maximum efficiency. In other words, rational theorists underline goal specificity and formalization. The *natural (organic) type of organization* is constructed as a reaction against the rational organization. It accentuates the informal and spontaneous processes in the organization. Natural organizations are therefore collectivities as such. They stress problems of communication, leadership and job satisfaction in the organization.

For the purpose of this study it is important to develop the idea of the rational organization. This type of organization has its intellectual origin during the end of the Nineteenth Century and the first half of the Twentieth Century. As organizational theory co-evolved with the practice of management, a specific set of managerial principles was invented. The manager's basic problem was essentially one of quantity: how could the complexity of a large and expanding organization be managed? The period under discussion was, indeed, characterized by phenomena such as massive industrialization, mass and mechanized production. In response to these problems in the industrial sector, Frederick Taylor developed the theory of scientific management in 1911.[30]

The basic thrust of **scientific management** is captured in the idea that management is a process of planning, organization, command, co-ordination and control. The result of this idea is a kind of organization represented in the familiar organization chart: a pattern of precisely defined jobs organized in a *hierarchical* manner through precisely defined lines of command and communication. Job responsibilities interlock so that they complement each other as perfectly as possible, and they are linked together through the scalar chain of command expressed in the classical dictum '*one man - one boss*'. The organization is made to operate as precisely as possible through patterns of *authority*. Patterns of authority serve as points of resistance and co-ordinate activities by restricting activity in certain directions while encouraging it in others.

By giving detailed attention to patterns of authority and to the general process of *direction*, *discipline*, *and subordination of individual to general interest*, the scientific

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[28] Richard Scott*, Op. Cit.,* pp. 57-101.
[29] The adjective 'rational' here refers to the structure of the organization and may not be confused with the concept of 'rational actor'.
[30] Frederick W. Taylor, 'Scientific Management', in: Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller, *The Sociology of Organizations, Basic Studies*, New York: The Free Press, 1981 (Second Edition), pp. 55-67; Gareth Morgan, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 29-33.

management theorist tried to ensure that when commands were issued from the top of the organization they would travel throughout the organization in a precisely determined way, to create a precisely determined effect. Blind obedience was therefore the assumed attitude of the workers who were not supposed to participate in the decision-making process. In other words, 'brain' and 'hands' were strictly divided and there was a high degree of centralization.[31] Taylor, the founder of scientific management, advocated five principles.[32]

1. Shift all responsibilities for the organization of work from the worker to the manager.
2. Use scientific methods to determine the most efficient way of doing work, design the worker's task accordingly, specify the precise way in which the work is to be done.
3. Select the best person to perform the job.
4. Train the worker to do the work efficiently.
5. Monitor work performance to ensure that appropriate work procedures are followed and that appropriate results are achieved.

Max Weber also presented his well-known ideal model of the **bureaucratic organization** at the turn of the Twentieth Century.[33] This was no coincidence, as many characteristics of Weber's theoretical bureaucratic ideal model corresponds with Taylor's practical management principles. Nohria and Berkley summarized the bureaucratic organization thus.[34]

1. A discrete set of "jurisdictional areas" separate and regulated spaces pertaining to clearly differentiated functions within an enterprise;
2. A hierarchy consisting both of the subordination of offices and of individuals, with a resulting separation of levels of planning and execution;
3. A management system based on written documents or files and on a staff of people who maintain and transmit these files;
4. An exclusive focus on the organizational roles specific to particular offices, so as to create a neutral, impersonal environment;
5. A stress on technical training, with the use of technical criteria for matters of both recruitment and promotion;
6. An office system comprised of general rules, which are stable, thorough, and learnable.

The ideas of Weber and Taylor must be seen as part of a much broader social trend involving the mechanization and rationalization of life in general.[35] Taylor provided his era with a method to manage a large group of people performing a specific job in favor of the detailed goals stipulated by the organization. Therefore, 'Taylorism' and the bureaucratic organization serve as benchmarks for the understanding of organizational life in the first half of the Twentieth Century. They are the outcomes of thinking about organization as closed rational entities.

For a long time, the principles of Taylor, as well as the Weberian insights into the bureaucratic organization, were generally seen as the most effective mode of organization. However, during the second half of the Twentieth Century, flaws in the concept became

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[31] It is interesting to remark that in the field of psychology the school of behaviorism reigns in the period of scientific management. The basic idea of behaviorism is that human behavior is the learned response to specific stimuli. Human behavior can be conditioned by punishing wrong behavior and rewarding good behavior. This remark will be referred to when the relations between officers and soldiers in Russian barracks are described.

[32] Gareth Morgan, *Op. Cit.,* 1997, p. 23.

[33] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology,* New York: Bedminster, 1968; Max Weber, 'Bureaucracy', in: Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller, *Op. Cit.* pp. 7-36.

[34] Nitin Nohria and James Berkley, 'The Virtual Organization, Bureaucracy, Technology and the Implosion of Control', in: Charles Heckscher and Anne Donnellon (Eds.), *The Post-Bureaucratic Organization, New Perspectives on Organizational Change*, London: Sage Publications, 1994, p. 111.

[35] This will be explained and elaborated on further in the discussion of the environment affecting organizations.

apparent, and criticisms of the bureaucratic concept were formulated.[36] One of the most profound criticisms was the idea of 'Rigidity Cycles', stipulated by Michel Crozier, wherein cyclic crises were created in 'bureaucratic phenomena' by a 'bureaucratic vicious circle'.[37] This hinged on two ideas: first, the top management always tries to both retain and maximize its power and avoids external control (the so-called 'bureaucratization of leadership'). Secondly, each department of an organization attempts to hold onto its status, which results in the 'bureaucratization of offices'. Such a system suffers sclerosis caused by the contradictory impulses of each tier. The end result is an immobile and static organization which Crozier and Friedman called the 'non-organization'.[38]

Confronted with two inter-linked problems - an increasingly dysfunctional hierarchical organization type and the profound and ever faster rate of change in the external environment - analysts looked for a different perspective. Despite the considerable 'consensus' about the obsolescence of the established bureaucratic type, a new ideal type for the post- bureaucratic organization incorporating a new set of management principles had still not been unequivocally created. In the context of this study, an attempt to define a post-bureaucratic ideal type is presented and both the 'virtual' and 'matrix' organizations are introduced as solutions to bureaucratic and managerial problems.

However, before the discussion of the organization types and management principles of the post-1960 period, it is necessary to emphasize the demands which underlie the profound changes in organizational theory. For example, one of the key elements of the changes was the re-(e)valuation of human resources in the organization. The role of personnel within the organization took on a new meaning. This had significant consequences for inter-human relations. This 'humanization' is in no way an outcome of a moral decision whatsoever, but a decision based on considerations of organizational efficiency and survival. The new way of thinking about man, organization and society is therefore in no way morally better than the Nineteenth Century way of thinking. At most, it can be stated that it is more an adapted answer to the challenges of a new era. These challenges are discussed later in the analysis of the wider environment in which actors operate. For the time being, it is sufficient to state that the environment urges the manager to stress quality more than quantity. The managerial environment is very unstable and determined by the outcomes of the technological revolution, what the futurologist Alvin Toffler called 'the Third Wave'.[39]

In an attempt to create a post-modern ideal bureaucratic model that can be used like Weber's ideal model, Charles Heckscher stated that **the post-bureaucratic organization** is based on the following eleven ideas.[40]
1. Consensus is created through institutionalized *dialogue* not through acquiescence to authority, rules, or traditions.
2. Dialogue is defined by the use of *influence* rather than power and peoples' decisions are affected by p*ersuasion* rather than relying on commands or orders.
3. Influence depends initially on *trust*, on the belief that all members seek mutual benefit rather than maximizing personal gain. In other words *interdependence* is essential. [41]

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[36] There is an abundant literature on this issue. Influential books on this subject are: Michel Crozier, *Le Phénomène Bureaucratique [The Bureaucratic Phenomenon]*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1963; Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967, especially pp. 158-166. Charles Heckscher, 'Defining the Post-Bureaucratic Type', in: Charles Heckscher and Anne Donnellon (Editors), *The Post-Bureaucratic Organization, New Perspectives on Organizational Change*, London: Sage Publications, 1994, pp. 19-24.
[37] Michel Crozier, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 247-274.
[38] Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg, *Op. Cit.*, p. 182.
[39] Alvin Toffler and Heidi Toffler, *The Third Wave*, New York: Bantam, 1980.
[40] Adapted from: Charles Heckscher, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 25-28.

4. There is a strong emphasis on *organizational mission* rather than universalistic statements of values. Employees therefore need to understand the key objectives in depth in order to coordinate their actions intelligently.
5. There is widespread *sharing of information* and there is an attempt to make conscious the connection between individual jobs and the mission of the whole. 'Brain' and 'hands' are not separate entities anymore but complementary. Individuals can break free from the boundaries of their 'defined' jobs and must think creatively and cooperatively about improvements.
6. The focus on the mission is be supplemented by guidelines which are *principles* rather than rules. Principles are more *abstract* and *express the reasons behind the rules* that are typical of bureaucracy.
7. Influence relations are fluid, which means that decision-making processes must be frequently reconstructed. Authority can not be directly read from an organization chart.
8. Influence relations are wider and more diverse but also shallower and more specific, than those of traditional "community". It is a matter of 'knowing who to go to', rather than a matter of building a stable network of friendship relations.
9. It is a relatively open system at the boundaries. There is far more *tolerance* for outsiders coming in and for insiders going out.
10. There is an effort *to reduce rules* and concomitantly an increased pressure to *recognize the variety of individual performances.*
11. There is an expectation of constant change, and therefore the organization attaches time frames in order to adapt to the unstable environment. In an extremely unstable, ever changing environment, the manager must be able to manage different time frames.

As noted above, the two organization types which can be derived from this post-bureaucratic ideal model are the virtual organization and the matrix organization:

Nohria and Berkleyhave have attributed the following basic features to **the virtual organization**[42]:
1. The disappearance of material files and the reappearance of them in flexible and electronic form by means of information technology;
2. The replacement of face-to-face communications with computer-mediated communication, and a concomitant increase in the role of informal face-to-face communication for purposes of maintaining organizational coherence;
3. The transfer of issues of organizational structure from the realm of the organization of human beings to the organization of information and technology in such a way that the functioning of the organization appears spontaneous and paradoxically structure-less, while the functioning of information systems seems at once all-pervasive and faintly magical;
4. The networking of individuals from technically separate firms to the extent that clear boundaries of the organization become difficult to establish in practice;
5. The implosion of bureaucratic specialization into 'global', cross-functional, computer-mediated jobs, to such an extent that individual members of the organization may be considered holographically equivalent to the organization as a whole.

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[41] The importance of trust in society is also emphasized by Francis Fukuyama, who devoted a book to this subject: Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1995. Moreover, it is interesting to observe that Theo Dilissen, manager of the year 2001in Belgium, revealed the following strategy to explain his success: 'team, transparency and trust.' It is no coincidence that Theo Dilissen is the manager of *Real Software*, a high tech company.
[42] Nitin Nohria and James Berkley, *Op. Cit.*, p. 115.

Francis Fukuyama and Abram Shulsky have given another less technological interpretation of the virtual corporation. [43]   In their view, this type of organization seeks to push as many routine functions outside the boundaries of its own organization as possible. Consequently, one of the by-products of this trend is a general downsizing and breaking up of large integrated corporations. Companies examine all of their activities and decide which constitute 'core competencies' where they are 'best in the world'. Everything else ought to be out-sourced to some other firm that is 'best in the world' for the production of a good or service. For Stoner and others, the virtual organization is a temporary network of companies that come together quickly to exploit fast-changing opportunities.[44] The companies involved share costs, skills and access to global markets, with each partner contributing what it is best at. The key attributes for these kinds of organizations are: high technology, opportunism, excellence, trust, and temporary boundaries.

Stoner and others state that the **matrix organization** is based on multiple authority and support systems.[45] This means that there are two lines of authority: one running vertically (by functional department) and another running horizontally. As a result every matrix contains three unique sets of relationships: the senior manager who heads up and balances dual lines of authority; project managers, or team specialists, who share subordinates; and subordinates who report to two different managers (their department head and the project manager). This type of organization allows employees from different functional departments to pool their skills when solving a common problem. It aims at increasing the organization's ability to use human resources wisely and adapt to a changing environment. It ensures flexibility and cooperation at all levels of the organization. Therefore it thrives on open, direct lines of communication. Managers and subordinates need special training to learn new skills. Thus, it is an organization which is characterized by a strongly competitive environment, an enormous flow of information, rapid (if not instant) change, and is an entity in which resources are limited as cost efficiency is paramount.

At this point, a few words need to be said about downsizing because it coincides with the rise of the post-modern organization and is a feature of the conscript to professional debate in military reform.[46] Downsizing has a quantitative aspect, which simply means making the corporation smaller and leaner. During a period of corporate downsizing, managers and subordinates are encouraged to work in a manner which is based on cooperation, flexibility, expertise and trust.

A one-dimensional understanding of the downsizing process as a procedure which simply expels people from a company is only a part of the managerial and organizational revolution. Such expulsions are a characteristic misreading of organizational redesign. Therefore, downsizing has as much more to do with the 'flattening' of the organization as with the idea of making it smaller. The corporation shrinks vertically as well as horizontally. In sum, the open versus closed view of organization embedded in an historical framework can be presented in the following chart:

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[43] Francis Fukuyama and Abram Shulsky, *The "Virtual Corporation" and Army Organization*, Santa Monica: RAND, 1997, pp. 14-16.

[44] James Stoner, Edward Freeman and Daniel Gilbert, *Management*, London: Prentice-Hall, 1995 (Sixth Edition), p. 336.

[45] *Ibid.*, pp.333-334; See also: Jay R. Galbraith, 'Matrix Organization Designs: How To Combine Functional and Project Forms', *Business Horizons*, Vol. 14, No 1, January-February 1971, pp. 29-40.

[46] See for instance: James Stoner, Edward Freeman and Daniel Gilbert, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 328-329 and directly applied to the Russian military organization: David Segal and others, *Downsizing the Russian Army: Quality of Life, and Mental Health, Consequences for Organizational Leavers, Survivors, and Spouses*, Paper presented at the international conference on Plant Closures and Downsizing in Europe, organized by the Higher Institute of Labor Studies, Catholic University Leuven, Leuven, Belgium, 28-29 January, 1999.

	Closed System	Open System
Period	1890-1950	1960 onward
Organizational type	Bureaucratic-traditional, hierarchic corporation	Post-Bureaucratic- Virtual and Matrix corporation
Management Philosophy	Taylorism	Human Resource Management

Table 1: Organizations as Closed versus Open Systems

Complex Organizations as Coalitions. The role that the rational actor plays in an attempt to fit into the rationally acting organization is another dimension of this type of organization. Indeed, complex organizations are not only considered as fundamentally open organizations, but also as collections of coalitions. Downs proposed that the idea of 'coalitions' differs from the concept of the 'teams'.[47] He defined a team as a group of people working together who have identical goals. A coalition, however, is a group of people or a collective actor working together who have some common goals, but not all of their goals are common ones. The individual does not need to give his/her common goals the same relative weight in this individual preference structure. In this sense, organizational goals are the result of a compromise between the individual actors, and their individual calculations, bargaining skills, power relationships between individuals and the influence(s) of key persons in the organization. Thus, when all these factors are taken into account the organization is steered rationally through the calculated activity of the rational actor.

The Modernizing Environment

The third and last element of the triad model is the environment of the organization. In the case of the open organization type, it is self-evident that the environment of the organization matters. The environment, which influences complex organizations, is called the 'modernizing society'. This term allows both the process of modernization and the state of modernity to be described simultaneously. A cluster of fundamental structural variables forms the 'motor' of the modernizing process.

The debate about which variables influence the process of modernization is a diffuse and incoherent discussion. Each author contributes a relative weight to a particular variable and sees a particular inter-relationship between the variables. Rather then explaining all the details of this academic discussion and evaluating the relative merits of each, we shall select a cluster of variables on which a broad agreement exists. These variables include the development of technology; the state of the economy; socio-cultural factors; and geo-political factors. The combination of these four principal variables makes up the organizational environment. Using these variables, three stages in the typology of society can be distinguished during the process of modernization: the pre-modern, the modern and the post-modern society. As the type of organizational change that is discussed in this thesis is profoundly molded by the modern society and troubled by the shift to the postmodern society, it is necessary to explain what sort of society the organization is acting in. Piotr Sztompka summarized the general organizing principles of modernity as[48]:

1. *individualism* in which the individual receives a central role in society;
2. *differentiation* wherein there is a great degree of individual specialization and the growth of a staggering variety of options and concomitant choices;
3. *rationality* which tries to make the world predictable;

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[47] Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967, pp. 76-77.

[48] Piotr Sztompka, *The Sociology of Social Change*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996 (Second Edition), pp. 71-76.

4. *economism* by which is meant the dominance of economic activities, goals, criteria and achievements over all social life; and

5. *expansionism*, the idea that modernity has an inherent tendency to extend its reach in terms of space (geographically) and depth (in reaching the most detailed, private and intimate spheres of daily life).

A final aspect of modernity concludes this presentation of the triad model that constrains organizational change. Alex Inkeles describes the idea of the 'modern personality'.[49] This analytical model attributes characteristics to modern human beings and their mentality. From this discussion of the modern individual, this insight helps us to understand the idea of the professional soldier in the subsequent section. The following qualities were attributed by Inkeles to the modern man:

1. a readiness for new experience and openness to innovation and change;

2. a readiness to form or hold opinions and to recognize the diversity of existing opinions;

3. a specific orientation toward time: emphasis on the present and the future rather than the past. An acceptance of schedules, punctuality;

4. efficacy, which refers not only to potential mastery over the natural environment but also to potential control over problems arising in social life;

5. planning, anticipating and organizing future activities;

6. trust in the regularity and predictability of social life, allowing for calculability of actions;

7. the sense of distributive justice: the belief that rewards should accord to rule skill and contribution;

8. interest in formal education and schooling;

9. respect for dignity of others, including those of inferior status or power.

After the 1960's, especially in the West, many authors perceived an upcoming new world in which they saw qualitative mutations in society which they labeled the post-modern world.[50] Although the idea of modernization is controversial, it is adopted in this study to explain change in both complex and military organizations.[51] Lyon's argument, in his discussion of the meaning and value of the concept of post-modernity, can be used to buttress this point of view:

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[49] Alex Inkeles, 'A Model of the modern man: theoretical and methodological issues' in: Cyril Black, *Comparative Modernization*, New York: The Free Press, 1976, pp. 320-348.

[50] It is for this study unfruitful to discuss the problem of vocabulary. Some authors call the actual period the 'post-modern society', other scholars such as Anthony Giddens call it 'high modernity', while some others call it the 'post-industrial society'. What is important for this study is that the post-1960 world is a world which has developed and is developing into a fundamentally different type of society with a completely different logic than the industrial society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[51] On the theoretical side the following critique is formulated against the idea of modernization: (1) the underlying evolutionary assumption, namely the idea of one single track evolution, is found unacceptable; (2) the strict opposition of tradition and modernity is found misleading; (3) the importance of an external, global context and exogenous causation (the so-called convergency theory of Kerr) is overemphasized in place of an exclusive endogenous focus; (4) the regular sequence of stages in modernization is put into doubt and (5) the ethnocentric, western-oriented conception of the goals of modernization is questioned. See for this critique: Piotr Sztompka, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 135-136. The critique of Charles Tilly is especially worth mentioning. He claims that sociology is trapped in the assumptions deriving from the Nineteenth Century. Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984, p. 12.) Tilly's critique has many parallels with Robert Nisbet's remarks on this matter (See: Robert Nisbet, *Social Change and History*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 166.) and with the ideas of Immanuel Wallerstein (See: Immanuel Wallerstein, *Unthinking Social Sciences. The Limits of Nineteen-Century Paradigms*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991.)

"…the concept of postmodernity is a valuable 'problematic' that alerts us to key questions concerning contemporary social changes. I see it as a concept that invites participation in a debate over the nature and direction of present-day societies, in a globalized context, rather than one describing an already existing state of affairs. Quite unprecedented social and cultural shifts are occurring; whether or not 'postmodernity' is the best term to sum them up is a moot point. The important thing is to understand what is happening, not to agree on a concept to capture it with. 'Postmodernity' will do fine for now."[52]

Thus due to the concomitant evolution of organizations, it may be clear that the complex organization discussed above is a product of the Twentieth Century. More precisely, the modern era was the environment in which the classic bureaucratic organization developed, whereas the virtual and matrix organization has developed within the environment of the post-modern society. This insight is summarized in the following table.

	Closed System	Open System
Period	1890-1950	1960 onward
Organizational type	Bureaucratic-traditional, hierarchic corporation	Post-Bureaucratic- Virtual and Matrix corporation
Management Philosophy	Taylorism	Human Resource Management
Organizational environment	Modern society	Post-Modern society

Table 2: Organizations as Closed versus Open Systems (Complement 1)

The Triad Model of Change in Organizations

In summary, the previous discussion can be graphically shown in the triad model of organizational change as follows (Figure I). The three key elements, the **'**environment', 'the organization' and **'**the actor' are represented as 'concentric' entities. Each element of the model of organization has an active and a passive component. In the environment, the active component is political practice (political decision-making through political institutions, and possibly the process of institution building itself). The passive component comprises the structural environmental factors that influence the organization. The organization is a 'complex organization' which is an 'open organization' based on coalitions. The ideal model of the bureaucratic organization as well as the 'virtual' and the 'matrix' organizations represent the passive component of the organization. Finally, the individual as a 'rational actor' is a component of the active interpretation of organizations. In contrast, the individual as represented in the ideal model of the 'modern personality' is a component of the passive interpretation. Hence, this 'triad' model is located in a central position in the 'actor-system' debate. It represents the modernization hypothesis as a heuristic model.

The complexity of this triad model as thus understood is schematized in Figure 1.

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[52] David Lyon, *Postmodernity, Concepts in the Social Sciences*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999, (second edition), p. 108.
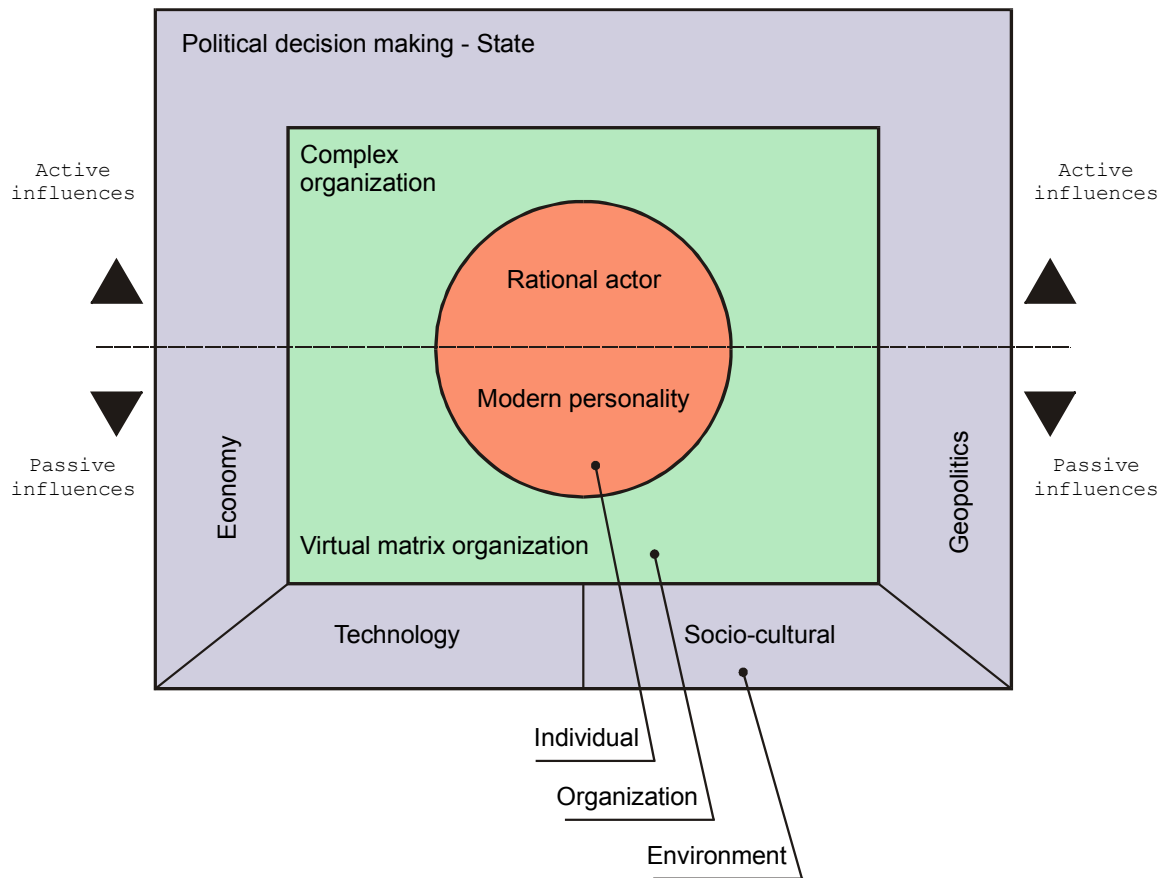
Figure 1: The Triad Model

1. 2. Change in Military Organizations

Clark Kerr's convergence theory postulates that industrial societies become increasingly alike and evolve as a whole because the character of the dominant technology enforces specific forms of social organization, political life, cultural patterns, every day conduct and even beliefs and attitudes. [53] This idea can be used to show that military organizations are in the long run a reflection of state and society. Furthermore, the open organization hypothesis underscores the co-evolution between the military organization and society. These insights lay at the basis of military sociology as an applied field of sociology. The idea of organizational evolution presented here fits the approach outlined during the 1960s by Morris Janowitz (who is regarded as the founder of this applied field of military sociology). Janowitz hypothesized that there was a resemblance between the evolution of civilian organizations and military organizations. This is the so-called 'civilianization hypothesis' which James Burk describes as follows[54]:

> "The central argument was that the boundaries separating the military from civilian society had progressively weakened since the turn of the century. It described a military organization that was forced to participate more

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[53] Mentioned in Piotr Sztompka, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 133-135.
[54] Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier, A Social and Political Portrait*, New York: Free Press, 1971 (second edition), pp. xii-xv.

actively in the life of the larger society and yet maintain its relative autonomy, competence, and group cohesion."[55]

In addition Jacques Van Doorn noticed a qualitative mutation in the character of military organizations. In a seminal article on 'the decline of the mass army', Van Doorn argued that military organizations evolved from a modern mass-army to a professional army.[56] Janowitz's and Van Doorn's ideas were visionary at that time. When many of their postulated ideas were realized, other military sociologists expanded and refined the idea of the professional armed forces and they subsequently created the model of the post-modern army. Thus the evolving theoretical discourse on organizational change in business and government and the narrow discussion on military change are now comparable. In fact, the similarities between business and military organizations were not accidental: they are both affected by profound changes in the external environment.

In order to outline the ideal models of the modern and post-modern variants of military organizations, the environmental changes that precipitated the mass army and the post-modern All-Volunteer Force (AVF) will be reviewed. The structural variables presented above will be employed to examine what the logic or the pattern of military organizational change is and from this discussion typical characteristics of different military organizations types will be outlined.

Changing Environments

Environmental Aspects of the Mass Army. The 'mass army' is a type of military organization that developed during the French and American revolutions and this form of military organization prevailed until the end of the Second World War. The armies that fought in the First World War can be considered as archetypical mass army types. Mass armies were closely related to the development of the industrial society and as well to the notion of nationalism.[57] The growth of the industrial sector which was based on the production and use of sources of energy such as coal, steel and steam made mass production possible. Mass production in the weapons industry made it feasible to procure weapons for large armies. The development of a factory system and a refined division of labor in the textile industry, enabled the state to produce uniforms on a massive scale for the army. Finally, the development of the railway system, telecommunications and food industry allowed states to mobilize, transport and feed huge armies in a relatively efficient way.

The emerging nation state - 'the political consequence of modernity'[58] -was an essential element in the socio-cultural environment of mass armies. The nation-state was able to mobilize the whole community under the banner of nationalism. The state intervened directly and bluntly in the life of the individual citizen. Charles Tilly called this the imposition of the state's 'direct rule'.[59] In exchange for protection and increasing education the citizen had to be

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[55] James Burk, 'Morris Janowitz and the Origins of Sociological Research on Armed Forces and Society', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol.19, No. 2, Winter 1993, p. 179.

[56] Jacques Van Doorn, 'The Decline of the Mass Army in the West: General Reflections', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 1, No. 2, February 1975, pp. 147-157. Although Van Doorn spoke instead of an all-volunteer force (AVF) and never used the terminology of post-modernity. However, the context, referents and form of argumentation used in the article render the interpretation possible.

[57] For a good overview see for instance: A. Vagts, *A History of Militarism: Civilian and Military*, New York: The Free Press, 1959; and Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States AD 990-1990*, Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990, pp. 96-126.

[58] Claus Offe, *Modernity and the State*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996, p. 61.

[59] Charles Tilly, *Op. Cit.*, 1990, pp. 103-117.

willing to perform military service. State nationalism was the myth that justified the practices of modern society:

> "The essence of the mass army is only partly its size, although it is a great deal larger than most of its predecessors. The essence of the mass army is its ability to maintain its size in the face of the rigors of war: the attrition exacted by the unhealthy conditions of the campaign, the temptation of individuals to desert, and the firepower of the enemy.(…) Thus the recruits must arrive with a certain willingness to become soldiers, a certain educability [sic], and a certain commitment to the outcome of the battle. This makes political motivation, and ultimately literacy, key elements of the mass army. (…) The problem becomes how to keep these dispersed, scared, and lonely men risking their own lives, and cooperating to take the live of others."[60]

Conscription was seen as an accomplishment of the French Revolution. Universal compulsory military service contributed to the democratization of society on three levels.[61] The duty and the right to bear weapons was a totally new idea. It was perceived as a compulsory contribution of civil rights by the citizen. Moreover, the fact that conscription was supposed to be distributed equally over the male population meant that the introduction of compulsory conscription, a core characteristic of the mass army, can be seen as a contribution to the democratization of society. Finally, citizenship and military service were two narrowly related ideas. Military service made the individual take part in society. Rejection of military service excluded him from society. Janowitz remarked in this context that military service was the hallmark of citizenship as citizenship was the hallmark of political democracy[62] and Tilly summarized it in another one-liner, 'Militarization = civilianization'.[63]

Frontiers and territory were important elements of the state during the Nineteenth Century and the threat of invasion was a primary concern of the state and its military organization(s). In addition, this period was characterized by the concept of total war in which the mobilization of the whole society was necessary to wage war. The concept of total war is embodied in Posen's comment, "economy, education, culture… all this stood in the function of the preparation and waging of the next war."[64] The military institution was consequently regarded as the most important institution in society, the *primus inter pares*, of the state's agencies. Military organizations enjoyed a high level of esteem and resources were made readily available to them. The army was therefore an integral part of state nationalism. In contrast to the Nineteenth Century environmental characteristics, the world changed dramatically in the second half of the twentieth century.

Environmental Aspects of the Post-Modern Military. The first contours of the postmodern military appeared in the 1960's, but it was during the Gulf War of 1991 and different peacekeeping and peace-making actions in the 1990's which can be seen as prototypical for

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[60] B. R. Posen, 'Nationalism, Mass Army, and Military Power', *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Fall 1993, pp. 83-84.
[61] See for instance: Charles Tilly, *Op. Cit.*,1990, pp. 122-126 and James Burk, 'Citizenship Status and Military Service: The Quest for Inclusion by Minorities and Conscientious Objectors', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 21, No. 4, Summer 1995, pp. 503-529.
[62] Morris Janowitz, *On Social Organization and Social Control*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 226-227.
[63] Charles Tilly, *Op. Cit.*, 1990, p. 122.
[64] B. R. Posen, *Op. Cit.,* p. 87.

this army type.[65] The post-modern variant of the military organization must be seen in the context of a fundamental change in the geopolitical situation in the world, rapid economic and technological changes, and changes in the world's populations' attitudes to war. This ever growing rapidity of change has made the organizational environment profoundly unstable. Instability and unpredictability are key characteristics to which the military organizations have had to find organizational answers.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the ultimate collapse of the Soviet Union led to the break-up of the certainty and predictability of a bipolar international system. The new security era could be characterized as one of risk, complexity and uncertainty in comparison with the relative certainty of the preceding four decades. The outbreak of total war, already in doubt by the introduction of nuclear weapons during the Cold War, changed fundamentally.[66]

Whereas deterrence was the core of the mission of the military organization during the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union produced a completely different scale and set of threats and missions. The missions were called 'missions other than war' or 'low intensity conflicts' and were against such threats as terrorism, organized crime, and local nationalism. Humanitarian aid, refugee support and aid in areas of natural disasters became part of military missions.

The rapid changes in the nature of the threats facing Western militaries, when deployed on a particular mission, were also a notable characteristic of the new geo-political environment. A good example is provided by British forces deployed in Macedonia during May-June 1999. During the NATO air campaign over Kosovo they prepared and trained initially for a full-scale ground war. But after Kosovar refugees flooded Macedonia and Albania they changed their mission and became a humanitarian force. Finally, after a peace agreement, they entered Kosovo with a peacekeeping mandate. Thus, in a time frame of two months, the missions of these elite troops changed fundamentally. The tempo and the nature of the changes possible in the post-modern military environment have urged the British forces to become both more flexible and better trained.

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[65] It is important to remark that the transition from the 'mass army' to the 'post-modern' army type took considerable time and in fact passed over a third, specific (transitory) type army. This transitory type of army is called in the literature of military sociology the 'force-in-being' and was related with the idea that armies evolved to a 'constabulary force' rather than the traditional fighting force (See: Morris Janowitz, *Op. Cit.*, 1971, p. li and pp. 417-442) Also Karl Haltiner stressed the transitory character in the evolution between the two extreme army types. Based on the quantitative variable 'Conscript Ratio', he stated that: 'the transition between the different types of force format is rather gradual, and the mass army format of the armed forces apparently rises *relatively continuously* in the transition from type 0 (all-volunteer systems) to type III (hard-core conscript systems [with a conscript ratio above 66%]' See: Karl W. Haltiner, 'The Definite End of the Mass Army in Western Europe', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Fall 1988, pp. 7-36. Charles Moskos made room for three periods in his famous post-modern typology, namely Early-Modern, Late-Modern and Postmodern periods. It implies also the 'force-in-being' idea. (See: Charles C. Moskos and James Burk, 'The Postmodern Military', in: James Burk (editor), *The Military in New Times, Adapting Armed Forces to a Turbulent World*, Boulder: Westview press, 1994, p. 147 and Charles C. Moskos, John Allen Williams and David R. Segal (editors), *The Postmodern Military, Armed Forces after the Cold War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 1-2) In the less accurate, but more generally used notion -especially in Russia- of the 'mixed army' type, the idea of a transitory army type is also suggested. The mixed army type refers to the fact that recruitment is based on both, compulsory conscription and contract basis. Conventionally and for matters of analytical explicitness, this study limits itself to the dichotomy between the mass army and the post-modern army type. It is important to bear in mind that this is a simplification of historical and social reality, but nevertheless applicable to Russia.

[66] See for instance: Martin Shaw, *Post-Military Society, Militarism, Demilitarization and War at the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, pp. 19-23 and pp. 64-105; J. van der Meulen, 'Civiel-militaire betrekkingen in verandering: wisselwerking tussen maatschappij en krijgsmacht', in: H. Born, R. Moelker and J. Soeters, *Krijgsmacht en samenleving: klassieke en eigentijdse inzichten, [Armed Forces and Society: Classic and Modern Views]*,Tilburg: Tilburg University Press, 1999, pp. 54-66.

Economically in the world today there is a trend towards globalization. Predominantly national markets have evolved into global markets. This increased competition combined with technological and information revolutions have made organizations less labor-intensive and more capital-intensive. As a result of globalization there has been a change from extensive to intensive growth, and the famous quantity-quality innovation has taken place. Firms have become smaller but their capacity and their ability to provide services have increased in inverse proportion.

These factors have also affected military organizations. The third industrial revolution, with computer technology as a key factor, allows armies to work with technological advanced weapons. This context has led to the so-called 'revolution in military affairs' with significant consequences, such as military organizations requiring on the one hand more and more highly trained personnel with higher educational qualifications; and on the other hand the least specialized military functions have begun to disappear because they can be automated or out-sourced; and the training of these military specialists takes too long and is expensive. [67]

The ideas of materialism and individualism have also grown to extreme levels in post-modern society.[68] Consequently, values and attitudes have evolved in the direction of 'self realization', consumerism and hedonism. The 'Welfare State' mechanism supports this situation as a safety net for those who cannot compete in this type of society. Within the overall societal dynamic people are no longer prepared to give up their privileges for reasons of state security. Carroll J. Glynn and others noted this in their paraphrase of Inglehart's ideas:

> "In the United States and Western Europe, the general increase of prosperity over most of the twentieth century had profoundly altered the balance between materialist and postmaterialist values. Each new generation tended to be less concerned about materialistic values such as prosperity and security. Postmaterialist values-such as more say in government, a less impersonal society, and freedom of speech-gradually rose in importance."[69]

In its attempt to cope with highly complex social problems, the state appears to be in crisis. It finds itself in a contradictory (post-modern) state of being too small and too big at the same time. On the one hand, states seem to be too large to cope with the individual problems of the increasingly demanding citizenry. On the other hand, given the growing trend of giving more authority to international institutions such as the United Nations and the European Union, states are too small to handle classical state matters; and this perception is taking the efforts to create common defense (although political obstacles related to individual states' perceptions of their role in the world create stumbling blocks).

In this situation, the narrow relationship of citizenship and military services dominant in the modern era no longer exist. The status of the army changed dramatically. The allocated state resources for defense shrank proportionally and were re-allocated to what can be broadly called 'welfare matters'. The fall of the army's status, as an international phenomenon, can be explained by several interacting processes: the fundamental shift in state priorities in the 'post-

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[67] D. M. Snow, *The Shape of the Future: the Post-Cold War World*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1991; and Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *Op. Cit.*, 1993.

[68] See for example: Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990; Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution, Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977; and Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999. For an application of this idea on the military organization see Fabrizio Battistelli, 'Peacekeeping and the Postmodern Soldier', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 23, No. 3, Spring 1997, pp. 467-484.

[69] Carroll J Glynn, Susan Herbst, Garrett J. O'Keefe, and Robert Y. Shapiro, *Public Opinion*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1999, p. 269.

nationalistic era'; the indifference and even hostility of the population toward military missions (except for peacekeeping and other humanitarian missions); and the cost-intensity of the technological revolution in military affairs meaning that maintaining a broad suite of capabilities is untenable for any single nation.[70] Bernard Boëne calls this last element 'structural disarmament'.[71]

To conclude this description of the changed (and changing) logic of military organizations in similarly changing societies, the previous tabulation can now be completed:

	Closed System	Open System
Period	1890-1950	1960 onward
Organizational type	Bureaucratic-traditional, hierarchic corporation	Post-Bureaucratic- Virtual and Matrix corporation
Management Philosophy	Taylorism	Human Resource Management
Organizational environment	Modern society	Post-Modern society
Military organizational type	Mass Army	All Volunteer Force

Table 3: Organizations as Closed versus Open Systems (complement 2)

Changing Military Organizations

The Mass Army. The mass army organization type can be described in two different ways: as 'minimalist' (in quantitative terms) and 'maximalist' (qualitative). The maximalist description allows more aspects of the mass army to be taken into account. However, both approaches are complementary.

The Swiss military sociologist, Karl Haltiner, presented a working definition of a mass army in order to describe 'the end of the mass army in Western Europe'. His approach stressed **quantitative variables** related to the structure of the organization, namely 'size', 'social mobilization' and 'homogenization'.[72] The definition contained the following elements[73]:

1. The recruitment system is based on universal or selective conscription.
2. The effective strength of regulars and reserves in the armed forces comprises a relatively high share of the national population. This strength can be measured in the so-called Military Participation Rate (MPR).[74]
3. Specific-age cohorts of the male population are liable for military service, and the majority of these military-age cohorts are also drafted.

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[70] See for instance: Philippe Manigart and Eric Marlier, 'New Roles and Missions, Army Image and Recruitment Prospects: the case of Belgium', in: Philippe Manigart (Editor), *Future Roles, Missions and Structure of Armed Forces In The New World Order: The Public View*, New York: The Nova Science Publishers, 1996, pp. 8-12; Lucien Mandeville, Pascale Combelles and Daniel Rich, 'French Public opinion and new missions of the armed forces', in Philippe Manigart (Editor), *Future Roles, Missions and Structure of Armed Forces In The New World Order: The Public View*, New York: The Nova Science Publishers, 1996, pp. 55-59.

[71] B. Boëne, "A tribe among tribes…post-modern militaries and civil-military relations?" paper presented at the interim Meeting of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee 01 (Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution), Modena, Italy, January 20-22, 1997.

[72] 'Size', 'level of mobilization' and 'homogeneity' are the three basic meanings of the adjective 'mass' in the sociological interpretation of Jacques van Doorn on this subject. Jacques Van Doorn who wrote in the founding years of military sociology a classic article on the mass army. Jacques Van Doorn, "The Decline of the Mass Army in the West: general reflections", *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 1, No. 2, February 1975, pp. 147-157.

[73] Karl W. Haltiner, *Op. Cit*., p. 10.

[74] MPR is a concept that was first proposed by Stanislav Andreski and defined as 'the proportion of militarily utilized individuals in the total population'. See: Stanislav Andreski, *Military Organisation and Society*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968 (Second Edition), pp. 33-34.

4. The conscripts make up more than 50 percent of the total strength of the national armed forces. This percentage is called the Conscript Ratio (CR). Accordingly, the share of volunteers, especially women, is relatively low.
5. The level of military technology is relatively low. This allows the air force and the navy to rely primarily on conscripts who serve for short time periods.
6. The armed forces are army-dominated, that is, the share of the navy and air force is relatively small compared with the ground forces.

Although Haltiner's working definition is useful, it does not contain all aspects of a mass army. Therefore a more complete and more **qualitative ideal type** is presented as well. In the qualitative interpretation, the following features of a mass army are identified:

1. It is a huge army ('quantity' and 'extensive growth' are basic features).
2. There is a high degree of societal participation in the army through the practice of conscription in peacetime, and through the practice of mobilization of reserves in wartime.
3. There is a high degree of homogeneity. The social differentiation is relatively small. Practically all soldiers have combat functions. The infantry soldier is prototypical for the military.
4. There is a small nucleus of professional soldiers around which a mass of mobilized civilians is enrolled.
5. The functions executed by the military are less differentiated and specifically military (combat functions). As a result, the military is a very different organization from the civilian society.
6. Authority is based on domination. An explicit order, without any explanation, directs the conduct of the subordinate. Threatening and negative sanctions are used in this kind of authority (see also the management principles of Taylor, and the remarks on the problem of control in the mass army treated below).
7. An institutional understanding of the military profession. This is a traditional view of the military profession characterized by vocation, patriotism, dedication and sacrifice. The military feel themselves different from the civilian. There is even a feeling of supremacy over the civilian world. General interests prevail over individual interest. The military are generalists, who feel themselves to be a 'twenty-four hour' military. They are always available. Being a military man is a way of life.
8. Politically, the army has a great deal of internal autonomy. There is practically no control from outside.

'The army of the Nineteenth Century' thus had a classic bureaucratic outlook and was governed by Taylorian management principles. The high status and the closedness of the organization (aptly termed 'walled-in organizations' by Erving Goffman) assured the traditional autonomy of the institution.[75]

The closedness of the military organization which made the military so different from civil society also influenced the internal culture in the organization. They are related with **achieving control and the resulting 'soldiers' culture' in the mass army.** Several aspects related with the culture of the inmates of closed organizations might be helpful to highlight the problem.[76] During the 1950s-1960s, Goffman, Cressey and Krassowski researched behavior among and between inmates in closed (but public) institutions as mental hospitals, prisons, and concentration camps that contain people against their own free will.

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[75] Erving Goffman, 'The Underlife of a Public Institution: A Study of Ways of Making Out in a Mental Hospital', in: Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller (editors), *The Sociology of Organizations, Basic Studies*, New York: The Free Press, 1981 (Second Edition), p. 302.
[76] Donald R. Cressey and Witold Krassowski, 'Inmate Organizations and Anomie in American Prisons and Soviet Labor Camps', *Social Problems*, Vol. 5, No.4 , 1958-59, pp. 217-230.

Their ideas to the same extent can be applied to life in the military barracks throughout the period of the mass army because soldiers during this era served compulsorily. This specific element of holding people against their will, combined with the specific tasks of training soldiers for a job which was life threatening, resulted in major problems for the officer corps. The core problem was how to control soldiers in this situation. The officer corps was admonished to train soldiers, but its over-all success as a corps was measured mainly both by the degree to which 'trouble' was absent during peace time and missions were accomplished in war time. Thus success was measured by the effective installation of obedience.[77] 'Control' and 'obedience' are obtained at a (high) price. The roots of this high price may be seen through the sociological work of Cressey and Krassowski who describe the effect in American prisons and Soviet Labor camps. Due to the closed character of the military organization their conclusions may also be applied to the study of armed forces. Cressey and Krassowski observed the following aspects in the problem of controlling inmates.[78] Firstly, they stated that the way control was exercised in barracks depended on the values of the society, especially on the values of persons and groups which had special interests in the army. The officer corps' idea about how a soldier should do his job and behave heavily influenced the way control was exercised. This view was also influenced by how war was perceived by the officer corps. Secondly, two kinds of (contradictory) relationships among soldiers could be discerned. On the one hand, soldiers lived in isolation and conditions of *anomie*.[79] On the other hand, there was a strong tendency toward self-organization and interdependence among soldiers which is a result of emerging informal groups in which leaders of various types dominated and enforced their own code of behavior. These codes had several core elements as basic rules: do what is asked from you; maintain social distance from the officers; and honor soldiers' solidarity. This code was based on one golden rule, namely the 'law of silence'. Whoever broke the 'law of silence' could expect (cruel) punishment from the informal leaders. Thirdly, both the state of *anomie* and informal organization among the soldiers were of functional utility for the officer corps. The state of *anomie* in which soldiers were kept psychologically isolated and unorganized minimized the danger for revolt, riot, or other collective action. Furthermore, allowing informal organization among soldiers made control complete. It complemented the effect of *anomie* upon the soldiers. These features colored the relationship between officers and other cadres. When a particular group of soldiers was allowed to control the rest of the soldiers, a kind of non-written contract was signed in which a certain liberty of action was permitted by the informal leaders (in which formal institutional rules could be broken) in exchange for control over the rest of the soldiers. In other words, if the informal leaders allowed military training and maintained order among the soldiers, they had freedom of action in the informal power structure of soldiers.

Finally, both the conditions of alienation and of self-organization existed under conditions of systematic deprivation, usually taking either physical or psychological forms.

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[77] A typical practice in mass armies was the tradition of collective punishment, in which the group was punished for a mistake or infraction of the individual. Nowadays, this practice is unacceptable in the post-modern army. Another extreme example of installing obedience on the soldiers in war time was the execution of deserters and of people who committed less important infraction on military law to set an example for the others. This practice was more or less common in the mass armies on the Western Front during the First World War. The fact that this issue is even in the year 2000 a taboo for Western governments underlines that this practice is an anachronism in postmodern times which damages the image of the armed forces. Moreover, it demonstrates that 'functional violence' outside its historical and societal context may seem for the 'distant' observer absurd and inexplicable.

[78] Donald R. Cressey and Witold Krassowski*, Op. Cit.*, pp. 217-220.

[79] The concept of *anomie* is a typical sociological concept introduced by Emile Durkheim and further used by Robert Merton and Talcott Parsons. It equates 'extreme instability' with 'demoralization' and 'de-institutionalization' caused by a lack or break down of guiding norms, which consequently leaves individuals with neither restraints nor guidance.

Scarcity created jealousy, suspiciousness, mistrust, and other indices of anomie among soldiers. The officer corps manipulated this situation in order to reward the informal leaders with symbols of power and status. Therefore the officer corps selectively distributed scare goods, as food, cigarettes, alcohol, or immaterial goods such as free time.

To conclude: in order to install control, a relationship of interdependence among soldiers and officers or 'a system of reciprocal adjustment' existed. [80] This was probably not an explicit administrative policy, but it was certainly a principal technique for controlling men in the barracks. Moreover, besides installing control, it also made the process of socializing the new inmates 'easier'. The price for this practice was a tolerance for deviant behavior as beating, physical and psychological torture. However, the specificity of the soldiers' job could in a certain way justify these practices: it created hard-nosed soldiers ready for battle.

Officers saw 'toughness' which was obtained by conditions of anomie, deprivation and the reign of informal leaders as a necessary military characteristic which was determined by the harshness of the system of control. The idea of interdependence without much external control, embedded in a specific military mentality, resulted in a soldiers' culture which was difficult to change. [81] Indeed, as long as 'the military mentality', 'the interdependence between the leading inmates and staff' and 'the closedness of the organization' were unchanged, this vicious circle could not be broken; and the resulting perverse consequences could not be avoided.

The Post-modern Military Organization. Parallel with the evolution of the bureaucratic organization to the post-bureaucratic organization, the military organization in the West underwent a similar evolution. The modern organization type (or the mass army) evolved over time to the post-modern military organization. Dandeker has outlined the following features of the post-modern military organization as distinct from its modern antecedent[82]:

1. Responsibility shifts to lower levels. Even the individual soldier at the lowest level has to take decisions autonomously, even ones with important political consequences.
2. The military job is intensive and very demanding, but also very rewarding, with increased responsibility for equipment, people and the success of the operation.
3. Flexibility means an emphasis on the multi-rolling of equipment and a consequent desire to recruit and retain personnel able to take on multiple roles, creating and necessitating a more flexible work force at all levels of the hierarchy and in all specialties.

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[80] *Ibid*., p. 219.

[81] The 'military mentality' can be compared with what Huntington wrote about the 'military mind' and the 'military ethic'. The first, he described as 'conservative realist' and the latter as' pessimistic, collectivist, historically inclined, power-oriented, nationalistic, pacifist, and instrumentalist in its view of the military profession'. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State, The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, New York: Vintage Books, 1957, p. 79. Concerning 'the military mind' see also Feld who stated that '…the emotional and intellectual positions under considerations are the models guiding the modes of organization and employment of military forces…'. Maury D. Feld, *The Structure of Violence, Armed Forces as Social Systems*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977, pp. 33-34.

[82] C. Dandeker, "Flexible forces for a post cold war world: a view from the United Kingdom", *La revue Tocqueville/ The Tocqueville Review* Vol. XVII, No. 1, 1995, pp. 23-38 and C. Dandeker, "New Times for the Military: Some Sociological Remarks on the Changing Role and Structure of the Armed Forces of the Advanced Societies", *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 45, No. 4, 1994, pp. 637-654. See also: David R. Segal, *Organizational Designs for the Future Army*, Alexandria: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Special Report No. 20, 1993 and Charles C. Moskos, John Allen Williams and David R. Segal (editors), *The Postmodern Military, Armed Forces after the Cold War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 1-11 and 265-275.

4. The 'mixing and matching' of components from different services and countries pose problems of establishing effective command and control links of a lateral as well as vertical kind.

The following features can be added to this conceptual interpretation[83]:

1. To work effectively, this system requires fundamental changes in the relationship between the military/political center and the force commanders. Here a new and contradictory situation is faced: the political control involves a shift away from detailed control to acceptance of discretion within the constraints of the overall strategic objective. The omnipotence of the media leads to an overall and detailed control of the fourth force in modern society. Besides the media, the non-governmental organizations control the military and even become concurrent in humanitarian operations. The autonomy of the military is fundamentally affected. The force commander thus receives on the one hand more autonomy but on the other is more controlled and constrained than ever by the media and non-governmental organizations.

2. Authority is based on manipulation.[84] This type of authority is based on explanation, competence of the leader and consensus in the group. Instead of negative sanctions, the leader uses positive stimuli. The military leader has to take into account the motivation and morale of the individual. The most brutal procedures for schooling and training are not tolerated anymore. Primary groups and leadership are key elements in manipulation type of authority.

3. There is an occupational perception of the military profession.[85] The military profession is a job like any other. The military personnel serve for economic reasons, not for patriotic reasons. The military profession is not a way of life anymore, it is a way of obtaining extrinsic rewards. Professional organizations as well as unions defend the collective interests of the members of the military organization.

4. Diversity, rather than homogeneity is the central characteristic of the AVF.[86] The introduction of women and ethnic minorities in the military is an example of this trend. In addition to tolerance, flexibility is rewarded in this kind of organization.

Charles Moskos summarized his view on the how military organizations are changing in a typology. This typology is based on the distinction between the institutional and the occupational interpretation of the military profession. The original idea was proposed in 1977 and it has been expanded upon and refreshed over the years.[87] Moskos' typology, represented

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[83] These features are borrowed from the literature and completed with some personnel insights. Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier, A Social and Political Portrait*, New York: Free Press, 1974. Charles C. Moskos, 'From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organizations', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 4, No. 1, November, 1977, pp. 41-50; Charles C. Moskos, 'Institutional/ Occupational Trends in Armed Forces: An Update', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 12, No. 3, Spring, 1986, pp. 377-382; Charles C. Moskos and James Burk, 'The Postmodern Military', in: James Burk (editor*), The Military in New Times: Adapting Armed Forces to a Turbulent World*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, pp. 141-162. Pascal Vennesson, 'Le triomphe du métier des armes: dynamique professionnelle et la societé militaire en France', *La Revue Tocqueville/The Tocqueville Review*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, 1996, pp. 135-157.

[84] Janowitz, *Op. Cit.*, 1971, pp. xvii-xxiv.

[85] Charles C. Moskos, 'From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organizations', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol.4 , No. 1, 1977, pp. 41-50; and Charles C. Moskos, 'Institutional/Occupational Trends in Armed Forces: An Update, *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 12, No. 3, Spring 1986, pp. 377-382.

[86] Joseph Soeters and Jan van der Meulen (editors), *Managing Diversity in the Armed Forces, Experiences From Nine Countries*, Tilburg: Tilburg University Press, 1999, especially pp. 211-221.

[87] Charles C. Moskos, 'From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organizations', in: *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol.4 , No. 1, 1977, pp. 41-50. Charles C. Moskos, ' Institutional/Occupational Trends in armed Forces', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 12, No. 3, Spring 1986, pp. 377-382; 'Charles C. Moskos and Frank R. Wood (Editors) *The Military: More than Just a Job?,* Washington D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988. Charles C.

in the following table, is a good summary of the change that is taking place in military organizations.

Variable	Institutional	Occupational
Legitimacy	Normative values	Marketplace economy
Role Commitments	Diffuse	Specific
Basis of Compensation	Rank and seniority	Skill level and manpower
Mode of Compensation	Much in non-cash form or deferred	Salary and bonus
Level of Compensation	Decompressed; low recruit pay	Compressed; high recruit pay
Residence	Adjacency of work and residence locales	Separation of work and residence locales
Societal Regard	Esteem based on notion of service	Prestige based on level of compensation
Evaluation of Performance	Holistic and qualitative	Segmented and quantitative
Legal System	Military justice	Civilian jurisprudence
Reference Groups	"vertical"-within the organization	"horizontal"-external to organization

Table 4: Military Organizations: Institutional versus Occupational

<u>Source:</u> **adapted from Charles Moskos, 'Institutional/Occupational trends in Armed Forces: An Update',** *Armed Forces and Society***, Vol. 12, No 3 Spring 1986, p. 378 and Charles C. Moskos, 'Toward a Postmodern Military: The United States as a Paradigm', in : Charles C. Moskos, John Allen Williams and David R. Segal (editors),** *The Postmodern Military, armed Forces after the Cold War***, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 15**.

As a final, but important remark, on the post-modern military organization, it is necessary to stress the difference between the concept of an all-volunteer force and the idea of a post-modern All-Volunteer Force. An all-volunteer force is just a way of manning a military organization. It basically expresses a recruitment policy. There are many examples of this recruitment system all over the world. In Africa, Asia, etc., there are many (regular or irregular, state controlled or mercenary) military organizations who recruit their soldiers on a voluntary basis. In this case, soldiers are just paid for their military services. The post-modern All-Volunteer Force, however, is a specific type of military organization, which is found in Western post-industrial societies. In what follows, whenever the all-volunteer force concept is mentioned, it is meant the post-modern variant of this idea. Consequently, the exercise of this thesis is to found out whether the Russian State can reform towards a post-modern All-Volunteer Force. Differently put, the assumption is that the Russian armed forces can not become a post-modern All-Volunteer Force, which does not necessarily mean that it can not adopt an all-volunteer force recruitment policy.

1. 3.   The All-Volunteer Force in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, an Illustration

The post-modern AVF experience in Belgium, France and The Netherlands took place during the same period when Russia started the AVF debate. In this sense, the experience of these three selected countries is a tool of comparison. It is not the purpose of this study to outline in detail the political discussions of the 'zero draft' in Belgium, the Netherlands and France.[88] Rather, some general remarks will be presented about the political decision-making process in these countries. What is remarkable is that there are, apart from some very specific national

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Moskos and J. Burk, 'The Postmodern Military' in: James Burk (Editor), *The Military in New Times: Adapting Armed Forces to a Turbulent World*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, pp. 141-162.

[88] For a more in depth discussion see for instance: Jan van der Meulen and Philippe Manigart, 'Zero Draft in the Low Countries: The Final Shift to the All-Volunteer Force', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 24, No. 2, Winter 1997, pp. 315-332.

tendencies, many similarities in the different political processes in these countries, so it may be possible to speak about a common experience.

To explain and summarize the experiences in France, Belgium and The Netherlands, the following topics for discussion will include: the political rationale used by politicians to justify their decisions; the actors involved in the political process and the reactions of the military leaders to the political decisions; and the principles of military reforms. This presentation is based on the published White Papers of each country concerned as well as on the debate among military sociologists and political commentators on these national cases.

Statistics, based on Haltiner's working definition of the mass army, show the decline of the mass army in the three cited countries. Next a comparison is made with Russia and these three countries which underwent a 'successful' transition to a post-modern AVF in the 1990's. All statistical data for this study are taken from the journal *The Military Balance* from the years 1987-88 through to the 1998-99 editions. For illustrative purposes in the following paragraph, some selective graphs may suffice to make the point.

The Decline of the Mass Army in France, Belgium and the Netherlands: some Structural Indices

It may be clear that a comparison between France, The Netherlands and Belgium (later to be completed with the Russian case) can only be based on relative data instead of absolute figures. A simple glimpse at the population reveals that France is a country of a different quantitative dimension than the Low Countries (the Netherlands and Belgium).[89] Notwithstanding this difference, some structural similarities in the military organizations can be perceived such as their size, the idea of societal mobilization and the homogeneity of the armies.

The Size. Firstly, the size of the different armed forces has contracted tremendously during this period. Between 1988-1998, the French armed forces shrunk by 34%, the Dutch armed forces declined by 47%, and the Belgian armed forces decreased by 51% during the same period of time. In 1998 France was still using a conscripted contingent of 129,250 men which represents a reduction of 47% in the use of conscripts. In 1988 there were still some 30,000 conscripts in the Belgian armed forces and about 50,000 men in the Netherlands. Belgium and the Netherlands effectively established the zero draft in 1995 and in 1997. Thus, in a space of ten years the French armed forces lost a third of their active manpower while the Low Countries cut their armies in half. This dramatic downsizing went in a relatively smooth and coherent way.

When the evolution for the individual services is studied for France, Belgium and The Netherlands, changes are even more dramatic, especially for the Army (see Table 5): In 1988, the Army (ground forces) made up 63% of the armed forces, the Navy 15% and the Air Force 21% in France. In 1998, these figures altered only slightly: 58% of the armed forces were Army personnel, 18% Navy and 22% Air Force personnel. Notwithstanding the smooth character of the changes, the Army downsized the most in comparison with the more technologically advanced forces (the Navy and the Air Force). However, 1998 figures show that the Army was still the largest force, using more than half of the armed forces personnel.

It may be clear that national traditions play a role in the evolution of the figures. For instance, the Dutch Navy was a large force in comparison with those of other countries which may be attributed to The Netherlands' colonial history. French data shows that the decline in

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[89] With a population of approximately 57 million France is much larger than both the Netherlands which has only 15 million and Belgium with 10 million.

the size of the army was less pronounced than in other countries which may be explained by the continental French tradition.

	Year	France	The Netherlands	Belgium
Army	1988	63,4%	65%	73%
	1998	58,9%	51,1%	66,5%
Navy	1988	15%	16,8%	5%
	1998	18,3%	26,1%	6,1%
Air Force	1988	21,4%	17,8%	21,1%
	1998	22,6%	22,6%	27,2%

Table 5: Manpower Development in the Armed Forces in France, Belgium and The Netherlands (1988-1998)

Mobilization and homogeneity. The mobilization capacity and the homogeneity of the armed forces can be illustrated by the following structural variables: (1) the military participation rate (MPR) in the period 1988-1998; (2) the conscription rate (CR); and (3) the conscription rate (CR) of the different Forces in the three countries.

The **MPR** of the three countries shrank considerably, and they were actually reduced by a half in the Low Countries. This statistic illustrates that armies of the new type, imposed themselves to a lesser degree on society than before because both the active duty and the reserve contingents became smaller over time. It is remarkable that the MPR did not change as a result of the operations that the respective military forces accomplished during the 1990s. This fact is due to the nature of the 'missions other than war' philosophy, which do not burden society as much as earlier military operations did in the era of total war. This last observation combined with the MPR evolution in the 1990s may lead to the conclusion that mobilization as a key concept in defense planning is outmoded.

MPR: France-The Netherlands-Belgium
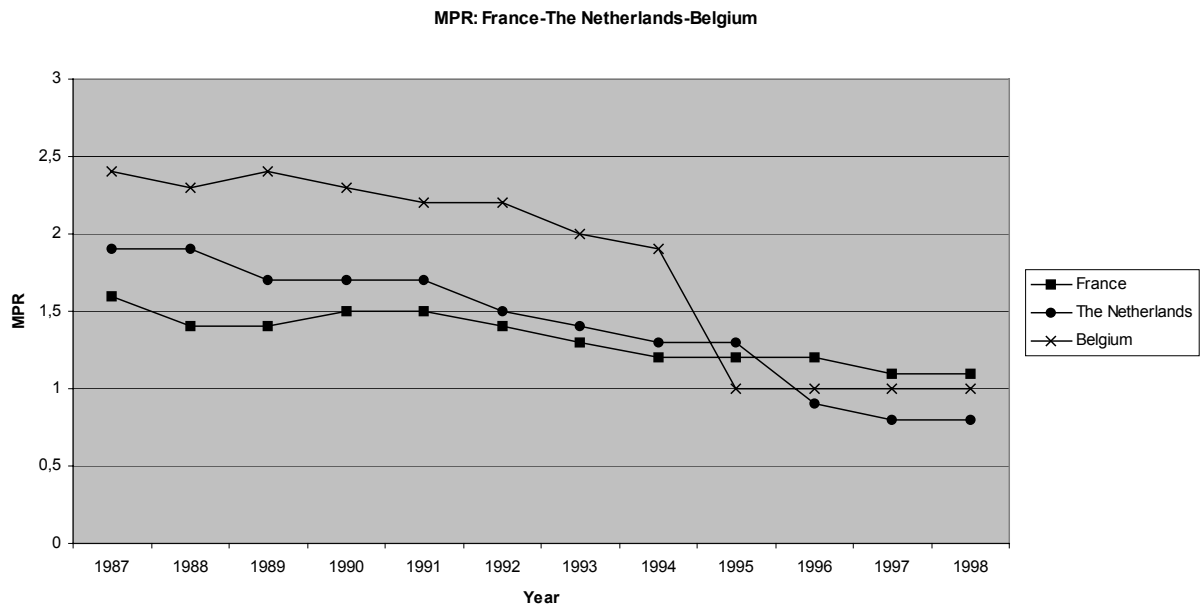
Graph 1 : Military Participation Rate: France-the Netherlands-Belgium (1988-1998)

Even in 1987-1988 the **CR** of the Low Countries was much lower than 50% which, following the typology of Haltiner, implied that Belgium and the Netherlands were only pseudo- mass armies. This gave this force type –not *de jure* but *de facto*- more the character of an all-

volunteer military than of a conscript army'.[90] This is an important observation because it reflects the fact that the decline of the mass army had been under way for some time. It also reflects the evolutionary character of the process. Based on these figures, France was a more traditional country because it retained a CR above 50% until 1991, but the CR gradually shrank soon after this year. Since 1996, when the decision was made to accept the zero draft, the CR has shrunk in an even more pronounced fashion.

CR: France-The Netherlands-Belgium
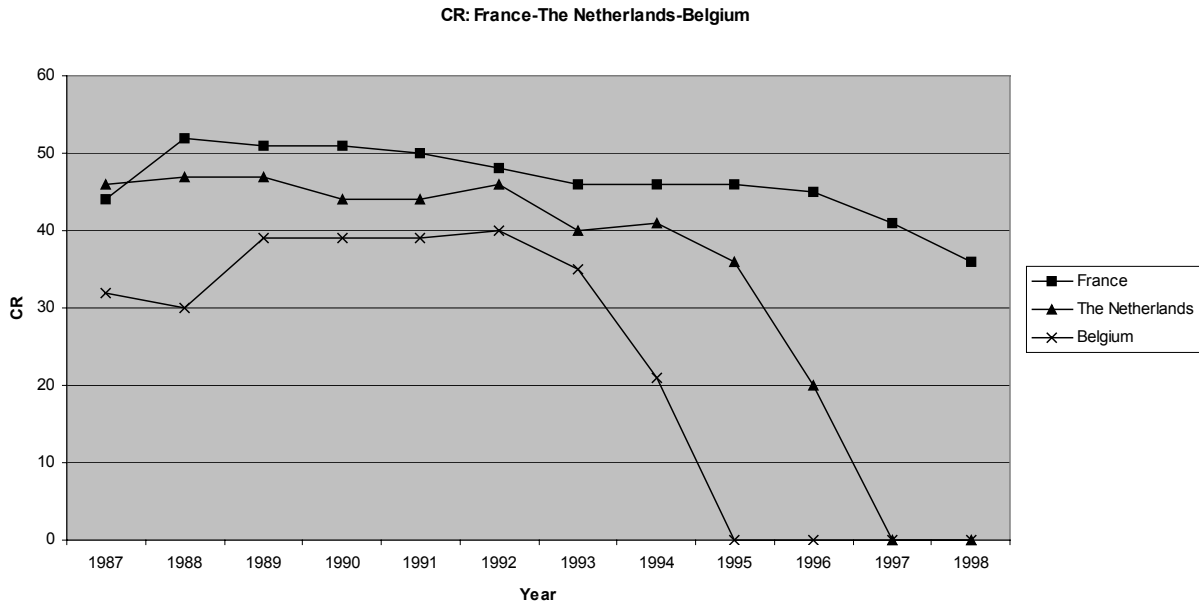
Graph 2: General Conscription Rate: France-the Netherlands-Belgium (1988-1998)

The conscription rate of the different Forces in the three countries show a correlation between the technical character of a force and the use of conscripts. Indeed, the Army, the least technical of all the forces, uses the most conscripts, while the most technical forces use fewer conscripts. The evolution, as demonstrated in the three countries' tables, confirm the decline of the mass army model.

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[90] Karl W. Haltiner, 'The Definite End of the Mass Army in Western Europe?', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Fall 1998, p. 16. The 'conscript ratio' is defined as 'the percentage of conscripts compared to the total of a country's regulars without reserves. It indicated the degree to which the armed forces recruit respectively their conscripts or volunteers and is thus of central importance for the characterization of the organizational structure of the military organization'. (*Ibid.* p. 12)
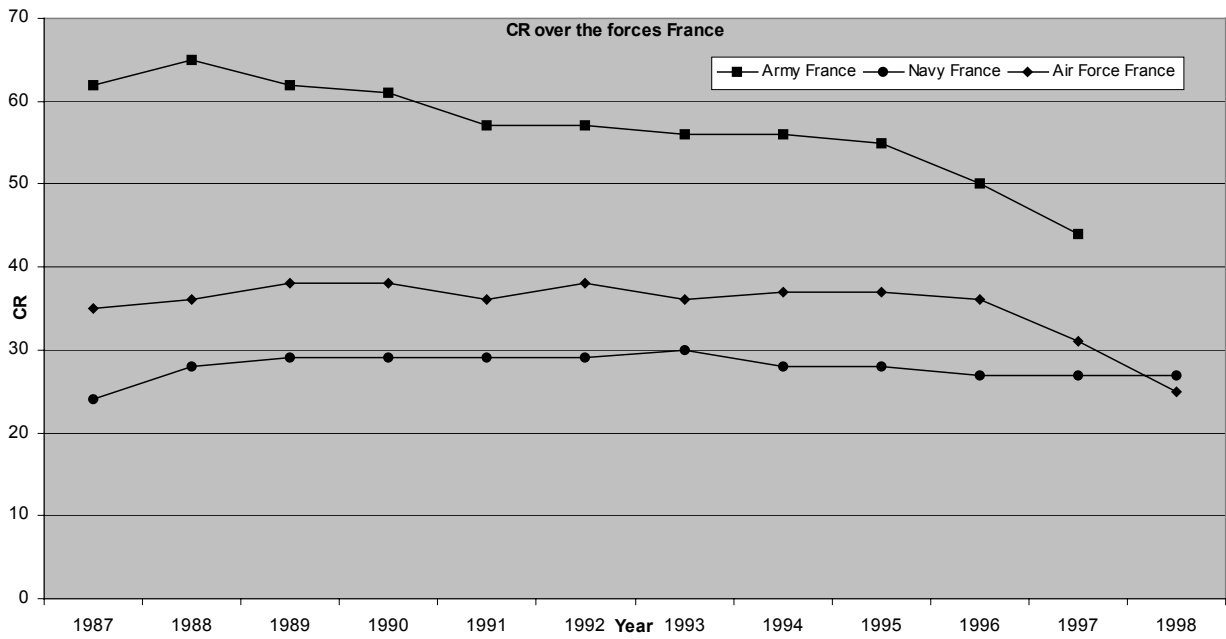
Graph 3: Conscription Rate over the Forces: France (1988-1998)
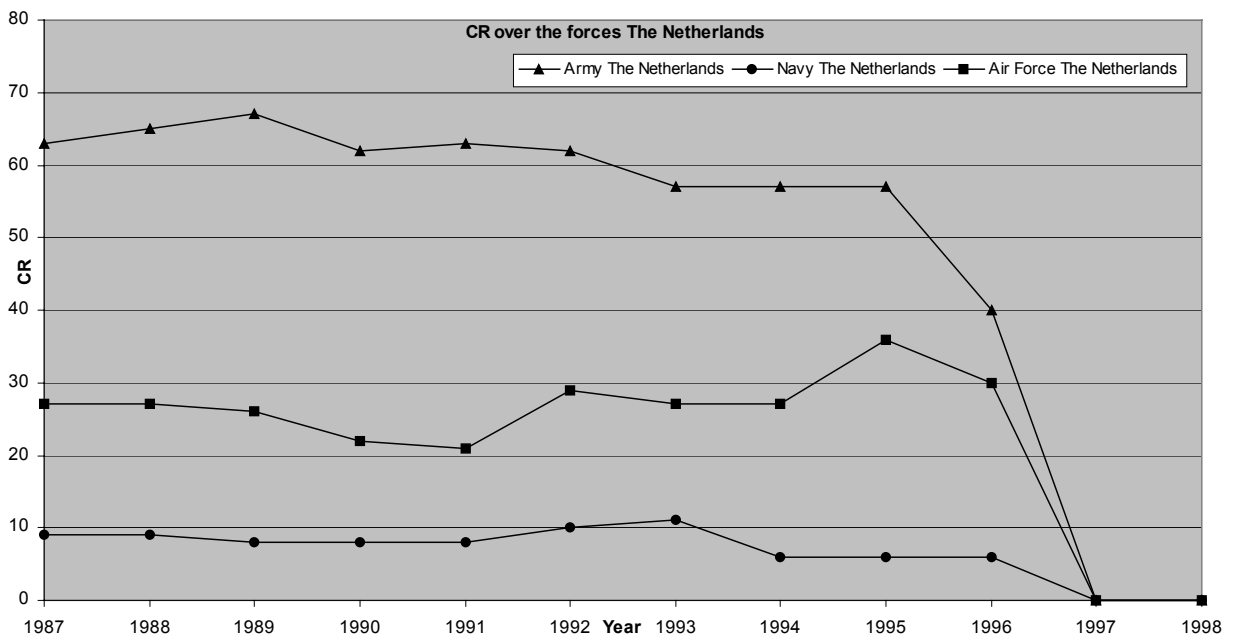
Graph 4: Conscription Rate over the Forces: the Netherlands (1988-1998)

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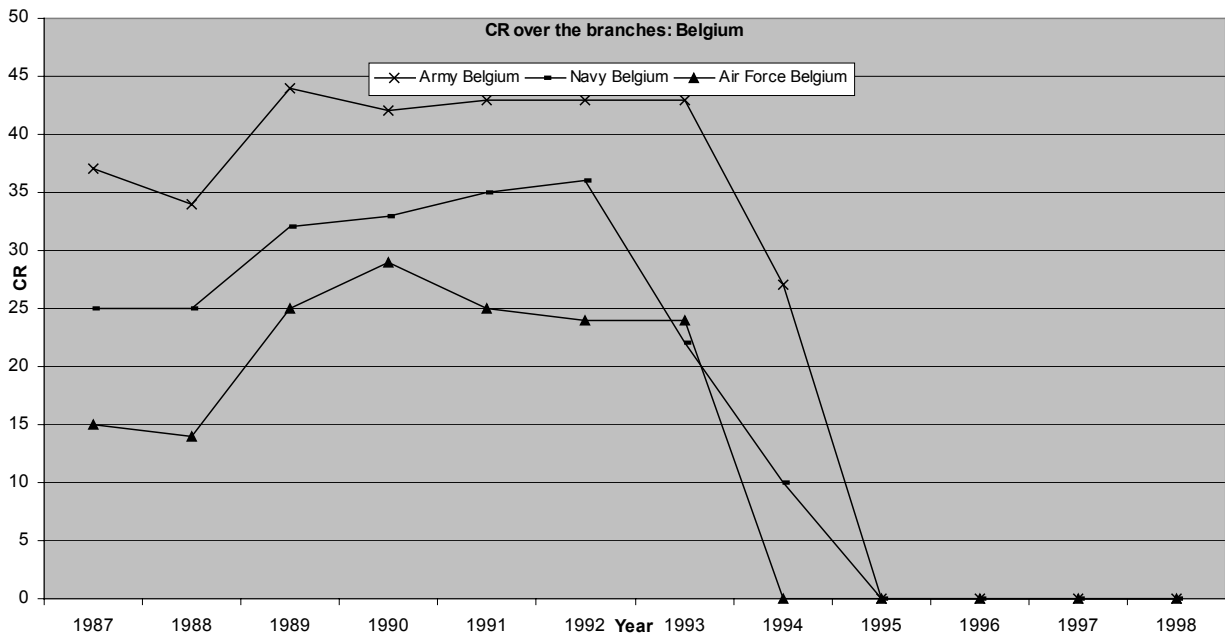
Graph 5: Conscription Rate over the Forces: Belgium (1988-1998)

The tables presented above illustrate the concept of mobilization's loss of meaning over time. They also show that armies no longer rely on a large number of recruits Moreover, and this is not expressed in the graphs above, it is also true that the third pillar of the mass army has lost its meaning. Indeed, the armed forces of France, Belgium and The Netherlands no longer strive for homogeneity in their units. On the contrary, diversity rather than homogeneity characterizes the recruitment dimension of the military organization as women, civilians, visible and cultural minorities and even declared sexual minorities are allowed to fill the ranks.[91]

In conclusion, the observed countries underwent a relatively smooth, coherent and long-term evolution in which their armed forces changed gradually from one army type to another. This finding has been confirmed by Haltiner, and it also supports the theory of the decline of the mass army. The 'qualitative mutation' from the mass army to the post-modern AVF- as illustrated here with some structural indices- therefore had an evolutionary nature. The stability of the environment was enhanced by the predictability of a bi-polar world, the successes of western socio-economic achievements, and the slow pace of changes which eventually provoked cultural shifts that subsequently contributed significantly to this evolutionary process. Nevertheless, it is also necessary to repeat that despite wide global trends which affected these three countries and their similar evolutionary processes, every country underwent these changes at a unique speed and the process was marked by individual and distinctive national characteristics.

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[91] See for example for the Belgian case: Philippe Manigart, 'La gestion de la diversité: personnel féminin et minorités culturalles dans le Forces armées belges' [Managing Diversity: Female Personnel and Cultural Minorities in the Belgian Armed Forces], *Courrier Hebdomadaire*, Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, No. 1630, 1999; More generally, diversity is elaborated in Joseph Soeters and Jan van der Meulen (editors), *Managing Diversity in the Armed Forces, Experiences from Nine Countries*, Tilburg: Tilburg University Press, 1999; and for a study on coping with sexual minorities in the Armed Forces, see: Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, *Homosexuals in European Armed Forces: Policies, Practices and Problems*, London: European Research Office of the US Army, 1996.

The following citation, taken from the conclusions of a European study on the socio-cultural aspects of defense restructuring and conversion, summarizes these conclusions. It simultaneously adds a warning against overhasty and incoherent decisions:

> "A focus on personnel issues is one possible approach to the study of changes in military organization in the post-Cold-War period. It restricts its focus to the socio-cultural issues in conversion, where human resources are important and manpower problems dominant. In order to get a more general view of changes in the military, the organizational and structural problems need also to be addressed. If this is done, we can see that military organizations have been exposed to a process of long-term transformation since WW2. It is the case that, though this transformation has accelerated since the Cold War, the trends are well known. There is one very crucial characteristic of military organizations, which can be seen from these changes. Military organizations do not cope well with rapid changes. All these changes need to be discussed and planned well in advance, implemented gradually in small steps with the possibility of withdrawing those found to be faulty thus avoiding great damage. It is noteworthy that the post-Cold-War period has generated different patterns of military transformation, in which this need for gradual change has not always been respected."[92]

Besides these structural and quantitative characteristics that illustrate the evolution toward a post-modern all-volunteer force, the decision to implement such an organizational model is first and foremost a political decision. Some aspects of the political dimension of this decision will now be presented.

The Political Rationale for Reform

Four main arguments were used to support the idea of abolishing the practice of conscription in the Dutch, Belgian and French armed forces and all of these arguments are located in the spheres of international affairs; national budgets; public opinion; and military affairs. However, each country has emphasized one argument more than the other. Michel Auvray, for example, who wrote on the French situation, observed that:

> "…les dirigeants français s'évertuent à concilier un triple souci proclamé: comprimer les effectifs, accentuer la professionalisation et restaurer l'égalité de tous devant le service."[93]

These developments occurred in a more benign and rapidly changing international environment. Internationally, the bi-polar world was finished. The fall of the Berlin Wall, on November 9th, 1989, became the symbol of the end of the Cold War. The disarmament agreements of 1990 (Paris, CFE agreement) and 1991 (Moscow, START agreement) created an atmosphere of détente and threat reduction in Europe. Many Western politicians indicated that these changes would have a tremendous effect and they would ultimately improve the

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[92] Ljubica Jelusic, 'Sociocultural Aspects of Defence Restructuring and Conversion: Some Initial Conclusions', in: Ljubica Jelusic and John Selby (Editors), *Defence Restructuring and Conversion: Socio-Cultural Aspects*, Brussels: European Commission Directorate-General Research- Cost Action A10, 1999, p. 313.

[93] Michel Auvray, *L'âge des caserne, Histoire et mythes du service militaire* [The Era of the Barracks, History and Myths of Military Service] La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube, 1998, p. 237.

West's political relationship with the Soviet Union (and later Russia) on defense policies. Western leaders complimented the Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev for his *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (reform) policies. Although the Soviet threat dramatically diminished, Western decision-makers were quick to state that there were still other diffuse risks and threats that should be considered.

These risks, however, were of a completely different order and situated in the spheres of terrorism, ethnic tensions, and organized crime. Threats of conflict and violence had now evolved to the sub-national and non-(conventional) military sphere. The fact that the new conflicts were considered not as strictly military conflicts, but as politico-military confrontations, impelled the military professional to have well developed political abilities and diplomatic skills. In this new strategic context, the link between military posturing and national security is less direct than during the modern period. As a result, the huge armies manned by conscripts of earlier decades became obsolete.

There was also a trend to more international cooperation and integration in order to obtain collective security. Militarily, the Dutch-German brigade, the Eurocorps (with the participation of Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Spain), the Dutch-Belgian cooperation in naval affairs, Etc. are mentioned as examples of this trend. The Dutch supported more international cooperation, interoperability, standardization, and the multinational composition of units on different levels. The integrative power of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union was a political outcome of this trend, which was illustrated by France's decision to fully integrate militarily into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The trend toward more international cooperation can be linked to the economic argument against conscription. Military cooperation enabled each country to share the high costs of national defense. The fact that the Treaty of Maastricht obliged countries to limit their budgetary debts forced governments to reconstruct their national budgets. Budgetary reasons obliged states to make their spending, and thus their armies, smaller. Belgium and the Netherlands considerably reduced their defense budget while France maintained approximately the same level: but all their armies became smaller. The revision of the national budgets also had major consequences for long-term investments and modernization of the military forces. In this context of frozen and declining defense budgets the place of the 'universally' conscripted soldier became outdated.

The abolishment of conscription was also a *'beau geste'* to the public with electoral implications. Military conscription was unpopular in the West because many conscripts saw their service involving a waste of time, a loss of potential earnings. Many of their unconscripted peers in other countries found it easier to find work and subsequently they started to work earlier. Furthermore, the fact that military conscription was far from universal during the 1980's was seen as a social injustice. The equal rights of women, a consequence of feminism in Western society, brought women into the army as professional soldiers and politicized the conventional confinement of conscription to the male population. Military conscription was perceived as increasingly discriminatory. As a result, abolishing conscription was found to be politically fruitful for governments in the West.

The fact that military service became selective can be linked to the military argument against conscription. The progressive obsolescence of conscript-labor became a decade long trend during the 1980's (as shown in the evolution of the CR above). Moreover, in France only 36 % of male population of the 18-22 age group was effectively conscripted by 1989. In Belgium only 33% were conscripted and in the Netherlands only 27% were.[94] Besides the fact

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[94] Michel Auvray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 233. Philippe Manigart, La restructuration des forces armées belges [Reform of the Belgian Armed Forces], *Res Publica*, Vol. 35, No. 3-4, 1992, p. 435. Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, *Defensienota 1991: Herstructurering en verkleining. De Nederlandse krijgsmacht in een vernaderende wereld*

that this was socially unjust, technological developments meant that the established routine training of men for only ten months could no longer be effective. The more advanced weapon systems that dominate the modern battlefield required more complicated, intensive, and long term training. It is therefore significant that the two branches most reliant on high-tech equipment (the Navy and Air Force) had already employed personnel on a contract basis for some time. The Army, as the least advanced force (particularly in the infantry units), used conscripts extensively until the system was ended.[95]

The change in the missions faced by the military also played a role in the 'zero draft' decision. In the 1990's, peacekeeping and peace-making became one of the armed forces' most important missions. These missions were often situated in troubled regions far from the European heartland. However, it was governmental policy not to send conscripts to the conflict zones.[96] Only contract soldiers were used for such missions. Therefore, technologically and professionally, poorly trained conscripts - the equivalent of the uneducated blue collar worker in the manufacturing industries - became unfit for military service in the 1990's.

These four arguments were combined to determine the different national governments decision to abolish conscription. In Belgium and the Netherlands emphasis was placed upon the economic and public opinion arguments, and in France the military argument was more important. The lessons that were learned from the Gulf War accelerated these political decisions. However, it is remarkable that this topic did not mobilize public opinion. In addition, conscription did not become an issue in the political debates or programs of any of the parties in any of these countries. There were other military issues that mobilized the public and politicians as the nuclear weapons issue did in Europe during the early 1980's. In other words, the abolition of conscription, a profound decision with great historical significance, was a smooth, even bleak political event.

Even in France, from where the origins of universal compulsory military service can be traced, the televised broadcast of President Chirac on February 22, 1996 announcing the abolition of conscription was a colorless event. This lack of interest reflected the fact that in the West, military service was no longer a social issue across the whole of society. The conscription system was already too deeply eroded. The political decision to end it coincided with societal trends.[97] This explains the overwhelming majorities which passed the abolition resolutions in each respective national parliament. The conscription debate had merely become a consensus issue. In the case of the Netherlands, the parliament even accelerated the time frame in which the conscripted soldier could leave the service. As the previously cited figures demonstrated, contract service was already an alternative recruitment policy in the three mentioned countries. The so-called 'mixed system' had already existed for decades thus Western militaries were not completely surprised by events in the 1990's.

[Reform and Reduction, The Dutch Armed Forces in a Changing World], 'S-Gravenhage: SDU uitgeverij, 1991, p. 164.

[95] In this sense the professionalization of the armed forces is most difficult for the Army which is seen as the most traditional, most conservative and therefore most resistant to change. The process of the decline of the mass army therefore represents a severe crisis for the Army.

[96] Reflected by the fact that France decided not to send conscripts to the Gulf War (August 1990-March 1991). The triumph in the Gulf War can be seen as a triumph of high technology used by professionals.

[97] It is noteworthy to repeat that this observation may not be seen as a general rule true for all national defense discussions that occurred in Europe In May 2000, for example, a fierce and unconventional debate broke out in Germany on the zero draft. The lack of consensus in the German case can be understood on the basis of the Second World War experience of Germany with which German society is apparently still struggling. This German exception on the trend that is noted above is another example of how particular national experiences may contradict general trends as accepted in this study.

The Actors Involved. In a democracy based on the division of powers over society (or the system of 'checks and balances'), two fundamental powers play a role in political decision-making, the executive and the legislative power. In post-modern society the media also play an increasingly influential role in the political process. In what follows, the government, parliament and media are reviewed as actors in the defense debate. Where necessary, the relationship of the military institution with these actors will be highlighted and it will demonstrate how the conscription issue became part of a reform agenda.

The impetus for reassessing conscription as part of a military reform program did not actually come from the military organization itself. All the reform plans currently under consideration were instigated by the executive branch, namely the Ministry of Defense. General staffs were ordered to realize the ministerial ideas of change. Thus in Belgium the Chief-of-Staffs Lt. Gen. Gysemberg (1988) and Lt. Gen. Charlier (1989 and 1990) proposed a plan to restructure the armed forces; and in the Netherlands, the 1991 Defense Paper [*defensienota*] entitled 'Restructuring and Reduction', was used and it was followed by Priority Paper [*prioriteitennota*] in 1993.

Even the 1991 Dutch Defense Paper, edited by the Minister of Defense A.L. Ter Beek, still favored compulsory military service. Ter Beek underlined the relationship between society and the army that was secured through military service. Moreover, in September 1992 the Dutch Meijer commission advised against the abolition of conscription, subsequently this commission was accused of being too heavily influenced by the military establishment. It may be concluded that military organizations tried at every opportunity to delay the abolition of conscription.

In a minor form, institutional resistance can be observed. Military organizations drew up cosmetic measures which adapted conscript recruitment to the new circumstances. For instance, they proposed shortening the period of service and proclaimed a greater tolerance of 'alternative service'. They also played with the idea of 're-evaluating' military service. Generally speaking, the military forces were not necessarily opposed to the idea of fundamental change in recruitment policy, but some fought a bureaucratic rear-guard battle against it. Hence, the revolutionary decision to abolish conscription was a civilian decision which was announced by the Minister of Defense L. Delcroix in June 1992 in Belgium and by the Minister ter Beek in The Netherlands in 1993.[98] As soon as each government took the zero draft decision, their respective military leaders accepted it and revised their plans taking this new reality into account.

However some military mavericks, mostly retired infantry generals, occasionally criticized the government. Their criticisms can be summarized in four main points, they argued that: the transitional period in which the forces would transform themselves from a hybrid to a fully professional army was too short; that there was a lack of financial support for the shift; that there would be various problems with the reserve forces; and that without conscription, the armed forces would be 'losing' the nation's youth, which they saw as a moral loss for society as a whole.

This critique, which was generally isolated and anecdotal, did not influence the political decision making process. Thus, the decision to abolish military conscription did not negatively affect civil-military relations. The democratic idea of civilian control over the military forces stood the test by implementing the decision to professionalize the armed forces. However, as will be shown below, the ongoing reform of the armed forces in Western

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[98] See for instance: Joris Van Bladel and Philippe Manigart, 'Herstructurering in België' [Restructuring in Belgium], *Maatschappij en krijgsmacht*, Vol. 15, No. 5, October 1993, pp. 9-12; and Jan van der Meulen, 'Civiel-militaire betrekkingen in verandering, wisselwerking tussen maatschappij en krijgsmacht'[Changing Civil-Military Relations, Interaction between Society and Armed Forces], in: H. Born, R. Moelker and J. Soeters, *Op. Cit.*, 1999, pp. 31-67.

countries has not been a consistently positive story. Actively obstructing and resisting reform may not be shown openly in the political arena, but this does not mean that organizational resistance does not exist. One aspect of this resistance will be demonstrated in the discussion about the role of the media in the political discussion of military affairs.

The parliaments of each of the different countries were not active in the decision-making process of this debate. Political parties were not clear about the practice of conscription, nor the process of professionalizing the armed forces. Defense issues were not politically important: hence, they were not considered electoral issues. As Moskos foresaw in his postmodern model, the public attitude towards military and defense issues in general is skeptical and/or apathetic. Politicians were more interested in the economic benefits of reforming the armed forces, and they were counting on an ensuing 'peace dividend'. However, what was remarkable was the speed and smoothness (also observed in the structural variables above) of the concomitant parliamentary process accompanying such an important event. Society's implicit consensus on the conscription issue was certainly an important element in this phenomenon. Subsequently the armed forces, could not count on parliamentarians to defend their case in the political arena.

Strangely enough, the mass media was relatively calm on the issue of conscription. They reported rather soberly about the different point of views, and were never a driving-force in the debate. This debate, as shown above, was sincere and modest. The role of the media however is completely different in the coverage of military scandals, which regularly took place in the aftermath of the political decision to install the All-Volunteer Force.

In conclusion, in terms of the experience of the Dutch, Belgian and French armed forces, the political decision to abolish the draft and to structurally reform the armed forces was a politically smooth and efficient process. This can be explained by the power of societal trends which had already influenced the army for some time. Political decisions that cohere with environmental trends seem to have more chance of being successful than ones that do not. In

Main organizational principles of the reforming armies. The strategists in the three countries stipulated the main organizational principles of the reforming armies in a similar way. Michel Auvray, for instance, commenting on French military affairs during the 1990's noted that:

> "Technicité, mobilité et disponibilité vont plus que jamais de pair avec une professionalisation accrue, sinon totale."[99]

The Dutch White Paper stipulated the following organizational principles they recommended the military forces should have: more flexible organizations, more proficient equipment, more efficient unit formation, greater mobility, more and a better means of intelligence gathering, a more resilient command and control system, a multi-national composition of units on different levels, more logistically independent and inter-changeable units, and greater international cooperation, interoperability and standardization.[100]

All the principles of the Dutch White Paper were brought together to form the concept of the 'mobile forces'. These forces have been installed in Belgium, the Netherlands and France. They must have a high degree of readiness and must be able to contain a crisis without mobilizing the entire army. It is only at a later stage and/or in the case of a major full-

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[99] Michel Auvray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 236.
[100] Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, *Defensienota 1991: Herstructurering en verkleining. De Nederlandse krijgsmacht in een vernaderende wereld [Reform and Reduction, The Dutch Armed Forces in a Changing World]*, 'S-Gravenhage: SDU uitgeverij, 1991, p. 68.

scale conflict that the 'main defense forces' and 'reinforcement forces' are required.[101] The reformed armed forces are therefore, smaller, more mobile and generally ready to react with a certain amount of flexibility to any potential crisis.

1. 4.   Summary: Towards a Complex Understanding of the Professional Soldier

Today, professional soldiers are faced with acting in a turbulent international environment where local wars flare up in an unpredictable manner. These wars are generally localized and endanger stability in certain regions, rather than threatening entire national territories. The post-modern soldier is thus not a product of state nationalism. (S)he is however, a citizen who is prepared to fulfill a contract in order to protect security of the state in its broadest definition. In this sense armies are not necessarily 'a mirror of the nation'. Consequently, armies are organizations in which diversity prevails. Women, civilians and ethnic (and sexual) minorities find a place in this new type of army.

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[101] The three countries also have a similar view on possible future tasks for their armed forces: (1) defense of national territory, (2) contributing to NATO operations- in or out the NATO territory, (3) contributing to peace operations; (4) protecting former colonies. The examples of each of the countries emphasize the special relationship with their former colonies. The Netherlands stipulate the protection of the Dutch Antilles and Aruba, while France and Belgium underline their special relationship with central African countries. It is interesting to note that the historical relations of the Western countries with their former colonies are generally accepted, while the Russian 'claim' on the 'near abroad' is interpreted as neo-imperialism.

Thus, the post-modern soldier must show a willingness to adapt to the social and political conditions of each mission and (s)he must demonstrate an attitude of tolerance towards other soldiers and civilians. Combat functions, although essential to a certain degree in every military organization, are now emphasized less than in earlier epochs. Even the skills of the professional combat soldier are changing. Besides being proficient in the execution of combat techniques, (s)he needs to master diplomatic and scholarly skills. The post-modern military soldier is expected to cope with difficult political dilemmas, in which (s)he must constantly evaluate the real situation on the terrain, according to vague rules of engagement. Even at the lowest levels of the organization, a soldier must take responsibility for his/her actions and be able to independently take the initiative. (S)he must be prepared to hold opinions on a large variety of subjects and organizational matters, and also be able to cope with the problems that arise in military life. The soldier is expected to show an interest in educating his/herself beyond the narrow confines of a traditionally strict military education. Subsequently modern military education touches upon topics such as political science, economics, psychology, and cultural and regional studies in order to cope with new missions in peripheral regions.

Because even the lowest levels in the manpower structure of a post-modern army are important, the mutual relationships that develop between soldiers and between soldiers and officers are relationships that are based on trust. The hierarchical structure of the army is eroding and leadership in the post-modern forces is based on conviction and personality, and less on rank and tradition. Small group cohesion, is an important phenomenon, however it is now not regarded as a dominant factor. Ironically the culture of group cohesion, which is linked to conventional traditions and organizational differences from the outside world, can actually be counter-productive when soldiers are faced with political and cultural dilemmas that occur during the new missions.[102] Therefore a balance must be found between group cohesion and the values on which it is based within the post-modern environment.

The perception of the professional soldier is narrowly linked with the ideal model of the post-modern personality which touches all aspects of a person's or soldier's professional and organizational life. This model is a fundamental change from the classical view of the soldier. The prototypical 'peasant' soldier, or even the 'industrial' soldier, would not only be an anachronism in contemporary military terms but also a danger, given the type of missions (s)he might face. Besides, even a well-paid 'peasant' soldier does not fit into the constantly changing socio-military picture. Therefore, the professional soldier is much more than the narrow economic interpretation of the 'paid' soldier: the post-modern, professional soldier is only distantly related to his colleague of the past.

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[102] Donna Winslow, 'Rites of Passage and Group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Spring 1999, p. 453.

Chapter 2. Crisis in the Russian Military: Both Politics and Culture Matter

In the previous chapter, the post-modern military organization in general and its specific professionalization process in particular were analyzed and the process of change was illustrated by the experiences of France, Belgium and The Netherlands. These insights will now be applied to the Russian military forces. Comparing the Western experience of socio-military issues with recent Russian realities is based on two considerations, which include: the post-war Western scientific discourse on changing military organizations, which provide a conceptual reference, can be used to analyze the Russian situation; and the Western experience reflects the reality of the Russian army to a certain extent since the Russian reform debate has been inspired by Western concepts. Indeed, using this comparative model contradicts the impression that Russian military affairs are a strange, incomprehensible and, unchangeable phenomenon despite the fact that immediate results of (ambitious) reform experiments fail to appear.

As an overall, holistic comparison between the evolution of military organizations in Russia and the West is, for practical reasons, impossible, the purpose of this chapter is to compare the development of the proposed and actual solutions to the Russian manpower problems with the French, Belgian and Dutch experience. This comparison makes it possible to put the Russian organizational crisis into perspective. At the same time, we will determine which specific Russian characteristics contributed to the failure of Russian reform. The basic arguments of this study are that political and cultural factors lie behind the failure for reform.

2. 1.   Russian Manpower Development Beyond Control: Towards a Hybrid Army Type.

Organizational problems in the Russian military are not only a persistent issue in the Western and Russian press, they are also –due to their magnitude - perceived by Western analysts to be a threat to political, social and international strategy. All of these problems are well documented, but some fundamental characteristics of the Russian military organizational crisis have been less understood. The Russian organizational crisis may be explained by examining the basis of the structural variables which comprise the armed forces. Parallel with the findings of the French, Belgian and Dutch experience, the following variables will be presented: the development of active duty manpower in Russia; the distributions of army personnel over the separate branches of the armed forces; the Conscription Rate (CR) in general and in the forces; and the Military Participation Rate (MPR);. These structural variables reveal the basic characteristics of the Russian military, namely 'size', 'mobilization' and 'homogeneity', being the three key variables of a mass army. We will determine the main trends in the organizational changes of the Russian armed forces and compare them with the ideal types of the 'mass army' and the 'post-modern military organization'.[103]

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[103] To ensure methodological coherence the data from the 1987/88-1998/99 editions of the *Military Balance* is used. In order to put the Soviet-Russian experience since 1985 in a broader context some data are also used from Ellen Jones' basic study on the Soviet military organization before 1985.(see: Ellen Jones, *Red Army and Society, a Sociology of the Soviet Military*, Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985) The distinction is also made between the Soviet period (1988-1991) and the Russian period (1992-1998) in order to make clear the difference between the process of 'state making' and 'organizational change'. As may be clear, these two processes influenced each other. Consequently, this complicates the interpretation of Soviet-Russian figures in comparison with the West.

Ellen Jones, a distinguished researcher of Soviet manpower issues, in the 1980's, advised that in order to understand the Russian military system one must take both the historical heritage of the tsarist army and Marxist ideology into account in order to understand Soviet military manpower tradition.[104] Thus a brief outline of the manpower structure and the use of conscripts in the Soviet mass army are necessary in order to understand the Russian army.

The Soviet Type Mass Army

The reliance on some form of conscription is one of the strongest military traditions in Russia. This tradition goes back to the very beginning of the Russian Imperialist period. Conscription definitely predates the French Revolution's '*levée en masse*', which is often seen as the first example of the mass army. Russia has forced young men into the Imperial army as early as the eighteenth century, when men were recruited as a result of the Petrine reforms.[105] Although the conscription system itself has changed considerably in Russia and the Soviet Union, specific Russian-Soviet traits of the 300-year conscription system can still be identified. This is illustrated by an evocative picture of a conscript soldiers' life in the early 19th century.

> "Economic instability and the struggle to survive in the most basic physical sense were constant features of military life…The character and the abilities of individual officers had a decisive effect on the social and economic conditions of the lower ranks. The state either chose or was forced, because of inadequate economic, and administrative resources, to rely extensively on ad hoc measures taken by individual officers and to tolerate flagrant violations of the law- all of which eroded bureaucratic rationality and professional efficiency…The army was then left with the unenviable task of trying to transform an obligation that…society regarded as an unmitigated disaster into a glorious and heroic deed."[106]

Today's Russian army shares many similarities with its Tsarist and Soviet past. The Soviet army relied heavily on recruiting a large number of soldiers as the Soviets especially emphasized 'size' in their concept of a mass army.[107] 'More is better' was their motto. The Soviet Union had a standing army of about 4.5 to 5 million soldiers and a reserve force which stood at an estimated number of about 50 million men and women. Soviet strategists believed the USSR was prepared for waging total war and a mass attack which would be decisive in future conflicts. These numbers also prepared the USSR for a protracted conflict. Mobilization and recruitment were considered the key aspects of Soviet manpower policy and

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[104] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[105] About the Russian imperial tradition see for instance Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter*, From Serf to Russian Soldier*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 3-25; John L. H. Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar: Army and Society in Russia, 1482-1874*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985; John Bushnell, 'Peasants in Uniform: the Tsarist Army as a Peasant Society", *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 13, No. 4, Summer 1980, pp. 753-780; Dietrich Beyrau, *Militär und Gesellschaft im Vorrevolutionären Russland*, Cologne: Bohlau Verlag, 1984; John Shelton Curtiss, *The Russian Army under Nicholas I, 1825-1855*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1965; Allen K. Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980. L.G. Beskrovnyi, *Russkaia armiia I flot v XVIII veke* , Moskva, 1958; L.G. Beskrovnyi, *Russkaia armiia I flot v XIX veke* , Moskva, 1973; P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Voennye reformy 1860-1870 goduv v Rossii*, Moskva, 1952.
[106] Elise K. Wirtschafter, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 149-150.
[107] Lenin's comment 'quantity is quality' may have been inspired by military issues.

it was practiced to the point of obsession.[108] Reliance on the concept of mobilization capacity, and the Soviet interpretation of combat readiness, originated in the traumatic experience of the Second World War, as the 'Barbarossa Syndrome'. Historically, invasion by foreign powers had been a reality, but it had become a nightmare in the minds of Soviet military planners. This paranoid fear of external invasion together with the practice of total warfare, led to the conviction that society as a whole, and not just the armed forces, had to prepare for war. Besides this purely military understanding of the armed forces, the Soviet military organization fulfilled a considerable economic function as well. The military was used as a 'flexible labor force' for different societal needs, such as agricultural and construction projects. The Soviet military-industrial complex, which represented the majority of Soviet industrial capacity, supported the armed forces. Moreover, the Soviet military were seen as an important educational agent in Soviet society. It was regarded as the school of the nation in which multi-cultural attitudes could be installed and basic education could be provided. Ellen Jones, for instance, emphasized the socializing role of the Soviet army, which was in essence aimed at producing the notorious 'Soviet Man'. In short, the army fulfilled an all-embracing political role in the Soviet polity and society.

All these military, economic, educational and political arguments resulted in an even higher incentive to call up as many as possible of the young men in the Soviet Union. Ellen Jones estimates that between 65-70% of the 18-year old pool were drafted in the 1970's, and up to 75-80% in the beginning of the 1980's.[109] Once they were enlisted, Army and Air Force conscripts served for two years, and three years when they were assigned to the Navy. Prior to the 1967 conscription law the service terms were even longer and the generals were only open for a reduction of training-time when this loss was compensated for by the revival of a program of initial or basic military schools, the so-called *nachalnaya voyennaya podgotovka*, or NVP. The intention was to give students of secondary schools 'an introduction to military skills at an early age in order to instill enough military-technological knowledge to facilitate the absorption of a military specialty once the conscript was drafted'.[110] The NVP also increased the mobilization readiness of Soviet society.

Christopher Donnelly has observed that the Soviet conscription practices had an important impact on the technological level of weaponry. He noted that there were strong pressures on the Soviet weapons procurement system to produce equipment which was simple to operate, highly robust, and on which it was relatively simple to do battlefield maintenance and repair.[111] Soviet manpower philosophy thus influenced the technological innovation (or the lack of it) in the Soviet Union. As a result of all these considerations, the Soviet Union lived under a very high MPR and CR. Jones estimated that in total the Soviet Armed forces professional-conscript ratio was 30:70. This rate corresponds with the figures of *The Military Balance* that noted that all branches in the Soviet forces used between 70% and 75%

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[108] See for instance Ellen Jones, *Op. Cit.*, p. 38-41 and Chris Donnelly, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 153-161. In a paper presented by Dr. Charles Dick, Director of the Conflict Studies Research Centre at Sandhurst, the author emphasized the importance of Russian invasion history in order to understand Russian military policy in the 1990s (presentation of Dr Charles Dick on Friday 2 June 2000 at the seminar "Rebuilding Cooperation", UK-Russian Security Support Seminar, organized by Air Vice-Marshal Professor Tony Mason, Birmingham University, 1-4 June 2000.)

[109] Herbert Goldhamer estimated that in 1967, the moment when a new Law of Universal Military Service replaced the 1939 Law, about 50% of the 18-year cohort was conscripted. Herbert Goldhamer, *The Soviet Soldier, Soviet Military Management at the Troop Level*, New York: Crane, Russak & Company, 1975, p. 7. The way deferments based on health, education and family situation were interpreted as well as demographic considerations influenced how 'universally' conscription laws were implemented in the Soviet Union. The estimates of Jones and Goldhamer demonstrate that it changed considerably over time.

[110] Ellen Jones, *Op. Cit.*, p. 69.

[111] Chris Donnelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 180.

conscripts to fill the ranks.[112] Based on Haltiner's typology, a CR of 70% means that the Soviet army can be labeled as a 'hard-core mass army', like countries such as Turkey, Greece, Finland and Switzerland.[113]

Finally, the Soviet armed forces were intended to be a homogeneous organization. This was emphasized by the fact that the Soviet Union strove to develop one specific type of man who had well defined characteristics that were embedded in an ideological framework. The nature of Soviet ideology thus only strengthened the phenomenon of homogenization. However, social, educational and ethnic realities proved to be more difficult to cope with as the evolution from 1988 onwards demonstrated.

Two specific Soviet characteristics installed control in the conscript army. First, the Soviet Union did not have a non-commissioned officer corps such as Western armies did. Small Unit command was given to the corps of *serzhanty*, which actually were fellow conscripts who had received additional specialized training of only six months.[114] At the beginning of the 1970s a corps of so-called *praporshchiki* and *michmany* (warrant officers in the Army and Navy) were installed to cope with small unit command. However, this experiment to professionalize small unit command may not be seen as an overall success and this will be explained in the third part of this study. Secondly, besides the company commander, every company had a political officer (*zampolit*) who was formally responsible for the discipline and welfare of the soldiers. This difficult situation of dual command greatly lacked legitimacy at the troop level and was one of the reasons that an informal system of control came into existence. This system was the notorious *dedovshchina* system that Jones described as follows:

> "Control is also maintained through an informal and [officially] unauthorized seniority or "caste" system among conscripts. Because soldiers are drafted at six-month intervals, a typical ground force unit will have four classes of conscripts: new soldiers (freshly arrived conscripts), soldiers with six or twelve months' previous service, those with twelve to eighteen months' service, and senior conscripts with less than six months' service remaining before demobilization. While informal customs regarding responsibilities and privileges of each 'class' vary from unit to unit, the senior soldiers enjoy a far higher status than their newly arrived counterparts, who must endure a six-month period of hazing by conscripts with longer time in service. The system is widely accepted by both conscripts and the career force. Conscripts accept the hazing they receive in the first six months in return for the privileges they receive upon achieving 'senior' status. The career force accepts the system because it simplifies the problems of maintaining control of large groups of post-adolescent males."[115]

This system of informal control corresponds with the idea of the closed organization system. This system was shrouded in secrecy and mythology, just as the Soviet military actually was within Soviet society.

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[112] Jones made room for some nuance on this issue when she observed that technology and the rapid expansion in both general and technical education of the Soviet youth influenced enlistment rates in the different forces. (Ellen Jones, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 70-73.)

[113] Karl Haltiner, *op. Cit.*, p. 18.

[114] Donnelly, *Op. Cit.* pp.180-182. Anatol Lieven saw the continuation of this tradition at first hand in the first Chechen war.

[115] Elen *Jones, Op. Cit.,* p. 130.

Samuel Huntington has noted that in traditional military thought, the state is considered to the most important political institution. In the Soviet context, the officer corps was encouraged to develop statist attitudes. This meant that the state always came first, even before personal liberty, personal freedom, individuality and human rights. In the Russian language it was said that officers were '*derzhavniki*' or (extreme) state servants. The idea of *derzhava* was also related with the idea of *gosudarstvo* which means 'state' with the attributes of greatness and/or superiority as well as firmness towards the people. Such an understanding of the idea of *derzhava* had the implication that the officer corps was in principle not against values such as personal liberty, personal freedom, individuality and human rights as long as they were compatible with the idea of the state. Clearly, such an attitude goes together with a higher tolerance of losses in combat and casualties even in peace time. This attitude was reflected in the high casualty and death rates seen during the different wars that the Soviet Union fought.[116]

In conclusion, the formation of the Soviet armed forces is based on developing a mass army which has specific Soviet features. The Soviet type mass army was a military force in which direct rule of the western type was replaced by totalitarian rule that was embedded in a particular ideological context. The Soviet-type mass army must be understood in the particular political context of the Soviet Union and its traumatic combat experiences. In the 1970 –1980's, the Soviet military was still experiencing the consequences of supporting a mass army, while in the West the first contours of decline in Western military organizations were being observed in the scientific literature. Thus it is due to its extreme appearance and its persistence, that the Soviet mass army was considered to be different than armies in the West. The assertion that 'the Soviet Union *had* no army, but *was* an army' illustrates the Soviet militarization rate.

An Analysis of a Manpower Crisis: Towards an Hybrid Army Type

The main characteristics of the present Russian military manpower policy and its relationship with the ideal types of the mass and post-modern military organization will now be assessed.[117] Parallel with the presentation on the case of the Belgian, French and Dutch experience, the structural variables of 'size', 'mobilization level' and 'homogeneity' of the Russian armed forces will be reviewed. This point of comparison will provide a summary of what the Russian crisis in manpower exactly meant and it will indicate what the main causes of the crisis were.

Size. The personnel levels of the Soviet-Russian armed forces have been reduced over time as anywhere else in the world.[118] The Soviet armed forces shrank by 33% during the last four years of its existence (1988-1992). In the post-Soviet Russian Federation, the armed forces' have declined by 65%. In absolute figures this meant that the Soviet armed forces stood at

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[116] See for instance: Amnon Sella, *The Value of Human Life in Soviet Warfare*, London: Routledge, 1992. This observation completely contradicts the body bag hypothesis in the West.

[117] Data are again retrieved from The Military Balance (edition 1986/87-1997/98). Russian sources generally affirm the IISS data. See for instance: Alexei G. Arbatov, 'Military Reform in Russia, Dilemmas, Obstacles, and Prospects', *International Security*, Vol. 22, No 4, Spring 1998, pp. 83-134; and G. A. Ziuganov, *Voennaia reforma: otsenka ugroz natsional'noi bezopasnosti Rossii, Moskva: Obozrevatel'*, 1997, pp. 79-80.

[118] Manpower reduction went along with a severe reduction of the military arsenal. Andrew Duncan wrote a good overview of this issue on the basis of the latest CFE data: see Andrew Duncan, 'Russian Forces in decline-Part I', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 1996, pp. 404-408; Andrew Duncan, 'Russian Forces in Decline-Part II', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, October 1996, pp. 442-447; Stuart Goldman did the same exercise for the Library of Congress. See: Stuart D. Goldman, *Russian Conventional Armed Forces: On the Verge of Collapse*, Washington: Congressional Research Service-The Library of Congress, September 4, 1997, pp. 4-9.

5,096,000 soldiers in 1988, 3,400,000 in 1992 and 1,159,000 in 1998. This is illustrated in Graph 6 where the decline is represented during the period from 1970 to 1998. This thirty year overview gives the reader a better understanding of the scope and velocity with which the decline of the armed forces occurred in Russia. Moreover, it can also be read as an extension and prolongation of Ellen Jones' overview of the trends between 1970-1985.
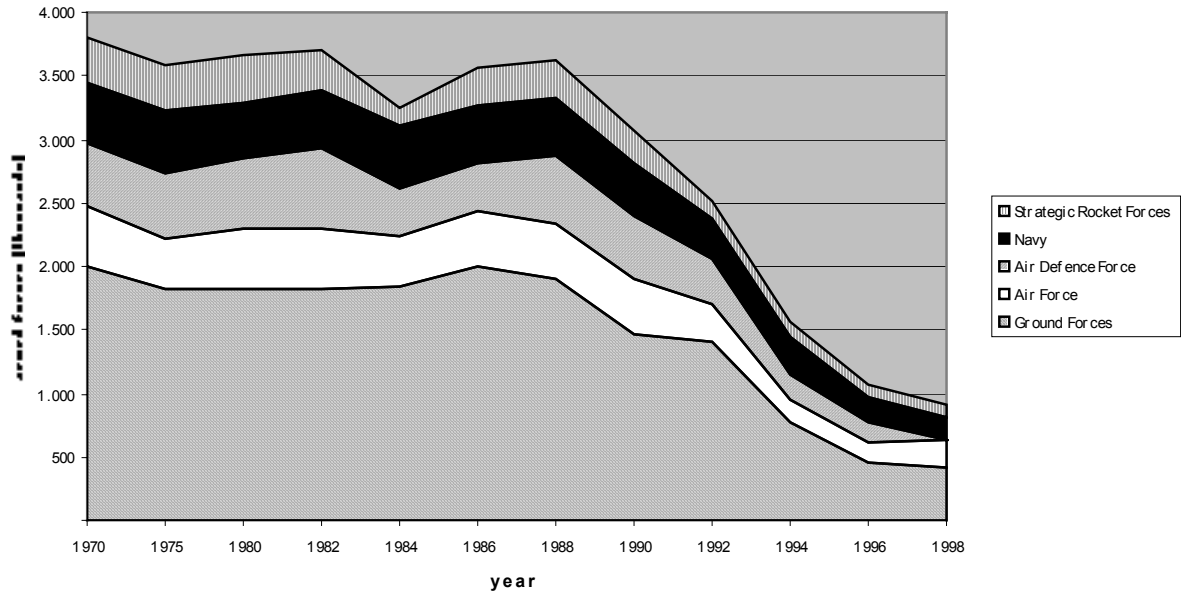
Graph 6: Estimates of Active Duty Armed Forces Personnel (Thousands)

The scale and the velocity of decline were therefore so great as to render it incomparable with the gradual, evolutionary process observed in France, Belgium and The Netherlands. The use of the words 'devolution' or 'collapse' used by Meyer or Goldman are therefore appropriate. [119]

	Soviet Union (1988-1992)	*Russian Federation (1992-1998)*
Army	-26%	-70%
Navy	-30%	-43%
Air Force	-32%	-56%
Air Defense Force	-12%	-62%
Nuclear Rocket Forces	-51%	-30%

Table 6 : Manpower Development in the Armed Forces in the Soviet and Russian Experience (1988-1998)

The decline of personnel in the forces was a dramatic phenomenon in the Russian Federation between 1992-1998. The Army especially underwent a 'decline beyond control', while the Nuclear Rocket Force was –in the context of the wider implosion- the least affected. The impression that the figures for the 1988-1992 period give us, is that during this period there is greater control of the policy intentions by the parties involved than there was during the 1992-1998 period in which there appears to have been not only a lack of control over military reform policy but the policy itself was unclear. Indeed, Gorbachev's nuclear disarmament initiatives are shown in Table 6 in which the Nuclear Rocket Force was reduced

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[119] Stephen M. Meyer, *The Devolution of Russian Military Power*, Defense and Arms Control Studies Working Paper, (Cambridge: MIT, November 1995); Stuart D. Goldman, *Op. Cit.*, 1997.

by 51%, while the other forces underwent a steadier decline. The fact that reduction of the armed forces in the Russian period was apparently out of control, is therefore an important characteristic of a military crisis. It appears that decision-makers in the Russian government were powerless to these influence events.

If one was to compare the relative importance of each separate force with the total armed forces the following findings can be noted:

	1988	*1991*	*1998*
Army	52,4%	55,5%	46,1%
Navy	12,6%	12,6%	19,7%
Air Force	12,2%	11,9%	23%
Air Defense Force	14,3%	14,1%	Merged with Air Force
Strategic Rocket Force	8,2%	5,7%	10,9%

Table 7: Relative Decline of the Forces in the Soviet and Russian Manpower Development (1988-1998)

What is remarkable is that the relative importance of the forces in the Soviet-Russian military organization was more or less stable or in other words, the basic nature of the forces stayed the same. There was –again in the context of the personnel implosion- no real sign of a qualitative change. Table 7 shows that there is an increase in the importance of the Air Force in 1998 compared with 1988, which is due to the merging of the Air Force with the Air Defense Force in 1998. This merger was an important decision from a structural point of view. Apparently, the Navy was the only force that survived the turbulent times of the 1990's relatively well, however this observation must interpreted with caution. Indeed, when the CR of the forces is examined a different aspect of this evolution becomes clear.
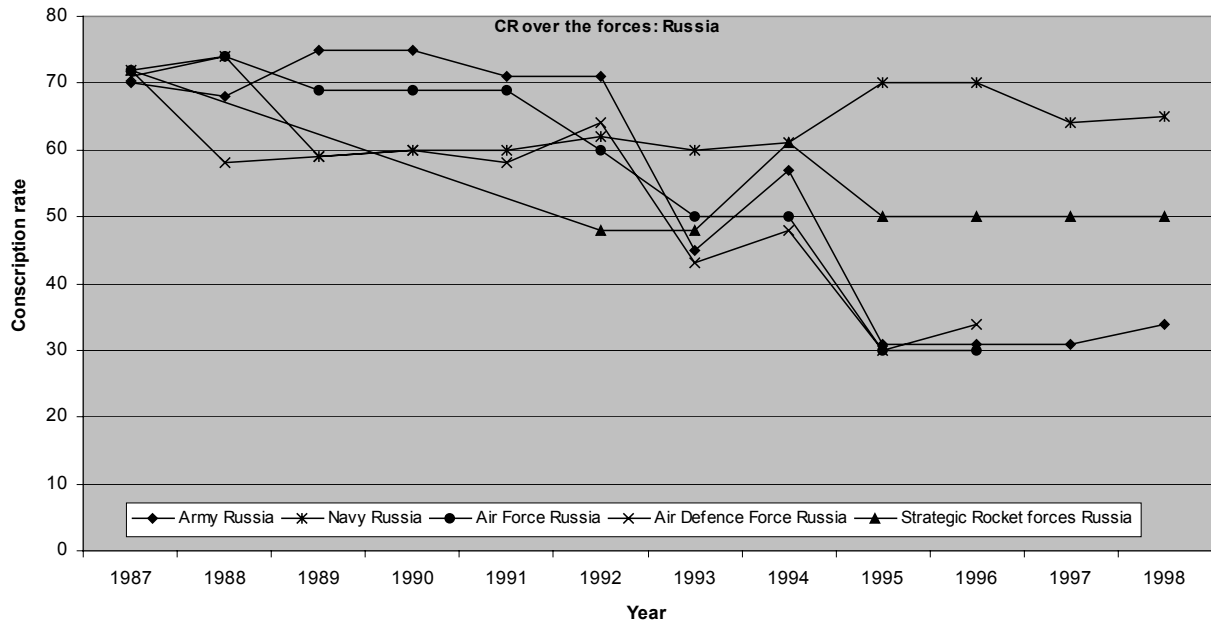
Graph 7: Conscription Rate over the Forces in the Soviet Union and Russia (1988-1998)

The CR of the forces illuminated an atypical characteristic. In the second half of the 1990's the CR of the Navy was the highest of all the forces, followed by the CR of the Strategic Rocket Forces while the CR of the Army was comparable to that of the Air Force. These data contradicted the idea of using conscripts in the least technically sophisticated forces, while- inversely- there were more conscripts in the more technical forces. When in the former paragraph the relative importance of the Navy in the armed forces was noted, it must

be said that this force was filled with an 'undereducated workforce' to a large extent. This can be perceived as a remnant of the Soviet tradition, but certainly it did not conform with the idea of professionalizing the armed forces. It is also an atypical result when it is compared with the evolution of events in the West. Another point that may be made about this table is that these data reflect the chaotic, unstable and incoherent developments in the Soviet-Russian military organization. It was as if the developments that took place in the armed forces were beyond the control of the decision-makers. This idea of an 'out of control' evolution is further reflected upon and will be discussed in the following paragraph.

Militarization and Mobilization. While overall manpower levels collapsed between 1988-1998, the Russian MPR was still remarkably high. Russia's MPR (MPR 1998 = 2.4) decreased by 1.5 points during the last decade. But this was still more than twice as high as France (MPR 1998= 1.1), The Netherlands (MPR 1998= 0.8), and Belgium (MPR1998= 1.1). If the MPR was one variable that expressed Russia's mobilization capacity, it also showed that this key aspect of the mass army was still present in the Russian army. Moreover, if the MPR is considered to be a reflection of the relative militarization of a society, then Russia, although significantly demilitarizing during the 1990's, was still more militarized than countries with a post-modern military organization.[120]
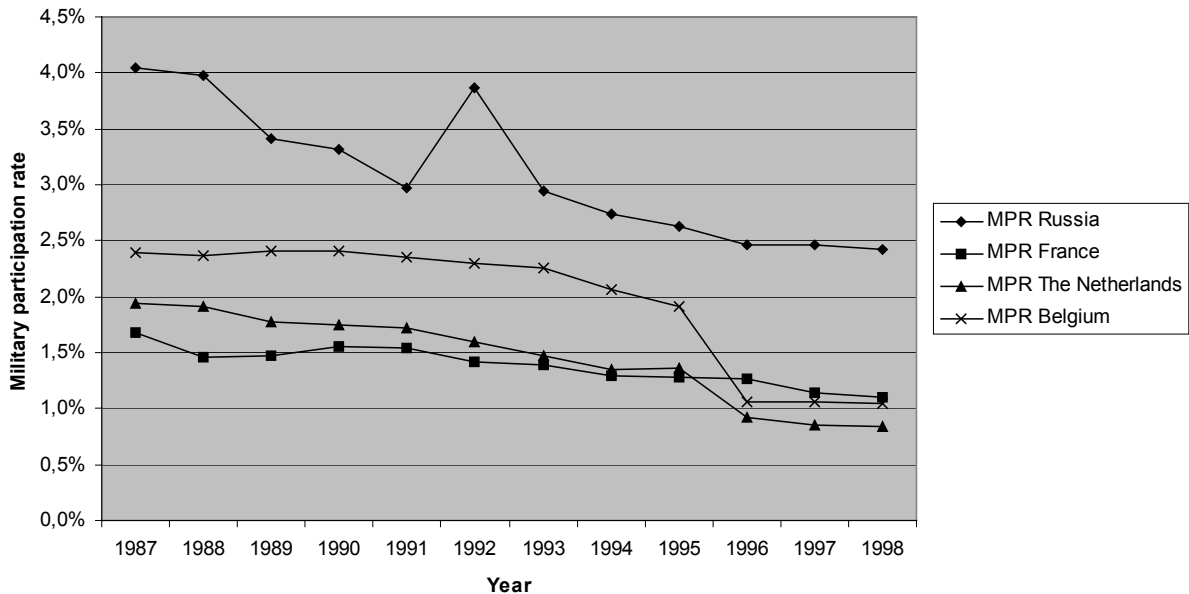
Graph 8: Military Participation Rate Russia-France-the Netherlands-Belgium (1988-1998)

Another variable that reveals what type of military organization a nation has is the Conscription Rate. Based on the general CR in 1998, the Russian armed forces was not a typical mass army. But, although the CR definitely fell below 50% after 1994, the decline was incoherent. It therefore probably had more to do with societal and organizational chaos rather than a deliberate choice. Hence, the collapse of the CR in 1994 (without special policy

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[120] Joachim Schmidt-Skipiol came to the same conclusion as he published the following data concerning the number of military personnel per thousand citizens in 1998: USA: 5,2; France 6,1; Great Britain: 3,6; Germany: 4,1; and Russia: 8,2 (even 13,5 if all military personnel in other ministries besides the MoD is counted). See: Joachim Schmidt-Skipiol, Die Militärreform in Rußland Teil II: Aktueller Stand und Zukunft [Military Reform in Russia Part II: Contemporary situation and future], Berichte des Bundesinstituts für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien, No 54-1998,Köln: Bundesinstituts für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien, 1998, p. 22.

changes in that year) subsequently had more to do with the inability of the Russian state to implement conscription effectively rather than with implementation of a policy on this issue. Moreover, the Russian CR slightly increased after 1996 while the CR in Belgium, France and The Netherlands constantly declined. Instability and incoherence- are the persistent characteristics of a crisis situation that can be noted here.

CR-Russia-France-The Netherlands-Belgium
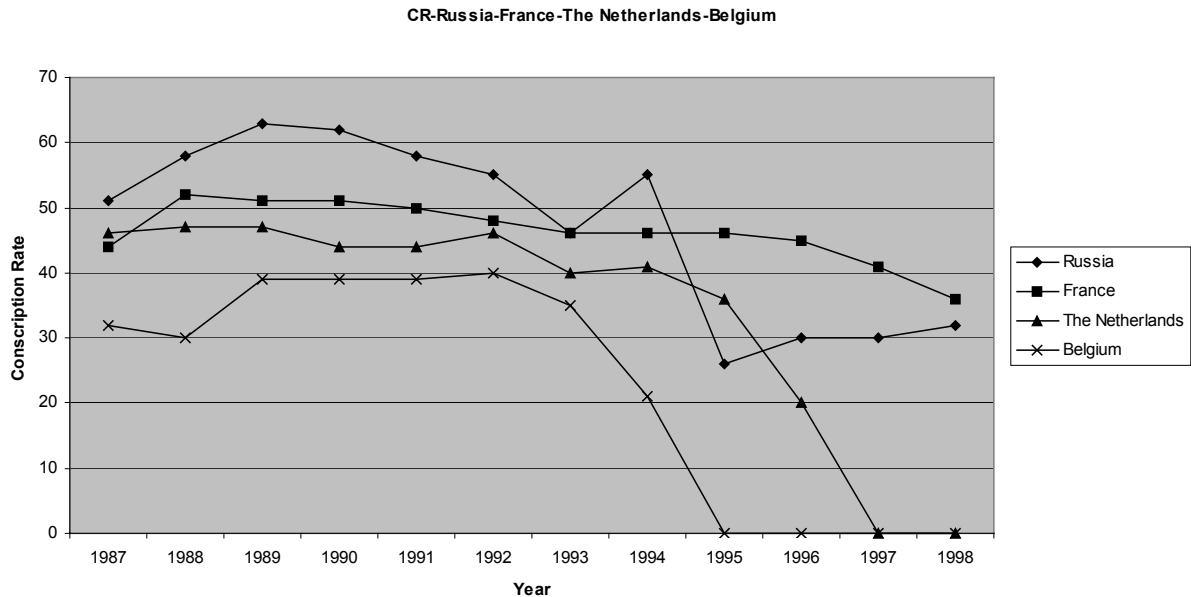
Graph 9: Conscription Rate Russia-France-the Netherlands-Belgium (1988-1998)

Reform Failure Synthesized

The crisis the Russian armed forces experienced had several important characteristics. They are synthesized below with reference to the structural variables that have already been presented.

Between 1988-1998, there was a *chaotic* evolution. This chaos resulted in a hybrid type of army that contained Soviet, 'Western' and atypical characteristics. Some demobilization (and demilitarization) of Russian society undoubtedly took place, but comparatively speaking, the level of mobilization remained higher in Russia than in France, Belgium and The Netherlands.

From 1994 onwards the CR collapsed, but this did not demonstrate a constant downward trend. The use of conscripts in the forces, expressed in the Conscription Rate in the forces, show two things. Firstly, compared with the West, the Russian armed forces' crisis was and is a crisis *of the Army*. The Army suffered the most and seemed to be the least resistant to instability. This is consistent with the Western evolution. Secondly, the Navy resisted the turbulent times the best: but their intensive use of conscripts reflects a Soviet tradition. The use of conscripts was not decisively influenced by the technological demands of respective forces. Ideological, cultural, political, and economic factors all made conscript labor a tradition that is embedded in the Russian armed forces.

The evolution of the armed forces in Russia developed in tandem with another domain of Russia's post Soviet period. Richard Erickson suggested that Russia's economic system could be labeled as 'Industrial Feudalism'.[121] He observed that:

> "The transformations to date clearly seem to have eliminated the Soviet "command economy" as the operational system, but it also seems to me that they have not (yet?) succeeded in creating a coherent market-based economic system. What is evolving appears to be neither a modern market economy, of whatever variant, nor a continuation of its modern challenger, the bureaucratically managed Soviet-type economy. Indeed, in many of its structural and operational characteristics it seems to be recreating the economic system of an earlier, pre-industrial, era-medieval feudalism."[122]

In other words, Erickson observed the emergence of a hybrid economic system in which achievements of the industrial era were combined with structures and operations of the past. Given the structural analysis of military manpower policy, Erickson's argument is interesting because it shows that the military system co-evolved in parallel with the structure of the economy and society in general. At the same time it gives us grounds to adopt the open-organization paradigm in order to study the Russian military organization. Finally, it can be argued that Russian military organizational evolution is not 'exceptional'.

Not only is the evolution of the Russian military not exceptional, but it may be argued that: the deterministic evolution from a command economy towards a market economic system and the evolution from a mass army towards a post-modern All-Volunteer Force is a complex phenomenon and therefore a difficult objective to achieve. Cultural and political decision-making in Russia have had a major impact on society; but organizational change is apparently not determined to evolve along Western lines, despite all hope and efforts embodied in the 'Washington Consensus' and European euphoria concerning Russia's political, economic, and military development in the 1990's. [123]

2. 2.   Studying an 'Out of Control' Process

The manpower crisis in the Russian armed forces was characterized by a web of interconnected factors which included a lack of control over an organization which had no internal coherence and was undergoing a transitional process of extreme proportions. The way the crisis was managed and the way decision-making was organized are important reasons for

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[121] See Richard E. Erickson, "The Post-Soviet Russian Economic System: An Industrial Feudalism?" at http://www.columbia.edu/-ree3/ January 1999 and George Breslauer, Josef Brada, Clifford G. Gaddy, Richard Erickson, Carol Saivetz, and Victor Winston, 'Russia at the End of Yeltsin's Presidency', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2000, pp. 1-32. (especially, p. 18-31). Also Vladimir Shlapentokh used the 'anarchic quasi-feudalism' idea in his thinking. (See: Vladimir Shlapentokh, 'Russia as a medieval State', *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1996, pp. 395-412, and Vladimir Shlapentokh, 'Early Feudalism-The Best Parallel for Contemporary Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 3, May 1996, pp. 393-411). Anatoly Lieven opted for the 'cacique' system analogy in his writing to characterize the hybrid political system in Russia. (See Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya, Tombstone of Russian Power*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp.151-152). Many others commented the hybrid system as for instance Michael McFaul who called Russia quiet optimistically an 'unconsolidated democracy or illiberal democracy' (See Michael McFaul, 'Russian Democracy: Still Not a Lost Case, *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1, Winter 2000, p. 163.)
[122] Richard E. Erickson, "The Post-Soviet Russian Economic System: An Industrial Feudalism?" at http://www.columbia.edu/-ree3/, p. 1
[123] The 'Washington consensus' was the US administration's definition of reform in Russia, which contained the idea of installing 'democracy' and a 'free marked economy'. Especially President Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, Strobe Talbott and Lawrence Summers were important authors of this policy.

this crisis and the failure to reverse this trend. The fact that a hybrid type of army emerged in which traditional Soviet and post-modern Western organizational ideas 'clashed', created a patchwork of cultural influences that developed and compels us to study the socio-cultural environment in which this crisis occurred. Studying political and cultural arguments is therefore necessary to understand the failure of reform in Russia. In the literature on post-Soviet Russia, these political and socio-cultural arguments are usually neglected and overshadowed by the economic argument. In the following section the economic argument will be reviewed and contrasted with the comparatively ignored socio-cultural debate.

A One-Sided and Tautological Economic Argument

The economic argument is a one-sided and incomplete explanation of the army's organizational crisis. The debate's one-sidedness can be found in its emphasis on budgetary concerns. While the economic explanation offers two distinct aspects, namely a structural and monetary variable, the military reform discussion is usually evaluated by budgetary standards; while the structure of the everyday (civilian) economy and how it functions is an important area of study that has been neglected in the wider discussion on Russian defense issues.

As stipulated in the first chapter, it is necessary to see the parallel between the management of the military and the inter-related management styles used in the civilian economy and concomitant managerial organization types that prevail throughout Russian society itself. The economic structural debate is a more profound discussion based on long-term future planning, while the budgetary debate is politically a highly sensitive issue that occurs annually and hence is a short-term discussion. Vladimir.V. Shlykov, a 'dissident' Russian military economist, pointed out this distinction as follows:

> "Unfortunately, the difficulties of dismantling a structurally militarized economy have been ignored by the Russian reformers themselves. As a result, they have committed several grave mistakes, have wasted precious time, and, sad to say, lost some irretrievable opportunities to thoroughly dismantle Soviet-Russian militarism. Their biggest mistake was a firm belief that money can play a decisive role in changing the ways of the Russian economy, and that it can be managed with the help of a budgetary and credit policy. It is certainly tempting to use financial indicators in summing up the results of economic developments and formulating its goals, instead of getting bogged down in the intricacies and problems of technological and structural imbalances between the civilian and military sectors of the economy. Moreover, this practice of using financial indicators is accepted all over the world and is intellectually and administratively not very demanding, with ready-made and tested recipes galore."[124]

If one is to consider just the military budget alone, it is clear that the devastating problems of the Russian economy have compromised the attempt to reform the Russian military forces. This point is made by the authors of *The Military Balance* who have stated that: 'The major threat to the Russian armed forces in 1997 was not military, but financial. A dire lack of funding was compounded by delays and genuine difficulties in implementing

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[124] Vitaly V. Shlykov, 'The Crisis in the Russian Economy', June 30, 1997, p. 11. Monograph originally presented at the US Army War College's Annual Strategic Conference held April 22-24, 1997.

urgently needed structural reform'.[125] The data concerning the Russian military budget confirm this view:

	Defense Budget[126]	%Federal Budget	Defense spending
1992	901	16,0	
1993	3,116	16,6	$ 7,4 billion
1994	40,626	20,9	$ 18 billion
1995	48,577	19,6	$ 12,8 billion
1996	80,185	18,4	$ 15,1 billion
1997	104,300	19,7	
1998	81,765	16,4	

Table 8 : Russian Defense Budget Estimates (1992-1998)

Source: *The Military Balance, 1998-99* **(first two columns) and Stuart D. Goldman,' Conventional Armed Forces on the Verge of Collapse?', (CRS Report for Congress, September 4, 1997), p. 12. (Third column)**

Data concerning the procurement of major weapons systems are even more striking:

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
MBT*	1,800	2,200	1,700	850	500	200	40	0-30	5	5
IFV**	2,000	7,000	3,400	3,000	700	300	380	400	250	350
FGA***		526	430	250	150	100	50	20	25	35

Table 9: Production of Major Weapon Systems in the Soviet Union and Russia (1988-1997)

Source: Stuart D. Goldman, Conventional Armed Forces on the Verge of Collapse?, (CRS Report for Congress, September 4, 1997), p. 10 and *The Military Balance 1998-99*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1998.p.

*	**Main Battle Tank**
**	**Infantry Fighting Vehicle**
***	**Fighter, Ground Attack (aircraft)**

However, the problem with this analysis is that many Russian (and Western) defense specialists state that economics was the *only* reason why there was no western-style professional army in Russia.[127] This argument is in itself a self-fulfilling prophecy. The longer military reform is postponed, the less time there will be for political and economic maneuvering in an institution which is rapidly deteriorating. Moreover, the economic argument is very often misused by the Russian military elite themselves as an excuse for not

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[125] The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1997/98*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 101.

[126] In current Billion Rubles

[127] Two important Russian voices can be noted who did NOT emphasize too much the economic argument. However, these voices were aired in the second half of the 1990's. The first is the well known military theoretician Machmut Gareev who stated that 'Eine Berufsarmee, …, kostet natürlich viel Geld, so dass sie sich nicht jeder Statt leisten kann. Doch dieser Aspekt der Frage wird gewöhnlich übertrieben' [A professional army …costs of course a lot of money, in order that not every state can afford it. However, this aspect of the problem is usually exaggerated.] (See: Machmut A. Garejew, *Konturen des bewaffneten Kampfes der Zukunft, Ein Ausblick auf das Militärwesen in den nächsten 10 bis 15 Jahren*, Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1996, p. 152, my translation) The second voice is expressed by the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy which said: 'The deep crisis in the armed forces is an evidence of the comprehensive crisis in the society, the state and the government of Russia. It points not so much to economic bankruptcy of the government, …' (See: Sergei Karaganov (Editor) *Strategiia dlia Rosii: Povestka dnia dlia prezidenta-2000*, Moskva: Sovet po Vneshnei I oboronnoi politike (SVOP), 1998) p.254)

reforming the system. In fact, this economic rhetoric is based on a tautology.[128] The deplorable economic situation was used as the basic reason for reforming the system while at the same time it was used as a profound excuse for not reforming the armed forces.

For instance, the question remains today, whether, if the Russian military received a higher percentage of the Russian GNP, the money would be used more rationally and inevitably lead to a well-functioning military organization. The above mentioned authors of *The Military Balance* noted that: "Although the military forces receive nearly 20% of the total federal budget, the money is not being used to continue the reform program, rather, it is being used, at least in mid-1997, to maintain as far as possible the inefficient status quo."[129] In other words, the problem is how additional funds to the military forces could be used to bridge the gap between long-term structural goals and short term objectives. Furthermore, another political problem exists which questions whether the military elites were actually guilty or at least partially responsible for the poor economic situation.[130] Finally, it is interesting to note that even in the West, one of the most profound army reforms in centuries, that is the transition to All Volunteer Forces, has been accomplished under severe budgetary restraints.[131] Organizational change is therefore something more than a budgetary or purely economic problem.

In conclusion, the dire state of the Soviet-Russian economy may not be ignored or seen as a hindrance to reform. But it is wrong to state that the economy was solely responsible for the lack of results in the military reform debate. The difficult economic situation of the armed forces and its weak position in budgetary discussions can be interpreted more broadly and seen as a result of its loss of both societal and political legitimacy.

An Ignored Socio-Cultural Argument

In a certain way, it is understandable that studying the socio-cultural environment of an organization in order to evaluate the Russian military forces is a perspective that has often been neglected.[132] By using the socio-cultural argument, Russia is confronted with its contemporary self, its history and society. At the base of the socio-cultural variable lies a daring question: is the idea of the All-Volunteer Force suitable for Russian society at present? Are the 'normative' socio-cultural conditions present in Russia for this transformation to an All-Volunteer Force to take place?

These conditions are, as outlined in the first chapter, situated in the mentality of the individual, in Russian society in general, and in the Russian military organization itself. The fact that the whole of society itself is intimately related to the idea of having professional armed forces is not only an academic issue. It also locates the responsibility for either success or failure of the project in Russian society as a whole and not solely with one actor, be it either the military or the state apparatus.

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[128] This contradiction was, in fact, the origin of a dispute between Rodionov and Baturin in the spring of 1997. Rodionov stated that military reform was not possible without a substantial increase in the military budget (this may be seen as the military's general perception). Baturin, as the head of the Defense Council and as a representative of the civilian view on military reform, stated that military reform must be implemented at current spending levels.

[129] The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1997/98*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 101.

[130] For the contradiction between internal decline and external expansion, see: Seweryn Bialer, *The Soviet Paradox, External Expansion Internal Decline*, London: I.B.Tauris & Co, 1986.

[131] This is even the case for most private firms, as they have to reform in periods of financial crisis.

[132] An exception is Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya, Tombstone of Russian Power*, London: Yale University Press, 1998, especially pp. 186-219.

For instance, violence in the ranks, and the responsibility for it, is not only a problem of the military organization, but is also a crime committed by a 'civilian' youth against one of his peers. Besides individual malpractice in the army, there is also a revealing parallel between the army's conditions and the conditions in prisons and even in orphanages in Russia.

The following questions are a result of this observation. Firstly, is it possible to speak about a particular Russian condition, perhaps steered by necessity and scarcity rather than by choice and abundance? If this is the case, is it not an absolute contradiction to introduce an ultra- modern idea into a 'retarded' social environment? This unevenness, or this 'cultural lag', lies at the core of this survey and it is not a new idea in Russian studies. Students of Russian history are familiar with this topic. Alex Simirenko noted "one of the striking features of Soviet society as it emerged from its world isolation during the post-Stalin era was its superior technological and industrial position coupled with predominantly nineteenth-century Russian and European culture."[133] Significantly, Orlando Figes concluded in his study of the Russian revolution that: "Russia's prospects as a democratic nation depend to a large extent on how far the Russians are able to confront their own recent history; and this must entail the recognition that, however much the people were oppressed by it, the Soviet system grew up on Russian soil."[134]

The 'peasant question' as Riasanovsky formulated it, is also in essence one of the variables that strained modernization.[135] Therefore, in this study the problems of the conscript soldier are deliberately called the 'soldiers' question', by which a direct link is made to the historical peasant question and the problem of Russia's inherent 'cultural lag'.

Conclusion

In 1988, the idea of a Russian all-volunteer force was placed on the Russian political agenda. In 1998 this topic faded from politico-military debates. During these ten years many environmental arguments in favor of real structural change in the Russian military organization were made. However, reality shows that no military organization of this type has been constructed. What could have been the cause of such an intuitive contradiction? In this study I investigate some of the causes of this contradiction. In a sense this is a study about something that did not take place. The basic problem that examined in this thesis is the structural incompetence of Russian attempts to implement the Western model as well as Russia's wider struggle to catch up with the West. Some limits have been set for the study of this complex social problem. Economic, technological and international arguments are beyond the scope of this study. However, I will examine the political and cultural debates that surround this issue in part II and part III of this thesis.

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[133] Alex Simirenko, *Soviet Sociology, Historical Antecedents and Current Appraisals*, Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966, p. 328.

[134] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy, The Revolution 1891-1924*, London: PIMLICO 1996, p. 808.

[135] Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, 'The Problem of the Peasant', in: Wayne S. Vucinich (editor), *The Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Russia*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968, p. 263.

Part II Protests against Choice: Decision Making in Russian Military Policy

'Leaders have a degree of choice making policies. Depending on their skill and intelligence in seeing real alternatives, they can increase that discretion, but they are constrained by structural conditions and reactive decisions by subordinates and other people affected by their choices. Interactions of policies, conditions and other people create the dynamics of politics (and military operations in peace and war). And the top policy maker's choices are often decisive in the creation of a particular dynamic between policy and its impact on structural conditions and reactive choices by all of those people affected'

William E. Odom, The Collapse of the Soviet Army, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 392

Introduction

The management of organizational change is a complex and comprehensive process.[136] Once the need for innovation is recognized and thoughts about change are summarized in a reform plan, a new phase begins in which these ideas are implemented, monitored and possibly adjusted. Consequently, the introduction of innovation in an organization may be theoretically subdivided into two separate stages: the so-called 'decision-making' and 'implementation' stages. Military reform is in this part of the thesis considered as a strategic decision making process. Accordingly, the complex process of introducing organizational innovation in general, and military reform in particular, is limited and it includes the stage in which a suitable strategic plan of programmed reform is identified, selected and decided upon. It is during this phase that the need for change is consciously recognized, that new ideas are discussed and diagnosed, that different plans are designed and evaluated, and finally, that a strategic plan of reform is approved. The different stages of the decision-making phase are illustrated in Figure 1. Clearly, this is an 'ideal' representation of the decision-making process that does not correspond precisely with reality. It is a theoretical reference that outlines the limits of the analysis conducted in this part of the thesis.

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[136] Although change, reform and innovation have slightly different meanings in the literature on organizational change, they are used here as synonyms. This is because this study is particularly interested in the dynamic process of introducing change in organizations and not necessarily in the idea of change '*an sich*'.
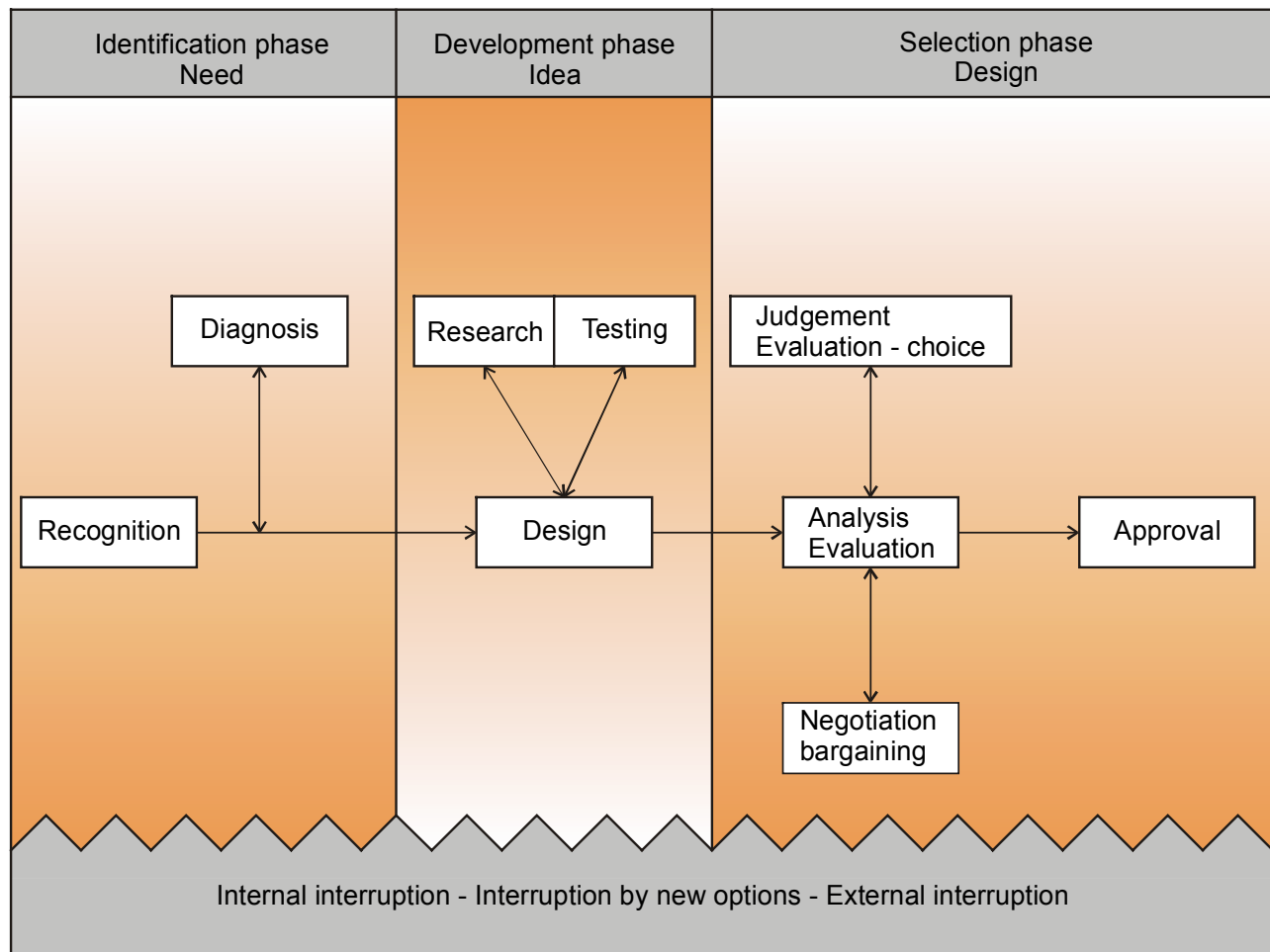
Figure 2: Theoretical Phases in the Decision Making Process

To obtain a deeper insight into the decision-making process on the All-Volunteer Force issue in Russia, it is necessary to look at decision-making theory, which provides a framework that demonstrates how ideas of the All-Volunteer Force have developed over time in the Soviet-Russian context. It also illuminates the characteristics of military policy making and political culture during the Gorbachev-Yeltsin era. We will focus on four traditional models in decision making theory: the 'rational' model, the 'bounded rational' model, the 'Carnegie' model, and the 'incremental decision-making' model. These academic constructs each emphasize different aspects of the decision-making process, but are seen as a cumulative whole where each model adds to the analyst's knowledge of decision-making in military reform.

In **the rational model** of decision-making, change and thinking about change always starts from the idea that there is a need to adapt an organization to a new environment. A new idea can be generated inside or can be borrowed from outside the organization. In the latter case we speak about 'managerial imitation'.[137] Both notions of need and idea are the fundamental starting points

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[137] The concept of organizational imitation is used in the field of organizational sociology. (See for example Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell, 'The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields', Walter Powell and Paul DiMaggio, *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 63-82; and J. Soeters, *Verschuivende en Vergruizende Grenzen, Over de doordringbaarheid van organisaties (met toepassing op de krijgsmacht),* Breda: Koninklijke Militare Academie, 1994, pp. 8-11) The policy of imitation can also be found in the historical literature where it is considered as an important lever of historical change. (See for example: David B. Ralston, *Importing the European Army, The Introduction of European Military Techniques and Institutions into the Extra-European World 1600-1914*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990). Finally, in the field of international relations, the idea that actors in a competitive international system are socialized to adapt similar policies and strategies is an accepted common

in the process of change. Subsequently, the 'high command' must choose the best option available by completing a comprehensive analysis of the problem, defining the goals of the organization and considering alternative proposals. To this end, the nature of the reform ideas, their origins and the moment when they are generated, must be closely scrutinized. Moreover, the 'high command's perception of who originally drew attention to the needs and shortcomings of the organization significantly affects the subsequent commitment to solving organizational problems.

Needless to say, such a clear cut and fluent decision making process is an ideal type and does not exist in reality. Rather, actual decision making is based on the assumption that managers cannot readily transform a complicated web of facts, assumptions, objectives, and educated guesses into clear decisions that people in an organization can act upon. Therefore, more realistic models have to be presented. One of the pioneers in this respect is Herbert Simon, who has adjusted the rational model of the decision making process to his **theory of 'bounded rationality',** which has replaced the idea of 'comprehensive rationality'.[138] He argues that decision makers are limited by inadequate information about the nature of the problem and its possible solutions, a lack of time or money to compile more complete information, an inability to remember large amounts of information and the limits of their own intelligence. The search for the perfect or ideal decision is therefore often replaced by a solution that will adequately serve the purposes of the organization. Instead of maximizing or optimizing a solution, decision-makers usually accept the first satisfactory decision that they uncover. In the words of Simon, managers are 'satisficing'. Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman have researched the theory of bounded rationality and state that decision-makers rely on heuristic principles.[139] They state that managerial decisions are mostly judged by the decision-makers' memory, their personal experiences, their pre-existing categories and some of their initial values. In other words, intuition, more than rationality becomes the predominant factor in managerial decisions. The experience, memory and mentality of military and civilian decision makers, are therefore important indicators in our research as they influence the process considerably.

Not only are the individual decision-makers bounded in their rationality. Organizations themselves limit the potential of decisions being made, due to the 'logic of their existence' i.e. their inherent bureaucratic structure. The so-called **Carnegie model** developed by Cyert, March and Simon claims that many managers are involved in the decision making process and they present solutions based on coalitions between themselves. Coalitions are alliances between several managers who agree on certain organizational goals and the priority of specific organizational problems. Uncertainty and conflict in an organization generate the need to form coalitions in order that a decision will be made. In the highly mobile process of coalition formation the bargaining process is immanent. The bargaining process is a game of give and take in which particular psychological elements such as status, prestige and power are the medium of exchange. A system where coalitions are needed to implement a decision is not the most favorable situation for decision making to take place and in the case of military reform, a 'bargained' consensus between coalitions is the norm.

The nature of the military organization itself means that the political system can potentially interfere in all aspects of the reform process itself. From a democratic point of view this interference can be interpreted as a form of legitimate control imposed by the civilian world on military institutions. From the point of view of the decision maker, however, this interference

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assumption. (See for example: Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, New York: Mc Graw-Hill, 1979, p. 127)

[138] Herbert A. Simon, *Models of Man: Social and Rational*, New York: Wiley, 1957; and Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision, Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1971, pp. 71-72.

[139] Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, 'Judgement and Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases', *Science*, Vol. 18, 1974, pp. 1124-1134.

complicates the process of decision making.[140] Graham Allison, who advanced the 'Governmental (or bureaucratic) Politics Model' has found that the political participants of the process;

> "…focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intra-national problems as well; …act in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but rather according to various conceptions of national, organizational, and personal goals;…make government decisions not by a single rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics."[141]

The political actor is simultaneously the primary and most important (extra-military) partner needed by military decision makers to establish a reform plan, but, the non-military nature of the political actor makes the coalition formation process more complicated. Although a plan for military reform may be regarded as an important document in the security policy of a state, it is at best a plan of consensus rather than a plan that matches rational military needs with solutions. In this sense, every published reform plan can be termed a 'failure' because: (1) it is by definition impossible to obtain a comprehensive rational plan, and (2) in the bargaining and coalition formation game there are always losers. Consequently, assessing where criticism and praise for a certain plan come from is vital. More importantly, no single player can be blamed or praised in the ultimate evaluation of the military reform process: military reform is always a shared responsibility.

In addition to Allison's findings, Henry Mintzberg emphasizes that decision making is not a steady and progressive process. Bureaucratic choice consists of partial decisions, which is explained by **'the model of incremental decision making',** in which the process is constantly interrupted.[142] These intrusions may find their origin in the internal coalition formation process or in the extent of external, political interference. In other words, Mintzberg reminds us of the evolutionary aspect of the process and the important aspect of timing. Figure 2, summarizes the conceptual framework of the presented models on decision making.

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[140] The difference between the political and the managerial logic of military organizations or, according to James Burk, the complex relationship between the 'functional' and the 'social' imperatives on the military-represent an important element in the discussion on the gap that separates the military from the larger society. This is the so-called civil-military gap hypothesis, which is put on the academic and political agenda since 1997 in the United States. See for instance: Thomas Ricks, 'The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society', *Atlantic Monthly*, 280, July 1997, pp. 66-78 and the elaborated academic study on this issue led by Peter Feavor and Richard Kohn: Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn (editors), *Soldiers and Civilians, The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001.

[141] Graham T. Allison, *Op. Cit.*, London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1971, p. 144.

[142] Henry Mintzberg, Duru Raisinghai and André Théoret, 'The structure of "unstructured" Decision Making Processes', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, June 1976; and Henry Mintzberg and Others, 'Opening-Up Decision Making: the View From the Blank Stool'*, Organization Science*, Vol. 6, Nr. 3, May-June, 1995.

Decision making models	Key notions	Critical issues	Hampering elements
Comprehensive Rational Model	Idea	• Existence, timing and origin of ideas • Internal and external information flow • External consultancy and expertise • Grass root level idea generation (empowerment)	• Complexity of the issue • Number of participants • Uncertainty of the environment
	Need	• Problem identification • Commitment to problem solving	
	Plan Design	• Participants to and timing of decision-making process • Stability of decision-making platforms	
Bounded Rational Model	Heuristic Principles	• Experience, memory and mentality of decision-makers	
Carnegie Model	Coalition Formation	• Formation and participation in coalitions • Stability of coalitions • Political, public and military actors in coalition formation	
Incremental Decision-making Model	Interruptions and Set-backs	• Timing and scheduling of the whole decision-making process • Internal, external interruption or interruption through new options	

Figure 3: Selected Phases in the Decision-Making Process

In conclusion, military reform is *an overwhelmingly complex problem* in terms of content and the decision making process itself. The process develops in *an uncertain environment* in which institutions, such as the state and its political and military apparatus, become highly unstable. The *multitude of actors* involved, each with their own agenda and rationale, underlines the ratio of bounded rationality, coalition formation, bargaining procedures interruptions and setbacks in the decision making process. Moreover, banal accidents or international incidents make the process of reform even more susceptible to a variety of external (and unpredictable) factors.

In this study, a strong emphasis is deliberately placed on the process of decision-making in the military reform debate. Traditional definitions of military reform have emphasized the components of military reform while ignoring the process itself. This is especially true in the case of Soviet-Russian decision making practices. The Russian definition of military reform, as stipulated in the *voennyi entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* [Military Encyclopedic Dictionary], for example, may illustrate this:

> "Military reform is a profound reorganization (transformation) of the military
> system of the state, implemented by the decisions of the highest organs of state

power. Military reform is influenced by new political missions of the state, the existence of new weapon systems, economic considerations, changes in production levels, the means and methods of conducting war (battle) and other elements. Military reform is legally determined (fixed) by laws, military directives and other documents."[143]

In this definition military reform is reduced to a static and smooth process wherein success is simply dependent on a sound intellectual analysis and clear-cut decisions being made. In direct contrast, the ensuing analysis accentuates the dynamic and problematic character of the reform process; in so far as it can obstruct or destroy the reform effort. The key notions and critical issues of the decision-making process, which are presented above, will be analyzed in the context of the Soviet-Russian military reform effort. Hence, the main political events and the institutional environment in which military affairs evolved will be reviewed. The important interdependence between the socio-political evolution and military development must be stressed, in order to explain the context of different reform designs. This interdependence also explains various forms of reasoning, which are the foundations for the various reform plans.

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[143] S.F. Akhromeev and others (Eds.), *Voennyi entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1986, p.633.

Chapter 1. The Gorbachev Era: Losing the Initiative

1. 1.   1985-1987: The Introduction of Perestroika

The Policy of Perestroika and its Military Consequences

At the time of Konstantin Chernenko's death on March 10th 1985, the Soviet Union found itself in a grave condition. The limits of the Soviet-style command economy and extensive growth had been reached. Meanwhile the Soviet Armed Forces were using an inappropriate amount of state resources in what was effectively a militarized society.[144] The abuses and malfunctions of the system became so apparent that the situation of complete stagnation [*zastoi*] within Soviet society was a publicly acknowledged fact.[145] Mikhail Gorbachev, appointed as the new General Secretary of Communist Party, understood that this situation could not last if the Soviet Union wanted to maintain its superpower status. During this period, the Soviet Union was coping with the challenges of the so-called 'Third Wave' revolution which was characterized by an extremely turbulent internal and external environment, the need for extensive knowledge and a technologically intense environment.[146]

Gorbachev introduced his idea of reform [*perestroika*] not only in order to be able to compete with the United States and the West in the bi-polar world, but first and foremost to survive as a state in the 21st Century. In April 1985 he announced his main, though still vaguely formulated, ideas about *perestroika* during his speech to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) which primarily focused on the improvement of the Soviet economy. As he noted in his memoirs, Gorbachev claims that the two outstanding principles of his new policy were: "the unflagging forward motion of progress, the identification and resolution of

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[144] See Yurii Yaremenko, Strukturnye izmenneniya v sotsialisticheskoi ekonomike, Moskva: Mysl', 1981; Roy Medvedev, *Post-Soviet Russia, A Journey Through the Yeltsin Era*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000, pp. 51-85. Gorbachev has noted on this issue: "We were, of course, aware of how heavily our exorbitant military expenditure weighed on the economy, but I did not realize the true scale of the militarization of the country until I became General Secretary. Finally, although the leaders of the military-industrial complex opposed it, we published those data. It turned out that military expenditure was not 16 per cent of the states budget, as we had been told, but rather 40 per cent; and its production was not 6 per cent but 20 per cent of the gross national product. Of 25 billion rubles in total expenditure on science, 20 billion went to the military for technical research and development". Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoirs*, London: Doubleday, 1996, p.215. For a more historical account on militarism in the Soviet Union see Mark von Hagen, *Soldiers in the Proletarian Dictatorship, The Red Army and the Soviet Socialist State, 1917-1930*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990, pp. 6-7.

[145] The period of *Zastoi* was devastating for Soviet-Russian economy, technological development and society. The way the Soviet economy was organized did not allow for change from an extensive to an intensive growth model. Innovation had existed only in principle so that technologically the USSR was far behind the West. Socially the SU lived in a state of lethargy. Soviet citizens could only survive on the system of '*blat'*, an informal system in which networks were constructed among which 'trade' in scarce services and products were carried out. This system of social survival, however, bred corruption, which was rampant. As zastoi was typical for the Brezhnev period, it still throws its shadow over contemporary Russia. For example, *blat'* is still an important strategy of soldiers to avoid military service and, more generally, it is an essential social custom for survival for the Russian citizen. See for example: Markku Lokila, Post-Soviet Russia: A Society of Networks, in: Markku Kangaspuro, *Russia: More Different Than Most*, Helsinki: Kikimora publications, 1999; and especially the Russian specialist on this subject: A. Ledeneva, *Russia's economy of favours. Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

[146] Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-War, Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, London: Warner Books, 1994, pp. 71-78.

new problems"; and "the perfecting of a society based on the concept of developed socialism".[147] As an apparently convinced Leninist and believer in the communist system, Gorbachev estimated that the improvement of the economy would result in the correction of the entire 'superstructure' of Soviet society. His goal was to bring the communist system to a point of perfection, based on the ideals of Marxist-Leninist materialism.

Gorbachev's idea of *perestroika* and its emphasis on the Soviet economy inevitably affected the Soviet Armed Forces and the military industrial complex. Since the Soviet Union was more or less a military organization itself, it was clear that every reform effort that was made to reform Soviet society would also effect its military institution. The cult of 'full mobilization' had, indeed, militarized the whole of Soviet society and its economy.[148] Therefore, from the beginning of the perestroika movement, the military organization was included in Gorbachev's reform enterprise. Gorbachev simply could not ignore the *imperium in imperio* that the military institution presented thus he used two traditional Soviet methods to make the military decision making elites support his program. First, in a state that relied heavily on propaganda, Gorbachev believed in the power of the word and he used propaganda to enforce a program of ideological indoctrination. Second, for those who stubbornly resisted change, he used a method of personnel and administrative purges. In brief, he tried to convince, coerce, manipulate and build coalitions among political and military elites.

Gorbachev Makes Perestroika Clear to the Military. Soon after April 1985, Soviet military leaders received various messages that their institution would not escape Gorbachev's reform endeavors. Indirectly, the General Secretary made it clear that the arms race was overburdening the Soviet economy and subsequently in April 1985, Gorbachev announced the suspension of the deployment of SS-20 missiles in Europe. Six months later, the Soviet Union proposed that half of all Soviet and American nuclear weapons should be destroyed. These were strong signs to the Soviet Generals that the period of quasi-unlimited and unquestioned defense budgets was over.

In the course of the following campaign during which he promoted the April plenum resolutions all over the Soviet Union, Gorbachev met several senior officers at the so-called 'Minsk Meeting' in July 1985. During this national meeting he bluntly stated that military spending had to be contained.[149] This statement was the first direct and clear message to Soviet military leaders that they should start to downsize its organization. During the XXVIIth CPSU Party Congress in February-March 1986, Gorbachev again made it clear that military spending needed to be controlled more stringently. Gorbachev announced that he intended to reformulate military doctrine and to introduce the idea of 'reasonable sufficiency'; and that he wanted to refocus with a renewed vigor on the human aspects of perestroika.[150] Soviet military leaders were once again put on notice about the consequences of perestroika for their organization.

In order to propagate perestroika effectively in the military, Gorbachev replaced Aleksey Epishev with army General Aleksey Lizichev as chief of the Main Political Directorate (MPA) or *Glavnoe Politicheskoe Upravlenie* (GlavPU) in July 1985.[151] This replacement was a remarkable

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[147] Mikhail Gorbachev, *Op. Cit.*, p.173.

[148] See for example the comments of Georgii Shakhnazarov, Grobachev's close assistant: Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svoboda: reformatsiya Gorbacheva glazami ego pomoshchnika,* Moskva: Rossika-zevs, 1993, p. 42 and pp. 83-84.

[149] Cited by William Odom, *The Collapse of the Soviet Military*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, p. 106; Dale R. Herspring, 'On perestroika: Gorbachev, Yazov, and the Military', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XXXVI, Nr. 4, July-August 1987, p. 101.

[150] 'CPSU Program New edition Adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress", *Pravda*, March 7, 1986.

[151] The Main Political Directorate was an organization that was part of the Ministry of Defense, which carried the legal authority of a department of the CPSU Central Committee. It was simultaneously a department within the Party's Secretariat's Central Apparatus and an administrative division within the Defense Ministry. Ellen Jones stated: "The MPA's basic charter is "part political work" but this term carries a far broader meaning than party oversight and control…the MPA is the main organization concerned with personal issues in the military. It is responsible for directing political socialization, maintaining high morale and discipline, administering cultural and recreational programs, managing the military's party and Komsomol organizations". Ellen Jones*, Red Army and Society, a Sociology of the*

move because Epishev had led the MPA since 1962 and in addition it revealed Gorbachev's tactics towards obstinate officials. Gorbachev apparently wanted to use Lizichev and the traditional Party channel in the army to give his propaganda machine a new impetus. In his writing and political agitation work, Lizichev translated the features of the inherently (economic) program of perestroika to the military organization. The main points of this program were as follows: there was the need to create an efficient army; to fight inefficiencies and laziness among soldiers; to stress personal responsibility among individuals; to indict prevailing negative conditions such as alcoholism, *dedovshchina*, racial tensions (seen in friction between the different nationalities); and finally to address shortcomings in the education levels of military personnel. [152]

From March 1986 onwards, the problems of perestroika were discussed in a special section of *Krasnaia Zvezda*, the official daily newspaper of the Ministry of Defense. Letters to the Editor were also published in this newspaper, marking the moment when the military elite began to discuss the impact of perestroika on its own organization. The MPA also organized high level meetings with officials of the Ministry of Defense in which it tried to endorse Gorbachev's call for the acceleration of the country's socio-economic development. The Secretary General clearly hoped to change military attitudes by putting forward convincing arguments in the Defense Council.

Besides this propaganda effort, the Secretary General also tried to build coalitions in order to implement this policy. He appointed his allies to institutions which played a role in the decision-making process in military affairs and dismissed 'hard-liners' who opposed his policy. [153] Although this trend was not very clear at that time, Grigory Romanov, a political rival of Gorbachev and a well-known ally of the military, was expelled from the Politburo and this was considered a crucial political move. Gorbachev also revived the Defense Council [*Sovet oborony*] which had been in a deep political crisis since the end of the Brezhnev era. [154] Until Gorbachev's appointment, it had only met infrequently, its meetings were formal, and its function was merely to rubber stamp decisions made elsewhere. Gorbachev tried to stimulate discussions in the Defense Council from the beginning of his period in office. Thus, he altered and enlarged civilian representation on the

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Soviet Military, Boston: Allen&Unwin, 1985, p.17. See also: Christopher Donnelly, *Red Banner, The Soviet Military System in Peace and War*, Coulsdon: Jane's Information Group, 1988, p. 136 and pp. 192-93; Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott, *The Armed Forces of the USSR*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1984, pp. 286-296; Herbert Goldhamer, *The Soviet Soldier, Soviet Military Management at the Troop Level*, New York: Crane, Russak Company, 1975, pp. 255-309. Howard Frost, 'Soviet Party-Military relations in Strategic decision making', in: Kenneth M Currie and Gregory Varhall (Editors), *The Soviet Union: What Lies Ahead? Military-Political Affairs in the 1980's*, Studies in Communist Affairs, Vol. 6, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1985, pp.58-74.

[152] See for example: A. Lizichev, 'At a turning point in History', *Krasnaia Zvezda*, March 19, 1986.

[153] Generally, the institutions which played a major role in the decision-making process in the organizational development of the armed forces (institutions for industrial defense development are excluded) in the pre-1989 era were: the **Politburo** (especially the subgroup on national defense), the **Central Committee** (especially its Secretariat because of its day-by-day supervisory responsibilities and the MPA, as well as occasional ad hoc committees) the **Defense Council**, the **General staff** and the **Collegium of the Ministry of Defense**. Although organizational development decisions were formulated and implemented within a dual party-government system, the Party controlled the military organization. In order to control the military, the Party used the following strategy: (1) it gave formal instruction and directives to the government (Ministry of Defense), (2) it issued joined party-government resolutions and (3) it appointed individuals in key functions. The military were thus integrated into the political structure, but there was a systematic attempt to exclude the professional military from the highest organs. See for instance: Howard Frost, 'Soviet Party-Military Relations in Strategic Decision making', in: Kenneth M. Currie and Gregory Varhall, *Op. Cit.*, 1985, pp. 58-74. Edward L. Warner, *The Military in Contemporary Soviet Politics*, New York: Praeger, 1977. Ellen Jones, *Op. Cit.*, 1985, pp. 1-25.

[154] The Defense Council, the highest governmental institution that was jointly composed by civilian and military participants made the main decisions on military affairs. Gelman has noted that: "National Security decision-making was confined to a very small, hermetically sealed group (Defense Council) in which a few sympathetic members of the Politburo interacted with military and military-industrial leaders who jealously guarded a total monopoly over esoteric information and advisory rights." Harry Gelman, 'Gorbachev and the Future of the Soviet Military Institution', *Adelphi Papers*, Nr. 258, spring 1991, p. 3. See also: Christopher Donnelly, *Op. Cit.*, 1988, p. 114-17; Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott, *Op. Cit.*, 1981, pp.105-108; and Howard Frost, *Op. Cit.*, 1985; pp. 63-64.

Defense Council. His objective was to inject his ideas into the Council in the hope of obtaining support for the military establishment and to enforce change in its mentality.[155] Archie Brown noted this tactic in his writing about the working practices of the Politburo, which is considered to be the nucleus of military policy making:

> "It is noteworthy that during the first five years of his leadership Gorbachev kept in the politburo people of strong personalities and of very different views. This was partly, no doubt, because he felt constrained to do so, but, still more, because he chose to have a broad representation of opinion and counted on his skills of persuasion to carry both wings of the party with him in the process of fundamental, yet evolutionary, change."[156]

After two years of discussing and propagating reform, albeit in the vague terms of the period, the results were disappointing. It prompted Herspring to make the following remark:

> "By the beginning of 1987, it was clear that if the military-like most of the rest of Soviet society-was not openly resisting perestroika, neither was it rushing to embrace the approach"[157]

Gorbachev showed some irritation at the slow progress of perestroika's introduction into Soviet society during the January 1987 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and in his speech he called for truly revolutionary, comprehensive transformations in society. During this plenum Gorbachev highlighted the existence of a 'crisis phenomenon' in the Soviet system; he proposed multiple candidacy elections; he spoke out against additional military spending; he urged the expansion of the idea of Glasnost'; and he advocated a faster political personnel turnover, a policy which was a reaction against the 'principle of cadre stability' which was a remnant of Brezhnev's policy.[158]

This speech sent a shock wave through the military establishment. General Yu. Maksimov, Deputy Minister of Defense, understood the message and stated that the January 1987 plenum decisions were 'all embracing' while admitting the many shortcomings in the Soviet defense organization. He also pointed at the personal responsibility of military professionals and he stressed the firmness with which he would endorse perestroika including punishments for those who could not maintain discipline in the army.[159]

In the same newspaper there appeared an even more remarkable article by Colonel V. Pokholenchuk who went as far as saying that without general purges in the military high command, the necessary change of mentality would never take place. He also asked for a better approach to ministerial planning and a new military strategic plan.[160] Similar articles followed indicating that perestroika was the key issue in restructuring the armed forces. Apparently, perestroika received a new impulse within the military establishment during 1987, which seemed to have understood the Kremlin's message. But Maksimov's *Krasnaia Zvezda* article can also be seen as an example of self

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[155] Harry Gelman, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 15-20.

[156] Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 201.

[157] Dale Herspring, 'On Perestroika: Gorbachev, Yazov, and the Military', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XXXVI, Nr. 4, July-August 1987, p.103.

[158] Gorbachev*, Op. Cit.*, pp. 222-226; and 'O perestroke i kadrovoi politike partii, Tezicy doklada General'nogo sekretaria TsK KPSS M.S. Gorbacheva na Plenume TsK KPSS 27 ianvaria 1987 goda', *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 28th January 1987, pp.1-2; 29th January 1987, pp.1-2; and 30th January 1987, p. 1.

[159] Yu. Maksimov, 'Perestroika ekzamenyet kazhdogo', *Krasnaia Zvezda*, March 5, 1987, p. 2.

[160] V. Pocholenchuk, 'perestroika- delo kazhdogo', *Krasnaia Zvezda*, March 18, 1987, p. 2. See for the impact of this article Dale Herspring, *Op. Cit.*, 1987, p. 103 and Melanie Russell, 'Restructuring in the Soviet Armed Forces', *Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, Radio Liberty Research*, RL 118/87, March 23, 1987.

criticism ('*samokritika*') of the military, a traditional, though not necessarily convincing way of approving the ideology of reform 'from above'.

Gorbachev was also eager to make breakthroughs in the international arena. Nuclear disarmament and conventional force reductions were a main concern. In November 1987 he signed the INF-agreement in Geneva committing the USSR and the US, to the total elimination of intermediate-range nuclear missiles, thus the military establishment gradually lost its monopoly over defense policy making and weapon programs. Simultaneously, Gorbachev encouraged political and civilian criticism of military institutions and its traditional policies. He was enthusiastically supported in this endeavor by two key allies, Aleksandr Yakovlev and Eduard Shevardnadze. Yakovlev, the 'father of *glasnost'*, was appointed head of the Central Committee Propaganda Department by Gorbachev, which was the center from which perestroika was promoted. He was elected as a full member of the Central Committee in February 1986 and of the Politburo a year later. Shevardnadze, also a full member of the politburo, became the newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in June 1985, replacing the long serving Andrei Gromyko, who went on to become the 'honorific' Soviet President. Their appointments signaled the endorsement of 'the new thinking' and broke the analytical monopoly of the *genstab* on strategic and defense issues. Shevardnadze criticized the Soviet military leaders and the role of the General Staff in the Defense Council in particular.[161] He started a campaign against the military establishment threatening their near-monopoly on foreign policy issues, and forcing his department into Gorbachev's inner circle of decision makers. The appointment of Shevardnadze to the Minister of Foreign Affairs was crucial in the development of the post-1987 period. Gorbachev was, indeed, faced with a dilemma. On one hand, Gorbachev and his reform team understood that the Soviet Armed Forces could not be a neutral observer of the perestroika experiment, and that the military's active involvement was actually necessary. On the other hand, Gorbachev could not endlessly wait for the military leaders' formal approval of the reforms he thought were necessary for Soviet society. Hence, Gorbachev on the one hand appeared to deliberately risk alienating the military establishment from his government and on the other hand welcoming his two liberal allies to actively participate in the discussion on military affairs.

It was clear at that moment that the discussion of military reform was not harmonious with events at the international level. There was not only a 'mental' discord between the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but Gorbachev's policy priority and his supporters were located in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the significant organizational resistance of military elites who were against perestroika was located in the Ministry of Defense. This situation not only exposed bureaucratic rivalry and clientism, but also caused particular organizational outcomes for the Soviet military which had far-reaching practical consequences. The discussion of perestroika among Soviet Military elites remained at the problem identification stage. Sokolov only reluctantly admitted that there were problems in the army and he only paid lip service to Gorbachev's perestroika endeavors. There was no debate in the Soviet Army about systemic reform. Consequently, in the military establishment the radical idea of the All-Volunteer Force was not mentioned, let alone considered as an option at this time. The polemic about reform was, therefore, still at a preliminary stage and the military establishment had to be convinced of the necessity of reform 'from above'. Gorbachev's policy at the international level, however, fundamentally influenced the organization of the Soviet military system and forced it to think about organizational change. Gorbachev's neglect of the practical implications of his foreign policy for the Soviet military would, especially after 1988, cause major problems for it. In fact, these problems ultimately caused the Soviet/Russian military crisis of the 1990's.

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[161] The role of the General Staff in the Defense Council was crucial. The General Staff acted as the permanent secretariat of this body. In this way, it could manipulate the agenda of the Defense Council meetings. See: Harry Gelman, *Op. Cit*., pp. 17-18, and Howard Forst, *Op. Cit*., pp. 65-66.

Incidents that led to action. In the perestroika years, the military's reservations about reform were overtaken by political events. The socio-political system was in deep trouble, the economic situation deteriorated further and the Soviet Union experienced the Chernobyl disaster. But it was the Mathias Rust affair that prompted the impetus for reform for military institutions. The military's inefficiency was shown when Rust, a German student, landed a small Cessna 172 airplane at the gates of the Kremlin. Moreover, he had flown 700 kilometers in Soviet airspace on Border Guard Day itself, which was regarded as a painful and humiliating experience both for the political and military leadership. Although the incident itself was not that spectacular, nor an unchallenged proof of military incompetence, Gorbachev grasped the opportunity to justify his assertion that there was a need for major change in the military forces. Rust's dangerous but childish adventure gave Gorbachev an excuse to pass over and fire senior military officers who had opposed and obstructed military reform.[162] Moreover, according to Anatoly Chernyaev, Gorbachev's chief foreign policy aide, the Rust incident planted for the first time the idea of the professional army as a reform option at the highest level of political power. Chernyaev's devastating memo on Soviet military affairs speaks for itself:

> "It would be ridiculous on my part to suggest even the broad outline of such a reform. But it's not difficult to recognize the vital necessity of giving up a multi-million man army and universal conscription. And, by the way, to avoid drafting "future Newtons". We need a professional army. We need quality, not quantity…"[163]

In May 1987, the Minister of Defense himself was victimized as well. Sokolov was replaced by General Dmitriy Yazov whose experience lay primarily in the field of personnel management and administration and not in military operations or other more prestigious areas.[164] Even though he could not be called a 'radical reformer', he had shown a positive attitude towards Gorbachev and his reform program. The dismissal of Sokolov would also be the start of a series of personnel purges in which younger officers with a less parochial orientation were favored. There was also a slight preference shown for officers from the Far Eastern Military District who would then become the new military elite.[165] Herspring has summarized Gorbachev's personnel policy as follows:

> "Those military officers who think that the talk about creating a Soviet style meritocracy in the military is empty rhetoric need only look at the changes within the high command itself since Gorbachev came to power…Changes in lower-level commands have been even more extensive. Furthermore, while other factors besides age may have influenced these changes, it is clear that seniority no longer ensures an officer's longevity. Indeed,…, more extensive changes in favor of younger officers are in order. And, while younger officers may have looked on the ouster of Marshal Sokolov and Gen. Koldunov in the aftermath of the 1987

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[162] Apparently Gorbachev was supported or even stimulated to oust senior military actors by other politicians who saw the military as a burden for reform. Michael Desch wrote: "It was Yeltsin who, as head of the Moscow branch of the Communist Party, took the lead in June 1987 in castigating the Soviet military for negligence and incompetence in connection with the Mathias Rust Affair". Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military: the Changing Security Environment*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 62.

[163] Anatoly S. Chernyaev, *My Six Years With Gorbachev*, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, pp. 118-119. See also Gerard Snel, *From the Atlantic to the Urals, The Reorientation of Soviet Military strategy, 1981-1990*, Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1996, pp.206-207

[164] Yazov was appointed in January 1987 as chief of Personnel Directorate in the Soviet Ministry of Defense. For the reasons why Gorbachev appointed this young officer as minister of defense see: Michail Gorbachev, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 232-233.

[165] Dale R. Herspring, *Op. Cit.*, 1987, p. 106.

Matthias Rust affair as an action aimed only at the highest levels of the military, it is now becoming clear that no-one is immune."[166]

The 1985-87 Period Placed in the Context of the Decision Making Process

The period 1985-1987 was the period in which Gorbachev initially tried to introduce reform into Soviet society. He was convinced, together with his advisory team that the USSR could not see out the 20th Century in its then current condition.[167] The liberal elite felt the need for change and was committed to enforcing it. The program it proposed, however, was a poorly developed and vague hotchpotch of ideas. The reform plan was still deeply embedded in the ideology of the rigid communist system of that moment: and it narrowly focused on the economy. The program was also termed a program of *'uskorenie'* [acceleration], which indicated that Gorbachev wanted to stay within the limits of the system at this stage of events. Gorbachev's idea of reform was therefore not yet a program of radical change but one of incremental change. He could be called a reformist rather than a radical at this stage of events. Cohen defined reformism as:

> "the outlook, and those policies, which seek through measured change to improve the existing order without fundamentally transforming existing social, political, and economic foundations or going beyond prevailing ideological values. Reformism finds both its discontent and its program, and seeks its political legitimacy and success, within the parameters of the existing order. This distinguishes it from radicalism. The essential reformist argument is that the potential of the existing system and the promise of the established ideology-...- have been realized, and that they can and must be fulfilled. The reformist premise is that change is progress."[168]

The reform ideas were made public at several official meetings of the Communist Party elite. In the Communist tradition Gorbachev's thoughts on change were formulated in a hybrid ideological language. This did not mean that there was a plan of action at the political level. This situation molded the way reform was treated by military elites. The General Staff and the Soviet military-industrial complex were aware of the need to do something, especially in the technological field. The need for change was felt by the quality of the arms race with the US and in the American plan to develop SDI. But reform of the military system was not even an issue. Only reluctantly, and under the pressure of events, were most military leaders prepared to recognize organizational problems. However, while the military high command was cautious *vis-à-vis* perestroika, the mid-level cadre showed signs of openness. This uneven response to Gorbachev's call for reform indicates the first signs of the officer corps' lack of cohesion and the gradual disintegration of the military organization. The 1985-1987 period can thus be seen as a period of preparation for the fermentation of reform ideas and organizational developments. The appointment of Yazov might be

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[166] Dale R Herspring, 'The Soviet military and change', *Survival*, Vol. XXXI, Nr. 4, Winter 1989, p. 325.

[167] Gorbachev had indeed a small group of trustees on which he relied. Although this informal group had no decision-making power, it was a sounding-board for the Secretary General. Although there were members of the Politburo in this team, it may not confused with the inner-cabinet of the Politburo which was the real center of decision-making. Important members were Gorbachev's advisors: Alexander Yakovlev, Vadim Medvedev (both politburo members), Anatoly Chernyaev, Georgy Shakhnazarov, Ivan Frolov, Valery Boldin and Yevgeny Primakov. See Archie Brown, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p. 202.

[168] Stephen F. Cohen, 'The Friends and Foes of Change: Reformism and Conservatism in the Soviet Union', in: Alexander Dallin and Gail W. Lapidus, *The Soviet System, From Crisis to Collapse*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1995, (revised edition) p. 59.

seen as a firm signal for a new era, as, from that moment on, reform of the military organization was formalized and hence entered the stage in which it was most lively and passionately discussed.

1. 2.   1988-1991: Radical Change Discussed

The Political and Institutional Contexts that Foster Radical Change

In the period 1988-1991, the nature of the Soviet Union as a state and political institution profoundly changed. There were not only important changes in the way the political decision-making was organized, the relations of the Soviet Union with the external world and the multi-ethnic nature of the USSR was also in flux. Logically, a prominent institution such as the military could not avoid the outcomes of these changes. The way that the military was affected by the political, international and ethnic setting, reconstructs the context in which the military reform discussion occurred.

Institutional and Political Reform in the USSR. Confronted with 'the management *nomenclatura's'* resistance to perestroika, Gorbachev tried to invite the masses to participate in the perestroika experiment. Through the mass media, he solicited the people to end their apathetic attitudes towards the state. In turn he had to tolerate pluralistic and contesting views and criticism of state institutions. Gorbachev's call for more glasnost' provoked a stormy reaction from the intellectual, urban and the pro-western minded people who were ready to explore the limits and possibilities of glasnost.[169] By the same token there was a major difference between the criticism of the intelligentsia *vis-à-vis* the military during the high days of perestroika and public opinion of the military institution itself. The criticism the military endured through the liberal press, especially *Ogonek, Komsomolskaia Pravda* and *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, was overwhelming. Public opinion in general, however, continued to express 'high trust' in the military institution throughout this time. Among the public, the military establishment still received the highest esteem of any state institution.[170] As could be expected, opponents of reform articulated their criticisms more vociferously then those who were unequivocally positive. The notorious letter of Nina Andreieva, a neo-Stalinist teacher from Leningrad, published in *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, openly savaged the reformers.[171] It was also clear that the opposition forces to perestroika were soon to organize themselves through *glasnost*. Soon public opinion was polarized into two extreme wings: 'the radical destructive wing' and the 'revanchist group' or the radical reformers on the one side and the ultra-conservative forces on the other.[172]

The communist nomenclature, led by Yegor Ligachev and Nikolay Ryzhkov, had an important hand in this conservative bolstering of power. The mythic Soviet State monolith was publicly dissolved through the process of *glasnost*. Although the reformists gradually augmented the pressure on the state institutions, Gorbachev realized that there was stiff resistance from the

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[169] For a discussion on the origin and the development of social movements in Russia see: Elena Zdravomyslova, 'Opportunities and framing in the Transition to Democracy: The case of Russia', in: Doug McAdam, John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (editors), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements, Political Opportunities, Mobilising Structures, and Cultural Framing*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 122-137.

[170] Public opinion surveys of the All-Union Center for Public Opinion Research (VTsIOM), showed that until the very end of the existence of the Soviet Union, one third to one half of the entire Soviet population-not just Russians-said they *fully trusted* the army in 1989 and 1990. (December 1989: 44%, July 1990: 35%, July 91: 59%) A survey effected in July-august 1990 by Vox Populi concluded that 61% of the respondents said they trusted the army either completely (30%) or 'on the whole' (32%). See: Matthew Wyman, *Public Opinion in Post-communist Russia,* London: Macmillan Press, 1997, pp. 66-71.

[171] Nina Andreieva, 'I can not give up my principles', *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 13 March 1988.

[172] Gorbachev, *Op. Cit.*, 1996, p. 210.

nomenclature. It was during the XIXth All-Union Party Conference, in late June 1988, that Gorbachev endorsed fundamental reform which went beyond the limits of the traditional Soviet system. He proposed; a presidential system for the Soviet Union, a new parliament which was to be called the Congress of People's Deputies, an increase in the power of local Soviets at the expense of the Communist Party, and the removal of the Party from state economic management. The monopoly of the Communist Party was attacked and the first, albeit embryonic steps, towards more individual initiative in the Soviet economy was proposed. The importance of the XIX Party Congress is underlined by Gorbachev himself:

> "Historians, who like everything to be in neat order, have been arguing whether perestroika and reforms began in March 1985 or at some later date. Well, in the first three years we made serious efforts to bring the country out of stagnation and to achieve renewal in all aspects of life. We made our first attempts at radical reform of the economy. However the real turning point, when perestroika became irreversible, was the XIX All-Union Part Conference. This decisive step was prompted by the obvious failure of economic reform to get going and the radicalization of public opinion."[173]

In March 1989, the first free elections were held in the Soviet Union to elect the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. These elections were a success for the reformers, while many Party candidates lost the election.[174] In May, the first Congress of People's Deputies was opened in which Gorbachev was elected chairman. The permanent variant of the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet, was elected the day after the opening of the Congress. Both forums would become important places for political discussion and renewal. The Inter-Regional Group – a coalition of all reform minded members of the Congress of People's Deputies - especially tried to promote and endorse reform through this institution. Together with the establishment of this democratic opposition, it was clear that the Congress was spontaneously structuring itself along the lines of the polarized polity. Indeed, the democratic faction met with some fierce resistance from the conservative forces in the Parliament. The factions were not stable thus, being a member of a faction was not a formal given and most of the time not ideologically inspired. Consequently, voting in the parliament and indeed parliamentary work was very often unpredictable and even chaotic in nature. This would become a permanent characteristic of Soviet-Russian parliamentary life. The establishment of a 'real' parliament had for the military decision making procedure a formal consequence. A 'new' Supreme Soviet Committee for Defense and State Security was established within the new parliament. This committee was supposed to question the military impact on defense issues and its privileged position in the party elite, but it soon became clear that it was too weak to fulfill this role. Most of its members were representatives of the military-industrial complex and they did not question their colleagues. Moreover, the lack of parliamentary culture meant that the members of the Committee were insecure and as a consequence ineffective in dealing with military issues.

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[173] Mikhail Gorbachev, *Op. Cit.*, p. 237.

[174] What is remarkable in these elections was that active 'soldiers' could run for a seat in this legislative body. 82 out of 2,250 members of the Congress of People's Deputies were military men. These military deputies, however, did not represent a cohesive group. 12 out of 82 could be named as reformist. It was this minority that could count on the sympathy of the democratic forces in the Congress and the western press, which would contribute to the professionalization debate of the Soviet armed forces. It must be clear from the very beginning that the military democratic representation (and their contributions to the debate) represented only a minority. For an analysis of this group of military representatives see: Timothy L. Thomas, 'The Reformist Military Deputies, Yeltsin's in Fatigues?', *Military Review*, Vol. LXX, Nr. 12, December 1990, pp. 41-48 and John W. Lepingwell, 'Military Deputies in the USSR Congress', *Report on the USSR*, *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty*, Vol. 2, Nr. 20, 18 May 1990, p. 20.

In 1990 there were even more revolutionary events that marked the political life in the Soviet Union. In March, the Congress of People's Deputies amended Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution, ending the monopoly of power of the Communist Party. Moreover, later in the month, Gorbachev was elected as the president of the Soviet Union. The most crucial outcome of these two decisions for the Armed Forces was that the dual party-government structure had been dissolved. The institutional links between the party and the executive branch- at least in theory- were cut.[175]

Despite the restructuring of the political institutions during this period, Gorbachev held the supreme power of the state in his hands. His role as a leader combined the functions of: Chairman of the legislative body, Head of State as well as General Secretary of the Communist Party. This combination of functions and the monopolization of supreme power in the hands of one man was, seen by the radical democrats as a contradiction with the ideas of *glasnost* and *perestroika*.[176] Crucially, Gorbachev's election as president divided both the intelligentsia and the more democratic members of the Congress of People's Deputies into opposing factions. He became politically isolated as he gradually lost support from both the liberals, and the traditional supporters of his policy. In short, *Glasnost* made him a powerless president.

As chief executive, Gorbachev also created a Presidential Council. The nature of the Council was never clear. Some thought it had executive powers, others thought it was simply an advisory body. Moreover, this body was not very effective because its composition was diverse and it had no supporting structures capable of carrying the decisions into effect.[177] It was Gorbachev himself who appointed the members of this group and he followed his tactic of keeping a disparate group behind him so he - at least in his mind - would be able to unite a broad front of society behind his reform program. In a public statement the Presidential Council took over the function of the Defense Council. But as a result of the vociferous protests of Chief of the General Staff General Mikhail Moiseev, the Defense Council was reinstalled one month later in April 1990, albeit under presidential authority and thus with decreased autonomy/authority.[178] In November 1990, Gorbachev announced the abolition of the Presidential Council and its replacement by the Security Council. In this Security Council most of the members of the Presidential Council had a seat, with the exception of some intellectuals.[179]

What was the result of this institutional reshuffling for the military? The General Staff lost its influence in the decision-making procedure in military affairs. Although the Defense Council officially survived until March 1992, its precise role was unknown. The center of decision-making was replaced by the Security Council, which had a more pluralistic composition and a less

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[175] An indicator for this may be the resignation of Aleksei Lizichev as chief of the MPA, once welcomed in Gorbachev's reform team to introduce reform in the armed forces. Officially he resigned for health reasons, but it was clear that when Gorbachev's policy 'shifted to the left', Lizichev increasingly came to support the conservatives. He was an opponent of radical military reform, and the MPA itself emerged as a hard-line bloc against Gorbachev's reform effort.

[176] For example, Yury Afanasiev, a prominent member of the democratic group (DemRossiya movement) and rector of the Moscow Institute of History and Archives, criticized Gorbachev for his culmination of functions. Gorbachev, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 290-292 and p. 320.

[177] The members were: from the legislative branch: Anatoly Lukianov (Supreme Soviet), Yevgeny Primakov (Chairman of the Soviet of the Union); from the executive branch: Ryzhkov (chairman of the Council of Ministers), Shevardnadze (Minister of Foreign Affairs), Bakatin (Minister of the Interior), Yazov (Minister of Defense), Kryuchkov (KGB chief) and Masliukov (Chairman of the State Planning Commission). From the Party: Alexandr Yakovlev, Vadim Medvedev and Valery Boldin. Gorbachev selected also two writers: Valentin Rasputin and Chingiz Aitmatov and the economist Stanislav Shatalin and Venianim Yarin. (Alexander Rahr, 'From Politburo to Presidential Council', *RFE/RL Report on the USSR*, Vol. 2, Nr. 22, 1 June 1990, pp. 1-5.)

[178] Theodore Karasik, 'The Defense Council & Soviet Presidency', *Perspective (Institute for the Study of conflict, Ideology and Policy)*, Vol. 1, Nr. 2, December 1990; and William E. Odom, 'The Soviet Military in Transition', *Problems of Communism*, May –June 1990, pp. 66-67.

[179] The Security Council consisted, by the time of its creation on 16 November 1990, of: Bakatin, Bessmertnykh, Kryuchkov, Pavlov, Pugo, Primakov, Yazov and Yanaev. These members represented the 'power ministries', which are the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Security, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

prominent military voice. In brief, the military institution was excluded from the inner-circle of decision-making bodies in the Soviet Union. Moreover, it was constantly criticized by a vocal liberal minority who were representatives of the legislative bodies.

The End of the Cold and Afghan Wars. When perestroika was the key idea for internal reform, 'New Thinking' was Gorbachev's notion concerning his international agenda. The most spectacular decision in this field was made public on December 7th 1988. During a speech at the United Nations, he announced a unilateral reduction of Soviet military personnel by 500,000 within two years. He would also ordered the withdrawal of six tank divisions from Eastern Europe. This announcement was unusual for at least two reasons. Firstly, Gorbachev's announcement was a construction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by Shevardnadze, and the civilian security experts – the so-called *institutchiki* - who led a campaign against the military leadership and its policy. This action coincided with Gorbachev's campaign to gradually neutralize communist and military hard-liners. The replacement of the Chief of the General Staff Marshal Sergei Akhromeev by General Mikhail Moiseev the day after Gorbachev's UN speech showed that there was friction over the spectacular announcements.[180] The military elite were thus not involved in Gorbachev's disarmament policy and they lost their monopoly over military policy. Secondly, the fact that the military were confronted with a *fait accompli* meant that they had no choice but to face far reaching and unresolved practical questions about conventional force withdrawal, radical reorganization and large force reductions.[181]

During his UN speech, Gorbachev also announced that the Soviet Union renounced the use of force to handle conflict. This prepared the way for the ending of the Cold War. In July 1988 he had already said that the Warsaw Pact countries had the right to follow their own path towards socialist objectives. With these decisions, Gorbachev buried the Brezhnev Doctrine and started a process that ended when the Berlin Wall came down in November 1989. The end of the Cold War was not only an important step in the relaxation of tension in international affairs but the decision to withdraw the Soviet troops from Afghanistan in the spring of 1989 was also remarkable, with far reaching effects on the Soviet home front.[182] The withdrawal was completed when General Boris V. Gromov, the commander of the 40th Army in Afghanistan, crossed the Termez River as the last Soviet soldier to leave Afghanistan.[183]

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[180] Akhromeev would stay the military advisor to Gorbachev until 1991.

[181] The frustration of the military on this subject can be read in three books of Viktor Baranets. The books of this colonel of the General Staff can be seen as an expression, or even an outcry, of the general feeling of frustration in the Soviet-Russian military. See: Viktor Baranets, *Poteriannaia armiia, zapiski polkovnika Genshtaba*, Moskva: Kollektsiia "sovershenno sekretno", 1988; Viktor Baranets, *El'tsin i ego generaly, zapiski polkovnika Genshtaba*, Moskva: Kollektsiia "sovershenno sekreto", 1998; and Viktor Baranets, *Genshtab bez tain (Kniga pervaia i vtoraia)*, Moskva: Politburo, 1999.

[182] About the decision making for withdrawing from Afghanistan see: for instance: Sarah E. Mendelson, *Changing Course: Ideas, Politics, and the Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, Mark Galeotti, *Afghanistan, The Soviet Union's Last War*, London: Frank Cass, 1995, and the round table discussion organized by the Carnegie Endowment for International peace in Moscow on 15 February 1999: Malashchenko Alekseia (Redaktor), *Afganistan: itogi beskonechnoi vojny, Materialy 'kruglogo stola' posviashchennogo 10-letiyu vyvoda vojsk iz afganistana*, Moskva: karnegy endownment, 1999.
In the spring of 1999, the democratic forces of Russia took the opportunity to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Soviet decision to withdraw from Afghanistan. See for example a special edition of Karta, a Russian independent historical and human rights defending journal issued by Memorial. Karta, *Afganskii al'bom*, Nr. 24-25, Moskva: Memorial, 1999. Although the democratic forces in 1999 did not, by this time, have the same status and influence as ten years earlier, the impact of the decision to end the Afghan War on society and the democratic forces cannot be underestimated.

[183] See also the remarks of Dmitri Trenin, for the impact of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan on the break-up of the USSR Dimitri Trenin, *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border between Geopolitics and Globalization*, Moscow: Carnegie Endowment for International peace, 2001, p. 97

No explanation is needed to conclude that the military institution was severely affected by these events. Not only the end of the Afghan War, but also the end of the Cold War took away the rationale for Soviet militarization of the state and the nature of the military organization which had lasted for over 40 years. These dramatic changes set the context in which the nature of this organization could be questioned. The fact that these crucial events were decided upon without consulting the military elite themselves, added to the military's traumatic experience.

Ethnic Disorder and the Collapse of the USSR. Perestroika and glasnost had demolished all the creations of the Stalinist order: the political hegemony of the Communist Party, the establishment of an industrial society based on a command economy, and the creation of a relatively 'peaceful' multi-ethnic state. This may not be a surprise since these creations were based on the authoritarian and totalitarian control of the citizens of the State. Once this control was relaxed, any belief that the different ethnic groups would not use *glasnost* to demonstrate their discontent with Stalin's social constructs could only be an illusion.

Ethnic tensions surfaced early in Gorbachev's presidency. In December 1986 the first nationalist troubles arose in Kazakhstan, and in mid-1987 the Crimean Tartars organized themselves into a strong movement and demanded the restoration of their rights and return to the Crimea. Many other repressed peoples – such as the Volga Germans, the Kabardins and the Ingushetians - soon demanded the same rights. Unrest also rose in the Baltic States. These republics protested against the policy of 'Russification' and the idea of separatism found fertile ground in these republics. The events in Nagorno-Karabakh, which culminated in an open war between Azeris and Armenians, illustrated that the ethnic upheavals could end in violence and complete disorder.

The Soviet Army intervened several times in nationalist disputes. It did so on several notable occasions, for example in Georgia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Latvia and Lithuania.[184] The Army, however, was not able to restore the Soviet All-Union order and it was not keen on doing this job. In every clash where the Army was involved, its appearance was ambivalent and the realization grew stronger that its status was deteriorating. However, the Pandora's Box of nationalist feelings was opened and could not be closed again anymore.

During this period of unrest, Gorbachev tried to redefine the relations between the Soviet republics in a new Union Treaty. This attempt was countered by a coup attempt in August 1991 in which the most conservative elements of the Government helped by a faction from the security forces tried to stop Gorbachev. When their coup seemed to be ill prepared and was countered by democratic forces led by Boris Yeltsin, the collapse of the Soviet Union could not be stopped. In the months after the coup, the Republics declared themselves independent. It was the Belovezh Forest agreement on 8th December 1991, between the Slavic republics that finally sealed the fate of the USSR. The presidents of respectively Russia, Belarus and Ukraine- Yeltsin, Leonid Kravchuk and Stanislav Shushkevich- declared the USSR dissolved and founded instead a 'Commonwealth of Independent States'. This secret agreement was officially signed in Alma Ata by a total of eleven Soviet republics several months later in December 1991. That same month, Gorbachev resigned and on the 31st December the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

The ethnic troubles that the Soviet state endured harmed not only the status and prestige of the Soviet military organization, it also affected its composition. The conscription system was characterized by the multi-ethnic state and resulted in a multi-cultural army. It was indeed through the boycotting of the conscription system that the peripheral republics could show their discontent. This personnel aspect of conscription would subsequently trouble the military establishment to a great extent.

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[184] The army intervened more precisely on 9th April 1989 in Tbilisi (Georgia); on 4th June 1989 in the Ferghana Valley (Uzbekistan); on 19-20th January 1990 in Baku (Azerbaijan); and in January 1991 in Riga and Vilnius (Latvia and Lithuania).

The Military and Radical Change: the Emergence of the Idea of the AVF

The policy of *glasnost* had already begun to have an effect on the military organization and ideas about military reform before the formal decision making process on military reform started. In parallel with the public resentment of many aspects of Soviet life in general there was discontent about the way that the military itself functioned.[185] The fact that conscription was the major link between society and the military forces made it only logical that exactly this practice came under severe public attack.

The beginning of the public discussion about military affairs in general, and conscription in particular, began in the fall of 1988. During this period, the mass media paid attention to the problems of conscription and the life of soldiers in the Soviet Forces. There were, for instance, follow-up articles and reports in the popular press, there were round table discussions, fictional stories in the Soviet 'thick' journals, and even television discussions took place, which called for a public debate about military institutions.[186] The most significant arguments against the military establishment were: that there was a continued cultivation of a militarized society, despite the fact that the external threat to Soviet security was declining; that the military organization was too closed and too privileged; that the war in Afghanistan had been a national travesty; that there was a questionable level of professional competence and a low level of education among the military leadership; that *dedovshchina*, the cruel practice of informal discipline common among conscript soldiers continued to take place; that the recruitment of educated and skilled young people into the military, was taking place which was seen as a societal waste; and finally that the republics' protest against the call up of their inhabitants into the Soviet military needed to be recognized. This critique resulted in an immense decline in the military's prestige in Soviet society in general, but most of all it was the conscription system that stood under immense fire.[187] This protest took place on several levels. Firstly there were organized actions by so-called *neformal'nyi* groupings; secondly, there was informal protests by young men who boycotted the draft by ignoring the call-up; and finally, there were protests by members of parliament.

The protest against the draft was initially led by Moscow State University's administration who criticized the government for the fact that talented students and valuable know-how were

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[185] It is necessary to return to the discrepancy between the criticisms leveled at the military organization, which was concentrated on some specific practices of the Army, filtered by a specific stratum of Soviet society and loudly expressed in the liberal press, and the general view of public opinion expressed on the subject of the military institution. The 'loss of prestige' is only a (relative) perception often used by the military to find excuses for the dysfunctions in the military organization. Moreover, the opinions expressed in the liberal-democratic camp, are not necessarily supported by the public in general. The Army remains a strong national symbol, certainly in comparison with the West. Public opinion, the voice of anti-militarist voices in Soviet-Russian society and actual military reality form a complex relationship and must therefore be treated with caution.

[186] The most remarkable round table discussion took place in September 1988. It is here that many observers situate the beginning of informal discussion about structural reform in the armed forces. This discussion was published in *Vek XX I Mir, "Army and Society"*, Nr. 9, September 1988, pp. 18-28. This exercise was repeated among military professionals, organized by the voenaia mysl' redaction in 1990. 'Voennaia reforma: opyt, problemy, perspektivy, *Voenniai Mysl*, Nr. 4 and Nr. 5, 1990, pp. 30-41 and pp. 41-53). Another remarkable article appeared in the press written by A. Savinkin: A. Savinkin, "What kind of Armed Forces do we Need?", *Moskovskie Novosti*, Nr. 45, November 6th, 1988, p. 6. The controversial novel of Yuri Poliakov published in the journal Yunost' in November 1987: Yuri Poliakov, 'Sto dnei do prikaza', *Yunost*, Nr. 11, 1987. Sergei Kaledin wrote the novel 'Stroibat' which dealt with the problems of the construction units: Sergei Kaledin, 'Stroibat', *Novyi Mir*, No. 4, April 1989. 'Stroibat' was subsequently put on as a play: Anatolii Smelianskii, 'Lessons for Men', *Moskovskie Novosti*, Nr. 45, 11 November 1990, p. 14.

[187] Especially the massive (negative and positive) public reactions to these articles and literary works are worth mentioning. Yunost' published reactions to Poliakov's novel in 'Skol'ko dnei do prikaza?' *Yunost'*, Nr. 5, 1988 (See also Sergei Zamascikov, 'Insiders' Views of the Soviet Army', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XXXVII, Nr. 3-4, May-August 1988) and Aleksei Levinson, 'Ob estetike nasiliie Armiie I obshchestvo v SSSR/ Rossii za Poslednie 10 let', *Neprikosnovennyi Zapas*, Vol. 2, Nr 4, 1999.

wasted in the armed forces.[188] In the spring of 1989, an informal group of 'Soldiers' Mothers' was founded and they actively protested against the practice of conscription, and the abuse of soldiers in the Armed Forces. Their protest was remarkably successful and in March 1989 the Defense Council adopted the decision to stop the conscription of students. In the summer of 1989, the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff fought a rear guard fight against this decision. However, 176,000 soldiers who were serving in the army were released from their duties. This success inspired the Soldiers' Mothers to continue to expand their actions against all abuses that were related with conscription, for instance: the unhealthy living conditions in the barracks; the peace-time deaths and the use of soldiers as cheap labor.[189] Finally, they became inspired advocates of the professional army in the Soviet Union. The protest against the draft clearly inspired citizens to organize effective political action as Buckley pointed out that: "Of all the women's group to have formed since *Glasnost*, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers has made, perhaps, the largest impact on Russian society and politics."[190]

Besides this societal protest, the practice of conscription was also eroding from the inside. From the spring draft of 1989 onwards, a significant fall in the draft's enforcement was noted. Young men from the Baltic, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Ukraine Republics, especially began to abscond. Even youths from Russia itself showed up less and less in the '*Voenkomaty*', the offices to which the 18-year-olds had to report after being called up. Serebriannikov and Deriugin, two former political officers and later leading spokesmen on social problems in the Armed Forces, noted that whereas in 1978 it was reported that some 78% of young men declared they were pleased to serve in the military, in 1990 this figure was only 12%.[191] This prompted the military elite to say that they were confronted with a boycott of the conscript system: whereas in 1986, only 1044 people did not show up in the '*voenkomaty*' in 1991 this number increased to 17,000.[192]

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[188] It is not a coincidence that the sociological Department of Moscow State University made a very profound study of the phenomenon of *dedovshchina*, the system of systemic abuse of soldiers. See: S.A. Belanovskii (Editor), *Dedovshchina v armii (Sbornik sotsiologicheskikh dokumentov)*, Moskva: Institut Narodnokhoziaistvennogo prognozirovaniia, 1991.

[189] Mark Galeotti already saw from the beginning of the Afghan war some self help groups who would later evolve to the influential group of the Soldiers Mothers. He identified the feminist dissident group 'Mariia' and '*Nadezhda*'(Hope) as specific Afghan related action groups who later would be overtaken by broader based movements. Whereas in the beginning these groups were protesting against the Afghan war and sought support for help for the mothers and widows of Afghan veterans, they later tried to defend the whole stratum of conscripts. Mark Galeotti, *Op. Cit.*, 1995, pp. 96-97 and p.140. There is an abundant literature on the Soldiers Mothers Organization: See for instance: Valentina Melnikova and Anna Lebedev, *Les Petits Soldats, le Combat des Mères russes*, Paris: Bayard, 2001; Eva-Maria Hinteruber, *Die Soldatenmutter Sankt Petersburg, Zwischen Neotraditionalismus und neuen Widenrständigkeit*, Münster: LIT Verlag, 1999, Julie Elkner, Militarism versus Maternalism under Gorbachev: The Committee of Soldiers' Mothers and the Soviet Military's legitimacy Crisis, unedited MA thesis, University of Melbourne, March 2000 and Elena Zdravomyslova and Galina Eremitcheva, 'Transformation in Russia and Soldiers' Mothers Movement', unedited paper received from the authors

[190] Mary Buckley, 'Women and Public Life' in: Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman (Editors) *Developments in Russian Politics, Part 4*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1997, p. 205.

[191] The data published from public opinion research done in the USSR before 1989 must be treated with caution, since these surveys had a clear function in the propaganda policy of the State. Elisabeth Seica, a French researcher who studied (the functions of) public opinion in the Soviet Union and wrote a Ph.D. dissertation with the title: 'Les sondages d'opinion publique en Russie de la perestrojka à nos jours (1985-1992): un outil hautement convoité, enjeu d'intérêts multiples', noted that surveys were used in the USSR as a support for ideological messages. The results of the surveys that were made public showed a big consensus among the population toward the official ideology and were used as a pseudo-scientific proof of the coherence between the politics of the State and the will of the population. See: Elisabeth Seica, 'Opinion de l'armée & l'armée dans l'opinion, fonctions des sondages militaires' unedited paper received from the author . The figures about the attitudes toward military service that are mentioned here, and which are often used by the military throughout the 1990's, are thus probably an overestimation of Soviet opinion in reality.

[192]V.V. Serebriannikov and Yu. I. Driugin, *Armiia Rossii: Sostoianie I perspektivy vykhoda iz krizisa (sotsial'no-polititseski srez sovremennogo voennogo sotsiuma)*, Moskva: Rits ispi Ran, 1998, p.15.

At the time of the First Congress of Peoples' Deputies, every individual Minister of the Government had to be confirmed in order to increase the legitimacy of the Soviet government. During this process progressive deputies in the government openly criticized Yazov for his lack of vision and conservatism. It was only with the personal help of Gorbachev that Yazov was finally re-appointed as Minister of Defense. Also during the Second Congress of People's Deputies, the representatives opened fierce attacks on the military institution itself. Criticism of General Rodionov's responsibility for the Tbilisi massacre, and Andrei Sakharov's speech on the conduct of the military in Afghanistan, underlined the anti-militaristic feeling in the democratic camp of the Congress while conversely the conservative members in the Parliament supported the Army and its leadership. In brief, military affairs, the position of the military in Soviet society and the declining faith in conscription was a divisive element in Soviet society on which two opposing camps were formed: conservatives versus progressives. These camps were also noticed in other discussions about Soviet politics and society at that time as Julie Elkner observed:

> "These opposing standpoints extended to broader underlying questions concerning the nature of the individual's duty to the state as to general issues surrounding the ways in which violence functioned in the Soviet system. Indeed, debates in this area had implications for the legitimacy of the Soviet state itself, whose identity was so closely bound up with militarist models and metaphors."[193]

Under these circumstances, the reform discussion took place as it could not escape the societal polarization which grew between 1990-1991. In fact the reform debate was an expression of the same political-societal processes that dominated Soviet socio-political life. In 1990, two antagonistic military reform plans were presented that split the political landscape. The first of the plans was a progressive one presented by the legislative Supreme Soviet, the second a conservative inspired one presented by the Ministry of Defense in close collaboration with the General Staff.

The Progressive Reform Ideas: the Lopatin Plan. It was out of the Second Congress of People's Deputies that an initial and progressive reform proposal was openly formulated.[194] A special sub-commission of the Commission on Defense and the Armed Forces of the Supreme Soviet was set up during the Second Congress of People's Deputies. This Commission was led by Major Vladimir Lopatin and its purpose was to produce a proposal for military reform for consideration at the Third Congress of People's Deputies.[195] Initially, this commission consisted of seventeen members and

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[193] Julie Elkner, *Militarism versus Materialism under Gorbachev. The Committee of Soldiers' Mothers and the Soviet Military Legitimacy Crisis*, Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Melbourne, 2000.

[194] Gerard Snel has observed that since 1985 an IMEMO working group under the direction of Yakovlev was working behind the scenes on military reform. In the spring of 1987, Yakovlev handed to Gorbachev a military reform plan with very radical proposals and a second draft at the end of that year. One element in these proposals was a partial shift to a well-trained and well-educated army and a transition to a professional army in six, seven years. See: Gerard Snel, *From the Atlantic to the Urals, The Reorientation of Soviet Military strategy, 1981-1990*, Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1996, pp.206-207; Also Gorbachev's foreign aide Anatoly Chernyaev formulated in 1987 a proposal to replace the multi-million man army and the draft system with a professional cadre army. (Anatoly Chernyaev, *Op. Cit.*, p. 118.) So, although Lopatin's ideas were certainly not unique, his proposal was the first coherent and officially proposed plan for military reform that stood against the ideas coming from the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff.

[195] This initiative came from the Congress of People's deputies and not from the Supreme Soviet, the permanent representation of the legislative body. In the latter, a committee for Defense and State Security was formed. This Committee consisted of 43 members of which the majority was related with the military-industrial complex. This committee was headed by professor Vladimir Lapygin, who had worked all his life in the Soviet aerospace industry. Although he advocated draft exemption for all college students, he stood for the conservative line in the military debate. The committee was thus no lever for reform in the Soviet armed forces and certainly not an instrument for democratic control over the military. This remark points out that the debate on military reform was steered by informal, more then the institutional channels. See Stephen Tsypkin, 'The Committee for Defense and State Security of the USSR Supreme Soviet', *RFE/RL: Report on the USSR*, Vol. 2, Nr. 19, May 11, 1990, pp. 8-11.

the reform draft they issued in the beginning of January 1990 was signed by twelve members, all military officers, from the ranks of first lieutenant to colonel. It was therefore called 'the plan of the twelve' or 'the Lopatin plan' according to the name of the chairman of the commission.[196]

Actually, this radical plan, announced the gradual development of an AVF, which was the basis for the work of a Special Commission 'On Developing a Concept of Development of the Soviet Armed Forces 1991-1995 up to 2000'. This plan was set up during the CPSU Central Committee Plenum in preparation for the XXVIIIth Congress of the CPSU which was held in June 1990, where finally a sound, radical reform plan was presented and the concept of a phased implementation of military reform was officially stipulated in the Congress' resolutions.

The Lopatin plan evolved between December 1989 and June 1990, although the main ideas were clear from the very beginning of the plan's conception in January 1990:[197] (1) The Soviet army should induce a radical reduction in the size of its armed forces. (2) The Soviet Armed Forces should evolve into a professional army over the next 4-5 years. The first recommendation of Lopatin plan was that the most technologically advanced troops (e.g. the Strategic Rocket Troops and the Navy) should recruit on a voluntary basis and in the last phase of the plan the Army (Land Forces) should recruit on a voluntary basis. The Military Forces were advised to professionalize the NCO-Corps and the quality of the formation and education of cadres should also be augmented. If this plan was carried out then, Lopatin argued that this would result in the re-establishment of the status and prestige of the Army in Russian society. It was recommended that reserve forces should also be organized on a territorial basis (territorial-militia basis) and general mobilization and conscription should be limited and used only during times of war.[198]

After the idea of a professional army was introduced, and certainly after the publication of the Lopatin plan, conservative members of the military establishment reacted fiercely against the abolishment of conscription. They had social, financial, security and sentimental-historical arguments against the abolishment of the draft[199]. Yazov argued that the defense of the country could not depend on a small group of people who were hired by the state to defend the country. In a critical manner, he called a professional army 'an army of mercenaries or hirelings' [*naemnaia armiia*] The defense of the country was, according to the Minister of Defense, a concern of the whole society and based on the conviction of the people.[200] Moiseev calculated that a professional army would cost five to eight times more than a conscript army and subsequently he proposed a financial argument against professionalization.[201] Akhromeev, now in his function of military advisor of Gorbachev, claimed that a professional army would encounter problems with the formation and training of the reserves. Behind this suggestion lay the idea that the international geopolitical situation of the Soviet Union could (still) not allow the introduction of an AVF. Although Akhromeev worked hard to implement the doctrine of 'reasonable sufficiency', he used security reasons in his argumentation against the professional army.[202] Lieutenant-General Serebriannikov, a political officer of the MPA, agreed with the financial, geo-political and moral arguments against a professional army, but added an historical reason. He argued that the

[196] 'Proekt semnadtsati', *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 11 February 1990 and Vladimir Lopatin, 'Proekt voennoi reformy', *Izvestia*, 11 April 1990.

[197] 'Proekt razrabotannyi gruppoi narodnych deputatov SSSR, 'O podgotovke I provedenii voennoi reformy', *Pravitel'stvennyi Vestnik*, Nr. 48, 1990, pp. 5-10.

[198] Ibid., p. 11.

[199] See: Vitalii Shlykov, Printsipy formirovaniia armii: mirovoi opyt, in: V. Kachanov (ed.), *Perestroika: glasnost', demokratiia sotsializm, armiiai i obshchestvo*, Moskva: Progress, 1990 pp. 319-341 and 'Professional'naia armiia: "pliusy" I "minusy"', *Dialog*, Nr. 16, June 1990.

[200] D. Yazov, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 13 April 1989, p.1-2

[201] Interview with Moiseev, *Sovetsky Patriot*, Nr. 1, 1990, pp. 11-14

[202] Interview with Akhromeev, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 6 October 1989, pp. 2-3

experiment of a territorial army in the 1925-39 era had been a great failure and that as a result this aspect of the Lopatin plan was doomed to fail in the 1990s.[203]

Holoboff observed an open conflict between the advocates and the adversaries of a professional army just before the beginning of the XXVIII Party Congress.[204] Forty-seven liberal minded members of the Parliament and civilian experts signed a letter in which they warned against the military leadership that was thwarting all real attempts to reform the military forces. This 'letter of 47' argued explicitly for the gradual transition to a professional army and it received a hostile response from Akhromeev and twenty six other marshals and generals; and later by Moiseev and seventy seven USSR and Russian Republic People's deputies and several academics in *Krasnaia Zvezda*.[205]

The conservative military establishment also set up a press campaign in the *Voenno-istoricheskii Zhurnal* [Military Historical Journal] in favor of its traditional militarist values. During the summer of 1989, Karem B. Rash, proclaimed that, based on historical grounds, the military forces played a key role in disciplining society and it was the only institution that though its system of conscription could develop patriotic attitudes among the youth of the Soviet Union.[206] Rash's ideas reflected in a semi-scientific, semi-artistic way the kind of ideas that were circulating among the militarist, conservative faction of the military elite.[207] His ideology could be regarded as an answer to the 'irresponsible' alternative reform plan of the Soviet deputies.

The Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces himself showed at this very moment of his period in office a brief 'turn to the right'. During a Komsomol Congress, in April 1990, Gorbachev said that a volunteer army was out of the question for the present, because of the large costs it would entail. With this statement, he paid lip service to the main argument of the General Staff. However, Gorbachev's stance towards the professional army was actually more ambivalent and vague. During the celebration of Victory Day, on 9th May 1990, he firmly stated to a senior military audience that it must prepare for considerably more *perestroika* in the military forces and during a speech in Odessa in a military academy he vaguely came back to the AVF issue. He stated that the idea of creating a professional army 'was under his attention'.

It was clear that the leading figures of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff were opposed to the idea of professionalization, but the military elite did not speak with one mind. Colonel General Dimitri Volkogonov, the military historian and author of revealing biographies of Stalin, Lenin and Trotsky (and who would later become the military advisor to Boris Yeltsin), predicted that the Soviet Army would be two to three times smaller and increasingly more professional by the year 2000. He already saw some signs of this evolution in the most technological sections of the Soviet Armed Forces, for instance, the submarine fleet and the Strategic Rocket Forces. Army General P.G. Lushev, Commander in Chief of the Warsaw Pact States Joint Armed Forces, said that he believed in the system of conscription, but that his conviction was not unshakable. He said that objective conditions prompted the General Staff to increase the proportion of professional military men in the overall strength of the Army and Navy. Lushev did not, therefore, exclude the mixed system of recruitment in which conscripts and professional soldiers were simultaneously recruited. Colonel General Viktor Yermakov, appointed as the new Deputy Minister for Personnel, announced his sympathy for the notion of a professional

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[203] Vitalii Shlykov, *Op. Cit.*, 1990., pp. 320-321.

[204] Elaine M. Holoboff, 'The Crisis in Soviet Military Reform', in: Susan. L. Clark, *Soviet Military Power in a Changing World*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1991, p. 99-103

[205] See 'The Army Needs Protection. From Whom?' *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, July 4, 1990, p. 2 for the 'letter of 47' 'Don't Rub Salt in the Wound….', *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, August 4, 1990, p. 2 for the Akhromeev answer, and 'Is this How to 'Protect' the Army?', *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 12, 1990, p. 4 for the Moiseev reply.

[206] See the serialized articles of Karim Rash in *Voenno-istoricheskii Zhurnal* from February until September 1989 under the title 'Armiia i Kul'tura' (Army and Culture). (*Voenno-istoricheskii Zhurnal*, Nr. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 1989.)

[207] Notorious and 'wave making' representatives of this fraction were the so-called 'black colonels' Viktor Alksnis and Nikolai Petrushenko. General Albert Makashov was also a prominent member of this fraction.

army immediately after his appointment. The most unexpected voice in favor of the Lopatin plan out of the officer elite came from General Vladimir Lobov. Formerly, this general was fiercely against force reduction and he was seen in the West as a hawk. In 1990, however, he reviewed his conservative ideas. He criticized the Ministry of Defense and said that it was not committed to reform. He was also against the idea that the military establishment should have a monopoly over military affairs. In other words, he approved of the 'civilian' effort to present a reform plan for the military, but most importantly, he understood that the system of conscription did not work anymore. He favored a system in which voluntary and compulsory conscription should be combined. In the long run, he was in favor of 'the principle of universal voluntary enlistment' or the professional army.[208]

Beside the divided and ambivalent opinions of the military elite, the officer corps in general was divided in their opinions about the progressive plan. In a survey conducted in July 1990 which sampled 1069 officers from all parts of the Soviet Armed Forces, the report stated that 29% of the respondents supported the Lopatin plan, a minority of 18% supported the Yazov plan, while 53 % had great difficulty in choosing between the two plans.[209] This indecisiveness among the officer corps was explained in the research report by the fact that the officers saw the reform discussion as a political game in which they had nothing to gain. Moreover, the officers were poorly informed about the results of the discussion and they were convinced that the debate would not change anything in their everyday life. With respect to the AVF proposal, the report stated that the officers thought, "the voluntary principle depends on the battle readiness, the professionalism of the personnel and the technological level of the unit". Some 35% of the respondents said that a complete transition to the AVF was possible and 45% saw only a partial transition as a realistic option. Nevertheless, 69% of the officers thought that a gradual transition [*poetapnyi perekhod*] to a professional army in the next four to five years was possible.

In conclusion, the progressive Lopatin plan brought the idea of the AVF onto the political agenda and it could count on the vocal support of the liberal, democratic faction of society as well as on the progressive camp of the military elite. The elite of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, together with the nationalistic and conservative forces of society, however, were opposed to the progressive reform plan and the idea of the AVF. Although there existed a large 'silent camp' of free riders concerning the discussion on the AVF, a split among the officer corps was visible and preceded only what Lilia Shevtsova would later call 'the fragmentation of the armed forces'.[210]

The Conservative Reform Ideas: the Yazov Plan. The Ministry of Defense and the General Staff was put under pressure by the publication of the progressive reform plan of the parliamentary deputies, by reform ideas of Gorbachev's aides and allies as well as by civilian criticism towards the military forces. Therefore, the military establishment could not afford to postpone the formalization of its own view on military reform.[211] In February 1990 the Central Committee of the CPSU ordered the military leadership to formulate a plan. A 'Special Commission on Developing a Concept of Development of the Soviet Armed Forces 1991-1995 and to 2000' was established under the authority of the Minister of Defense. This commission drafted several proposals which were considered by the Defense Council, the Ministry of Defense Collegium and the Committee on

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[208] See interview with Vladimir Lobov: 'Armiia-eto slishkom ser'ezno, chtoby doveriat' ee tol'ko voennym', *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, 10 September 1991, p. 2.

[209] S.S. Solov'ev, I.V. Obraztsov, *Rossiiskaia Armiia: Ot Afganistana do Chechn*i, [The Russian Army: From Afghanistan to Chechnya], Moskva: Natsional'nyi Institut Imeni Ekateriny Velikoi, 1997, p. 120.

[210] Lilia Shevtsova, 'Russia's Fragmented Armed Forces', in: Larry Diamond and Mark F. Plattner, *Civil-military Relations and Democracy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp. 110-133.

[211] Dimitri Yazov, 'O voennoi reforme', *Pravda*, 9 february 1989 and Stephen Foye, 'Radical Military Reform and "the young Turks"', *Report on the USSR*, 13 April 1990, pp. 8-10.

Defense and State Security. In the Fall of 1990, the final draft was submitted to the parliament. Reform became now a real policy issue in the military high command. The special issue of *Voennaia Mysl'* [Military Thought], a professional journal issued by the General Staff, in November 1990 was completely dedicated to the issue of reform and might be seen as a barometer of the thinking of the General Staff.[212]

Yazov reported in the *Krasnaia Zvezda* the main outlines of the Ministry of Defense version of military reform.[213] Compared with the Lopatin plan, Yazov's plan was mainly focused on the *status quo*, although it contained some minor concessions toward the possible professionalization of the Armed Forces. It also reflected that the military forces were considering several force structural changes. Holoboff evaluated the plan as being, generally; "conservative in both its vision and content".[214] The main ideas of the Yazov plan were that there should be an optimization of: the organizational staff structure, the composition and size of the Army and the Navy; the assimilation of the principles stemming from the defensive doctrine, strategy, operational art and tactics; the improvement of the system of military cadre training and the Armed Forces manning; the transformation of the system of Party political work in the Army and Navy; the implementation of the effective system of social guarantees for military servicemen; and the democratization of society's entire military organization.[215]

Although the military elite of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff were opponents of the idea of establishing a professional army, they modified their opinion slightly during 1990. They experimented on a small scale, for instance with the practice of voluntary recruitment or contract service in the Navy.[216] They also said that they did not exclude the idea that the implementation of a mixed system was possible in the 'foreseeable future' in the Navy and Strategic Rocket Forces.[217] This can be seen as a confirmation that their policies were rushed forward by societal discussion and that the practice of conscription was a rapidly growing problem.

Lopatin reacted against the Ministry of Defense plan by saying that the High Command did not want effective and radical change.[218] He stated that the publication of the plan was only a political maneuver to slow down the process of military reform. Lopatin stated that the High Command did not want to abandon the following principles which included: the monopoly of the Communist Party over the relationship between the army and society; the immobilization of the conservative leaders of the Party; and finally, the High Command's monopoly over military affairs. In other words, Lopatin criticized the immobilizing conservatism of the Soviet military leaders, which he thought Communist ideology was responsible for.

In the same interview, Lopatin pointed out that there were rising crime rates in the armed forces, conscripts died in peacetime and there was massive desertion by recruits and even junior officers wished to leave the armed forces. Lopatin explained that this was taking place because the military High Command could not get a grip on the events that occurred in Soviet society and they could not keep pace with the speed at which Soviet society - precipitated by *glasnost* and

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[212] 'Voennaia reforma: Opyt, problemy, perspektivy, "kruglyi stol" zhurnala "Voennaia mysl'", *Voennaia Mysl'*, Nr. 4-5, April-May 1990, pp; 30-41 and pp. 41-53.

[213] Dmitri Yazov, 'Voennaya Reforma', *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 5 June 1990, p.1.

[214] Elaine M. Holoboff, *Op. Cit.*, 1991, p. 111.

[215] 'Kontseptiia voennoi reformy, Proekt Ministerstva oborony SSSR', *Pravitels'stvennyi Vestnik*, Nr. 48, 1990, pp. 5-10.

[216] See: Interview with Admiral Chernavin, *Pravda*, 19 October 1989, p 4; N. Karasev, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 6 February 1990, p. 6. Interview with Yazov in *Pravda*, 23 February 1990, p.4 and another interview with Moiseev, *Izvestia*, 23 February 1990, p. 4. C. Parrish, *Contract Service in the Soviet Navy*, RMA Sandhurst: Soviet Studies Research Centre, Nr. B45, September 1991.

[217] 'Kontseptiia voennoi reformy, Proekt Ministerstva oborony SSSR', *Pravitels'stvennyi Vestnik*, Nr 48, 1990, pp. 6-7

[218] 'Deputaty-ofitsery-za kardinal'nuyu voennuyu reformu, Beseda s narodnym deputatom SSSR, Majorom V.N. Lopatinym', in V. Katchanov, *Perestroika: Glasnost' demokratiia sotsializm*, Moskva: Progress, 1990, pp. 413-425. Vladimir Lopatin, Armiya I politika', *Znamya*, Nr. 7, 1990, pp. 147-159.

perestroika - was evolving.[219] In an attempt to regain control of the situation of proposed reform in the military forces, it is perhaps the reason why Yazov decided to support the August Coup in 1991. The failed coup actually meant the end of Yazov's career and, in complete contradiction of his original intention, it accelerated the collapse of the Soviet Union. Moreover, the August Coup brought Boris Yeltsin onto the forefront of the political scene. He would determine the fate of military affairs in the 1990s. Consequently, a new era with new protagonists, new rules and new logic began.

Saving the Union: Shaposhnikov's Ideas About Reform. The period September-December 1991 represents an interim phase in the process of transformation of the USSR into Russia and its successor states. It was a period wherein the Union dissolved and the republics came to seek their independence. Consequently, during the four last months of its existence, the Soviet Union had an ambivalent status in which the composite republics tried to increase their profile at the expense of the Union, which added another element to the polarization of society.[220]

The relations between the Center and the periphery contained a strong military element. The new republics wanted to organize their defense systems on a national basis. In the case of the Russian Federation, the struggle between the Union and the Russian Federation was in fact a fight between Gorbachev and Yeltsin. Gorbachev wanted to save the Union; on the other hand Yeltsin's position was more ambivalent. His main purpose was to obtain absolute power and in the months preceding December he apparently had not yet decided whether to choose to support the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation. In any event, he had two military 'clients' who he could use for both possibilities. He appointed Evgeny Shaposhnikov, a young Air Force Marshal as Minister of Defense, known as an advocate of the All Union idea. He also recruited General Grachev to his team, who Yeltsin could use in case he had to play the Russian card. In other words, Yeltsin's choice between the Union and Russia was a pragmatically oriented choice towards the seizure of absolute power. The characteristics of the political practice in the Yeltsin era were already perceivable in September 1991 and will be explained in the next chapter.

In September 1991, Gorbachev created an inter-republican committee to work out a new national defense structure. Yeltsin, with a remarkable political feeling, gradually realized that the Union option would affect his power position and he started to use Grachev as the whistleblower of the national Russian armed forces. In December, the real intentions of Yeltsin became clear when he opted for Russian independence. The politicians, in their inter-personal rivalry for absolute power, again gave ambivalent signs about their real intentions. This ambivalence and lack of consensus would have important military consequences. For the time being, Shaposhnikov, as a convinced 'Unionist', tried to endorse a plan that could revive the Soviet Union's military forces, while Yeltsin, behind the scenes, was preparing his own national army by establishing important contacts with military officers in key positions.

Shaposhnikov presented his reform intentions at the end of September 1991.[221] He promised to reduce the Armed Forces to 3 million people, to institute a pay increase of 30-40% to all members of the Armed Forces, and he stated his intention to establish a committee, independent of the troop commanders and deputy ministers of the Ministry of Defense, to ensure that the legal and

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[219] V. Katchanov, *Op. Cit.,* 1990, p. 407.

[220] The fact that the disintegration of the USSR created much rancor may be illustrated by the fact that during the impeachment procedure, introduced by the Communist-Nationalist led Duma in 1998, used exactly the argument of the illegality of the Belovezh agreement in an attempt to purge Yeltsin. See *Federal'noe Sobranie Rossiiskoi Federatisii Gosudarstvennaia Duma, Sbornik dokumentov I Materialov spetsial'noi komissii Gosudarstvennoi Dumy federal'nogo Sobraniia Rossiskoi federatisii po otsenke sobliudeniia protsedurnych pravil I fakticheskoi obosnovannosti obvineniia, vydvinutogo protiv Presidenta Rossiiskoi federatsii, I ich rassmotreniia Gosudarstvennoi Dumoi 13-15 Maia 1999 goda* Moskva: Isdanie Gosudarstvennoi Duma, 1999, pp. 43-44.

[221] Interview with Marshal Shaposhnikov in Pravda: 'Povinuius' sovesti I zakonu…', *Pravda*, 25 September 1991, pp.1and 3.

social protection of soldiers and their families was carried out. He vaguely stated that: "The Soviet military will be smaller, more professional, better fed and housed, with fewer, but better weapons."[222] In this sentence there was only a small suggestion of progress toward a professional army that would put quality above quantity. In reference to the ongoing debate about recruitment policy he noted that:

> "The soldiers' service must also be improved. Firstly, there will be a change of the term of service from two to one and a half years. There will also be a change to a mixed principle of recruitment. In the first six months the (conscript) soldier will receive his basic training and his military specialty. After this he will have a choice. Either he will continue his military service for one year or he will sign a contract in which he will engage for three or five years for which he will receive a defined loan, partly paid in his hands and partly on an account. Food and clothing will be free. After three or five years he would have a small amount of money and may leave the military. Ultimately he could continue his military service for which he would now receive a higher loan and a flat."[223]

Shaposhnikov clearly continued the line of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the pre-1991 era to introduce a mixed system of recruitment. An AVF was not one of his options, His ideas, however, were not unrealistic. He tried to create incentives to attract people for military jobs and he admitted that there were problems among the soldiers' ranks. Consequently, he pointed at the common responsibility of every commander to fight the problem of *dedovshchina* and he said "When *dedovshchina* takes place in the barracks, it is the commander who is guilty [*vinovat*] and at the same time it is the responsibility of the individual [*lichnost'*]"[224].

In November, the last Soviet reform plan was published in *Krasnaia zvezda*.[225] The most important question of this plan was not the issue of professionalization, but the question of who should command the troops -- the center of the Union or the republics. Vladimir Lobov, who had been appointed chief of staff on August 23rd , said that the High Command opted for a central command of the Armed Forces and thus for the unity of the armed forces for strategic and nuclear affairs. The republics, however, were given the possibility to command the troops in their republics in a relatively autonomous way. A few days later, on September 1st , the people of Ukraine voted for total independence, an act which spelled the end of the USSR and the maintenance of the Soviet Armed Forces.[226] A military reform plan that was only a few days old was again outmoded and overtaken by events.

Radical and Conservative Reform Ideas Explained in the Decision-Making Process

The Creation of a Highly Uncertain Environment. The process under review occurred in an extremely unstable period of radical change. In fact it is a difficult task to determine which process influenced what event. Did the context of this turbulent period allow the formulation of the radical reform plan or was the reform plan a contributor to the ongoing turbulence? Probably both are true: it is clear for example that the logic of the reform debate significantly contributed to the political atmosphere of that moment. In fact this remark is an application of Merton's article which

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[222] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[223] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[224] *Ibid.*, p. 3

[225] 'Vooruzhennye sily otechestva segodnia I zavtra, General armii Vladimir Lobov o problemach voennoi reformy', *Krasnaia Zvesda*, 29 November 1991, p. 1-2.

[226] See Dmitri Trenin, *Op. Cit.*, 2001, p. 98, and more generally pp. 87-105.

summarizes the reasons for the unanticipated consequences of purposive social action, where he says:

> "Public predictions of future social developments are frequently not sustained precisely because the prediction has become a new element in the concrete situation, thus tending to change the initial course of developments."[227]

This citation can easily be applied to the study of military reform in the USSR during the last years of its existence. Plans for military organizational change are always controversial, since the plans themselves become a new element in the discussion, which tends to change the course of events. There is no such a thing as a social and/or political vacuum in which reform plans can be developed and discussed. The idea of a rational process, in the sense of the rational comprehensive model, is an illusion, whatever the military staff techniques may presume or the academic observer expects.

Glasnost allowed the public to participate directly and indirectly in the military reform debate. Indirectly, informal groups with the liberal press on their side emerged as lobbies to put the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff under pressure. The Congress of People's Deputies, a consequence of Gorbachev's political institutional reform, emerged as a legislative institution that would bring out a concrete reform plan, independent from the Military High Command. This plan had a direct impact on the military reform discussion. In other words, *glasnost* multiplied the number of participants in the reform debate. The fact that so many people had a voice in the discussion affected the decision-making process. Indeed, the critique on the military forces that took place from 1987-88 onwards meant that a multitude of issues were raised which increased the complexity of the issues and the 'bounded rationality' of decision making. The manner and the speed with which the military debate evolved in this period made the rationalization and the management of it into a reform program almost impossible. The military elite lost their grip on events and proved to be unable to rationalize the evolution. The changes that the military forces had to cope with were also extensive and may not be minimized. Firstly, they lost their monopoly on military and strategic facets of international affairs; secondly, they lost the ideological framework and structure that they had worked in for seven decades; thirdly, their societal legitimacy had been weakened; and ultimately, they lost the state which they served. Institutional uncertainty - partly provoked by the military themselves, partly beyond their control - was in other words complete.

The process in the period 1988-1991 was also interrupted on several occasions. The discussion of military reform experienced a profound and radical new option as a result of the presentation of the Lopatin plan. This evoked an internal interruption because the Ministry of Defense was now forced to react and to edit its own reform plan. Finally the process was twice externally interrupted, once in the beginning and once at the end of the period under review. Indeed external interventions, such as the dismissal of key persons in the organization, including the luminaries Sokolov and Akhromeev, and the August coup itself, gave the reform discussion a completely new dimension. The main focus shifted from cosmetic reform to profound organizational reform, and from a discussion about the choice between a mass-conscript army and the professional-AVF army model to a discussion about the relationship between the center and the republics.

The logic of the three different interruptions illustrates in another way the instability of the reform process: it reflects the way the rational-decision-making process was disturbed and the comprehensive rationality in the decision-making process which was quite impossible to achieve. Soviet military reform was never a well defined subject that could be rationally sub-divided into several categories. Reform is rather a problem that is built around several key issues and key problems of which the relative importance alters over time. As has been shown, in the period 1988-

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[227] Robert K. Merton, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 903-904.

1991 the problems, the needs and suggested solutions were incrementally brought into the discussion. The solutions - edited in reform plans - can only be understood in the political system and context in which they appeared and may not be seen as independent from each other.

Reactions to the Uncertain Environment. For **Gorbachev**, the environment that he created became his worst enemy. The instability he unintentionally fabricated was so overwhelming that he was gradually forced to dissolve the system that he led. He overestimated his ability to establish coalitions among the political and military elites that existed in the Soviet Union. In fact, Gorbachev was much more a 'reformer' than a 'radical' politician. Gorbachev never accepted all the consequences of his choices: he was too wise to face the potential horrific societal consequences of his decisions and too smart to risk his own position of power. This is perhaps the reason why he was always ambivalent about military reform and military affairs were never one of his policy priorities. In fact military affairs was only a side issue in his reform policy. Archie Brown has described four fields in which the General Secretary tried to enforce fundamental change: the economic field, the internal political field, foreign policy, and the national question.[228] All four reform attempts were logically interrelated and produced side-effects. The military question only came to the forefront for Gorbachev when it affected his policy in the four cited fields. And, indeed, all four elements touched the military organization, which may not be a surprise given the militarized nature of Soviet society.

Reforming the military organization itself was thus never a direct goal of his policy making and military issues were very often presented with a *fait accompli* by the achievements or defeats it experienced in the policy goals Gorbachev had set for himself. Because the military was never a first priority for the president of the Soviet Union, he was only interested in the military in terms of the degrees to which they would neither boycott his policy priorities nor cause popular concern or even unrest concerning the army's condition and status. Consequently, the military forces were isolated and deliberately excluded from the decision-making forums on military affairs and they could never count on the support of Gorbachev in their organizational management. On the contrary, they often felt betrayed by Gorbachev. This occurred at several defining moments: when Gorbachev denied he was involved in the decision-making on military intervention in the Baltic in January 1991; and on different occasions in the Caucasus during which the military's status was severely damaged. Gorbachev was thus never an ally for the military in the reform debate. Specifically on the AVF question Gorbachev was vague and ambivalent. His stand on this was lost in generalities without him ever expressing his own personal ideas about the issue. This attitude also reveals that he was not an ally of the liberal military reformers either. In fact Gorbachev stayed out of the reform debate even when the debate dominated political life in 1990. This attitude can also be deduced from his memoirs in which he did not write a word about military reform.

The Ministry of Defense and the General Staff reacted in a conservative way to the turbulent political environment that has emerged. The overwhelming problems they faced urged them to seemingly fall back on known and approved past experience. In other words, the answer of the military forces to the problems posed was rather one of strengthening conservatism than of radical change. Their call for more discipline, for more patriotism and their support for the conscript system, in short for traditional military values and practices, can be seen as evidence of this reflex action.[229] They lacked the necessary creativity needed to come up with new ideas in order to cope with uncertainty. Stephen Cohen's description of conservatism - even though it does not refer

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[228] Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 157-160.
[229] For a good account of Soviet military values: Stephen Carter, 'Soviet Military Ideology', *Report on the USSR*, Vol. 3, Nr. 36, September 6, 1991, pp. 16-19. More generally, traditional military values are a subject of the early work of Huntington. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State, The theory and politics of Civil-Military Relations*, New York: Vintage Books, 1957, pp. 59-79.

specifically to military conservatism - is perfectly applicable to how the Russian Ministry of Defense reacted:

> "The pivot of conservatism is a deep reverence for the past, a sentimental defense of existing institutions, routines, and orthodoxy which live on from the past, and an abiding fear of change as the harbinger of disorder and of a future that will be worse than the present as well as a sacrilege of the past. Conservatism is often little more than the sum total of inertia, habit, and vested interests. But it can also be a cogent philosophical justification of the status quo as the culmination of everything good in the historical past and thus the only sturdy bridge to the future. Many conservatives can distinguish between stability and immobilism, and they do not flatly reject all change. But the conservative insistence that any change be slow and tightly controlled by established authority, based on law and order, and conform to prevailing orthodoxy is usually prohibitive. In the end, conservatives usually prefer cults of the past and those authorities … which guard order against change, native tradition against alien corruption, the present against the future."[230]

Two elements are necessary to underline the military's behavior during this period in order to nuance this observation. Firstly, Moiseev and Yazov experimented with contract service in the Navy, but it was a small scale, tightly controlled experiment. During 1991 there were signs that the Ministry of Defense considered the possible implementation of contractees in a slow and tightly controlled manner. Their conservatism may thus not be confused with inaction. Secondly, the military was not a monolithic organization. As demonstrated above, there were voices from the rank and file and even among the highest ranks that openly proclaimed to be in favor of the AVF. In the end, the radical program of Lopatin was in essence also a military plan, written by officers of field grade level.

In conclusion, the following questions can be raised concerning the Soviet military's role in the reform discussion. (1) The military elite cultivated the closed character of their decision-making practices. The ideas came from the General Staff and the Ministry of Defense, and were - as their conservatism showed - based on past Soviet experience. The victorious experience of the Second World War, in particular, played an important role in their mindset. The information flow was as a result primarily internally based. There was no input of external consultancy or external expertise. The strict hierarchical thinking in Soviet society and especially the Soviet armed forces prohibited the growth of ideas at the grass roots level; (2) The Soviet High Command was not pro-active in searching for organizational problems. It was the informal groups that brought organizational problems to society's attention and forced the army to react. Publicly, the military elite preferred to deny the societal accusations that were leveled at them, a tactic that proved to be counter-productive; (3) Decisions made in the Russian military forces were basically a *fait accompli*. The forces had to cope with overwhelming organizational problems for which they were not responsible, they had little or no decision-making responsibility, and they were rarely considered as consultants. In other words, their professional opinion was neglected even if the decisions had severe consequences for them as a group, as for instance the unilateral reduction of troops in Eastern Europe; and (4) Closely related with this last argument is the fact that Russian politics themselves created an extremely unstable environment, in which the military was isolated from. The military received little or no support from politicians, and in some ways they were not treated fairly by civilian authorities. Gorbachev never regarded military organizational reform as an important priority.

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[230] Stephen F. Cohen, 'The Friends and Foes of Change: Reformism and Conservatism in the Soviet Union', in: Alexander Dallin and Gail W. Lapidus (Editors), *The Soviet System, From Crisis to Collapse*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1995 (revised edition), pp. 59.

The Congress of People's Deputies played a crucial and specific role in the period 1988-1991. Lilia Shevtsova described the political impact of this institution as follows:

> "…Sessions of the Congress of Peoples Deputies were important milestones in the development of Russian political life, as the entire Russian political establishment, including its regional representatives, gathered together. The power struggles that had gone on behind closed doors burst into the open. These periodic explosions of passion and emotions could hardly be expected to resolve problems productively. However, given Russia's political circumstances and the weakness of institutions, such public reaction at least served to express society's interests and orientations, refine or change the balance of power, and to force major political actors to look for ways to resolve their conflicts."[231]

This description of the political significance of this particular Soviet legislative body can also be applied to the contribution that this institution made to the field of military reform. The small group that was appointed to present a reform proposal at the end of 1989 proved to be innovative, in fact it expressed 'society's interests and orientations'. Their reform proposal can be praised for the fact that it summarized the military societal debate that burst forward into the public forum during that period.

But where did the idea of the AVF come from? Lopatin himself admitted that this idea came from the contacts that their sub-committee had with their American colleagues. William Odom confirmed that, as soon as the Congress of People's Deputies was established and operational, there were contacts between the American and Soviet legislative bodies.[232] The US military organization was for Lopatin and his 'group of seventeen' the role model for the reorganization of the Soviet army. The introduction of the AVF idea can then also be seen as a good example of organizational imitation. The fact that such a revolutionary idea could take root in this sub-committee, may be explained by the size, composition and open character of the committee. A small group which was homogeneously composed of officers with field grades and which was open for new ideas proved to be a good breeding ground for innovative thinking.

Besides the positive elements of this legislative work, it is also necessary to see the problematic elements of their endeavor. First, their revolutionary ideas, which was an imitation of the Anglo-Saxon military organizational model, was not adapted to the organizational reality of the Soviet army. Was the Soviet army ready for the introduction of this AVF-model? In other words, did the AVF model offer any guarantee for the solution of organizational problems in the Soviet army? In Part III of this study, this question will be discussed in depth.

Lopatin's idea was the expression of passion and societal outrage. Shevtsova's remark that the Congress of Peoples Deputies "hardly could be expected to resolve problems productively", is therefore apt in this matter. It was also clear that the liberal-democratic reform proposal was representative of a political minority, which had received considerable attention in the press. It was the press which reported on military affairs and informal groups active in the field. These two groups were clamorous, but not very influential political actors when it came to the true decision making practices. Politically, Lopatin was isolated and excluded from decision-making forum, just as Yazov had been. It is, indeed, an illusion to think that at that moment Lopatin's plan received any substantial support from any state institution, or even in the Congress because political life at the time was too polarized.

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[231] Lilia Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia, Myths and Reality*, Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999, p.40.
[232] William E. Odom, *The Collapse of the Soviet Military*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1998, p. 185.

This political reality can explain the stalemate in which organizational thinking found itself in the summer of 1991. Lopatin's plan, just as the Ministry of Defense-plan caused and was an effect of this polarization. It was clear that there was no communication between the legislative bodies and the executive: an effect of institutional weakness. In conclusion, the Lopatin plan was innovative, it incorporated societal criticism and considerations into its recommendations and these ideas would influence Russian organizational thinking even in the new millenium. The 'group of seventeen' was thus actively and openly seeking solutions for organizational problems in the Soviet Army. Their solution was based on imitation. However, flat imitation of an Anglo-Saxon organizational model and applying it to the Soviet military case is no guarantee of success. The plan was uncompromising and the authors lacked the necessary political skills to endorse their plan. Thomas remarked on this issue:

> "The reformist position is innovative, and action-oriented, but remains consumed by the euphoria of making bold statements not fully representative of responsible foresight for potential future problems or present constraints."[233]

In this sense they were true revolutionaries, for, as Huntington wrote: "The revolutionaries must be able to dichotomize social forces, the reformer to manipulate them."[234]

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[233] Timothy L. Thomas, *Op. Cit.*, 1990, p. 43.
[234] Cited in Archie Brown, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p. 317.

Chapter 2. The Yeltsin Era: Seizing Control

2. 1.   August 1991-December 1991: Yeltsin Becomes the Leading Man

The Russian Federation became *de jure* independent on January 1st 1992. In reality, the declaration was a formality: since from the summer of 1991 Russia had been *de facto* independent. Richard Sakwa referred to the emergence of the Russian 'shadow state' within the larger Soviet construct that summer.[235] Leon Aron pursued this idea saying that:

> "In his last three months in office, step by desperate step, Gorbachev retreated to positions he thought he could hold but eventually had to give up, settling for progressively smaller and smaller versions of the centre in an effort to preserve what towards the end became a mostly fictitious Union."[236]

During the latter part of 1991, Russian presidential power gradually overshadowed the Soviet institutions in terms of personality, political instinct, and both moral and electoral legitimacy. In terms of the personal rivalry between Yeltsin and Gorbachev, the popularity of the nonconformist and impulsive Russian president starkly contrasted with the indecisiveness and uncertainty of the former Soviet president.[237] From the moment he was elected chairman of the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet (the Russian parliament) in May 1990, Yeltsin adopted an assertive Russian nationalist, populist, and anti-Communist course.[238] On his election as President of the Russian Federation, in June 1991, his political platform and agenda gained even greater momentum, reaching its climax during the August Coup two months later. Yeltsin demonstrated that he had great reserves of political will, an ability to make decisions and to take responsibility for crucial political actions and most importantly that he could operate in political ambiguity and confusion far more effectively than Gorbachev.

Yeltsin's increasing political weight in this period was reflected in his ability to gain the personal loyalty of the military establishment. Just as Gorbachev had done in 1987, Yeltsin co-opted, coerced, and manipulated the military elite, while building coalitions with them. The Russian nonconformist politician, for instance, could count on the military vote during the June 1991 Russian Presidential elections when he achieved a first round victory with 57.3 % of the vote. A survey among the military, depicted in the following graph, showed that 70 % of the Moscow and Leningrad garrisons [garnizony Moskvy i Leningrada] voted for him, 54 % of the garrisons in big cities [garnizony v gorodakh] and 45 % of those stationed outside the big cities [garnizony vne gorodov].

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[235] Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, London: Routledge, 1993 (Second edition), p. 138.

[236] Leon Aron, *Boris Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, New York: St. Martins Press, 2000, p. 473.

[237] For a good account of this rivalry see for instance: John B. Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, pp. 3-66 and 'Gorbachev or Yeltsin: the Lords of Misrule', *The Economist*, 16th April 1991, pp. 17-20.

[238] John Dunlop pointed out that 'In challenging Gorbachev and the center, Yeltsin for the first time embossed the dichotomy "Russia/USSR" upon the minds of contemporary Russians'. (See: John Dunlop, 'Russia: confronting a loss of empire', in: Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras, *Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 52. As will be shown below, the military consequence of this stance was less obvious.
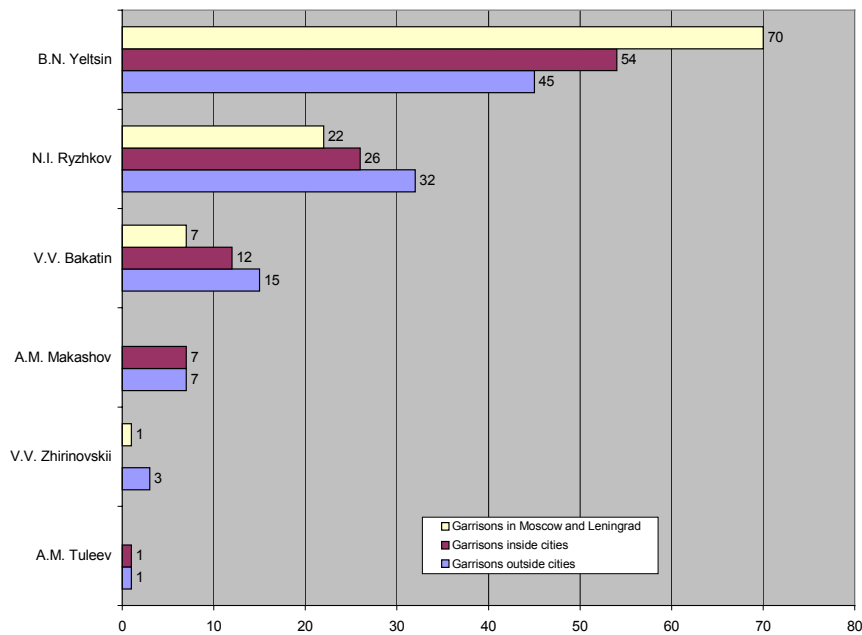
Graph 10: Military election behavior during 1991 Russian presidential elections

<u>Source</u>: adapted from S.S. Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsev, *Op. Cit.*, p. 181.

The substantial attention Yeltsin paid to the military forces apparently paid off during the elections. The *Economist* contemporaneously reflected on the fact that Yeltsin never lost sight of the military:

> "Mr. Yeltsin has caught the point. Unlike Mr. Gorbachev, who has been puzzlingly negligent in cultivating contacts with the army, he has been assiduous in his courtship. He goes out of his way to meet officers and men."[239]

Lilia Shevtsova, a distinguished observer of Russian politics, made the same comment:

> "Yeltsin now [August 1991] attempted to secure military support. He increased his contacts with the power ministries, especially with Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who now joined Yeltsin's entourage. The president also made a point of visiting elite military units in the Moscow region, and he donned military gear in front of television cameras for the first time."[240]

In the months that followed the August Coup, Yeltsin progressively dominated the political arena. It was he - and not Gorbachev, the formal Commander in Chief of the Soviet Armed Forces – who orchestrated the personnel purges in the military. During the process that Aron called 'decommunization'(see Box 2), several top functionaries in the Soviet Ministry of Defense and the General Staff were replaced by generals who had been loyal to Yeltsin and, concomitantly, crucial key players during the coup attempt.[241] Marshal of Aviation Shaposhnikov was appointed as Minister of Defense, Army General Vladimir Lobov became Chief of the General Staff and Pavel Grachev was promoted to the rank of Colonel-General. The latter was also appointed to the post of

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[239] 'Gorbachev or Yeltsin: the Lords of Misrule', *The Economist*, 16th April 1991, p.17.
[240] Lilia Shevtsova, Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia, Myths and Reality*, Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999, p. 81.
[241] Robert V. Barylski, *Op. Cit.*, p. 131-135 and Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, New York: Times Books, 1994, p. 107.

Deputy Defense Minister of the Soviet armed forces and chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) State Committee for Defense and Security.[242] These purges were the result of keen political instincts: Yeltsin built patronage relationships, which could be used in any possible scenario that the Union might encounter during this four month period. The personal relationships that he built with different generals served both the 'Union' and the 'Russian' options. For instance, the functions Grachev performed at both the Russian and the Soviet levels were, in practical terms, interchangeable.[243]

Box 1: The process of 'decommunization' in the Soviet Armed Forces

After the August coup Yeltsin implemented a process of 'decommunization' in Soviet society which essentially meant that he dismantled the triad that formed the foundation of the Soviet state, namely: the Party Bureaucracy; the secret police; and the propaganda machine (Leon Aron, *Boris Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life*, New York: St. Martins Press, 2000, p. 473.). The armed forces also underwent this decommunization process as follows:

Gorbachev announced that eighty percent of the Ministry of Defense and General Staff would be dismissed after the August Coup. In reality about 30 generals were retired or replaced due to their involvement in the anti-Gorbachev conspiracy. The most important were: Marshal Dmitry Yazov (Minister of Defense), Army General Moiseev (Chief of the General Staff), Army General Konstantin Kochetov (First Deputy Defense Minister), Colonel General Nikolai Shlyaga (Chief of the MPA), Army General Valentin Varennikov (a Deputy Defense Minister), Colonel General Vladislav Achalov (a Deputy Minister of Defense for Emergency Operations), Colonel General Vladimir Denisov (Chief of the Main Operations Directorate of the General Staff), Army General Vladen Mikhailov Chief of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff), Army General Viktor Ermakov (Chief of the Main Personnel Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense) and Colonel General Boris Gromov (First Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs of the USSR). Marshal Sergei Akhromeev, a former Chief of the General Staff and senior aide of Gorbachev committed suicide after the coup's failure.

The personnel purges were limited only to the top brass of the armed forces. The soldiers and officers of the Army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, whose tanks, machineguns and truncheons were so awesomely deployed by the losing side, were protected against persecution by Yeltsin's statement of 20th August 1991. In order to 'preclude the escalation of confrontation' and 'avert civil war', personnel who had been involved in the unlawful activities of the GKChP [Gosudarstvennyi Komitet po Chrezvychaynomu Polozheniyu-State Committee for the State of Emergency, (the leaders of the August 1991 putsch)] were not to be held responsible for the coup. The Moscow City Council also appealed to Muscovites to 'show wisdom and composure', to 'distinguish between the guilty top leadership and their subordinates and to refrain from any provocations against the armed forces' (See Leon Aron, Op. Cit.; p. 470) Indeed, the restraint on both sides is remarkable when it is considered that a survey taken among five hundred officers showed that 53% of the military supported the GKChP, while only a minority of 29% did not support the Putsch, and 18% had no opinion. (See: S.S. Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsov, *Op. Cit.*, p. 200).

Personnel purges were not the only consequence of the August coup as Yeltsin now saw an open opportunity to get rid of the last vestiges of the Communist Party's remaining influence over the armed forces. The legitimacy of the Communist Party had already been severely damaged by the abolishment of the Soviet constitution's sixth paragraph. A commission, led by Konstantin A. Kochetov, was set up at that time to reform the Communist Party's organization in the armed forces. When it was clear that Kochetov himself had been involved in the August putsch another commission was founded to review the activities of the MPA in the Armed Forces. Yeltsin and Shaposhnikov gave this commission a new impetus by appointing Dimirti Volkogonov and Vladimir Lopatin to prominent roles.

All 92,500 members of the MPA, (called the 'All-Army Party Commission' from March 1991) passed a personal interview in which the political reliability of every individual was tested before a new job was eventually offered to them. (see: Robert V. Barylski, *Op. Cit.*, p 136, Roger R. Reese, *The Soviet Military Experience*, London: Routledge, 2000, p.183; Colonel General Eduard A. Vorobyev in an interview: "Ne mogu skazat', na skol'ko protsentov nasha armiia segodnia-Rossiiskaia a na skol'ko-sovetskaia" unpublished document of the military union 'za voennuiu reformu') However, many officers of the former MPA stayed on in their posts as 'zampolit', but now received military-educational and social welfare duties instead of checking the political reliability of the commanding officers. For the sake of historical accuracy it must be stressed that Party control over the military professionals was most prominent in the period 1918-1942. (See for instance: Dale R. Herspring, 'Samuel Huntington and Communist Civil-Military Relations', *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol.. 25, No. 4, Summer 1999, pp. 557-577 and S.S.Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsov,

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[242] The Committee for Defense and Security of the RSFSR should not be confused with the committee on the federal level that coexisted with it.

[243] See for an inside account Viktor Baranets, *El'tsin I ego generaly, zapiski polkovnika Genshaba*, [Yeltsin and his generals, remarks from a general staff colonel], Moskva: Kollektsiya Sovershenno Sekretno, 1998, pp. 167-172.

In conclusion, a man prepared to make radical decisions, ready to undertake sweeping actions and who kept in contact with the military apparently could convince the officer corps to support him, even if this possibly meant the end of the USSR.[244] Under these conditions, new opportunities and possibilities could occur for the military forces. The military elite's decision to support Yeltsin implied that the capacity to act, rather than purely 'moral' principles, guided their political choices at this time. The military's loyalty and support for Yeltsin - among other factors- would have important consequences for Russian history.

2. 2.   1992-1998: Institution Building in a Pyramidal Presidential Regime

The initial construction of the Russian State and all the subsequent political events related to it between 1992 and 1998 were indisputably personally linked to Yeltsin and his presidential function. Therefore, Yeltsin's personality, his political career and the evolution of the so-called 'presidential pyramidal system' were vital factors in the decision-making processes of the military sphere. Yeltsin's political system was the product of constant conflicts and crises, which continually bogged down Russian political life. Shevtsova claimed that only the year 1995 was politically 'calm', despite the ongoing Chechen War, while the remainder of Yeltsin's term was labeled 'turbulent, if not explosive'.[245] This observation can be affirmed when the process of institution building is examined. In simple and schematic terms, Russia underwent two periods in which new institutional bodies were energetically (re)constructed: namely the 1992-1993 and 1996-1997 periods.

The first period, 1992-1993, began with the establishment and the construction of the Russian state and ended with the settlement of the conflict between the President and Supreme Soviet in October 1993. The second period, 1996-1997, was related solely to the outcome of the 1996 presidential elections. It is no coincidence that these specific periods of institution building correspond with those during which Yeltsin was consolidating his position at the highest level of power and for that purpose, he had to create loyal institutions. Institution building was thus linked first and foremost with the consolidation of Yeltsin's power rather than concerns about efficiency.

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[244] The popularity and the electoral success of President Vladimir Putin among the military, a decade later, can be explained on the same basis as Yeltsin's success in 1991.

[245] Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia, Myths and Reality*, Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999, pp. 269-277.

These two periods were linked by an almost inhuman outburst of energy on the part of Yeltsin, while they alternated with periods of stagnation and immobility.[246] As the activity of institution building did not lie at the basis for efficient government, additional small - scale modifications – both in terms of formal organization and personnel appointments - were implemented. With these small corrections, institutional efficiency deteriorated instead of improving; and this inefficiency disintegrates further into lethargy. A vicious circle was created in which inefficient institutions and decision-making bodies were replaced with only more inefficient institutions.[247] The more Yeltsin used permanent personnel purges as a weapon to make institutions loyal to him, the more difficult it became to break this vicious circle. Political and organizational power games created inefficiency and it is exactly this 'vicious circle of inefficiency' together with the military's reactions to it that will be the subject of discussion of this next section.

Building on Ruins: the First Wave of Institution Building (1992-1993)

The dissolution of the USSR and the 'first round' of Russian institution building marked the period 1992-1993. In spite of this euphoric start for the new Federal State, new conflicts began and the struggle between the executive and the legislature dominated Russian politics during 1993, exemplifying this trend. It was only after this conflict was (forcefully) settled that the form Yeltsin's power would take was crystallized.

The Disintegration of the USSR and the Phenomenon of the Military's Nostalgia for the USSR. The Belovezhskiy agreement was not just the start of the process of disintegration of the USSR, it also created a great deal of confusion and instability in the military sphere.[248] There were basic reasons for this uncertainty. Firstly, the military aspect of the disintegration was initially not of great concern to the 'master minds' of the Belovezhskiy agreement. Military issues were discussed in only one article (and number six at that) of the agreement, and the article only provided the most general guidance for future military cooperation. In this vein, while Richard Sakwa and Mark Webber have both underlined the predominance of economic cooperation in the agreement, they have highlighted the lack of a comprehensive military annex.[249] Secondly, there was ambivalence in the 'plotters' attitudes. Some of the national leaders did not wholeheartedly opt for the Commonwealth and at the very least there were different opinions about the importance and weight

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[246] All Kremlin watchers agree on the fact that Yeltsin suffered a deep psychological crisis after his 1993 'victory' over the Supreme Soviet and after his 1996 presidential election victory. Aron noted that 'The contrast between Yeltsin of crisis and the Yeltsin of stasis was reminiscent of the poles in the manic-depressive cycle ' (See Aron, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 574) Indeed, in his 'manic' period, Yeltsin showed 'a huge store of energy' and an 'inexhaustible appetite for work' during which he issued many decrees and controlled the work of the government attentively. In his 'depressive' periods, he went through lapses of attention, apathy and self imposed isolation in which he was no longer in full control. Shevtsova used the terminology of 'Mr. Nowhere' for these specific moments of depression in Yeltsin's political career, which were known to insiders since 1987. (Shevtsova, *Op. Cit*. p.. 80) Yeltsin's bodyguard Alexander Korzhakov revealed in his memoirs that the Russian president even had several times tried to kill himself. (Alexander Korzhakov, *Boris Yeltsin, Ot rassveta do zakata*, Moskva: Interbuk, 1997) Besides this manic-depressive cycle, he suffered many physical afflictions for instance his back problems after his plane crash in Spain in Spring 1990 and the troubles with his heart since the summer of 1996. (Leon Aron, Op. Cit., p.572-578)
[247] The terminology of 'vicious circle' is borrowed and adapted from Crozier who described the phenomenon of three types of vicious circles in the bureaucratic organization. See: Michel Crozier, *Le phénomène bureaucratique* [The Bureaucratic Phenomenon], Paris: éditions du seuil, 1963, pp.247-257.
[248] The evolution of the CIS is further in this study not relevant. For a good overview of the political and military evolution of the CIS see: Richard Sakwa and Mark Webber, 'The Commonwealth of Independent States, 1991-1998: Stagnation and Survival, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.. 51, Nr. 3, 1999, pp. 379-415.
[249] Jacob Kipp, 'The Uncertain Future of the Soviet Military, From Coup to Commonwealth: The Antecedents of National Armies', *European Security Studies*, Vol. 1, Nr. 2, Summer 1992, pp.226-227. Richard Sakwa and Mark Webber, *Op. Cit*., p. 381.

of the national states in the CIS construct and its decision-making organs. Indeed, ambiguity was at the heart of the Commonwealth concept as national leaders sought to construct a political and practical platform to dismantle the Soviet construct whilst accommodating, to invert Gorbachev, the 'variable geometry' of the divergent national independence movements at their heart. In the military field, Russia, as the USSR's 'logical' heir or the so-called "continuer state" (Brian Davenport's term), initially opted for a centralized Commonwealth-wide military structure.[250] In comparison to some other Former Soviet Union states, Russia created its own national army very late in this period, and in fact it was one of the last CIS states to do so. Prominent advisors and collaborators in Yeltsin's entourage, such as Gennady Burbulis and Shaposhnikov, reputedly advocated the idea of the CIS personally to Yeltsin.[251] Ukraine and Belarus, however, laid much more emphasis on issues surrounding their national armies and the possibilities for independent decision-making in the CIS. These two countries revealed their eagerness to found national armies soon after the August coup in 1991.[252]

The demonstrable ignorance and ambivalence of the political elite, however, created much uncertainty among the military elite, who wrestled with moral, legal, practical and security considerations. For many military men it was not clear which country they were serving and to which authority they should pledge their oath. Thus military loyalty, a basic military virtue, was thoroughly questioned. Moreover, the disintegration of the USSR meant that the military forces were faced with a dilemma in which two basic traditional military values were at stake. On the one hand, military institutions are inherently connected with the idea of the state because the military ethos is basically a state ethos. On the other, the solidarity and the supremacy of the group is another basic value found in officer corps. The dissolution of the USSR forced the military to choose between the closedness and unity of the officer corps and the idea of the sovereign state. The dilemma may not be underestimated because the practical issue of who would pay the military forces was a foremost issue. Secondly, there were legal problems. The legal status of troops stationed abroad, such as the Russian troops in Moldova, the Caucasus, and the sovereignty of the Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine was unclear. Thirdly, serious logistical operations occurred which involved moving troops and material from Germany, Poland, Mongolia, Cuba and the Baltic States.[253] These logistical problems presented important practical questions for the troops who were camping with their families in tents and train wagons upon their arrival in their 'motherland'. Fourthly, there was a security problem. The future of the nuclear forces was unclear, although the fate of the nuclear arsenal was an early preoccupation of the CIS states. All these reasons contributed to a general feeling of loss and 'political disorientation', which developed sometimes into revanchist ideas among the Russian military. Public opinion results conducted among the military in 1990 illustrated this, showing that generally the forces were against the disintegration of the USSR:

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[250] Brian A. Davenport, 'Civil-Military Relations in the Post-Soviet State: "Loose Coupling" Uncoupled?' *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 21, Nr. 2, Winter 1995, p. 183.

[251] It is for example not surprising to see that the political influence of Burbulis was waning after the Sixth Congress of People's Deputies in April 1992 after which effective steps were taken to establish the Russian Armed Forces.

[252] See for instance Adrian Karatnycky, 'The Ukrainian Factor', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, Nr. 3, Summer 1992, pp.334-372; and Jacob Kipp, *Op. Cit.*, pp.217-219. Public opinion research had already insinuated before the break up of the USSR that the Ukrainian and Belorussian military were more willing to support the national army instead of the Union variant in comparison with the Russian military. In a survey on 'problems related with the functioning among multinational military personnel' [Problemy funktisionirovania mnogonatsional'nykh voinskikh kollektivov] taken among 3260 military of all ranks in the period January-August 1990, only 32% of the Russian respondents declared a preference for the idea of building national units, while 49% of the Belorussian and 51% of the Ukrainians said to endorse it. (see: S.S. Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsov, *Op. Cit.*, p. 133.)

[253] See for instance: Viktor Baranets, *Genshtab bez Tain, (Pervaia Kniga)*, (Moskva: Politbiuro, 1999), pp.338-350 and the original view of discussing the military in a thematic number of the Dutch journal 'Oost-Europa verkenningen' concerning migration flows after the disintegration of the USSR. See: Christine Hoen, "Terug naar de basis, De terugtrekking van het Sovjetleger uit Centraal-Europa", *Oost-Europa Verkenningen*, Nr. 148, juni 1997, pp. 37-50.

Service and social demographic characteristics	In favour of preservation of USSR	Against preservation of USSR	No opinion
According to Service categories			
General Officers	74	15	1
Field Grade Officers	81	10	9
Praporshchiki (michmany)	67	20	13
Cadets	85	11	4
Conscripts	69	17	14
According to kind of Service			
Commanding	84	10	6
Political	94	4	2
Engineer - technical	61	22	17
Rear Service	89	9	2
Pedagogical	85	6	9
According to Party membership			
Member of KPSS	80	11	9
No member of KPSS	69	16	15
According to age			
younger than 20	71	16	13
21-30	69	17	14
31-40	80	12	8
41-50	80	12	8
older than 50	75	13	12
According to nationality			
Russian	72		16
Ukranian	76		10
Belorussian	74		11
Zakavkazia Republics	70		17
Centralasian Republics	85		7
Pribaltic Republics	51		37

Table 10: Military opinion on the future of the USSR military

Source: adapted from S.S. Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsev, *Op. Cit*., p. 170.

A similar, but less pronounced, trend could be seen among civilians. Public opinion measured by VTsIOM in May 1990 among Russians, showed that 43% of the respondents supported the view that Russia should receive more political and economic independence (up to and including leaving the Union); 35 % favored greater economic and political rights for Russia but added that the final say in all questions should remain with the 'center'; and only 18% the respondents favored the status–quo, keeping the Soviet union intact.[254] Although comparison between the two polls are difficult to make, the difference between civilian and military opinion about the maintenance or decomposition of the USSR can be explained by and correlated with the feeling of loss and disorientation. The 'military syndrome' as Solov'ev and Obraztsov called it, had several consequences and influenced the political events in the post-1991 period. Firstly, the military, with the Minister of Defense Shaposhnikov as the leading instigator, persisted in their advocacy of unified armed forces: initially in the context of the USSR, and then – after the collapse of the USSR - in the context of intra-CIS cooperation. Secondly, this nostalgia for the Soviet Union even manifested itself in a desire for its re-establishment. Russian officers bluntly stated that they did not recognize the 1993 Russian Constitution because the USSR remained their fatherland, not the Russian Federation and they refused to swear the oath of allegiance to the Russian state, instead they declared to do whatever was in their power to re-establish the USSR.[255] This sentiment was reflected in the parliamentary elections of 1993 and 1995.[256] The Communist Party and nationalist

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[254] John Dunlop, *Op. Cit*., 1993, p. 62.

[255] Meeting with officers of the *voenkomat* in St.-Petersburg in May 1998.

[256] This view is been challenged by Deborah Yarsike Ball and Theodore P. Gerber who claimed that the alarmist views of Western and Russian observers that a retrograde dictatorship and revanchist aggression would emerge were

parties, the most conservative forces in favor of the preserving old Union, received the majority of their votes from the military electorate[257].

> "In that time [late 1991], the societal processes led to political disorientation in the conscience of the military servicemen. Many could not imagine what the goals and the consequences were of the economical and political course chosen by the leadership of the country. The internal and external political results of their policy were very negatively appreciated, and meant that they lost their faith in the ultimate success of reform. In this situation a part of the military service men stood open for populist rhetoric and political propositions formulated in an easy language. Some of them even stated that in such a difficult military-political situation and the passive attitude of the leadership the military had the right to take their own faith and that of the State in their hands."[258]

The 'First Round' of Russian Institution Building in the Defense Sphere. The new Russian Federation obviously required new institutions. These institutions can be divided into the executive and legislative branches, whereas the presidential institutions can be characterized as bridging offices between these two branches, or as 'coupling the uncoupled'. One should add that this gives a distorted view of the system because in reality Russian political structures were less clear and less stable than their labels suggested. The Yeltsin era was characterized by rapid personnel changes and institutional instability, thus this schematic view is purely theoretical. The exact power relations and the locus of the decision-making processes were never clear, which made institution building problematic.

As head of state, **the President** is the Supreme Commander in Chief of the Russian Armed Forces. From the August Coup onwards, Yeltsin tried to tighten his grip on the military elite because they could potentially challenge his supreme power. By neutralizing the risk of such interference, Yeltsin created what Regina Smyth called 'patronage-based institutions'.[259] In this concept, appointments of senior officers and key personnel into decision-making bodies are controlled by the 'patron'. In this manner a strong executive leadership can be created, by 'buying' loyalty and cooperation in exchange for promotion and opportunities. Yeltsin's actions followed this model to the letter.

Another important mechanism through which Yeltsin asserted control was **the Presidential Apparatus** (also called **the Presidential Administration**). Led by Sergei Filatov from January

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overstated. Even if there would be a political will to re-establish the Soviet Union among the Russian officer corps, which the authors did not subscribe to, the Russian military would not be able to organize a 'conspiracy given the state of disintegration of the Russian army'. In fact, 'the Russian army' as an entity did not exist anymore. Anatol Lieven in his authoritative *Chechnya, Tombstone of Russian Power*, underscored this idea especially in the fifth chapter of the book 'Who Would Be A Soldier If You Could Work in a Bank?' elucidating the social and cultural roots of the Russian defeat. See: Deborah Yarsike Ball and Theodore P. Gerber, 'The Political Views of Russian Field Grade Officers', in: *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 12, Nr. 2, 1996, pp. 155-180 and Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya, Tombstone of Russian Power*, London: Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 186-218.

[257] This may not be very surprising as Inglehart noted 'that relative low levels of diffuse satisfaction and trust make one more likely to reject the existing political system and support parties of the extreme Right or Left'. (See Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial society*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 38. However, Voting behavior of the military in the 1990's can both be rooted in the economic/materialist situation of the military (the so-called 'scarcity hypothesis' in which the individual's priority reflects the socio-economic environment) as well as the socialization process in the military organization that breeds conservative values (the so-called 'socialization hypothesis') *ibid*. p. 68.

[258] Translated from: S.S.Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsov, *Op. Cit.*, p. 172.

[259] Regina Smyth, 'Power as patronage: Russian Parties and Russian Democracy', Webedition of Program on New Approaches to Russian Security *Policy Memo Series* (PONARS), Nr. 106, p. 2

1993 to January 1996.[260] The apparatus underwent constant reorganization but its main functions remained constant: to provide the president with vital necessary information; to perform analytical work; to provide policy options (and thus to solve problems); and to organize the public relations of the President.[261] Simply, the Presidential Apparatus represented the personal staff of the President. One agency in the Presidential Administration that was particularly important for the military establishment was the Commission on Higher Military Ranks which was responsible for the appointment of generals to key military positions. The proximity of the commission to the presidency and its closest agents inevitably led to the over-politicization of the selection and appointment of generals. Therefore, for Yeltsin the commission was an important lever of control over the military forces. Over time, Yeltsin was careful to place a 'trustee' at the head of this commission; or, in the absence of a trustee, he took the function on himself. Both actions reflected the tight control Yeltsin exercised over the military forces.

There was nothing particularly special about the administration of an institution that was a tool of the President were it not for the fact that it sometimes acted autonomously, in some cases taking its own initiative for its own purposes. It participated in the struggle for direct access to the President, which was the key to influencing his decision-making process. Two examples can be given. First, Viktor Baranets (formerly a *genshtab* colonel) reported that analysts from the presidential administration interfered constantly in discussions on military reform. As a result three parallel institutions (the Presidential Administration, the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff) worked independently on the subject without much communication between them. Baranets reported that in 1994 some 'Kremlin analysts' started to secretly invite General Staff *genshtab* officers to their own offices.[262] Secondly, in this race for presidential access the head of the Presidential Administration, Sergei Filatov found himself in a personal conflict with Alexander Korzhakov, who was in a privileged and trusted position as head of the presidential Security Service - responsible for the personal safety of Yeltsin. Korzhakov meddled in areas in which he had no authority, which included the oil trade and the politics of privatization.[263] This conflict was an example of the fierce struggle for access to the President, which not only raged between the institutions but also within the institutions themselves. The Presidential Apparatus became a perfect institution for co-opting people into the presidential circle with the result that it was soon too large and complex to remain efficient. Even Yeltsin himself sporadically showed his annoyance with the Presidential Administration and he described it as an inefficient and immobile bureaucracy. In November 1994, for example, Yeltsin ordered a reduction and streamlining of his staff when it was announced that the Presidential Apparatus had 3,200 employees and consisted of fifteen different administrations and departments.[264] In 1996, Yeltsin called for a reduction in the number of units from forty-three to nineteen and a twenty-percent cut in the number of employees.[265] The fact that this administration remained unreformed over the years showed how trivial and ineffective these announcements actually were.

Surveying Yeltsin's orchestration of the military hierarchy during his first years in office, Yeltsin favored military over civilian specialists when he appointed people to the politico-military sphere.

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[260] The liberal Filatov was replaced by Nikolai Yegorov, the hard-line former minister of nationalities. Other key figures in the presidential administration were: Oleg Lobov, Viktor Ilyushin and Aleksandr Korzhakov, who systematically checked and controlled who made contact with the president and who did not. In this way they wielded enormous influence over policy.

[261] See: Stephen Larrabee and Theodore W. Karasik, *Foreign and Security Policy Decisionmaking Under Yeltsin*, Santa Monica: RAND, 1997, pp. 43-47; Richard Sakwa, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 144-145.

[262] Viktor Baranets, *Genshtab bez Tain, Kniga Pervaia*, [The General Staff Without secrets, First Book] Moskva: Politburo, 1999, p. 364.

[263] Interview with Sergei Filatov, *Obshchaya Gazeta*, Nr. 38, September 21-27, 1995, pp.4-6

[264] Komsomolskaya Pravda, November 10, 1994, p.4

[265] "New Appointments" *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, February 1, 1996, p. 1.

This trend was apparent in several cases: but it was most evident in the creation and subsequent management of the **Russian Ministry of Defense**. In March 1992, after three months of fruitless efforts to bolster the CIS's military role and a concomitant utter vagueness about its role and legitimacy, Yeltsin decided to create the Russian national armed force of which Yeltsin was the interim Defense Minister. At the beginning of April 1992, Yeltsin installed a state commission 'for the Creation of a Ministry of Defense, Army and Navy of the Russian Federation'. This commission was led by Colonel-General Dmitri Volkogonov, who was assisted by four Deputy Chairmen, with specific individual tasks. These Deputy Chairmen included: General Pavel Grachev, who was responsible for operational matters, command and control structures; a civilian Andrei Kokoshin, who was responsible for the development of military doctrine, the procurement and welfare of servicemen; General Alexander Kobets, who was responsible for the relations between Russia and CIS; and General Yuri Skokov who was responsible for overall legislative problems and providing presidential advice on senior appointments. In May 1992 the Russian Armed Forces were inaugurated and two weeks later, after much speculation and a keen hope that a civilian Minister of Defense would be chosen, General Pavel Grachev was appointed the first Russian Minister of Defense.[266] Andrei Kokoshin, a civilian authority on military affairs whose reputation was based on his role in Arms Control debates throughout the 1980's, but disparagingly called a '*skazochnik'* [a story-teller] by Baranets, became the First Deputy Minister of Defense.[267]

One particular appointment in the Ministry of Defense was indicative of the contemporaneous policy practices in the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces, and also influenced the shape and the content of the reform debates for the next four years. The appointment of Colonel Gennadii Ivanov to the Ministry of Defense, a trustee and personal friend of Grachev, was a great surprise and scandalized many General Staff officers. Ivanov's appointment was possibly an attempt to neutralize the three more experienced and older members of the General Staff who posed a theoretical threat to Grachev himself: First Deputy Ministers of Defense Colonel-General Boris Gromov, Colonel-General Georgi Kondratyev and Colonel-General Valerii Mironov. Ivanov was quickly promoted to General after his appointment and led the new founded and prestigious directorate of 'Redeployment and Reform'. The directorate determined the reform debate throughout Grachev's tenure as Minister of Defense. Although Ivanov was 'the' ideologue of the idea of mobile forces, he had no technical staff experience and was seen by many General Staff officers as incompetent for such a high profile job. Ivanov's appointment demonstrated that favoritism was a hallmark of Grachev's appointment policy within the Ministry of Defense. In fact, the Minister of Defense, himself a product of such favoritism imitated the policy of executive patronage and personal ties within the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces. In this way Yeltsin was in turn faced by the ability of key actors to create their own web of patronage based on relations to secure their own interests. Moreover, the appointment of Ivanov also resulted in the centralization of the reform debate within the Ministry of Defense. Grachev and Ivanov monopolized the reform debate over the next four years without allowing the General Staff or other institutional involvement in discussions. This inevitably created a fierce bureaucratic struggle between the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff over the issue of reform.

Again, Grachev imitated the policy practice of his Commander in Chief: Yeltsin also tried to centralize power to and within his office. In this sense, Baranets' complaint that *'kakaia vlast', takoi i ministr oborony'* [The Minister of Defense acts as his master] was accurate.[268] In other words, the

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[266] Names that circulated as candidates for the post of Minister of Defense were: Shaposhnikov, Kobets, Galina Starovoitova and Andrei Kokoshin. The latter two were civilian and although they made part of the 'democratic' camp they survived on the highest political level until November 1998 when Galina Starovoitova was killed in what is most probably a political assassination and Kokoshin was dismissed by Yeltsin in the middle of 1999.

[267] Viktor Baranets, *El'tsin I ego generaly, zapsiki polkovnika genshaba*, Moskva: Kollektsiia Sovershennno sekretno, 1998, p. 197.

[268] *Ibid*., p.156.

creation of the presidential regime in the broader political context was duplicated in the High Command of the Armed Forces. In this way a political *matrioshka* was created in which political practice and power relations fitted into each other like nesting dolls. In these (unfavorable) conditions the Russian Ministry of Defense was established and began the immensely difficult job of creating a Russian military organization from scratch.

Three waves of appointments that took the rest of 1992 to complete concluded the formation of the High Command of the Russian Armed Forces. In this effort, the **General Staff**, and the **Branches of the Armed Forces and the Military Districts** were reformed and manned. In June 1992, seven important appointments were made public and Colonel General Mikhail Kolesnikov was assigned to the post of Chief of the General Staff. The Main Organization and Mobilization Directorate, as part of the General Staff, was especially important in two aspects of military reform: the decision-making process; and discussions about the AVF. The directorate was responsible for both the design of the military organization and the recruitment of personnel as its name suggested. In July-August 1992, a second wave of thirteen senior appointments was announced in which the four Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Services were announced. In October, in a third wave of appointments, the names of the new Military Districts Commanders' were made public. The reorganization of the Russian High Command in terms of both structure and personnel was so profound that the command only had a more or less stable form by 1995. Hence, the creation of the Ministry of Defense and its constituent institutions was drawn out over 1993 and its character was unstable and inefficient: as with the executive, the locus of power was ambiguous, the character incoherent (as a result of patronage relations), and the capacity for efficient decision making obstructed by the preeminence of the politics of patronage, or in other words, the primacy of patronage relations over institutional coherence. Grand and bureaucratic politics hamstrung the reform debate process and they did not create the environment for efficient debates.

Until 1993, when the conflict between the President and the Supreme Soviet was finally settled and the outcome affirmed by the new 1993 Constitution, **the Legislative Branch** had been composed of the 'Congress of Peoples' Deputies of the Russian Federation', which had the Supreme Soviet as its permanent body. This body was originally elected in March 1990 and was thus a clear remnant of the Soviet period. At that time, the Parliamentary Committee on Defense and State Security, presided over by Sergei Stepashin, was the instrument through which the legislature played a role in defense matters, but it was clear that Yeltsin did not tolerate any parliamentary influence over military affairs. Yeltsin's treatment of the parliament during the September 1991 purges illustrated this when he did not allow the parliament to overview the political counter measures against the August Coup. However, as formally stipulated in the Law on Defense of September 1992 (a basic law identifying the place of the armed forces in society and in the political landscape) the Parliament and the President had comparable powers and balanced each other's powers.[269] In reality, there was no counter-balancing effect. There were only two fields in which the Parliament could project itself and influence decision-making in military matters: over-viewing the draft of the Law on Defense and scrutinizing the Federal Defense Budget. This restricted parliamentary activity was also confirmed later in the 1993 Constitution and the May 1996 Law on Defense. Thus it was clear from the very beginning of the Yeltsin era that the Parliament was neither in a position to control the military executive, nor to influence the debate on armed forces reform or any other defense related issues. Besides the fact that Yeltsin would not tolerate any parliamentary control of

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[269] Alla Kozlova, Gosudarstvennaia Duma I problema stanovleniia v Rossii demokraticheskoi sistemy grazhdanskogo kontrolia nad voennoi sferoi, in: A.G. Arbatov (Red.), *Razoruzhenie I Bezopasnost' 1999-2000, Rossia,: sreda bezopastnosti v kontse XX veka*, Moskva: Nauka, 2001, pp. 255.

or influence over military affairs, the State Duma possessed neither enough expertise to influence events or a staff which could do parliamentary research on defense matters.[270]

In May 1992, Yeltsin created **the Security Council** in order to preside personally over a think-tank and decision-making body, which had the input of both the executive and the legislative branch.[271] This body was potentially the main platform for coordinating and integrating national security policy and it came under the leadership of the executive secretary Yuri Skokov, a man who was closely linked to the military-industrial complex. In a certain sense, the Security Council can be compared with the Soviet Defense Council (a remnant of the Soviet Union) that was only finally abolished in March 1992. This apt comparison can also be seen in the Council being staffed with military personnel from the different power ministries over time, and who together, in this way, tried to influence its activities.

However, the responsibilities of the Security Council were always broadly–and therefore also vaguely, defined. It was created to help both the presidential and legislative bodies by providing recommendations and proposals on security related issues. But, the Security Council was a consultative rather than a decision-making body. Shevtsova noted that: "the Security Council was a consultative body without specified functions; it could make decisions only if the president wanted it to do so." Furthermore "the appearance of this new structure was another example of Yeltsin's efforts to rely on his own institutions, even if they did not have total legitimacy."[272] Others commented that although the composition, the missions and the functioning of the Security Council constantly evolved during the Yeltsin era it was *de facto a* body at the disposal of the president.[273]

Reviewing this first round of institution building, three remarks can be made. Firstly, the building of new institutions that would affect military organizational matters occurred with much hesitation and only after the failure of the original intention to organize the defense structure based on a CIS-wide model. Russia's defense decision-making system was thus a second choice, which led Michael Orr to make the following remark:

> "At the same time the re-birth of Russia did provide an opportunity to create new armed services which could appeal to Russian national sentiment and even act as a nation-building force. This opportunity was immediately wasted as the High Command fought to ensure that the Soviet Army survived the fall of the Soviet Union. That battle was lost when it became clear that the newly independent states were determined to create their own armed forces but the ministry of defense in

[270] *Ibid*., pp. 253-262.

[271] Much has been written about the Security Council. It demonstrates that many analysts consider this body as an important decision-making institution with functional precursors in the Soviet setting (the Soviet Defense Council) and other institutions as for instance the National Security Council in the United States. Ellen Jones and James H. Brusstar, 'Moscow's Emerging Security Decision-making System: The Role of the Security Council', *The Journal of Slavic Military studies*, Vol. 6, Nr. 3, September 1993, pp. 345-374. Jan S. Adams, 'The Russian National Security Council' P*roblems of Post-Communism*, January/ February 1996, pp. 35-42, Jan S. Adams 'Russia Security Council Profiled', *RFE/RL Research*, October 6, 1994, pp. 1-13; F. Stephen Larrabee and Theordore W. Karasik, *Foreign and Security Policy Decision-Making Under Yeltsin*, Santa Monica: Rand, 1997, pp. 35-41; Eberhard Schneider, 'Moscow's Decision for War in Chechenia (sic)', *German Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 46, Nr. 1, 1995, pp. 157-167.

[272] Lilia Shevtsova, *Op. Cit*., p. 47 and p. 186.

[273] Ellen Jones and James H. Brusstar, 'Moscow's Emerging Security Decision-making System: The Role of the Security Council', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 6, Nr. 3, September 1993, pp. 345-374. Jan S. Adams, 'The Russian National Security Council', *Problems of Post-Communism*, January/ February 1996, pp. 35-42, Jan S. Adams, 'Russia Security Council Profiled', *RFE/RL Research*, October 6, 1994, pp. 1-13; F. Stephen Larrabee and Theordore W. Karasik, *Foreign and Security Policy decision-making Under Yeltsin*, Santa Monica: Rand, 1997, pp. 35-41; Eberhard Schneider, 'Moscow's Decision for War in Chechenia (sic)', G*erman Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 46, Nr. 1, 1995, pp. 157-167.

Moscow continued a grim defensive struggle to maintain as much of the Soviet military machine as possible. In the process they demonstrated the truth of the old principle of defensive warfare that he who tries to hold everything risks losing everything."[274]

Secondly, although the new institutions may have had a proper place in the process of democratic institution building and civil-military relations in the Russian Federation, many institutions were compromised by political developments during the last half-year of the Soviet Union's existence. Because of their questionable reliability, Yeltsin tried, beneath the surface, to make the Security Council an institution solely under his command. Yeltsin's looming disagreement with the Parliament also forced him to marginalize the parliamentary overview of the military. In other words, institutions were soon hollowed out by Yeltsin's political practice; a practice which consisted of putting 'annoying' or potentially threatening elements outside the game and bringing loyal followers into the inner circle. This inner circle, however, became smaller and smaller over time. Thus, the process of institution building was directed by Yeltsin's regime at the same time as alternative power structures were assembled: reflecting and illuminating one of the most important characteristics of his regime.

> "During his first term, Yeltsin failed to create a stable institutionalized framework for defense policy. Important decisions were made by a small circle of top officials, with no serious parliamentary oversight or public scrutiny. The lack of clear institutional lines of authority and overarching mechanisms to coordinate defense policy meant that defense policy often became a contest among rival factions who sought to appeal directly to Yeltsin over the heads of other bureaucratic actors."[275]

Thirdly, in terms of the military reform process, there were, in theory, several institutional agents and decision-making centers that could be involved in the reform debate. The General Staff, the Ministry of Defense, the Presidential Apparatus, the Security Council and even the Duma contained offices dealing with the reform issue. But the competition between the president and all these institutions made them impotent and turned them into competitors and rivals. In the end it was the Ministry of Defense, more precisely the Minister of Defense and his sidekick Ivanov, who won this competition: a victory which allowed them to monopolize the debate. But from an institutional point of view, it was clear that Yeltsin was only interested in political loyalty rather then bureaucratic efficiency. This particular political reality created negative conditions for military reform.

The Kremlin Against the White House and the Creation of a Super Presidential Regime. Political life in 1993 was dominated by the open conflict between President Yeltsin and the Supreme Soviet (or Parliament). It gained momentum when, at the end of September 1993, Yeltsin issued Decree No. 1400 'On the Stages of Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation', and ended violently with direct tank fire on the White House in early October 1993. The conflict was essentially one between the executive and the legislative branch. Yeltsin, still immersed in the most frenetic period of political activity of his presidency during which he was trying to gain endorsement for and implementation of his reform ideas, did not allow much external interference from other elected

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[274] Michael Orr, 'The Russian Armed Forces as a factor in Regional stability', in: Charles Dick and Anne Aldis (Editors), 'Central and Eastern Europe: Problems and Prospects', *Strategy and Combat Studies Institute*, Nr. 37, December 1998, p. 101.

[275] F. Stephen Larrabee and Theodore W. Karasik, *op. Cit.*, p. viii. The same idea can be found in Robert H. Epperson, 'Russian Military Intervention in Politics 1991-1996', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 10, Nr. 3, September 1997, pp. 99-102.

branches of government. The legislature, however, claimed a vital democratic role for itself during a period when massive, radical, and traumatic reforms were being implemented.

To some extent the legislature's claim was legitimate. By direct extension of their democratic mandate, the Parliament asked the government to take into account the social aspects of their draconian economic reform plan. But it was also clear that the claims of the Supreme Soviet could be reduced to a bare power struggle in which no party wanted to give up the privileges accompanying their privileged position in society. Moreover, under the leadership of the speaker of the Supreme Soviet Ruslan Khasbulatov and vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoi, it was the parliament itself who called for an armed popular uprising against the President. The parties were apparently neither willing nor able to create consensus, an important characteristic of normative democratic societies.

The conflict between Yeltsin and leaders of the Supreme Soviet had far-reaching and immediate consequences for both political life and civil-military relations in Russia. A profound break with the immediate post-Soviet period occurred. After the crisis was settled in Yeltsin's favor, new players were brought into the political game, new power positions were determined and a new set of rules were established that would determine politics thereafter. After the violent clash of October 1993, the Congress of People's Deputies was dissolved. New elections were organized on 12 December 1993 and a new bicameral Federal Assembly was founded. It was created out of the Federation Council, (the Upper House) and the State Duma (the Lower House).

In addition, a referendum on a new constitution, drafted by Yeltsin's team, was organized. It established a super-presidential system in which the power of the president was immense and practically without external control.[276] The adoption of the 1993 Constitution formalized a new Russian State, and in this way, the independence declaration of January 1992 can be considered as a false start. Some kind of political stabilization had been created.

However, the cost of this rudimentary stability was high. The stabilization was only a fiction, as political antagonism had not disappeared. The success of the ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky in the December 1993 parliamentary elections not only shocked the world, but also kept the relationship between the executive and the legislature tense for the years to come.[277] But besides the (falsely) stabilizing effect of Yeltsin's September-October revolution another aspect of political life must be highlighted. As a result of the failure of the economic reform plan and the related power struggles, Yeltsin became increasingly isolated politically. In particular, he became immensely unpopular in the public's eye. Liberals and other democrats even saw him as a traitor. The people who had made Yeltsin into the figure he was and in whom so much hope had been put, felt profoundly betrayed by their hero. Moreover, the Communists and (to a lesser extent) the nationalists were now his political rivals and remained so, from that point on. Consequently, Yeltsin's actions cumulatively underscored his political and, indeed, personal isolation.

The result was that Yeltsin –the former populist- became what Tatyana Tolstaya called 'Tsar Boris I' who ruled Russia far from the people behind the closed doors of the Kremlin. [278] Consequently, Russian political and economic life 'was turning into an unruly and spiteful struggle among lobby groups'. It did not go unnoticed that this and other factors were reminiscent of Russia's imperial tradition.

Within the Kremlin, the isolated president surrounded himself with a select and small circle of trustees. In 1994-1995 this 'inner circle' was composed of people who had their roots in the security

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[276] See Lilia Shevtsova, *Op. Cit*., pp. 93-96 and Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, London: Routledge, 1993, (Second edition), pp. 53-61.

[277] See for instance: Peter Conradi, *Vladimir de Verschrikkelijke, Zjirinovski en de opmars van extreem-rechts in Rusland* [Mad Vlad, Vladimir Zhirinovsky & The Rise of Russian Nationalism], Antwerpen: Standaard Uitgeverij, 1995.

[278] Tatyana Tolstaya, 'Boris the First, The Struggle for Russia' *The New York Review of Books*, 23 June 1994, pp.24-27.

field and the armed forces: Aleksandr Korzhakov, Mikhail Barsukov (the Head of the Kremlin Security), Viktor Yerin (Minister of Internal Affairs), Pavel Borodin (the Head of the Presidential Administration), first deputy Oleg Soskovets, Pavel Grachev and Yeltsin's personal tennis coach Shamil Tarpishchev who literally controlled access to the president and *de facto* ruled the country. This group was later termed the 'Party of War' because it was the 'lobby group' that contributed to the outbreak of open war with Chechnya. The pyramidal presidential system, which fomented the emergence of the 'inner circle', not only took shape in the aftermath of the failure of Gaidar's shock therapy, but it also proved to have other dangerous aspects.

By this time, the military was no longer a neutral political observer. Only two years after the August coup, the military elite was forced to take sides in a divided political arena. Loyalty to Yeltsin now had severe consequences as military leaders had been forced to use violence against the members of parliament, a *prima facie* anti-democratic act. Different accounts of the crucial events of 3rd and 4th October 1993 show that the military forces were very reluctant supporters of Yeltsin.[279] Although Grachev's orders strengthened his position in Yeltsin's 'inner circle', the military organization did not unequivocally support the action. Nichols noted on this issue that:

> "…The October 1993 attack on the Russian parliament divided military loyalties, and forced many officers (who were suffering significant material deprivations under Yeltsin's reforms) to reconsider their role in Russian political life."[280]

This division among the officer corps explains the subsequent 'electoral military mutiny' during the December parliamentary elections in which the military elite played an influential role in the aforementioned electoral success of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) as illustrated in Table 11.

Parties, presented to the voters on the party list	Parties that the civilian population of theRussian Federation voted for (in %)	Parties that the officer corps voted for (in %)	Parties that soldiers, during their military service voted for (in %)
Agrarian Party of Russia (APR)	8,96	0,8	5,5
"Yabloko" block	7,35	9,0	3,6
Russian Choice	15,74	19,9	27,3
Russian Democratic party	5,5	5,1	9,1
Russian Women	8,5	4,3	6,4
Communist Party (KPRF)	11,89	6,6	1,0
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR)	23,21	41,4	24,6
Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES)	6,66	2,3	9,1
RDDR	3,92	1,6	2,7
Ecological Movement "Kedr"	0,81	0,1	1,9
Other	2,05	1,8	2,2
Against every party	3,8	5,9	4,7

Table 11: The December 1993 parliamentary election results
Source: adapted from S.S. Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsev, *Op. Cit.*, p. 360.

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[279] Lilia Shevtsova, Op. Cit., pp. 86-87; Leon Aron, *Op. Cit*., pp. 540-543.
[280] Thomas M. Nichols, '"An Electoral Mutiny?" Zhirinovsky and the Russian Armed Forces', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 21, Nr. 3, Spring 1995, pp. 327-347.

Notwithstanding these sentiments, this trend had already been observed during the Gorbachev period and the Russian public's trust in the military forces as an institution was high. At the end of 1993, the Russian military establishment was the institution in which the Russian public had the most trust after the Russian Orthodox Church.
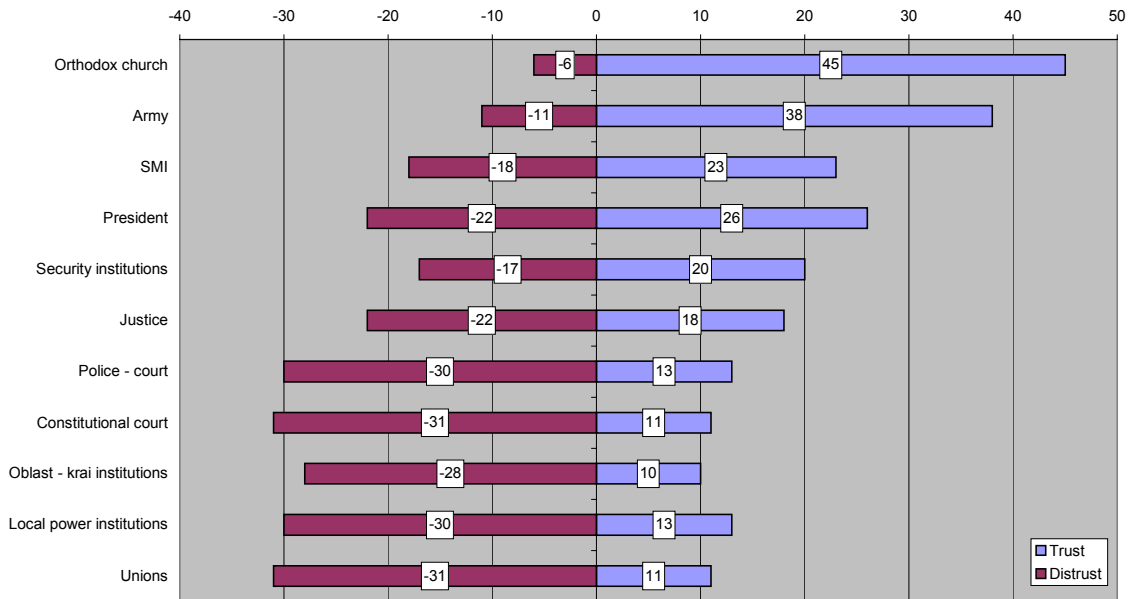
Graph 11: Survey on trust in Russian institutions (End 1993)
<u>**Source**</u>**: adapted from S.S. Solov'ev and I.V. Obraztsev,** *Op. Cit.***, p. 321.**

This rather high faith in the military was confirmed in a civilian survey conducted by VTsIOM (*Vse-Rossiiskii tsentr Izucheniia Obshchestvennogo Mnenii*a-The All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion). VTsIOM published the following graph in May-June 1994 which showed the evolution in trust in several Russian institutions in the period June 1993-March 1994. This period covered the open conflict between Yeltsin and the parliament.
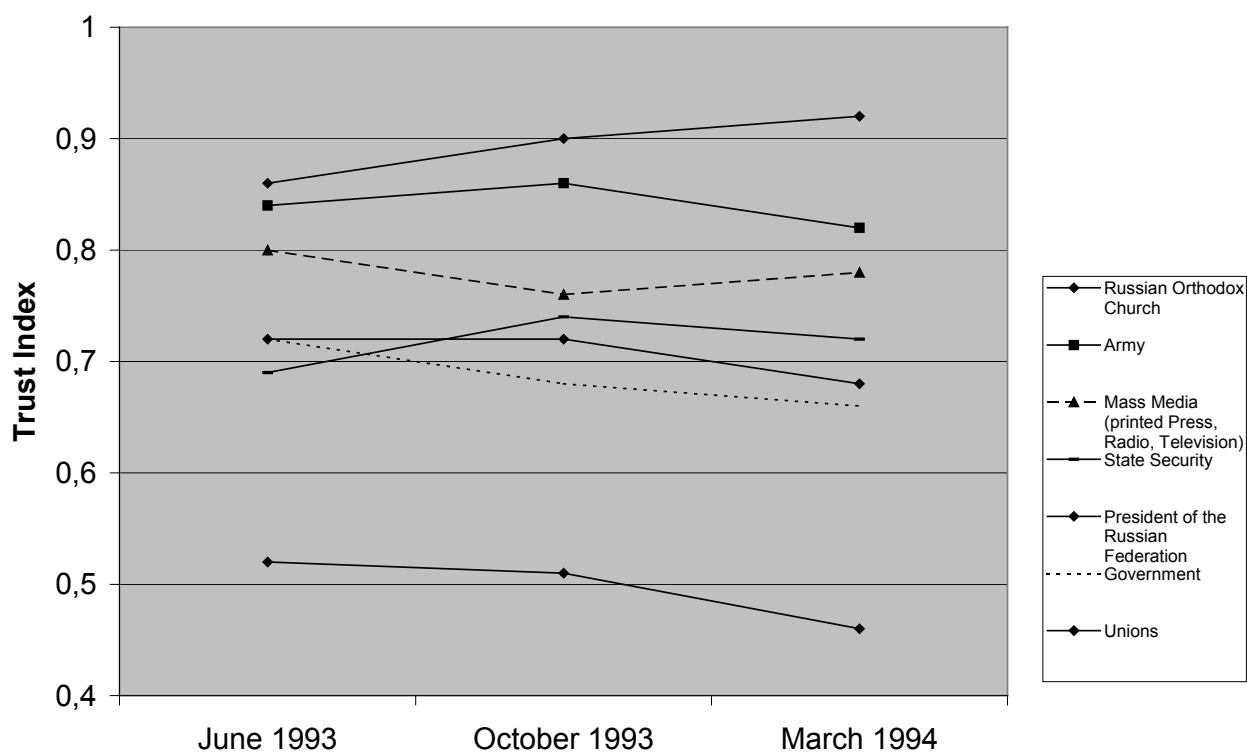
Graph 12 Trust in social Institutions (VTsIOM)
<u>Source</u>: **VTsIOM, 'Doverie k sotsialnym institutam',** *Informatsionnyi Biulleten Monitor***, Nr. 3, Mai-Jiun 1994, p. 8.**

These results had clear implications for Russian civil-military relations. Firstly, these indicators show that at the 1993 elections, rather than simply choosing a side in the President-Parliament conflict, the military opted instead for a 'third force'.[281] By skillful manipulation of the feelings produced by the 'military syndrome', Zhirinovsky made the LDPR a 'rational choice' for the military community. Secondly, the public's trust in the military was not shaken by the military's *prima facie* anti-democratic act against the parliament, nor for its nationalistic electoral preference. In spite of these factors, the military institution could still rely on a traditional pro-military bias of the Russian public.

The first round of state making was finished by the end of 1993, but Yeltsin was physically and psychologically marked by the political battles he fought and fell into a black hole of mental depression thereafter. Yeltsin's period of depression would endure until the beginning of 1996 thus the years 1994 and especially 1995 were, therefore, politically 'calm'. However, for a country in desperate need of reform, this also meant lethargy and stagnation. To make matters worse, the country experienced a bitter war between December 1994-July 1996.

The First Round of Institution Building Tested: The 1994-1996 Chechen War.

With the settlement of the political conflict between the legislature and executive at the end of 1993, a new conflict of a different type and even greater intensity surfaced, a conflict which defined Russia's post independence period and marked a generation. It was the conflict between the federal

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[281] In explaining Zhirinovsky's victory in the December 1993 elections, Aron stated that '…the LDPR's success was a careful and deliberate positioning as a third force, distinct from both the restorationist Communist/Agrarians and the liberal-radicals of Russia's Choice'. (See Leon Aron, *Op. Cit*., pp. 558-561.)

center and the periphery; between Moscow and the federal republic of Chechnya.[282] Although this rivalry had its roots in the wars of the nineteenth century and the Stalin's deportation policies in the Caucasus, the immediate cause of 1994-1996 war lay in the aftermath of the 1991 coup.[283] Former Soviet aviation General Dzhokar Dudayev proclaimed the independence of the Chechen Republic in October 1991. The territory rapidly became a base for criminal activities and it was also an arms trading center. Furthermore, militants from the republic became involved in a conflict with neighboring Ingushetia and sent volunteers to fight in Abkhazia in Georgia. This act meant that the integrity of the Russian Federation was at stake and it was feared that domino effect would take place in which other republics would agitate for independence.

By 1994, Yeltsin, liberated from the acute political threat that the Duma had created for him for the previous two years, and, as a result of a new constitution that was stronger than ever, he could no longer afford to tolerate the Chechen's unilateral declaration of dependence. The success of the extreme nationalist LDPR in the 1993 elections also forced Yeltsin's hand. Ignoring this latent problem could have indicated to other regional leaders who had similar independence aspirations (such as Tartarstan, Bashkortostan and some Volga territories) that the Russian state could not prevent secession. Moreover, Russian sensitivity about the idea of territorial integrity may not be underestimated.[284] Baev has noted that the main characteristic of Russian military culture is that:

> "If there is any one issue capable of mobilizing the army for decisive action, it is a threat to the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation-and Chechnya, with all reservation about the real political aims of this war, may serve as a case in point."[285]

Therefore, after a year of threats from Moscow in reply to Dudayev's statements and the inability of either side to reach a political consensus, the lingering Caucasian conflict quickly evolved into open hostility and a full-scale war.

However, if moral judgement is suspended and human suffering treated as an abstract idea, war is first and foremost a test of a state's coherence. It was Charles Tilly, who stated that war makes the state, and the state can either come out stronger, or contrarily it can be completely weakened and exhausted by war. Therefore, the Chechen war can be seen as a test of the first round of institution building in Russia. Obviously, the newly created decision-making bodies and the military organization itself went through a hard time between 1994-1996. Two elements are worthwhile mentioning, the decision-making mechanism and the start of the war.

The acute crisis severely tested the newly built institutions of the Russian state - the Security Council, the Duma, the Presidential Administration and the elite group of Yeltsin's trustees in the Ministry of Defense. The manner in which decisions were made and the manner with which the authorities coped with the conflict were both crucial indicators of how the institutions would work

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[282] The Russian-Chechen conflict, although it is a conflict which evolved into an outright violent war, is just one manifestation of a broader tendency in which several rivalries between the regions and the center in Russia existed. (See for instance Robert V. Barylski, *Op. Cit.*, p. 300) Moreover, besides the economic, political rivalry between Moscow and the regions there were many 'hot spots' in and on the border of the Russian Federation which endangered National Unity. For an overview of the hot spots see Pavel Baev, *The Russian Army in a Time of Troubles*, London: Sage, 1996, pp. 123-148. Moscow's concern about national unity is expressed in several official policy documents of the Russian State as for instance, the Security and Military Doctrines issued in 1992-1993, 1997, and 1999. The Chechen war as debated here must thus be seen as one example of a much broader underlying process in which the unity of the federal state was threatened.

[283] See for a very informative historical overview: John B. Dunlop, *Russia Confronts Chechnya, roots of a separatists conflict*, Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1998.

[284] See Dmitri Trenin's book on the idea of Eurasia for the impact of borders on military and politcial menatlity. Dmitri Trenin, *Op Cit.*, 2001.

[285] Pavel Baev, *Op. Cit.*, p. 25.

in the future. Secondly, the Chechen war had major effects on the military's prestige and status in Russian society. The historic esteem in which the armed forces were held and its emotive cultural symbolism within society were, albeit temporarily, severely shaken. This was remarkable given the public's general support for the military as a highly trustworthy institution. Latterly, both the institutional and the societal aspects of the war would significantly influence civil-military relations in general and the contents of the military reform discussion in particular. On this issue, Baev suggested that:

> "The War in Chechnya marked a crucial watershed in the development of democratic processes in Russia, particularly in military-civilian relations. This war was by no means a continuation of a consistent state-building policy: it was more the continuation of political squabbles and intrigues in Moscow."[286]

The Russian Army Fails the Test. The similarities between the strategy and circumstances of the Soviet war in Afghanistan and the Russian Chechen War were striking and the decision-making procedures and the outcome of the war were particularly so since they demonstrated the institutional and personal proclivity for aping Soviet forms of thought and action: an instinctive, in-bred action.[287]

Firstly, both wars started with a failed covert action quickly followed by an overt and full-scale operation of a 'limited contingent' [*Ogranichennyi Kontingent*]. These operations were failures because of the severe miscalculations that lay behind them. Enemy force capabilities were critically underestimated and overly optimistic predictions were concomitantly made about the outcome of the campaign. Grachev, for instance, predicted that the campaign's first active phase – with the objective of capturing Grozny and to seize control of the southern part of Chechnya - would only take one week. After two years of severe fighting, however, the Russian army was defeated and forced to retreat.[288]

Secondly, in both the Afghan and Chechen wars, it was not exactly clear who took the ultimate decision to invade the respective territories.[289] What is known *a posteriori* about both local wars is that the decision-making was conducted by a very small group of intimates and that

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[286] *Ibid*. p. 24.

[287] The comparison between the Chechen war with other military actions is also possible. Lilia Shevtsova, for instance, made a comparison between Gorbachev's action in Lithuania in January 1991 with Yeltsin's action in Grozny. (Lilia Shevtsova, *Op. Cit*., pp. 111-112.) Robert V. Barylski makes a comparison between the way Yeltsin handled his conflict with the Russian Supreme Soviet and the way he handled the conflict in Chechnya. (Robert V. Barylski, *Op. Cit*., p. 300) These comparisons may result in general remarks about 'Soviet-Russian stabilization style'.

[288] Apparently, this strategy with deep roots in Soviet military thinking (see for instance Christopher Donnelly, *Op. Cit*., pp. 213-232) is still popular among ultra-conservative military thinkers. In 1996, for instance, retired lieutenant General Valeriy Dementyev and the military analyst Anton Surikov, two advisors of the president, the General Staff and the Ministry of Defense on military and security issues and both analysts related with the Institute for Defense Research (INOBIS, *Institut oboronnykh issledovanii*) in Kaliningrad wrote the following about operations of Mobile Forces: "In the first stage, aviation, special military intelligence (GRU) forces, and special Federal Security Services (FSB) and Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) groups carry out strikes for the purpose of destroying or seizing the most important enemy targets and eliminating the enemy's military and political leadership. Then Mobile Forces, with the support of the army and frontline aviation and naval forces, crush and eliminate enemy forces and take over their territory. After that, sub-units of Ground Forces and Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal affairs, preferably with some combat experience, move in. They establish control of the most crucial locations and carry out "cleansing" of the territory. Then, with the help of militia formed out of the pro-Russian part of the local population, they establish control over the territory and ensure the elimination of nationalists and deportation of some categories of citizens from certain locations; It should be emphasized that until the end of the special operation, local authorities are needed only insofar as they are useful in supporting military control over the territory." (Ariel Cohen, 'Russian hard-liners' military doctrine: in their own words', *The Heritage Foundation*, Nr.104, 30 May 1996). As may be clear from the text, the importance of the first covert operation and the crucial idea of controlling territory are reflected in this passage.

[289]. The same obscurity exist about decisions on the military intervention in Vilnius, Baku and, more recently, the Russian airbone battalion's dash to Pristina airport during the Kosovo war in June 1999.

existing, formal structures of decision-making were either not involved or only formally consulted in the actual decision-making process once decisions had been taken.[290] The meeting of the Security Council which approved the use of force on Chechen territory (29th November 1994), was only called to formally approve a decision that had taken place elsewhere.[291] This 'formal' procedure was useful legally: the meeting of 29th November 1994 was used to prove the legality of a decision, which had actually taken place *in camera*. In this way, Yeltsin was exonerated by the Constitutional Court on 9th December 1999, even though the Russian parliament contested the legitimacy of the decision and presented a case against it.[292] Yeltsin used the decision taken by the Security Council as evidence of and justification for is government's allegedly ambiguous actions. Therefore his selective choice of an institution whose support he simultaneously needed to legitimize his actions and whose decision outcome he could guarantee in advance paralleled the well known practices of the Soviet era. This method of compromise was a 'standard procedure' of the Politburo at the end of the 1970's about which Gromov wrote in 1994:

> "Our country has its traditions. One of them is that the true meaning of a political action becomes only clear after the death of the politicians who pursued this policy. People do not like to make a display of their secrets. Therefore, I can say, that the true history of the decision-making about the sending of the 'limited contingent' to Afghanistan is only recently revealed."[293]

The 'democratic revolution' that separated the Afghan and the Chechen wars had not influenced the way decision-making occurred in Russia in the 1990's, nor had it altered the 'Soviet stabilization style'. Moreover, the obscure method of decision-making can be seen as another example, comparable with the Belovezhskiy agreement, of how crucial and important decisions in

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[290] For the Afghan War see: Boris V. Gromov, *Ogranitjennii kontingent*, Moskva: Progress, 1994, p.17 and pp. 22-65. For the Chechen War see: Stasys Knezys and Romanas Sedlickas, *The War in Chechnya*, Houston: Texas University Press, 1999, pp. 53-70. Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya, Tombstone of Russian Power*, London: Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 102-108. Lilia Shevtsova, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 112-113.

[291] What is meant here is the small group of advisors and presidential trustees, also called 'the family', which thoroughly influenced Yeltsin's decisions. The family, however, was a heterogeneous group of ambitious individualists who fought each other to become as close as possible to the president. At the time of the decision-making of the Chechen invasion, 'an unprepossessing clique of hawks and bruisers, led by Alexander Korzhakov, head of the presidential guard' was active. They were seeking for a 'small, victorious war' to raise the President's rating. Yeltsin's view on the Russian military was completely distorted by 'the fertile imagination of his corrupt and lazy generals'. The advice of Sergei Stepashin, at that time head of the Russian Security Services, was also confused by personal intrigues. These factors led to a total misreading of Chechen military potential, a misreading responsible for the Russian intervention. (See, Robert Cottrell, "Chechnya: How Russia Lost", *The New York Review of Books*, webedition, 24 September 1998) Again, personal influence and intrigues seemed to be more influential in Russian decision-making process than institutional procedures. Another view was expressed by Eberhard Schneider. While he underlined the importance of the Security Council and the Presidential Administration in the decision-making process together with the non participation of the government and the Duma in this process, he saw a clear parallel with the CPSU decision-making procedure: "The decision-making process follows the example of the CPSU. The Security Council assumes the function of the Politburo and the presidential administration that of the committee apparatus. Both were/are not controlled by parliament, which, in the case of the USSR, was a parliament in name only which had no say anyway." Eberhard Schneider, 'Moscow's Decision for War in Chechenia (sic)', *German Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 46, Nr. 1, 1995, p.165.

[292] This means that the Russian State Duma was completely out of the game in the decision-making procedure. Although there were parliamentary initiatives to find solutions for the Caucasian conflict, it was a political reality that the parliament had little influence over the fundamental decisions of the President. In fact, Yeltsin could easily, according to the 1993 Constitution, ignore the parliament to endorse the policy of his own choice. Concerning parliamentary actions about the Chechen war, it was Sergei Yushenkov, the leader of the Defense and Security committee of the Duma and Ivan Rybkin, the speaker of the Duma, who were especially active on this subject (See: Carlotta Gall and Thomas de Waal, *Chechnya: Calamity in the Caucasus*, New York: New York University Press, 1998.)

[293] Translated from: Boris Gromov, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

Russian politics were and still are made, in secret, behind the closed doors of the executive center: the Kremlin.

Finally, the Afghan and Chechen wars ended with traumatic military failure. Although the comparison between the two local conflicts is only an intellectual construct, it is interesting to see how Yeltsin not only mimicked the Afghan war *de facto* in the manner of the road to war, he also imitated the manner in which it was prepared and conducted, as well as the trauma of the exit of Afghanistan, as if the Russian elite had not learned anything from the war in Afghanistan.

This failure was very surprising because in 1994, the *Afghansty* (the term used for the Afghan war veterans who rebelled against the Soviet military 'gerontocracy' between 1989-1991) conducted the Chechen war themselves. It was a deep irony that people who would have been expected to have learnt from their own experiences had apparently not done so.[294] Structure could affect intention. However, the context in which people find themselves acting in a particular political reality, is a reality which is being inevitably organized in a different way to its antecedents, which in turn means that making 'rational' presumptions about people's behavior in order to understand their political actions and decisions is less beneficial than to make an analysis of the 'actor in the structure'. Here, Yeltsin's construct, 'the super presidential system', running throughout the eponymous Yeltsin era like a continuous thread, bore a great responsibility for the decision-making structure and the ensuing consequences of the time.

During the Chechen war the Russian military leadership underwent additional traumas in three different fields. Firstly, there was a deep feeling of professional humiliation. Notwithstanding six years of debate about military reform which included a debate about local wars, the manner in which the military fought the war showed that they were apparently not ready for conducting such a war as professionals. Reform had apparently had no effect on the skills or performance of the armed forces normally associated with basic professional competence. Moreover, the war's trauma was so profound that there was neither a stimulus nor impetus for a new round of reform.[295] The Russian troops' consistent tactical blunders during campaigns were striking, and their ensuing losses were extremely high. The initial assault on Grozny in January 1995, the handling of the two hostage crises in Budennovsk (June 1995) and Pervomaisk (January 1996) serve as dramatic landmarks of their failure.

Moreover, in January 1995, a confidential list of dreadful lessons learned from the initial phase of the war written by General Eduard A. Vorobyev was made public by the press. This exposed to the public the military's malaise. Vorobyev's conclusions were subpoenaed by a Russian Duma Commission led by Stanislav Govoruchin which was researching the causes of the war and its results.[296] In sum, all the reports that evaluated the military's performance gave a bleak picture of the military's professionalism. This made their humiliation complete.

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[294] To set things straight, the *Afghansty* were not a unified group of people. Baev noted that the lessons the *Afghansty* learned from Afghanistan were far from clear cut and chaired by all officers. For some, the 'warriors', the responsibility of the Afghan failure lay with the political (-military) elite and decision makers who betrayed the military. Grachev was one of this group. Other officers, the 'peaceniks', said that there was no military solution for an Afghanistan problem. Gromov was, according to Baev. a representative of this group. (Baev, *Op. Cit*., p. 22). The same evaluation, as shown later, is to be found among the 'Chechentsy', the veterans of the Chechen war.

[295] This does not mean that the military did not understand or did not acknowledge the internal organizational problems. The Russian military failure is in no way an expression of the intellectual capabilities of the Russian military. On the contrary, the Russian military were certainly able to evaluate their own campaign. Mid-level cadres were even openly criticizing their military superiors and their own institution. But again, a distinction must be made a difference between the intellectual analysis of the problem and the implementation of practical solutions. It is a question of standing intellectually outside the system or acting within the system.

[296] Stasys Knezys and Romanas Sedlickas, *Op. Cit*., pp. 57-58, pp. 69-70 and pp. 81-85. For Western, purely military evaluations see for instance: Raymond C. Finch III, 'Why the Russian Military Failed in Chechnya', as mentioned in: Timothy L. Thomas, 'The Battle of Grozny: Deadly Classroom for Urban Combat', *Parameters*, Summer 1999, pp. 87-102. Timothy L. Thomas wrote a serial article about military performance in Chechnya under the title 'The Russian Armed Forces Confront Chechnya': Timothy L. Thomas, 'The Russian Armed Forces Confront Chechnya. Part I:

Secondly, there was a deep feeling of betrayal among the soldiers. The rank and file of the military felt betrayed by their own superiors, especially by the Minister of Defense and the President in his capacity as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Officers on the front line felt that they did not receive enough mental and material support from their superiors. According to their assessments they had been sent to war for purely political reasons. When Alexander Lebed ultimately forged and completed a peace plan the military did not unequivocally support it. Lebed's action was seen by many as a part of a 'dirty' political game in which 'one of them' now participated. In their view, a military victory had been close in June 1996 but was taken away from them by Lebed's peace effort.[297] Moreover, the public discontent and disapproval of the war fuelled the military's sense of betrayal.

Closely connected with this element of discontent was a third factor which had a traumatic effect on the military. The military elite, except for some hard-liners and political opportunists, only fought the Chechen campaign reluctantly. For some generals, such as Major-General Ivan Babichev, the assault was unconstitutional. But the military elite again faced a dilemma in which professional arguments stood against moral arguments. On the one hand, they were supposed to obey orders; on the other, the war was a war against their own countrymen. In turn, the Chechen war once again posed the military with a moral dilemma and demonstrated that the military's ranks were not sealed off from the domestic political developments around them. With its combat failings, internal dissent, and politicization, the Russian armed forces were rift with discord, a cumulative sclerosis.

In conclusion, Russian politics in this period did not stand the democratic test of transparent decision-making and the military organization did not stand the professional test of conducting a war effectively. And yet the political system, as Yeltsin had constructed it, endured! Key players remained in their posts and the political law that '*voiny i revolutsii vsegda meniali elity*' [wars and revolutions always change elites] did not come true. As the presidential elections of 1996 would show, the 'Yeltsin system' – and the powers behind - proved too strong to be put aside by the humiliating Chechen experience.

The Chechen War: Public Opinion and Presidential Elections. Between 1994-1496, there appeared a third player in the political game, which influenced the agenda of Yeltsin. Civil society, namely the press and non-governmental human rights organizations had made a most prominent stand against the war. They did *de facto* force Yeltsin to make some fundamental decisions, which proves his sensitivity to the *vox populis*. One of issues the president touched upon was the idea of the professional army. Thus, once again, the public forum brought this military theme back onto the

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Military-Political Aspects, 11-31 December 1994', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 8, Nr.2, June 1995, pp. 233-256; Timothy L. Thomas, 'The Russian Armed Forces Confront Chechnya. Part II: Military Activities, 11-31 December 1994', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol.. 8, Nr.2, June 1995, pp. 257-290 and Timothy L. Thomas, 'The Russian Armed Forces Confront Chechnya. Part III: the Battle of Grozny, 1-26 January 1995', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol.. 10, Nr.1, March 1997, pp. 50-108. Andrei Raevsky, 'Russian Military Performance in Chechnya: An Initial Evaluation', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 8, Nr.4, December 1995, pp. 681-690. For a more comprehensive, political military evaluation the most authoritative studies are: Stases Knezys and Romanas Sedlickas, *The War in Chechnya*, Houston: Texas University Press, 1999; Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya, Tombstone of Russian Power*, London: Yale University Press, 1998; Carlotta Gall and Thomas de Waal, *Chechnya, A Small Victorious War*, London: Macmillan, 1997; For a more historical introduction on the conflict John B. Dunlop, *Russia Confronts Chechnya*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
[297] I heard this argument several times during conversations with military officers and it was publicly confirmed by General Pulikovsky in August 1999 when he proclaimed that the generals would not allow the politicians to steal their military victory during the second Chechen war. During the Second Chechen War, this frustration was vented several times by elite soldiers, as Patrick Cockburn discovered at a military funeral in the Pskov region, the home of the 76th Airborne Division: he related a soldier's opinion that "…the feeling after the first Chechen War was that we were betrayed. All the soldiers and most of the civilians here believed we could have defeated the separatists" Patrick Cockburn, "Russians tight lipped over Chechnya losses", *The Independent*, 19th March 2000.

agenda, just as it had during the 1989-1990 period. The raw and hyper-realistic way that Russian television brought events in Grozny, Budennovsk and the Chechen mountains into Russian homes was appalling. Although the Russian public is accustomed to violent television images, the horror and cruelty of the war was repugnant. Moreover, the human rights organizations, of which the 'Soldiers Mothers' and 'Memorial' were the most prominent, enjoyed freedom of movement and expression during the war and they fully exploited this political freedom. The Soldiers' Mothers even surrealistically went to the frontline to discuss the fate of their sons with military commanders. The actions and criticisms of both actors were so overwhelming that they intensively influenced society's attitude towards the war.

The Russian public's widespread disdain of the conflict and the concomitant severe impact of the war on the social position and outlook of the Armed forces were evident in a number of quarters. Viktor Serebriannikov has published the following table in his book *Sociology of War* [*sotsiologiia voiny*] which clearly showed that trust in the military took a severe blow after the Chechen war began in December 1994.

Year	Trust	No trust	No opinion
1992 (second half)	55-60	12	28-33
1993 (end of the year)	48-53	18-20	27-34
1994 (July)	38	28	34
1994 (31 December)	35,1	40,3	24,6
1995 (1 march)	~31	50	~20
1997 (January)	29	52	19

Table 12: Trust in the Military and the Chechen War

Source: V.V. Serebriannikov, *Sotsiologiia voiny*, Moskva: Nautchnyi Mir, 1997, p. 152.

The number of people who continued to trust the armed forces during these years halved, while the number of those who mistrusted them quadrupled. As shown above, the contentious events of the 1991 August coup, the 1993 October uprising and the media campaign against the military from 1987 onwards had together never created as much distrust of the army as the 1994-1996 Chechen war did alone. A second remarkable element of the sudden mistrust was that the militaries debate about its role apparently affected the whole population. This conclusion can be derived from the fact that the group holding 'no opinion' about their trust in the military became smaller over time, while most respondents pronounced an increase in the negative opinions that they held about the war. Subsequently attitudes about the Russian armed forces were once again polarized in Russian society.

The public not only gradually lost trust in the military forces as an institution, but it was also bluntly against sending troops into the dissident republic. Anatol Lieven noted that a public opinion poll conducted between 16th –20th December 1994, (before the full scale invasion) showed that 36% wanted a peaceful solution, 23% were for an immediate withdrawal of the Russian troops from the north Caucasus region, while only 30% of the respondents favored 'decisive measures' to restore order in Chechnya.[298]

A public opinion poll in *Moskovski Novosti* taken just after it was clear that the covert operation against the Chechen government had failed showed that by then 65% of the Russian population was against Russian troops marching into Chechnya.[299] In March 1996 more than half (54%) of the Russian population supported the withdrawal from Chechnya, while only 27% supported the continuation of the war.[300] Notwithstanding this general disapproval of the campaign,

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[298] Anatol Lieven, *Op. Cit.*, p. 196.
[299] *Moskovski Novosti*, 29 January-5 February 1995, p. 4.
[300] Anatol Lieven, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 196-197. There was one moment during the whole Chechen campaign where public support was increasing, namely in the aftermath of the hostage taking in Budennovsk. This hostage taking was viewed

it did not gather sufficient momentum to mobilize mass demonstration on the streets. Therefore, the political apathy and disappointment within the democratic movement was very high.

More importantly, Yeltsin's popularity, which after 1992 was never very high, dramatically fell at that time, 63 % of the respondents were against Yeltsin's policy in Chechnya and only 8% favored it. Political analysts evaluated *post factum* that the Chechen war was Yeltsin's most serious mistake. For a President who was determined to be re-elected, such rapidly declining popularity was alarming. Yeltsin, who was regularly shown to be sensitive to mass public agitation during his reign, actually reacted to public criticism in his presidential re-election campaign. He anxiously sought a way out of the Chechen war, and as a result military reform, most particularly the AVF, became a key element of his election campaign. Thus public disillusion with the war, with the military and with Yeltsin himself became factored into the executive's calculations about re-election strategies and concomitantly manifested itself in terms of the executive's public agenda for and the imperative of military reform. These factors shaped the future public and private debate.

Although Shevtsova and Olcott acknowledged that the Russian human rights lobby was small and fragmented and the Russian mass media was financially dependent on oligarchs who used them to push their respective political agendas, they credited both the activists and the media for their roles in forcing the government and the President to modify its policy during the Chechen war.[301] After the war, Sergei Kovalev, the well known human rights activists wrote:

> "The war was won by those few dozen, and only a few dozen, non-government organizations all across the country - the Soldiers' Mothers and Memorial, among others - which from the first day raised their voices against the meat grinder. They were seen and heard by only a small percentage of citizens. But among these citizens were several hundred or so-just a few hundred-who demonstrated and picketed day after day, month after month. Their conviction made an impression on our 'silent majority'. This is our arithmetic. The war was won by freedom of speech. By several dozen honest journalists-just a few dozen-who continued to describe the truth about Chechnya to hundreds of thousands of readers and tens of millions of television viewers, despite pressure from the government…In 1996, the more perceptive politicians seeking office understood that the country would support anyone who didn't promise to stop the bloodshed. The "hawks" had no future. It was at this moment that Yeltsin made several highly public moves toward peaceful settlement of the conflict. It was exactly then that Lebed, a man not entirely devoid of political instinct, it seems, beckoned to the voters with the promise of immediate peace. Those voters who didn't believe Yeltsin believed Lebed…This in fact is democracy at work: society has mechanisms with which it can force."[302]

Indeed, the logic of elections - that is the race for the voters' will - combined with freedom of speech, influenced Yeltsin's agenda during 1996 and it definitely influenced the military reform debate thereafter. While the Chechen war can be seen as a very negative element of his tenure,

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by most Russians as a terrorist act. In parallel with the mobilization force the concept of territory has in Russian military culture, the fear and mobilization power of terrorist among the Russian population may not be underestimated. This observation is supported by events in September 1999, where nighttime explosions in Moscow and Volgodonsk that killed more then 200 people were crucial for installing a public opinion in favor of a re-launching of a full scale war in Chechnya.

[301] Shevtsova and Olcott , *Op. Cit*., pp. 6-8. See also Shevtsova, *Op. Cit.,* pp. 166-167.

[302] Sergei Kovalev, 'Russia after Chechnya', *The New York Review of Books*, 17 July 1997. In a second follow-up article, Kovalev had to review some of his optimistic thoughts with the beginning of the Second Chechen War. See Sergei Kovalov, 'Putin's War', *The New York Review of Books*, 10 February 2000.

Yeltsin must be credited with guaranteeing that scheduled elections took place and also protecting freedom of speech.

Contradictorily, however, the policies of pursuing war and ensuring freedom of speech – perhaps characteristic of Yeltsin's impulsive personality – cancelled each other out. This last observation can be seen as exemplary of Russia's stagnation in the 1990's. This stagnation, however, was interrupted one last time by an outburst of energy and a political *tour de force* from Yeltsin which led to his surprising victory in the race for a second term in the Kremlin, however, the political price that Yeltsin paid was high.

Building on Ruins: the Second Wave of Institution Building (1996-1997)

Political analysts were amazed that Yeltsin was re-elected. In early 1996 even people in Yeltsin's inner circle doubted his election chances. Rumors existed that Korzhakov - who was not afraid of anti-constitutional proposals - wanted to postpone the elections. The results of the elections, however, proved once more that both Yeltsin's abilities as a politician and his physical strength had been underestimated.

Nevertheless, in early 1996 objective facts underscored the view that Yeltsin was not nor could become a 'new' man. At the end of October 1995, Yeltsin fell unconscious and suffered a heart attack. From that moment on rumors and speculation about his health and ability to govern gained a life of their own. The Communist opposition gained a clear victory in the Duma elections of December 1995. As the most fervent and organized opponents of Yeltsin's regime, Yeltsin suffered a major political defeat. Moreover, the nationalist LDPR, the other political opponents of the President came second. Although Yeltsin did not have a party of his own, the party closest to him, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's 'Our Home is Russia' (NDR), only came third. Fourthly, in January 1996 Yeltsin found himself in only fourth place in the opinion polls behind the Communist Zyuganov, the liberal Yavlinsky, the nationalist Zhirinovsky, and the 'strongman' candidate of the Congress of Russian Communities (KRO), Alexander Lebed. While Zyuganov could count on 21% of the likely presidential votes, Yeltsin could only rely on 8%. The other three candidates had about 10% each: Yavlinsky 11%, Zhirinovsky 11% and Lebed 10%.[303] Finally, the Chechen war became a real threat to his political career. As a result, these facts cumulatively made it hard for political analysts to believe that Yeltsin could plausibly win the elections.

When Yeltsin launched his presidential campaign in spring 1996 his survival instinct was stronger then ever. He started with a dramatic gesture: he fired an unpopular member of the government. Andrei Kozyrev, the Western minded Minister of Foreign Affairs, was his victim. This was not surprising given the fact that even liberals saw him as a rather ineffective and weak minister. He was replaced by Yevgeny Primakov, an experienced Soviet diplomat and former head of the Foreign Intelligence Service. This replacement, however, introduced a more statist and confrontational foreign policy in the post-1996 period. Moreover, it was the first indication that the re-election of Yeltsin would have important consequences that would change the foreign, defense and security policies of Russia.[304]

Yeltsin's presidential campaign was, for a Western observer, simple and visibly deceptive. Everywhere he went he promised whatever his audience asked. He theatrically ordered people in his entourage to immediately settle the problems that were proposed to him and he signed *ad hoc* decrees to enforce these decisions. In this way he tried to convince the public that he worked consciously on every individual problem that was presented by every Russian citizen he met during his campaign. One spectacular example of such an *ad hoc* decree concerned the AVF. During a

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[303] Poll organized by VTsIOM as noted in Shevtsova, *Op. Cit.*, p.156.
[304] About the so-called Kozyrev and the Primakov doctrine see for instance: Greg Austin and Alexey D. Muraviev, *The Armed Forces of Russia in Asia*, London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2000, pp. 65-73.

lightning visit to the Chechen front Yeltsin promised soldiers that he would install an AVF by the year 2000.[305] In other words, without consulting with either the Ministry of Defense or the General Staff, he abolished conscription with a single signature. With this dramatic act he evidently tried to win the votes of those who favored an AVF in society itself, as well as, more concretely, the votes of the approximately 400,000 conscripts serving in the armed forces. In addition, Yeltsin enhanced his re-election strategy by monopolizing the mass media with the help of the new capitalists who ran the media. They extensively covered his public performances be they at rock concerts or street meetings all over the country.

However the work behind the scenes was much more important at this time than his public appearances. Yeltsin worked hard to find a way out of the Chechen war. Moreover, he admitted new members into the inner circle of his entourage. An important breakthrough was reached at the Economic Forum at Davos in the same year. During the meeting Anatoli Chubais bargained for the support of the most influential Russian bankers and industrialists on behalf of Yeltsin's presidential campaign.[306] This so-called Davos agreement had two results. First, Yeltsin received the support of the 'New Rich' in his campaign, which provided him with enough capital to bribe his way through the elections. Indeed, many rumors about corruption and bribery surrounded Yeltsin's re-elections.[307] Secondly, the small group of confidants around Yeltsin underwent a major upheaval. The 'Petersburg' group associated with Anatoli Chubais, now supported by 'the Group of Seven' and other young liberal reformers, stood against the group led by Korzhakov and Oleg Soskovets, two conservative minded Yeltsin trustees closely connected to the security forces.[308] In fact, Yeltsin now presided over two presidential campaign staffs of which the Chubais team gained more influence over time.

The Davos Pact can be perceived as another example of an influential agreement which was made far from the public eye that then had major consequences for Russian political life during Yeltsin's second term. Very soon, in March 1996, it was clear that Yeltsin's chances were changing in the presidential race. He soon obtained second place in the ratings and, more importantly, Zyuganov's support was diminishing. This slide could be seen in the opinion polls ratings. At the end of March, Zyuganov had 20% of the total ratings, while Yeltsin had 14%. In April 1996, the gap between the two protagonists was only 5%. By 1st June, Yeltsin had 36% and Zyuganov only 33%. By 16th June 1996, when the first round took place, Yeltsin won with 3% more votes than the Communist candidate, but, more importantly, Lebed received 15% of the votes and consequently became a crucial protagonist in the second round. Lebed would use this power position to bargain for an influential position in the Russian political scene.

In the beginning of July, after receiving Lebed's support, Yeltsin was elected as President of the Russian Federation in the second round. This victory was a political *tour de force*, but the price –especially in terms of democratic values and the evolution of the decision-making institutions- was

[305] Meant is here, Ukaz Nr. 722 of 16 May 1996, 'on the transition of recruitment of soldiers and sergeants of the armed forces and other forces in the Russian Federation on contract basis'.

[306] For a very informative account of the so-called Davos Pact and the role of the oligarchs in Yeltsin's re-election see: Chrystia Freeland, *Sale of the Century, Russia's Wild Ride From Communism to Capitalism*, Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2000, pp. 182-213.

[307] This observation is however challenged by Aron who accused Western scholars and journalists of condescension, if not Russophobia and racism, by stating that the corruption theory that surrounded the 1996 presidential elections. He continued his defense for the Russian president noting that ' After all, unfolding at the same time President Clinton's re-election campaign spent perhaps several hundred times more per voter, yet no one suggests that the American voters were 'bought', while an equally preposterous allegation, which depicts millions of Russian men and women as unthinking cattle, is advanced without a blush of shame.' Leon Aron, *Op. Cit.*, p. 641.

[308] 'The group of seven', (after the G-7), existed of Boris Berezovsky, Vladimir Gusinsky, Pyotr Aven, Mikhail Fridman, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Aleksandr Smolensky, and Vladimir Potanin. Berezovsky would be the major brain behind the Davos Pact between Chubais and the bankers. Later Sergei Filatov, Viktor Ilyuhin and Tatyana Dyachenko, Yeltsin's daughter, joined this new team. It is this group of trustees that later will become the 'inner circle', 'the family' or a new 'dynasty' of Presidential trustees.

high. The results of the bargaining that took place behind he scenes in the first half of 1996 compromised the following concessions for Yeltsin, which could be observed in the way that personnel changes and institutional changes occurred after that period.

Firstly, many personnel changes occurred in Yeltsin's immediate entourage. It must be said that these people did not necessarily hold an official position in Russian politics. Some of them did while others only had informal contacts with the President or members of 'the family'. However, those who contributed to Yeltsin's re-election bought themselves into the President's inner-circle. Most conspicuous were the new liberals or 'the young reformers' and the 'robber barons' or 'oligarchs' by which was meant people who (legally or illegally) accumulated enormous wealth, power and sometimes their own 'empire' after the introduction of the free market. People like Chubais, and later popular young governor Boris Nemtsov, represented the new reformers, while Boris Berezovsky, who became the public face of Russia's wild capitalism, was one of the most notorious of the new elite 'oligarch' elite.[309]

Besides these cronies, the popular airborne forces General Alexander Lebed managed to become a remarkable actor in Russian high politics. He became secretary of the Security Council, a prestigious, though quasi non-executive position. The frank general, however, thought that doing politics was the same as commanding a military unit. He soon found out that the political game was more subtle and complex when he was fired as secretary of the Security Council and consequently lost all his official posts in Moscow four months later in October 1996. Finer's rule that the 'experts on violence' are generally spoken poor politicians was herewith once more illustrated.[310]

Berezovsky's influence was more lasting most of all because he had good personal contacts with the Yeltsin family, particularly Tatiana Dyachenko, the daughter of the President. In this way Berezovsky promoted himself not only as an informal but influential advisor to the President, but also proved himself to be a master intriguer who bypassed (and even boycotted) normal democratic procedures in political decision-making. In this way he even succeeded in attaining, albeit for a short time, the position of Deputy Secretary of the Security Council (after Lebed's dismissal) and then the position as Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States. It needs no explanation that Berezovsky's influence in the Kremlin was used by him to protect the interests of the *haute finances*. This not only compromised the way political decisions were made in Russia, but also stifled the emergence of a middle class in Russian society that was so badly needed for the development of a Western style democracy.[311]

When Yeltsin nominated Chubais as head of the Presidential Administration in July 1996 he not only made it clear that a new energetic stage in economic reform was on the cards, but also that the architect of privatization was now a political ally and confidant. 1997 was his political year and although all these trustees were adopted in the presidential inner circle as a consequence of the Yeltsin re-election effort, it must be underlined that their relations with each other were very hostile. None of the 'temporary partners' were prepared to share their influence and all of them ambitiously and uncompromisingly vied for the most powerful positions. Moreover, their coalition with Yeltsin was based on calculation and certainly not on conviction or personal loyalty to him himself. The inherent conflicts were openly demonstrated very soon in the unstable political year that was to come.

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[309] Boris Berezovsky started his career as a car-dealer and soon accumulated an enormous empire of banks, oil companies, media companies and airlines. An interesting book that explained the system of how these oligarchs build their empire (and typically the importance of the car business) and how they influenced politics between 1994-1998 is: Stephen Handelman, *Comrade Criminal, Russia's New Mafiya*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 13-114. Also Chrystia Freeland devoted a study on this topic: Chrystia Freeland, *Sale of the Century, Russia's Wild Ride From Communism to Capitalism*, Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2000.

[310] S. E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback, The Role of the Military in Politics*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1988, (Third Edition), pp. 12-14. See also Lilia Shevtsova, *Op. Cit.* pp. 201-202 and Benjamin S. Lambeth, *The Warrior Who Would Rule Russia*, Santa Monica: RAND, 1996, p. 91.

[311] Paul Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin, Boris Berezovsky and the Looting of Russia*, New York: Harcourt, 2000.

The frictions reached such dimensions that Yeltsin lost his position as arbiter over the parties. The presidential regime based on the principle of 'divide and rule' lost herewith its meaning. Political rivalry in Yeltsin's immediate environment was out of control, in so far that during 1998 and certainly 1999, political observers could not identify the exact locus of power in the Russian political landscape. This confusing situation also had its consequences at the international level where, for instance, some analysts at NATO in Brussels did not know whom to talk to about Russian-NATO relations.

Secondly, the personnel changes in the President's immediate entourage were accompanied by institutional changes. In this case, the position of Lebed as secretary of the Security Council especially caused some fundamental changes with consequences for the defense debate. Yeltsin counterbalanced Lebed by installing a new institution: the Defense Council. This Council, chaired by Yeltsin himself and meant to meet on a monthly basis, was part of the presidential staff and was responsible for advising the president on defense policy, especially on coordinating military policy in matters of reform.[312] Yeltsin appointed Yuri Baturin, a long-term ally and 'liberal inside the Kremlin', as head of this Council. But here, it was also proved that Yeltsin's policy of control based on the principle of 'divide and rule', created nothing more than conflict and certainly not efficient decision-making institutions. Lebed and Baturin soon clashed over several issues and constantly trespassed into each other's fields of responsibilities in the defense and security spheres.

The adoption of Lebed into the executive with some limited levers of power at his disposal had another far-reaching consequence in the defense arena. Lebed called for the dismissal of the Russian Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev and proposed Igor Rodionov, a sincere and professional general (although mistrusted by the liberal-democrats due to his involvement in suppressing the Tbilisi uprising in 1989)[313], as the new candidate for the post of Minister of Defense. On July 17th 1996, Yeltsin gave in to Lebed's demands, and Rodionov was appointed to the Ministry of Defense. The proposed candidate was also positively welcomed by former Lieutenant General Lev Rokhlin, then the head of the Duma's Committee on Defense and Security, who was another friend of Lebed. In the summer months of 1996, it was as if Lebed's influence reached it peak, the more he succeeded in getting rid of the Kremlin's 'party of war', he could finally end the war in Chechnya. Yeltsin fulfilled at least one promise he made during his presidential campaign, by ending the war. His re-election thus had important personnel and institutional consequences for the military forces. Moreover, after the unpopular war with Chechnya was ended, an euphoric mood was perceived in Russian society in general during the summer months, that was reminiscent of the first half of 1992. However, the question remained about how efficient this (second) period of institutional turmoil was, and whether it could give a new impetus to reform in the military.

Yeltsin's Regime Becomes Stagnant

Immediately after his re-election Yeltsin fell sick, a condition from which he never fully recovered. Notwithstanding the fact that 1997 became registered in the political annals as the year in which a new attempt to put (economic) reform back on track occurred, Russia in fact underwent a process of political decay. The permanent struggle between the different members of the executive, between the legislature and the executive branch, and between practically all the key institutional actors and the President made Russia a 'stagnant' state. Yeltsin isolated himself and only had sporadic contact with his own advisors. This created an atmosphere where intrigue and conspiracy were common in

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[312] See: *Rossiskaia Gazeta*, 27 July 1996; F. Stephen Larrabee and Theodore W. Karasik, *Op. Cit.*, p. 21; and Greg Austin and Alexey D. Muraviev, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 144-155.
[313] For Lebed's account of this event, see: Alexander Lebed, *General Alexander Lebed, My Life and My Country*, Washington: Regnery Publishing, 1997, pp. 213-219.

the Kremlin and stood in great contrast with the ideal principles of transparency and democratic order that the Russia Constitution supported.

The President's main concern was the conservation of his position and therefore he fired any individual who dared to express his presidential ambitions or who was too assertive. As a result, the years 1997-1998 were characterized politically by a constant reshuffling of personnel and frequent institutional changes. The rationale behind these presidential actions was the subject of much speculation.

Hence, the question to what extent Yeltsin was still in control of the political game was reflected in the fact that his mental and physical health appeared to make him more of a ceremonial leader than a powerful executive. 'The family', which was almost an official actor in Russian politics during this period, was accused of steering the political agenda behind the scenes. The whole truth on this issue may possibly never be revealed, but it is a fact that there were many ministerial replacements, which began in March 1997, when Chernomrydin's government became dominated by the young liberals of Boris Nemtsov and Anatoli Chubais, who were both nominated as First Deputy Prime Ministers. Igor Rodionov the last representative of Lebed, was replaced with General Igor Sergeyev through the lobbying of the new liberals, in the new government. The former commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces was apparently more suitable for the new liberals dominating the government because he was more loyal, less vocal and less assertive on the defense budget issue. To the credit of this government it must be said that it was full of energy and genuine intentions to implement liberal economic reforms. However, the division of the political world, motivated most of the time by antipathy towards Chubais, the bankers and media would stifle many of the intended reforms.

Shevtsova blamed this 'traditional' society for the failure of this liberal attempt to reform Russian society when she wrote:

> "Despite all the modern trappings, Russian society as a whole remained highly traditional. Patrimonialism, old patron-client relationships, typical Soviet habits and symbols, and populist sentiments retained their hold. The very fact that the country was still governed by representatives of the communist nomenclature showed the depths of the roots of the past. For a significant portion of society, the members of Chubais's team-with all their self-assurance, their lack of a sense of proportion or of respect for the old symbolism, their conviction that they could do anything and their disdain for all roots- were an alien growth. Also alien to the establishment was a large part of the business world, especially those who had not gone through the Soviet school and were not familiar with the habits of the old establishment. The parvenus were able to attain power and to make money. They could be assigned certain tasks-they could become functionaries, like Chubais. The liberals could be liked by Yeltsin, and some of them, like Nemtsov, could even become his favorite. But they could not rise above that level-they could not overcome the old establishment and get to the point of dictating their own laws."[314]

At the end of 1997, Yeltsin was dissatisfied with the liberal reforms and dismissed the Chernomyrdin government. Chubais and Anatoli Kulikov, the former Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Internal Affairs, were also fired. Chernomyrdin had perhaps become too powerful in the mind of the President and was replaced by the thirty-five-year-old Sergei Kiriyenko who was accepted by the Duma on April 17th 1998. The new government was a mixture of liberal forces, while the ministries of power were manned by the same people, namely Sergeyev for the Ministry of Defense, Primakov for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Stepashin became the Minster of

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[314] Lilia Shevtsova, *Op. Cit.*, p. 231-232.

Internal Affairs. This presidential 'coup' as this replacement was called, did not bring stability, on the contrary, the antagonism between the legislature and the executive grew while the economic situation deteriorated and found itself at the brink of collapse.

The 1997 shake-up also influenced the military decision-making system. Kokoshin, the only servant in the Ministry of Defense who could survive as a civilian in this ultimate military environment, was appointed as General Inspector of the Russian Armed Forces. Later, during the next institutional shake-up, he became the new Secretary of the Security Council, while he kept his function as General Inspector of the Russian Armed Forces, which by then had been incorporated into the organization of the Security Council. Meanwhile, the Defense Council, an institution that ultimately did not last longer than two years, was abolished. The Security Council once again formally became the sole institution that bolstered all coordination functions in defense and security issues, a state of affairs that resembled the situation of 1992-1993.

Kiriyenko was sacrificed in his turn after the ruble's devaluation on August 18th 1998 and the Russian economy collapsed. Yeltsin again proposed Chernomyrdin as the new Prime Minister, but finally had to nominate Primakov as a consensus candidate for the post. This new government was a centrist government including people from the Soviet past, technocrats and personnel from the regions. During 1999, in the period that lies beyond the scope of this study, Yeltsin changed the government twice within a few months. He replaced Primakov with Stepashin during the NATO air campaign over Kosovo and the latter with Vladimir Putin, the current President of the Russian Federation, as a consequence of Stepashin's weak response to the attacks by Chechen warlords on Dagestan in September 1999.

The poor economic situation culminated in the collapse of the Russian economy in August 1998 which, together with the political cleavages in Russian society, and their collective blows to a presidential power game mixed with a generational conflict, resulted in a completely stagnant society, in which decision-making procedures and institutions were constantly under attack.

The discussion about reform was thus overshadowed by a merciless power game in which the intrigues were mostly orchestrated behind the scenes by a small circle of Yeltsin's trustees. Moreover, in this political context, failure as well as success in reform was punished with dismissal because both threatened the power structures of the Kremlin. In this way a new vicious circle of inefficiency was created which could not be broken as long as the rules of the Yeltsin's political game remained fundamentally unchanged.

Conclusions: The Pyramidal Presidential System and the Consequences for Reform

In the previous section, the main aspects of the development of the Russian political system under Yeltsin were presented. The resulting moribund political system was mainly the result of what Shevtsova called the 'pyramidal presidential system'. This system, in the specific context of Yeltsin's regime, was a contradictory system that combined an almost complete form of presidential power with an inability to exercise this power, which intrinsically bred vicious circles of inefficiency, which subsequently compromised the capacity for efficient and 'real' rule. The powerful individual was not able to rule this complex, internally divided and extremely unstable system.

In his ambition to accumulate as much power as possible in order to survive in this divided political landscape, Yeltsin created a strong presidential regime, which was reflected in the presidential powers embedded in the design of the 1993 Constitution. This political regime was thus not only the result of his personality, but also of Russia's societal and political evolution, which was characterized by chaotic pluralism, political cleavages, and the growing assertiveness of the regions towards the center. Therefore, he had to make compromises with powerful groups such as the oligarchs and the regional administrators, which then resulted in a permanent change of goals and a loss of control over the implementation of resources.

When Yeltsin's health deteriorated in 1996 he was physically unable to play referee among the competing groupings that surrounded him. Yeltsin could no longer impose a balance among the political factions or prove his supremacy in the system. In the end he came up with spectacular dismissals and governmental changes, which on the one had proved his power in the system, but on the other hand demonstrated his weakness and his inability to create a normally functioning state.

Instead of a coherent state system many centers of power were created through which interest and elite groups could channel their interests. The most important of these were the Presidential Administration, the Security Council, and the 'group of four': the President, the Prime Minister, and the heads of the lower and upper houses of the parliament. If this system could be seen as it was, it was essentially the fact that it was extremely unstable that made it inefficient. There was simply not a minimum of political or societal consensus available that could stabilize Russian society and this in its turn was translated into elite mobility in state functions and permanent changes in decision-making institutions.

Samuel Huntington would call this a weak political organization because it lacked both legitimacy and only had a low level of *institutionalization*. Huntington explained this last concept by the way the different institutions composing the system were allowed to develop their own traditions and by the way they were able to act autonomously.[315] The Russian political system did not meet these two conditions. In the pyramidal presidential regime Yeltsin unified three important functions in his person: he took the decision-making initiative; he managed both the politicians and the organization, and he was able to establish the criteria of rationality. These three functions are normally distributed over different instances in a complex organization in order to make the system work efficiently.[316] The fact that the Russian president (intentionally or non-intentionally) monopolized these functions may be seen as an alternative explanation of why the Russian political system in the 1990's was inefficient and why it can be categorized as only a semi- democratic system.

In what follows, the military reform debate is overviewed in order to evaluate it as a decision-making problem. For now, it may be clear that the political context in which this debate advanced was not an encouraging one in which to introduce one of the most sweeping changes to the military organization that were ever undertaken in Russia. Moreover, this overview demonstrated that the military elite was not only a passive player in this game, but that it was also an active participant in the process. Thus, the military elite was one of the co-founders of this super-presidential system.

2. 3.   The All-Volunteer Debate under Yeltsin

The political landscape in which the military reform debate developed was extremely unstable and found itself at the brink of collapse several times, which subsequently resulted in a weak state that had to cope with bureaucratic struggles and conflict containment among political coalitions.

Moreover, there was a fundamental lack of consensus on which role the state had to play in post-Soviet society. Russia consequently evolved from a rigid totalitarian to a chaotic paralyzed state, in which a constant reorganization of the political institutions as well as a high degree of elite mobility were the basic characteristics. In 1996 Hans-Henning Schröder, an analyst from the Federal Institute for Eastern Scientific and International Studies (Bundesinstitut für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien), summarized this situation as follows:

> "It is not possible to create an orderly political proces, in which the interests and the different point of views of the political factions could be integrated. Early in Yeltsin's leadership there emerged several contradictory forces. ... the dynamics

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[315] Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New haven: Yale University Press, 1968, p. 345.
[316] Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg, *Op. Cit.*, p. 189.

of the presidential apparatus fundamentally changed as responsibilities and posts were redistributed. In this atmosphere each politcial faction seeked the best position to maximaze its power. "[317]

The Russian political system lacked the necessary levels of both legitimacy and trust, despite the fact that the leaders of the state had organized the democratically prescribed elections. Under these circumstances, the process of 'institutionalization' was extremely difficult. The fervently embraced word 'reform', that had mobilized and motivated so many at the beginning of the nineties lost its entire candor as Yeltsin's regime progressed. Schröder continued his severe analysis on Russia's transformation when he wrote:

> "The policy of the president did not follow a well thought concept or program. It was modified by political battles and the different interest groups who tried to influence the president." [318]

Every attempt to rationalize and to improve the decision-making system ended in a more complex and opaque organization and the more energy that was invested in talking about reform, the more stagnant the environment became. Once more, certain Russian politicians, including Yeltsin, had created the opposite of what they originally intended.

The way Yeltsin's regime evolved and the way it handled reform in general must be seen as the global context in which military reform evolved. The reciprocal interference of politicians and the military elite in each other's domain of expertise will serve as a basic argument to explain why the conceptual phase of military reform ended in failure. The three official military reform plans that were presented in the period 1992-1998 by the Ministers of Defense and in which the conscription-professionalization debate was prominent will be surveyed. As the plans will be chronologically reviewed, attention will be paid to the personality of the ministers, their professional background, and the (political) logic of their appointments, which will reveal some aspects of the different reform ideas. They will also shed some light on the main political difficulties that the ministers were confronted with during their time in office. This will explain why the enthusiasm of the initial phase of each reform endeavor faded away as reform attempts quickly stagnated.

This chronologically based approach may be misleading, for the discussion about these issues was in reality much more chaotic. Alternative ideas and external interference will be mentioned and situated in the dynamic of the political context of the particular moment at which they were expressed. Finally, all these observations clustered around this political and institutional analysis are summarized in an evaluation of the AVF idea under Yeltsin.

The All-Volunteer Force as a Reform Topic

The Grachev Period (May 1992- July 1996). The appointment of General Pavel Grachev as to the position of Minister of Defense in May 1992, was essentially the result of political calculation and favoritism. Yeltsin knew that the armed forces were an important player in Russian politics and, therefore, the loyalty of at least a fraction of the military was crucial for his political survival. On the other hand, individual military officers were also zealously seeking personal contact with the president, as this would help them in their search for the well-known Russian patronage bonds or *blat'*. This practice was a reciprocal process, as both actors – politicians and military leaders alike -

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[317] Translated from: Hans-Henning Schröder, Viele köche verderben den Brei…Zur Strukturellen Führungsschwäche der Jelzin-Administration (Teil I), *Aktuelle Analysen* , Nr 53/1996*, Bundesinstitut für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien, 3 September 1996, p. 2.
[318] Translated from: *Ibid.*, p. 2.

were active in it and both were motivated by political and organizational survival. The immediate result of this political reality was that it undermined the concept of military professionalism, at least in the way that Huntington defined it and as it is characterized by: expertise, responsibility and corporate identity.[319] During the period 1990-1991 the manner in which the relationship between Yeltsin and Grachev evolved, may be considered as a protypical model for civil-military relations under Yeltsin.[320]

During this period, liberal politicians were disillusioned by the appointment of an officer to the position of Minister of Defense, because they had hoped that their support for Yeltsin in the turbulent 1989-1991 period would be rewarded by the appointment of one or the other short listed civilian candidates, such as Andrei Kokoshin or the late Galina Starovoitova. This disappointment may not be underestimated, because it not only influenced the process of Russian democratization in macro-political terms, but it also allowed the military elite to monopolize the defense debate.

Indeed, Yeltsin's decision meant that many military reformers of the 1988-1991 period resigned from the ranks and that during the Yeltsin regime the reform debate would no longer be influenced by external, civilian voices. Moreover, the prominent place that was given to the military leaders by Yeltsin meant, that non-governmental organizations, which once had a voice in the military debate, had faded away. Thus, Yeltsin's political calculations had a negative impact on grass-roots activism and it illustrated just how transparent the decision-making process in military affairs had become.

The fact that Yeltsin did not choose a civilian Minister of Defense subsequently does not mean that he could nominate any military officer that he was in close contact with for the position. If Yeltsin were to do this, it would not guarantee that the officers as a group would support Yeltsin's candidate, because the officers' corps itself was already too fragmented due to an internal power struggle which was rooted in bureaucratic survival. Thus in the end, Yeltsin had to choose a candidate from a powerful faction of the military elite who had support from the armed forces in general and who had at least a minimal level of support from the civilian political world. This was the reason why General Kobets, who was a personal military advisor to Yeltsin and who became the Chief Inspector of the Ministry of Defense in May 1992, was not appropriate for the ministerial post. Kobets was a controversial personality in military circles and he had little credibility among his peers among the General Staff officers. General Grachev was thus a consensus candidate, who could more or less satisfy both the majority of the civilian elite as well as the military leadership. For the civilians it was significant that Grachev opposed the August Coup and the military had a high regard for the young and energetic elite airborne troops, as well as the *Afghansty* group. In other words, Yeltsin respected the cynical 'Baranets axiom' that stated:

> "The main military department must be one of the most trustworthy supporters of
> the First Person of the state and, especially, in agreement with an unstable
> society."[321]

However, the fact that Yeltsin nominated Grachev to the position of Minister of Defense, brought some supplementary political uncertainty and friction to the government. Firstly, it was not a secret that Grachev had limited professional skills and/or experience to fulfill the complex job he was assigned to. Some of Grachev's colleagues stated that he was a good field commander, but a poor manager. Grachev was not a typical product of the well known and intellectually skilled class of *Genshtab* officers, but his lack of competence, however, was not a problem for Yeltsin. Grachev's appointment might have been the result of a well intended policy, because for Yeltsin,

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[319] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, New York: Vintage Books, 1957, pp. 7-18.
[320] Viktor Baranets, *Elt'tsin I ego generaly, zapiski polkovnika genshtaba*, Moskva: Severshenno Sekretno, 1998, pp. 155-176.
[321] Translated from: *Ibid*. p. 480.

this appointment was the result of political calculation, which in his estimation took precedence over professional competence.

> "It may well be that for many in Yeltsin's entourage these concerns [about Grachev's incompetence] spoke rather in favor of the new Defense Minister, in much the same way as Yazov's narrow-mindedness had been his main attraction for Gorbachev."[322]

Secondly, as a 44-year-old appointee General Grachev overtook many senior General Staff officers, who had hoped for a promotion to the General Staff and possibly to the Ministry of Defense. Their feelings of envy and injustice were strengthened when Grachev brought a group of Afghan war veterans and personal friends with him to work in key positions in the Ministry of Defense. Indeed, the arrival of Grachev paralleled some important personnel changes in the Ministry of Defense, which included those of Colonel Ivanov and General Burlakov. To make matters worse, some of Grachev's protégés, such as the former commander of the Western Group of Forces, General Matvei Burlakov, were the subject of corruption investigations. Incompetence combined with corruption, meant that after the initial euphoria of Grachev's appointment, Grachev was eventually rejected by the military elite, and became isolated inside the military establishment.

The result of the Grachev appointment was a fierce bureaucratic struggle between the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff which was even fought in the public arena. Many general officers expressed their discontent about the leadership, among them were, for instance: the Chief of the General Staff General Koleshnikov, First Deputy Defense Minister General Gromov, Deputy Defense Minister General Valeri Mironov, General Georgi Kondrateyev, Commander of the Airborne Troops General Evgeni Podkolzin, General Eduard Vorobyev and General Alexander Lebed.[323] The disagreement between the General Staff and the Ministry of Defense became so intense that sources in the presidential administration suggested bringing the General Staff directly under the control of the president instead of its normal subordination to the Ministry of Defense. If this change were to take place then this would make the Ministry of Defense only responsible for the military budget and the military industrial complex, rather than military operational control. But it was due to the questionable loyalty of the Chief of Staff General Koleshnikov vis-à-vis the president that prohibited the implementation of this idea. Once again, informal relations and networks, personal loyalty, and bonds of trust, steered Russian military policy and institution building, rather than rules of sound and transparent policy making and professionalism.

The political appointment of the mediocre Grachev to the post of the first post-Soviet Ministry of Defense thus created a highly unstable and even hostile environment, in which drafting a new reform plan and making historic organizational changes to the system became very difficult. The power struggle that was taking place among the Russian high command could be also be observed in a broader political context. In fact, a Hobbesian state emerged in post-Soviet Russia in which everybody fought each other for scarce resources. Externally, ministries, departments and administrations were engaged in fierce bureaucratic struggles, and internally the controversial leadership fought for its own survival. It was president Yeltsin who stood at the top of this political battlefield, as he was the initiator and driving force behind it. The power struggle in the defense ministry was motivated by 'provincial' thinking and/or the misplaced camaraderie of military officers responsible for implementing reform which favored the forces and units they originated from. Moreover, the personal profit seeking of individual high-ranking officers, (so contradictory to the ideology of the Russian officer corps that prescribed 'selflessness and service to the country'),

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[322] Pavel Baev, *The Russian Army in a Time of Troubles*, London: Sage, 1996, p. 61.
[323] Not surprisingly Lebed noted in his memoirs that especially the generals Semenov, Vorobyev, Gromov, and Mironov were officers of 'honor'. See Benjamin S. Lambeth, *The Warrior Who Would Rule Russia*, Santa Monica: RAND, 1996, p. 63.

fuelled the on-going friction among officers. Protected power positions, such as Grachev's ministerial post, not only allowed the holders to engage in corrupt behavior, but compromised reform, as the pursuit of privilege overshadowed sound and coherent management of the department.

Notwithstanding the fact that Grachev's arrival in office started in difficult circumstances and even though it evolved from bad to worse, he proposed an ambitious plan for military reform in July 1992. In an effort to prove his determination to reform the armed forces, he proposed a spectacular plan in which the professional army question was to be one of his primary concerns. In the optimistic first half of the year 1992, some politicians created what Baev called an 'omnipotence complex', which manifested itself in the economic sphere through the implementation of shock therapy. During this time it seemd like everything was possible in all areas of government, and that the most revolutionary perestroika-style ideas still lingered in the political arena.

The plan prescribed military reform activity from 1992 until the year 2000 and it envisaged three phases. The first phase of the plan covered the period 1992-1993 and was mainly a stabilization period in which the Russian military was supposed to take an inventory of men and material and withdrawals from military service would be effectuated. The second phase, foreseen to take place in 1995, would involve reducing the military forces to 2.1 million people, establishing mobile forces (one of Grachev's favorite issues) and reorganizing the Land Forces along a Corps-Brigade structure. The last and third phase, which covered the period of 1995-2000, foresaw the merging of the Air Defense Force and the Strategic Rocket Forces into the Air Force, and as well, the reorganization of the system into Military Districts was proposed. During the final phase of the plan, all redeployment activities would be ended and implemented according to new strategic plans. An essential and favorite point of Grachev's plan was the mobile forces concept, in which the Russian armed forces would be organized along three types of forces according to their state of operational readiness, namely: Constant Readiness Forces (capable of effectively influencing local conflicts); Rapid Deployment Forces (airborne and marine infantry based forces intended mainly to reinforce constant-readiness forces); and Strategic Reserves (to be deployed only during a major crisis or in large-scale wars). This diverse package of measures also foresaw the gradual transition from a conscript army to a professional army.

In the year 2000, Grachev wanted to install a military organization that would recruit 50% professional soldiers (or '*kontraktniki*' as the Russian call them) and 50% conscripted soldiers. In fact the two complementary ideas of mobile forces and the recruitment of *kontraktniki* can be understood as a major impulse to professionalize the Russian armed forces, although the full professionalization of the armed forces was not yet on the agenda. Why was the military prepared for such a concession? Several arguments may be proposed[324]: Firstly, the euphoria of the time played an important role. Russia - as was the perception of the time - stood on the brink of significant changes after the failed August coup. These changes would be guided by the triple concept of 'democratization', 'the introduction of the market economy', and the 'introduction of a professional army'. The Russian liberals tried to endorse these principles in Russian society, because they thought that if Russia would develop along these principles, it would quickly be embraced by the 'civilized, Western world'. The West also participated in this euphoria and subscribed to these principles while simultaneously trying to influence Russia's transformation. This policy, which would later be known as the 'Washington consensus' or as the Russia policy of President Bill Clinton, and especially his Vice president Al Gore, and his advisors (especially Strobe Talbott and Lawrence Summers), was driven by key notions such as democratization, the

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[324] Some of these arguments may also be found with A.I. Smirnov, *Rossiya: Na Puti k Professionalnoi armii (opyt, problemy, perspektivy*), Moskva: institut sotsiologii RAN, Tsentr obshchechelovecheskikh tsennostei, 1998, p. 74.

introduction of a market economy and to a less visible and a minor degree the introduction of an AVF.[325]

Thus, this new team of policy makers incorporated some of the core ideas of the liberal agenda into their reform plan. Moreover, some alternative reform plans were published during the following years in the press by Kobets, Lobov and Lopatin, and they all insisted on the introduction of the AVF into the system.[326] Although these articles were politically not very influential, it kept the professional army debate alive. The fact that Grachev included some popular ideas in his reform plan during this time period may be regarded with some skepticism. Indeed, it is impossible to find out to what extent Grachev actualy really believed in the idea of the professionalization of the armed forces himself. It could be possible that the political significance of this reform document for the Ministry of Defense was much higher than its actual practical significance. With the swift publication of the reform plan Grachev could at least satisfy the high expectations of the population that was focused on the conscription debate. In this sense he could calm the skepticism of liberal politicians towards a military officer, who acted as the Minister of Defense.

Secondly, Grachev used some ideas from successful military reform endeavors that took place in the international arena. It was clear that the Western experience of the AVF provided a powerful example for the Russians: the more so because off the very successful campaign of 'Desert Storm' against Iraq which showed how modern warfare had changed, and how obsolete conscript armies were in this type of warfare.[327] Thus, Grachev imitated the international experience which was tempered by his own negative personal experience in the Afghan war and subsequently may have strengthened his conviction.

Thirdly, and perhaps the most tangible reason for his reform plan was the fact that the Russian military saw itself confronted with a severe crisis in the conscription system. Russian youth simply did not want to serve in the Russian armed forces anymore, which seriously endangered personnel levels. As a result of these shortages, Grachev was forced to incorporate the idea of professional soldiers into the Russian military, in order to man the Russian military. In this sense, the option of a professional army was a matter of necessity rather than one of choice.

This last point may be highlighted by the fact that Grachev started the implementation of his reform plan and the recruitment of contract soldiers in an over-hasty manner. This may be deduced from the facts that: firstly, his reform plan did not have the necessary legislative backing; secondly, the Russian army was not ready to host this new type of soldier from an organizational point of view, thirdly because fundamental strategic documents such as the security and military doctrine were drafted eighteen months later; and fourthly because Grachev underestimated the bureaucratic resistance to the implementation of his plan that would take place. In other words, Grachev's professionalization campaign lacked legitimacy, practical organization, a conceptual background, and an organizational consensus.

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[325] See for a severe critique of the 'Washington consensus' and the United States Russia policy: the political inspired Christopher Cox report: Christopher Cox, *Russia's Road to Corruption, How the Clinton Administration Exported Government Instead of Free Enterprise and Failed the Russian People*, Washington: U.S. House of Representatives, September 2000 and for a more scholarly critique: Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade, America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000.

[326] See for example: Konstantin Kobets, 'Prioritety voennoj politiki Rosii' ['Priorities of Russia's Military Policy'] in: *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 5 February 1992; Vladimir Lobov, 'Not to reform but to build Anew', in: *Moscow News*, Nr. 4, 31 January 1993; Vladimir Lopatin, 'A Professional Army Instead of an Armed Nation', *Novaya Ezhednevnaya Gazeta*, 26 May 1994.

[327] See for instance: S. Bogdanov, 'Uroki 'Buri v Pustyne''[Lessons from 'Desert Storm'], *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 17 May 1991. Lieutenant-General S. Bogdanov was at the time of the printing of this article director of the Centre for Military-Strategic Research of the General Staff. This was very prestigious, highly professional, but rather unknown organ of the General Staff responsible for the coordination and conduct of future critical and applied research to the most important questions of military strategy. On this research centre see: S.J. Main, *The "Brain of the Russian Army-The Centre for Military-Strategic Research, General Staff 1985-2000*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, C 101, March 2000.

Without any formal legislative backing, Grachev was recruiting *kontraktniki* before he knew exactly: how many soldiers he was allowed to recruit, how much money he needed to pay them, what standards these potential soldiers had to maintain and what status this new type of soldier would have to have. Grachev was under so much pressure at the time to enforce this policy, and the need for fresh soldiers was so severe, he apparently could not wait for the necessary legislative backing to endorse his plan.[328]

Another example that may illustrate the incoherence that existed between executive and legislative documents in the Russian government is situated in the discussion about the personnel strength of the Russian forces.[329] In the reform document that Grachev made public in July 1992, it stated that the Russian armed forces would be reduced from 2,8 million in 1992 to 2,1 million at the end of 1994 and 1,5 million people at the end of 1999. However, the publication of the law 'On Defense' – the basic law that defined the position of the armed forces in society - in September 1992, prescribed that the Russian armed forces may not represent more than 1% of the Russian population, which meant a force of 1,5 million people. The law also stated that the objective of 1,5 million people had to be reached by the end of 1994. These formal documents therefore make it clear that the timing of personnel reduction was in discord with the law.

To make the situation even more chaotic, Grachev frequently changed the numerical objectives of military personnel. Some analysts even suggested that the Russian high command did not know how many people were in the military at any given time. In reality the situation in the forces also proved to be so unstable and unpredictable that it became practically ungovernable. Grachev's reform plan was not well underscored legally, because at that time the Supreme Soviet was, firstly, simply overworked (so many aspects of the new state had to be organized and legally covered), and secondly, the military forces was not a priority for the parliamentarians. Thirdly, the military elite could not, or did not, want to provide the necessary information to the parliament, as it was still trying to cover up military secrets. Finally, there was a growing antagonism between the legislature and the executive – which hinged on the well-known antagonisms between Ruslan Khasbulatov and Yeltsin - that would culminate in the October 1993 crisis. It may be clear that the ultimate evaluation of who was responsible for the legislative-executive dispute on reform is difficult to establish. Most probably it was a shared responsibility, since many people openly expressed intentions that were very often compromised by hidden (political) agendas. The competence of those involved in this dispute was often debatable and the organizational reality was also very complex.

How the practical implementation of the recruitment policy was going to be enforced is the subject of the study's third part, however some elements of it will be addressed here as they illustrate how incoherent Grachev's policy was. For instance, the old recruitment structure, orientated towards the incorporation of conscripted soldiers, was not fit for recruiting professional soldiers. The transformation of the *voenkomati* (or the local recruitment bureaus) from being a passive administration agent into an active seeker of potential candidates within a very short period of time, was unrealistic because the *voenkomati* were not only poorly informed themselves, but because they lacked the necessary means and, most importantly, they lacked the necessary mentality to do this work.

Moreover, the soldiers who prolonged their conscript service as contract soldiers very soon experienced the black hole in which the recruitment of professional soldiers found itself in at that time. There was simply no structure in place for them to apply for contract status due to the disorder

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[328] The crisis of conscription system was severely felt in the Army. It was some infantry units manning levels were only at 50% of peacetime recruits.

[329] For an extended discussion on the problem of personnel strength in the Russian army, see: Franz Walter, ' Wie in russland militärpolitik "gemacht" wird, die verringerung der Streitkräzfte als Kernstück der Militärreform, *Osteuropa*, Nr. 1, January 2000, pp. 42-55; and Stephen Foye, 'Manning the Russian Army: Is Contract Service a Success?' *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 3, Nr. 13, 1 April 1994.

in the recruitment offices and they were disappointed by the poor terms of the contracts and the lack of resources to train them to be professional soldiers. As a result, the professionalization campaign failed on the basis of an insufficient intake of new, qualified soldiers and the disillusionment of the contracted soldiers. Many contract soldiers, with a lack of prospects for economical survival in Russian society, left the ranks before their contract obligations were fulfilled. Those who stayed on as *kontraktniki* sought an escape from social problems at home. Due to these unfavorable circumstances, the qualitative standards of the contract soldiers dropped dramatically. Based on this reality, the initial enthusiasm for creating professional soldiers fell away as skeptics found new arguments to denounce the idea of contract service. This was another example of how crisis management based on unadapted structures only bred more crises and how, in this manner, the logic of 'the vicious circle of inefficiency' was not broken.

The first professionalization attempt failed not only on legal and practical grounds, but also on conceptual grounds. For instance, the idea of having mobile forces was closely linked with the idea of professionalization and the AVF, which was not supported by a military doctrine since it was issued late in November 1993. In other words, the basic conceptual document that had to outline the future tasks of the military organization was drafted a year and a half after the major implementation of the policy had taken place. The types of conflict that the professional soldier was being trained for still remained unaddressed in this document. In other words, the implementation of the plan came before the conceptualization of the plan, rather than vice versa, which was the opposite of rational decision-making theory. Baev makes the following remark:

> "Debate on this transition remained rather marginal, so the implementation of a new idea – as too often in Russian history- started before it had been properly thought through."[330]

Finally, by introducing the idea of mobile forces into the military forces, Grachev underestimated the level of organizational resistance to the fundamental implementation of the plan, which meant the abolishment of some types of units and the regrouping of other units into a different formation. Generally the airborne regiments were the most uncooperative and the elite component of the Russian armed forces did not accept downsizing. These disputes isolated Grachev from the military establishment and even from his own regiment, who distanced itself from his plans and even boycotted him. The dispute between the commander of the Russian airborne troops, Colonel-General Podzolski (supported by General Lebed) and Grachev, may therefore be seen as symptomatic of the bureaucratic resistance that was taking place in the military forces. There was a lack of consensus about the necessity of change and, more importantly, the practical consequences of it. In sum, the narrow minded corps of Russian generals, who let tactical considerations prevail over strategic thinking, were themselves responsible for the introduction of the new ideas of Mobile Forces and, consequently, the armed forces' professionalization.

From the sidelines it is easy to judge Grachev's period in office on the professionalization issue alone because it was such a startling failure. The death toll during the first Chechen war may also be used as a macabre illustration of this point. Nevertheless, Grachev's task was not easy given the organizational crisis he inherited from Soviet times and the extremely difficult political situation he faced. As a result, Grachev was obliged to build the Russian Armed Forces on the unstable basis of a multitude of practical problems, which were the result of the disintegration of the USSR. Notwithstanding these extenuating circumstances, Grachev was himself responsible for the fact that he encircled himself with mediocre and suspicious people who brought corruption to the highest level of the military establishment. These scandals resulted in the fact that Grachev was nicknamed 'Pasha Mercedes', an epithet that did not honor any reforming credentials, but rather association with corruption within the military. Moreover, personal loyalty to the president earned him the

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[330] Baev, *Op. Cit.*, p. 70.

highest office in the military, but he had to pay a high price for it: organizational isolation and as a consequence, a reform failure. Grachev was responsible for the failed introduction of contract soldiers, which ultimately compromised the future professionalization of the Russian armed forces. In conclusion, Grachev can be placed in the gallery of mediocre generals who fit the ideals outlined in Norman Dixon's 'psychology of military incompetence'.[331] Grachev was the product of a military system that did not prepare him for his political role as a reformer. Charles Dick, a distinguished British analyst of Russian military affairs, noted more bluntly that Grachev was 'an over-promoted, rapidly corrupted incompetent'.[332] This last observation cannot be applied to the successor of Pavel Grachev, namely Igor Rodionov who would give a new (although short-lived) impulse to the Russian discussion on military reform.

The Rodionov Period (July 1996- March 1997). The arrival of General Igor Rodionov as Minister of Defense on 18th July 1996 was the result of political negotiations between President Yeltsin and General Lebed. In order to get the support of Lebed during the second round of the presidential election in July 1996, Lebed not only demanded a prominent place in Russian security affairs for himself, he also negotiated the replacement of Pavel Grachev by Igor Rodionov.[333] In other words, politics also prevailed in the case of Rodionov's appointment, which is also considered to be a controversial outcome of Yeltsin's 1996-power struggle.

The controversy that surrounded this appointment was not so much based on the professional skills and personal integrity of Rodionov, but was instead based on Yeltsin's strained relationship with Russian parliamentarians. The difference between Rodionov and his predecessor was significant. For example, Rodionov publicized an alternative reform plan in November 1995[334] and the curriculum vitae of the new minister earned the respect from both Russian and foreign military analysts, who in turn became more optimistic about the prospects of Russian military reform.[335] Charles Dick called Rodionov; '…an honest, intellectually impressive and respected officer genuinely determined on radical reform implemented responsibly'.[336]

However, the relationship between the liberals and the new minister did have some problems. The liberal members of parliament had not forgotten that Rodionov was ultimately responsibility for the Tbilisi massacre in Georgia in April 1989, where he was Commander-in-Chief of the Transcaucasus MD. With Rodionov in office, the liberals felt that once again a representative of the traditional Soviet military was responsible for the management of the Ministry of Defense. In his turn, Rodionov still referred, even in 1995, to the 'anti-army-campaign of the late eighties' as a 'scandalous' period. The hostile relationship between the 'old guard' and the 'young Turks' showed that it would probably never be normalized. Yet, however controversial Yeltsin's decision might

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[331] Norman F. Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence*, London: Random House, 1994.

[332] Charles J. Dick, 'Russian Military Reform: Status and prospects', *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, C100, June 1998.

[333] The fact that Lebed's relation with Grachev was so soured says much about the position of Grachev in the military organization, since Lebed has been a direct and close collaborator of Grachev during military operations in Afghanistan, and as deputy airborne forces commander. (See: Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Op; Cit.*, pp. 61-64 and Alexander Lebed*, My Life and My Country by the Man Who would lead Russia*, Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1997, pp. 28-32 and 37-38.)

[334]Igor Rodionov, 'Voennaya reforma v Rossii. ee glavnaya tsel: obespeshit 'bezopasnost' gosudarstva', *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, Nr. 3, 18 November 1995.

[335] Many saw the arrival of Rodionov in the Ministry of Defense as a relief. See for instance: Michail Orr, 'Rodionov and Reform', *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, C92, January 1997; and Lester W. Grau and Timothy I. Thomas, 'Russian Minister of Defense General Igor Rodionov: In With The Old, in With The New', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, June 1996, pp. 442-452.' Also in Russia Rodionov was welcomed as minister of defense. For example, General Lev Rokhlin, who preceded the parliamentary Commission on Defense, supported the new Minister in public.

[336] C. J. Dick, 'Russian Military Reform: Status and Prospects', *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, C100, June 1998, p. 4. Dick's appreciation of Rodionov stood in great contrast with his views on Grachev, of whom he noted that he '…was an over-promoted, rapidly corrupted incompetent.', See: *Ibid.*, p. 3.

have been, it indicated, once more, how insignificant a role the liberals played in the political arena at that moment and how mercilessly Yeltsin handled his former coalition partners.

Rodionov's rise to ministerial office should be situated in the broader context of the 'Rodionov phenomenon' of 1995, in which the disastrous results of the Chechen war and the Duma elections played a clarifying role. Indeed, in the first half of 1995, after three years of silence, the terrible campaign in Chechnya brought military reform back onto the political agenda. On February 16th 1995, for instance, during his annual address to the Russian parliament, Yeltsin stated that the situation in the armed forces was catastrophic and that military reform was a top priority for his government. On February 23rd 1995, the Day of the Defender of the Fatherland, Yeltsin repeated this message and he subsequently urged the government and the Security Council (respectively under the leadership of Viktor Chernomyrdin and Oleg Lobov) to devise a plan for military reform. Though there was a call for reform, in reality, this flare-up of interest by the Yeltsin government was limited to simple rhetoric, and it did not result in any practical consequences.

It was the silent, but stubborn, rejection of 'reform without financial means' by the military elite from the outset of the Yeltsin era -especially by Grachev and the Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Mikhail Kolesnikov- that suffocated Yeltsin's intentions. But at least, military reform was once again a political topic and an issue for debate. The first Chechen war had another consequence: it would prove to be a supplementary cause of the fragmentation of the officer corps because many officers denounced the war. Vitaly Shlykov wrote that in April 1995, officers refused to fight in the war in Chechnya.[337] This denouncement against the war was essentially based on moral principles and this group of officers is referred to as 'the moralists'.[338]

Colonel General Eduard Vorobyev, the deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces, resigned from the armed forces out of protest against the war, and subsequently he is an example of the 'moralist' group. The majority of the officers, who did not agree with the Chechen war, did so for purely professional reasons and they were labeled as the 'professionals'. This group of officers bluntly blamed the Russian leaders' amateurish preparation of the military forces for their problems in Chechnya. This discontented group of officers, however, did not necessarily leave the ranks and Rodionov was clearly a member of this group of 'professionals'. Rodionov, to improve his political profile, at that time as the Commander of the General Staff Academy, had already used this argument on the onset of Russian independence, to improve his political profile.

At a later stage these two groups organized themselves into two dissident socio-political movements. The 'moralists' created the 'Movement For Military Reform' ['Za voennuiu Reformu'] in September 1995, and the 'professionals' founded another movement called the 'Honor and Motherland' ['*Chest I Rodina*']. In the context of the Duma elections, the military elite played an active role and political parties and movements became associated with these military movements. Indeed, the military's participation in politics was a reciprocal process in which parties were actively looking for military officers to be members of their parties and military officers, on their side, were eager to play an active role in politics. In this way the 'Movement for Military Reform' became related to liberals such as Yegor Gaidar, Alexander Yakovlev, the retired general Vorobyev, and the movement 'The Military for Democracy' which had members that were the first liberal reformers from the 1988-1991 period. The 'Honor and Motherland' movement became

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[337] Vladimir P. Avershev, 'The War in Chechnya: Implications for Military Reform and Creation of Mobile Forces' paper presented at the Conference 'War in Chechnya: Implications for Russian Security Policy' organized by Mikhail Tsypkin at Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California in 1995 and published on the net: http:// www;mis.nps. navy.mil.

[338] It must be noted that this categorization is in some way an oversimplification of reality. Moral and professional considerations do not necessarily exclude each other. Moreover, there was, certainly in the beginning, no sign that hinted at a successful attempt to organize the liberal dissidents. Therefore it is sometimes difficult to speak of a formal group. Finally, not every officer expressed his opinion on this issue. The majority of the officer corps kept their opinion to themselves as an outspoken opinion could be harmful for their military career and could mean the end of the family income.

politically related to the party of Lebed and Yuri Skokov, the 'Congress of Russian Communities', which meant that the charismatic and popular general used the 'professionals' for his own political ambitions. Rodionov maneuvered himself into the highest military position by using the general discontent about the Chechen war to his advantage, and in addition he received political support from various 'professionals' and General Lebed.

The professional and intellectual differences between Grachev and Rodionov were exemplified by their individual approaches to the issue of military reform. Using Russian military terminology, it could be said that Grachev represented the idea of the 'reform of the armed forces', while Rodionov represented the more profound idea of 'military reform'. Baranets writes that the different Ministers of Defense represented differences in the 'conceptual schools' of thought on military reform. Rodionov's views were more analytically profound compared with the almost superficial changes that Grachev had proposed. Baranets noted that:

> "Grachev understood military reform as a necessary reduction of military personnel, the movements of troops and army groups, the foundation of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the Russian Federation, the introduction of contract service and a new uniform."

> "Rodionov claimed that the armed forces could not reform itself; that the reform of the armed forces necessarily must be a part of a review of the whole military system of the State…In order to implement Rodionov's concept of reform, the strategy (inclusive all the staff regulations and procedures of the military security of the State), the doctrine, the education of service men, Etc. should be reviewed as a first and preliminary step of reforming the armed forces." [339]

At the end of November 1996, Rodionov published an article in which he discussed the broad outlines of his reform project. [340] This project was discussed on October 4th at the first meeting of the Defense Council and contained the following elements. Firstly, the reform plan aimed at reducing the armed forces to 1.2 million people and it advocated the creation of more flexible and more mobile forces. At the same time, it was suggested that the system of military districts would be revised and several military services and structures would be reorganized. To facilitate a more efficient system of decision making, the plan recommended that a sharper division of responsibilities between the Ministry of Defense and General Staff be created. The plan suggested that the Ministry of Defense should deal with political and management issues, while the General Staff should have operational command of the armed forces which would mean that the role of the General Staff would be strengthened. Moreover, Rodionov applauded the re-establishment of the Defense Council (which would plan military reform) and he proposed that the establishment of a new State Inspectorate (who would monitor the implementation of the plan under the supervision of the president), be appointed.[341]

According to Rodionov, not only did the military forces have to be restructured, but Russia needed to revise its military doctrine as well. The formal plan that Rodionov laid out stressed the

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[339] Translated from: Viktor Baranets, *op. Cit.*, 1996, p. 501.
[340] Igor Rodionov, 'Kakaya Oborona nuzhna', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, November 29, 1996.
[341] This Military Inspectorate of the president was established in the Fall of 1996. Remarkably enough, this apparatus, which was part of the Presidential Administration and which represented the civilian control over the military, could count on about 100 posts, but which had no chief. Moreover, there was no clearly description of the mission and the tasks this apparatus should perform. The battle between the Ministry of Defense and the MVD that flared up on the appointment of the chief and the exact definition of the mission hollowed this institution out further. The installation of the Military Inspectorate was again an example of how non-efficient institutions were built and, as a result, how hollow political rhetoric was.

importance of an institutionalized decision-making system being created and at the same time he pointed out the analytical errors that his predecessor Grachev had made. Rodionov also underscored the idea that a smaller and more modernized army was needed and this would be the result of qualitative change. Indeed, as Grachev's political paralysis was made clear in 1995, the 'professionals' and the 'moralists' of the military forces, were criticizing him respectively from the political 'right' and the 'left'. Due to their liaison with the movement '*Za Voenuiu Reformu*' from the '1988-1991' wave of democratic reforms, the moralists were adversaries of a more just system of conscription.[342] They demanded that, in the short term, there should be an introduction of alternative service and the right of conscripts to reject service in 'hot spots'. In the long term, they called for the phased ending of conscription and the introduction of a voluntary military service. They made their claim for a professional army complete with a request for structural organizational change aimed at reducing personnel strength and modernizing the armed forces.

The rightist movement '*Chest I Rodina*', of which Igor Rodionov was the main military ideologue, represented another perspective. The ideas of 'Honor and Motherland' may therefore be equated with Rosdionov's view on this issue. Rodionov was never a supporter of the AVF concept, but agreed with the idea of a mixed-manning system. In particular he was a major driving force behind the idea of a professional NCO corps that would replace the system of *praporchshiki* [warrant officers] and the conscripted sergeants. He claimed that the Russian armed forces lacked the small unit leadership essential for success in low intensity operations. Michail Orr synthesized Rodionov's view on the idea of professionalization as follows: "The Ideal for the Russian armed forces in Rodionov's view would be professional officers and NCO's leading and training conscript soldiers."[343]

Based on this view, two remarks may be made. Firstly, it may be said that Rodionov's view on small unit command was correct. Command at the lowest levels of the Russian army was indeed a serious problem, which in turn lay at the bottom of many aspects of Russia's 'soldiers' problem'. Moreover, as politics is 'the art of the possible', Rodionov was wise not to propose a project that would professionalize the military forces in the time frame of only a few years as his predecessor had done. In this sense, the new minister of defense's view on reform issues was more realistic and more balanced than Grachev's was. Secondly, Rodionov proved to be a traditional Soviet officer who placed the armed forces before society (or the state before the individual). This may be illustrated by the fact that he blamed Russian society for the problems related with conscription, rather than the armed forces. Rodionov used the same rhetoric as his Soviet predecessors, and he condemned 'society's moral degeneration, and Russian youth for not considering military service as either prestigious or mandatory. Thus, from a conceptual basis, Rodionov's views could be evaluated as well thought out and profound, however, when he began to implement his plan for reform, Rodionov had several serious problems.

Rodionov began his term in office with a clean-up operation in which he tried to eliminate all the people in the Ministry of Defense and General Staff who were reportedly involved in scandals of corruption. This purging of cadres was carried out in order that the Ministry of Defense would then be considered a credible and legitimate policy making institution. In addition, people who worked for the Ministry of Defense who did not agree with Rodionov's views on reform were fired. In October 1996 this resulted in the retirement of six high-ranking officers, including Colonel General Podkolzin (Commander of the Airborne Forces), Colonel General Vladimir Ivanov

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[342] It may not be a surprise that, for instance, the movement 'Soldiers' Mothers' of St-Petersburg [Soldatskie Materi Sankt-Peterburga] advocated in major terms the same ideas as the 'For Reform' organization. The Soldiers' Mothers could be placed on the same political side as the 'for Reform' movement. Both organizations organized a seminar in February 2000 in St-Petersburg: 'Vzaimodeistvie grazhdanskogo obshchestva I voennoi organizatsii-garahtiia prav voennosluzhashchich' [The co-operation between civil society and the military organization is the guarantee for the rights of the service men] St. Petersburg, 25-27 February 2000.
[343] Michael Orr, 'Rodionov and Reform', *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, C92, January 1997, p. 5.

(Commander of the Space Forces), Colonel General Mikhail Koleshnikov who was the Chief of the General Staff of the Army and General Viktor Samsonov. Although this was a necessary operation in political terms, it caused severe problems in terms of continuity in the Ministry of Defense. In fact, with the arrival of Rodionov, the General Staff experienced a revival as it performed its traditional role of 'brain of the army' once again, a role that it was ascribed in the 1920s.[344]

Before discussing what Rodionov accomplished in terms of professionalizing the army, it is significant to mention the fact that Yeltsin had, two months before Rodionov came into office, decreed (without consulting the military elite), the abolishment of conscription by the year 2000. This meant that the formal discussion about the principle of professionalization was over before the timeframe of full-professionalization was actually determined. Yeltsin then, unblushingly signed an *ukaz* to comply with the deepest wishes of conscripted soldiers for the abolishment of the conscription system. Nevertheless, this act was a farce for both the skeptical public and the military community. The fact that military thinkers proceeded despite the lack of resolution or recognition of the conscription/professional controversy, illustrated how much the Russian army lacked leadership, how cynical Yeltsin's reign was, and how mercilessly he played with the human considerations of the Russian people.

This presidential decision, however, contrasted with the ministers' ideas on the issue. Therefore Rodionov's first job was to try to postpone or even to get rid of this resolution. Yeltsin gave in rather easily and postponed the implementation of his *ukaz*. In October 1996, Rodionov announced the 'freezing' of the presidential decree until at least 2005. Moreover, he did manage to limit conscription to the armed forces, border guards, internal troops and railway troops. This meant a serious rationalization in the conscription system. Formerly, conscripts could be enlisted in twenty-four different ministries within the Russian state bureaucracy. In other words, Rodionov's first months in office were successful, and in October 1996, he announced a reduction of the armed forces to 1.2 million people by the end of 1997. Nevertheless, it must be said that until this time, reform was only limited to the announcements of projects and in fact these plans were limited to only rhetoric.

Indeed, Rodionov's energetic start sputtered out as he also underwent a process of political and organizational isolation.[345] Politically, Rodionov became more and more ostracized, especially when he lost the support of Aleksandr Lebed in October 1996, who was his most trusted ally in the presidential administration. Moreover, the rise of the new liberal parliamentarians and oligarchs decreased Rodionov's sphere of influence. Consequently, two main adversaries challenged his political operation. Firstly, Yeltsin had created the Defense Council that paralleled the Security Council, which had in principle the major say in matters of military reform. Building a new institution to coordinate military affairs was not a problem for Rodionov, as he advocated the re-installation of a Defense Council himself. The problems originated, however, in the personal antagonism between the Minister of Defense and the ambitious and influential Secretary of the Defense Council Yuri Baturin. As a result, instead of becoming an institute of coordination, the Defense Council became an institute of obstruction. Two strong characters, Rodionov and Baturin fought their bureaucratic battle in public as they tried to obtain the first voice in the ongoing reform debate. The fact that Baturin had personal access to the president, while Rodionov was deliberately refused such contact, meant that the Defense Council was temporarily the most important institution on military reform. This is a strange observation as this institution ignored the Ministry of Defense. Secondly, the rise of the new liberals in the executive, under the leadership of Chubais and Nemtsov, also contributed to the isolation of Rodionov. For the liberals (and the oligarchs) military

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[344] Boris. M. Shaposhnikov, *The Brain of the Army*, Moscow: Voenizdatel, 1929.
[345] Many of the arguments which are used here can be read in the political testament Rodionov wrote after his dismissal as minister of defense in May 1997. See: Igor Rodionov, 'problemy voennoj reformy transformiruiutsia v politicheskie spekulatsii. Zaiavlenie eks-ministra oborony RF', *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, Nr 26, 19-25 July 1997.

reform was not a priority, their interests lay in trying to revitalize the Russian economy and they denied the military elite the right to compromise this objective.

The political isolation of Rodionov was the result of the rise of new liberals in the Kremlin at the time of his appointment. However, the dispute between the military theoretician and the civilian economists showed a more fundamental conflict that shared some of the characteristics of the 1988-1991 politico-military debate. This dispute may be illustrated by the following incident that occurred in the fall of 1996. Although an official Ministry of Defense document on military reform was published in October 1996, it was revealed that in December 1996, Baturin used another document as a reference on this topic. Baturin's document represented the Kremlin's view as it was influenced by insights of the president himself, as well as Chubais and Baturin. A brief review of the contents shows the significance of the economic factor in the eyes of the Kremlin. The document proposed that military reform should take place in two stages:

> "The first stage (from 1997-2000) would, according to the economic possibilities of the country, downsize the structure and the organs of the military organization; it would streamline the cooperation between the different ministries and a reorganization of the military districts.
> The second stage (2001-2005) based on the economic prognoses, the military organization would undergo, far reaching structural changes; recruiting would be based on an exclusive contract service; the reserve forces would be reorganized; a streamlining in the system of military education; and the reorganization of the military-industrial complex."[346]

The existence of two reform documents showed two things; Firstly, in terms of management, it may be clear that the effective management of the military reform project was based on two different views, edited by two different political coalitions, which had divided the executive institutions. Secondly, the relevance of the Baturin reform document was not only interesting in terms of the decision-making procedures that it followed, but its contents showed what the liberals of that time thought about military reform.

Although the Baturin document was written in vague terms and based on grand principles, two elements are significant to note. Firstly, the Kremlin sought to find a balance between military organization and economic development as it was clear for the new liberals that economic considerations prevailed over military concerns. Secondly, the idea of the 'zero draft' system was still the ultimate goal of the civilian authorities. It showed that the ridiculed presidential *ukaz* of May 1996, which abolished the system of compulsory military draft, was apparently based on a more persistent conviction than was perceived at the time of its issuing. Indeed, the basic demands of the civilian opposition of the 1988-1991 period reflected the same main ideas as the principles of the Baturin plan, namely the demilitarization of society (and thus a review of state priorities) and the professionalization of the armed forces.[347] Thus Rodionov's fight went further than his personal struggle with Baturin: he was basically confronted with a coalition which stood for a fundamentally different point of view of military reform.

Hence, politically, Rodionov had to spend his time struggling to define his field of competence rather than concentrating on the management of his department. He became extremely disappointed with his isolation and political impotence. Rodionov began to ventilate his frustration in public from January 1997 on, and in fact, he 'blackmailed' the presidential apparatus when he

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[346] Viktor Baranets, *Genshtab bez tain, kniga pervaia*, Moskva: Politbiuro, 1999, p. 425.
[347] To illustrate this point, Yeltsin repeated his view on the professional army during a televised state-of-the-nation speech on 6 March 1997 in which he announced fundamental decisions on military reform. He stated that an increase of the number of contract/regular soldiers during 2001-2005 and full professionalization after 2005 was the final objective of this reform.

described doomsday scenarios, which could overcome the Russian military in the near future. He predicted an accidental nuclear holocaust, as well as an open mutiny due to a lack of financial means among the military forces. Yeltsin regarded Rodionov's public whining as the complaints of an old and weak man and he did not appreciate Rodionov's position.

Rodionov not only underwent political isolation but internally in the military establishment he had to cope more and more with organizational resistance. Again, it was the elite-corps of the airborne troops who refused to collaborate with the proposed practices of structural reform. In September 1996, Rodionov ordered a major reduction in the airborne forces by over 15,000 people and the public objection of high-ranking airborne officers to these measures resulted in their dismissal. Strangely enough, Rodionov's ally, Lebed, angrily joined the airborne lobby. The airborne resistance was only one example of how the military forces rejected their minister as further reductions in the land forces were also foreseen.

According to his plan, Rodionov tried to reduce the total strength of 60 divisions to 12 fully manned divisions and 12 cadre divisions. Moreover, the implementation of the 1996 reform plan would have cost the jobs of about 500 generals. It is doubtful that this massive, but necessary, reduction would be accepted by all portions of the army and the General Staff itself. Once again, every single officer paid lip service to the necessity of reform, but nobody wanted to make sacrifices for it. In other words, there was no general organizational consensus on what a reform plan should contain and what outcomes could be considered as reasonable and bearable consequences. In January 1997, Rodionov still had Yeltsin's support and he was appointed, quite artificially, to the post of the first Civil Minister of Defense of Russia. Indeed, as the Minister of Defense changed his military uniform for a civilian suit when he reached the age of retirement in December 1996, he was invited by Yeltsin to continue his efforts to implement reform in the military forces. Five months later, however on May 22nd 1997, he was fired together with the Chief of Staff, General Samsonov. The new liberal politicians convinced Yeltsin to get rid of Rodionov's dissident voice in the executive, which was dominated by the new flair-up of wide reform intentions. In this way, during the first half of the year 1997, the new liberals achieved total control of the executive.

The military lobby that Rodionov represented proved to be a politically powerless pressure group for at least two reasons. Firstly, the highest representative of the military in the executive proved to be a poor player in the political game because he did not enjoy the trust and the support of the executive. Rodionov did not understand the rules of this political game nor did he have the personal qualities that would make him part of this specific (presidential) game. In the end, perhaps Rodionov was too much of a professional soldier for this precarious game of Machiavellian intrigue. Secondly, the Minister of Defense could not unite the military elite and the general forces behind his project. Therefore he could not create enough momentum, space or time within his own organization to impose the far-reaching global changes that he had in mind. In this sense, the plan of the military theoretician moved beyond the provincial thinking of his colleagues. On the other hand, Rodionov's plan was in some ways a 'utopian' model, which did not take into consideration the social context that the military forces lived in. Rodionov, thus, found himself in a no win situation from the start of his ministerial adventure, an environment in which he acted in a political vacuum between vying politicians and military leaders. This is a tragic fate for a talented general who had the best intentions and the highest possible recommendations for the job of Ministry of Defense. In addition to his personal political drama, Rodionov's faith in his military reform project illustrated that the real obstacle to saving Russia's armed forces, was politics.

The Sergeyev Period (March 1997). When Rodionov and Samsonov were both fired on May 22nd 1997, they were replaced respectively by Igor Sergeyev and Viktor Chechevatov. They would survive the Yeltsin era, which is a considerable achievement in the unstable political context of Russia in 1997-1999. Thus it was Sergeyev who introduced the last effort to implement the Russian

military reform plan during the Yeltsin era. Sergeyev was not a well known general in the military forces, although he commanded the Strategic Rocket Forces before his appointment to the position of Minister of Defense. However, the unexpected arrival of Sergeyev onto the political scene in Russia can be explained by his relationship to the issue of nuclear weapons and the underlying attitude of military conservatism. On two different occasions Rodionov made decisions from which Sergeyev profited. Firstly, Rodionov used the tactic of 'nuclear blackmail' in his bureaucratic battle with the Presidential Administration, which proved to be a politically questionable move. Secondly, Rodionov supported the wrong political party in the debate on the position of nuclear weapons in the Russian security doctrine. Sergeyev profited from these mistakes and he received an opportunity to maneuver himself into the highest circles of the executive.

Rodionov warned of the dangers of inadequate resources in the nuclear forces, that there was unreliable personnel, and that there were extensive problems in the techniques and weapon systems that were used in the nuclear branch of the forces. In this way he tried to put the president, the government and the presidential administration under pressure. In fact Rodionov's move can be labeled as nuclear blackmail as a disaster was 'guaranteed' if sufficient resources were not supplied to the military forces.[348] The impact of this nuclear blackmail, however, was not well calculated and had some unexpected consequences. Firstly, nuclear safety issues were (and are) extremely sensitive in the international arena and easily alarmed the Western public. Consequently, Western governments were seriously alarmed by this point and put the Russian president under pressure to clarify the status of Russia's nuclear arsenal. Rodionov had chosen the weapon of the Cold War for his battle, which was clearly a tool of blackmail in the international arena, but not for internal national political skirmishes.

Secondly, Rodionov officially exposed Russia's weaknesses by publicly stating that the military's nuclear installations were unreliable, and this subsequently tarnished Russia's international prestige and status. These statements compromised Rodionov's place in the executive, and it was clear that the Kremlin had to do something about this and to deny the scare tactics that were issued by its own Minister of Defense. Rodionov counted too much on the passivity of his political adversaries and in this way he underestimated them. Thirdly, and politically the most significant factor was that, Rodionov indirectly launched an attack on the competence of Sergeyev, the commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces. Sergeyev received Rodionov's statements as a professional insult. Sergeyev understood that Rodionov was implying that he could not maintain control over the security of the nuclear forces, therefore he loudly and publicly denied Rodionov's 'accusations' and consequently this public denial made Sergeyev a potential ally to the Kremlin.

In February 1997, Yeltsin reacted to Rodionov's attack and he ordered an inspection tour of the nuclear forces and its weapons, to be completed by his Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and the Commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces. In this way he tried to silence Rodionov and attempted to calm the outside world's concerns about Russia's nuclear insecurity. Politically, however, this inspection tour had significant consequences. It provided Sergeyev with an opportunity to establish personal contacts with the close circle of Yeltsin's trustees and Baturin for instance, applauded Sergeyev who, in the opinion of the secretary of the Defense Council, managed his force outstandingly and thriftily, but most importantly without (public) complaints. This was a clear sign that Sergeyev earned the trust of the president, which was the key to being nominated to the highest military post. In conclusion, Rodionov's nuclear blackmail was a clumsy political move as it compromised his own position as well as bringing in a new candidate for his post, to the surface. He politically chose the wrong tactics (which was 'blackmail'), he chose the wrong subject (which was 'nuclear safety') and he miscalculated the political reactions to this threat, especially in his own organization, which he thought was still the monolithic and obedient organization of the Soviet period.

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[348] Grachev did in fact the same as he said no reform in case of not enough funding. However, Grachev did not explicitly use the nuclear disaster scenario to give his threat more impact.

Sergeyev and Rodionov also stood in opposition to one another in the START debate. Despite the fact that Yeltsin agreed to sign the treaty with his American counterpart George Bush, he could not pass the treaty through the Duma. This was first and foremost a consequence of the hostile relationship between Yeltsin and the parliament. Hence Russia's political dichotomy also caused a stalemate on the nuclear issue and in the broader security debate. The START debate also divided the military and security community on more fundamental considerations. Indeed, the whole community agreed on the fact that Russia's strategic defense and Russia's place in the world community relied almost completely on nuclear weapons. Russia's conventional force weaknesses promoted the nuclear weapons to first place in Russia's security concerns, however, it was rather the question of how to ensure Russia's deterrence capability that divided the community. In general terms, conservative generals (e.g. Rodionov, Lebed, Rokhlin) supported by the Communist and nationalist parties thought that Russia could ensure its international position by keeping the existing arsenal functioning. However more progressive people advocated that only through the reduction and the modernization of Russia's nuclear arsenal, could Russia's nuclear capacity in the world be assured. Sergeyev, liberal parties (e.g. Yabloko), the president and his administration supported this second view.

It was clear that both parties had different views on the ratification of START, as a reduction in the nuclear arsenal holdings meant for the conservatives that Russia was getting weaker, while more liberal parties saw this as an opportunity to strengthen Russia's nuclear capacity. The logic of the nuclear debate added another element of fragmentation to the military officer corps and meant that Sergeyev and Rodionov were again on opposing sides of the political debate. The fact that this political difference was translated into the struggle between political parties (liberals against nationalists and communists) and political institutions (the executive against the legislative) meant that the relationship between Rodionov and Sergeyev had important political consequences. The replacement of Rodionov with Sergeyev is an outward manifestation of this phenomenon.

Sergeyev was, when he became the Ministry of Defense, a rather colorless general whose professional record did not show any remarkable elements. Russian as well as Western analysts saw him as a spineless and opportunistic general who was ready to subscribe to the program of the Government and Presidential Administration. In this context, Baranets bitterly quoted Sergeyev when the new Minister of Defense said to Yeltsin just after his appointment: "Vse vashchi ukazaniia budut bezuslovno vypolneny" [All your decrees will unconditionally be implemented]. [349] This was a sign for Baranets that Sergeyev was a pawn of Yeltsin, rather then a strong character who would defend the military forces' interests.

The unenthusiastic comments on Sergeyev's arrival onto the political scene must, however, be placed in the political context of that moment, as it is not necessarily an accurate picture of Sergeyev's political abilities. Indeed, from an *a posteriori* point of view, it is clear that the 'spineless' general had more political insight (and good luck) than his predecessor as he proved to be able to survive in an extremely unstable political environment. Moreover, the prudent and patient general succeeded in endorsing a program of modernization of the nuclear weapons arsenal. The so-called TOPOL-M program, intended to modernize the Strategic Rocket Forces and an expression of technological innovation may be seen as an example of Sergeyev's endorsement of his personal plan which succeeded in promoting the Nuclear Rocket Force to a higher position of prestige in the military forces. Despite the fact that this may be seen as another example of 'provincial thinking' (promoting its own services over that of other services), it showed at the same time that a program of modernization was finally endorsed. This may be catalogued as an example of successfully managing a reform plan. The fact that Sergeyev was apparently misunderstood and in a way

[349] Viktor Baranets, *Genshtab bez tain, kniga pervaia*, Moskva: Politbiuro, 1999, p. 435.

underestimated by Western analysts needs more attention, as it is an illustration of the endemic analytical misconceptions and miscalculations of both the USSR and Russia.[350]

Sergeyev's view on reform and the professional army and the obstacles he met during his period in office under Yeltsin were intensified by Yeltsin who put the new military team under pressure by giving a short term dateline to produce a new reform plan by July 25th 1997. After only one month and a half in office, Sergeyev publicly outlined his vision on military reform. On July 16 Yeltsin issued four presidential decrees which underscored Sergeyev's plan.

The main emphasis of the reform plan lay on administrative reorganization and downsizing. The most important elements were the following. Firstly, the Russian army would reduce the number of services, instead of having the Soviet structure of five services (Ground Forces, Navy, Air Force, Air Defense Forces, and Strategic Rocket Forces), the Russian army would evolve in the long run into a traditional three-service military (Ground, Sea, and Air Forces), and on short notice the merging between the Air and Air Defense Forces would be accomplished.[351] Secondly, the number and nature of Military Districts would be changed from the eight existing MD's, to the Russian army being divided along four MD's: Moscow, North Caucasus, Urals and Far East. The commanders of each of the MD's would thus have operational command of all the forces in his theater. Thirdly, military manpower would be cut by 500,000 people to 1.2 million people and the central administration would be limited to 1 percent of total military manpower and, for instance, the number of generals would be reduced by 22% (at that moment the Russian army had more then 1,900 generals). To achieve this goal, many officers had to be retired. Fourthly, the Ministry of Defense would be freed from non-military tasks such as construction work and agricultural aid. Fifthly, the number of military educational establishments would be cut from 103 to 57.

Besides these initial reforms ideas, Sergeyev announced other initiatives, which the General Staff was working on. Yeltsin on the other hand made new promises to protect the social and living conditions of the military forces. He pledged to pay all back wages by September 1st and he promised to build 100,000 new apartments for discharged military men. In this way Yeltsin tried to win the support of the military forces for the new reform impetus.

Although the idea of professionalization was not forgotten and in fact was still explicitly on the reform agenda, it had no priority in the short term. The abolishment of conscription was postponed for an indefinite time and the lack of financial resources for the forces was again used to motivate this decision. In the mean time, Sergeyev proposed to rationalize the conscription system and to save what remained of the collapsed conscription system. Two decisions in particular may be used to illustrate this policy.

Firstly, Sergeyev proposed to limit the number of ministries competing for conscript manpower from 14 to 5,[352] which meant that conscript soldiers could only serve in the army, the Interior Troops, the Border Guards, railroad troops and FAPSI (*federal'noe agenstvo pravitel'stvennoi svjazi I informatsii pri Prezidente Rossijskoi Federatsii* or Federal Agency for

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[350] The elaboration of this item refers to the discussion that started after the dissolvent of the USSR and the analytical, academic world on Soviet/Russian affairs underwent a crisis as they saw their lack of understanding and insight into Soviet/Russian affairs. The misinterpretation of Sergeyev may be an illustration of the fact that not much changed concerning our knowledge of Russian affairs and in fact that the analytical world has to permanently rethink its own methodology, and, most of all, needs a more critical attitude towards its own analysis. See for this discussion for instance the special issue of The National Interest: 'The Strange Death Of Soviet Communism', *The National Interest*, Nr. 31, Spring 1993; and Michael Cox (Editor), *Rethinking the Soviet Collapse, Sovietology, the Death of Communism and the New Russia*, London: Pinter, 1998.

[351] An alternative three-service military is proposed which make the distinction between Strategic Missile Forces (Strategic Rocket Forces, Military Space Forces, Anti-Ballistic Missile Defenses, and Long Range aviation); Deterrence Forces (Air Defense forces and same Air Force and Navy units), and General Purpose Forces (Ground Forces and units from air force and Navy).This perception of the three-service military is based on functional considerations.

[352] This is an amendment on the 'law on military service' of 2 April 1998.(See: O Voinskoi obiazannosti I voennoi sluzhba, federal'nyi zakon of 28 March 1998)

Government Communications and Information).[353] Secondly, he announced the re-introduction of the system of military education in the secondary schools in order to prepare potential conscripts for military service. This policy was a well-known Soviet practice and indicated that *de facto* the whole conscription debate found itself back at its original stage in 1988-89. Based on these observations, it can be said that the idea of the AVF was perhaps not forgotten, but it was now seen as a long-term objective for the military forces.

The de-prioritization of the AVF idea, due to the lack monetary resources, meant in practical terms that it was no longer a valuable alternative for the Russian armed forces. On the contrary, instead of modernizing the Russian military, some conservative reactions emerged and the militarization of Russian society was (again) back on track. In August 1998 when the Russian economy collapsed, the fate of the professional army under Yeltsin was sealed and Sergeyev's view on reform, which showed an ambivalent attitude towards modernization of the armed forces, was restricted and therefore not a coherent view on change. Firstly, Sergeyev advocated that modernizing the forces was crucial and that the quality rather than the quantity of resources was an important factor especially concerning the promotion of technological innovation in the nuclear debate. These objectives were met by some degree by the signing of the START treaty, the endorsement of the TOPOL-M program, and the demonstration of the strategic exercise ZAPAD 99, where the nuclear aspect of Russian warfare received preponderate attention. On the other hand, he did not take the conscription issue into consideration when he revealed his 'philosophy of modernization' of the armed forces, on the contrary, he demonstrated that his attitudes about the conscription-professionalization debate were similar to those of the Soviet era.

Secondly, downsizing and the administrative reorganization of the forces as they are presented in Sergeyev's reform proposal were not the result of the implementation of the idea of 'intensive growth' or modernization, apparently Sergeyev's idea of quantity stood still in proportion to efficiency, which is in contradiction to 'third wave modernization'. Sergeyev's position was therefore an expression of necessity rather than of choice in the sense that it was not an expression of fundamental change in the military elite's mentality. Thirdly, in prioritizing the modernization of the nuclear forces over personnel and recruitment issues, Sergeyev proved that he had a conservative Soviet-Russian attitude. In other words, fundamental thinking about personnel management did not evolve proportionally with technological innovation. Politically this instrumental thinking is an expression of a typical Russian-Soviet attitude that always put state interests above individual rights. This attitude stands in complete opposition to the idea of Human Resource Management, one of the pillars on which the AVF idea is based in the Western reading of the concept. In order to be efficient, human resource management has to take technological innovation and individual human rights into consideration.

This ambivalent and restricted view on the modernization debate contained one danger, the available resources of the military forces were disproportionally used on Sergeyev's plan for nuclear modernization. In this sense the attitude that was observed demonstrated that the professionalization issue was not so much a problem of resources, but rather a problem of prioritization. Professionalization of the forces was simply not a priority for the Russian military high command. In this way it may be logical that conservative reflexes and a return to Soviet traditions was the only solution to save what remained of the conscription system.

The fact that Sergeyev was urged to present a program in such a short period of time suggests that military reform became a priority for the President and his Administration. Yeltsin himself came up with some solutions, which included paying overdue wages, and by ordering a new housing program to be created for military personnel. Sergeyev, on the other hand was extremely active during the summer and fall of 1997 in order to show Russians that his reform plan was on track. During this period of time, he undertook an inspection tour of all the military's services and

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[353] FAPSI is one of the two internal successor organizations to the KGB. The other is the FSB (Federal Security Service).

many military units all over the country. This tour was actually a campaign that he embarked upon to win support for his reform plan and to gather information on the daily problems of the military forces. When he was touring Sergeyev spoke preferentially with mid-level officers, as he knew that their support was crucial for the successful implementation of his plan.

Besides this action, the military Procurator General was encouraged to renew his efforts to fight corruption in the military forces and to examine the problems of abuse that conscript soldiers were experiencing. This renewed attempt to fight intolerable behavior in the army had some spectacular results as some corrupt generals were publicly prosecuted and soldiers and officers involved in the abuse of soldiers were put on trial. However, besides some initial spectacular actions, soon these efforts to root out corruption in the system lost their momentum. Notwithstanding this, the Kremlin and the Ministry of Defense made a considerable effort to win the hearts and minds of the military forces because there was a sustained resistance to reform. As soon as Sergeyev's July program was made public and it became clear that it was again a Kremlin machination, an open and aggressive reaction surfaced among military personnel which was led by General Lev Rokhlin, the Secretary of the Defense Committee.[354] This general had made considerable efforts to influence military reform from the legislative branch since he had been elected as a member of parliament during the December 1995 Duma elections.[355] The fact that he had no impact on the process of military reform himself and Sergeyev did, urged him to publish an open letter in which he accused the president of incompetence and he called upon the military community to stage an open rebellion that protested against the further deprivation of the forces

Rokhlin subsequently tried to organize the military elite into an oppositional organization called: 'the All-Russian Movement in Support of the Army, the Defense Industry and Military Science (*Dvizhenie v pdderzhku armii, oboronnoy promyshlennosti I voennoy nauki-DPA*). The founding Congress of the organization took place on September 20th 1997 and was attended by over 1000 people. Prominent military attendees were Igor Rodionov, Alexander Lebed, Aleksandr Korzhakov, Albert Makashov, and the former head of KGB Vladimir Kriutshchov and Valentin Varennikov who were prominent members of the 1991 coup. Other well-known anti-constitutional officers who attended the meeting were Vladimir Achalov and Stanislav Terekhov. Besides these famous military leaders, the Russian Nationalists Vladimir Zhirinovski and Viktor Iliuchin, and Communists such as Gennadi Zyuganov were in attendance. Thus, the traditionally conservative forces of Russia supported Rokhlin and his movement, which was regarded as a military led anti-regime action.

The fact that over fifty local branches of the DPA were quickly organized and that Rokhlin predicted a 'hot political autumn' and even the resignation (or abdication) of Yeltsin, showed that his opposition movement had an influential start. Once again, an anti-reform movement that originated within the military forces blocked a new impetus of military reform. As a result, military reform remained a subject that divided society or, depending on the perspective one takes, the political opposition parties used the military elite's lack of consensus on military reform, in their battle against the Yeltsin regime. Therefore, military reform once again took off in an extremely unstable and polarized organizational and political setting.

Rokhlin's movement however, despite the flamboyant start, was not very successful. Two reasons can be cited to explain this. Firstly, Rokhlin tried to set up a broad military opposition that

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[354] Indeed, the plan was proposed and accepted by the Kremlin without any influence from the parliament or other institutions. There was a direct and personal line between Sergeyev (Ministry of Defense), Chernomyrdin –Chubais and Yeltsin that meant that reform, at least on paper, was conceptualized and excepted by the executive in a time lapse of only a few weeks.

[355] On 8 July, Lev Rokhlin, for instance, had sent a law proposal to the Presidential Administration from the parliamentary committee on defense which could legally cover military reform. This proposal, however, was completely neglected by the President. This neglect for the legislative branch, a constant in Yeltsin's policy, severely frustrated Rokhlin. (see: Joachim Schmidt-Skipiol, 'Lew Rochlin, Ein General Rebelliert', Aktuelle Analysen, Nr. 50/1997, Koln: *Bundesinstitut für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien*, 14th November 1997, p. 2.

contained not only military men, but also all the people who in one way or another were affected by the military forces. Rokhlin essentially tried to mobilize discontented people in the military-industrial complex, military pensioners and families of the military (potentially 20 million people). However, Olson's theory of collective action-expressed in the paradox of collective action theory, predicts that the organization of such a large group in order to obtain a collective good, namely the improvement of social living conditions for the military, is extremely difficult. Olson claims that:

> "If the members of a large group rationally seek to maximize their personal welfare, they will not act to advance their common or group objectives unless there is coercion to force them to do so, or unless some separate incentive, distinct from the achievement of the common or group interest, is offered to the members of the group individually on the condition that they help bear the costs or burdens involved in the achievement of the group objectives. Nor will such large groups form organizations to further their common goals in the absence of the coercion or the separate incentives just mentioned. These points hold true even when there is unanimous agreement in a group about the common good and the methods of achieving it."[356]

It was an illusion that Rokhlin's status as a general and the dissatisfaction among the military community could succeed in organizing and mobilizing military people and their civilian relations to overthrow Yeltsin's regime. Status, prestige and a common goal are not enough to motivate 'rational people' to take collective action. In another context James Sherr states that:

> "…strong instincts, high popularity, executive power and a dedicated executive team do not guarantee success or even progress. In Russia public support is at least as mercurial as it is elsewhere. Loss in confidence can also transform a disciplined elite into a cynical one-and submissive people into plotters."[357]

Secondly, Rokhlin's movement was related politically with the conservatives, in particular with the Communist forces of society. This alliance compromised the DPA movement over time and eventually Lebed, a long time ally of Rokhlin, felt the heat of Rokhlin's political influence and popularity. Lebed recognized the danger of his alliance with Rokhlin and for the sake of his own political career, very soon after the founding meeting of the DPA movement Lebed and Rokhlin became political enemies. Moreover, Rokhlin's alliance with Zyuganov was too one-dimensional to gather all the military's discontents and Sven Gunnar Simonsen pointed out that "the military men themselves at the most recent [1995] parliamentary elections cast their votes along much more complex patterns than those Rokhlin was betting on."[358]

In conclusion, Rokhlin- as his colleagues did before him- launched himself into politics acting like a military commander. He did not understand the complexity of political affairs, as he simplistically identified Russia's fate with that of its army and he was unable to fully understand the political diversity of the armed forces. The murder of Rokhlin, on July 3rd 1998, sealed the fate of the DPA movement, and it soon became a non-event in Russian politics. With the death of Rokhlin, another attempt to organize the military forces to protest against the regime collapsed, nevertheless it distracted the attention of the Kremlin and the Ministry of Defense from its core function in military affairs, which was namely reforming the armed forces.

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[356] Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action, Public Gods and the Theory of Groups*, London: Harvard University Press, 1977 (Seventh edition), 1977, p. 2.

[357] James Sherr, 'A New Regime? A new Russia?' *Occasional report No 35*, Monitoring Foreign and Security Policy in Ukraine- Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, 15 July 2000, p. 7.

[358] Sven Gunnar Simonsen, 'Rokhlin Enters the Political Fray', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, January 1998, p. 17.

Indeed, the open rebellion of a broad but loosely bound coalition in the summer of 1997 urged the president to make another personnel shuffle in his government. Kokoshin was the only civilian who had survived in the Russian Ministry of Defense since the founding of the Russian armed forces in 1992 and he now replaced Baturin as secretary of the Defense Council. Kokoshin was in any case, more generally accepted and professionally appreciated by the military elite than Baturin was. A few months later a new institutional change made Kokoshin the most important man in military affairs in the presidential administration as the Inspector General as well as the person presiding over the Security Council, which had at the same time incorporated the functions of the Defense Council.

This reorganization seemed to be a good move and during the first half of 1998 many observers remained relatively optimistic about the fate of military reform. However, the shock of the financial collapse of August 1998 sealed the fate of military reform under the Yeltsin regime. The musical chairs of five Prime Ministers in the eighteen months following August 1998, did not create the necessary calm and governmental cohesion that is needed to implement military reform. Sergeyev succeeded in implementing his own, personal 'nuclear program', but there was not enough resources to implement a total reform of the military forces, or to introduce an all-volunteer force into the system. On the contrary, Sergeyev had to rely on old, well-known and cheap practices to find a solution to the manpower problem. In fact, the 1997 effort to install reform in manpower affairs completely failed, instead, the existing situation deteriorated hopelessly. By the end of the Yeltsin era, Pavel Felgenhauer described the manpower situation as follows: "The military forces have disintegrated into a mass of men that walk around in uniforms but cannot be sent into battle under any circumstances."[359]

Based on these observations, some general conclusions can be made about the military reform efforts that were made by Sergeyev's ministry. Firstly, it was only after Yeltsin himself decided that reform was a priority for the executive that it became a priority in reality. More accurately, it was only in the light of Yeltsin's need to ensure his own political survival that it became a policy priority at all. Yeltsin 'pyramidal political construction' was thus also applicable to the practice of military reform. Secondly, military reform was a one-dimensional project inspired by personnel force-related motives, rather then a generally coherent reform view. The modernization proposal thus became a fragmented and manipulated project, instead of a comprehensive process. Military reform was subsequently, just like Russian political practice in general, a personified process. As Yeltsin and his close circle of allies trusted Sergeyev, he was able to implement his program. In other words, the professional background of the Minister (just as Grachev demonstrated with his 1992-1996 Mobile Forces project) was a fundamental determinant in the way reform developed.

Thirdly, there was a great internal resistance from the military forces themselves to Sergeyev's attempts at reform, hence, military cohesion was thus a non-existent entity. In other words, the military elite could not draft a reform plan that could rely on some kind of organizational consensus. The diversity and the complexity of the bureaucratic interests of the forces prevented this from happening. On fundamental issues, such as for instance the nuclear-strategic balance, there was no consensus in the armed forces and on the contrary, the lack of consensus triggered a fierce bureaucratic battle that strangled military competence and efficiency.

Lastly, the deeply divided political arena (between the executive and the legislative branches of the government, between the 'liberal forces' and the red-brown opposition of the parliament, between Yeltsin and his small circle of trustees against the rest of the political forum and society), generated conflict on several different levels and all groups used the issue of military reform to fight their struggle. Some generals and colonels tried to influence this battle, which meant that the lines between political struggle and internal military conflicts were not clear. Thus, a lack of consensus, fierce and counterproductive bureaucratic incompetence, and individual ambition placed above

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[359] Pavel Felgenhauer, 'Reform of Military a Sham', *Moscow Times*, 14th September 2000. Webedition: www.themoscowtimes.com.

generally accepted plans of reform, were manifested under the leadership of Sergeyev. Other external causes such as Russia's financial collapse and the unpredictable political scene of Yeltsin's last year in office, sealed the fate of military reform under Yeltsin: in other words it failed dramatically.

The Concept of a Professional Army under Yeltsin: an Evaluation

Soon after Yeltsin came into power in the Russian Federation, the executive branch re-monopolized the reform discussion. Sporadically there were some voices in the newspapers (e.g. Lopatin, Lobov, Goltz,) in the scientific journals (e.g. A. Arbatov), or in non-governmental organizations (e.g. Soldiers' Mothers, Memorial) on military reform, but these voices faded away as time passed. Civil society, the academic world (except perhaps the *sovet po venshnei i oboronoi politike* [the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy]) and the legislative branch of the government were all systemically excluded from the specific reform debate. This observation not only made civilian supervision over military affairs highly questionable, but it made the discussion also univocal and therefore less 'rich'. It was Yeltsin, and only he, who determined the players and the rules of the game: but his orchestration of the events was uneven and incoherent and it was related to his personal character and his own power struggles within the Kremlin. Only when it was politically necessary - when his power position was questioned - did he address the 'military' problem. His actions were most of the time impulsive and therefore unrealistic and impractical and as a result, Yeltsin gave no clear guidelines to the military forces and its organizational future.

Other important players in the reform debate were in order of importance: the Presidential Administration (in which the Security and Defense Council were incorporated), the government, and finally the military elite themselves. It must be stressed however that the military elite did not have a voice in the debates, as they were not allowed into Yeltsin's inner-circle of decision-making politicians. The military leaders, were given several reform programs under three different Ministers of Defense, and they kept the AVF discussion on the reform agenda, but not wholeheartedly. Instead of regarding the AVF idea as a concept that could be applied to the armed forces, their discussions about reform were confined to theoretical debates rather than debates about immediate practical action. Different arguments can be used to explain this situation:

Firstly, the military elite was convinced that the financial-economic situation of the country did not allow them to select the AVF as a possible reform model. Although they experimented with contract service, the elite was soon disillusioned with the results since only undesirable candidates wished to become professional soldiers. Moreover, as soon as these *kontraktniki* left the service, when it became clear that the job was not well paid and they were not well equipped, the military elite realized that AVF did not correspond with the short term socio-economic conditions of Russia.

Secondly, there was great resistance to the principle of the AVF itself since many officers simply did not accept the idea of replacing conscript soldiers with professional ones. This attitude cannot be underestimated and it was derived from and was coterminous with both the tactical and strategic thinking of the Russian military and the entire discussion of human relations in the Russian military forces. In Chechnya for example, many officers were still thinking in a classical military terms and practicing traditional forms of warfare in which no tactical adjustments were made to accommodate the new types of warfare that the forces were experiencing. Traditionally Second World War thinking still dominated the tactical thinking of the Russian officer corps and moreover, the non-responsibility of the officer corps for the lives of their subordinates was another outcome of that same mentality. For many officers the limitless use of soldier 'fodder' in the ranks remained an indisputable feature of their profession and the AVF idea undermined or at least questioned this mentality. On the other hand the leadership could not simply waste a highly educated and trained soldier who cost the organization a great deal of money, time and effort. Sticking to the old Soviet

idea of the mass army was not only much cheaper and easier, but it was embedded in their professional 'genes' as it were.

Thirdly, and perhaps more importantly, there were bureaucratic arguments that made the AVF proposal only a topic for discussion. The introduction of more mobile, compact and modernized armed forces into Russian society would create deep cuts and effect a profound reorganization of several branches of the forces, which subsequently could cause a certain degree of organizational resistance. Even the Ministers of Defense, albeit to different degrees, could not resist endorsing a plan that favored the forces and branches that they originated from. A 'provincial' kind of thinking among the Ministry of Defense resulted in each one favoring its own force or branch line. The opposite attitude, however, was necessary in order to endorse the AVF idea, which would have a profound effect on the Russian armed forces. The fact that military managers were bad politicians and sometimes openly corrupt, added other elements to a political scene in which organizational change was very difficult.

Although the AVF proposal was never a concrete reform option, it must be underlined that the idea was sometimes prominent at certain moments. In 1992-1993 and in 1996-1997 for instance the AVF plan seemed to be taken more seriously than during the remainder of the Yeltsin era. Grachev joined the euphoric mood that reigned over the country in 1992, while the Yeltsin election of 1996, and the energetic policy of the new liberals in 1997, gave a second impulse to the discussion. However, as soon, as military planning met reality, the idea quickly received less energetic support, if it was not already completely abandoned. In this sense, the AVF idea underwent the same fate as other major reform plans such as the introduction of the market economy and democratic reform. Perhaps major reforms do not follow the logic of the 'omnipotent grand design' as many might believe and in fact profound societal and organizational changes are more likely to be the result of a long term process of trial and error and many parallel and cumulative decisions instead of one major rational exercise in decision-making.

In conclusion there were political, bureaucratic, conceptual and practical reasons why the AVF project was only a 'concept of the future' and never a concrete reform option during the Yeltsin era. Yeltsin courted and patronized the military elite in its political game while he effectively muzzled their professionalism. Conversely military leaders were eager players in the presidential game, but they were unskilled politicians who did not understand the rules of the political game. Not only were they not allowed to directly participate and were sidelined from the political playing field, military leaders were ineffective players themselves and as a result they were unsuccessful advocates for the military lobby in the political arena. In addition the Russian military forces were internally heavily fragmented, thus as an organization, the military forces was lacking in social and political cohesion. During this time frame the military forces did not have a charismatic leader who combined both expertise with organizational power and who could build a conceptual consensus in both the military and political high command. [360] This meant that parties, the civilian leadership and the military high command (who most of the time blamed the extra-military world for the malaise in its organization and used this as an excuse not to take responsibility for it) were responsible for the failure to install the AVF proposal. Strangely enough, this brings the analysis on decision making back to its starting point. Indeed, organizational change starts theoretically with an honest and open evaluation of an organization's problems: the Russian military elite did not even meet this condition. In this way another vicious circle was established which could only be broken by external factors, factors which could change the players and the rules of the game.

In order to test the decision making models that were outlined in the beginning of Part II, I can make the following remarks. Under Yeltsin's rule, there were no discussions about the status of

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[360] Expertise and organizational power are both necessary conditions to make decision on and implement change. See: Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind, Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997, pp. 200-203.

the AVF because neither a comprehensive, nor a bounded rational debate was permitted. Yeltsin's method of monopolizing power relations prevented the Carnegie coalition model of decision making from developing. Yeltsin's opportunistic and politically functional approach to military affairs, made even the incremental decision making model impossible. The fact that we cannot apply these models shows that the political insitutinalization process and the political culture of the system forgoes the decision making process. In Part III of this thesis, I will focus on the debate that surrounds military organizational culture.

Part III Cultural Encounter: the Soldiers' Question

> *In its most naked sense, the simple existence of an armed force answers the question of how much an individual is worth to society and how much society is worth to him. The decision about who is to serve, in what capacity, and for what sort of compensation-describe the social policies of a political system, often long before it is itself aware of the need for the existence of such a concept.*

> (Feld, The Structure of Violence, Armed Forces as Social Systems, p. 18)

> *Structural problems often underlie the cultural ones*

> (The economist, Time for a rethink, April 20th 2002, p. 25)

Introduction

Part II of this thesis demonstrated that during the Yeltsin period, the absence of adequate decision making procedures and a related bureaucratic political culture were important negative factors impeding the pursuit of successful military reform. Due to the instability of the political system, the impulsiveness of the political leadership, the polarization of Russian society and the fierce departmental battles for scare resources, the reform efforts, particularly the attempt to professionalize the armed forces, failed. This argument is based on the study of the reform process itself during important decision making phases. In this third part of the thesis an additional argument for the failure of the professionalization of the Russian armed forces will be made. This argument is situated in the realm of the follow-up stage of the decision making process, namely in the stage of actual implementation of the proposed reform plans. Thus the theoretical blueprint for reform that was put into practice and challenged thereafter by the everyday reality of the Russian military's complex organization will be discussed. Subsequently, when a theoretical model is tested, the formal and informal aspects of the organization question each other. It is a fact that politico-managerial decision making does not occur within a socio-historical or organizational vacuum. Each organization has its own specific values, norms, and material goods, which comprise its specific organizational culture. This section of the thesis will focus upon this 'cultural encounter' between theory and practice.

When an ambitious plan with far reaching objectives is proposed, such as the professionalization of the armed forces in Russia, the risk is that the gap between theory and practice will provoke passive and active organizational resistance.[361] Thus, when there is a substantial difference between the organizational culture and the proposed reform goals, implementation of the reform plans become difficult or even impossible. In the context of this study, it can be said with some exaggeration, that it is questionable whether a nineteenth-century military mentality is compatible with a twenty-first-century military organizational format. In order to understand this organizational dilemma, the everyday

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[361] Vicki Baier, James March and Herald Saetren, 'Implementation and Ambiguity' in: James March, *Decisions and Organizations*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp. 150-164; Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, *Implementation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); and Richard Nelson and Douglas Yates, *Innovation and Implementation in Public Organizations*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1978).

life of Russian soldiers, which I will call *Russian soldiers' culture*, will be the main focus of this part of the thesis. Therefore, soldiers' culture will be described, explained and compared to the AVF model presented in Part I of the thesis. In summary, I will study 1) whether the present day Russian military organizational culture, especially the soldiers' culture, is compatible with the AVF model; and consequently 2) the implications of the policy of unadapted organizational isomorphism or uncritical export of western organizational models, which ignores organizational culture, for overall organizational effectiveness. In order to answer these questions, the general concepts of organizational (military) culture and the methodology used to study them will be outlined.

Organizational culture

Organizational culture can be defined as 'the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one organization from another'.[362] It manifests itself in at least four forms, namely symbols, heroes, rituals and values.[363] The first form, the symbols, are comprised of the jargon, the gestures and objects which have a specific meaning for those who share the same organizational culture. The second form, the heroes, are those people who possess the characteristics which are highly prized in that particular culture. The third form, the rituals, are made up of the collective activities which are considered as socially essential to the group. Subsequently, the symbols, heroes and rituals are called the cultural *practices* because they have a visible outcome, although the specific meaning may not always be precisely understood by an outside observer. These practices are underscored by the organizational *values*, which are the fourth form of a culture. Although they are not visible to the observer, these inherent values shape the individual's actions in various circumstances. Organizational culture refers to a holistic concept that is historically determined, and socially constructed, and therefore difficult to change.

An important aspect of organizational culture is thus that it is the result of learned behavior that is generated by the organization. This behavior is reproduced by voluntary socialization programs and/or involuntary coercive methods or, respectively, primary and secondary socialization methods. The organizational culture reflects in this way the historical development of the political and social practices of the organization.[364] The

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[362] Geert Hofstede, *Culture and Organizations, Software of the Mind, Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991), p. 180.

[363] There are other ways to describe organizational culture. For example Shein suggests that culture exists on three levels: artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions. (See: Edgar Shein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1992) and Donna Winslow, *Army Culture*. A Report Prepared for the US Army Research Institute, (Alexandria, Virginia, 2000), p. 21-24. A recent study on American military culture describes organizational culture essentially as 'how members of an organization do things'. (Walter Ulmer, Joseph Collins, and Thomas Jacobs, American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century, Washington: The Center for Strategic and International studies, 2000, p. 3 and p. 7.) It is important to note that culture is multi-layered and composed of material and immaterial elements. Moreover, not all manifestations have the same impact on the organizational culture. The material manifestations are more superficial than the values or underlying assumptions. Therefore, practices (artifacts) tend to be more easily changed than values.

[364] This idea is also adopted in general studies on Russian culture. The ethnographer Nancy Ries, for instance, has stated that the Soviet communist culture never replaced or erased Russian culture, but was itself permeated, patterned, and structured by it. She continued her argument by saying that in Russia, the sphere of public events and rituals demonstrate the historical persistence or reformulation of the old culture of the new. (Nancy Ries, *Russian Talk, Culture and Conversation during perestroika*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 22.)

culture that emerges shows how the organization has adapted to its politico-social environment. In the case of the Russian soldier, the culture under investigation reveals how the soldier has learned to adapt to his military environment. Based on Hofstede's view on the composition of organizational culture, this research on Russian soldiers' culture can be developed further by questioning the soldiers about the following issues:

1) What is the special language and terminology of the group which only they understand? (*organizational symbols*);

2) Which people are particularly meaningful members of the group? (o*rganizational heroes*);

3) What events that are celebrated by the group do they attend? What periodic meetings do they participate in? And how do people behave during these meetings? (*organizational rituals*); and

4) What would the soldiers themselves like to see happen in the unit? What is the biggest mistake that a soldier can make? And which problem is of greatest concern for the soldier? (*organizational values*)

When the relative importance of practices and values is considered, several studies have shown that '…at the organizational level, cultural differences reside mostly in practices, and less in values'.[365] Therefore, it is possible to describe an organizational culture based on practices which Hofstede has defined along six dimensions. Firstly, the dimension *process oriented vs. results oriented,* describes a type of organization that is mainly concerned with the methods that are used by the organization as opposed to focusing on the goals of the organization. Thus in a process oriented culture, people perceive themselves as avoiding occupational risks, making only a limited effort in their job, and they see their job as a daily routine. In contrast to this, in a results oriented culture, participants perceive themselves as comfortable in unfamiliar situations; they put maximal effort into their job, and they see each day as a new challenge. Hofstede's second dimension examines *employee oriented vs. job oriented organizational practices*. In the employee oriented dimension, people feel that their personal problems are taken into account, that the organization takes responsibility for the welfare of the employee and that important decisions tend to be made by groups rather than individuals. Conversely, job oriented organizational culture workers feel that the organization is not interested in the personal welfare of the employee, major decisions are made by individuals and the organization is only interested in the employee's work and whether it has been completed or not.

The third dimension of Hofstede's typology juxtaposes *parochial vs. professional cultures*. In a parochial culture the employee derives his/her identity largely from the organization itself, while those workers who are active in a professional dimension, are people who identify themselves with the job itself. In parochial cultures the behavior of the members of the organization is monitored by organizational norms not only in the public realm but in the private sphere of the home as well. Individuals feel that the parochial organization takes into account their social and familial background as much as their level

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[365] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

of job competence. On the other hand, members of professional cultures consider their private lives their own business, and they feel that the organization's reasons for hiring them are based strictly on their job performance record.

In the fourth dimension of the model *open vs. closed systems* are proposed. In open organizational cultures, people perceive that their organization is open to newcomers and outsiders and that almost everybody fits into the organization. In closed system units, the organization and the people are felt to be introspective and secretive, even among insiders. People who work in a closed culture believe that their jobs are so important and so specific that only special people can 'fit' into their organization.

The fifth component of the model refers to the degree of internal structuring within an organization and it is labeled as *loose or tight control*. In loose control units people feel that no one considers labor costs; people are late for meetings and jokes about the organization and the job are frequent. People in tightly controlled units describe their work environment as cost-conscious; meeting times are kept punctually, and jokes about the job or the organization itself are rare.

Finally, the sixth dimension examines *normative vs. pragmatic cultures*. In normative cultures, it is important to follow prescribed organizational procedures exactly. High levels of esteem, loyalty and honesty are maintained, and consequently a strong group ethic is predominant in normative cultures. In a pragmatic organization, the clients' needs are considered more important than the rules. Similarly, results are more important than correctly following procedures. Thus, the pragmatic attitude towards ethics is less dogmatic.

In this study, Hofstede's dimensions of organizational culture will be applied to the Russian soldiers' culture and compared to the culture of the All-Volunteer Force. The contrasting cultures associated with the modern versus the postmodern organization can in general terms be summarized by Michael Reed's statement:

> "If modern organizations are constructed around a culture of repression and control, then their postmodern counterparts are thought to generate a culture of expression and involvement within which autonomy, participation and disagreement are openly encouraged. In this respect, postmodern organizations are seen to rely on much more 'emotional' cultures in the sense that they facilitate the personal development of individuals within collectivities based on trust, and the relatively high level of risk-taking which this involves. In addition, they refuse to make available the ritualized routines and formalized rules which 'bureaucrats' can hide behind and manipulate to repress emotional tension and political conflict. Indeed, the culture of postmodern organization seems to be one that celebrates, even luxuriates in, the dissolution and demise of the normative regimes and disciplinary practices associated with rational bureaucracy."[366]

Based on this description of the postmodern organization, combined with Hofstede's insights into the dimensions of organizational culture, it is possible to describe an ideal

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[366] Michael Reed, *The Sociology of Organizations, Themes, Perspectives and Prospects*, (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), p. 229. See also Part I of this thesis, where a typology of the post-bureaucratic organization (Charles Heckscher) and a virtual organization (Nohria and Berkley) were presented.

type of the AVF organizational culture. The AVF-culture tends to be result oriented. It focuses on the employee; it has a professional attitude; it is open system, loosely controlled, and it promotes a pragmatic attitude. The mass army, as the ideal typical counterpart of the AVF, can then be described as the opposite of the six dimensions of Hofstede's model. This 'binary' model is illustrated in the next table.

Mass army organizational culture	All-Volunteer Organizational culture
Process oriented	Result oriented
Job oriented	Employee oriented
Parochial	Professional
Closed system	Open system
Tight controlled	Loosely controlled
Normative attitude	Pragmatic attitude

Table 13: Mass army culture versus AVF military culture

Army Culture

Donna Winslow's meta-theoretical model which specifically describes army culture will be used in addition to Hofstede's insights to study the Russian soldiers' culture.[367] Winslow proposes three perspectives from which an army's culture can be viewed, namely: the integrationist, the differentiated and the fragmented perspectives. These perspectives integrate macro to micro levels of analysis, and cover formal and informal patterns of army culture. In the **integrationist perspective**, the principle idea is that there is a broad organizational consensus which is built around a stable set of ideas, values and norms that characterize the organization as a whole. This means that all cultural manifestations (practices and values) are interpreted as consistently reinforcing the same themes. According to the integrationist approach, all the members of an organization share and understand their own culture. It is a realm of activity where all is clear and where all ambiguity is excluded. The **differentiated perspective** looks at specific groups or subcultures within the organization. The organizational culture of the army is shared only by the group and not by the entire organization. Subsequently consensus exists only within the boundaries of the sub-culture. In the **fragmented perspective**, culture is a loosely structured phenomenon and is a system of values and practices that are not shared by every member of the organization. This fragmented form of culture emerges dynamically and it is the result of random interaction between actors in the organization. Ambiguity and change are permanently present within the organization, thus, culture in the fragmented perspective combines a multiplicity of views. Winslow describes her model as follows:

> "…army culture contains elements congruent with all three perspectives. If any organization is studied in enough depth, some issues, values, and objectives will be seen to generate organization-wide consensus, consistency, and clarity (an Integration view). At the same time other

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[367] Donna Winslow, *Army Culture*, A Report Prepared for the US Army Research Institute. (Alexandria, Virginia, 2000)

aspects of an organization's culture will coalesce into subcultures that hold conflicting opinions about what is important, what should happen and why (Differentiation view). Finally, some problems and issues will be ambiguous, in a state of constant flux, generating multiple, plausible interpretations (A Fragmentation view) Thus each perspective in its own way will reveal one aspect of reality."[368]

I propose to use a different terminology than Winslow, in order to have these terms coincide more succinctly with the vocabulary used in the field of organizational sociology. Subsequently, Winslow's integration perspective will be referred to as the **formal culture** of an organization, which is officially approved by an organization-based (superficial) consensus. The differentiated perspective I will describe as **informal culture**, as it reveals the unofficial culture of the organization's everyday life. Finally, the fragmentation perspective can be called **a-formal culture**, as the circumstances in which this specific outcome of organizational culture manifests itself are so unpredictable and unstable, that there is no organizational control whatsoever at the time of its occurrence. Hence the three aspects of military culture can be summarized in the following table:

Features	Integration perspective- formal military culture	Differentiation perspective- informal military culture	Fragmentation perspective- A-formal military culture
Orientation to consensus	Organization-wide consensus	Sub-cultural consensus	Multiplicity of view (no-consensus)
Relation among Manifestations	Exclude it	Channel it outside subcultures	Focus on it
Metaphors	Culture as glue, organizations as machines or 'little society'	Subgroups as islands in a sea of ambiguity	Culture as a web, organizations as a jungle

Table 14: Donna Winslow's meta theoretical view on army culture

(Source: Adapted from Donna Winslow, *Op. Cit.*, 2000, p. 8-9)

The three perspectives give us methodological guidance in the study of army culture. The formal perspective provides a broader understanding of organizational patterns and structures and the official view on the Russian (conscripted) soldier. In addition it expresses the values and norms of the military establishment on how they believe that the 'ideal' Russian soldier should act. The formal perspective obliges us to focus on the consistent and coherent rhetoric that dictates how the (mythical) Russian soldier should act. The informal perspective provides insight into the informal groupings and power relationships in the Russian army. Subsequently, the researcher should observe the formal and informal patterns and behaviors of individuals in the group, as well as the underlying

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[368] *Ibid*. p. 4.

assumptions that guide this behavior. This perspective also examines the organizational conditions that allow for the emergence of subcultures to occur within the organization. The informal perspective is an approach that allows us to describe the soldiers' subculture, and to examine the logic of how it operates and how it is embedded in the organizational structures of the army. It also highlights the conflicts that exist between the soldiers' culture and the broader organizational aims, which lead to inherent organizational paradoxes and inconsistencies. This informal perspective demonstrates the importance of informal leadership, which allows self proclaimed leaders of the soldiers to reign over 'the barracks' instead of the formal authorities. Finally, the a-formal perspective examines organized chaos which is ultimately expressed during periods of warfare. The a-formal perspective provides the opportunity to concentrate on the soldiers' culture during battle experiences such as those that took place in Chechnya. Used in this manner, Winslow's meta-theoretical model enlarges and rounds out our perspective on military culture when applied to the question of the Russian soldiers' culture.

Thus, using the combined models of Hofstede and Winslow as well as the theoretical background of the postmodern military organization, the purpose of this section is to examine particular aspects of everyday military life in order to describe Russian soldiers' culture. 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. The official and ideal picture of the 'expected' Russian soldier is analyzed in the first chapter by reconstructing the image of the mythical 'Russian soldier'. The 'actual' Russian soldiers' reality, described in the second chapter of this Part, is reconstructed on the basis of 50 life-history interviews of Russian soldiers and 50 in depth analysis of so-called declarations or *zaiavlenie* filled in by Russian soldiers. In order to give a complete picture of the soldiers' culture, it should be necessary to complete our overview with the soldiers' culture during war experiences, with the so-called a-formal or 'unexpected' soldiers' culture. The experience of Chechnya would be a good case to study the Russian soldiers in the situation of war. However, in the context of this study there were only three soldiers we could interview who had experience in the war on the southern border. Therefore; it has been decided not to treat the a-formal soldiers' culture. This doesn't undermine our endeavor to find an answer to the question whether the Russian soldiers' culture is incompatible with the ideal type of the All-Volunteer Force. Based on the result of the formal and the informal soldiers' culture a convincing answer can be presented. This will be clarified in the conclusions of this part.[369]

The reconstruction of an ideal type is an intellectual exercise which is like solving a puzzle in which pieces are to be found in different boxes and the actual model of the puzzle, which is usually available on one side of the box, is not present. Concretely, this process involves a complicated form of inductive reasoning. No individual who is consulted will have a clear-cut image of the ideal soldier as his rhetoric contains implicit as well as explicit elements of the army culture. Consequently, the ideal image of the Russian soldier, which is anchored in Russian (military) culture, has tangible (*practices*) and intangible (*values*) elements. In addition to this reconstruction exercise, Part III will answer the question whether the official rhetoric of the Russian soldier and actual life in the

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[369] The methodology used to support the analysis of Russian soldiers' culture is extensively explained in appendix I.

Russian barracks is compatible with the image of the ideal professional soldier which was presented in Part I of this study.

Chapter 1. Russian Formal Military Culture: The Construction of the Mythical Soldier

In this chapter the main characteristics of Russian formal military culture will be discussed.[370]   The main goal of this discussion is to make an analysis of the narratives about the Russian soldier and what is generally 'said' to be typical for him in his everyday life.   The military discourse on the Russian conscript is most often expressed in what Nancy Ries calls the genre of cant, which is "a pious, self-satisfied, promotional genre which epitomized much official propaganda and many other realms of public speech. It 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'".[371] A good example of such cant is expressed by the popular two-star general Alexander Lebed who has characterized Russian soldiers as 'smart, courageous people who love and know their profession, and are selflessly devoted to their Fatherland and ready to die for it'.[372] It should be clear that what is expressed in cants about the conscript does not necessarily have anything to do with reality.   Elise Wirtschafter has phrased this in the Russian military setting of the first half of the 19th century as follows:

> "The State either chose or was forced, because of the inadequate economic and administrative resources, to rely extensively on *ad hoc* measures taken by individual officers and to tolerate flagrant violations of the law- all of which eroded bureaucratic rationality and professional efficiency …The army was then left with the unenviable task to trying to transform an obligation that…society regarded as an unmitigated disaster into a glorious and heroic deed."[373]

Formal military culture is very often **mythical**, by which is negatively meant that the narrative does not correspond with reality.[374] At the same time myths have a transcendent, fantastic, or magical character (which does not have to be explained as it stands above '*la condition humaine*'). Myths may color and/or justify military (everyday) reality and they make eventual suffering bearable. And indeed, the nature of military life easily lends itself to the creation of myths, hyperboles, drama, and historical falsifications, because, in its ultimate execution, military life is so closely related with basic questions of life and death, order and chaos, or the so-called fundamental-existential questions of human existence. The Belgian historian Gie Van Den Berghe has noted in this connection that 'war, chaos

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[370] See also Soeters' article on 'Culture in Uniformed Organizations', which implicitly touches upon some elements described in this paragraph. Joseph L. Soeters, 'Culture in Uniformed Organizations', in: Neal M. Ashkanasy, Celeste P. M. Wilderom and Mark F. Peterson (editors), *Handbook of Organizational Culture and Climate*, (London: Sage Publications, 2000), pp. 465-467.

[371] Nancy Ries, *Op. Cit*. 1997, p.88.

[372] Alexander Lebed, *My Life and My Country*, (Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1997), p. 212.

[373] Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter, *From Serf to Russian Soldier*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 149.

[374] Rudyard Kipling, together with many other authors, destroyed the First World War military myth when he lyrically expressed his grief on his son's death, saying: 'If any ask us why we died, tell them 'because our fathers lied''

and fear feed the imagination, certainly when reality threatens to surpass it'.[375] Similarly, Donna Winslow has suggested that control over chaos, manifested in many practices, is the fundamental raison d'être of military culture.[376] I would add to this ethnological observation that control over death is another aspect through which military culture can be seen.[377] I would suggest that military culture is basically a rite of death, a way of coping with or handling the agonizing idea of dying on the battlefield.

Formal military culture-to be interpreted as stable, long term, but constructed convictions and beliefs expressed in rituals and the material surrounding circumstances-is not only mythical. Formal military culture is a creation of the military which is also **functional**. It provides 'the software' for status, comradeship, group cohesion, organizational coherence and group solidarity.[378] Formal military culture is thus the mental glue that sticks the members of the organization together. It is, therefore, a tool of organizational control in the hands of the military elite that is supposed to help to execute its basic missions. Consequently, formal military culture is believed to be supporting organizational effectiveness.[379] At the same time, formal military culture is also an instrument to define who is part of the organization and who is not. The particular set of values and practices gives in this way the definition of the 'self' and 'the other' ('we' and 'they'), and indicates who makes up part of that culture and who does not. Consequently, it sets the boundaries of the organization. But the military organization is also an instrument in the hands of the State and expresses State authority, and therefore, formal military culture is also cultivated and reinforced by the State.[380] As we have noted in part I, it was in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, when the idea of the 'nation-state' was dominant in the West, that military culture was carried out by citizens as a result of socialization programs run by the State. Military culture, although treated here as a distinct and specific organizational culture, cannot, therefore, in this specific time frame be completely separated from the history of the state and the society in which it is functioning. Military culture was thus embedded in a national culture. In the case of Russia, a state in which military values remain important and the military organization is still perceived as a crucial state making agent, military organizational culture is a tool in the hands of the State. Thus the Russian President uses and re-vitalizes a patriotic education program, in order to foster public acceptance of military values and practices. As far a the military is

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[375] Gie Van Den Berghe, 'Ontastbare gaskamers, Collectieve herinnering en geschiedkunde', *De Standaard der Letteren*, 31 Januari 2002, p. 8.

[376] Donna Winslow, *Op. Cit.*, 2000, p. 59.

[377] See Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring, The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1989)

[378] In an extreme form military myths may implicitly and explicitly result in an attitude of (moral) superiority or an attitude that civilian rules and conventions are not applicable to the military community. Moreover, these myths may give the soldiers the feeling that they are constantly misunderstood and misrepresented in civilian settings.

[379] See for instance David K. Vaughan and William A. Schum, 'Motivation in US Narrative Accounts of the Ground War in Vietnam', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 28, Nr. 1, Fall 2001, pp. 7-31 in which the authors suggest that primary groups are 'a primary motivational factor'; Ole Holsti, 'Of Chasms and Convergences: Attitudes and Beliefs of Civilians and Military Elites at the Start of a New Millennium', in: Peter D. Feavor and Richard H. Kohn (editors), *Soldiers and Civilians, The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), pp. 56-63 and pp.95-97; and James Burk, 'Military Culture' in: Lester Kurtz (editor), *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict*, , San Diago: Academic Press, 1999).

[380] For a macro-historical opinion on this, see Charles Tilly, Op. Cit., 1990, pp.67-126. Recent public opinion research has also shown that the 'civilian-military gap' between the military elite and the civilian political elite is not that wide. The difference between the civilian and the military opinion on many societal issues, however, is wider and more pervasive when this is studied with regard to the military elite and the general public. See: Ole Holsti, *Op. Cit.*, 2001, p. 90-99.

concerned, the state offers the mythical and functional formal military as a kind of compensation and recognition for the physical, mental, and moral hardship that inevitably characterizes soldiers' life. Formal military culture is, therefore, an instrument of bargaining in the hands of the State, with which it tries to overhaul its citizens to fight for its causes and to keep the soldiers loyal to the State.

In conclusion, formal military culture is a concept with mental and material aspects that are primarily constructed and cultivated by the military. Under ideal circumstances, formal military culture is stimulated by the State and supported by society. The State and society can thus be seen as secondary constructors/supporters. Formal military culture can also be seen as the memory of the organization as it has been shaped by history. It should be clear that formal military culture is a mental construct and in this way it is often exaggerated and idealized. It is in other words an intellectual construction. Not every single soldier is consciously aware of the values and practices we are presenting here. There are, for instance, gradations of patriotism, in which some soldiers cultivate extreme forms of xenophobic nationalism, while others do not accept or simply reject such beliefs. There is also, as will be shown, individual and collective, passive and active resistance to this formal military culture. In the second part of this study it was, for instance, shown that Soviet-Russian society was polarized on several military issues. The nationalists, for instance, supported traditional military values and practices while they were vividly contested by the liberal-intellectual end of the political spectrum. Formal military culture as it is presented here must thus be treated with caution as it is in reality less clear and coherent and much dynamic than the following discussion may suggest. Nevertheless, the construct of formal military culture as presented here, is capable of revealing and explaining many aspects of Russian military reality. It is indeed the software of the mind that programs the mainframe of the military organization.

A Formal Military Culture Defined by Pain, Patriarchy, Patrimonialism, and Patriotism

The specific Russian formal military culture is in this study defined by four basic characteristics or stances, namely pain, patriarchy, patrimonialism, and patriotism.[381] These stances, observed on their own, relate respectively with the individual, who is supposed to suffer stoically and heroically; the peer group, in which machismo-like bravado and mischievous behavior is tolerated and encouraged; the institution, which legitimizes authority on traditional grounds; and the state, which demands national loyalty and love for the country. Subsequently, each characteristic touches upon a specific level of the formal military culture, thus highlighting the multi-layer disposition of the formal military culture. The four constituents can also be seen as clusters with which organizational practice (practical behavior and material surroundings) can be related to and explained. At the same time, when the stances are seen as a whole, there is an accumulative aspect in the relationship between the four characteristics. Pain and suffering, for instance, are also expressed in the machismo-like behavior and male mischievousness between peers, in the way authority is exercised and in the way patriotism is supposed to be proven. Russians are only good patriots as they are prepared to suffer for it, to show typical Russian macho behavior and to transmit an attitude of traditional behavior. In the same way, the typical male culture reflected in the dominant leadership style of the institution is also reflected in

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[381] Stances, dispositions or moods are defined by Ries as emotional and physical postures that express particular perspectives, values, desires, or expectations. (Nancy Ries, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p. 88)

the patriotic discourse held in the Russian armed forces. Russian formal military culture can, accordingly, be illustrated in the following figure.
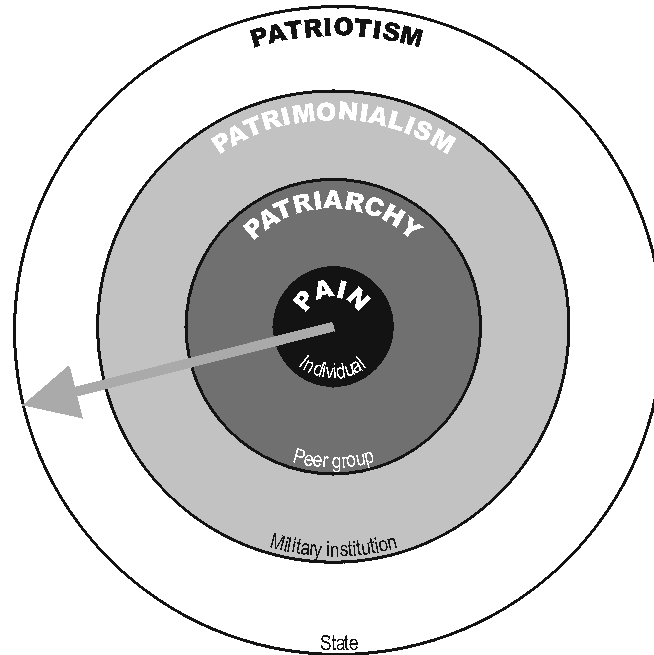
Figure 4: Russian military organizational culture

The Russian military ethos is, according to many Russian analysts, unique and fundamentally different from the Western military culture. This exclusiveness claim is not new in Russian cultural discourse, but is interesting to observe in the military context. Serebriannikov and Deriugin, for instance, characterize the Western military mentality as 'based on the liberal idea, juridical norms and a strict contract between the 'patron and the client', while the Russian military mentality is, according to the same analysts, based on 'an ethical [nravstvennyi] basis, moral principles and a collective psychology'.[382] The fact that the Russian formal military culture is claimed to be distinct from the West, however, does not prevent it from occasionally coming under pressure from Western and modernizing influences. This can be indirectly demonstrated through the Russian debate on the draft during the 1990's. Indeed, some researchers blame the (pro-western) education of the materialistic, pampered, and urbanized youngsters for the anti-draft sentiments among this cohort and ultimately for the draft crisis. They deprecatingly label the prizyvniki [draftees] of the 1990's as the 'perestroika children', 'the neglected generation' or 'the fruit of the radical reforms' ['deti perestroiki', 'broshennoe pokolenie', 'plod radikalnych reform'].[383] This negative stereotyping of the youth reminds us of the campaign that was held in the 1960's in which the army elite of that day criticized the mentality of the [Second World War] 'war babies' who were, at that time, susceptible to what the Soviets call the 'cosmopolitan' and 'corruptive' influences of the West, characterized by a liking for jazz and abstract art and the longing for an individual and prosperous life, as the outward manifestations of inward spiritual turmoil.[384] There are two elements interesting to note here. Firstly, the analysts' observations implicitly holds the idea that the modernizing Soviet-Russian youth mentality apparently does not fit the attitude of the 'authentic'

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[382] Serebrianikov and Diurigin, *Op. Cit.*, 1998, pp. 22-23.
[383] Serebrianikov and Diurigin, *Op. Cit.*, 1998, p. 13.
[384] Nikolay Galay, 'Soviet Youth and the Army', *Institute for the study of the USSR Bulletin*, Vol. 10, Nr. 2, February 1963, p. 17.

Russian/Soviet soldier. This implies that the idea of the Russian soldier is a traditional idea. Secondly, in order to protect the 'russianness' of the soldiers, the conscription problem has a nationalistic component and is in a sense anti-western/anti-modernist. Conscription and the Russian debate on this topic are thus fundamentally linked with the national idea, a (moderate or extremist) nationalistic ideology, and are influenced by modernizing factors (such as education and urbanization). Generally speaking, conscription is, in the sociological sense of the word, an anti-modernist institution in the time frame of the twenty-first century. Consequently, revolting against the draft is both an expression of a modernist attitude and a denunciation of the Russian military culture. Supporting the draft means rallying against the modernization of society and supporting the consolidation of traditional Russian military culture. Progressive, westernizing forces clash here with conservative, nationalistic forces in Russian society. In other words, conscription can also be linked with the traditional zapadniki-narodniki dichotomy in Russian society, which is so characteristic for Russian cultural studies in general.

What is also remarkable is that in the 1960's as well as in the 1990's the government formulated an identical policy in response to this anti-draft sentiment and draft crisis. In the 1960's as well as in the 1990's it was hoped that the effects of the modernizing society on youth' mentality would be countered by the inducement of a socializing program in the school system. This military socialization program, the so-called NVP, was implemented in the educational system in 1968, while President Putin decreed a patriotic program in the civilian educational program in 1999. With this decree signed on December 31, 1999, Putin aimed at: 'consolidating society and restoring patriotism and incidentally stimulating the interest of young people doing their military service'.[385] It is debatable how effective these socializing programs are and to what degree these programs militarize society, but it was hoped by the state authorities that through educating the basic patriotic and military values from a very young age on, the draft system could be saved. In other words, through socialization and indoctrination, an antidote was sought for modernizing factors that could jeopardize Russian military culture. Soviet-Russian policy makers always have put the power of the word or the power of propaganda against the power of progress, but can a military mentality under pressure be saved by words alone?

In what follows, the formal culture will be illustrated in terms of both affirmations and negations that can be retraced in the narrative on and by Russian soldiers, in Western and Russian academic literature, classic Russian literature, and assertions made by the Russian public. Moreover, military informants shed some light on the different but interrelated aspects of Russian formal military culture. Finally, practices from daily military life [*soldatskii byt'*], recounted by conscripts themselves, provide illustrations of what is meant by pain, patriarchy, patrimonialism and patriotism.

1. 1.   Pain or the Culture of Suffering

One of the most important aspect of the cultural ethos of the Russian soldier, as an individual, is claimed to be his acceptance and tolerance of pain and, more broadly, suffering. This is expressed in the commonly heard saying that 'Russkii soldat vyzibet v liubiax ysloviax' [The Russian soldier survives in all kind of circumstances]. Suffering is functional in the military context as the jarring circumstances of battle, the ultimate

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[385], 'patriotic education of the Citizens of the Russian Federation', *Izvestia* , 23 February 1999, p. 1

expression and goal of the military profession, is unavoidably linked with military life and therefore the soldier must be able to endure it. Consequently, hard living conditions must be part of military training as it aims to create an environment that resembles military 'reality'. Subsequently, it gives the military authorities the 'freedom' or rather the imperative to impose severe discipline. Harsh discipline may be seen as an expression of the conviction that soldiers must be physically strong and mentally hard in order to cope with military life. Therefore, Russian soldiers are supposed to undergo military everyday life passively and patiently and to demonstrate stoic behavior. Moreover, the culture of pain is not only functional, but also mythical. It is based on the belief that only through suffering do soldiers become better men and authentic Russian soldiers. Ries has noted in a different context on suffering in Russia that 'suffering engenders distinction, sacrifice creates status, and loss produces gain'.[386] The idea of suffering as it is proposed here is, thus, an expression of the endurance of the Russian soldier, and also carries a spiritual, almost messianic connotation.

When loss, sacrifice and suffering, are so highly rewarded in the Russian formal military culture, it is easy to understand that the 'cult of the soldier-hero' is not far away. This spiritual cult of the suffering soldier has also existed in the West, although in another time frame. Indeed, the soldier-hero was dominant in the West during the First World War, which was a conflict that, as we have seen in Part I, was prototypical for the mass-army. The Dutch historian Leo Van Bergen noted on this soldier-hero cult:

> "Hero was the title of honor that every soldier received. Soldiers were no common men anymore. They were heroes who committed acts of heroism, who shed blood of heroes; who passed away like heroes, and who were buried in a tomb of heroes. The death of a hero was not regrettable, because through dying as an individual, the nation could survive. The nation was more important than the individual. The death of a soldier was only a physical phenomenon, his spirit, his courage, his deeds were a source of inspiration for the coming generations. This was the cult of the soldier [during the First World War]."[387]

This functional and spiritual culture of pain and suffering is still what distinctively makes the myth of the Russian soldiers in the 1990's Russia! It lies at the very heart of the formal military culture, and this factor of pain is crucial for understanding Russian military practices. It is expressed in the desolation of Russian soldiers' life; in a high tolerance for peacetime and wartime deaths; and in the widespread acceptance of violence, all of which can also, generally speaking, be viewed as embedded in and supported by the broader Russian culture.

Scarcity and Desolation in Russian Soldiers' Life

The combination of hard living conditions and the ability of the Russian soldier to cope with them have been observed by many witnesses and spectators over different historical periods. Wirtschafter concluded her social-historical study of the Russian army in the late eighteenth-early nineteenth century with the assertion that "Poorly equipped, ill fed, sporadically trained, and physically abused, the Russian soldier stood firm in the face of

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[386] Nancy Ries, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p.83.
[387] Translated from: Leo Van Bergen, *Zacht en eervol, lijden en sterven in de Grote Oorlog*, [Gently and heroically suffering and dying during the Great War], (The Hague: sdu Editors, 2001), (second edition), p. 16

battle".[388] This means, no matter how dreadful the conditions, the soldier was still a good combatant. He could bear the hardship of military life and showed an extremely high capacity for endurance. Other observers of Russian soldiers' life over the last two centuries and especially during the Great Patriotic War, have made the same observation.[389] General Afanasy Beloborodov, for instance, stated that it was the Russian coolness, selfless bravery, inexhaustible optimism, and tenacity that made the German invader lose all hope of ever conquering Russia.[390] More recently, Lieutenant-General Vladimir Shamanov, commander of the Western Group in the North Caucasus during the second Chechen war said about the Russian soldier:

> "We gave a worthy reply to the skeptics in the West who had written off our army: There is no one stronger in this world than the Russian soldier. This isn't an abstract idea, the Russian soldier, but quite specific. You will not find anyone less demanding or more devoted, self-sacrificing and capable of adapting to difficult conditions than the Russian fighting man."[391]

In an interview with the Belgian battalion commander of the first Belgian contingent in Eastern Croatia (BELBAT I- that took place from June until September 1992), Lieutenant-Colonel Jockin was asked about the collaboration with the Russians and how he evaluated the Russian soldiers who were working in his sector.[392] He spoke with respect of the physical endurance and tenacity of the soldiers and their ability to survive in uncomfortable living conditions. A Russian soldier, ideal typed as a peasant-soldier by the Belgian colonel, never complains. Colonel Jockin remembered the anecdote that he met a Russian soldier who spent the whole day without any food or drink on a checkpoint without complaining. This is something a Belgian soldier never would accept, he said.

It is also a common observation that western military experience of conscription was never comparable with the Russian experience of conscription:

> "In order to gain a more complete idea of the rigor of conditions of military service in the Soviet Union, one must bear in mind factors which even in peacetime make it far more arduous than it is for any young soldier in the West. Throughout the period of service there is no right to home leave, which is granted only as an incentive or the event of special family circumstances; as a result of the extraterritorial system of manning the armed forces the entire period of service is, as a rule, spent far from home; financial remuneration is minimal, amounting to no more than 3 rubles a month; in addition, there is exceptionally rigorous physical and mental training under conditions of iron discipline. Thus, the draft for

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[388] Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter, *Op. Cit*., p. 151.
[389] See, for example, Roger Reese, *Op. Cit*., 2000, pp. 101-136 and p 185; Herbert Goldhamer, *Op. Cit*., 1975, pp. 89-169
[390] Albert Axell, *Russia's Heroes 1941-1945*, (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 2001), p. 1-2.
[391] Anna Politkovskaya, *A Dirty War, A Russian Reporter in Chechnya*, (London: The Harvill Press, 2001), p. 189.
[392] Interview conducted on 14 April 1994, Brussels. Lieutenant-General Jockin is now Vice Chief of the Belgian General staff.

military service is the young Soviet citizen's first harsh contribution to the state."[393]

The harshness of military life is also illustrated by the dreadful accommodation in which Russian soldiers have to live. The Soldiers' Mothers Organization of St.-Petersburg, for example, claims that the filthiness of the barracks, even in military hospitals is appalling and not fit to house human beings. Military barracks resemble, according to activists from this Human Rights movement, "desolate stables for animals". The activists of the Soldiers' Mothers Organization have not seen any exceptions to this observation.

The Soldiers' Mothers claim that it is deliberate military to degenerate the personality of the soldiers by the creation of this dreadful environment in order to make them 'obedient and willing' soldiers. Andrei, one soldier interviewed, commented on the harshness of the environment: "I served in an infantry unit in North Ossetia. When I arrived in the unit on the first day … we entered the barracks, and suddenly the question came up: 'How can I live here?'; all the windows were broken and covered by some blankets…'How would it be in the winter?' I thought."[394] At the same time, the extremely monotonous and poor quality diet of soldiers, often resulting in serious loss of body weight endangering the health of many youngsters, adds to the harshness of military soldiers' life. Aleksei testified on this as follows:

> "Until the time of my military service my weight was 86 kilograms and I measured 186 centimeters. I did a lot of sport and I had a well developed physical condition. After the first month in the instruction company I lost 10 kilograms. The constant feeling of hunger, weakness, my interest in doing sport disappeared. After being used to the food served at home it was difficult to adjust to food served in the army, as well as the speed with which it has to be gulped down [glotnyt']. The food consisted mainly of porridge [kasha] or rice to which dry onions and carrots were added, which were steamed long before. There was never enough veal. Sometimes they prepared very fatty pork of which they gave very little portions. With this kind of food situation and a harsh and cruel physical and mental pressure on us, there was also fear. The monotonous life in the barracks, could always unannounced and unexpectedly be broken on a day and nobody knew why this was or where the danger came from." [395]

The dreadful physical environment was also noted by General Alexander Lebed. But he denied that this was a matter of intentional policy on the part of the armed forces to degenerate the individual soldier's personality. He acknowledged the importance of the living conditions of the soldiers and its effect on morale. He noted in his memoirs that:

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[393] Nikolai Galay, Soviet Youth and the Army, *Institute for the Study of the USSR Bulletin*, Vol. 10, Nr. 2, February 1963, p. 14.
[394] Interview conducted on May, 22 1998 in St.-Petersburg (Interview Nr. 23)
[395] Interview with Aleksei 4 on May 27, 1998 (Interview Nr. 33). The ideas from this paragraph were also based on an interview with Ella Mikhailova Polyakova and Jelena Iurevna Vilenskaya on December 10 , 2001, Brussels. On the food condition of the Russian soldiers see also 'The diet of conscripts in the Russian army' published by the Soldiers' Mothers Organization of St.-Petersburg (http://www.soldiersmothers.spb.org/index_eng.htm), and the document 'To Serve Without Health? Inaqequate Nutrition and Health Conditions in the Russian Armed Forces' published by Human Right Watch (http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/russia1103/russia1103.pdf).

"[…] if a soldier lives like a human being, he will behave like a human being, but if he lives like a pig…".[396] The opinion of the popular Russian general, expressed in his memoirs not without political intentions, is quickly contradicted by an officer who responded to the complaints about living conditions in the Russian army by a mother of a conscripted soldier as follows: "Ce n'est pas grave. Un soldat, ça doit vivre les pieds dans la boue. Les uns partiront, les autres les remplaceront"[397] [It doesn't matter. A soldier has to live with his feet in the mud. Some of them will leave, some other will replace them.]

This casual response testifies the acceptance of pain and the endurance of suffering that is common in formal Russian military culture. It is seen as a distinctive quality of Russian soldiers.

High Levels of Mortality and Violence as consequences of the glorification of pain

The idea of suffering rejects Western ideas such as materialism, orientation towards the present, rationalism, a concern with the means rather than the ends, and a high emphasis on legalism. This has many practical effects for Russian society. One of them, which has also important consequences for Russian military practice, is the acceptance of a high mortality rate. The high mortality rate in Russian society in general, especially among Russian men, was during the 1990's intensively discussed among demographers. Demographers spoke in alarming terms about the 'demographic crisis of Russia'. They were especially alarmed by the spectacular increase of the so-called 'non-natural' or 'external' causes of death, with which they meant death caused by road accidents, accidental poisoning, suicide, homicide, injury and violence. According to Vadimir Shkolnikov, Giovanni Cornia, David Leon and France Meslé this sharp rise in mortality was directly and indirectly related to dramatic increases in alcohol consumption and to mal-adaptation and psychological stress stemming from sudden changes in economic and social conditions in post-Soviet Russia.[398] More generally, Catherine Merridale has noted about mortality in Russian society that 'no one is sure how it works, but most people agree that there is some connection between Russia's culture and its history of high mortality."[399] Roger Reese has synthesized this idea more dramatically, although also with a more optimistic undertone by characterizing that the story of the Russian armed forces is "essentially one of continuos death and rebirth."[400] The Great Patriotic War is prototypical for this as more than 11 million Soviet servicemen lost their lives during the war, including some 7 million killed in action; and about 4 million who died in POW camps. Those wounded, shell-shocked, frost bitten or suffering from burns or illness numbered above 15 million.[401] In Afghanistan the 'Limited

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[396] Alexander Lebed, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p. 52

[397] Valentina Melnikova and Anna Lebedev, *Les Petits Soldats le Combat des mères russes*, [Tiny Soldiers: the combat of the Russian mothers] Paris: Bayard, 2001, p. 14.

[398] Vladimir Shkolnikov, Giovanni Cornia, David Leon and France Meslé, "causes of the Russian Mortality Crisis", *World Development*, Vol. 23, Nr. 11, November 1998, pp. 1995-2011; Vladimir Shkolnikov and France Meslé, The Russian Epidemiological Crisis as Mirrored by Mortality Trends, in Julie DaVanzo (Editor) Russia's Demographic "Crisis", Santa Monica: RAND CF-124, 1996, pp. 113-161 (http://www.rand.org/publications/CF/Cf124/cf124.chap4.htlm) and Julie DaVanzo and Clifford Grammich, Dire Demographics: Population Trends in the Russian Federation, Santa Monica: Rand, 2001.

[399] Catherine Merridale, *Op. Cit.*, p. 60.

[400] Roger Reese, *Op. Cit.*, 2000, p. 136.

[401] See for instance:; Grigoriy Krivosheyev, *Grif sekretnosti snyat: Poteri Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR v voinakh boevykh deistviyakh I voennykh konfliktack* [The Secret Caveat is Lifted: Losses of the Armed Forces of the USSR in Combat Actions and Military Conflicts], Moskva: Voenizdat, 1993; V.V. Serebriannikov, *Sotsiologia voiny*, Moskva: Nauchyi Mir, 1997, p. 231; Albert Axell *Op. Cit*., p. 245-250; Catherine

Contingent' lost officially 14.626 soldiers; while about 50.000 soldiers were wounded; 6.669 soldiers were disabled; and more than 500.000 went through different serious illnesses of which 100.000 needed psychological help.[402] *Komsomolskaia Pravda* published a *'kniga pamiati'* [remembrance book] in which they listed 2.939 fatalities during the First Chechen war during the period December 1994-October 1996. After 10 months of fighting in Chechnya during Russia's second campaign in Chechnya, the Minister of Defense, Sergei Ivanov, said that 2,682 Russian soldiers in the various military branches had been killed.[403] In March 2002, this figure was officially raised to 5669 fatalities. The soldiers Mothers Organization claimed in the same article that these official data have to be multiplied with a factor of two to three.[404]

But it is not only during military campaigns that Russia culture shows a high acceptance for soldiers dying. In peacetime, too, the Russian army is notorious for so-called 'peace-time deaths' or 'non-combat deaths'. These are fatalities caused by accidents, suicides, homicide, violence among soldiers, etc. during peacetime. The data concerning this phenomenon are surrounded with murkiness as official differ substantially from on-the-ground reports by citizens, soldiers, and human rights observers, such as, for instance, the Soldiers' Mothers Organizations and Memorial. Non-combat deaths is a phenomenon that not only lies at the center of the debate between the defenders of conscription and the protesters against the draft. It is also an important component in our discussion about the culture of pain. The acceptance of many deaths as being 'part of the risks of the profession', is clearly an illustration of the culture of pain. We will therefore discuss this phenomenon in more depth. First we will discuss the issue of peace time deaths in general, and then we will focus on one specific sub-element of it, namely, suicide among soldiers.

The following table lists official non-combat deaths in the Russian military between 1990 to 1998.

Year	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Official data	4399	4034	2824	2572	2500	392	1037	1057	2600

Table 15: Official data concerning peace-time deaths in the period 1990-1998

(<u>Source</u>: **S. A. Belanovskii(red) dedovshchina v armii (sbornik sotsiologicheskich dokumentov, (Moskva: akademii Nauk SSSR), 1991, p. 192; Veronika Marchenko, *Op. Cit*. p. 12;)**

The official data are fiercely contested by Human Rights NGO's, which publish their own 'unofficial data'. These unofficial data are also vague, but they suggest that the official data underestimate the number of non-combat deaths in the Russian armed forces. The fact that the armed forces are still a bastion of secrecy adds to this conviction.

Merridale, *Op. Cit*., pp. 269-306; and Amnon Sella, *The Value of Human Life in Soviet Warfare*, London: Routledge, 1992.

[402] Aleksei Malashenko (Red.), Afganistan: Itogi beskonechnoi voiny, Materialy 'kruglogo stola', posviashchennogo 10-letniiu vivoda voisk iz Afganistana [Afghanistan: Evaluation (Balens) of a never ending War, Material of a round table conference ten years after the retreat from Afghanistan], Moskva: Canergie Endowment Moscow, 1999, p. 12. Bruce Porter, The Military Abroad: Internal Consequences of External Expansion, in: Timothy j. Colton and Thane Gustafson (Red.), *Soldiers and the Soviet State, Civil-Military Relations From Brezhnev to Gorbachev*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 294.

[403]"Russian Troops Killed in Chechnya", CNN report on Chechnya of June 2, 2001, http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/europe/06/02/russia.chechnya/ (consulted on April 5, 2002.)

[404] Evgenii Moskvi, "Minoborony obschityvaet v svoiu polzu, realnye tsifry po vyplate 'boebych" I voenym petriach proizvolno meniatca", Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie, Vol. 11, Nr 281, April 5 2002. (http://nvo.ng.ru/forces) consulted on April 5 2002.

According to the Soldiers' Mothers in the period 1985-1990, 15 to 20.000 conscripts were said to have died in 'non-combat' situations. In 1991, it was reported that at least 5.500 soldiers died during their military service.[405] This figure, approximately 5.000 a year, comes back year after year in independent commentary on the problem of peace-time deaths.[406] In round numbers it may be said that on a yearly basis in average officially about 2380 peacetime deaths are reported and in unofficial reporting the figure 5,000 is frequent.

When we look at the causes of peacetime deaths, again we can present a difference in the official and unofficial readings of the facts. The official data focus on the 'normal' risks and dangers of the military profession, accidents on the work floor, and reasons considered to be beyond the military's control. The military provides the following breakdown of causes of peacetime deaths among conscript soldiers: suicide (26,4 %), death caused by illness (16%), death during executing military duty (without further explanation) (14,9%), fatal accidents (neschastnii sluchai) (7,2%), desertion after which the soldier disappeared (7%), and for many cases there is no official answer (28,5%).[407] Veronika Marchenko, the president of the 'Pravo Materi' [The Mother's Rights] movement adds crime, 'non-regular relations' among soldiers, lack of discipline, and lack of responsibility on the part of the military commanders as principal reasons for the peace-time death phenomenon.[408] Thus, the military either consider these fatalities as 'normal' as they are inseparably linked to the risk of the military profession, or do they not take the responsibility for them. The military attitude is deeply fatalistic and pessimistic. This is definitely an expression of the culture of pain. The human rights groups, however, are protesting against this rationale and point out that most of the peace time deaths have in principle nothing to do with the core functions of the army, but with the perverse effects of the organization and how it functions. Moreover, they consider the military officers responsible for whatever occurs under their command, including unregulated relations, desertion, suicide, illness and so on. With Feld they point out that 'the simple existence of an armed force answers the question of how much an individual is worth to society and how much society is worth to him'.[409] This rather schematic opposition between the military and the NGO approach should not be applied too rigidly as, for instance, K. Kuzmin admitted in a 'Military Thought' article of the General Staff that the human factor is a primary cause in the accidents occurring in the Russian armed forces. Inadequate training, violations of the procedures, and psychological reasons such as demonstrative boldness, lack of discipline, bias to risks, lack of self control and lack of experience to deal with complex organizations were, according to this author, important factors explaining the high number of 'accidents'.[410] In any case, the data published on the issue of non-combat deaths are according to Western standards exceptionally (and unacceptable) high. It gives ground to the assertion of Laure Mandeville who has noted that: "l'histoire de l'armée

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[405] Beseda s narodnym deputatom SSSR, maiorom V.N. Lopatinym, in Kachanov (red.) *Perestroika: glasnost' demkratiia sotsializm, Armiie I obshchestvo*, Moskva: Progres, 1990, p.425.

[406] It is my assumption that the recurrent figure of 5,000 peace–time deaths goes back to the first public complaints on this topic. In 1989, Lopatin estimated that at least 20,000 peace-time deaths were counted in the Soviet barracks since Gorbachev was in power. Lopatin was a very active political lobbyist and it seems that Lopatin's estimation created the 'myth of 5,000' as from then on, this very high estimation comes back year after year.

[407] Veronika Marchenko, *Takaia armiia…narshenie prav cheloveka v voorushennykh silakh*, Sant-Peterburg, Norma, 1995, p. 17.

[408] *Ibid.* , p. 18.

[409] M. Feld, *The Structure of Violence, Armed Forces as Social Systems*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977, p. 18

[410] V.M. Kuzmin and others, 'Why is Safety of Military Service Conception Expedient?', *Military Thought*, Vol. 15, Nr. 4, p. 44.

Rouge s'est écrite dans les larmes et dans le sang." [411] [The history of the Red army is written with tears and blood] It gives moral value to the claims of the Soldiers' Mothers that: "Le mépris total pour la vie humaine, dans l'armée soviétique puis dans l'armée russe, s'étend jusqu'au mépris pour les morts." [412] [The total disdain for human life in the Soviet army and then in the Russian army goes until the disdain for the deaths] Ella Polyakova's statement that the Russian army cultivates a culture of death (*Kultura Smert*) can be well understood in the context of the reality that is cited above.[413] Neither the fact that the phenomenon of peace-time deaths may not be minimized, nor the fact that we have tried to explain this issue in the context of the formal military culture, gives moral justice to the phenomenon of the high number of peace-time deaths.

The acceptance and glorification of suffering has had also another consequence, namely the acceptance of an excessive amount of violence being present in Russian society, and in the Russian barracks. Orlando Figes' in his study of the 1891-1924 revolutionary period devoted a great deal of attention to the violence present in Russian peasant culture, which he stereotyped as "a culture in which life was cheap" and in which according to peasant sayings "a good life was not without violence."[414] Figes also argued that this Russian cruelty made by history. In another 'people's tragedy', the BBC study of the Patriotic War described not only the war crimes of the German army against the 'Russian' population, but destroyed at the same time the myth of the partisan movement which was also extremely violent and aggressive towards its own population.[415] In another setting, life in the barracks–as will later be explained in more detail in the next chapter-is also characterized by a high levels of violence, often expressed in fistfights, gang warfare, and torture. Yuri Poliakov's short story of 'S*to dnei do prikaza* '[100 days before demobilization] speaks for itself as one of the first publications under the perestroika wind that protested against the 'non-regulation relations' [*Neustavnye otnochenia*] as the Russian officials euphemistically calls the violence in the ranks.[416] General Lebed was also confronted with violence among soldiers when he arrived at Bagram, at his first posting in Afghanistan in November 1981:

> "There again, their wildness took over. Having no unit cohesion, hardly knowing their comrades, they fought each other to establish a sort of animal hierarchy: broken noses, cracked jaws, and black eyes became the norm. No one could stop them, and I couldn't keep tabs on my men all the time: two soldiers would go to the restroom; one would return; the other would come back later with a completely battered face." [417]

In the interviews I conducted, there were two main factors that were consistently mentioned by the interviewees: the presence of violence and the scarcity of resources

[411] Laure Mandeville, *l'armée Russe, la puissance en Haillons*, Paris: edition° 1, 1994, p. 31

[412] Valentina Melnikova and Anna Lebedev, *Les Petits Soldats le Combat des mères russes*, [Small Soldiers: the combat of the Russian mothers] Paris: Bayard, 2001, p. 112.

[413] Ella Polyakova, interview on December 10th, 2001, Brussels.

[414] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy, the Russian Revolution 1891-1924*, London: Pimilco, 1996, p. 97.

[415] Laurance Rees, *Operatie Barbarossa, De oorlog van Hitler en Stalin [Operation Barabarossa, The War of Hitler and Stalin]*, Roeselare: Globe, 2001, pp.77-123. See also V.V. Serebriannikov, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p. 230-235.

[416] Iurii Poliakov, 'Sto dnei do prikaza ', [100 days before demobilization], *Iunost*, Nr.11, 1987, pp. 44-68. See also Yu. Tchizhov, Koroli I Peshchki (o neustavnych otnoshcheniiach v Sovetskoi armii), *Sotsiologicheskie issledovania*, Nr. 5, 1988, pp. 76-83; Kirill Podrabinek, 'An Inside Look at Life in the Soviet Army', *Russia, a quarterly review of Contemporary Soviet Issues*, Nr. 3, 1981, pp. 3-12.

[417] Alexander Lebed, *Op. Cit.*, p. 57.

which were the product of the harsh environment in the Russian military barracks. Kesha, for instance, said that every day there was at least one fistfight. He also witnessed two homosexual rapes in the barracks during his eight-month service. In his platoon, there was a conscript coming from Dagestan who was so strong that even the sergeants would run away from him as they were afraid of his violent behavior. He concluded that: "in the barracks it is the law of the strongest that rules."[418] Violence in the barracks is also characterized by the Russian soldiers as *bespredel*, which stands in the Russian military jargon for 'cruel education' and has the connotation of acting violently and with impunity outside the rules. It holds also the connotation of excesses and atrocities.[419]

It may not be a surprise that the anti-conscription movement reacts against the glorification and practical consequences of the culture of pain. The 'Moskovskii antiprizyvnoi Punkt' [The Moscow Anti-Conscription Point], for instance, cites the following reasons, among others, for the decision not to serve in the Russian army, in one of their agitational leaflets: "…You do not want to be beaten or forced to beat someone; you do not want to be confronted with homosexuality and rape; you want to keep your health…"[420] What else are these claims other than a reaction against the culture of suffering?

Suffering in the broader Russian culture

Russian military stoic acceptance of suffering as manifested in Russian soldiers' life is not only present in Russian military culture, but has deeper cultural grounding in its parent society. Civil and military culture are interactive, as the military organization reflects its own functional imperative and the social forces, ideologies and institutions who dominate the society in which it functions. The Russian civil culture touches upon the idea of the Russian soul and the Russian Idea. This is demonstrated in classic Russian literature, the Russian Orthodox religion and broader cultural studies, which focus on Russian nationalism. Dostoyevky, for instance, claimed that "the main and most fundamental spiritual quest of the Russian people is their craving for suffering."[421] Contemporary Russian soldiers also fit well the personage of the literary figure 'Ivan Denisovich' shukhov created by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. In this metaphorical personage the winner of the 1970 Nobel Prize for literature described the attitude of the prisoners of the Soviet Gulag and the way the prisoners took pride in their suffering. At the end of the day, the narrator said about Ivan's day:

> "Shukhov went to sleep fully content. He'd had many strokes of luck that day: they hadn't put him in the cells; they hadn't sent his squad to the settlement; he'd swiped a bowl of kasha at dinner; the squad leader had fixed the rates well; he'd built a wall and enjoyed doing it; he'd

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[418] Interview with Kesha 2 conducted on March, 24 1998 in St;-Petersburg (Interview Nr. 7).

[419] V. Korovuchkin, *Slovar Russkogo voennogo zhargona*, [The dictionary of Russian Military Jargon], Ekaterinburg: Izdatelsvo Uralskogo Universiteta, 2000, p. 42; Maura Reynolds, War has No Rules for Russian Forces Fighting in Chechnya, *Los Angeles Times*, 17 September 2000, (electronic version retrieved on 09 September 2000.); Sharon Lafraniere, Beatings and Death of Recruits Mirror a Declining Russian Army, Military Life: Who is the Real Enemy?, *International Herald Tribune*, 22 May 2001, (electronic version retrieved on 28 May 2001).

[420] Moskovskii Antiprizyvnoi Punkt, '*Shest Prichin, pochemy vam ne sleduet sluzhit v armii,* p. 2. Retrieved from the internet www.copris.com/map on 6 August 2000.

[421] Cited in Tim McDaniel, *The Agony of the Russian Idea*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996, p. 34.

smuggled that bit of hacksaw blade through; he'd earned a favor from Tsezar that evening; he'd bought that tobacco. And he hadn't fallen ill. He'd got over it. A day without a dark cloud. Almost a happy day. There were three thousand six hundred and fifty-three days like that in this stretch. From the first clang of the rail to the last clang of the rail. Three thousand six hundred and fifty-three days. The three extra days were for leap years."[422]

By accepting and taking pride in suffering, Ivan Denisovich collaborated with the prison camps and in fact supported the system. The same idea was also expressed by a Russian soldier in Solzhenisyn's epic on the First World War who exclaimed: "It's with worrying and grieving I know I'm still living."[423]

The idea of the acceptance of suffering is also supported by the deeply eschatological Orthodox religion, which states that the salvation of the individual is directly dependent on the amount of suffering that individual can bear. The so-called kenotic tradition in Orthodox Christianity cultivates humiliation, poverty, suffering, sacrifice, and nonresistance. In monastic practices this kenotic tradition was accomplished by rigorous fasting and through deliberate self-impoverishment. The emphasis put on the Matthew gospel (especially Matthew 19) in the Orthodox liturgy speaks for itself: "Но многие, кто были первыми, станут последними, и многие последние окажутся первыми" [But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first]. The Russian Orthodox church thus reinforces traditional Russian values and, consequently, promotes the idea of stoic suffering.[424] It is not by accident that the Russian Orthodox Church sees military service as a sacred duty for each male citizen of Russia. The fact the military organization, and the Russian Orthodox church became close political, ideological, social and institutional allies in the post-Soviet period in order to rebuild the Russian State and Russian Identity, has added to the continuation of the culture of suffering in the armed forces. Surveys indicate, for instance, that religion is gradually starting to play a more important role in the barracks as 25% in 1991, and 32 % in 1999 declared themselves to be believers Of these, 79% are Orthodox, 10% are Muslim, 2% are Buddhist and 2% Catholics or Protestants.[425]

Cultural studies have also underlined the presence of the idea of suffering. Catherine Merridale has noted a testimony about the Soviet population during the blockade of Leningrad that "The Russian earth was holy. Suffering brought people face to face with their basic nature, the things that always matter. Pain stripped away the vanity of city life, reminded the Russian of his soul. Endurance, in the end, was always worth it."[426] Tim McDaniel who described the Russian idea-and especially how it is contradictory to the idea of modernization-has noted: "Quite characteristically,…the 'beautiful error' may lead to suffering, but that suffering is redemptive. It is redemptive for the individual, since it will lead to humiliation and purification. And it will also cleanse society in preparation for

[422] Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, London: Penguin Books, 1993 , p.139.

[423] Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *November 1916, The Red Wheel II*, London: Penguin Books, 2000, p.20

[424] See also Carey Schofield, *Inside the Soviet Military*, New York, Abbeville, 1991, pp. 56-57.

[425] See Yuri Noskov, The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Russia, its Armed Forces and ways to overcome it, paper presented at the conference: Military Obedience, Ethical, Military and Legal perspectives, at the Royal Military Academy, Brussels, June 29, 2001. And Françoise Daucé, L'institution militaire face à la pluralité religieuse dans l'Etat russe, *MOST Journal on Multicultural Societies*, Vol. 2, Nr. 2, 2001, internet edition consulted on http://www.unesco.org/most/vl2n2dau.htm.

[426] Catherine Merridale, *Night of Stone, Death and Memory in Russia*, London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 288.

collective renewal. For only from the depths of societal humiliation and degradation can resurrection take place. This theme of redemption through suffering is absolute fundamental to Russian culture, and central to a great many views of Russian distinctiveness."[427] Finally, two scholars who have conducted empirical research on Russian cultural distinctiveness may be cited to underscore the idea of suffering. Ksenya Kasianova, who used Russian proverbs and religious beliefs in order to study Russian cultural distinctiveness, claims that patience, humility, and suffering are fundamental characteristics.[428] The Canadian sociologist Valerie Zawilski, who studied Russian nationalism on the basis of Samizdat literature, has concluded that the intelligentsia's ability to create and appreciate Russian culture, their clarity about political and social issues and most of all their capacity to suffer made them culturally distinct and defined the Russian national identity.[429] Conclusively, we can state that the glorification of pain and suffering in the Russian soldiers' life is deeply embedded in the Russian national identity.

Conclusions

Orlando Figes in his study of the problem of cruelty during the Russian revolution identified as a fundamental problem the need to explain pain in Russian society. He has stated that "It is difficult to say where this barbarism came from–whether it was the culture of the Russian peasants or in the harsh environment in which they lived…." In fact, the material environment and the expression of values do not need to be separated. They both form part of and construct the formal culture of the organization. Both the dreadful, scarce environment that surrounds military life in Russia and the idea that the soldier must be able to cope with it in order to become a more effective and really Russian soldier, are interwoven phenomena, which are mutually reinforcing.

Consequently, the idea of suffering is a primordial Russian military cultural trait that is embedded in the broader Russian culture. It imposes upon the individual soldier the moral obligation to suffer and to accept this suffering stoically. The glorification of suffering has several practical consequences: it set the stage for a high acceptance for fatalities (in peace time as well as times of war) as well as the presence of a high degree of violence. Moreover, it can be used as a justification for poor living conditions and a depressing material environment with many negative social consequences. The acceptance of suffering also installs the mentality of inaction and may lead to the lack of a sense of responsibility on the part of the military authorities. Subsequently, it is an anti-modernist attitude which encourages a disposition of conservatism, bondage and subservience. This attitude is supported not only by this glorification of suffering trait, but by three other cultural traits: patriarchy, patrimonialism, and patriotism

1. 2.   Patriarchy or Machismo-Like Bravado

The term patriarchy is usually used with reference to an organization that is male-dominated. This is, perhaps not immediately reflected in the statistical data on the number of women serving in the Russian army. Whereas in 1980 about 1.6% of the Soviet armed forces were women, this figure had hardly increased by 1985, when it was 1.8%. By 1999,

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[427] Tim McDaniel, *Op. Cit*., pp.33-34.

[428] Ksenya Kasianov, *O russkom natsional'nom kharaktere*, [On the Russian National character] Moscow: Institut natsionalnoi modeli ekonomiki, 1994, pp. 110-111.

[429] Valerie Zawilski, *Saving Russia, Development of Russian Nationalistic Thought among the Intelligentsia, 1965 to 1995*, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1996.

however, this figure had risen to approximately 10% of the total armed forces.[430] (This is higher than in the Netherlands where the actual proportion of women in 1998 is 7.4%; in France this figure was 4% in the 1990's while researchers predict in France a proportion of women approaching 10% once the AVF is completely operational; and in Belgium the female cohort represented 7.30% of the armed forces in 1998).[431] The difference between Russia and Western countries is that in the Western countries women can (legally) serve in almost all, combat and support functions, and are thus almost fully integrated in the armed forces. In Russia, on the other hand, the majority of women are serving in administrative and medical functions. Women in the Russian army are, with some exceptions, segregated, as may be illustrated by the fact that NOT ONCE did any of the hundred soldiers interviewed mention the presence of women in the barracks. It is almost as though the 120,000 women serving in the armed forces are non-existent.

Russian social research shows that the quality of the female cohort in Russia is higher than that of the male cohort. Indeed, women are said to have a higher educational level, are more disciplined, are better organized and more devoted to their work. Yet they still have to cope with a stubborn macho community and a masculine mentality. Women serving in the Russian army often become victims of manhandling, assault and battery, or of more low-level annoyances. (19% of the women serving at the Northern Fleet, for example, complained of sexual harassment, while 9% of the same group complained of sexual intimidation by their commanders).[432] It is also important to note here that, for instance, in Belgium, opinions concerning women in the armed forces are rather conservative and that many female service people have been subject to sexual harassment in one form or another (ranging from voyeurism to physical violence).[433] But a purely quantitative comparison on the issue of sexual harassment is also tricky here, as levels of tolerance in both Russia and different western countries are difficult to assess. Thus, while at first glance and purely quantitatively it may be suggested that the Russian army is becoming a more feminized institution, in reality the Russian armed forces are still a bastion of masculinity. It is, for instance, interesting to note that Russian officials are so open and blatant in expressing their opinions about women in the armed forces. For example, Chief Military Prosecutor Yuri Demin's frank statement that women "are traditionally not very suitable for performing military duties", would be deemed at the very least politically incorrect in western countries, and would certainly be considered unacceptable.[434] Moreover, in many propagandistic Russian periodicals, women are represented in a very feminine way, but are absolutely not integrated in the military organization. The fact that women in uniform are shown applying their make-up is at least an un-military representation of women. It not only enforces a certain female stereotype, it is almost an insult for the female military professional who is practically represented as a

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[430] Rossiiskoi Armii nuzhny Zhenshchiny [The Russian Army Needs Women], *Nezavissimoe Voennoi obozrenie*, 23-29 June 2000.

[431] See: Jan van der Meulen, The Netherlands: The Final Professionalization of the Military, in Charles Moskos, John Allen Williams and David Segal, *The Postmodern Military, Armed Forces after the Cold War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 111; Bernard Boëne and Michel Louis Martin, France: In the Throes of Epoch-Making Change, in: *Op. Cit.*, p.64; and Philippe Manigart, La Gestion de la diversité: personnel féminin et minorités culturelles dans les Forces armées belges, *CRISP, Courrier Hedomadaire* Nr. 1630, 1990, p. 14.

[432] Rossiiskoi Armii nuzhny Zhenshchiny [The Russian Army Needs Women], *Nezavissimoe Voennoi obozrenie*, 23-29 June 2000.

[433] Philippe Manigart, La Gestion de la diversité: personnel féminin et minorités culturelles dans les Forces armées belges, *CRISP, Courrier Hedomadaire* Nr. 1630, 1990, p. 24-25.

[434] Chief Military Prosecutor Yuri Demin , *Pravda*, 1 March 1999

cheap pin-up. This may be illustrated in the following picture taken from a military calendar.

Picture 1: Representation of women in the Russian Armed Forces

Military service as a male rite de passage

Military service is from an ethnographical and anthropological point of view seen as a rite of passage for adolescent males. My use of the idea of rite of passage, draws on the theory of Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner, who stated that the inducement of a critical change in the life of an individual in one social position to another, or from one life cycle to another, goes along with a specific ritual. Military service is seen by the political and military establishment as an important event in the male citizen's life that will give him the tools to cope with (male) adult life. Military service, which in ideal terms is to be performed by the all members of the male population, marks the shift between childhood and adulthood. Ries has noted in her fieldwork that a general claimed in 1989-1990 that military service is considered to be "the male university."[435] According to Van Gennep, a rite of passage follows, in broad terms, three different stages: separation, followed by transition, and, finally, re-incorporation. Victor Turner called these stages: separation, liminality, and consummation, respectively. Through military service, soldiers are literally separated from (female) society. Ellen Jones has noted that: "The conscript tour is generally the first sustained contact of young men with an all-male environment; and Soviet officials stress its importance in providing male role models and instilling masculinity."[436] It is a tradition that Russian draftees have a wild party with friends or in the family the days just before they enter the armed forces, as though they were celebrating their last days of freedom and of childhood. When they arrive at the draft point, Baranets

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[435] Nancy Ries, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p. 76. See also footnote nr. 29.
[436] Ellen Jones, *Red Army and society, A sociology of the Soviet Military*, Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985, p. 103.

has lyrically written that 'the newcomers are escorted to the army, the mouth-organ sounds happily and the mothers bitterly cry' as the male youngsters enter their period of isolation for two years from society. [437] This isolation must be taken quite literally; during the two-year service not many soldiers can visit home as they are generally posted many thousands of kilometers from home, and usually lack the time and money to afford the journey. Conscripts are also only allowed to wear their army uniform, as their civilian clothes are taken by the military during the first day of service and taken into custody until the last day of service. The army uniform symbolizes their isolation from society and stigmatizes their status of neophyte male adult. The transition period or the period of liminality is a tough encounter with male reality. It is seen as a test which a boy must undergo in order to become a 'real man'. It is an intense period with a heightened experience of unity among the males of the same draft age. The hardship of the experience and the communality with other neophytes are characteristic for this period. The discipline in the army is a symbolic presentation of the social values that Russian society cultivates. But there is also place for the so-called periods of reversion in which 'anti-structures' are shown. Contradictory values are shown from which the neophyte can learn. The violence, *dedovshchina* and other anti-social behavior are examples of this technique. Therefore, complaining about the hardships of military life is not accepted. In 1995, for example, one military recruiter mocked the draftees, advising them to come out from under their mamas' skirts and reproached the mothers for 'breast feeding their sons'.[438] In the last six months of service, the draftees are prepared to go back to society and because they have endured their service they are seen as able to cope with male life in Russia. This is symbolized by the stamp the soldiers receive when they have done their service. This facilitates the possibilities to rent an apartment and to obtain a job, as many house keepers and patrons ask young men if they have the military stamp in their passport. Military service, indeed, facilitates life in Russian society. Back home, a new welcoming party is organized in order to welcome the new man in the family…a new man is born and accepted back in society. Through the eyes of an ethnographer, it is clear that pain, hardship, and the difficulties that go with army life have a symbolic value that makes 'real men' out of boys.

Male values are also explicitly expressed through public opinion surveys. One survey published in 1998 suggests that traditional masculine motivations still dominate among young conscripts: About 50% of the respondents said that they saw military service as an opportunity to become stronger and more physically fit. About one-third of the questioned soldiers said that they joined the military in search for 'honor in battle' and in order to defend their country. More than 40% saw their tour of service as a chance offered by the armed forces to test themselves in difficult circumstances.[439] It is a well known fact that only a small minority of the draft cohort, namely 18%, is effectively doing its military service. This situation is according to Colonel V. Laktyshin due to the phenomenon of "feminized men".[440] This does not stop Denis, an interviewee and abused soldier, from saying that "Until the time I finally served, I was eager to enter the army. I wanted to enter and participate in the harsh and male life [surovoi i muzhkoi zhizni]."[441] The masculine mentality also gives way to the notorious and cruel system of *dedovshchina,* which may be

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[437] Baranets, *Op. Cit.*,1998, p. 162.
[438] Meeting with a Russian military recruiter on May 20, 1998, St.-Petersburg.
[439] Vladimir Mukhin, 'Vse men'shee kolichestvo molodezhi zhelaet sluzhit' v Rossiiskoi armii', *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie,* Nr 21 (5-18 June) 1998.
[440] Colonel V. Laktyshin, 'Stroite vzvod, madam', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 20 March 1992.
[441] Interview with Denis conducted on June, 20 1998 in St.-Petersburg (Interview Nr. 34).

seen as an initiation rite. Jennifer Mathers observed that women were never involved in the system of *dedovshchina*, which makes it a purely male ritual.[442]

It is significant to observe that male conscripts who do not adopt a macho attitude-and do not accept Ries' characterization of Russian male mischief behavior by, for example, not participating in drinking excesses, not using coarse language or swearing, not participating in violent sports or demonstration of physical strength and male prowess-are especially vulnerable and likely to become the victims of harassment and beating in the barracks. In other words, it's not only women that are regarded as un-military, but also feminine-like men, not to mention homosexually oriented young men. This is an aberration of patriarchy as we know it; we might tend to think of patriarchy as men physically, emotionally, socially and culturally dominating women, but here we also have men dominating men who are 'women-like' in their appearance. These misogynistic attitudes are at the base of Russian military culture in their peer group relations.

Masculinity and Sex

The macho controlled military culture also has a specific sexual connotation. A Russian soldier is one who, in the standard narrative, is someone who exploits fully his sexual potential and tries to have as many sexual experiences as possible. Sexuality is reduced to the pure physical act and has absolutely no romantic connotation, as ideas of love and tenderness are seen as feminine and worthless for the true soldier. Prostitutes, as symbols of casual sex, consequently play an important role in macho soldierly tales. Sexuality also has much to do with power relations as demonstrated by the following story:

> "In an evening exercise during the first weeks of basic training, soldiers were gathered on the parade ground, with bear chest, while it was freezing cold. The soldiers had a Physical Training exercise that actually more resembled on a torture session than an exercise to improve the physical condition of the conscripts. After many sit-ups and push ups, with which many soldiers were crying out of pain for the physical strain they had to go through. Suddenly the drunken drill sergeants came up with two prostitutes they had hired in the city. These girls were paid not for sexual services, but to watch the sergeants cruel and macho behavior. The sergeants were demonstrating the power they had over a platoon of soldiers. They yelled their orders and asked the prostitutes if they liked their behavior and were constantly trying to demonstrate how weak the 'sissy soldiers' were. After a while, the prostitutes were said to sit on some soldiers back who had already a lot of difficulties to do the exercises properly. With this the sexual humiliation of the conscript soldier was complete."[443]

Many Russian military practices have sexual connotations that conceal symbols of power, and are the ultimate outcome of macho-like behavior. This may be illustrated by the perception of homosexuality in Russian society and the occurrence of homosexual rape in the barracks. Until 1993 male homosexuality in Russian-Soviet society was a dangerous illegal act, while female homosexuality was something to be cured, and was certainly not

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[442] Jennifer Mathers, 'Women in the Russian Armed Forces: A Marriage of Convenience', *Minerva, The Quarterly Report on Women and the Military*, Vol. XVII, Nr. 3-4, Fall/Winter 2000, pp. 129-143.
[443] Interview conducted in Brussels with Ella Polyakova on December 10th 2001.

seen as dangerous or against the law.[444] 'A violation of masculinity' in the form of *Muzelozhstvo* [sexual intercourse between men] was perceived completely different than lesbian sexual acts would be. Paradoxically, however, homosexual rape is common in the military barracks as a tool of ultimate violence, but is also used symbolically to strip a soldier of his masculine dignity and consequently to make him a total outcast in the military organization.

Male Mischief and Physical Proneness

Two, more mild examples may show Russian macho culture in a folkloric way. The first is given by General Lebed's account of how he had to compete with another officer for 'the honor of his airborne regiment':

> "About 0300 the next morning, we finally returned to my brother's company. There were only nine people left at the table, no full bottles, and the jars of caviar were empty. But our return seemed to give the party a second wind. Reserve bottles were discovered and passed around. Somehow, we got to arm wrestling. How it started, the devil only knows. A big, self-assured senior lieutenant sitting across from me said something about the wimps from the 345th. I'd been serving in that regiment only a few days, but all the same this pushed my buttons. Dishes fell off the edge of the table as he and I set about trying to establish which regiment of the airborne troops actually contained the most wimps. We appeared evenly matched, but I was considerably more sober. After two minutes of struggle, the back of his arm hit the table. "Well, let's try the left arms." He did even worse with the left arm: he was completely played out. Suddenly, he blew an emotional fuse, his eyes burning with a wild, unthinking flame. I socked him in the jaw, toppling him across a bed into some armor netting. He lay there, motionless. "What the hell? How hard did I hit him? He's not batting an eyelid. "Surrounding the bed now, everyone grew quiet. In the ensuing silence, the gentle snoring of the senior lieutenant could be heard distinctively. The poor devil had been dead drunk, and it was as if he had said to himself, "You know, what I'd really like now is a punch in the jaw," and I granted his wish."[445]

The second example of Russian military macho culture can be seen in a 'open house' happening during the UN peacekeeping mission in the Baranja, Croatia, where Russian and Belgian troops worked together under Belgian command. It was striking to see that Belgian static demonstration stands were basically showing material such as armored personnel carriers (APC's) and other vehicles. There was a large emphasis laid on the technology of the mechanized infantry battalion. The Russian airborne battalion, however, gave close combat demonstrations. Soldiers with naked chests were demonstrating how many roof tiles they could break with one karate chop while screaming dangerous sounding yells. Other soldiers showed daring jumps through burning rings. The macho soldiering demonstration stood in sharp contrast to the more technological Belgian stance, and indicates a different army culture.

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[444] Laurie Essig, *Queer in Russia, A Story of Sex, Self, and the Other*, London: Duke University Press, 1999, p. 24.

[445] Alexander Lebed, *Op. Cit.*, 1997, p. 55.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that Russian patriarchal culture is deeply embedded in Russian army culture. It is openly present and may be observed in folkloristic but also in a less harmless behavior. Male prowess tests physical and mental endurance: it is also seen as a test which must be passed in order to become part of the group and a male citizen of the Russian Federation. The macho culture is basically anti-intellectual and likes to test the limits of the system and of its own luck. It is also in a certain way anti-authoritarian when some commonly accepted behavior is formerly an infraction of formal military law. But the military authorities prefer good "fighters" to good "soldiers". In this sense it is closely related with Ries' idea of Russian male mischief behavior.[446] Moreover, the macho-culture is physically oriented and extremely homophobic. The army is still seen as the school of manhood, despite the fact that there are signs of increasing feminization in the Russian armed forces. The specific and protective male culture is perhaps the reason why the Soldiers' Mothers react so furiously against this cultural trait, when they define themselves as: "Un groupe de femmes dans un monde d'hommes, au milieu de valeurs masculines, de problèmes masculins, voilà ce que nous sommes."[447] [a group of women in a world of men, in the middle of masculine values, masculine problems, that's what we are]

1. 3.   Patrimonialism or 'Traditional' Authority

The passivity and the idea of 'unlimited service' to the military authorities that is included in the idea of suffering are also embodied in the third element of Russian formal military culture. This concept is situated in the realm of organizational authority. Russian soldiers are generally supposed to obey orders for 'traditional' reasons, rather than 'rational-legal' reasons.[448] In other words, military authority in Russia is more likely to be based on authoritative 'domination', rather than 'manipulation' techniques, such as explanation, expertise and group consensus.[449] Weber called a system in which traditional authority is dominant a 'patrimonial system', which, when the absolute authority is maximized is called a system of 'Sultanism'.[450] Subsequently, there are more opportunities for arbitrary and authoritarian-like violations occurring in Russian barracks than in Western military barracks.

Anthony Beevor described Soviet discipline in times of war, especially during the battle of Stalingrad, as ruthless. There was no place for sentimentality in the Soviet armed forces during the Battle of Stalingrad, for example, where the number of direct executions of Russian soldiers by the authorities was 13,500. Soviet soldiers were also seen as traitors if they failed to shoot a comrade attempting to desert or to capitulate.[451] In this period of crisis, the exercise of authority could easily be labeled as Sultanism. What is interesting is that the soldiers themselves could decide whether to kill a comrade if they thought he was a deserter. In this way soldiers were entitled to exercise authority over their fellow soldiers.

[446] Nancy Ries, *Op. Cit.*,1997, pp. 65-82.

[447] Valentina Melnikova and Anna Lebedev, *Les Petits Soldats le Combat des mères russes*, [Small Soldiers: the combat of the Russian mothers] Paris: Bayard, 2001, p. 72.

[448] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations*, New York: The Free Press, 1947, pp. 328-329

[449] Morris Janowitz, The Professional Soldier, New York: The Free Press, 1971 (second edition), pp. xvii-xxiv.

[450] Max Weber, *Op .Cit.*, 1947, p.347.

[451] Anthony Beevor, *Stalingrad*, Amsterdam: Balans, 1999, p. 181.

In fact, this amounts to tolerating the existence of a parallel system of authority, among soldiers. This is, eventually in a milder form, still the case in the Russian barracks in the 1990's. In an interview Andrey has said: "During the first week it was clear that not only the officers decided what we should do, but also all those conscripts who were older than we [this is: who served longer]. Even a soldier who served two or three months longer than me could order me to do what he wanted."[452] This parallel system of authority, also based on traditional authority, gives way to the so-called system of *dedovshchina*, which will be explained in the next chapter. For now it is clear that traditional authority with the inherent abuses, exposed in several parallel systems of control, is predominant in the Russian barracks. Violence is again abundant as the following scene recounted by Aleksei may suggest:

> "When only I and my friend arrived in the military unit, I understood immediately what kind of sinister relationship existed among the soldiers. Military comradeship doesn't exist. Comradeship in the army is seen, when you drink, when you behave brutally and when you beat a *duchy* [literally: a ghost, the nickname of soldiers who serve during the first six months of their conscript service]. My friend, with who I entered in the military unit, became the focus of anger of them [the elder soldiers] and they began to beat him from the first day on. They were with seven or eight who beat him with their fists and kicked him with their feet. There was a lot of blood on the floor and on the walls. Bystanders yelled and gave directions how and where to beat him. Officers heard the scenery, but did not interfere. The beating continued until my friend did not move anymore. The next day he was brought to the hospital where he was treated for a ruptured liver...Officers, in general, stay out of this kind of situations until the moment they are confronted with a situation from which they can not retreat anymore. In fact, they are happy about the fact that soldiers' beat each other as they installed order and discipline among each other."[453]

In his autobiography, General Lebed has described his authority with the troops in the following situation:

> "So far, my troops thought I was a 'softy'; But on the fifth day of my regime, I ran across a group of wise guys who had gone up to another soldier and said: "Can you do a cartwheel?" "No." "But the battalion commander says you have to! We'll teach you." They grabbed him, strapped him to a horizontal bar, attached his feet to a field telephone and turned the crank, shooting an electric shock that sent him flying to the ceiling. When I confronted the leader-'was this your bright idea?'-he answered me like any normal soldier would answer any normal battalion commander: 'Sir, no, sir!' I let him have it on the jaw. He went out cold, sliding across the floor into a corner. Then I went after the others. His 'deputy' fell across him. Nine more went down on top, along, or beside him. Only one proved tough. I had to hit him twice."

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[452] Interview with Andrey 3 conducted on May 25, 1998 in St.-Petersburg (Interview Nr. 29).
[453] Declaration filled in by Aleksei 3 on March 26, 1998 in St.-Petersburg (Declaration Nr. 19).

Lebed's story shows three things: firstly, violence is predominant in power relations; secondly, Lebed tells his story with male exaggeration by showing off his boxing capacities; and thirdly, his behavior is arbitrary and authoritarian-like. His behavior demonstrates the accumulation of the three cultural traits so far explained and demonstrated.

1. 4.   Patriotism or the Love for the *Rodina*

Russian formal military culture is closely related to the idea of the Russian motherland, and the military consider themselves as the motherland's ultimate defender. In Russia, the motherland is a rather complex concept that has several connotations: firstly, it is related with 'the state' *stricto senso* [*Gosudarstvo*]; secondly, it has a geographical connotation when it is related to the Russian soil, with territory and the whole concept of borders [*Zemlia*]; finally, it has an almost semi-religious connotation where Russia is seen as an abstract idea that provides shelter and comfort, or as Ries has said 'the timeless, long-suffering motherland [*Rodina*]. Not by accident the word *narod* has the same root and refers to the (Russian) people that belong to the *rodina*. It is almost a messianic term that in its most extreme form breathes the '*Blut und Boden'* philosophy of extreme nationalism and even fascism. *Narod* and *rodina* are such strong Russian metaphors, that they have real mobilization power, while they implicitly and explicitly contain the feeling of superiority. This feeling of superiority is perfectly illustrated by the nationalistic writer Solzhenitsyn when he compares the Western countries with the values of the Russian *narod*. It is also clear that suffering is seen by the jubilated author as a source of strength and not as a dreadful tragic phenomenon.

> "…But should someone ask me whether I would indicate the West such as it is today as a model to my country, frankly I would have to answer negatively. No, I could not recommend your society in its present state as an ideal for the transformation of ours. Through intense suffering our country has now achieved a spiritual development of such intensity that the Western system in its present state of spiritual exhaustion does not look attractive. …A fact which cannot be disputed is the weakening of human beings in the West while in the East they are becoming firmer and stronger. Six decades for our people and three decades for the people of Eastern Europe; during that time we have been through a spiritual training far in advance of Western experience. Life's complexity and mortal weight have produced stronger, deeper and more interesting characters than those produced by standardized Western well-being. Therefore if our society were to be transformed into yours, it would mean an improvement in certain aspects, but also a change for the worse on some particularly significant scores. It is true, no doubt, that a society cannot remain in an abyss of lawlessness, as is the case in our country. But it is also demeaning for it to elect such mechanical legalistic smoothness as you have. After the suffering of decades of violence and oppression, the human soul longs for things higher, warmer and purer than those offered by today's mass living habits, introduced by the

revolting invasion of publicity, by TV stupor and by intolerable music."[454]

The Russian armed forces also cultivate the semi-mythical, semi-mysterious idea of the Russian Motherland as exemplified by General-Colonel V. Mironov's statement in *Voennaia Mysl'*:

> "The essence of a serviceman's social service can be expressed most accurately via the defense of such values, as the citizen and patriot, land, people, the Fatherland, the Motherland, freedom and honor. Spiritualized by these values, military service will acquire durable motivation."

All the concepts cited by General Mironov can be rounded up in the spiritual concept of patriotism. This concept has several practical consequences for the military. It urges soldiers to commit themselves to their duty and it installs a cult of service; it results in the deep rooted military concern for the capacity of mobilization; and it explains the extreme sensitivity associated with the issue of borders.

Duty and Mobilization

Military service is considered as a duty and as an expression of the love a soldier has for his Motherland. This was expressed by Marshal Zhukov who said to General Eisenhower in Berlin in 1945: "You [in America] tell a person he can do as he pleases, he can act as he pleases, he can do anything. But we Russians tell him that he must sacrifice for the State."[455] General Shamanov phrased it differently during the second Chechen War where he was asked the question: "Do you today feel that our State Russia has treated you badly?" His answer was: "Not in the slightest. I'm aware that my country is in a bad way today. Now is not the time to rake over the past; and I feel an enormous urge to make a contribution, so that people don't talk badly of my Motherland."[456] Carey Schofield has tried to explain to the western reader in 1991 about Russian patriotism that:

> "…there is, among the ordinary Russian people, a simple patriotism that hardly exists any more in the West. …Despite all the difficulties the soldiers face, I believe that many of them, too, take pride in serving their motherland. It is extremely hard for many Westerners to appreciate this, but it seems to me that this feeling exists very strongly. It was demonstrated by a silly conscript who cheerfully admitted to disliking army life and having committed almost every crime in the book, but who took offense when I implied that he was a bad soldier. He insisted that he was just bad at keeping the rules. …I should emphasize now that if you cannot admit the possibility of old-fashioned patriotism you will not, in the end, understand the Soviet army."[457]

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[454] Text of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's speech on June 8, 1978 at the University of Harvard. (http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/arch/solzhenitsyn/harvard1978.html)

[455] *Ibid*. p.6.

[456] Anna Politkovskaya, *A Dirty War*, London: The Harvill Press, 2001, p. 187.

[457] Carey Schofield, *Inside the Soviet Military*, New York: Abbeville Press, 1991, p. 25. Remark also that the soldiers' story Schofield has given in this citation is also a perfect example of mischievous, macho-bravado behavior, cultivated in Russian formal culture.

The issue of patriotism and the related idea of duty were also reflected in many interviews I conducted with soldiers and parents of soldiers. Aleksei, for instance, began his interview with saying "Until the time I entered the army, I was convinced that the defense of the Fatherland (*Otechestva*) was a duty for all."[458] Many parents I spoke to have the same opinion. They view serving in the army as a duty from witch no escape is possible. Besides the fatalistic undertone, there is also a true belief in the notion of service for one's country. During the interviews, however, the sense of duty and the obligation to serve were also questioned, when the same people were confronted with the way the Russian army treated the conscripts in everyday life. It was surprising how many youngsters showed their disappointment in the military institute as soon as the myth of patriotism was shattered by every day reality. In a limited survey I conducted among visitors of the soldiers' Mothers Organization in St.-Petersburg I asked the open question of why the visitors were against conscription.[459] There was a lot of anger to observe in what people wrote, but never were the reasons for the existence of the army called into question. People were outraged by the way the army was abusing its soldiers, but in fact were not attacking the institution and the reasons why it existed. When Elena, a mother of a beaten conscripted soldier, was asked if she would sent her son to the military if she knew that he would be well treated, she said without hesitation, 'Yes, serving in order to defend the Motherland is an honor and a duty!"[460] In this sense, the crisis of conscription has not so much to do with the undermining of traditional arguments for the draft (such as the new imperative not to lose time that could be devoted to earning money) or with the questioning of the institution itself (pacifism). It has more to do with the way the soldiers are treated. The crisis of the draft is therefore based on a completely different logic than the crisis of the draft that was witnessed in the West. This is the reason why the Russian population has such a high trust in the military institution, while at the same time nobody wants to serve in it. Indeed, the Russian army is broadly speaking, the institution with the highest trust index, after the Russian Orthodox Church. The two most traditional institutions in Russian society, which embody the Russian culture as we explain it here, are also the most trusted among the Russian public. This may be the expression of a rather traditional view on state and society from the Russian public. The Russian conscript, however, is also a rational actor, and chooses not to serve when he knows what kind of situation he will be confronted with. This can explain why the army, despite the fact that it is fairly highly trusted, is not able to recruit soldiers. The crisis situation is dramatic as the army currently succeeds in recruiting only 15 to18 % of the cohort that is supposed to fulfill its military service. This means that 85 to 82% of the cohort find legal and illegal ways to escape military service.[461] This is exactly what is expressed in a recent book published by the Soldiers' Mothers:

> "On croise encore des familles, qui parlent du devoir de citoyen, de l'obligation pour chacun de défendre sa patrie. Au comité, nous avons élaboré un antidote infaillible à ce patriotisme effréné. Nous demandons aux mères, aux grand-méres, aux pères de venir passer quelque heures au Comité, d'assister à l'accueil des soldats fugitifs, des soldats revenus de Tchétchénie, de parents de soldats disparus…En général, une journée

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[458] Interview with Aleksei 2 conducted on March, 31 1998 in St.-Petersburg (Interview Nr.17).

[459] This survey was conducted in February 1999 in St.-Petersburg where 50 persons were asked to fill in the questionnaire of four open questions.

[460] Interview with Elena conducted on May, 22 1998 in St.-Petersburg (Interview Nr. 17). Elena was the mother of Sacha 3 who has participated with the interview of her son.

[461] Data based on the recruitment effort in the Leningrad Military district from 1992-1999, but can be extrapolated to the whole country where the same data exist.

suffit pour qu'ils révisent leur position; deux pour les plus coriaces." [462]
[We still meet families who talk about the duty of the citizen, about the obligation for everybody to defend the country. In the Committee we have worked out a never failing countermeasure against this patriotism. We ask the mothers, grandmothers, fathers to visit the Committee during some hours. To assist the soldiers' fugitives, the soldiers coming back from Chechnya, the parents who lost their son…Generally, one single day is enough in order to make them change their opinion, two days for the more stubborn among them.]

The Soldiers' Mothers Committee again is very critical towards Russian patriotism and consequently plays a modernizing role vis-à-vis the traditional patriotic character of Russian military culture.

Closely related with the idea of patriotism, duty and service is the notion that all men must be ready to be mobilized. In a conversation with an officer it was said that in case of war, everybody must be ready to fight. Every single man, student, worker, literate or illiterate must take up weapons, as if in the 1990's Russian society was threatened by invasion as it was in the second and fourth decade of the twentieth century. It is very strange to hear such assertions in a period when the idea of total war is not seen as a first priority in the Russian strategic document. Notwithstanding this, mobilization is still very much a living idea. In the interviews, too, many soldiers stated that they would be ready to take up weapons in the event of an attack of the Motherland. Although there is always a real difference between what people say they would do and what they actually do, it is startling to see how many young men are still thinking in terms of mobilization and defending the country against external threats.

1. 5.   Assessment of Russian formal military culture

What can be learned from this analysis of the formal military culture that is based on Pain, Patriarchy, Patrimonialism and Patriotism? Firstly, it is clear that these comprise a very traditional set of values, which have roots in the long history of the Imperial and Soviet past. They are thus a long-term, stable set of values and ideas. They form the ideological glue that binds the soldiers together and makes them function in the organization. Moreover, the formal military culture, by the nature of its characteristics, is hostile towards alien (external) influences. The modernizing force coming from the Soldiers' Mothers Committees, for instance, has been shown to represent a challenge to the four pillars of formal military culture. The Soldiers' Mothers, and other similar organizations, ask for respect for human life and demand decent living conditions. They are calling for respect for so-called 'feminine values' in society, and reacting against authoritarian authority. Finally, they do not support Russian patriotism that does not coincide with respect for its citizens. Russian formal military culture, however, is stubborn in its resistance to external influences. It may even become reactionary and therefore more conservative to resist alien influences. It is only under constant and external long-term pressure that the formal military culture may gradually change.

The Russian army culture belongs, compared with the Western military culture, expressed in the institutional-occupational model, to a different time frame. It is clear that

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[462] Valentina Melnikova and Anna Lebedev, *Op. Cit.*, 2001, p. 88.

according to the institutional-occupational dichotomy the Russian formal military values are biased towards the institutional side. Indeed, the described military culture stresses, for instance, **normative values** that legitimize military service; the idea of **rank and seniority** that dominate soldiers-officers and even soldiers-soldiers relations; and the **notion of service**. Subsequently, Russian formal military culture fits better the mentality of the mass army model than the post-modern military organization. We can also reach the same conclusion on the grounds of comparison with Hofstede's model. The Russian formal military culture is clearly **a job oriented organization** in which the personal welfare of the individual is subordinated to the institutional needs. The identity and the behavior of the soldier are solely determined by organizational norms. The fact that the civilian status and background of the soldier becomes irrelevant in the barracks makes of the formal military culture **a parochial culture**. The formal military culture is definitely **a closed system**, as newcomers have to adapt to the culture. Not accepting this culture may have serious consequences. The phenomenon of peace time deaths is linked with recruits' refusal to adapt to military customs and traditions, and desertion is ultimately a protest against these. Finally the military culture is **normative** as esteem, loyalty and honesty are maintained in a strong group ethic. In conclusion, we can say that the formal military culture is an extremely traditional culture that supports the idea and the structures of the mass army. Conclusively, we might say that the Russian military culture is a physical and an explicit culture that stands closer to the bare reality of combat. Moreover, it is a more no-nonsense straightforward military culture. The Russian soldier is in its ideal representation a very physical soldier with its orientation to the past that approximates perhaps best the broad cultural label of the peasant soldier or the *muzhik-voennik*.

Finally, there are also other remarks to be made regarding the difficulties involved in bringing about fundamental change in a reigning and deeply socialized formal military culture. We have already suggested that the Russian formal military culture is embedded in broader Russian culture. More strongly put, Russian military culture is more explicit in its Russianess than Russian culture in general. The Russian military organization in its daily life and its ideology enlarges aspects of Russian culture in general. It becomes almost a caricature of Russian life in general. The fact that Russian military culture is embedded in broader Russian culture impacts on the reform endeavor. Military reform or organizational change will take time and is not solely a military problem. Moreover, when an alien army model is held up as the example to be followed, as the post-modern All-Volunteer Force clearly is, it should be obvious that this will cause problems in the implementation of this reform. The imitation of Western models does not work easily in a hostile cultural environment. The danger for chaos is real, as we described in the first part when we discussed an organizational development that is a development 'out of control'. Another element is the problem of *dedovshchina*. It is clear that the software for this institutionalized practice is available in the formal military culture as described above. Not only do pain, patriarchy, patrimonialism and patriotism provide a welcoming and fertile environment for the practice of *dedovshchina*, Russian formal culture also encourages it. In the next chapter, which will treat the problem of informal military culture, and in which the Russian soldiers' subculture will be described and explained, it will be shown that besides the ideas, there are also structures that support the institution of *dedovshchina*. This all make the problem of bullying and harassing fellow soldiers a very difficult thing to change or to abolish. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 2. Russian Informal Military Culture: Soldiers' Life in the barracks

It would be a mistake to explain organizational behavior solely on the basis of **ideational factors**, that is, in terms of officially proclaimed and worshipped values, symbols, and rituals. Although these factors are illuminating and essential aspects of the organizational fabric, their analysis must be complemented with an examination of the **structural aspects**. Organizational structures co-influence people's behavior and organizational culture to a large extent. In fact, this assertion is an application of Crozier and Friedberg's basic axiom, explained in Part I, that human behavior is the result of the impact of both 'actors and systems'. This means that we need to consider both free, active human choices and more deterministic, passive structural influences. Therefore, in this chapter we will focus on the impact of structural elements on the soldiers' culture.

Likewise, it would be an illusion to think that **formal military culture** explains all aspects of organizational behavior. In reality, the formal military culture is only able to explain the proverbial tip of the iceberg of organizational life. Reducing the military culture to the officially asserted culture would mean that the most fundamental and profound, the most noteworthy aspects of organizational life are ignored. Without studying the **informal aspects** of the Russian military culture-or the so-called **subculture of Russian soldiers**-the Russian military organization would be only superficially understood. It is almost certain that the informal culture will (partly) contradict the picture we have drawn of the formal organizational culture. In this sense, military culture contains internally contradictory values, rituals and symbols. Even the informal soldiers' heroes, the so-called 'grand fathers' [*dedy*], differ dramatically from the official presentation of the soldier-hero. However, by making room for incoherence and internal contradictions, our overview becomes more realistic and genuine. It underscores our idea that military culture is NOT composed of a static, coherent set of values and symbols but is rather a dynamic process where imposed values of the establishment are constantly challenged and countered by 'the lower ranks'. It is this conflicting process that colors daily life in the barracks and shapes the 'real' military culture.

In conclusion, in this chapter we will add to the ideational, formal soldiers' culture of the Russian army, some structural elements which engender and maintain a specific subculture within this organization. The structural elements of the Russian military organization will be explained, based on the theory of 'total institutions' proposed by the Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman and supplemented by what is called the system of patronage.

Total Institutions and Patronage: Hosting Structures for the Soldiers' Informal Culture

In the 1950's, Erving Goffman introduced the idea of total institutions, by which he meant: "place[s] of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life."[463] Goffman used the term to refer not only to the more obvious examples such as concentration camps, prisons, military barracks, and convents, but also to such institutions as TB sanitaria, mental hospitals, ships, and so on. In addition to the

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[463] Erving Goffman, *Asylums, Essays of the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, New York: Doubleday, 1961, p. xiii.

physical exclusion of the residents of total institutions from the outside world (as symbolized by material fences such as barbed wire, walls, etc.), Goffman observed also a breakdown of barriers that separate the normal spheres of the life of a 'free citizen in the external world'. All aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority; all daily activities of the inmates are carried out in the immediate company of other inmates; and all activities are tightly scheduled. This schedule is imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rules and a body of officials. This schedule is also the result of a single rational plan that is designed to fulfill the official aims of the institution.

This organizational reality results in a basic split between the large group of inmates (the managed group) and the small supervisory staff (the managing group). This split is traditionally translated in the military context into the difference between the categories of officers and enlisted men. As in the armed forces the managing group, tend to feel superior and righteous, while the inmates tend to feel inferior, weak, blameworthy and guilty. Such totally structured institutions give rise not only to a particular work ethos, but also to a distorted self-image among inmates, and a drastically changed meaningful domestic existence. In his study Goffman particularly focuses on the inmates' world, with a view to identify what strategies the inmates try to build in order to survive the institution that has been imposed on them. This enables Goffman to explain the rationality of the inmates' behavior-behavior that the external observer might otherwise view as abnormal, sometimes violent and most of the time contradictory to the goals of the organization. In other words, Goffman draws our attention to the perverse effects created by total institutions.

Goffman's reconstruction of the inmate's world accentuated two particular phenomena that are used by the staff to manage the daily activity of a large number of persons in a restricted space with minimal expenditure of resources. These two methods of power exertion comprise the so-called method of 'mortification', on the one hand, and the creation of a system of privileges, on the other. Goffman identified **a process of 'mortification'**, especially characteristic of the period of recruitment. During this process the 'self', the private life of the inmate, is intentionally and unintentionally deconstructed and eventually destroyed. Several techniques are used, including humiliation and degradation (swearing at inmates, forcing them to swear, uncomfortable and ill-fitting uniforms, and shaving their heads,…); isolation (depriving inmates of the right to leave the compound); exigency of complete obedience (applying rules to the point of absurdity); 'contaminative exposures', that is, the complete deprivation of privacy (discussing personal files in public, extracting public confessions of 'bad' behavior,…); and 'interpersonal contamination', that is, forcing interpersonal contact upon the individual (via shared toilets, shower facilities and dining rooms). In some extreme forms, physical abuse is used in order to mortify the self. Constant surveillance and reduction of the adult inmate's autonomy to that of a child engenders chronic feelings of uneasiness, nervousness, and anxiety in the individual. The sense of personal inefficiency produced by organizational regimentation results in a situation of tyrannization. This feeling can be labeled, using the terminology of Emiele Durkheim, as a state of 'anomie'.

Besides the distortion of the inmate's personal self, the staff of the total institution also uses a more common method to obtain obedience, namely the application of a system of rewards and punishments. Generally speaking, there is nothing special about this behaviorist method of rewarding acceptable or desired behavior and punishing unacceptable behavior in order to discipline inmates. Nevertheless, in the context of total institutions, the system of rewards in particular receives a specific unintentional function. Rewards result in co-operativeness from persons who often have cause to be unco-operative. In a world in which freedom is totally or at least gravely deprived, rewards give

the inmates a framework for personal reorganization. Through rewards, how minimal they may be, the inmates are given the possibility to regain some personal autonomy and increase the impact they may have on their own life. It is this possibility to reassemble the self that makes the rewards so (symbolically) important. The system of rewards results in a **system of privileges**, which form, according to Goffman, the most important feature of the inmate culture. The system of privileges constructs a world of its own in which a specific communication system or 'institute lingo' develops. In addition, the system provokes activities which Goffman catalogues as 'messing up'. Messing up is a complex system of engaging in forbidden activities which give the leading inmates an informal status within the group. There are also 'secondary adjustments' in which informal systems of control are installed among inmates, thus necessitating a specific social typing.

This whole internal world among inmates has, according to the logic of total institution, one single function namely, to attempt to rebuild the autonomy of the individual self. It represents an awkward cry for freedom from the inmates, based on the minimal resources they have at their disposal. In this way the inmate counter-reacts to the staff's destruction of the inmate's individual autonomy, and attempts to re-build this autonomy. The conflict between the staff and the inmates is thus basically focused on the autonomy of the self. This observation can lead to rather optimistic assumptions regarding the human quest for freedom and resistance to oppression. As Giddens has noted:

> "…in Goffman's portrayal of total institutions individuals do not appear for the most part as broken beings. On the contrary, they find a multiplicity of ways recovering their integrity, of creating personal territories of their own and of combining together to resist the impositions to which they are subject. There are all sorts of ways in which through their wit or cunning inmates establish counteractive modes of interaction which 'breed and start to infest the establishment'."[464]

Goffman, however, is more reserved on this matter. He acknowledges that there is a certain fraternization among inmates in which mutual support and a set of counter-mores is installed. It is also true that, in this process, the staff of the organization is totally rejected in a sort of protest against the regime that has been imposed on the inmates. However, Goffman warns that the solidarizing tendencies should not be confused with a high group morale and solidarity. It is a functional, calculated and rather negative solidarity, necessary to survive in a world of anomie that is characteristic for total institutions. In other words, Goffman refers here indirectly to the rational actors' paradigm and strips group solidarity from its moral connotation. The world of the Russian soldier will be used below to illustrate how negatively violent and murderous, but effective such fraternization tendencies may be.

Besides the informal world that tends to be created in the struggle for the autonomy of the self, another practice can be highlighted that has an important impact on the inmate's world. This is **the system of patronage** that is studied by anthropologists as Eric Wolf and Sharon Kettering.[465] Patronage refers to a rather stable personal relationship between unequals between leaders and their followers, 'patrons' and 'clients'. The stability of the relationship is based on the exchange of power and the mutual benefit of the two partners.

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[464] Anthony Giddens, *Social Theory and Modern Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987, p. 130.
[465] Eric Wolf, *Pathways of Power, Building an Anthropology of the Modern World*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, pp.166-184.

Clients offer the patrons support and deference by providing services and through gestures of submission and the language of respect. The patrons, in their turn, mainly provide protection. It is clear that in the inmate's world of the total institution patronage networks are easily installed. Newcomers need guidance and protection in the strange world of the total institution. They can receive this protection when they follow the rules of the elderly inmates. In this way, the fraternization process among inmates that was observed by Goffman in total institutions may be explained through the system of patronage.

The system of patronage makes a positive contribution to group integration and group solidarity, notwithstanding the high price that has to be paid for this forced solidarity. Indeed, patronage breeds conflict, corruption and behavior that deviates from the formal duties of a public role. Both insights, the informal culture of the inmates in total institutions and the system of patronage leave us with two paradoxes: firstly, both systems breed both stability and conflict, and secondly, group solidarity is in both systems based on rational egotistical behavior. These two counter-intuitive observations of how egotism breeds solidarity and violence breeds stability will be illustrated and explained by the Russian soldiers' informal culture.

The organizational nature of the Russian armed forces can be seen as prototypical for a total institution. Below, we will demonstrate this statement based on some critical aspects of total institutions, as well as, contextualizing the Russian army as a total institution in the broader Soviet-Russian society. We will then show the effects of the total institution on the soldiers' culture. Aspects of the patronage system linked with the total institution will also be revealed in this overview. In this way the soldiers' informal culture can be compared with the structures and cultures of the post-modern army.

2. 1.   The Russian Armed Forces as a Total Institution

The Russian armed forces conform to one of the most basic criteria of total institutions insofar as it contains a large group of conscripted soldiers who reside and work in the barracks. The soldiers' life is located exclusively within or nearby the barracks. Their lives are cut off from the wider society for at least two years. They are lead communally in an enclosed and formally administered round of life. We will demonstrate these aspects of Russian military life based on observations regarding the closed nature of the Russian military barracks; the nature of the group of soldiers that populated the barracks in the 1990's; and the specific methods of organizing the officer corps in Russian military practice. Translated into Goffman's terminology, we will touch upon aspects of **the encompassing tendencies** of the Russian military institution, the **interpersonal contamination** in the barracks, and the **basic split between the inmates and the supervisory staff.**

Closedness and Secrecy Dictate the Encompassing Tendencies of the Russian Military Institution.

The Russian military barracks are hermetically closed compounds. Communication between the internal and the external world is difficult and, perhaps more importantly, slow. The Russian soldier mainly communicates with the home front by mail. Sometimes, as Andrei witnessed, their letters are checked by staff to ensure that they do not contain

state or military 'secrets'.[466]   Phone calls are for technical and financial reasons less common than the traditional letters, whereas mobile phones and internet communication are, as far as my interviewees were concerned, non-existent. From time to time an (illegal) amateur videotape is smuggled out of the barracks that shows some aspects of the internal life of the soldier. For parents as well as for the soldiers, visits are difficult to organize. This is dictated by the geographical vastness of Russia as well as by the economic hardships experienced by many Russian families. Besides these rare family contacts, soldiers are only on exceptional occasions exposed to non-military persons. Journalists, for instance, are in principle not allowed into the compounds. In the cases where they are granted access, this is usually either because the commanding officer was simply overwhelmed or taken by surprise, or because the visit has been orchestrated in the best Potemkin tradition to create a positive impression. Almost all journalistic reports on the Russian soldiers' question are made outside the barracks and based on interviews conducted with soldiers, who are no longer serving, such as, deserters, demobilized soldiers, soldiers in hospitals, etc. It is also difficult for other visitors to gain access to the barracks, and when they do their visits are tightly controlled. Even members of the Russian Duma, for instance, told me that it was difficult for them to gain entrance to military barracks where conscripts are actively serving.[467] Military attachés based in Moscow witnessed the same trend. The Polish and Belgian military attachés complained that, despite the fact that twice a year they were invited to visit soldiers' rooms and see soldiers' life, it was clear to them that these rooms were not actually used by soldiers. They were simply 'Potemkin rooms'.[468]

For the conscripted soldier, there is no legal escape from the military authorities even when the soldiers have, at least after basic training, the right to go out of the compound. In order to leave the compound, a soldier has to request official permission. The right to leave the compound is seen as a favor or privilege. Kesha complained of this restriction that

> "to get permission for a nightly sortie, I had to inscribe myself on a list, which had to be approved at four different levels. When finally the sortie is approved, I receive an officially stamped ticket which gives me the right to be out of the barracks. The approval of such a sortie depends largely on the personality of the commanding officer, which made the system completely arbitrary. The power of the company commander is enormous and he is being seen as a 'godfather' of the Company."[469]

Furthermore, Kesha knows that when he does leave the barracks, the surveillance is not over. In St.-Petersburg, the city where Kesha is serving, he is constantly checked by military patrols. These patrols are often seconded by military cadets, who maintain a high presence on the city's streets. Kesha's testimony shows firstly that the soldiers' movement in and out of the barracks are bureaucratically and closely surveyed, and that this surveillance extends beyond the borders of the barracks themselves. Secondly, the policy governing soldiers' right to leave the barracks is highly arbitrary, and thus extremely difficult for the soldiers to negotiate. This last element in particular shows the (intended or unintended) strategy of the commanding officer to create a permanent feeling of anxiety

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[466] Interview with Andrei conducted on May 23, 1998 in St.-Petersburg (Interview Nr. 23).
[467] Conversation with Alexei G. Arbatov, the specialist of defense matters of the liberal Jabloka party, in Moscow on May 18, 1999.
[468] Conversation with the Polish and Belgian military attachés on May 14, 1998.
[469] Interview with Kesha 3 conducted in St.-Petersburg on March 29, 1999 (Interview Nr. 14).

among the soldiers. According to Goffman, this is a tactic to make the soldiers obedient subjects.

In the Russian military, control over the behavior of soldiers is rationalized and justified primarily by the idea of military secrets. The culture of the military secret is rampant. This culture has an immense impact on the behavior and the customs of the military. It gives the military authorities the possibility to threaten the soldiers with severe punishments should they reveal 'military secrets'. It is clear that this culture of secrecy lends itself easily to arbitrariness. The impact of the culture of secrecy became evident during the interviews I conducted where many soldiers were very reluctant to speak about their daily life, because they feared repercussions for revealing state secrets. Contradictory to this observation, it was also telling to see how some young men engaged in what Goffman called 'messing up'. Soldiers and officers were showing documents and were talking extensively about their military service, to the point that the interviewer had to warn them that this was against (Western) rules of military conduct. The soldiers were in fact aware of this but chose freely and consciously to 'mess up'. In this way, the hermetically surveyed and closed basket of the Russian barracks was leaking everywhere. Apparently, a policy of total secrecy is impossible to maintain and engenders counter mores. When everything is declared secret, a distinction is no longer drawn between real confidential military information and banal trivial facts. As a result, the risk that confidential information will be revealed becomes more plausible. Here we have another example of the perverse effects in Goffman's contradictory world of total institutions. The culture of secrecy, when used as a strategy to keep the system completely closed and the soldiers under total control may result in its opposite. As Goffman pointed out, such systems are not only morally reprehensible, but ultimately inefficient.

Excessive surveillance and control, the culture of secrecy, closedness, arbitrary behavior of the staff, anxiety among soldiers, etc. all seem to be taken directly from Goffman's textbook of total institutions. At the start of the twenty-first century the Russian army remains a closed, total institution.

The Most Unfortunate and Unlucky of Society in the Barracks and their Effect on 'Interpersonal Contamination'.

We have seen in Part I and Part II that the Russian military is an 'out-of-control' organization and that the political decisions on recruitment of soldiers-on the question who does or does not have to serve-resulted in an inextricable recruitment system. The resulting crisis of the recruitment system had a clear impact on the quantity and the quality of the incoming recruits. This can be shown on the basis of various statistics published throughout the 1990's by different bodies.

It is common knowledge that the recruiters of the Russian armed forces have been experiencing severe problems in meeting the quantitative norms set by the recruitment policy. During the 1990's only 15 to 18% of the actual age cohort was effectively doing its service. The remaining 85 to 82% of the age cohort enjoyed the legal right to postpone or to be exempted from military service. For this large majority medical, family and educational reasons were used to avoid military service. The unpredictable reign of President Yeltsin, however, also had a direct hand in exacerbating the recruitment problem as his unexpected and impulsively signed *ukase* exempted many more youngsters from military service.[470]

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[470] See for example: Vladimir zolotarev, *Voennaia bezopasnost otechestva*, Moskva: Kanon Press, 1998, pp. 361-416.

It should come as no surprise that this situation has had an impact on the qualitative composition of the soldiers' cohort in the barracks. In 1996, for instance, 48% of the recruits came from a blue-collar worker background and 18% from a peasant background. This tendency gave rise to sarcastic mutterings within the army that in the 1990's finally the Russian army was finally approaching its communist ideal by becoming an 'army of workers and peasants' ('*rabotche-krestiansko*').[471] What is clear is that the social composition of the group of the enlisted is skewed towards the lower classes of society. Historically, this particular composition of the group of enlisted soldiers fits well with the classic form of the mass army.

It would be incorrect to conclude that 85% of the Russian youth is incapable of doing its military service. Military service, as it is now known in Russia, is simply rejected and the draft crisis has been caused by an effective boycott on the part of the Russian youth. Although we have hypothesized that the reasons why the Russian youth rejected the draft are different from Western-style protests–postmodern values versus consideration of physical survival-Russian families and youngsters do build strategies and networks in order to avoid the draft. Corruption is rampant and, for instance, medical doctors sitting on the military recruitment commissions are well known to take bribes. One doctor told me the story of an 18-year-old boy who consulted her in order to get medical documents to obtain medical exemption from military service, only to return a fortnight later requesting documents to prove his physical fitness enabling him to train to become a physical education school teacher. The official data make it clear that draft dodging is primarily an urban phenomenon characteristic of the educated and wealthy layers of society. In other words, those people with sufficient social capital to obtain an 'official' exemption from military service.

Other official military statistics show a clear bias in favor of the lower and less privileged classes of Russian society. The armed forces, for example, lamented that in 1998, 18% of the incoming soldiers had a broken family background (siroty i iz nepolnykh semei); only 48% had a higher or intermediate level of education (which means that half of the soldiers' population had less than a high school education and are only semi-literate); 10% had already contact with the police and could, according to the armed forces, be said to have a criminal record; and finally, 46% of the incoming soldiers had no work experience. In a Krasnaya Zvezda article of November 2001, the Directory of Recruitment and Mobilization of the MoD complained that the youth of Moscow, Moscow Oblast, St. Petersburg, and, to a lesser degree, Kaliningrad and Tuva were significantly under-represented in the barracks compared with the youngsters coming from other regions.[472] The regional representation in the barracks shows that youths from the most prosperous regions are the most under-represented amongst draftees. These official data are confirmed by the socio-demographic backgrounds of the sample of my interviewees. About 80% of the soldiers I interviewed fit the soldiers' background, described by the MoD. Most of the soldiers were indeed raised in single mother families, had reached a rather low educational level, and came from the regions. They were, indeed, recruited out of the most unlucky layer of Russian society

The severe manpower crisis of the 1990's created perverse effects as recruiters desperate to meet their quotas resorted to unorthodox measures to get the boys into the barracks. For example, in spring 1998, I witnessed press gangs in the subway of St.-Petersburg set up in order to drag young men to the recruitment offices especially those

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[471] V. Serebrianikov and Yu. Deriugin, *Op. Cit.*,1998, p. 11.
[472] Oleg Falichev, , 'Kto Stanet pod boevye znamena', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 21 November 2001, p.2.

young men who could not show a military stamp on their passport.[473] As recruitment pressure rose, medical examinations executed in the *voenkomaty* also became less critical to the point where the Soldiers' Mothers Organizations were complaining that most of the recruits' health wasnot strong enough to serve in the military. As a result the Soldiers' Mothers started a permanent campaign to rescue those unhealthy teenagers who had been illegally drafted. Recruitment of orphans also became common practice. In other words, old recruitment patterns that go back to the tsarist era became common practice in Russia during the 1990's.[474] It is a desperate recruitment policy under pressure, as illustrated by the following photograph. This photograph may also be seen as an illustration of the process of mortification that is touched upon above:

Picture 2: Forced recruitment and beginning of 'mortification'

In the period of the existence of the USSR, one of the main research topics of the time concerned the multi-ethnic composition of the group of draftees and its possible impact on group cohesion. In the 1990's, this research topic vanished completely from the academic discourse on the Russian soldiers' social problems. However, it should not be forgotten that the Russian armed forces are still composed of many different ethnic groups. For example, many of my interviewees referred to soldier-colleagues from Dagestan, the Far East, Yakutiia, and so on. Despite the fact that this aspect of soldiers' post-Soviet life is ignored in the academic discourse, the group of Russian enlisted men is multicultural, and this multicultural composition has a serious impact on the way soldiers live together and interact in the barracks

One of the most important characteristics of a total institution is that the inmates are obliged to live and work together, that a social life is imposed on them in what Goffman called 'interpersonal contamination'. The fact that the composition of the cohort of soldiers

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[473] This practice is also reported in Western newspapers. See for instance: Coen Van Zwol, 'Klopjacht op rekruten in Moskou, Legerdienst betekent twee jaar armoede, honger, dwangarbeid en geweld', *De standaard*, January 14, 2002; Coen van Zwol, 'Russich leger pikt rekruten op in disco', *NRC handelsblad*, January 9, 2002. Eve Conant, 'Remaking the Army', *Newsweek*, February 18, 2002.
[474] See for instance Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter who studied the recruitment policy in the early nineteenth century. She also noted that awkward recruitment strategies were used as a response to the endemic crisis of the draft. (Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter, *From Serf to Russian Soldier*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.)

in the Russian barracks in the 1990's is, for whatever reason, of such questionable quality, has an indisputable impact on the Russian soldiers' culture.

Soldiers and Officers and the Basic Split between the Inmates and the Supervisory staff.

The daily agenda of the soldiers is prescribed and organized by the staff. A daily schedule is outlined that dictates what soldiers must do and what they are allowed to do. The sample daily schedule below was composed on the basis of my interviews.

0600 Hr	Reveille
0730-0800 Hr:	Breakfast
0800- 8015 Hr:	Inspection and Parade
0830-1500 Hr	Training sessions
1500-1600 Hr	Lunch
1630-2000 Hr	Maintenance and individual preparation
2000-2030 Hr	Dinner
2030-2200 Hr	Free time
2200 Hr	Taps

This schedule does not predict a great deal about the quality of the military education and training. Andrei's military education, for instance, was limited to a monthly shooting exercise in which he could shoot a round of 15 bullets. In a class room he was taught how to handle his weapon. Three times a week there was a cross country exercise during which he had to run 10 kilometers. Five times a day there was a drill exercise. This took place half an hour before breakfast, lunch and dinner. Just after reveille and just before sleeping time there was another drill session scheduled. Andrei, like many conscripted soldiers, received absolutely no tactical education.[475] Based on this testimony, it can be concluded that in the 1990's many conscripts never received any thorough military training on the individual level, let alone the platoon, company and battalion level. Russian soldiers were confronted with long periods of boredom, and senseless physical training and drill sessions.

Regimented management results, according to Goffman, in a split between the staff and the inmates, or, in this case, between the officer corps and the enlisted men. In the Russian army, this split is radical, as there is no professional NCO corps to stand as a buffer between soldiers and their superiors. Aleksei stated on this issue, that he met officers only occasionally.[476] The organizational chart of the basic unit where a soldier undergoes service can further illustrate this point. Aleksandr described his artillery battery that can be seen as the basic unit that primarily constructs Russian soldiers' life, as follows.[477] The battery had a battery commander and a *zampolit*. The *zampolit* is an aid to the battery commander who is especially responsible for interpersonal relations and discipline. Aleksandr added on the function of the *zampolit* that he had a very low status, and was inefficient; indeed, Aleksandr added that the *zampolit's* very presence in the unit was entirely irrelevant. Besides this officers' duo, there were three platoon commanders. In total, thus, there were five officers active in the battery. There was one *praporshchik* in the

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[475] Declaration filled in by Andrei in St.-Petersburg on March 19, 1998 (Declaration Nr.3).
[476] Interview with Aleksei 4 conducted in St.-Petersburg on May 27, 1998 (Interview Nr. 33).
[477] Interview with Aleksandr conducted in St.-Petersburg on May 26, 1998 (Interview Nr. 31).

battery who played the role of a kind of secretary. In Aleksandr's battery there were two hundred to two hundred twenty conscripted soldiers, of which sixteen were conscripted sergeants. The Russian armed forces experimented several times with introducing NCO's into its organization, to replace the conscripted sergeants, but did not succeed in introducing a real professional NCO corps. The conscripted sergeants did not have enough authority over their fellow soldiers. Sergei illustrated the lack of authority of the conscripted sergeants in a tragi-comic way. He recalled a situation in which a young conscripted sergeant had to flee from a Dagestan soldier who threatened to beat him and literally chased the sergeant.[478] The fact that the split between the soldiers and the officers is so radical has serious consequences for daily living and working conditions in the unit. It makes communication between the officers and the soldiers more difficult, as it is limited and very formal. Moreover, the officer corps is seen by the soldiers' collective as the adversary, as the category against which the soldiers have to defend themselves. This defensive position of the soldiers is underscored by the unwritten and therefore, sacred rule of silence. Soldiers learn never to complain to the officers and never to play rat on their mates. A soldier who is becoming even sporadically involved with the officers (and *praporshchiks*) is viewed as suspicious by the other soldiers in the unit. Anyone who crosses the lines of the rule of silence must bear the consequences. Beating, ostracism, lack of protection, etc. is the price to be paid by the traitor to the soldiers' rules. A commander, Aleksandr recounts, who sees clearly during morning inspection that one of his soldiers has been severely beaten during the night, will very rarely succeed in learning the full story behind the incident. The soldier never complained to the commander. Even when the commanding officer asked publicly and/or privately the cause of the soldier's injuries, the soldier never told him. The soldier in question downplayed his injuries and finally used the stereotypical excuse of an invented accident. Without an official complaint, the officer felt incapable to take measures against the abuse of violence in his unit. In this way, through this formal, but inefficient inquiry, the incident was closed.[479] There is thus not only the culture of secrecy, cultivated by the officer corps, but there is also the rule of *omerta*, cultivated by the soldiers. These complementary cultures make the Russian military barracks sealed bastions of closedness, and, consequently, perfect feeding grounds for informal cultures.

The radical split between the officers and the soldiers in the Russian armed forces also has another aspect. The group of officers is not diversified, in the sense that the axiom of unity of command (*edinonachalnie*) is understood to be sacred in the Russian military. The commander, and the commander alone, leads the unit. This is based on a strict functional interpretation of his job. The *zampolit*, the doctor or the chaplain, active in the unit cannot question the commander of the unit. We have already pointed out that the **zampolit** plays a subordinated role in the unit. This is a remnant of the Soviet past, in which the political officers changed their role in a kind of semi-psychological aid to the command. The function of the *zampolity* is more a question of creating a job artificially, rather than increasing the effectiveness of the unit. Besides the historical burden of this function–*zampolity* were never popular in the tactical chain of command-their professional expertise is also questionable. Moreover, it is a particularity of the Russian army that **the medical doctor** has no functional authority. Medicine in general has never had a high prestige in Russian society, and in the armed forces the medical doctor's professional decisions can easily be overruled by the commander of the unit on the grounds of so-called tactical considerations. There is also no such thing as 'medical confidentiality' or 'the protection of the soldier's privacy'. The medical doctor is an integral part of the military

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[478] Declaration filled in by Sergei in St.-Petersburg on July 8, 1998 (Declaration Nr.40).
[479] Declaration filled in by Aleksandr 3 in St.-Petersburg on July 8, 1998 (Declaration Nr. 45).

hierarchy and does not have, as is commonly the case in Western armies, a specific confidential relationship with the soldiers. Finally, it is only recently that **Orthodox chaplains** were introduced in the units. They may represent a kind of 'point of rest' in the hectic daily life in the unit. But here, too, some qualifications need to be made. We have already indicated that the Russian Orthodox Church subscribes to rather conservative views on the armed forces. Moreover, the Orthodox priests see their role as strictly religious, and soldiers who come with non-religious questions or problems are sent to the commanding officer. One Protestant priest interviewed in St.-Petersburg, pointed out that he had no access to the barracks simply because only Orthodox priests have a privileged relationship with the military. This priest also criticized the Orthodox priests for having no ear for the soldiers' social and psychological problems.[480] In a structural sense, the Orthodox priest is not differentiated from the commanders, and does not represent an alternative medium through which a soldier can communicate with the officers' class or with the external world. In conclusion, it is noteworthy that the strict interpretation of the rule of *edinonachalie* results in a lack of differentiation of the officers' class. Soldiers have no way of communicating with the officers group or with the external world, other than in formal, controlled and prescribed ways. This situation adds to the sharply divided world of officers and soldiers in the Russian barracks and, ultimately, encourages the informal culture of the soldiers'.

The Russian Army: a Tribe among Tribes. [481]

In the preceding chapter we indicated that the hosting, national culture in which a particular army culture develops is an important factor in explaining a given army culture. In this way, it is useful to see the role and impact of total institutions in the Soviet Union, and even in Tsarist Russia, as an important organizational format in Soviet-Russian society as a whole. The role of total institutions in an undemocratic, totalitarian state is obvious: total control over its citizens. More important is the cultural impact of this organizational format in contemporary Russia. Indeed, parallel with the assertion that the Soviet Union *had* no army, but *was* an army, we can in a provocative way state that the Soviet Union did not dispose of total institutions, but was *itself* a total institution. This is illustrated in Russian and Soviet literature that denounce many social ills and problems, such as Fyodor Dostoyevsky's 'The House of the Dead', which concerns daily life in Tsarist prison systems, or the works of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who wrote on the social conditions of the Soviet prison camp system in the *Gulag Archipelago* and, more subtly, in his book on the hospital system *Cancer Ward*. In fact the whole corpus of Gulag literature may be viewed as an artistic illustration of Goffman's textbook on total institutions. Besides the Soviet prison camp there were also, for example, the system of 'closed cities', orphanages, student dormitories, etc., all of which can be seen as typical examples of total institutions. One can even argue that the informal economy and the informal service system already mentioned as the *blat'* system was a logical outcome of the State's attempt to attain total control over the Soviet economy and was worsened by the scarcity of goods. Total control, scarcity and closedness, create perverse effects such as arbitrariness, cruelty, and neglect. In the 1990's an interesting study was published by Human Rights Watch on the dire

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[480] Conversation with a Protestant Priest in St.-Petersburg on May 28, 1998.

[481] I borrow this expression from the French military sociologist Bernard Boëne. B. Boëne, "A tribe among tribes…post-modern militaries and civil-military relations?" paper presented at the interim Meeting of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee 01 (Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution), Modena, Italy, January 20-22, 1997.

situation in Russian state-run orphanages.[482] The specific conditions that were pointed out in this study are very recognizable when they are compared with the situation in the army. For instance, Kathleen Hunt reported that:

'…a dark tableau of abuse, dereliction of responsibility, and gratuitous cruelty also emerged. Orphanages for school-aged children breed their own genre of brutalizing punishment. It is distinct from the discipline found in the baby houses or the *internaty*, but well known in the Russian bastions of gang-rule: the military and the GULAG prisons…For children who hardly have a positive alternative social role model from the world beyond the institution, the orphanage staff set an unconscionable example of degrading discipline. In doing so, the adults helped reinforce a survival-of-the-fittest hierarchy among the orphans, which they fostered in a second pattern to control and punish children by proxy. This proxy pattern was particularly insidious because the favored children, delegated to 'govern' like minor feudal lords, developed a repertoire of vicious and injurious punishments which the older, stronger orphans inflicted upon the younger or weaker ones. In Russian, this is known by its familiar colloquial term "*dyedovshchina*" (sic) or hazing, which is taken from military slang.; it was not surprising to Human Right watch when orphans in St.-Petersburg spontaneously used *dyedovshchina* to describe the gratuitous violence in orphanage life. It is worth remembering that this practice of hazing as a means of internal control is understood by Russians as malicious and even deadly, it is not to be confused with the typical roughhousing among fraternity brothers at universities in the United States."[483]

Hunter noted in an interview on *detskii dom* from more remote areas that they are

"…fully closed institutions, and almost no one gets access to them. No NGO's, no private citizens, only government control. Even children living in homes do not complain to officials when they are abused by their parents because they feel ashamed about it and they are scared and do not know what they can do. The orphans live in isolation."[484]

Finally, Hunter pointed out that the culture of secrecy also existed in the system of orphanages, saying that

"…the Russian authorities have reacted to the critiques of their orphanages by blocking access to the institutions; punishing or threatening to fire workers if they speak about abuses; and, in some instances, promoting those who are responsible for the wrongdoing."[485]

It lies beyond the scope of this study to go in any depth into the social structure and the daily life of Russian prisons, orphanages, dormitories, etc. The point is here that the Russian army culture is only partly specific, in the sense that comparable inmate cultures

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[482] Kathleen Hunter, *Abandoned to the State, Cruelty, and Neglect in Russian Orphanages*, Washington: Human Right Watch, 1998.
[483] *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111
[484] *Ibid.*, p.113
[485] *Ibid.*, p.139

are bred by the organizational format of total institutions that is still commonly used in Russia. The state management of large groups is still based on overall control, arbitrary leadership and closedness.

Conclusions

This section has shown that the Russian armed in the 1990's is an organization based on the format of Goffman's total institution. This particular organizational format has deep historical, cultural and social roots in the Tsarist and Soviet periods. The specific economic, social conditions of the 1990's had a considerable conjunctural impact on the living conditions in the barracks. Economic crisis rendered the system of mortification and the construction of an informal prestige system among the soldiers more aggressive and violent. However, the basic problem is situated within the old-fashioned, inhumane, ineffective, and morally unacceptable total institution format. This supports my principal argument that there is a crucial gap between the state-run organizational structure that is mainly used in Russia's mainstream management philosophy, on the one hand, and Western post-modern management thinking, on the other. Logically, the transition to a post-modern military organization must go together with a fundamental change in the management philosophy. Reforming the army means thus first and foremost, that the Russian reform planners must tackle the structural problem of the total institutions. It is absolutely essential that they open up the organization. In political terms, this may involve democratizing the military and opening it up to external scrutiny. In sociological terms, this may involve the opening up of the barracks and raising the level of functional diversity of the managing corps. Should such measures be taken, the informal culture that is connected with the closed type of total organization, with the typical informal prestige system and messing up traditions, will automatically disappear. Unfortunately, until further notice this negative informal soldiers' culture is still very much alive as we will show below.

2. 2.   *'Dedovshchina'* or the 'Rule of the Grandfathers': a System of Secondary Adjustment

The informal culture in the Russian barracks, known as the system of *dedovshchina*, is already well described and documented in both the scientific literature and the politically inspired writings of human rights activists.[486] What is common in this literature is the descriptive, as well as the normative character of it. This means that moral outrage motivates these publications and that the spectacular character of *dedovshchina* is highlighted. In this overview of the soldiers' informal culture, I use the theoretical framework of total institutions to go beyond a purely descriptive analysis of the soldiers'

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[486] See for example: S.A. Belanovskii (editor), *Dedovshchina v armii (Sbornik sotsiologichesick dulomentov)*, Moskva: Akademia nauk SSSR, 1991; Michail Zolotonosov, *Obyknovennii Sadizm, staty o rossiskoi armii: 1993-1997*, Sankt-Peterburg: Tuskarora, 1997; 'dedovshcina' in S.S. Solovev and I.V. Obraztsov, *Rossiiskaia armiia ot Afganistana do Chechni*, Moskva: natsionalnii institut imeni Ekiateriny Velikoi, 1997, pp. 339-345; Amnesty international report EUR 46/10/1997, *Torture, Ill-treatment and Death in the Army*; Manfred Sapper, *Die Auswirkungen des Afghanistan-Krieges auf die Sowjetgesellschaft, Eine Studie zum Legitimitätsverlust des Militärischen in der Peresrojka*, Hamburg: LIT Verlag, 1994, pp.124-137; Eva Maria Hinterhuber, *Die Soldatenmütter Sankt Peterburg, Zwischen Neotraditionalismus und neuer Widerständigkeit*, Hamburg: LIT Verlag, 1999, pp. 31-33; Françoise Daucé, *L'etat, l'armée et le citoyen en Russia post-soviétique*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 2001, pp. 107-117; Carey Schofield, *Inside the Soviet Military*, London: Abbeville Press, 1991, pp. 82-86.

informal culture. Consequently, I will not focus on the moral aspects that go together with this organizational phenomenon; nor will I highlight the violence and other cruel violations of the physical and mental integrity of the soldiers.[487] Moral preoccupations hinder scientific analysis and make assessment and identification of the precise underlying structural elements more difficult. After a structural overview of the phenomenon of *dedovshchina*, I will make some comments concerning the origins and evolution of *dedovshchina*, and, finally, I will suggest some possible solutions for this phenomenon that, apparently, stubbornly refuses to go away.

Describing 'the Rule of the Grandfathers'

Explained through the concept of total institutions, *dedovshchina* is the outcome of a system of privileges, a system of secondary adjustment, and an involuntary process of fraternization that takes place within the group of soldiers. Through these phenomena the soldiers try to defend themselves against the regime imposed upon them by the officer corps. *Dedovshchina* is thus a rational response from the soldiers, both as individuals and as a group, to the strange and enclosed military world. Briefly, the system of *dedovshchina* is an informal hierarchical structure installed among the group of soldiers that is primarily based on seniority. This means that the senior group of soldiers reigns over the younger group of soldiers. The aspect of seniority is etymologically expressed in the Russian word *dedovshchina*, derived from the Russian root *ded*, which means grandfather.[488] *Dedovshchina* is, in Goffman's words, the organizational realization of a system of privileges in which informal status is rebuilt as a counter movement against the mortification tendencies in the barracks. It is also based on the system of patronage: the relationships between soldiers are intrinsically unequal since they are based on traditional seniority rules. In return for obeying the rules of the elder soldiers-the grandfathers-a neophyte soldier survives the odd soldiers' world. Moreover, obedience to the grandfathers' rule also represents an investment in the future, since growing up and surviving in the system automatically means gaining prestige and rising in the informal ranks of the soldiers. *Dedovshchina* is thus a rational system that knits the group of soldiers closely together. The system of the collective holds the rational elements that ensure the continuity of the system of *dedovshchina*. This last remark is especially important from a sociological point of view because this system holds the elements that ensure its own reproduction. *Dedovshchina* is a strong social system which once installed is very difficult to dismantle. This is all the more so since the system contains elements of self-control that make the problem of discipline in the barracks much easier for the officer corps.

In practical terms the informal culture of the soldiers is based upon an informal hierarchy, in which the soldier (automatically) grows up from being a 'slave' to becoming a 'master'. The system of *dedovchshina* is composed of four (or at times five or six) hierarchically structured stages, each with their well-defined functions and ranks.[489] The

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[487] For a description of the violent nature of the army life see especially: Michail Zolotonosov, *Obyknovennii Sadizm, staty o rossiskoi armii: 1993-1997*, Sankt-Peterburg: Tuskarora, 1997; European Council of Conscripts Organizations, *Casualties in Peacetime, A study on violence and intimidation in the armed forces in Europe*, Nijmegen: Gelderland offset, 1997, pp. 45-64; Yevgenia Borisova, 'Vitaly's Story: Knocking The spirit Out Of The New Recruits', *St.-Petersburg Press*, October 11-17, 1994.

[488] See V.P. Korovyshkin, *Slovar Russkogo voennogo zhargona*, Ekatarinburg: Urals University Press, 2000, p. 86.

[489] The number of categories is not an essential element in our analysis. For instance, some researchers point out six stages in a two year service cycle. (See: pp. 9-13). What is important is the stratification of the group

existence of the ranks is based on the time schedule imposed by the recruitment system. This recruitment system prescribes two recruitment periods a year and a two-year duration of draft service. This means that there are permanently four distinctive groups present in the barracks. The distinction between the four groups, each with their specific function, is shown in the following table.

Category of soldiers	Period of service	Labeling of the category of soldiers	Function in the category of soldiers
Category I	1-6 months	'dukh', 'tarakan', 'ten'', 'cherep', 'synok', 'udav', 'salaban', 'zelenyi', 'bolt', 'pirat', 'salaga', 'mukha', 'krolik', 'krab', 'uchstyi', 'ogurets'	Execution of military-functional jobs of soldiers of category III and IV + additional tasks to please these categories.
Category II	6-12 months	'Gus', 'kotel', 'slon', 'shnurok', 'starshii tarakan', 'mamont', 'skvorets', …	
Category III	12-18 months	'fazan', 'cherpak', 'limon', 'pomazok',…	Domination over and education of the first rank soldiers.
Category IV	18 months – official demobilization	'ded', 'starik', 'starii', 'kopol', 'gus chrustalnii',…	Control function in order to maintain the system and if necessary to intervene.

Table 16: Labeling of the category of soldiers

As the table shows, the soldiers use a highly specific terminology to indicate to which category an individual soldier belongs. This affirms Goffman's view of a strong tendency of 'social stereotyping' in the inmate's world. Moreover, the soldiers have a specific language that is only understood by those who belong to the informal culture. This aspect of 'the soldiers' lingo' has been studied by Russian linguists. Russian soldiers have also another secret way of communicating with each other: the secret language of tattoos. Just like in prisons, some soldiers display their status by means of tattoos, in a way that is commonly understood by the other soldiers. For the purposes of this study, this (secret) language aspect is only interesting to the degree that it helps us to understand the solid structure of the social fabric of the soldiers' world.

A basic underlying factor that influences the system of abuse is scarcity. Generally, total institutions impose a system that lacks freedom, but Russian soldiers lack even more fundamental things such as food, beverages, and especially money. This last aspect is particularly important for Russian soldiers. Money gives the soldier access to products that may color his gray, dull and monotonous life. It can improve his diet and may help him temporarily to flee his dreadful situation through alcohol and drugs. However, soldiers receive a monthly stipend of only 18.5 rubble: moreover, these payments are frequently either delayed by several months or simply not forthcoming.[490] In this situation, the elder soldiers use all possible means to acquire money. They steal money from the younger ones and force them to go out begging illegally for money, wherever they can. In practice this sometimes means that the 'dukh' has to steal from civilians in order to comply with the orders of the '*dedy*'. Another example of the *dedovshchina* system being exported out of the barracks is illustrated by the story of Yevgenii. Yevgenii explained in an interview that he was obliged by the *dedy* to write his mother asking her to send him money. As soon as this money arrived Yevgenii had to give it to the *dedy*. Had Yevgenii (and his mother)

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of soldiers based on seniority and the automatically growing-up throughout the system. The number of stages is, therefore, less important.

[490] This is the stipend in March 1998.

failed to obey this order, Yevgenii would have been beaten to death.[491] Other witnesses recounted that category I soldiers systematically had to give up their meals to the older soldiers. Vitalii, for example, had to give his meal to a particular category IV soldier. When he complained to this particular soldier that he was hungry, he was beaten up and told to steal food in order to stay alive.[492] Similar measures were taken by the *dedy* in order to obtain cigarettes and alcohol. In a sense such behavior is based on a sense of **self-sufficiency in a world of scarcity**. When the army does not provide the soldiers with basic goods, the soldiers have to provide the basic elements for survival themselves. They are forced to organize themselves in order to survive.

It would be a mistake to reduce the soldiers' informal culture to the system of *dedovshchina*, which would mean effectively reducing the informal leadership to **seniority**. Other 'primitive/traditional' factors are also playing in the informal culture of the Russian soldiers. Most important among these is **physical strength**. According to Alyosha, there was one way to avoid the effects of *dedovshchina*, namely through physical strength. If you could prove with your fists that you could resist the elderly, the elderly would, in the end, leave you alone. Alyosha cited one example of a soldier from the Caucasus who was able to resist the orders of the elderly. Quite logically, the elderly co-opted this soldier and used him as an ally. The soldier from the Caucasus was used to beat up other soldiers. In this way he acted as a gang member with the lowest status who had to carry out the petty orders of the godfathers.[493] Alyosha's story suggests that there is a structural relationship between the way soldiers are organizing themselves and the way criminal gangs are organized. It goes beyond the scope of this study to outline the typical Russian mafia structures, the so-called *krysha* system.[494] But it is important to note that definite processes of criminalization of the soldiers' informal culture were underway in the 1990's. Besides seniority, self-sufficiency, and physical strength there is another bonding factor: namely the regional factor. When I asked Akhmed if he had suffered from *dedovshchina*, he smiled and said that his friends from the Caucasus helped him to resist the rule of the grandfathers. 'We were strong enough to resist the elderly', he said.[495] Organizationally, this means that regional bonding, or '*zemliachestvo*', is another system that co-exists with *dedovshchina*. The idea of *zemliachestvo* can also be related with the **idea of localism or provincialism**. Conclusively, it can be said that the soldiers' culture is based on primitive bonding variables that are used to overcome the situation of scarcity and total control: namely seniority, physical strength, a focus on self-sufficiency and basic survival, localism or provincialism, etc. These traditional variables determine the way in which the elderly soldiers try to break through the all-encompassing power of the Russian army and to make their lives less dull and monotonous. The character of these variables belongs to a particular timeframe in Russian cultural history. Indeed, they may, without hesitation be described typical for the Russian peasant community of the nineteenth century which was also a world in which violence, uncertainty, and haphazardness were abundantly present. It was a life in which the basic concern of the peasant was focused on physical survival. The Russian soldiers' informal culture is in this way traditional and,

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[491] Interview with Yevgenii conducted in St.-Petersburg on July 1, 1998 (Interview Nr. 35).

[492] Interview with Vitalii conducted in St.-Petersburg on October 11, 1998 (Interview Nr. 47).

[493] Declaration filled in by Alyosha in St.-Petersburg on July 8, 1998 (Declaration Nr. 49).

[494] For a good introduction on the krysha system see, for instance, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Russian Organized crime, Washington: CISIS, 1997, pp. 29-31; Stephan handelman, *Comrade Criminal, Russia's New Mafiya*, New York: Yale University Press, 1995; and for an applied study on organized crime in the Russian armed forces, see: Graham Turbiville, *Mafia in Uniform: the Criminalization of the Russian Armed Forces*, Kansas: Foreign Military Studies Office, 1995 (retrieved from the internet site: http://leav-www.army.mil/fmso/fmso.htm)

[495] Interview with Akhmed conducted in St.-Petersburg on July 2, 1998 (Interview Nr 38).

consequently, NOT compatible with the idea of the post-modern military organization that cultivates concepts such as self realization, personal skills, moral and physical integrity etc. Consequently, contrary to the Western post-modern army and post-modern society the individual is not placed at the center of the Russian officers' concern. In any case, Russian soldiers' informal culture stands in sharp contrast with the commercial slogan 'an army of one' that is used in the U.S. armed forces and which sends the message that in the U.S. armed forces, every person counts!

Past and future of the soldiers' informal culture

There are two basic schools of thought regarding the origin of the informal culture of the Russian soldiers. One group argues that the origins of *dedovshchina* lie in the notorious Soviet prison camp or Gulag system.[496] We will call this the structural school of thought and *dedovshchina* is considered to be a perverse effect of the way the military organization is structured. The other school of thought is led by the American sovietologist William Odom, who traces the origins of the grandfathers' rule to 1967, when the Soviet recruitment system changed from a service period of three years to the current two-year draft period.[497] Odom claimed that the soldiers who were serving the three years were so resentful that they started to torture the younger soldiers. What is important in Odom's reasoning is that *dedovshchina* is seen as the result of a specific intention. Therefore, we call Odom's way of thinking the ideational school. To this second school of thought I also add two Russian sociologists, Aleksey Levinson and Yuri Levada. These two authors claim that the system of *dedovshchina* has been intentionally installed by the officer corps in order to socialize the soldiers.

Based on the axiom that the system of *dedovshchina* is related with the concept of total institutions, it is clear that I support the structural hypothesis, rather than the ideational hypothesis. I base this opinion on four arguments. Firstly, it is a mistake to think that the informal soldiers' culture is based on a kind of meta-decision of a group of people to punish another group of people. Such a widespread and solid system cannot be installed and reproduced on the basis of the frustration of a single group. *Dedovshchina* is the result of a particular type of organization that structures the lives of the inmates in a specific way. Why would this system exist in other closed, total institutions as prisons and camps [*tiur'ma i lager'*] as well? Secondly, there was also a change in the period of service in the 1990's. More precisely, the draft period was reduced from two years to eighteen months in the period 1991-96. This had, however, no effect on the basic characteristics of *dedovshchina*. In the 1991-96 period, the four categories of the rule of the *dedy* was easily adapted to become a system of three categories. It has already been mentioned that it is not the number of categories that is important, but rather the traditional idea that seniority goes together with authority. Thirdly, I have interviewed two fathers of soldiers who did their service before 1967. Both of them stated that during their service, the rule of the elderly existed, as did *zemliachestvo*.[498] However, there was a nuance. The system in the 1950's and 1960's was less brutal and criminalized than it was in the 1990's. This last point is interesting. It leads to our hypothesis that scarcity, aggravated by the economic crisis in Russia during the 1990's, has an important effect on the practical outcomes of the rule of

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[496] For a good reference see Cressey, Donald R. and Witold Krassowski, 'Inmate Organizations and Anomie in American Prisons and Soviet Labor Camps', *Social Problems*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1958-59, pp. 217-230. Also the soldiers' Mothers of ST.-Petersburg subscribe this hypothesis.

[497] William Odom, *The Collapse of the Soviet Military*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, p.48.

[498] Donald Cressy and Witold Krassowski, *Op. Cit.*, 1958-59, pp. 217-230.

the grandfathers. It leads us to suggest that there is a certain conjunctural evolution in the degree of brutality that goes together with the system of *dedovshchina* that is dictated by the economic conjuncture of the country. Fourthly, we can make a methodological remark on the view of Odom on the origin of *dedovshchina*. Odom's ideational hypothesis was supported by interviews he conducted among officers. It is claimed that this is the wrong category of people to ask questions on the informal soldiers' cultures. Officers are excluded from the soldiers' informal culture and are consequently not well informed about it.

The arguments of Levada and Levinson are politically inspired and anti-Soviet views that are difficult to falsify. Nevertheless, the idea that *dedovshchina* is based on a well planned policy is not supported. Firstly, it is difficult to imagine that an organization that is in deep crisis, and that is unable to implement any coherent reform program during the 1990's, would be able to plan and implement such an 'efficient' socialization policy as the system of *dedovshchina* is claimed to be. Secondly, both authors highlight the importance of terror and violence as socializing factors. In our view a system that is solely based on violence is not strong enough to be a reproducible system. Finally, the impact of the officers on the system of *dedovshchina* is overestimated.

The disagreement with the Odom hypothesis and our own study of the total institution concept, lead us to subscribe to the structural school of thought. Indeed, the internal life of the prisoners in the Gulag, described in the Gulag literature, presents a system that is comparable with the soldiers' system. Moreover, Cressey and Krassowski have studied the Soviet labor camps and have given a convincing image of these camps as total institutions, explaining how strategies of secondary adjustments were put into practice among the prisoners. The Soviet camp sub-culture has many comparable aspects with the soldiers' culture in the barracks. This being said, again, we should not push the comparison between the Soviet labor camp subculture and the soldiers' subculture in the barracks too far. The system of *dedovshchina* is NOT a copy of the prison camp system. Nor is it, as Levinson and Levada claim, a consciously created culture imposed by the Soviet authorities, who, as the engineers of the soul, tried to mold the soldiers into the ideal of the Soviet men. *Dedovshchina* was and is rather the result of the perverse effects of the way organizations were/are run by the Soviet/Russian state. Consequently, unless the structure of the Russian military organization is changed fundamentally, the military authorities will have little impact on the negative effects of the rule of the grandfathers. Indeed, the internal logic of *dedovshchina* makes it a very difficult system to destroy, so long as the basic structural idea of total institutions remains unchanged.

There are a number of basic approaches that can be proposed with a view to eradicating this detrimental, inefficient system of the soldiers' informal military culture. This is necessary if the leadership of the Russian Federation wants to adopt a post-modern all-volunteer force.

First, it should be pointed out that ideological and moral arguments against the 'rule of the grandfathers' make no sense from a sociological point of view. Consequently, it makes no sense to accuse the Russian armed forces of violation against human rights, even if this is the case.[499] Human rights violations are the ugly outcomes of the way the organization is structured. Neither is it efficient to call for a spiritual, patriotic or even a religious revival of the Soviet youth in order to prevent the abuses that take place in the

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[499] S.A. Podolskogo (red.), *Prava Cheloveka I armiia, realizatsiia I zashchita prav voennosluzhashchich, prizyvnikov, veteranov I chlenov ich semei*, Sankt Peterburg: Informatsinno-izdatelskoe agenstvo, 1999.

barracks.[500] It is much more efficient to focus on the structural elements which underlie the informal culture of the Russian army. Therefore, the Russian army needs to dismantle the organizational format of total institutions. The more Russia is able to open up its system, the greater the chances that the informal culture of the soldiers', and the system of secondary adjustments/messing up behavior, can be abolished.

Secondly, communication between the soldiers and the managing corps has to be improved. This means that the officer corps has to be diversified. Soldiers need to have the opportunity to speak confidentially with their superiors. Therefore trustworthy channels have to be set up, involving independent figures such as doctors and priests. In sociological terms, the introduction of priests would diversify the monolithic group of officers. Such diversification improves communication between the soldiers and narrows the radical officers-soldiers split. It goes without saying that the religious diversity of Russian society must also be reflected in the barracks. Protestant and Roman Catholic priests as well as Muslim imams must be available for soldiers. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, a professional NCO corps needs to be organized that can act as a mediator between the closed, and homogeneous world of the officers and soldiers. The introduction of a trustworthy, legitimate and respectful NCO corps would be an important step enabling the negative aspects of the soldiers' informal culture to be dismantled.

Thirdly, it is essential that the army take responsibility for its mistakes. The army needs to admit that it is fallible, and to show an ability to learn from its mistakes and take honest measures to avoid repeating these mistakes in the future. Instead, in the current situation officers are in fact rewarded for doing bad work, and their response to criticism tends to fall somewhere between paranoia and arrogance. Open and honest communication with their soldiers, the families, and even the political world, would not only improve the organizational effectiveness, but would also mean that the armed forces could also count on a better societal image, and a better negotiating position in the democratic relations with civilians and the political world.[501]

Assessment of the Russian Informal Military Culture

The informal soldiers' culture is the result of a particular way of organizing the armed forces. The total structure that is imposed on the group of soldiers evokes a reaction whereby the soldiers try to maximize their limited freedom and to create conditions in which they can survive. The result of this survival strategy is an informal soldiers' culture which is in the case of the Russian military the system of *dedovshchina* or the 'rule of the grandfathers'. Seniority is the basic organizing variable of this culture, around which physical strength (the rule of the strongest), the demanding idea of self-sufficiency in a world of scarcity, and localism or provincialism are intertwined.

The presented variables are traditional organizing variables which are also characteristic of the primitive, nineteenth-century peasant community in Russia.[502] This is not to say that Russian soldiers are primitive, or that they constitute a backward

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[500] V.I. Mironov, Humanization of troop Activity and the Spiritual Rebirth of Russia's Army, *Military Thought*, Vol. 11, Nr. 6, 1993, pp.112-125.

[501] The conflict between the Soldiers' Mothers organizations and the military is primordially based on a lack of information and clear communication. The soldiers' Mothers are most of the time just asking information on which they have the right to. A better and more honest communication between the armed forces and the soldiers' mothers will resolve the conflict between this NGO and the army.

[502] See Wayne S. Vucinich (Ed.) *The Peasant in Nineteenth-century Russia*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968; and John Bushnell, 'Peasants in Uniform: the Tsarist Army as a Peasant Society', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 13, Nr. 4, Summer 1980, pp. 753-780.

community. The soldiers' informal culture is an expression, using the scarce means that these soldiers have at their disposal, of the soldiers' lack of freedom and the constant direct or indirect control under which they live. This was also the case in the nineteenth-century peasant community. Moreover, the economic crisis endured by the Russian Federation in the 1990's aggravated the outcomes and increased the brutality of *dedovshchina*. But, the economic situation was not the cause of the rules of the grandfathers. The same can be said of the social background of the group of soldiers. The fact that the least educated, those with the most fragile social backgrounds are populating the Russian barracks may aggravate the brutality of *dedovshchina*, but is not the reason why this system exists. The basic underlying reason for the system must be sought in the total and closed nature of the organization. The influence of the poor economic situation and the particular social background of the soldiers who populate the barracks, suggest that there are secondary variables, which co-influence the specific outcome of the soldiers' informal culture. In short, the total structure of the Russian armed forces encourages the soldiers to organize themselves around 'primitive' principles, while the bad economic conjuncture and the specific social background of the group of soldiers aggravate this situation.

How does such an informal culture fit in with the idea of the post-modern professional army? It should be clear that the organizing principles of *dedovshchina* are not compatible with the idea of the post-modern professional army and the way Western armies are organized. Total institutions, as they were presented in the 1950's by Goffman and as exemplified by the Russian military, almost no longer existed in the West in the 1990's. For reasons of efficiency, and for political and moral reasons, Western organizations have become more open and more diversified. Under these conditions basic organizing principles such as individualism and personal skills are fundamental. Does this mean that there is no such a thing as a negative bonding culture in the West? Of course not. Donna Winslow has shown that in elite units there are risks that brutality and violence may occur as a consequence of the self-imposed closed nature of these units.[503] Elite units create a myth and a culture that make them different from the rest of the armed forces and society. But here, the term 'greedy organizations' is more appropriate than 'total organizations'.[504] The essential difference is that in total organizations the individual choice is non-existent, while in greedy organizations, the individual soldier makes a choice to become part of a closed institutions. In other words, more open organizations, limited control, individualism, etc. constitute the hosting culture for All-Volunteer forces. Such a culture is far removed from the closed institutions with its culture of secrecy, from the totally controlled organization in which the individual has almost no value and lives in a state of anomie.

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[503] Donna Winslow, 'Rites de Passage and group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 25, Nr. 3, Spring 1999, pp. 42
[504] Lewis A. Coser, *Greedy Institutions*, New York: The Free Press, 1974.

Conclusions

Based on a close observation of the Russian formal and informal military culture it can be concluded that the Russian army is still shaped by the influences of a traditional mass army culture. These traditional values are summarized in the following table.

Formal Military Culture	Informal Military Culture
Pain	Physical strength- Self-sufficiency
Patriarchy	Seniority
Patrimonialism	Physical strength
Patriotism	Localism, Provincialism
Idea	*structure*

Table 17: Idea and structure combined in military culture

This table demonstrates that there is a certain logic in the different aspects of Russian military culture. Almost all the formal values can be combined with the values of the informal culture. The Pain variable of the formal military culture, for example, corresponds with the law of the strongest of the soldiers' subculture. At the same time the idea that the soldiers' informal culture is focused on self-sufficiency in a world of scarcity is also related with the officially proclaimed positive value of pain. Russian soldiers are survivors in a desolate, violent environment. The second element of formal military culture is the idea of patriarchy. The traditional idea of patriarchy logically corresponds for the idea of seniority. It is more difficult to find a corresponding informal value to the idea of patrimonialism, even if the physical strength value of the informal culture can also be related with the idea of patrimonialism. Finally, the idea of patriotism can be related with localism and provincialism, since both express the idea of *zemlia* and territory.

We have claimed that the formal military culture concerns 'ideas', while the informal soldiers culture is more related to 'structures'. Consequently, based on the reasoning of the former paragraph, we can assert that the ideational values and structural values are intertwined. Ideas influence structures and structures influence ideas. This proves that the military culture is a strong culture that is very difficult to change. In any case, it is a culture that is very slow to change. This is particularly so because this culture is hosted in a societal culture that supports this particular military culture. We can say that the military culture is an enlarged view of the Russian society, a micro-version of Russian society at large. Nevertheless, we have to acknowledge that modernizing factors are beginning to influence the traditional military culture. Non-governmental organizations are playing an important role in this process. In particular, it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the role of the Soldiers' Mothers organizations, one of the most successful NGO's in Russian society during the 1990's in this process. Their lobby work, however, is far from over. In the light of the Western European 'model' of transition (demonstrated in the case of France, Belgium, and The Netherlands) to a post-modern professional army, we predict at least another two decades of lobbying, if all other variables are stable and unchanged, for Russia to change to a post-modern All-Volunteer Force.

The traditional Russian military culture of the 1990's is comparable with a nineteenth-century peasant culture, with even older remnants of the tsarist past. It should be clear that this culture is not compatible with the culture of the post-modern All-Volunteer Force. The skilful, professionally trained soldier which is valued as an individual is far removed from the idealized peasant, mass army soldier culture as characterized above. Consequently, and contrary to much popular opinion on this topic in

Russia itself, it would not be appropriate, advisable or indeed possible for the Russian armed forces to superimpose a twenty-first century model of military organization onto a nineteenth-century format.

Furthermore, it should be noted that there is nothing wrong with a peasant, mass army per se under the condition that it is efficiently managed. The basic question, however, is to establish the purpose for which this army was built. If the mission of the Russian armed forces is to fight a full-scale, continental war, than the mass army format is most appropriate and should be reformed and perfected. If, however, the Russian armed forces are to be used for complex, crisis-management operations involving peace-keeping, peace-enforcing and peace-making, than the Russian armed forces have to change dramatically and profoundly. Both the 'idea' and the 'structure' underscoring the format of the contemporary Russian military must be adjusted. Consequently, and as a matter of first priority, the Russian armed forces must dismantle its total structure format. This is the most essential step in the event that Russia develops towards a post-modern all-volunteer army. Without this revolutionary change, all other decisions are doomed to fail. Openness has a both a political meaning, in terms of democratization, and an organizational meaning, in the sense of taking down the fences and walls around the barracks. Perhaps the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 was only a first step in making the Soviet Union/the Russian Federation part of Europe. Perhaps the Russian military needs to rediscover that momentum, and find the will to deconstructing 'the walls' around its institutions. In order to accomplish this, perhaps the Russian army needs a sort of 'military Gorbachev'. Someone daring to tackle the obstacles that stand in the way of a post-modern all-volunteer force.

Conclusions: The post-modern all-Volunteer Force in the Russian Mirror

In order to formulate the conclusions of this study, it might be worth to remind the reader of the research question that lays at the basis of this thesis. This basic question has been formulated in the introduction as follows: **to what extent and in what way have institutional, political and especially socio-cultural factors contributed to the failure of military reform in Russia during the period of 1988-1998? In particular the case of the post-modern 'all-volunteer-force' debate is examined, which is the outward manifestation of a widely recognized need for military reform and effective organizational change in the Russian armed forces.** As the first part of this question suggests, two hypothesises are included in this question, namely that political-institutional and socio-cultural aspects of organizational reality have contributed to the failure of military reform in Russia. This means that external and internal, active and passive, as well as immediate political measures and long term societal and organizational trends have contributed to the failure of the intended reform goals. Therefore, it is supposed that (civilian and military) politicians as well as military managers of the General Staff and the Ministry of Defence, as the mean actors in the decision making process, have failed to formulate and to implement a sound reform plan on the Russian armed forces. Moreover, the idea is expressed that less tangible factors as organizational culture and military and societal mentality were significant obstacles to overcome in order to change toward a post-modern all-volunteer force in Russia in the period 1988-1998.

The two suggested variables, namely politics and culture, have both their own logic and play both their specific role in the development of organizational change. It may be said that the political and the managerial discussion- or the day by day management- is essentially focused on the issue of introducing an all-volunteer force format on the Russian armed forces, while the socio-cultural discussion is a much broader problem that touches upon the basic and fundamental features of the modern v. post-modern character of this particular military organization. In other words, the socio-cultural elements of change determine if the military organization of the Russian Federation may be characterized as a post-modern all-volunteer force or rather a modern mass army. The basic difference between the impact of politics and culture on the phenomenon of organizational change can be characterized with the concepts which were introduced in the introduction, namely the difference between 'military reform' and 'military organizational change'. While politics is involved with the ultimate decision and materialization of 'military reform', socio-cultural variables are the mean levers of change in the realm of 'military organizational change'. While politicians decide to introduce a professional soldier, the societal trends and organizational mentality determine what type of professional soldier we are dealing with. To use another metaphor, it can be said that culture is the grammar of the organization, while politics produces the vocabulary of it. For example, it could be imagined that the decision-makers in the Kremlin decide to adapt an all-volunteer force format while the Russian armed forces may not be qualified as a post-modern military organization. This is a very important remark as it would suggest that such a decision would only represent a poor, superficial and incomplete imitation of Western military reality. Indeed, it would suggest that the Kremlin is only copying the superficial outcomes of a fundamental new type of Western military organization (namely paying its professional soldiers), while ignoring the basic features of what this organization makes it a post-modern military organization (to name some: a new type of leadership, another idea

of (political and military) responsibility, the importance of the individual soldier as a valuable contributor of efficiency and success in the organization, etc.). Such a semi imitated military organization is at the utmost a hybrid organizational type. Differently put, it is suggested that the political decision-making of military reform is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to determine if the post-modern format is present in Russian reality. There is no language without both grammar and vocabulary. It is true that the decision-makers take the ultimate decision to change toward the all-volunteer force format, and only they can make this decision. Impersonal influences on organizational reality, as socio-cultural characteristics basically are, do not change an organization. People do change social reality, not impersonal influences. But as the title of the authoritative book 'Actors and Systems' by Friedman and Grozier suggests, the impersonal forces of society and the organizational mentality, of which for instance the 'powerless' class of soldiers class do make a significant part of, may not be underestimated. Politics and culture do matter as they determine if the reformed organization, compared with the western experience of military change, is a post-modern all-volunteer force, a modern mass army, or eventually a hybrid type of military organization in which a patch work of organizational characteristics is brought together in the new Russian military reality.

Based on our analysis of the experiences of France, Belgium and The Netherlands, three countries who made a more or less successful qualitative leap towards the post-modern military organization in the 1990's, we concluded that in these countries there was a coherent policy and managerial decision-making process that corresponded with the societal and organizational variables of the post-modern military organization. The political decision was a 'logic' result of long term societal and organizational tendencies. The political decision in these three countries was, once the Cold War was over and the international conditions for change were present, a rather easy, calm, and sometimes a dull event. Politicians and military managers, as loyal executioners of political reform plans, sensed the times of change rather well and oriented their management and their decisions towards these societal and organizational indices. In Russia, however, things were fundamental different. When we analyzed the organizational statistics and the sociological indices that typify the organization, we could only find a hybrid type of organization. This implies two things. Firstly, the Soviet and Russian military organization underwent tremendous, but uncontrolled and fierce changes in the period 1988-1998. It declined from a massive organization of 5 million men to an organization with only 1.2 million men. From a hard-core mass army, the Soviet and Russian armed forces developed towards a non-specific army type. The scale and the velocity, with which this decline took place, were so great that it is incomparable with the gradual, evolutionary process observed in France, Belgium and The Netherlands. Some analysts spoke, based on this observation, of the 'total collapse' or the 'complete devolution' of the Soviet and Russian armed forces. It was clearly a process out of control. Besides this rather alarming observation, it was also demonstrated that the internal structure of the Russian armed forces stayed more or less the same. The relative size of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, The Nuclear Rocked Force, and the Air Defense Force stayed the same. Also the use of conscripts in the different branches of the armed forces leads us, compared with western experiences, to strange conclusions. The most technologic advanced branches used at the same intensive way conscripts to man their forces as the least advanced branches. This means that typical Soviet and Russian structural traditions survived the deep cut changes of the 1990's. In other words, Russia underwent a contradictory development that included tremendous transformation, but without fundamental change. In conclusion, we observed in the Soviet Union/Russia an organizational reality that was an out of control process and that

consequently resulted in a strange and hybrid organizational type. It brought us to the observation that the reform endeavor in the Russian Federation compared with the model of the post-modern All-Volunteer Force was one of protracted failure. In order to research the question why this was the case I studied in a first step the vocabulary of 'military reform'. More in detail I studied the political process of reform and institutional change, the way decision-making bodies were installed and the way decisions were made. The hypothesis was that the power games in the political arena contributed to the organizational inertia and, at the same time, it showed the enormous pressures that existed on the Soviet-Russian military organization in the period 1988-1998. In a second step my attention was focused on a selected part of the grammar of the military organization culture, namely the soldiers' culture. In 'the soldiers' question, the third part of this dissertation, I firstly described the different aspects of the soldiers' culture: how they were seen by the military elite and by society, and how the soldiers actually behaved in the barracks. Secondly, I compared this organizational reality with the mean features of the post-modern military organization. The hypothesis was that a military culture of a fundamental different kind of that of the post-modern variant is very difficult, if not impossible to change, at least on short notice, towards the Western, post-modern type of military organization.

In the second part of this book, the evolution of the political process in the time frame of the last years of existing of the Soviet Union and the first years of foundation of the Russian Federation is under investigation. During these turbulent years, which were pregnant of high hopes, restrained fears, and widespread disillusionment, the discussion of the 'profesionalya armia' was the most vociferous. Studying a political process during an episode with the dimensions of an historical seizure, not to say a historical revolution with world wide repercussions is an utterly complex task. The tools that were used to analyze this complex political reality were based on the theories of decision-making that were proposed in the field of political science and management theory. Concerning these theories, it must be said that the mechanistic and static theory of rational decision-making, that sees the decision making process as an all-encompassing, inclusive, and discontinue follow-up of intellectual stages, is the least interesting. This theory is a typical outcome of the modern belief in the scientific-rational goals of the Enlightment. It assumes that as long as a political problem, a particular decision-making question, is long enough studied and analyzed in all its dimensions, the outcome(s) would be a perfect solution for that given political or decision making problem. In these fragmented, complex and post-modern times, however, it is understood that the fabric of human behavior and political interaction is much more complex, unpredictable and dynamic. Three other dimensions, stipulated in the more dynamic (and therefore more realistic) theories of bounded rationality, the Carnegie Model and the model of incremental decision-making are more applicable to the world of politics and decision making. More in particular these decision making theories stipulate respectively that decision-makers are only rational in the limits of their knowledge, their intellect, their experience their interest, etc. Therefore, a decision-maker is not a kind of an omniscient Deity, but a human being with its own particular restrictions. Moreover, the political arena represents a specific and explicit world in which coalitions are made and unmade and which bargaining is the mean style of interacting and communicating. The coalition formation is not only based on formal political party strategies, but is also active on the individual basis. Finally, the incremental decision-making model points out that a managerial or political decision never comes out of the blue or is thought out from scratch. There is always an historical reality, a tradition in which this decision-making process takes place. In other words, there is no such a thing as an historical, social, or organizational vacuum. Conclusively, the three decision-making

theories bring in: the (imperfect) individual, the (bargaining) group or coalition, and (historical) time and (social) reality. These entities give us an interesting tool to get an analytical grip on the events of Soviet-Russia, and a way of presenting a synthetic conclusion of this research.

The (imperfect) individual. In the political context of the Soviet Union, that was for seventy years characterized as a totalitarian dictatorship and that evolved during the Yeltsin years towards a 'super presidential regime' with a 'chosen tsar' in control, it is only logical to concentrate, in the first stage, on the two leaders of that time: Michael Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin. This is not to give a new impetus on the much criticized Cold War research practice of 'kremlinology', but it is simply a political reality in the time frame of our research that these two leaders are in charge of political decision making. Generally speaking, they decided upon the overall rules of the political game. Political reform was their, and only their, privilege. Concerning military matters, no matter how much political pressure there existed, it was their decision if military reform was an option or not. They were in control of the timing of the reform process as well as they selected themselves who made the preliminary planning for their decisions. Having observed this, this is not to say that there were no other influences on the political agenda. Certainly during the high days of glasnost and perestroika, the man in the street, students, parents, university professors, and even military officers called for military reform. The professional army was their motto of military reform during the late eighties. However, it was Gorbachev himself who decided upon this matter. Also during the Yeltsin era, there was influence from 'the street'. For instance, during the presidential election rally of 1996, Yeltsin brought the military reform issue, and more in particular, the issue of the professional army, on the political agenda as he knew that the potential election cohort of twenty million people was important for his presidential re-election. Also, some Non-governmental organizations, as the Soldiers' Mothers organization and Memorial, to name two rather influential organizations, could raise their voice on military affairs during the late 1980's and the 1990's. But ultimately, however, these external influences had only limited impact on the real decision making process, which stayed the privilege of the strong political leadership of these days. The question now remains what Gorbachev and Yeltsin did with this power on military affairs. Concerning Gorbachev we can make two, rather short remarks. Firstly, **Gorbachev was personally not very interested in military affairs and certainly not in the problem of the military organization**. He was mainly concerned about economics and international affairs and only to the extent where these issues touched upon the military organization he spoke in vague terms about military reform. The mean ideas concerning military matters were rather broad politico-military decisions that did only indirectly influence the military organization. These issues were the reduction of the military budget, the de-prioritizing of military industrial complex, and nuclear disarmament. Later, at the very end of Gorbachev's reign, the end of the war in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Central Europe had major, mainly logistical, consequences for the armed forces. Gorbachev never took a clear stance on the issue of military reform in general and the question of the all-volunteer force in particular. A second remark on the policy of Gorbachev is that **he stayed within the strict limits of the political rules of the Soviet Union**. Concerning military affairs this meant that military reform was an issue to handle by the Ministry of Defense, which implied that the military themselves had to solve their own organizational problems. Consequently, the minister of defense, Dimitri Yazov proposed only reluctantly a conservative reform plan at the very end of the existence of the Soviet Union. While there circulated many progressive and even revolutionary ideas about military reform, of which, for instance, the Lopatin

plan was the most vocal, the military decision makers stayed on the defensive and tried to save what was in fact already for a long time lost. But as long as Gorbachev did not change the rules of the political game and decided to leave military affairs to the military elite themselves, it was apparently an impossible task to let the military organization reform from within. The men in uniform, proved to be impotent managers who stubbornly monopolized the decision making privilege, as neither the ministry of defense, neither the Chief of Staff of the armed forces of the Soviet Union came up with a coherent and sound reform plan that corresponded with the 'wind of change'. In the end, among many other factors, Gorbachev's unwillingness and/or inability to radically reform the Soviet military organization contributed to the end of the existence of the Soviet Union and ultimately to the end of his political career, as Yazov himself participated in the Coup plot of August 1991.

If the chaotic political and military reality under Gorbachev was already complex to evaluate, it is even more complicated to assess the impulsive leadership of Yeltsin. Contradictory to the wide-spread idea that Boris Yeltsin was the champion and icon of Russian democracy, his time in power was shaped by one (fundamentally undemocratic) trait, namely the monopolization and the holding at all costs of his presidential position. He did not allow anyone to have presidential ambitions, neither did he tolerate any oversight over his policy and political decisions. Any political figure that seized to much political power or had the courage to express his presidential ambition was simply put on a side track or was removed from the political scene. He went even that far to shoot with direct tank fire the parliamentarians out of the White House in his clash with the Supreme Soviet in October 1993. But Yeltsin was also a political intriguer and manipulator who used more subtle actions. In his relation with the military decision-makers, he knew that he needed the military elite on his side for his political survival. Therefore, he paid at very particular moments, when it was politically opportune, some attention to the issue of military affairs and the problem of military reform. But also now, the president, the protagonist in the decision making game, paid only lip service to the military organization as he only temporarily and partially paid attention to their cause. He only paid attention to the military and their problems when it was politically necessary. It was thus no more than political opportunism that ruled Yeltsin's policy on military affairs. Also here three remarks can be made.

Firstly, notwithstanding Yeltsin's monopolization of political power and the huge pressure that was on him to make the military reform debate a fundamentally civilian discussion, he allowed **the military to monopolize military affairs**. Against the euphoric mood of radical change, the military held the initiative on matters of military reform. Indeed, against the high expectations of the liberal democrats and those who brought Yeltsin to power, the tsar Boris decided to appoint Pavel Grachev, an airborne general, as minister of defense in 1992. In this way, the Soviet tradition in which military themselves decided upon military affairs stayed in place. The choice of Yelstin for a man in uniform for the post of minister of defense was an opportunistic one. Grachev was an ally of Yeltsin during the August Coup and therefore Yeltsin wanted him to reward. Moreover, in the turbulent political times of that moment, Yeltsin knew that he had to keep the military on his side.

Secondly, **the men in uniform proved to be bad politicians and bad reform managers**. In 1992, the year in which the prizes were liberated and revolutionary

economic reforms were on the program, Grachev proposed a more or less progressive reform plan. He introduced the idea of 'mobile forces' and he also experimented with the so-called '*kontraktniki*' or professional soldiers. But soon after his quickly drafted reform plan was made public, it became clear that the implementation of the reform ideas was an enormous problem. The implementation of the professional soldiers was simply poorly administrated. There were no laws, there were no specific regulations, etc. that gave these *kontraktniki* a social and professional status. Soon this experiment resulted in a disaster and the idea of professionalization, already not that popular with the conservative elite of the armed forces, received a serious blow. For the first time, it became also clear that drafting a reform document was not so much a problem. It was rather the implementation of that reform draft that was the main structural problem. Execution, rather than planning was the essential challenge in the decision-making process in the Russian political process. Although Rodionov, the second minister of defense in the Russian Federation, was a far better educated officer than Grachev, with good knowledge about military affairs and sound ideas about reform, also he proved to be a bad politician. He did not only have a bad relationship with Yeltsin, which was deadly in the super presidential regime of Tsar Boris, he was also a bad negotiator. Although he might, for instance, have had legitimate reasons to ask to increase the military budget, the way he lobbied and bargained for stood for political suicide. In order to increase the military budget and to broaden his reform possibilities, Rodionov blackmailed the president and the government with the threat of nuclear disaster. This brought not only Yeltsin in a bad position, but also his colleagues responsible for the nuclear forces and nuclear safety of their installations. Therefore Rodionov was replaced by Sergeev, the former commander of the Nuclear Rocket Forces as the third minister of defense. Rodionov was not long enough on the seat of minister of defense to change something fundamentally. Military affairs developed from bad to worse. Sergeev seemed to be the best politician of the three ministers, as he survived rather long in the turbulent years after 1997. Politically he was certainly underestimated, but the price for his political obedience was high. Fundamental reform was no option.

Thirdly and lastly, it can be said that based on our observation of the Russian military elite during the 1990's, **the Russian generalissimo is composed of rather provincial thinkers**. As right-minded bureaucrats, the newly appointed ministers of affairs promoted their own people in the organization and they stick to the philosophy of their own force they originate from. Grachev, for instance, promoted the idea of 'the mobile forces', where the airborne troops should play a key role. Sergeev, on his turn, promoted the nuclear forces and wanted the Russian armed forces to change (again) towards a nuclear deterrence force. The arrival of a new minister of defense, and this was three times the case in the period 1992-1998, introduced also a complete personnel change in the ministry. This was the consequence of bureaucratic favoritism and provincial thinking, but the consequences were grave: it laid at the basis of a hostile relationship between the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, it did not promote coherence and continuity of a policy, it encouraged incompetence and inefficiency, and it even tolerated corruption. In a political and social unstable period such as the period 1992-1998 certainly was, it may be clear that the characteristics as noted above are not very positive to decide upon, to promote and to implement a coherent reform policy. The reform vocabulary produced by the reform elite was at the utmost a childish jabbering that tried to imitate the sounds of the parents, rather than a grown up speech.

The (bargaining) group or coalition. It would be a tremendous mistake to see the military organization as a homogeneous, monolithic organization. In fact, the Soviet and Russian

armed forces are a fragmented, highly divided complex organization. From a theoretical point of view, this may be a rather superficial remark. Seen the definition of the complex organization mentioned in the first part and the emphasis Max Weber put on 'the offices' in the life of the bureaucratic organization, every large organization is by definition a fragmented organization, in which there exists, by nature, a process of coalition formation. In the organizational reality of the 1990's however, the process of fragmentation and disintegration had also an extra-theoretical dimension. The disintegration of the 1990's was the result of the decline in the military status and the total pauperization of the armed forces in the Russian Federation. This negative trend, which brought the military organization at the brink of utter organizational survival, had serious consequences in the process of decision-making and the position of the armed forces in the political arena. Firstly, it need no more explanation that in a highly divided organization, which was reinforced by the practices of 'favoritism' and 'provincial thinking', it is difficult to come up with a coherent and sound reform plan that can count on a minimal organizational consensus. Russian military reality of the 1990's exemplifies this thought. But there is also a second, even more important consequence that is related with the utterly pauperized military organization. It seems that a military organization that is on the brink of collapse is not in a position of radical reform. Not so much because there are not enough financial means to reform, but rather because it bolsters defensive, protective and therefore conservative thinking. Indeed, The High Command of the 1990's proved first and foremost to try to safe what was still to safe of the military organization. Rather than changing radically and decisively the decision makers tend to go back to past glories and familiar practices instead of an uncertain future of radical reform. Thus, contradictory to our intuitional thinking that a military organization that it threatened with total collapse might breed radical changes, seems to be untrue in the Russian reality of the 1990's. The loss of status, the complete pauperization of the military organization, and the de-prioritization of military affairs in the political arena, even with dimensions that brings the organization at the brink of collapse, breed conservatism, defensive thinking and complete stagnation instead of being an impetus for radical reform. This might be called the downward spiral of organizational decline, which is also a vicious circle, in which the conservative mind is reinforced and at its turn reinforcing the negative tendencies present in the organization.

The Russian armed forces were not only highly fragmented because of its complex and bureaucratic nature of the military organization, the pauperization, and de-prioritization of military affairs and military reform in Russian society and politics. We may not forget that Russian society was politically subdivided since the second, more radical stage of perestroika in 1987. Russian society and Russian politics was subdivided between liberal, democratic, capitalist and progressive forces who stood for radical change, and statist, communist, nationalist, and conservative forces who stood for a status quo, the re-installation of Stalinism, and for the nostalgic among them, the re-installation of Imperial Russia. This dichotomized society, which is something very different of a pluralistic democratic society, existed certainly until 1994-1996. After this, instead of political activism and political subdivision, dissatisfaction and disillusionment bred political apathy. These two moods of non-consensual political activism and political apathy were also observable inside the military organization. The split between conservative and progressive forces inside the armed forces were most visible in the period 1987-1992. Young, mid-level officers with progressive reform thoughts stood against the conservative military elite. Sporadically, there was a general who showed some sympathy for radical reform, but generally spoken, the ideological split in the armed forces, which was only a moderate reflection of societal reality, made that young officers stood against the 'old

guard' of the Soviet and Russian 'generalität'. In this sense was the political conflict between the conservatives and the progressives a generational conflict. The period 1987-1992 was one of unusual political agitation and activism in Russian military history. But soon after Yeltsin had re-installed the military elite in its old and typical status, political apathy was brought in the military organization. Both, political activism and political apathy were driven to their extremes in Soviet and Russian organizational reality. Both extreme stances were, in fact, negative tendencies in the quest for reform in the 1990's. Political activism was one of extremism, which did not have any place for political consensus. The political apathy was one of non-participation, non-involvement that resulted in organizational anomie. Is it in the end true that according to specialist on Russian culture that there is no such a thing as a golden mean in Russia; that everything is taken to an extreme; that there are no internal limits and that there are no brakes? Whatever they state, it may be clear that aggressive confrontation and deliberate opposition from inside the military organization against its own decision-making elite as well as complete non-involvement and individualization of the military organization are negative tendencies that are counter-productive in a period in which reform is a required policy option. Also in this way, the Soviet-Russian armed forces were highly divided and therefore ineffective.

The historical time and social reality. Societal and organizational reform as well a change in mentality is not installed in a social and organizational vacuum. Therefore, according to decision-making theory, it is important to take the organizational history and, more general, the history of the country into account. As mentioned in the first part and studied more in detail in the third part, it is a historical reality that Russia is an example of a country that always had counted on a hard-core mass army to organize its national defense. Military service was the hall mark of this military organization. Therefore, it may be no surprise that the change towards an all-volunteer force is a very difficult mental hurdle to overcome. In fact, another question is here more accurate than this rather 'logical organizational failure'. Indeed, in the Russian context, it may be a surprise that the option for a professional army was even suggested. The traditional mentality of Russian society does not match with this idea. Again, we have to come back on the essential difference between the post-modern All-Volunteer Force and the professional army. As already mentioned above, the post-modern all-volunteer force has something to do with a fundamental shift in societal and organizational culture compared with the modern mass army. This shift, as will be more extensively explained below, did not take place in Soviet and Russian society, whatever modernist thinkers as, for example, Moshe Lewin may think. The raison why youngsters and parents of draftees called for the professional army was a cry out for help. The conditions in which the soldiers had to do their military service were so terrifying that the only hope for not to be damaged by it was not to be drafted. The professional army was their only solution. As already suggested, this had nothing to do with the long term societal and organizational changes in postindustrial societies. Moreover, a professional army, with no (fundamental) change in the mentality would be sick of the same bed as the contemporary armed forces populated with draftees. The same abuses would take place among the *kontrakniki*, corruption would be at the order of the day, in short, the same ineffective military organization would be in place in the Russian armed forces, now with the label professional army.

Conclusively, the inability to decide upon a coherent reform plan and an effective implementation of this plan is first and foremost a political problem. The political elite, unpredictable as they were, were not very interested in the problem of military reform. Economic reorganization and the place of the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation in

the world had for the leaders of these countries a much higher priority. The political institutions that were created by the two leaders did also have no time to produce a sound policy as the leaders, intentionally and unintentionally, changed always their policy and choose constantly other trustees to support their policy. The state leaders created therefore a political scene which was constant in crisis. But not only was the civilian leadership politically responsible for the reform failure, also was the military elite incapable to draft a sound and coherent reform plan or to manage the implementation of it. Therefore the military organization was too much fragmented, impoverished, and still too much conservative in its mindset. Finally, society as a whole contributed to the reform failure. The politically dichotomized society, which found itself sometimes at the brink of civil war, was not ready to make compromises and therefore contributed to the political turmoil of the 1990's. In a chaotic environment, often at risk for total collapse, was not an in inviting environment for fundamental change and reform. On the contrary, it bred conservatism and stagnation.

Conservatism, the mentality of a traditional society and old-fashioned thinking were already mentioned above as important reasons for reform failure. In the third part of this thesis, military culture (and societal mentality in which this military culture is embedded) is the main point of our research focus. It is claimed that the Russian military culture is proto-typical for a mass army. In order to show this statement, the formal military culture and (part of) the informal military culture is studied. The formal military culture expresses the way the military and society see the soldier. The different aspects of this formal military culture are very often built on myths and ideal thinking. Nevertheless, they show how the military is seen in society and what it symbolizes. Based on my research, the formal military culture can be reconstructed, based on four stances, namely pain, patriarchy, patrimonialism, and patriotism. The Russian soldier is seen as one who can bear a lot of suffering and pain; he is active is an almost solely male environment where male values are prevailing; moreover, he acts on clear and dry orders which supports a 'befehl ist befehl' culture or a dominant order structure; finally, the soldier serves his country. Russian patriotism, in which the idea of the Russian soil receives almost religious connotation, is an enormous motivator for the fighting soldier. It is clear that the cluster of the four dimensions of formal Russian military culture is a traditional one, which can be brought back to the nineteenth century romantic thinking about military affairs.

The informal culture of the Russian soldiers is strictly connected with the way the military organization is structured in Russian society. As a closed and total institution, the soldiers' informal culture is, based on the theory of Erving Goffman, therefore one of survival. Once the soldiers are 'mortified' by the military staff, the soldiers start to rebuild their own life and dignity with the scare means that are available in the barracks. They build an informal hierarchy among soldiers, in which 'old fashioned' variables determine the picking order in the barracks. These variables are seniority, provincialism and violence. Once the informal hierarchy is build up and maintained, an unwritten contract is set up between the soldiers and the officers. This contract stipulates that officers' orders will be executed under the condition that the informal discipline is maintained by the soldiers themselves. It may be clear, that besides the moral reserves one can formulate against this way of organizing its military organization, that the closed and total organization variant of organizing its military is, compared with the postindustrial societies, old fashioned. Since the 1950's total institutions are in decline in Europe and the United States. In Russia, the armed forces, orphanages, prisons, in short, all institutions which had a (re) educational

and propaganda function in Soviet times, maintain the closed and total form of organization.

A very nasty consequence of the informal soldiers' culture is the system of *dedovshchina*. It is the very often nasty way of keeping order and discipline among the soldiers by the eldest soldiers. Many testimonies of soldiers victims are published in the media and even as much descriptive studies are made about *dedovshchina*. But the link between the way the Soviet and Russian military organization is structured and the way the soldiers' behave toward each other is not made clear. This connection between structure and the actors' behavior is, however, essential. This insight brings me also to a possible solution of the problem of *dedovshchina* that is according to the military elite very difficult to control or to avoid. As soon as the total and closed character of the military organization is deconstructed, the problem of *dedovshchina* will automatically be reduced, if not erased. In fact this deconstruction would have many positive effects: first and foremost, it would increase the organizational effectiveness; it would improve the image of the armed forces and consequently improve the status of the armed forces in society; it would stop the of the human rights; it would increase the democratic character of the armed forces as the deconstruction of the closed and total institution would imply a reduction in the secretive and suspicious attitude towards the civilian world, an honest and open communication with the parents, the potential draftees, the politicians and the media. In short, implementing a solution for the problem of dedovshchina according to the findings of this study implies at the same time a tremendous step in the direction of the post-modern all volunteer force.

Conclusively, to the question of 'to what extent and in what way have institutional, political and especially socio-cultural factors contributed to the failure of military reform in Russia during the period of 1988-1998? ', our answers may be formulated as follows: Political instability, institutional fragmentation, the lack of a minimal of political consensus, provincial and conservative thinking of the military elite, the political dichotomization of society have all to a major extent contributed to the failure of Russian military reform. Besides these political arguments, fundamental long term aspects of organizational culture and mentality have contributed to this failure. An archaic and old fashioned organization type of the closed and total institution is responsible for an ineffective informal culture among the soldiers. Moreover, the formal military culture is based on a nineteenth century mentality that has nothing to do with the culture of the post-modern all volunteer force of the twenty first century. As long as no minimal of political stability and reform consensus is achieved, the total and closed nature of the armed forces is deconstructed and a formal culture is adopted with aspects of the twenty first century, Russia's reform endeavor will stay a huge transformation without change.

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 remarks[505]

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 'Geiteswissenschaffen' (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

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[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-

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[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 *zaiavlenyie*). 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

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[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 then '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
Voennie 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

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[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 whatsoever[513].

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

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[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, shestnadtsat' 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

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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-doucmenten*, [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

Appendix II   Samenvatting

In 1988-89 werd het probleem van militaire hervormingen het onderwerp van levendige debatten in de Sovjet-Unie. Dit gebeurde op het hoogtepunt van Gorbachovs macht en prestige tijdens dewelke zijn politiek van glasnost en perestrojka op kruissnelheid kwam. Het was een periode van grote hoop en bijna ongelimiteerde vrijheid van meningsuiting. In deze sfeer werden de Sovjetstrijdkrachten, één van de pijlers van het Sovjetsysteem, het middelpunt van heftige kritiek. Er werden rapporten van frauduleuze praktijken en misbruiken in de legerkazernes gepubliceerd in de liberale kranten zoals *Komsomolskaja Pravda*, *Ogonjok*, *Nezvisimaja Gazeta* en *Argumenti I Fakti*. De media testten hun vrijheid uit door openlijk de competentie van de generaals in twijfel te trekken. Er werden pertinente vragen gesteld over bijvoorbeeld de legitimiteit van de oorlog in Afghanistan en over de zogenaamde 'vredesdoden' (soldaten die stierven gedurende hun legerdienst in vredesomstandigheden en waarvan het aantal op enkele duizenden per jaar werd geschat) en vooral over de traditie van dedovshina (het beruchte informele disciplinaire systeem dat werd georganiseerd door de soldaten zelf en dat blijkbaar buiten de controle van het officierenkorps om in een gruwelijke vorm werd bestendigd). De verhalen van het immense lijden van de soldaten schokte de publieke opinie. In een paar maanden tijd werd het imago van de strijdkrachten grondig aangetast en werd de eeuwenoude militaire dienstplicht ter discussie gesteld . De institutionele vrijheid van de strijdkrachten, zo beseften de generaals zeer snel, werd ernstig beknot. Maar de ongelukkige en dikwijls arrogante reacties van de militaire elite versnelde het proces van desintegratie. Het was alsof het denken van de generaals was blijven steken in het 'gouden tijdperk' van Breznjev, dat werd gekenmerkt door een buitensporig hoog sociaal en politiek prestige en een virtueel ongelimiteerd defensiebudget.

In deze context kreeg het debat over de dienstplicht een bijzondere betekenis. Inderdaad, het lot van de dienstplichtige, als slachtoffer van de Afghaanse oorlog in 1979-1989, de brutale ontgroeningspraktijken en de etnische spanningen, speelden een katalyserende rol in het algemene defensiedebat. Heel snel kwam het idee van de afschaffing van de militaire dienstplicht op de voorgrond. Studenten van de Moskouse Staatsuniversiteit, die werden gesteund door de leiding van de universiteit en de liberale intelligentsia, vroegen om uitstel van hun militaire verplichtingen. Hun eis werd in juli 1989 door Gorbachov ingewilligd, wat op zich kan gezien worden als een ernstige nederlaag voor het militaire establishment. Maar het bleef niet bij de studenten. Ouders die hun zonen niet graag zagen vertrekken naar de Afghaanse hoogvlakten sloten zich aan bij de anti-dienstplichtbeweging. Wat begon als een kleinschalig en lokaal initiatief groeide snel uit tot een beweging die heel de Sovjet-Unie bestreek en die met het verstrijken van de tijd dikwijls een nationalistisch karakter kreeg. De Sovjetrepublieken die zich benadeeld zagen sinds de genese van de Sovjet-Unie, speciaal deze in het Balticum en de Kaukausus, waren nog meer gemotiveerd om de dienstplicht, die alleen maar ten voordele van de Sovjet-Unie was, te ondermijnen. Uiteindelijk waren er ook stemmen binnen de strijdkrachten zelf die de institutionele stilte doorbraken. Enkele majoors en kolonels mengden zich in het maatschappelijke debat. Ze lieten zich kritisch uit over de praktijken van de dienstplicht zoals die bestonden in hun onderdelen van de organisatie. Met deze interne kritiek werd een belangrijke psychologische barrière doorbroken, met het gevolg dat de eeuwenlange Russische traditie van de dienstplicht ter discussie werd gesteld. De mythe dat het Sovjetleger een essentiële vormende rol speelde in de creatie van de Homo Sovjeticus en een voorname rol had in de sociale cohesie van het imperium, werd aan stukken geslagen door de hetze rond de dienstplicht. Eén jaar nadat de massabeweging tegen de dienstplicht zich had gevormd klapte de Sovjet-Unie in elkaar Ook

in het nieuwe Rusland van Jeltsin kon het militaire establishment haar sociaal en politiek prestige niet herstellen. Tachtig tot vijfentachtig procent van de potentiële dienstplichtigen onttrokken zich in de jaren negentig aan hun militieverplichtingen. Op die manier bleef het probleem van de militaire dienstplicht een controversieel item.

Het feit dat de dienstplicht zo problematisch werd, verplichtte het Russische commando zijn rekruteringspolitiek aan te passen. Dit leidde er eveneens toe dat verschillende stemmen binnen de strijdkrachten opgingen om een professioneel leger te installeren. Parallel met de discussie rond de afschaffing van de dienstplicht ontstond dus ook een debat over de professionalisering van de strijdkrachten, en beide discussies waren complementair. Tot het einde van de Sovjet-Unie weerspiegelde het debat over de professionalisering van de strijdkrachten de breuken die bestonden in de samenleving. Het commando van de strijdkrachten, onder leiding van generaal Dimitri Jazov, en een coalitie van conservatieven, communisten en mensen die vasthielden aan de oude structuren verdedigden de militaire dienstplicht. Zij vormden front tegen de liberalen, westers gezinden en democratische krachten die felle aanhangers waren van een professioneel leger. Aldus evolueerde het debat over een strikt militair onderwerp naar een allesomvattend politiek debat. Het in elkaar storten van de Sovjet-Unie bracht geen consensus over dit onderwerp en Rusland is tot de dag van vandaag nog steeds op zoek naar een goede oplossing voor haar organisatiemodel in het algemeen en de rekruteringspolitiek in het bijzonder. In 1996, in volle kiescampagne, beloofde president Jeltsin de afschaffing van de dienstplicht, maar dit bleek een loze belofte te zijn. Belangrijke generaals zoals Boris Gromov, Pavel Grachov, Igor Rodionov en Igor Sergejev waren niet principieel gekant tegen de professionalisering, maar ze hadden wel praktische bezwaren tegen deze maatregel. Uiteindelijk bleef hun positie ambivalent. De economische crisis van 1998, de Kosovo-crisis in 1999, een wegdeemsterende anti-dienstplichtbeweging en de tweede Tsjetsjeense oorlog hebben de facto een einde gemaakt aan het debat dat gedurende tien jaar zo heftig had gewoed in Rusland. Het eens zo fanatieke debat verwaterde zienderogen. Maar het rekruteringsprobleem en het op poten zetten van een goede en efficiënte militaire organisatie is nog altijd niet veel terecht gekomen. Dit bewijzen de eerste Tsjetsjeense oorlog, de Russische participatie in SFOR en KFOR en andere operaties in de zogenaamde hot spots. Het publieke debat verstomde weliswaar, maar de eeuwenoude traditie van de dienstplicht overleefde de storm.

Het debat over de militaire dienstplicht en de vorming van een professioneel leger stond dus centraal in de jaren 1988-1998 en het heeft verschillende analisten verbaasd dat het professioneel leger uiteindelijk geen vaste vorm heeft gekregen in Rusland. De ontspanning tussen Oost en West had toch voor een verminderde militaire dreiging gezorgd. Het einde van de Koude Oorlog zorgde ervoor dat een massale aanval vanuit het Westen niet meer aan de orde was. Vele Westerse landen zagen dit als een aanleiding om hun legers aan te passen en ze kleiner en professioneler te maken: het postmoderne, professionele leger werd een realiteit in vele Westerse landen. Niet dat deze transitie zo makkelijk was, maar zeker in vergelijking met de toestand in Rusland was de overschakeling van de legers gestoeld op de dienstplicht naar een rekrutering op professionele basis en de omvorming tot een postmoderne organisatie een succes te noemen. Hoe komt het dan dat Rusland zo sterk vasthield aan oude structuren, tradities en voorbijgestreefde praktijken? Waarom blijft de militaire dienstplicht zo stevig overeind en is het in staat om zulk een sterke politieke en publieke kritiek te weerstaan? Kijken we bovendien ook naar het falen van de oude structuren en militaire praktijken in de verschillende conflicten waarbij de Sovjet-Unie en Rusland in de periode 1988-1998 betrokken waren, dan wordt deze vraag nog pertinenter. Die cruciale vraag van niet-

aanpassing van oude structuren aan nieuwe militaire realiteiten is het voornaamste onderwerp van deze dissertatie.

Er zijn al vele verklaringen gegeven voor dit falen. De belangrijkste en de meest uitgewerkte door de Russische generaals zelf is een economisch/financieel argument. Volgens de Russische generaals (alsook enkele Westerse analisten) is een professioneel, postmodern leger enkel mogelijk in een rijk land. Een ander argument is de veronderstelling dat Rusland moeilijk afstand kan doen van zijn supermachtstatus en daarom zijn militair apparaat niet wil verkleinen. In deze redenering wil het Russische militaire establishment zijn militaire macht niet afbouwen omdat het Sovjet-type van massaleger, waarvan de dienstplicht één van de belangrijkste pijlers is, zijn historische deugdelijkheid heeft bewezen en dat het mede hierdoor zijn status van supermogendheid heeft kunnen opbouwen en bestendigen. Nog een ander argument, wat men een organisationeel-bureaucratisch argument zou kunnen noemen, luidt dat Rusland niet over het nodige aanpassingsvermogen beschikt om zich soepel en efficiënt aan te passen aan de nieuwe wereldorde. Deze opgesomde redenen spelen zeker hun rol in deze complexe materie van 'change and continuity', maar zijn, in mijn visie, onvoldoende om de bestaande realiteit afdoende te verklaren.

In deze dissertatie worden twee alternatieve argumenten onderzocht die (mede) kunnen verklaren waarom Rusland zo stevig vasthoudt aan zijn oude structuren en tradities. Vooreerst is er een politiek-institutioneel argument. De politieke structuren, die praktisch volledig werden afgebroken en opnieuw weer moesten worden opgebouwd, waren in de periode die bestudeerd wordt niet voordelig om een vlotte en efficiënte omschakeling van organisatietype te bewerkstelligen. Daarnaast wordt er in deze studie aandacht besteed aan een sociaal-cultureel argument: de hervorming van een mentaliteit en een sociale organisationele realiteit die ver verwijderd is van deze van een postmodern leger is een bijzonder moeilijke opgave. Met een boutade zou men kunnen stellen dat het praktisch onmogelijk is om een organisationeel concept van de eenentwintigste eeuw te implementeren op een mentaliteit van de negentiende eeuw. In dit tweede argument gaat het er dus om een organisationele mentaliteit te reconstrueren zoals die zich heden ten dage voordoet in Rusland en deze dan te vergelijken met het ideaalmodel van een postmodern professioneel leger. Uiteindelijk monden deze twee argumenten uit in de volgende onderzoeksvraag: **in welke mate en op welke manier hebben institutioneel-politieke en sociaal-culturele factoren ertoe bijgedragen dat de omschakeling van een dienstplichtigenleger naar een postmodern, professioneel leger in de periode van 1988-1998 mislukte ondanks het feit dat er herhaaldelijk werd gepleit voor deze diepgaande hervorming van de Russische strijdkrachten?**

Om op deze vraag te antwoorden wordt de dissertatie in drie delen ingedeeld. In een eerste deel wordt een theoretische uiteenzetting gegeven van wat men eigenlijk bedoelt met een postmodern, professioneel leger, of het westers model van de strijdkrachten. De logica van de evolutie van een massaleger naar een professionele, postmoderne organisatie wordt hierbij uitgelegd. Om de westerse evolutie te illustreren wordt het voorbeeld van België, Nederland en Frankrijk gegeven. Juist in deze landen werd de overstap gemaakt van het oude naar het nieuwe model in de periode 1990-1995. Aan de hand van enkele kwantitatieve sociologische en organisationele variabelen wordt deze evolutie duidelijk gemaakt. In een tweede stap wordt dezelfde kwantitatieve oefening gemaakt voor Rusland. Sociologische en organisationele variabelen worden vergeleken met die van Frankrijk, Nederland en België. Uit

deze analyse wordt duidelijk dat Rusland helemaal niet beantwoordt aan de criteria die gelden voor de postmoderne militaire organisatie. Meer nog, uit deze kwantitatieve analyse blijkt duidelijk dat de Russische strijdkrachten in een totale chaos verkeren, of wat zal worden genoemd een 'out-of control process' en een 'hybried organisatiemodel'..

In een tweede deel wordt dieper ingegaan op de politiek-institutionele evolutie van de Russische strijdkrachten in de Russische politieke arena. Aan de hand van de theorie van de politieke besluitvorming wordt geanalyseerd hoe het beslissingsproces aangaande defensie in de periode 1985-1998 gebeurde. In de periode van 1985-1991, of de periode waarin Gorbachov aan het roer stond van de Sovjet-Unie, verloor het militaire establishment alle invloed op het politieke vlak. Het moest de politiek van Gorbachov, zijn buitenlandse politiek van ontspanning, het idee van het 'Europese huis' of kortweg het einde van de Koude Oorlog, lijdzaam ondergaan. Tegelijk werd er flink bezuinigd op defensie. De militairen werden gedwongen, in het keurslijf van de partij te lopen. Toen in augustus 1991 een laatste stuiptrekking van de hardliners, waaronder de toenmalige minister van defensie, Jazov, in de vorm van een staatsgreep mislukte, betekende dit tevens het einde van de Sovjet-Unie. Er moet echter duidelijk worden onderstreept dat in het proces van obstructie en tegenwerking van Grobachovs politiek, de Russische strijdkrachten niet als een monolithisch geheel kunnen worden beschouwd. Er waren invloedrijke generaals die wel degelijk Gorbachov steunden en toen puntje bij paaltje kwam tijdens de augustus coup steunden verschillende generaals Jeltsin openlijk in zijn verzet tegen de coupplegers. Maar net het doorbreken van de monolithische mythe van de Sovjetrussische strijdkrachten zal een zware hypotheek leggen op de creatie van een nieuwe militaire organisatie in het kader van de Russische Republiek onder leiding van president Jeltsin. De nieuwe Russische strijdkrachten waren van meet af aan intern zwaar verdeeld. Er bestond geen consensus in het militaire establishment hoe het verder moest met hun organisatie. Grachov, de eerste Russische minister van defensie, had woeste plannen en wilde op zeer korte termijn de strijdkrachten omvormen tot de toen populaire 'Mobile Forces'. De erfenis van de Sovjet-Unie was echter te zwaar, gezien de belangrijke logistieke operaties die het uiteenvallen van de Sovjet-Unie met zich meebracht. Daarenboven was Grachov niet bekwaam om het zichzelf opgelegde plan in de praktijk om te zetten. Grachov, ook wel eens Pasha Mercedes genoemd, schrok er tevens niet voor terug om zijn vrienden op belangrijke beleidsposten te plaatsen waardoor het Peter principle wel degelijk haar rol speelde. We mogen echter de militaire incompetentie niet te fel benadrukken als oorzaak van de ontstane chaos. Voor de Russische politiek was defensie geen prioriteit. Daarenboven was de strijd tussen de executieve en de legislatieve macht die Rusland tot eind 1993 lam legde niet bevorderlijk voor het installeren van een efficiënte militaire organisatie. Als klap op de vuurpijl werd het hoger commando van de strijdkrachten verplicht om partij te kiezen in de bikkelharde politieke strijd tussen het parlement en de president. Alle regels van democratische civiel-militaire relaties werden hierbij met voeten getreden, met als gevolg dat de Russische strijdkrachten nog meer intern verdeeld raakten. Het debacle van de Russische campagne in Tsjetsjenië en vooral de verpletterende operatie in de hoofdstad Grozny illustreerde de toestand waarin de strijdkrachten zich bevonden. In de campagne van de presidentsverkiezingen van 1996 werd er een nieuw bedrijf ingeleid op het politiek-militaire toneel. Toen Jeltsin generaal Lebed nodig had om een tweede regeringsperiode aan de macht te blijven werd als pasmunt het ontslag gevraagd van minister van defensie Grachov. Hij werd opgevolgd door generaal Rodionov, die op zijn beurt snel met een hervormingsplan naar buiten kwam. Zijn plan was veel meer uitgebalanceerd dan dat van zijn voorganger en Rodionov wist wel degelijk de vinger te leggen op belangrijke pijnpunten van zijn departement. Toen hij echter aan bleef dringen op een hoger defensiebudget en zijn vrees uitsprak voor een militaire coup in Rusland werd hij door Jeltsin de laan uitgestuurd.

Hetzelfde lot was ten andere generaal Lebed beschoren, die in de ogen van Jeltsin te ambitieus was en het te veel gemunt had op het Russische presidentschap. Met het aantreden van de derde minister van defensie, generaal Sergejev, werd een nieuwe periode ingeleid in het politiek-institutionele spel. Sergejev was voor hij minister van defensie werd de commandant van de nucleaire strijdkrachten. Hij zou dan ook 'zijn' nucleaire strijdkrachten tot de belangrijkste pijler van de Russische defensiepolitiek promoveren. Met deze beslissing werd een totaal nieuwe oriëntatie gegeven aan de Russische strijdkrachten, wat de interne consensus niet ten goede kwam. Op het algemeen politieke front, waarbij in het presidentiele regime van Jeltsin alle macht bij hemzelf lag, werd het windstil. Jeltsins gezondheid verslechterde zienderogen en hij werd omringd door 'de familie' die de touwtjes achter de schermen meer en meer naar zich toetrok. Op deze manier werd Rusland haast onbestuurbaar en die ondoorzichtige situatie was niet bevorderlijk voor een gedegen defensiepolitiek. De economische crisis van 1998 luidde de zwanenzang in van het imperium van Jeltsin. Het was wachten op een nieuwe leider die werd ingeleid met de figuur van Vladimir Putin.

De analyse van het politiek-institutionele proces in de periode 1991-1998 toont duidelijk aan dat het impulsieve beleid van het Jeltsinregime samen met de gespleten militaire organisatie ertoe hebben bijgedragen dat Ruslands defensiepolitiek, waarin de rekruteringspolitiek een belangrijke component was, nooit echt van de grond kwam en steeds dieper in het moeras van chaos wegzonk. Deze bevinding wordt als één van de belangrijkste verklaringen gezien voor het mislukken van een hervormingspolitiek. In het derde deel wordt een tweede belangrijke en dikwijls onderschatte reden voor deze mislukking aangehaald, namelijk de bestaande militaire cultuur.

Aan de hand van een honderdtal face-to-face interviews met Russische soldaten wordt de Russische formele (officiële) en informele (officieuze) organisationele cultuur gereconstrueerd. Vooral van theoretisch belang is hier de observatie dat de Russische kazernes nog steeds bastions zijn van gesloten en totale instituties. Deze bevinding verklaart veel over het gedrag van de soldaten, dat wordt gekenmerkt door een zeer grote brutaliteit en geweldpleging. De officiële cultuur luidt dat het individu weerbaar moet zijn voor zwaar fysiek en mentaal lijden. Het is tevens een patriarchisch en patronalistisch systeem, waarmee wordt bedoeld dat het een machocultuur is waarin een traditionele autoriteit wordt uitgedragen. Inspraak is hierbij uit den boze en nog steeds geldt de 'befehl-ist-befehl'-mentaliteit. De officiële mentaliteit wordt tevens gekenmerkt door een ver doorgedreven patriottisme, dat soms grenst aan racistisch nationalisme. Bij het onderzoeken van de officiële Russische militaire cultuur komt aan het licht dat het een traditionele cultuur is die nog steeds onlosmakelijk verbonden is met de cultuur van het massaleger zoals we die tot na de Tweede Wereldoorlog kenden in het Westen. In Rusland is deze cultuur niet uitgehold door de democratisering en individualisering die de Westerse samenlevingen macro-sociologisch kenmerken.

Behalve aan de officiële, formele cultuur wordt er ook veel aandacht besteed aan de informele cultuur die heerst onder de soldaten. Deze wordt gekenmerkt door het systeem van dedovshina, waarmee wordt bedoeld dat er een informele hiërarchie bestaat onder de soldaten die berust op de traditionele 'variabele' anciënniteit en waarbij de omertaregel met harde hand wordt toegepast. De informele Russische cultuur is zeer brutaal en eist vele duizenden doden per jaar. Hiermee wordt niet alleen het imago van de strijdkrachten in diskrediet gebracht, het werkt de bestaande chaos alleen maar mee in de hand. Zolang echter de top van de

strijdkrachten niet bereid is de kazernes te 'openen' en het totale karakter ervan te doorbreken staat het middenkader vrij machteloos om iets tegen deze informele cultuur in te brengen. Ten slotte moet ook opgemerkt worden dat het gesloten en totale karakter van de organisatie van de strijdkrachten in vergelijking met het Westen een verouderde en traditioneel negentiende-eeuwse manier is om organisaties te leiden. Men kan dan ook na deze analyse tot het besluit komen dat de organisatiecultuur van de Russische strijdkrachten, die nauw samenhangt met de organisatiestructuur en de traditionele Russische maatschappelijke waarden, niet compatibel is met de postmoderne organisatie die verschillende legers in het Westen hebben aangenomen.

Tot besluit kan men stellen dat de politiek-institutionele realiteit en de militaire organisationele cultuur belangrijke belemmeringen zijn in Rusland de transitie toe te laten van een traditioneel massaleger naar een postmodern, professioneel leger. Deze vaststellingen zijn belangrijk omdat ze in het algemene Russische defensiedebat onderschat worden of zelfs helemaal niet aan de orde zijn.

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