Social Movements and Gender in Post-Soviet Russia

The Case of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs

Zaira Jagudina

UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

Abstract

This dissertation provides a study of gender processes in the maternal human rights movement of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs, which were created in the arena of the military draft politics in post-Soviet Russia. It also includes an analysis of the depoliticized and gendered civil society of the formalized NGOs, which provides a broader social context for the soldiers' mothers' movement.

The dissertation is founded on a combination of ideas borrowed from three theoretical perspectives. First, the concept 'woman' is approached as an analytical and political category constructed through the social locations by gender, class, region and culture within the framework of a military nation-state. The conventional maternal femininity, 'naturally' linked with caring labor, is produced as a part of the modern nation-states' ideologies of militarism and patriotic duty. Second, participants in social movements create an oppositional sub-universe of meaning and try to deintegrate from the dominant beliefs, social norms, and rules of feeling. Finally, gender processes affect the political opportunities, mobilizing structures and collective identity construction in social movements. The case study´s primary empirical material is 22 semi-structural qualitative interviews conducted in 2000-2005 with 17 members of two organizations of the Soldiers' Mothers, located in two different large cities. In addition, a participant observation of these two organizations and a discourse analysis of 35 articles in the Russian press were carried out, as well as 36 interviews with members of other human rights NGOs in Russia.

The impact of gender processes upon the Soldiers' Mothers movement is analyzed in relation to three dimensions: institutional and ideological structures, mobilizing social and organizational resources, and collective identity framing. In the context of the ongoing

military operations and the depoliticizing trends in civil society, mothers of soldiers were supposed to work in the social service-oriented NGOs as a helpmate to the military officials. Through the rituals of storytelling and interactions with their allies and their constituency, the Soldiers' Mothers activists have deintegrated from the mainstream norms of women's civic duty. The goals of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs have been reframed by connecting the maternal frame with the counter-discursive rhetoric of human rights, rooted in the Soviet legacy of political dissent. The feelings of fear, shame and anxiety are managed, and solidarity, pride and hope are instilled among the activists and parts of their constituency. Challenging the post-Soviet traditionalist gender ideology, the activists create a more critical identity of soldier's mothers based on an anti-draft/military ideology. This ideology varies among local civic groups, depending on their access to material, human and symbolic resources. Relying on informal social networks, the activists sustain the autonomous status of their groups. From the viewpoints of the local grassroots', the Soldiers' Mothers activists reframe the concept 'gender' in the elitist feminism imported by Western donors in the NGO sector.

The key findings in this dissertation suggest different revisions and expansions of earlier empirical research of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs and development of theories of gendered social movements.

Keywords: social movement, gender, civic activism, collective identity, women's self-organization, a Third Sector of NGOs, post-Soviet Russia, reframing, deintegration, emotional work.

To my mother and in memory of my father

Contents

PART II CONTEXT: NGOs, GENDER ORDER, WOMEN'S NGOs IN RUSSIA

Chapter 4   71
The Sphere of Non-Governmental Organizations

Chapter 5   97
Interaction between NGOs and the State

Chapter 6   115
Western Donors' Gendered Interventions

Abbreviations

SOMO	The Soldiers' Mothers
HR	Human rights
NGO	Non-governmental organization
CSM	The Committee of the Soldiers' Mothers
FOM	Public Opinion Foundation (Russia)
IWF	The Independent Women's Forum
NIS-US	The Newly Independent States and United States Women's Consortium
NTV	Independent Television Channel
SPS	The Union of Right Forces
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
URW	The Union of Russian Women
VGTRK	All-Russia State Television and Radio Company
VTsIOM	The All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinion

Acknowledgements

Working on the research in this dissertation has been a remarkable journey filled with many insights, joys and hardships. This is the opportunity to express my gratitude to the people and institutions which made this endeavour possible.

My deepest thanks go to my supervisors Per Månson and Nora Machado who encouraged and supported me in so many invaluable ways. Per Månson inspired by a profound knowledge and commitment to Russian studies. Nora Machado's insightful, sensitive and steady guiding has been indispensable during the writing up of the dissertation.

I thank all the Russian interviewees who took part in the study for being generous with their time, enthusiasm and trust. Many thanks go to the Russian social scientists I have consulted and learned from during my work: Olga Zdravomyslova, Grigory Zdravomyslov, Vadim Mezhuev, Natalia Kozlova, Elena Zdravomyslova, Anna Temkina, Oleg Kharkhordin, Vladimir Kostushev, Alexander Sungurov and many others.

I am indebted to Pr. Ulla Björnberg and Pr. Bengt Furåker from the Department of Sociology in University of Gothenburg who read the final manuscript and provided excellent criticism and advice. I am also very grateful to Pr. Tom R. Burns from the Department of Sociology in Uppsala University who read the manuscript and contributed with many perceptive words of advice. I want to thank Margareta Oudhuis, Ingrid Sahlin, Claire Wallace, Risto Alapuro, Sara Ashwin, Tova Höjdestrand, Sven-Åke Lindgren, Anna-Karin Kollind, Bengt Larsson, Håkan Thörn, Merete Hellum, Oksana Shmulyar, Iwona Sobis and Minoo Alinia for their support, inspiration and comments on the doctoral papers. I would also like to thank my colleagues at the Department of Technology and Society in University of Skövde, in particular Lars-Erik Berg, Anni Tysk and Nomie Eriksson for their support during the final phase of my work. I am grateful to my family and my friends Arne Lange, Jadranka Andric and Richard Sobis for their understanding and support.

Finally, much of this research was made possible because of the financial support from the Department of Sociology, University of Gothenburg, the Humanistic-Social Science Research Foundation (HSFR) and the Johnsson Foundation in Sweden. The

sponsorship by Johnsson Foundation was made available due to the cooperation with the Centre for European Research at University of Gothenburg (CERGU) headed by Pr. Rutger Lindahl.

PART I

INTRODUCTION, THEORIES, METHODS

Chapter 1

Introduction

> We are like a bridge of justice between people and the power-holders. (Interview with a Soldiers' Mothers activist)
>
> The family is the most important focus of our movement. During the Soviet time we had a system; a woman was put in front of the factory machine and a man was sent to the war. But nobody cared about what happened to the family. (Interview with a Soldiers' Mothers activist)

These quotes are taken from interviews with members of the human rights movement the Soldier' Mothers (hereafter HR SOMO or SOMO), which I conducted in Russia during 2000-2005. They reflect grassroots women's concerns from the viewpoint of mothers and defenders of human rights. Human rights solidarity is based on the understanding of human beings' frailty and the fact that citizenship is not an adequate mechanism for protecting individuals against a repressive or authoritarian state (Turner 1994: 182).

Gender is a significant aspect of political activism, particularly in post-Soviet Russia. Women are generally more often involved in local community networks and groups of grassroots activism, while the official political institutions are predominately managed by men (Ferree and Merrill 2003). Female activists engage in creating networks, negotiating between different viewpoints, and challenging deep-rooted discourses. This involves organizing, creative thinking, and emotional investment. In the context of gendered[1] politics, women's grassroots activism and contribution to social change is often made invisible. In addition, it is not valued as highly as the institutional politics, in which social change may be envisioned through official speeches delivered from top down (ibid.).

---

[1] To say that any "analytic unit is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine" (Acker 1990: 146).

In Russia, grassroots self-organizing in politics has a controversial status, due to the country's history of authoritarian regimes and political repression. The Soviet voluntary associations were controlled and sponsored by the Communist Party and state. They acquired a dualist nature; the organizations were both supposed to realize the party's goals and protect the members from the official administration (Evans, Jr., Henry and Sundstrom 2006). Through the turbulent democratic reforms in post-Soviet Russia, a sphere of non-governmental organizations (hereafter NGOs) was established, which allowed the creation of independent NGOs. By the late 1990s, a Third Sector of social service-oriented NGOs took form in Russia. It was a result of the formalization of the spontaneous socio-political activism that emerged during glasnost. Existing research shows that civic groups act in conditions of relative material scarcity, political uncertainty, and the population's continued Soviet habits of activism and/or individualistic attitudes (Howard 2003; Diligensky 1998; Diligensky 2001).

Implications of at least four factors are important for understanding the dynamics and contradictions in the sphere of NGOs in post-Soviet Russia. They include: 1) the Soviet tradition of counter-cultural resistance, such as the underground diffusion of forbidden print, songs, and the like, 2) the influential role of the state, 3) the interventions of foreign (Western) donors, and 4) the reshaping of gender order and of the historical relationship between the socialist state and women as a collective actor.

NGOs and Women in Post-Soviet Russia

Civil society in post-communist societies is often discussed in social research as if it is created from scratch. However, the complicated legacy of counter-culture, the "second society," and informal social networks were activated and reshaped in the processes of post-Soviet change (Gal and Kligman 2000; Alapuro and Lonkila 2000; Temkina 1997). For example, the Soviet human rights dissidents formulated a local concept of human rights, which was interrelated with the idea of social justice based on the 'rule of law.' Human rights NGOs draw upon and develop these ideas in their concrete work.

The role of the state in the NGO sector has evolved during the 1990s and the early 2000s. The 'benign negligence' towards the NGOs by President Yeltsin's administration

was transformed into a policy of intervention in the voluntary sector and 'vigilance' towards the critical NGOs during Putin's presidency in the 2000s. These changes and their impact on the activities of civic groups' have only begun to be examined in social research (Henderson 2008).

Western donors' democracy aid, which was offered to new post-communist players in the post-Cold War world of market economy and democracy, has played an ambiguous role in shaping the Russian civil society and the NGO sector. The Third Sector was shaped according to a neoliberal model promoted by Western foundations. According to this developmental model, the state has to step back from public arenas, while the 'civil society' of the non-profit organizations is crucial for developing market economy and democracy (Hulme and Edwards 1997; Hemment 2007). Social activism became increasingly formalized. The unintended effects included the importing of "mainstreamed" feminism that was insensitive to local cultures, bureaucratization, and (re)production of social hierarchies and animosities among the NGOs, which gained unequal access to funding. At the same time, transnational activist networks brought new vocabulary, organizational technologies, and valuable social resources to Russia, which were creatively appropriated by the activists.

Gender order started to shift in Russia during the 1980s. The traditional relationship between the socialist state and women was restructured in the post-Soviet society. Among other things, women became increasingly involved in and associated with the Third Sector of the social service NGOs. The concept civil society, which was politicized in the democratic movements during President Gorbachev's glasnost, has been reinterpreted with the emergence of a formalized civil society. In the late 1990s, the shift from 'civil society versus state' to the 'Third Sector with the state' was related to defining civic activity as feminine (Salmenniemi 2005: 747; Gal and Kligman 2000). Women were supposed to work in the social sector of NGOs as a helpmate of the state, not as political activists. The civic sphere turned "into a sphere of care where women bear the social costs of the transformation" (Salmenniemi 2005: 748).

However, different groups of women-activists respond and adjust to this context in different ways. A range of independent women's NGOs emerged. Many of them aimed at resolving concrete social issues, such the Soldiers' Mothers groups, or were formed as

self-help groups of single mothers, professionals, and others. A network of explicitly feminist organizations was created mainly by female intellectuals.

Social movements are embedded in the local gendered landscapes and they have to be understood within the context of local histories. Existing studies of civic NGOs and women's movements in Russia focus on many different aspects (see Evans, Jr. et al. 2006; Sperling 1999). In post-communist civil societies, subject positions which were traditionally available to women, are: "worker-recipient of Communist entitlements", "naturalized, sexualized private being of civil society," "the sacred and inert mother of nationhood" (Gal 1997: 43). The emergence of the women's movement involves a process through which the traditionally limited range of subject positions available to women is challenged and transformed. Political identity includes a position of "an independent subject whose interests and issues can be publicly defined and debated" (ibid.).

The SOMO NGOs have been studied in earlier research as a case of the maternal movement (Caiazza 2002). Maternal movements emerged in different places such as Argentina, San Salvador, Israel, Ireland, and many others. These movements express 'female consciousness,' based on the idea that women's role as mothers is primary and that mothers will go to any lengths to protect their children. This kind of consciousness is also rooted in combating oppressive living conditions. Female consciousness may be a crucial political resource for women's organizations in countries with authoritarian regimes or/and during transitions when other kinds of resources are limited. They can build popular support and they mobilize other women to activism (ibid.: 115, 116).

However, the SOMO may be understood not only as a maternal movement, but also as a movement linked to the Soviet legacy of dualist voluntary organizations and counter-cultural movements, as well as to transnational women activist networks. I approach the NGOs of the Soldiers' Mothers as a broader phenomenon, which includes several interrelated dimensions; it may be viewed as maternal, human rights, and a women's movement embedded in the complex context of the post-Soviet NGO sector.

The Social Movement of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs

In post-Soviet Russia, military service in the conscription army became a source of personal grievances and political contests. Since the 1980s, hundreds of self-help and

protest groups were created by mothers of soldiers who were missing in Afghanistan, Chechnya, or who had been abused and killed in the military barracks during peace time. In the 1990s and 2000s, SOMO were established in different regions of Russia, some of which were actively engaged in the politics of the military draft. Between three and five thousand soldiers in the Russian army die each year in times of peace, because of beatings, harassment leading to suicide and dreadful living conditions. In the 1990s, which was a period of political instability and many violent conflicts, many young men tried to avoid the military service by hiding from or bribing officials in the local military draft commissions (Caiazza 2002; Sundstrom 2006a, 2006b; Kay 2006). The voluntary groups of soldiers' mothers articulate women's concerns and agency related to the masculinized arena of the Russian army.

The activists receive tens of thousands of requests for help every year. They arrange help for soldiers who are experiencing abuse and for those who were drafted illegally despite medical problems. In the courts of law, the activists defend conscientious objectors, whom the military believe are trying to avoid service. They also initiated a consideration of a draft law on alternative service in the Supreme Soviet. In 1990, they proposed to abolish the compulsory conscription and built public support for the idea of a professional army, which met a strong resistance from the military (Sundstrom 2006a, 2006b).

The SOMO is a heterogeneous movement; it includes separate organizations as well as loose networks. Voluntary groups of soldiers' mothers cover nearly every region in Russia. The largest association of groups is the Union of Committees of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia, whose headquarters are located in Moscow and which includes around three hundred branch organizations. Some of them are less radical; they demand that soldiers receive proper food and clothes during service and social entitlements after their service is completed. Other groups are more radical, such as the SOMO in Moscow and St. Petersburg which demand human rights protection and lobby for military reform. There are also government sponsored groups of Soldiers' Mothers which mainly visit and distribute gifts among soldiers (Zdravomyslova 1999; Sundstrom 2006a, 2006b; Caiazza 2002; Oushakine 2004).

The SOMO provide local self-help, empowerment of mothers and soldiers, and pressure central political decision-makers (Zdravomyslova 1999; Caiazza 2002;

Hinterhuber 2001; Sundstrom 2006a, 2006b; Hojer 2004; Sperling 2003; Oushakine 2004). Both activists and social researchers stress that like many other grassroots initiatives in Russia, the SOMO have been "pushed aside of political life" (Petukhov 2002: 62). The political effects of social movements should, however, also be assessed from the perspective of their 'routine' transformative social practices which include challenging conventional societal norms, values, and subjectivities (see Hojer 2004; Hinterhuber 2001).

The women-activists´ opportunities for social movements are shaped and limited within the gendered social arena of the military draft politics in Russia.

Gender Regime in the Arena of the Military Draft

Critical research examines the exercise of power and dominance by focusing on the complex network of structural relations, institutional arenas, and human agency (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005). The construction of gender identity in social movements needs to be studied in relation to the gender order in a given society and the *gender regime*[2] in a particular institutional sphere (Taylor 1999). Members of the SOMO forge their female identities in the sphere of political culture within the particular spatial and historical context of post-Soviet Russia in the 1990s and the early 2000s. In addition, femininities are produced, negated and negotiated within the sphere of the state's military politics. The gender identities of men and women are crucial for the states' ability to maintain the military armies. In Russia, motherhood and the symbol of the mother of a soldier have been central in the state's ideology and the policies encouraging certain kinds of female and male behaviors.[3]

While in modern states, the role of citizen-soldier and citizen-speaker in political debate are constructed as masculine, female citizens are constructed through the feminine role of the biological reproducer of the nation, unremunerated chidlrearer, and transmitter of culture (Yuval-Davies 1997; Fraser 1989: 128). Mothering seems to be linked to life and non-violent action and be opposed to war and death. Sara Ruddick (1989: 84) stresses,

---

[2] Gender regime refers to the "state of play of gender relations in a given institution" (Connell 1987: 120).
[3] The symbolic meaning of the mother of a soldier in the contemporary Russian socio-cultural context is analyzed in more detail in chapter 11.

however, that the masculinity of war is a myth which sustains both women and men's support for military violence. The state-military institutions are supported and sustained through a gendered discourse about the masculine soldier and the self-sacrificing mother. Sara Ruddick (ibid.) explains that through the maternal framework of a culture of war, women participate in the nation state wars as mothers, wives, and lovers. There is no 'natural' coupling between femininity and the peace movement, although it can be constructed through the efforts and inventiveness of women movement activists (Ruddick 2004; Yuval-Davis 1997).

In the Soviet gender politics of motherhood, the role of 'a dutiful mother' was projected into the public sphere as a symbolic model that represented political and social conformity (Novikova 2000: 122). The mass conscript army was perceived as a collective body through a family metaphor of Soviet power. Through the maternal symbol "the Soviet ideology made war the standard for connecting gender behavior, language and reproduction of national identity" (ibid.). The "warlike desire to build "peace" worldwide" was rooted in the image of a Soviet soldier-liberator, not a single warrior but a collective hunter-breadwinner (ibid.: 123). Soldiers were both agents and victims of the political system; men learned to be "eternal soldiers" who had to "bring liberty" whenever the Soviet system demanded it (ibid.: 124). This image of soldier-liberator collapsed with the dissolution of the Soviet empire and the military failures in Afghanistan and Chechnya. In addition, the 'masquerade' of female political agency created by the Soviet rhetoric of gender equality turned into a more open neo-patriarchal gender climate (Novikova 2000; Liljeström 1995). For example, after the Soviet gender quotas in the political representative institutions were removed, women have been under-represented in the post-Soviet legislatures. Politics is commonly perceived as a primarily male activity (Kay 2000).

At the same time, active civic groups of men and women emerged, which demanded more openness and public debate in the sphere of state military draft politics. But this sphere still remains relatively closed in relation to civil society and the predominately masculine and male-ordered sphere (Caiazza 2002; Khramchikhin 2004).

Research Problem and Aim

Along with the implosion of the Soviet system, groups of mothers of conscript soldiers joined together and established independent NGOs as places for articulating their social grievances. Women's articulation of the needs of soldiers and mothers is a moment in the self-constitution of a new collective agent. One of the effects of the SOMO movement is the transformation of women's self-identities. Mothers of soldiers are transformed from 'brave victims' to 'activists' of the civil society. The movement thus challenges the prevailing cultural codes (Melucci 1996) of national, political and gender orders. The activists try to create an oppositional sub-universe of meaning, feeling, and identity (Flam 2000), through which the meanings ascribed to mothers' membership in the political community are reframed.

This study's main *research problem* is how and why the identity of a civic activist is enacted, interpreted, and reframed as a result of an oppositional sub-universe of meaning, produced in the maternal movement of the HR SOMO NGOs within the gendered arena of military draft politics in Russia of the early 2000s.

The *aim* of the case study of the HR SOMO NGOs is to understand and explain the experiences of women activists in the context of the feminized Third Sector of NGOs in post-Soviet Russia. Through this analysis, the study aims to contribute to a gender-theoretical perspective on maternal social movement in the context of NGOs in post-Soviet society.

Research Questions

Questions explored in the thesis are:

1. In which historical, material, symbolic, and organizational contexts in the Russian Third Sector of NGOs is the SOMO social movement created and sustained? In which ways is the Third Sector feminized?

2. In which socio-political and discursive context in the arena of the state military draft politics is the SOMO social movement formed and sustained?

3. How and why are the SOMO's civic identity and strategies of delivering service to their constituency framed through a narrative of mothering? How is the 'injustice frame' constituted? How does 'maternal' framing interact with the SOMO groups' positioning through gender, socioeconomic status, and regional location? How is the military's construction of 'social mothering' in the Third Sector of NGOs opposed by the activists? How do the activists challenge cultural codes of national and gender order in the political sphere?

4. How and why do the SOMO activists establish social/organizational ties with the human rights activists' community? How do the SOMO try to reframe the collective identity of the mothers of soldiers through emotional work? How do the activists maintain solidarity with the larger community of mothers through routine interactions? What are the limits of this solidarity, due to differences in ideologies and personal lifestyles? How is the constituency encouraged to overcome demobilizing feelings of fear, resignation, and cynicism? How are women able to produce a new, more assertive and critical, collective identity?

5. How do the SOMO articulate the needs of soldiers and mothers and oppose the entrenched gendered discourses in the pro-government SOMO organizations in the NGO sector? Why and how do the activists disidentify from the styles of some human rights NGOs and feminist NGOs in the political arena? How and why do they renegotiate their perceptions of the party-political sphere? How do they reinterpret the concept of "gender inequality" from a perspective of grassroots women's anti-military and/or anti-draft human rights movement?

Disposition

The thesis consists of three parts. Part I includes the chapters on introduction, theoretical perspectives and methods. The introduction presents the background of the study, the aim, the research problem, and research questions. Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework which guides the understanding and interpretation of the empirical materials in the case study. Chapter 3 describes data and methods by which materials were collected, analyzed, and represented, as well as ethical aspects.

Based mainly on secondary sources, Part II presents historical, material, symbolic, and organizational contexts within the Third Sector of NGOs in Russia. It also describes changes in gender order. Chapter 4 explains how the sphere of NGOs is constructed by activists' groups based on the Soviet historical legacy in post-Soviet Russia. Chapter 5 describes interaction between NGOs and the state. Chapter 6 describes the effects of

gendered interventions in the sphere of Russian NGOs by Western donors who offered democracy assistance.

Chapter 7 includes a brief history and a contemporary scene of gender order and women's positioning in Russia. It discusses changes in gender order and the role of the state in constructing femininities and masculinities. Chapter 8 describes the types of women's NGOs and the relationships between them. It explains that women's NGOs are shaped within the material and symbolic framework of the Third Sector. The gendered framing of civic activism as more moral and socially oriented than the male-dominated political institutions is partly reproduced and partly challenged in different women's groups

Part III presents the case study of two HR SOMO NGOs. Chapter 9 presents a brief history of the emergence and main directions of the SOMO groups' activity. Chapter 10 presents the historical, political, and social context in the arena of the state´s military draft politics. Chapter 11 includes an analysis of discursive representations of Soldiers' Mothers /soldier's mother in the Russian press, based on discourse analysis of thirty five articles from national and regional newspapers of different orientations.

Chapters 12, 13 and 14 present analyses of the interviews and activists' documents. Chapter 12 explains how maternal identity construction is related to the framing of the social problem of the military draft around which the SOMO mobilize in interactions with the state military authorities. It also shows that the SOMO's maternal frame interacts with the activists' social positioning through gender, socio-economic status, and geographical center-periphery location. Chapter 13 examines the human rights framing and emotional work associated with it in the SOMO. Chapter 14 examines why and how the SOMO activists start to identify with the Russian and transnational women's movement and decide to create their own political party. The chapter examines how the SOMO create grassroots women's movement in the context of the partly bureaucratized and depoliticized NGO field.

Chapter 15 presents the main findings in the case study of the HR SOMO NGOs in post-Soviet Russia. It discusses how the results contribute to the existing empirical research of this movement and to gender-theoretical perspective on social movement with focus on the institutional context of NGOs in post-communist society.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction

This chapter presents the set of ideas and notions that are guiding my analysis and a discussion of women's collective action produced in the male-dominated and masculinized arena of military draft politics in Russia.

My theoretical framework combines ideas and concepts borrowed mainly from three theoretical spheres: Firstly, theories of gender construction explain that the endurance of gender inequality and of women's subordination is the result of multilevel processes of social embodiment within the context of a historically distinct gender order within the nation state and political regimes. Secondly, I combine the structuralist and cultural-constructivist approaches to social movement. Social movements are defined as agents of social change concerned with transforming subaltern groups and identities. Collective action comprises cognitive, emotional, and normative dimensions; and movements emerge when forms of social oppression may be recognized and alternative versions of social reality and self-identity may be produced and sustained. Thirdly, gender is one of the important explanatory factors in the emergence, course and outcomes of social movements.

I begin by presenting the concepts which explain how social positioning and an analytical and political category of "woman" is produced in the society, nation-state, and political sphere. Further, I clarify a set of notions from social movement theories which have been applied in my empirical analysis. Finally, some central aspects of gender processes in women's social movements are discussed.

1. The Positioning and Experiences of the 'Woman'

In my study, I approach the category 'woman' as an analytical and political category (Mohanty 2003: 26) designed and sanctioned within the hegemonic frameworks of national (state) order and political regime. The most cultural and ideological support in

contemporary society is given to the pattern of femininity which is organized as an adaptation to men's power and emphasizes compliance, nurturing, and empathy as womanly virtues (Connell 1987: 187). However, relationships of domination between men and women have different effects. Women cannot be viewed as a singular group based on a shared oppression. There is no universal ahistoric patriarchal power structure. Particular groups of women can be constituted as more or less "powerless" through specific material and ideological processes in a particular context (Mohanty 2003: 26; Lorber 1994; McNay 2000). Women are constituted as women through a complex interaction between class, sexuality, race, generation, culture, religion, and other ideological institutions and frameworks across different sites in space and time (Skeggs 1997). One of the important aspects in the construction of the category 'woman' is the role of the modern nation state. The national/militaristic state devises and constrains gendered identities of citizens.

The Nation-State and the 'Woman'

The nation state has historically been represented as a center of men's action. Men dominate the law, military, the police, the civil service, the state machinery, parliaments and autocracies, which 'award' suffrage to women (Hearn and Parkin 2001: 39). The state has been continuously based on the assumption, influence, and power of the heterosexual, married male collective subject (ibid.: 40). States may be characterized as heterosexual and heterosexist. Men and women's relationships to citizenship, state and nation are different. They have been differently located and positioned as citizens, politicians, fathers/mothers, welfare recipients and so on. Men are usually positioned as controllers of the state, the dominant group in reproduction of political regimes, as adult male citizens (ibid.).

The sexual division of labor assigns women the primary responsibility for the care of children, sick/elderly relatives, as well as of all who are unable to care for themselves. Women are assigned the role of unpaid caregivers (Fraser 1989: 148). They are also usually associated with the role of biological reproducer of nation and culture transmitter.

Nation, Violence, and Gender

One aspect of the ideologically supported version of femininity is the responsibility to represent the nation. In the modern state, men and women's relationships to the nation are constructed as a complex relationship between "country (space), state (political, legal, and administrative authority) and nation (culture and ideology)" (Hearn and Parkin 2001: 40). Women are viewed as reproducers of the nation and are given the social role of inter-generational transmitters of cultural traditions (Yuval-Davis 1997). The behavior of women may also be seen as signifying the ethnic and cultural boundaries. The gender ideologies of femininity and masculinity may therefore be used for implementing nationalist projects and building the nation-state (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989). A trope of the nation-as-woman is widespread in many cultures and "depends for its representational efficacy on a particular image of woman as chaste, dutiful, daughterly or maternal" (Parker et al. 1992: 6). At the same time, nationalism favors a homosocial form of male bonding and the nation is represented as a passionate brotherhood: "It is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings" (Benedict Anderson, cited in ibid.: 6). However, the nation distinguishes its proper homosexuality from sexual male-male relations; women are enshrined as the Mother, a trope of ideal femininity, a female who secures male-male arrangements: "Motherhood is idealized by the virile fraternity" (ibid.).

Violence is an essential part and a condition for membership in the nation-state. Men's, and in a different way women's, relationship to the state, country and nation, has been mediated by the performance/control of violence. It is involved in the construction of, obedience to, and the breaking of, the law, the commitment to defend the country, and to the institution of compulsory conscription. In many ways, the modern state has become a major controller and producer of violence, injury, fear, torture, and death. Men dominate in these individual and collective actions (Hearn and Parkin 2001: 41, 42). The power of the military-industrial complex and the almost complete exclusion of women from the major policy-making centers are related. Militarist beliefs and practices are supported by

an ideology which connects masculinity, physical toughness, authority, and technological violence (see Connell 1987: 109).[4]

Militarism and wars are not, however, exclusively made by men. Ruddick (1989: 84) stresses that the masculinity of war is a myth that sustains both women and men in their support for violence. Most men participate in campaigns which they do not design or often do not comprehend. Soldiers who engage in combat are usually very young men. Many are conscripted; others fight to escape the intolerant conditions of civilian life. "If men were so eager to be fighters, we would not need drafts, training in misogyny, and macho heroes, nor would we have to entice the morally sensitive with myths of patriotic duty and just cause" (ibid.). Many women support the military engagements of their sons, lovers, friends, and mates. Like men, women usually justify their militarism in terms of loyalty, patriotism, and legal rights and duty. While some women are militarists and others view war as a natural catastrophe, they delegate political judgments to leaders and do not try to understand these judgments. Mothers often construe their military service in maternal terms: "We had to back our boys" (Ruddick 1989: 87). They often argue that in a time of crisis, they could not "foster dissension within a family or community whose connectedness it has been their responsibility to sustain" (ibid.; see also Forcey 1994).

This study applies these concepts to explaining how the category 'woman' is constructed within the hegemonic frameworks of national/militaristic (state) order to analyze why and how the movement of the Soldiers' Mothers in Russia reproduce or/and challenges the conventional pattern of femininity that is dominant in the sphere of military draft politics.

Another analytical approach applied in my study concerns the way in which institutional politics is distinguished from the voluntary groups' activism and perceived as a predominately masculine arena.

---

[4] A concept of human rights solidarity has been developed as an important supplement to a theory of citizenship and a crucial resource for the protection of individuals against state violence. Turner (1994: 183) rather than starting from the idea of rational and aggressive Hobbesian man, suggests perceiving the human body as frail and dependent because of ageing, diseases, danger, and scarcity (see also Yuval-Davis 1997).

Women in the Political Sphere

Defining the Political

The boundaries between voluntary activism and that of political parties may be defined differently. The concept voluntary association describes a variety of formalized and loose networks and multiple motivations of voluntary responsibility for fulfilling tasks related to the organization of collective common life (see Joas 1996: 256; Dekker and Uslaner 2001). In some studies, political institutions and social movements are viewed as part of a single public political field which includes political institutions, contentious politics and social movements, and communication media (McAdam 2001). Other theorists argue that a civil society including social movements, non-government organizations, and grassroots' initiatives refers to efforts to influence political debate and decision-making. They focus on the limits and the opportunities to connect the grassroots, different arenas in the public sphere, and the organized actors in civil society on the one side and the constitutional state or the rule of law on the other (Delanty 2002). My study reworks this discussion from a gender-theoretical perspective.

The line between party-politics and grassroots' activism or social movements is frequently gendered. Both institutions and social movements are important for explaining how social change occurs. However, due to the relative separation of institutional politics and social movements as two entirely different fields of study, institutional politics tends to be studied in terms of effects of social policies and social movements in terms of their origins and organizations (Ferree and Merrill 2003: 257). Women are more likely to be politically active on the grassroots level. Social research shows that women in many countries are involved in non-institutionalized politics including self-help groups, protests, and women's associations (Bystydzienski 1992; Bystydzienski and Sekhon 1999). The work women do involves skills with regard to networking, bridging and organizing people. This type of political activity tends to be overlooked by a framework in which politics is defined as a typically male activity (Ferree and Merrill 2003). The gendering of the political in terms of a male-dominated sphere makes the formal hierarchal authority more visible than influence exercised in lateral networks. Top-down speeches is valued more than organizational bridge-building. The styles and content of discourses produced at the grassroots level also appear different. For example, researchers found, that women

who were active in community groups argued that what they did was "not politics" but "work for their communities." Using the language of party politics was consequently controversial for them (ibid.).

The terms "political" and "politics" have been contested. Some feminists have reformulated the definition of politics, rejecting the idea of a distinct political sphere. They stressed that "personal" institutions such as childrearing and housework also have political dimensions (Abbott et al. 2005: 307). The very division between public and private is a patriarchal idea used to exclude women and women's concerns from politics (ibid.: 306; Pateman 1988; Mouffe 1992). The state 'creates' the division between the public/political and private and women's concerns are relegated to the sphere of family/private life. In this case study, the analysis of how groups of women-activists started to perceive themselves as political subjects, rather than as only mothers linked to the family sphere, is based on the definition of "political" in democratic theory. This definition was developed further by Nancy Fraser (1989).

Fraser (1989: 166) states that the term "political" includes at least two meanings: First, a matter is considered "political" if it is handled in the institutions of official governmental system, including parliaments and administrative apparatuses. In this sense, "economy" and "family" are viewed as outside the official political system, although they are actually buttressed and regulated by it. Second, democratic theory defines something as "political" if it is contested across different discursive arenas and among different publics. The politicized is contrasted with what is not contested in public or is only contested within specialized or segmented publics. In democratic theory, though not always in practice, a matter does not become subject to state intervention unless it has been debated in a wide range of public arenas. Inspired by Fraser (1989), I approach the political sphere as being constituted through the coexistence, overlap and struggle between three kinds of discourses which interpret the needs and interests of social groups: oppositional, depoliticizing, and expert discourses.

Three Kinds of Discourses on Needs and Interests

Oppositional forms of discourse arise when needs are interpreted "from below." These forms contribute to the emergence of new social identities on the part of subordinated

groups. Needs are politicized through oppositional discourses. For example, women, workers, and people of color can come together and contest the subordinate identities and the reified and disadvantageous interpretation of needs. These groups insist on speaking publicly of previously depoliticized needs for which they claim legitimate political status. These groups achieve several things: They contest the established boundaries separating "politics" from "economics" and "domestics." They offer alternative interpretations of their needs. They create new discourse publics from which they disseminate their interpretations of their needs. Fraser (ibid.: 171) stresses that in oppositional discourses, talking about needs is a moment of self-constitution of new collective agents, or social movements. For example, feminist groups have instituted new vocabularies and become "women" in a different sense.

The politicization of needs in the oppositional discourse is resisted by powerful organized interests who shaped the hegemonic interpretation of needs to suit their own purposes. They might resist the discourses of social movements by defending the established boundaries that separate "political," "economic" and "domestic" spheres. For example, they may insist that domestic battery is not a legitimate subject of political discourse but a familial matter. It is a *depoliticizing* discourse (ibid.: 172).

Another axis of political struggles is concerned with the battle between oppositional social movements and the experts in the orbit of the social state. Once the issue of contest is accepted as a political issue, competing interpretations of the issue emerge. The struggle for hegemonic interpretation of needs point towards the involvement of the state. The concern here is politics versus administration. *Expert* discourses are the ways in which politicized needs are translated into objects of potential state intervention. They are connected with institutions of knowledge production, including social science discourses, legal discourses and administrative discourses (ibid.: 173). Expert discourses tend to be restricted to specialized publics. They are associated with professional class formation, institution building, and social "problem solving." The politicized need is redefined as the correlate of a bureaucratically administrable satisfaction, a "social service." By virtue of this administrative rhetoric, expert needs discourses tend to be de-politicizing as well. Sometimes, however, social movements manage to co-opt or create oppositional segments of expert discourse publics. Expert discourse publics then acquire certain porousness.

Expert discourses become the bridge discourse that connects social movements with the state (ibid.: 174).

The practical work of "social service" is low-paid and low-status jobs in the social care institutions and is frequently done by women. Women perform these types of "caring" jobs despite the low pay and status, because it is important for the formation of the gendered identity, of femininity. However, such work frequently involves the exploitation of women's nurturing as activities and emotions are tacitly assumed as 'natural' propensities stemming from the realm of instincts. The burdens and strains associated with caregiving are not addressed in the public debate (Hopkins et al. 2005: 124).

Feminists argue that "malestream" research, male-dominated trade unions and political parties have a certain definition of what counts as a political, which excludes much of women's expertise and political concerns. Feminists demonstrate that the 'male as the norm' operates in political and social analysis; distinctions between "political" and "social" or "moral" are based on arbitrary criteria that are connected to gender. Although women do participate in political parties and trade unions, many are alienated from politics and excluded by the domination of men in organizations (Abbott et al. 2005: 306). Women's political activities and concerns are marginalized and "hidden from history" (ibid.). Their expertise and concerns are kept out of public politics as their experiences differ from those of men. For example, women may be more likely to be affected by cuts in public expenditures in education, health, and community care. Women's lives, as Dorothy Smith argued, are more closely linked with the concrete reality. Men may have abstract theories on education and health care, but women take the children to school and to the doctor (Smith 2004; Abbott et al. 2005: 305).

In this study the concepts about women's positioning help to analyze the activists' ambiguous relationship towards the sphere of state politics and strategies, which challenge their exclusion from the policy making arenas. Another set of concepts regarding why and how women's alienation from state politics tends to be reproduced focuses on the role of emotions in producing subordinated positioning.

'Silenced' Positioning and Emotions

There is an 'emotional link' between power and self-sense (Flam 2008; Kemper 1990). Emotions may be understood as social, cultural and political constructs (Hochschild 1979). Particular patterns of emotions are produced and attached to individuals as a result of social positioning, inclusions or/and exclusions from certain social arenas. Collins (1990) states that positioning relative to micro patterns of power will result in high or low *emotional energy*. Thomas Scheff (2007, 2008) approaches people as motivated by maintaining or enhancing their standing in the eyes of other people. People's conforming to social norms may be explained as a consequence of their pursuit of social standing. While social inclusion results in a feeling of *pride*, *shame* and embarrasement are the result of social exclusion. Pride and shame are viewed as central aspects of social order.

The dominant keep the dominated locked in a state of collective 'humiliation.' A self-defeating emotion of shame arises when the dominated perceive themselves through the eyes of the dominant. The dominated become silenced when they internalize the outsider views of themselves although their sense of self-pride or indignity at what is happening to them does not disappear (Flam and Beauzamy 2008). Individuals in subordinated position are devaluated and perceived as morally unaccountable. They lack resources to make their standards of self-realization recognized (Flam 2008). Individuals and groups may hence be kept in positions of subordination through exclusion, prevailing emotions of shame and embarrassment, as well as by low levels of emotional energy.

Two types of habitus develop and are cultivated in the political realm: the self-assured speakers and the insecure, worthless-feeling listeners (ibid.). Girls and women may be alienated from politics, because they have been socialized into 'silence.' According to Pierre Bourdieu (1987, in Flam 2008), individuals from lower social classes and women often choose "I do not know" as an answer to questions concerning politics in national surveys. Their silence may be rooted in a deep feeling that they have no right, political power or the necessary education to speak about political issues compared to men with higher education. Women are silenced through gender and class habitus. They are taught that their command of the language and their viewpoints are inferior and that they should listen to those who are more articulate and better informed. They are taught to feel insecure (ibid.).

When the silenced "I" feels ambivalent, and pulled between anger and shame, cultures of dissent and social movements play the role of a buffer. They help the process of trans-valuation and overcoming the perceived emotional ambivalence. They reinforce the feeling of anger while suppressing the feeling of shame or fear (Flam 2008; Jasper 1998). Research on dissidents supports the view that angry, deeply moral, self-assured "I" often sustained by peers, community or social movements, retain their voice and thus the capacity to act after a trauma. The conformist "I" – whether on the side of the victim or the predator – becomes silenced, and its memory is fragmented (Flam 2008). Self-confidence and a sense of moral superiority are necessary prerequisites of critical action (Kleres 2005).

This study, examines how gender structures enable and circumscribe the efforts of NGO activists to transform the 'silenced' positioning of mothers of conscript soldiers through collective action. The following section presents a set of notions deployed for the analysis of contemporary social movements.

2. Social Movements and Change of Identity

The way in which movements are formed and evolve depends on the issue of protest and the larger social context which shapes them. No general theory of social movements is applicable to any movement in a variety of contexts. Contemporary social movements may be seen as collective actions organized in the form of loose networks, groups or organizations, whose agents share a certain basic conception of the world and feel solidarity with one another. Participants find themselves in conflict with the established system within a certain social area in which they act, express their protest, and try to bring about social change. Broadly defined, social change refers to the transformation of institutions and individual beliefs among the movement's supporters and the larger society. Protest actions and collective identities established by movements endure for some time. Social movements occur either outside the established channels for expressing grievances or use existing channels in innovative ways (della Porta and Diani 2006; Melucci 1996; Goodwin and Jasper 2003).

A social movement may be viewed as a form of 'action space' which a) is related to a *social conflict* b) is a *utopian context* related to the intention and action towards transcending the existing social order c) is constituted and integrated through *communicative praxis,* in which a certain tense world view is created and expressed not only through written and spoken manifestations but also through all actions. A *collective identity* through which the activists construct themselves as socio-political actors is formed through interwoven dimensions of formulating *cognitive frameworks.* These include the movement´s goals, means and environments, the initiation of the reflexive and affective relationships within groups, and making *emotional investments* in the relationships within groups (Peterson 1992: 4, 78; see also Melucci 1989: 10, 45, 43).

As summarized aptly by Helena Flam (2008: 1), individuals join in a successfully staged protest "when 1) they find the political structures either favourite or unbearable 2) generate their own or adopt external movement entrepreneurs who lead the way in diagnosing and mobilising others to find a way out what they define as the problematic or "issue" situation 3) draw upon their established social/organizational ties and identities 4) manage their material, emotional, and intellectual resources to create a new collective – assertive, critical, demanding – identity 5) an identity which blossoms when it is developed in quasi-therapeutic or ritualised encounters and/or dramaturgically staged in large demonstration, amplified by the mass media and put to the test in notable encounters with the opponent."

To understand why and how a social movement is produced it is important to analyze the interaction between the aforementioned dimensions and factors. Examples include the way in which institutional and ideological opportunities, mobilizing organizational structures, and collective identity framing are mutually interrelated, and their impact on the emergence and outcomes of a movement (Kamenitsa 1998).

In my study social movements are defined as agents of social change concerned with transforming subordinated groups and identities. Movements emerge when forms of social oppression may be recognized and alternative versions of the social reality and self-identity are produced and sustained. This study merges micro-/structuralist and cultural-constructivist approaches to social movements. Three moments are central in my approach: Firstly, the way in which the movement's constituency is positioned within the mainstream society; the movement interacts with the social context. Secondly, movements

are constituted through a set of structured face-to-face interactions or rituals, which generate emotions of pride, satisfaction. They are also the result of a shared group culture, i.e. symbols, meanings and feelings, increasing 'emotional energy' and encouraging engaging with the social surroundings (interacting with bystanders and the opponents). Thirdly, activists are involved in a high risk situation to make a 'change,' to change certain prevailing norms and values. They need to manage anxiety, maintain solidarity within the group, and transform their selves. Furthermore, the activists 'extend their selves' (self-expansion) during interactions with members of the constituency (community); and might also try to transform consciousness, rules for feelings, and the behaviors of the constituency (Summers-Effler 2005). Concepts of *reframing* the social reality, *deintegration*, and *breaching* are central for understanding how and why social movements are created and achieve social change. Further, concepts of *solidarity-building* and *self-expansion* help to explain how movements are sustained and interact with bystanders/potential recruits. These concepts are explained in the following sections of this chapter.

Reframing Social Reality

Symbolic production enables activists to attribute a meaning that facilitates mobilization to events and behaviors of individuals and groups (della Porta and Diani 2006). Activists in movements create an alternative set of cultural meanings and values in order to challenge the cultural codes of the mainstream society. Movements produce a sub-universe of meaning or 'oppositional symbolic reality' (Flam 2000). Within the context of asymmetries of power, social movements reappropriate culture in a given sector of society. Ann Swidler (1986: 279) stresses that the role of reappropriating the cultural repertoires increases in the periods of the 'unsettled lives.' Contemporary social movements, shaped around an ideology or value system, create their own specific spaces, which are both real and imaginative. Their actions often rely on developing certain *rituals*, totemic *symbols* and *narratives*. New meanings, structures of feelings and types of identities and identifications are constructed in these spaces (ibid.). By "doing framing

work" grievances, moral values, collective identity and claim of legitimacy are expressed in the ways which spur the support of potential participants (Ferree and Merrill 2003).

Symbolic activity in social movements has been described as *framing* or, in other words, creating different kinds of interpretative schemes (Snow et al. 1986). As they are recruited to protest groups, organizers and potential participants must "align" their "frames," and achieve a common definition of a social problem and a common prescription for solving it (ibid.). Snow and Benford (1992: 137) define a frame as following:

> an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one's present or past environment.

Snow and Benford (1992) distinguish three successive types of framing necessary for successful recruitment: *diagnostic*, in which a movement convinces potential converts that a problem needs to be addressed; *prognostic*, in which it convinces them of appropriate strategies, tactics and targets; and *motivational*, in which it encourages them to get involved in these activities. Frames are more likely to be accepted if they fit well the beliefs of potential recruits, involve empirically credible claims, are compatible with the life experiences of the audience, and fit the narratives the audiences tell about their lives.

The theoretical framework of this study integrates a concept of *reframing*, which was developed further by Helena Flam (2000: 69). She points out, that frame analysis which has been developed for Western democracies is based on the assumption that constructing frames is a free activity. In a democratic context, participants in movements have to compete with numerous frames that are diffused via the mass media. Individuals, who find a certain frame unappealing, might withdraw their support from the movement. The conditions for framing, however, are different in a repressive context, in which the regime might battle alternative interpretative frames. The most challenging task for activists is to create a viable frame when the ideological message and its organizational-technological diffusion are hindered by the opponents. In this context, the main effort of activists is not on reaching out and mobilizing potential supporters, but rather on *transforming the dominant frame* that is supported and diffused by the regime. When studying these movements it is important to understand how dissidents "manage to make

believable their version of reality to themselves and others" (ibid.: 70). As individuals'
actions are associated with risks and difficulties, a movement has to instill these risks with
symbolic value. Managing emotions thus gains particular importance in movements which
exist within a repressive context (ibid.).

Injustice Frame

One particular kind of frame which expresses a common conviction that existing
conditions are unjust is especially important (Jasper 1998). Gamson (1985) has developed
the concept injustice frame, which is a way of viewing a situation or condition that
expresses indignation or outrage over a perceived injustice, while finding some human
agency to blame for the transgression. The passion for justice is hence fuelled by anger
over injustice; negative emotions thus have a prominent role in the protest. Abstract norms
of justice gain some power from the positive emotions associated with them such as hope,
joy, and compassion. The contrast with an unjust situation and the negative motions, such
as a sense of threat, outrage, anger, and fear are, however, necessary for motivating action.
Negative emotions are powerful (Jasper 1998).

The movements´ symbolic work includes injustice frame or 'hot cognition' through
which the social nature of individual grievance is recognized (Gamson 1992). Protest
movements articulate the injustice frame and forge strategies for transforming feelings of
social alienation, frustration or shame which are the result of a form of social oppression.

Deintegration and Breaching

Social movements redefine dominant 'rules of feelings' about their own members, their
opponents, and other relevant aspects of reality (Flam 2005: 19). The emotional reframing
of 'reality' often predates and always accompanies its cognitive-normative reframing.
Social movements challenge the status-quo by reinterpreting some aspects of the social
reality, and calling for new, obligatory emotions and rules of feelings which they use to
mobilize individuals for collective action (ibid.).

One of the effects of the movements is the recognition by members that they participate in their own oppression. Activists aim to liberate themselves and each other of the emotional ties that bind them to the values and ideas of the dominant society (King 2005: 151). Maintaining an oppositional stance on issues requires activists to constantly negate the hegemonic messages and norms that permeate society. The concept of *deintegration* describes a process through which individuals separate themselves from society's dominant norms and values (ibid.). They need to do this to develop into reflective, creative, productive actors. Activists demonstrate non-commitment to dominant norms and realign their commitment to oppositional ideologies. This deintegration requires an engagement with the emotional as well as the rational cognitive attachments to internalized knowledge. To achieve and sustain an activist identity, they engage in emotional reflexivity which is the process through which emotional work is conducted (Hochschild 1979). They not only manipulate (through 'surface act' and 'deep act' (ibid.))[5] but also problematize their 'wrong' emotions. Without deintegration, individuals will be caught in the web of discourses and social structures that reproduce society (King 2005: 151). The deintegration requires the reframing of messages, situations or emotions in ways that are not aligned to the dominant framing rules (ibid.: 154).

Rules for framing provide the social guidelines by which individuals ascribe definitions or meanings to situations; they are the 'rules for managing feelings [which] are implicit in any ideological stance' (Hochschild 1979: 566). They influence the rules for feelings or the social expectations about how people should respond to a situation emotionally as well as the display rules which govern how these emotions should be expressed. Frames are socially constructed and they differ in different situations; the same situation may be framed in numerous ways and depends on perspective. The way in which this perspective is attained depends on the social norms and values to which you subscribe and whether or not these are hegemonic in your particular culture. Extracting yourself from the emotions related to a dominant frame and feeling emotions related to an oppositional frame may be more complex than extracting you from the dominant frame as the dominant framing process is constantly being reinforced, reiterated, and socially valued. This level of immersion often means that you are not even aware that you are acquiring the emotions associated with them (King 2005: 154). The organizational

---

[5] In order to feel the expected emotion it is possible to either surface act (pretend) or deep act and subsequently integrate the new emotional expectation (feeling rule) into the sense of the self (Hochschild 1979).

structure of a social movement challenges members to recognize and understand the ways in which they participate in the reproduction of oppression and the status quo (ibid.: 163).

Breaching refers to movements´ breach of boundaries of what is acceptable in the system of social relationships (Benski 2005: 59). Movements stage events which aim to reveal the underlying assumptions that hold society together.

Solidarity-Building and Self-Expansion

At the center of a mobilized movement is what Emile Durkheim called "collective effervescence" which is a product of "high ritual density" (quoted in Peterson 2001: 57). There is a physical assembly of people who participate in certain common action such as repeating certain gestures, chanting slogans, and who are aware of each one's unity with each other (Collins 2001: 28). When these elements are present, participants feel solidarity. They become filled with *emotional energy,* which manifests itself in self-confidence and enthusiasm. The emblems of the groups are created and allow the individuals to maintain feelings of dedication and to initiate new occasions of collective gathering. Finally, the emotional solidarity generates feeling of morality and own standards of right and wrong. Those who are outside the group are marked as unworthy or/and evil (ibid.).

As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, the activists' collective identity is formed through formulating *cognitive frameworks* concerning the movement´s goals, means and environments. At the same time, a collective identity is not simply the drawing of a cognitive boundary. It includes an emotion, a positive affect toward other group members on the grounds of the common membership. Defining oneself through the help of a collective label involves an affective as well as cognitive mapping of the social world. Participating in social movements may be pleasurable in itself, independent of the ultimate goals and outcomes. Protest becomes a way of saying something about one's morals, and of finding joy and pride in them. One may also have negative emotions about one's identity, such as shame or guilt and many movements are motivated to fight stigmatized identities (Jasper 1998).

Movements constitute, and are reproduced through, a shared group culture; storytelling and rituals confirm and constantly reproduce important beliefs and symbols. Collective action is shaped and originates in the 'moment of communion' when people came closer to each other, *physically* in the crowd, through spontaneous emotional *outbursts* and more *intense relations* with one another. This intensive emotional state might also be brought on by charismatic leaders, with help of chants, songs, gestures, and so on. A *sign*, an 'image of a sacred thing' may have a profound impact and connect the members. Through the ritual event, the members of the group remake it as a *moral* community. Powerful emotions unleashed are the substance of *group solidarity* (Peterson 2001: 58; see also Crossley 2002).

Emotions are structurally determined and micro-structural positions generate basic emotions (Scheff 2007). Culturally produced expectations and norms (Hochschild 1979) play a significant role in our understanding of the meaning of these experiences and how we behave in response to them (Summers-Effler 2005: 136). Based on these concepts, we may ask what kinds of social relational conditions favor emotions that enable movements to sustain themselves; how group cultures that support continued opportunities for building positive emotions (solidarity, high emotional energy, inclusion, pride) emerge from patterns of interactions (rituals, storytelling, etc.) within the groups.

Self-expansion refers to experiences of enlarging one's self to include another or others. This experience is emotionally rewarding and includes nurturing love, where one sacrifices one's own perfection to the perfection of one's neighbor. In this moment the needs and feelings of the other are experienced as our own. These feelings are central for maintaining solidarity with the community /neighbourhood (ibid.: 137).

3. Gender in Women's Movements

One important question is the impact of gender differences on understanding why and how women and men organize and participate in contemporary social movements. Gender is an essential explanatory factor in the emergence, course and outcome of protest groups. As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, *political constraints* and *opportunities* impinge on social movements. Changes in the larger political and cultural contexts can stimulate or

discourage people from participating in collective action. Changes in the gender regime of the institutional context are part of a broader set of political opportunities and limits (Taylor 1999: 14). The presence/absence and positioning of women in certain institutional arenas influence their access to the resources necessary for collective struggle, and the definition of goals and strategies.

In addition, new theories of social movements emphasize that identity and social location form contemporary activism. The gendered divisions encourage or impede the mobilization of the participants partially depending on their varying access to material and symbolic resources (Kuumba 2001: 56). A sense of *collective identity* and *ideological frames* are crucial in linking individuals to resistance struggles. Collective identities are used strategically in women's movements (Taylor and Whittier 1995).

Moreover, movements depend on whether aggrieved groups are able to develop the *organization* and solidarity necessary to mount a challenge. Pre-existing social resources such as informal networks, clubs, and formal organizations might provide incentives for people to take the risks associated with participating in protest groups. These mobilizing structures are frequently gendered. For example women-activists often draw on family ties and sex-segregated networks (Taylor 1999).

How the gendered identities and symbols operate in the process of social movements needs to be examined. The gendered nature of the movement includes contradictions; gender structures and ideologies might constrain the activities of social movements and the same gender patterns might enable certain actions and contribute to the emergence of social movements (Kuumba 2001; Taylor 1999). In my study of a maternal movement, changes in the post-Soviet gender order and the gender regime in the sphere of NGOs and in the military draft arena, as well as the activists' interpretation of symbolic identification with Mother are crucial for understanding the processes of political mobilization or/and women's passivity.

Maternal Movements and Symbol of Mother

The maternal movements are fuelled by and can strategically deploy their participants' gendered subjectivities. At the same time, they are constrained due to the women's limited

access to resources and power and the restrictions placed on women's roles in contemporary modern societies (Kuumba 2001).

The biological-essentialist interpretation of gendered subjectivity has a contradictory impact on the mobilization of women's movements. On the one hand, it might contribute to strengthening the ties of solidarity among the activists. On the other hand, it might prevent them from creating broader alliances with the movements´ allies. For example, as was mentioned earlier in this chapter, Forcey (1994: 355) criticizes the use of connections between women and peace which is often symbolized as the mother and the preserver of life. However, mothers do not have universal essential qualities derived from their roles as nurtures. Such beliefs are shaped as a result of oversimplifying the notion of a woman, denying her differences with other women and exaggerating her differences with men. We cannot assume a certain maternal peacefulness. Mothers' profound unease with militarism is usually intertwined with patriotic impulses, the romance of violence and self-righteousness on which militarism depends (Ruddick 1989).

A more useful interpretation of mothering may contribute to making caring to "travel out to become the responsibility of everyone" (Forcey 1994: 356). Caring labor should be a priority of society as a whole (Ruddick 2004). The strategy for peace politics should include a self-critical stance: One should realize that war is an activity, which is planned by human beings. It is important that women and mothers identify the actions which might cause suffering and actively oppose them: "A peacemaker's hope is a militarist's fear: that the rhetoric and passion of maternity can turn against the military cause that depends on it" (Ruddick 1989: 89).

Within states and political regimes where the sphere of public politics is predominately constructed as masculine, women's activities are often subsumed under the realm of motherhood. Such regimes try to depoliticize the women's sphere of activity, constructing a discursive order in which women and family become sites for maintaining a conservative national state (Radcliffe and Westwood 1993). When women participate in political resistance, they are protected by the patriarchal relations; the police do not treat them with the same level of violence. But women activists may *appropriate* the conservative maternal discourse. The image of the weak and powerless female may be transformed to their advantage as a means of protection for mobilization, resistance and survival. Both the supposed insignificance of women within the institutionalized polity

and their mission of caretakers for the family give their protests a shield of legitimacy. For examole, in Chile, mothers and grandmothers of the "disappeared" developed their strategy step by step. They built solidarity networks through casual contacts with one another, then engaged in the more public processes of collective protest through discursive constructions of motherhood disseminated by the military regime, and eventually gained the support of other human rights groups (Schirmer 1993).

The Construction of Transnational Feminism

In a critical analysis of transnational feminist praxis, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003) proposes to approach the women's movement in terms of an interdependent relationship between theory, history, and struggle. The very meaning of "feminism" is contested continuously; there are no simple ways of representing women's diverse struggles and histories (ibid.: 46). The term 'women' is not a given entity. The shared identity of 'Woman' in women's movements is a result of making connections between and among different struggles. For example, Mohanty explores the links among the histories and struggles of Third World women against racism, sexism, colonialism, imperialism, and monopoly capital. The movement, which was started by middle-class white women in the U.S. and Western Europe in the 1960-1970s, is locally and historically situated.

Following Mohanty (ibid.: 46), the women's movement can be viewed as an "imagined community" of oppositional struggles. It is 'imagined' as it suggests potential collaborations across divisive boundaries among women; 'community' because despite internal hierarchies, it suggests a commitment to "horizontal comradeship." As Mohanty stresses, the foundations for these struggles is not a nation or sex, but rather the way we think about nation, class, and gender: the links we choose to make among and between struggles. Women of all nations can potentially participate in these "communities." Our centrality in particular struggles, however, depends on our different, often conflicting, locations and histories. Women with divergent histories and social locations are united by their opposition to various forms of systemic dominance. Although these imagined communities are historically and geographically concrete, their boundaries are fluid. We are therefore unable to posit any homogeneous configuration of Russian Women who

form communities because they share gender and nation. Nations are not defined based on natural characteristics and gender cannot be defined as a universal entity.

These specific processes and struggles are sometimes not explored in feminist studies which apply cross-cultural notions of gender and sexual difference. Analytical strategies employed in the writings of feminists have political effects in the context of the hegemony of Western scholarship. Hegemonic white women's movements tend to appropriate struggles and suppress the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the Third World. For example, the concept of 'gender order' is an important analytical tool, but has limits, as it might exclude the analysis of power relations and processes of class, race, and ethnicity (ibid.: 23). Mohanty (ibid.) questions the privileged positioning of gender differences as the origin of oppression and of defining the female subject as limited to gender identity, thereby bypassing social class and national identity. Applying the notion of women as a homogeneous category to women in a non-Western context appropriates the pluralities of the simultaneous location of groups of women in a specific social class and national frameworks. Their historical and political agency is subsequently denied. As a result, the specifics of the daily existence and the complexities of political interests that women of different social classes and cultures represent and mobilize are not considered (ibid.).

Following Mohanty's and other sociologists' (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005) ideas, this study incorporates the intersectional approach to the effects of the gender order and gendered subjectivities on the SOMO movement in Russia. The impact of class, nation, geographical location, political culture on different women's gender positioning is considered.

Chapter 3

Data and Methods

Introduction

This chapter describes the empirical data and methods of this study. The dissertation is based on two different research methods. One is the analysis of the secondary literature about the historical and contemporary contexts of voluntary association and gender order in Russia, which is presented in Part II of the dissertation. The results of the study of the secondary literature about the military draft policy in post-Soviet Russia are presented in chapter 10. The second method is an empirical qualitative case study of the SOMO NGOs, which is presented in Part III. As I explain in more detail, the empirical study includes a pilot study of the HR NGOs and a main study of the HR SOMO NGOs. The results of the pilot study are incorporated both in Part II and Part III of the dissertation.

This chapter begins by describing the way in which I collected my empirical data. Secondly, I explain and discuss the strategies and procedures of my analysis. In addition, I explain the strategies of representing the results of the study. Finally, I discuss some ethical issues in relation to my qualitative interviews and participant observations and, in a broader sense concerned with the potential impact of my qualitative study upon the respondents' self-perceptions.

1. Data Collection

Sampling

I chose the setting of the HR SOMO for my empirical study through a two-step procedure of within-case sampling; in the pilot study of the HR NGOs and subsequently in the main

study. The sampling strategies evolved during the early phase of the data collection, which allowed me to take advantage of some unexpected findings, as I explain below.

The Pilot Study of the HR NGOs

In 2000, the relevant secondary sources which I consulted did not address the problems of civic activism from the perspective of its participants. It was a relatively new area in post-communist studies. My research therefore started with an explorative pilot study. The preliminary research questions included who became a civic activist and how; the way in which organizations were formed and sustained; in which ways they were useful to its members, and how the meaning of civic activism was produced.

The identification and selection of informants was made through strategic convenience sampling and snowballing. After consultations with several Russian sociologists who specialized in the research of civil society, I chose to study the human rights NGOs. This category of NGOs is more politically oriented and critical towards the political elites than the associations which deal with charity, self-help, or other issues (Sungurov 1999a). This suited my research problem.

The case of the human rights NGOs may be seen as 'theory-based' (Miles and Huberman 1994: 28). In other words, the HR NGOs were identified as empirical instances, or cases of my theoretical understanding of what constitutes a social movement organization. The organizations were chosen as cases of the same issue (social movement organization) as a result of the interaction between my ideas and the available empirical evidence (Ragin 1997: 10).

The setting was also chosen based on practical considerations. As I lacked personal contacts among the NGOs activists, which was important to gain access to the field, I asked a Russian sociologist to introduce me to the NGO leaders with whom she had good contact. My research subject and my background as a Russian and a sociologist from a Swedish research institution made a good impression on the leaders. In addition, I knew that this setting was not the only case; I could easily find other human rights organizations in the same city, as well as in other cities. The setting was thus suitable and feasible for research purposes.

Sampling within the setting of the HR NGOs occurred by the means of snowballing. The interviewees gave tips and information about additional organizations and activists.

Snowballing is useful for identifying key informants in social contexts which are difficult to access. It may provide background information which helps to choose analytically useful respondents (Gustafson 2002: 44). The problem with this method, however, is that it might exclude informants outside the social network used by the researcher (ibid.). The initial idea of my pilot study was to identify important common patterns in the human rights activists' self-organization. I thus strived to achieve a maximum variation among the informants who represented different HR NGOs (Miles and Huberman 1994: 28, 29; Ryen 2004: 78). In order to minimize the bias of the snowballing, I specifically asked the respondents to recommend organizations and activists, who differ on certain factors. This allowed me to include respondents of various ages ("young" HR-defenders as opposed to a generation of former Soviet dissidents), working by different methods (analytical, practical), and in various social spheres (the mass media, migration, the army, prisons, and others). The respondents included 20 females and 16 males ranging from 22 to 60 years old with different professional occupations.

The Case of the HR SOMO NGOs

Within the setting of the HR NGOs, I chose the case of the SOMO NGOs based on three different criteria of sampling: The SOMO is a *confirming* case which allows elaboration on the initial analysis of the HR NGOs. Further, it meets some key *criteria*: It represents a social movement, it is rooted in the local constituency, and it works using practical methods. Finally, the case is *opportunistic* as it follows a new lead and allows taking advantage of the unexpected, which I had discovered in the pilot study: the significance of gender (see Miles and Huberman 1994: 28). The factor of gender was not initially a part of the research design, but was added in the later phase of my study in 2003-2005.

Two separate SOMO organizations located in different large cities were included in the case. The core activists in the organizations are women and both organizations mobilize around the issue of the human rights in the military draft arena. They have, however, developed different ideologies and group cultures. This sampling was not driven by a concern for representativeness of the case such as for the civil society or women's movement in post-Soviet Russia. The choices of respondents and interactions were instead driven by a conceptual question about forms and sense-making of grassroots

women's/mothers' civic activism. I needed to see different instances of the construct of maternal activism, in different places, with different people (see Miles and Huberman 1994: 29). I sought to generate ideographic knowledge, which focuses on culturally unique features in the object of study (Ryen 2004: 26). The intention was not to generalize the findings to other settings.

Interviews

In the pilot study, from November 2000 to May 2001, I carried out 36 explorative and semi-structured qualitative interviews with members of 14 HR NGOs, located in two different large cities.[6] The duration of the interviews varied from 40 to 90 minutes. All interviews were taped and partly transcribed.

In the main study, 22 interviews with 17 activists of the SOMO NGOs, 2 men and 15 women, were conducted in five rounds during my trips to Russia in 2000-2005. In one SOMO organization I interviewed 7 members and in the other I interviewed 10 activists. Some activists were interviewed twice. As not all the activists were involved in the routine daily work or they were involved only during certain periods of time, I did not have the chance to meet all members of organizations.

The majority of the interviews were carried out on the NGO premises during working hours, except for two interviews, which were carried out at home and at a café. The activists have a high workload and it was hard for them to find time for the interviews. It was therefore often not possible to make very long in-depth interviews. The interviews were sometimes interrupted by long-distance phone calls from other cities or abroad. They lasted from three quarters to an hour and a half. All interviews were taped and transcribed.

Several informal and formal interviews with young draftees and mothers of draftees who visited the SOMO were conducted. These interviews highlighted the organizations from a different perspective and helped to understand the complexity of the phenomenon.

---

[6] I have interviewed members of organizations of Memorial, Civic Watch, Moscow Helsinki Group, Independent Legal Expert Commission, Centre for Development of Democracy and Human Rights, the Committee for Civil Rights, Interregional Foundation for Civil Society, Foundation of Glasnost Defense, Young People's Centre of Human Rights, Civil Assistance, Youth Centre of Human Rights and Legal Culture, Forum of Migration Organizations, All-Russian Social Movement "For Human Rights", and the Centre in Memory of Andrei Sakharov.

The first round of the interviews with the SOMO activists was explorative and open-ended: a conversation with a structure and a goal (Kvale 1996: 13). The respondents were asked about 1) biographical paths into and their motivations for activism 2) current tasks carried out in the organization 3) routine strategies, events, and the experienced difficulties in the organizations. Not all activists were equally willing to talk at length about their personal lives. Many of them had been interviewed before by journalists, who had seemed primarily interested in dramatic stories of the activists' sons-soldiers. For example, one of the activists, who perhaps thought that I was also curious about her son's story, refused be interviewed. Some activists were more open about their past, while others were very brief in their personal tales. This rendered the interpretation and analysis of the activists' biographical paths difficult.

In the second round, the interviews were semi-structured and focused on certain themes, which were identified through a preliminary analysis of the first round of interviews. The respondents were asked about five-six topics concerning their interactions with 1) the constituency of mothers and soldiers 2) the state and military institutions 3) journalists 4) Western donors, and foreign organizations 5) other NGOs, and 6) gender as a factor in their socio-political activism. The activists in both organizations had divided various kinds of work among themselves. Not every respondent could talk with detail and precision on all five-six topics. For example, Western donors and organizations from abroad were contacted mainly by leaders, who in both cases were the only people who knew English. Some members were mainly preoccupied with meeting their constituency on a daily basis, others worked exclusively with the legal aspects of individual cases. I slightly revised and adapted the interview questionnaire in each interview and followed up the activists' individual perspectives. The purpose of the interviews was not to compare the narratives of the respondents. I asked, however, most respondents about all five-six topics and discovered different viewpoints on different aspects of their movement. I evaluated the consistency of the respondents' narratives and reconstructed a common story of each organization.

Participant Observation, and Field Relations

I used observation and participant observation to complement and go beyond the activists' verbal narratives in the interviews. In the fall 2000, I started my research project with a two-month period of observations in one of the organizations. During 2001, 2002, and 2003, I made additional observations in both organizations. Following Becker's guidelines (1998) I spent time hanging around and trying to figure out what was going on. In the NGO locales, I observed the physical milieu, got impressions of the typical visual symbols, learned about the routine interactions among the actors and participated in them. For example, I took part in the "group of mutual support" which accompanied a young draftee during his medical check-up in the local military draft board. On other occasions, I joined the activists in the court, when they acted as lay defenders of a soldier's mother who was taking legal action against the local draft board. Once, I participated in the SOMO's officially sanctioned anti-war picket in the city.

Through the close interactions and relationships with respondents in the field, I personally experienced some aspects of the shared culture of the activist groups. Knowledge is not mediated only through the verbal language. There are other kinds, such as 'bodily knowing,' 'knowing through feeling,' 'experience-based knowledge' (Davies 1999: 128). Other researchers stress that to experience emotions on site while participating in the activists' actions is a method of understanding the emotional work that is conducted by the activists (Summers-Effler 2005: 140). Through participating in the SOMO's events and routine rituals, I co-experienced feelings of despair, empathy, hope which were expressed, during the mass meetings and workshops of the School of Human Rights. These were regularly held by the activists for potential draftees and mothers. I was approximately in the same age as most of the mothers who attended the workshops, which made it easier for me to identify with their feelings. At the same time, being 'too close' created problems. For example, during participant observations I did not write down things which seemed unremarkable and some valuable data was lost (see Davies 1999).

The problem with recording the data during the observations was that they were conducted during the first phase of the research process, when the research questions were still vaguely formulated. As a result, I tried to write down everything I could. In many cases the greatest amount of data was collected at the expense of a more selective focus on

the verbal and non-verbal details of interactions. Analyzing and interpreting this kind of field notes is difficult. They were ultimately used mainly as a means for sensitizing the organizational contexts; a background to what was said and expressed in the interviews.

Participant observations may also create problematic situations. Some field researchers have reported that they experienced their personality as plastic, they not only did things they would usually not do, but they also held opinions they would usually not hold (Fangen 2005: 148). I encountered similar problems. On one occasion, the activists asked me to take a soldier, who had run away from his unit and tried to commit suicide, to a temporal shelter with a family in the city. While I agreed to help, I realized that if caught by the police, I would risk my position as a researcher representing an official institution. It was a difficult dilemma; and I felt extremely relieved to hear that someone else would accompany the soldier. However, when I reflected on this episode afterwards, I realized that it was a valuable experience. It allowed me to feel what it means to participate in a high-risk movement.

Erving Goffman (1989, in Fangen 2005: 144) argued that fieldwork is not good enough unless the researchers keep up with the same body rhythm as the subjects and feels attracted by the members in the group. Many field researchers report that the local culture can only be understood by participating in it. For example, Öygarden studied the boxing milieu by participating in boxing and reported feeling knowledge "in his bones" (2001, cited in Fangen 2005: 148). There may be a risk of 'going native' and turning into a "non-observing participant" (Fangen 2005: 147). I preserved a distance to the field by trying to record the observational data as field notes or with help of tape recorder (during the mass meetings). In my case, the risk of 'going native' was minimized by the fact that I did not stay in the field for a very long time. Instead, I returned to the field after a break which lasted several months.

I alternated between the roles of *participant* and *observer* in the field. Most of the time, I was not an "activist," but a "sympathizing researcher." In some situations such as when I joined a "group of mutual support" in the local draft board, the military treated me like one of the "mothers-activists."

Field relations included both "closeness" and "distance" to the respondents (Repstad 2007). In some situations, one consequence of researching the "oppositional" movement was to be perceived as its proponent. For example, when I interviewed a military

journalist, he tried to persuade me that I had chosen to study the "wrong" SOMO organization. He recommended that I instead should write about the pro-government SOMO where, as he put it, there were "real" soldiers' mothers, who were "sad and very poor" (interview, November 2001). In the end, he tried to warn me: "When you get in trouble, call me, I will help you." He seemed very friendly and sincere. I did not use this interview in the analyses and I tried to forget about it until the moment of writing this chapter. Applying the "memory work" (Haug 1987, cited in Esseveld 1999) and *reflectivity* resulted in a new understanding of the interview situation and I was able to see it as in a larger social context. In the field, the researcher is not only an observer, but is also observed and socially constructed by the respondents (Hellum 2002: 46). The young military officer constructed and positioned me as a gendered and national subject. It is subsequently "natural" that a woman, who apparently took the side of the "disloyal citizens," should be morally guided, disciplined, and given protection; which is what the respondent tried to do. Reflecting on this experience in the field allowed me to gain more concrete knowledge about the hostile social context in which the SOMO acted. This in turn facilitated my analyses and interpretation of the interview narratives.

The activists perceived me as being on "their side." For example, they asked if I could write a book about them. I had to decline their proposal and explain that my research concerns a wider aspect of the SOMO movement, rather than just one organization. Other respondents perceived me as an outsider. My profession as a sociologist was sometimes viewed as a "boring science" or perceived as analogous with that of a journalist. This was sometimes a hindrance. At the same time, when I explained that I worked by methods, which highlight the voices of respondents, the activists spoke willingly to somebody who was interested in listening to their stories.

These examples illustrate some of the problems regarding the asymmetric relationship of authority and privilege between researcher and respondents. On the one hand, I was constructed in the field through a web of expectations and positionings. On the other hand, I preserved the discursive power to choose how to represent relationships and events in the final research report. This produces a number of ethic issues, which I discuss in the last section of this chapter.

Documents

I collected and analyzed two types of documents: the Russian press articles about soldiers´ mothers (activists) and the SOMO's own written and electronic documents.

Selecting and Approaching the Press Articles

The collection of articles aimed at finding and selecting appropriate print materials which reflected a range of discursive representations of soldiers' mothers in Russian mass media. The selection of materials for discursive analysis might start with formulating a research problem (Tonkiss 1998: 251). My research problem was: What is the significance of a certain use of language in these documents? How is a specific role for mothers put forward to address problems of the military draft in the Russian army?

Thirty five articles published in 1998-2005 were identified and selected mainly with the help of the electronic search engines on the Russian Internet. A variety of discourses was assured through a sampling strategy including the media outlets belonging to different owners with a range of political-ideological standpoints. The following newspapers were selected as sources:

- the state military daily *Krasnaia Zvezda*,
- the government's official daily *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*,
- the openly oppositional weekly *Novaya Gazeta*,
- the liberal moderately oppositional *Nezavisimaia Gazeta,*
- the liberal *KommersantЪ-Daily* oriented to the readers from the new middle-class and business elite,
- *AiF* (*Argumenty i Fakty*), and
- *MK* (*Moskovskii Komsomoletz*), both of a broader popular character.

In addition, several articles from other newspapers were included in the sample. The range of sources which I could use was limited to newspapers which publish electronic versions on the Internet and which I was able to access from my computer. The sampling

did not aim at being representative of the Russian press at that period of time. The following section provides an additional explanation of the strategies and procedures of my analysis of discourse.

The SOMO Documents

I collected the written and electronic documents produced by NGO activists in addition to narratives produced by individual interviews. They include articles or papers which were written by some of the activists; I received them personally or downloaded them from the SOMO websites on the Internet. Further, I received the published stenographical reports from the activists which included speeches and resolutions from their meetings and workshops. These publications were financially supported by different Russian and foreign sponsors.

The latter kind of documents in particular widened the empirical scope of the study. For example, it allowed a study of the discursive processes during the mass meetings among the local SOMO groups within the movement. The documents reflect the atmosphere, tensions and shifts in the interactions among various groups of activists; between the activists and the military justice organs or the military officials. With the help of these documents, contradictions and negations of the meaning of civic activism in the SOMO movement could be traced on the level of inter-organizational communication.

One limitation of this study is that I did not have access to the organizations' formal documentation, such as documents showing their financial status.

2. Analyses

I made two separate types of analysis: First, of the interview transcriptions and the activists' documents and second of the press materials. This section begins with a brief discussion of methodological considerations about the kinds of knowledge produced with the help of qualitative methods and the relationship between data and theory. I proceed to outline the strategies and procedures of two kinds of analysis.

Data, Theory, and Analytic Generalization

What respondents say in interviews and write in documents can be analyzed at least in two different ways: as resource and topic. I approached these data primarily as a *resource,* that is, as a source of *true accounts* of social situations (Seale 1998: 209, my emphasis). This approach treats interview data as a resource for discovering aspects outside the interview situation. Many interpreters and feminist social researchers hold a realist epistemological viewpoint that more authentic accounts may be gained in qualitative interviews of a certain format. It involves developing relationships of trust and proximity between researcher and respondents, being flexible in the interview situation and being as open as possible about our own agendas and the purposes of the research (ibid.: 208). By observing/participating in the 'natural' setting, while avoiding to become part of it and by using the respondents´ own words, I can show what they do and think (see Walsh 1998: 224; Ryen 2004: 32; Miles and Huberman 1994: 8). I assume that I have gained access to the social reality from the perspective of the activists. The interviews and documents shed a light on their activities, subject positions, and sense-making which they describe as a result of belonging to a civic activism organization. I use their statements to illustrate my conclusions; the quotes are important for the reliability of the study (see Ryen 2004).

This kind of approach is developed in critical research. The interviews are viewed as interactional contexts in which the social worlds of individuals, societies, and historical epochs can be made comprehensible as contextually embedded wholes (Richardson 1995: 201). It is stressed that we do not have direct access to the experiences of the respondents, but rather to their representations of their experiences (Widerberg 1996). We understand the human experience as a narrative. I interpreted and understood the activists' experiences through their personal or "biographic stories" and their "collective story" (Richardson 1995). The collective story of mothers-activists was constructed in the interviews and documents in opposition to the hegemonic "cultural story" (ibid.; Kincheloe and McLaren 2005). The cultural story is produced in the arena of military draft politics from the hegemonic perspective of the dominant actors including trans-/national elites, groups of men, and others.

Further, I integrated my approach to the data as a resource by treating it as a *topic*. The accounts of the interviewees or their documents can be viewed as the linguistic

repertoire, on which they draw. Certain words, phrases, and ideas which are typical of certain popular discourses are used to achieve certain effects (Seale 1998: 212). Interview data cannot be read as a literal description of social action (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Miles and Huberman 1994: 9). The interviews include a crucial discrepancy between the descriptive and interpretative dimensions of a conversation (Kvale 1996: 32). The data reveal the interpretative practices of respondents which occur in relation to the specific interactional and discursive occasion (Seale 1998: 213). In addition, the respondents construct their accounts in relation to multiple and changing social realities. For example, during the interviews, the respondents presented different explanations of the issue at different times. Sometimes they used "impression management" to construct self-identities which reflected how they wanted others, including the researcher, to see them. An additional example is the shift in the collective self-representation in the documents. In the early 2000s, the SOMO shifted from using the language of "defenders of human rights" to applying the terms of "women's movement."

As explained above, the interview and documentary data in my study have the analytic status of resource *and* topic. I explain that by the complexity of the social reality, in which humans are both positioned within institutions and producing/changing them. In the narratives, the respondents partly reflect their social positioning through gender, nationality, socio-economic status, education and partly challenge and change it. The respondents´ interpretations of the events and their interactions are influenced by the social conditions. The memories and experiences which the respondents activate in the interviews are selective. The choice of the themes and experiences upon which they touch tells something about their positions and the collective experiences and beliefs that dominate in the sphere of the NGOs in Russia. In the analyses I consider 1) what the activists say, 2) how they say it (linguistic repertoire) and 3) how they stage interactions with others.

Connected with the analytical status of the data is the question of the possibility to make *generalizations*. The purpose of qualitative studies is not to generalize from the sample to the population. An interpretative (narrative) explanation and understanding is produced by relating individual and group stories to the larger social contexts (Richardson 1995). Further, a researcher looks for concepts and models which account for the empirical findings. Theories and hypotheses in a qualitative study are not 'tested,' but

'generated' by systematically comparing the data with existing theory and relevant empirical studies.

To produce and critically develop concepts and models through interaction between data and existing theories is a way to create "analytic generalization" (Miles and Huberman 1994: 28; Yin 2009). The described actions and interpreted meanings can be explained in a more abstract way. For example, I constructed the concepts "maternal activist," "courage" in the NGO sphere, and others. While these explanations may be considered "internally" valid, they may gain added explanatory strength if they are connected to theoretical models outside the actual empirical study (Miles and Huberman 1994: 279). In my study, actions described and categorized in terms of "maternal activist" may be viewed as "framing" or "reframing" of the social reality by social movements. Furthermore, I suggested a framework for understanding reframing adapted to the context of post-Soviet society. The findings suggest that the theoretical construct of reframing may be developed. This development involved comparing, translating and synthesizing studies of similar phenomena in contemporary Russia, other post-communist countries, and in the transnational arena.

In the following part of this section, I describe the strategies and procedures of the two kinds of analysis of the case study: coding and categorization of the interview transcriptions and activists' documents and discourse analysis of the press articles.

Coding and Categorization

The analysis in a qualitative study is not a linear, but an "iterative" process. It does not start and end at certain points in the research process, but is ongoing during all phases (Ryen 2004: 116). In the pilot study of the HR NGOs, the transcribed and taped interviews were analyzed using techniques of coding and identification of recurrent themes (ibid.). Including a wide range of various organizations in the pilot study encouraged me to think comparatively and to identify similarities and differences in the activists' accounts. The material shows a variety of activists' individual motivations, biographical, and social circumstances of joining the NGOs. A set of themes crystallized in the interviews, including:

- The relationship between the civil society and the state, as two separate and interrelated entities
- The memory of the Soviet civic resistance and passivity
- The role of the Third Sector of NGOs: Is it charity or civil society?
- How a 'voice' of the local community is represented by the activists-intelligentsia
- Western donors in the sphere of NGOs and their cultural, political, financial influences
- The varying access of activists to material resources depending on education, age, and place of residence

Based on the findings of the pilot study I refined the research questions in the dissertation.

In the study of the SOMO NGOs, analysis started when I began to make observations and conduct interviews in the field. I brought into the field some of the concepts from existing theories and empirical studies about civil society, NGOs, and women's movement in Russia, which I had read.

The next step in the analysis occurred as the taped interviews were transcribed. I made as exact transcriptions as possible, noting pauses and expressions of feelings. Listening again and writing down the activists' narratives helped to identify the key elements in their collective stories. It was a beginning to find a pattern in the recurrent themes in the data.

When I read and reread the transcribed the narratives of the interviews and the activists' documents, I tried to understand what the written words might mean and represent. Some terms were subsequently given a significance of *key* words (codes) and were put together under a number of rubrics or categories. These rubrics and the contents which they covered guided my synthesis of theoretical notions. With the help of a theoretical perspective I tried to analyze what the respondents' words represented. Interpretations were reconsidered, deepened, or changed.

Coding is a step in which the analysis of the data is organized to become familiar with the settings and the events occurring within it, as well as with the research participants. "Codes are active, immediate and short. They focus on defining action, explicating implicit assumptions, and seeing process" (Charmaz 2005: 521). Civic activism may have

many meanings. The focus is on *action*: what do research participants see as routine? What do they define as problems? (ibid.: 523) I broke down the interviewees´ "stories" and based on the data accounts, I defined and organized the major aspects of the SOMO's patterned action of civic activism. Data was compared with data, data with category and category with category. I focused on *meaning and process* by addressing subjective, situational and social levels (see ibid.: 522).

In the following example I illustrate how the category "courage in the NGO sphere" was identified and interpreted in the data. The codes which have been identified in the interviews and put together under this category are presented in the left column of the table:

"Builder of life" (in vivo concept) – the goal is not organizational survival or PR-techniques	When an organization exists for the sake of receiving grants, it becomes skilful in transforming a little success into a great victory and selling it to a good price. But our technique is different. We are the builders of life. (Interview with the SOMO activist, 2003)
"not passive," such as large and bureaucratic advocacy non-profit organizations	Many other large, and good organizations including international organizations such as Human Rights Watch, are observers. Their [passive] position [can be often expressed like] I am sick, I did not understand, I do not feel like it at the moment. And it is not a big deal, because they stand at the side, because it is not a matter of human lives. (Ibid.)
represent "grassroots" constituency, respond to the individual grievances	When you are included in this, and the lives and freedom of humans depend on you, you certainly chose this individual grievance. Only when something accumulates, and takes form, you starts to see things … (Ibid.)
"effective action," getting along with the authorities	We work very efficiently with them, and we get along with the authorities, we can resolve any individual complaints, even the most complicated. (Interview with the SOMO activist, 2005)
"are limited" by the official political authorities	They set a line of absolute limit for us: You may go up to here, we allow you to work with the individual complaints. Some time ago, we could pressure the Duma to adopt amnesty [for soldiers-runaways] or an amendment to the law. But now, they have cut our wings. We became a kind of Ambulance, but our strategic goal actually is to abolish the conscription system.

A series of codes referred to sense-making of activism, such as related to maternal identity and grievance, a range of emotions, strategies for networking with other NGOs, organizational survival and finding sponsors, interacting with the authorities, "bridging" with women's movements, and others were identified. The links between codes and categories were created.

The categories were compared with models in existing empirical studies about maternal movements and the concepts from the gender-theoretical and theoretical perspectives on social movements. For example, I found some similarities between my data and existing empirical models of maternal movements in Russia, such as created by Zdravomyslova (1999), Caiazza (2002), Hojer (2004), Oushakine (2004), and Sundstrom (2006a). In addition, I find similarities between my data and existing theories about reframing in social movements within a "repressive" regime (Flam 2000), women's movements in the transnational context (Mohanty 2003), construction of gender in the maternal movements (Ruddick 1989, 2004; Taylor 1999), and the gendered civil society of NGOs in the post-Soviet context (Salmenniemi 2005). At the same time, as explained in the final chapter of the dissertation, my findings suggest a few possible expansions and revisions of existing empirically based models and theoretical concepts.

Discourse Analysis

Earlier in this chapter I described the way in which the mass media articles were identified and selected. The press material was analyzed using discourse analysis. Discursive representations of the soldiers' mothers in the mass media were analyzed to describe the discursive context, in which the activists' movement was created. Discourses produced via mass media constitute an important social dimension in contemporary urban Russia. The data suggest that the SOMO activists constructed a sub-universe of meaning in opposition to the hegemonic discourse in the military arena. It was therefore necessary to go outside the setting of the SOMO NGOs to understand the significance of what went on within it.

The language and texts may be studied as forms of discourse which help to create and reproduce systems of social meaning. It entails assuming a critical stance towards the

use of language in social settings. Texts are sites in which social meanings are reproduced and social identities are formed. A narrative discourse is an important cultural factor which some social groups might have en interest in controlling (Fahlgren 1999: 26). The power of a discourse consists in its ability to seem natural or obvious; reality is defined and produced through discourse (Foucault 1993). Different discourses do not have the same level of legitimacy or of power. Those which represent different ways of viewing and defining reality are in conflict; they participate in the discursive struggle about hegemony which in its turn influences and forms discourses. Hegemonic discourses are those which occasionally have a privileged position in defining reality (Lauclau and Mouffe 1984). Discourses might reproduce power relationships. The ideological function of discourse is fulfilled by closing down and fixating the meaning, which results in the exclusion of possible alternative understandings (Hall 1996; Sahlin 1999).

Analyzing discourse is chaotic, and there are no strict rules for how to do it, but some techniques exist which may be adapted and applied. I used the following main steps: I defined the research problem and selected the data set; I sort, coded and analyzed the text to find out the following: What are the recurrent categories, themes, and terms? What ideas cluster around them? What associations are being established? Is a certain reading implied by the way in which the text is organized (Tonkiss 1998: 255).

I coded and analyzed texts based on the research questions: What is the significance of a certain use of language in the articles describing the arena of the military draft politics? *How is the specific role of the mother of a soldier put forward to address problems of the military service in the army?*

I looked for the repetition of key words, phrases and images; consistency within and between texts, and for patterns of variations. I tried to identify how alternative accounts are rhetorically counted and combated (ibid.: 256, 257). Based on my theoretical perspective, I sought to understand how the use of language associated with the notions of mother and maternal feelings contribute to, or challenge, the hegemonic cultural meanings of sexual difference, class, nationality, and political culture.

3. Representation

This dissertation is based on my interpretation of the Russian activists' actions and narratives, which are translated from the oral, everyday Russian language into the written academic English language. I have played the role of both academic researcher and *cultural intermediary*. I translated quotes from Russian not primarily word by word, but through a rewording which more adequately reflected the content of the statement. However, culture cannot be fully translated. Some shifts and loss of the meaning of notions and expressions have occurred. For example, the term *"obschestvennaya"* organization can be translated as public, social, or voluntary organization. Some part of meaning of the Russian term is nevertheless lost or distorted. After this text was edited by an external English editor, I have checked the edition of the Russian quotes.

The understanding of information is partly shaped by a person's unconscious cultural beliefs and conventional rules of feeling. This dissertation has therefore been shaped through a dialogue with my own biographical narrative. My Russian background and the social locations influenced the ways in which I gained access to the field, collected, interpreted information, and represented knowledge. My past life in the Soviet Union and implicit knowledge of the social rules were a great resource during the fieldwork and the social encounters in Russia. At the same time, my Russian origin might have made me blind to certain aspects of the phenomena I studied.

My own unconscious understanding of Russian gender identity, political engagement, and national belonging were brought into the interviews. However, new knowledge was produced through my actions in the field and when I reflected on the consequences of these actions. For example, when one interviewee unexpectedly asked me a question about my husband, whether or not he was ever interested in how I manage the household economy, I could immediately understand and agree with her point. During the analysis of the interview, I related this part of the interview to the context of the Soviet gender discourse describing "strong woman and weak man, acting as a big child" (Gal and Kligman 2000). The other example is the alienation from political participation as something I could understand intuitively, relying on my memory of the Soviet past. I was, however, also able to compare memories with my recent experiences of a different political system in contemporary Sweden. Such comparisons helped me to detach from

my own preconceptions of the Russian-Soviet mentality and to situate the activists' 'voices' in the local culture.

4. Ethical Aspects

In a qualitative study ethical issues include informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, how the data have been used and if feedback was received from the respondents (Ryen 2004: 156; Repstad 2007). When I met respondents for the first time I explained the purpose of the interviews and the study; I told them that participation was voluntary, that their anonymity would be protected and that nobody else would have access to the taped interviews and the field notes. I removed the information that might allow readers to identify the respondents in quotations from the interviews and documents. I have used only fictitious names and changed them in various chapters of the dissertation. In addition, I did not reveal the names of the organizations and their geographical location. I received ongoing feedback from the respondents when I returned to the field and presented (orally) my preliminary analyses and interpretations.

A broader kind of ethical questions is: Who will benefit from my study? Do I damage or exploit people in any way (see Miles and Huberman 1994: 288)? These questions are related to the question of the researcher's authority and privileges in the relationship with respondents. The key question is how not to produce the Other while thinking that the researcher is giving "voice" to and empower the marginalized groups (see Davies 1999; Fine 1994). I was aware that it is important not to represent women-mothers as powerless 'victims' of the social order and the existing political regime. I focused on the interpretation of the activists' "collective story," which to a certain extent is in conflict with and challenge the dominant "cultural story" reflecting women's subordinated position. My interpretations and analysis highlight the activists´ multiple positioning, as not only mothers, but also human rights activists, and participants in transnational women's networks. Further, I hope that this study contributes to some new insights and stimulates a continued conversation about grassroots activism, gender and democratic social change in Russia, in academic circles as well as among members of NGOs, starting with those who are able to read in English. It does not mean limiting to the

academic elite as I know that there is an ongoing active cooperative exchange of ideas between activists with various kinds of competence.

PART II

CONTEXT - NGOs, GENDER ORDER, WOMEN'S NGOs IN RUSSIA

Chapter 4

The Sphere of Non-Governmental Organizations

Introduction

This chapter describes the historical background and contemporary conditions of the sphere of NGOs in post-Soviet Russia. It clarifies the dualistic legacy of the Soviet voluntary organizations, which were both subordinated to the state and provided services for their members. The Soviet counter-cultural and informal groups are described. The size, participants, and socio-economic conditions of the voluntary NGO sector are explained. Further, this section describes the impact of the post-Soviet transformation on the Russians' perceptions of socio-economic grievances and on civic culture. Finally, the chapter describes the ideology, the historical background and work methods in the human rights NGOs.

1. The Emergence of NGOs

The civic NGOs in post-Soviet Russia have their roots in the Soviet social organizations (*obshchestvennye organizatsii*) and particularly in the proliferation of the informal groups (*neformaly*) during Gorbachev's perestroika. Since the perestroika period, independent citizens' organizations reappeared on the Russian civic arena after being prohibited for about fifty years. By the early 2000s, a range of independent groups and movements, which had a voice and a certain degree of political influence, existed legally.

At the same time, the past continues to shape Russian attitudes to civic engagement and state control (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 319). To understand the way in which elements of change and continuity coexist and interact in the sphere of non-governmental organizations in contemporary Russia, the Soviet legacy of citizens' organizations needs to be considered as well as the main tendencies in the changing beliefs and attitudes towards civic self-organization. The following two sections explain the dualistic legacy of

the Soviet organizations, the phenomenon of informal groups, and the ways in which attitudes towards social activism in general are changing in the post-Soviet context.

The Dualistic Legacy of the Soviet Social Activism

The emergence of independent groups and organizations involved a rebirth of autonomous voluntary associations in Russia. While voluntary and service organizations thrived throughout pre-revolutionary Russia and have a rich history, tsarist autocracy tended to control voluntary associations (see Clowes et al. 1991; Hosking 2001; Bradley 2002; Pipes 1995), which continued and tightened further in Soviet Russia.

The concept of civil society developed historically in the West assumes a clear distinction, and sometimes opposition, between state and society (Seligman 1992). But in the Soviet Union, by 1930, social organizations such as the trade union, the *Komsomol* and others were either created by the state or closely integrated with it. Resources to the organizations came from the state and the organizations had equal opportunity to influence decision-making as a governmental ministry. These organizations contributed to reproducing the centralized state (Evans, Jr. et al. 2006).

The scholarly understanding of Soviet social organizations as mere "transmission belts" between the Communist Party and the masses, lacking any autonomous life, however, has been criticized lately. Based on new work of Russian historians produced since the beginning of the 1990s and new empirical studies, researchers highlight the *dualistic* legacy of the Soviet organizations which were both subordinated to the state while providing services for their members (Evans, Jr. et al. 2006; Yurchak 2006).

The party's control of social organizations intensified from the early 1920s and throughout the 1930s (Yanitsky 1991). The main tendency was to suppress spontaneous social initiatives and to direct all the organizations to achieving the goals of the state. The party leadership created the concept of a "new public" (*novaia obshchestvennost'*) in which social organizations were to be created at the initiative of the political regime (Evans, Jr. et al. 2006: 32). Many independent organizations were closed throughout the

1920s and the development of the *nomenklatura*[7] system guaranteed that the top officials in social associations were approved by the party. As a result, the leaders of the organizations were appointed from above and owed their loyalty first to their superiors rather than to the rank and file (ibid.: 32, 33; see also Nichols 1996). By the end of the 1930s, citizens were organized in mass organizations sponsored by the party and state, which aimed to embrace, to reform, and to support them from cradle to grave. In addition, individuals often viewed membership in these organizations as a necessary step in their professional or political careers.

The social organizations were given a *dualistic* orientation. For example, the trade unions were given a double role: they were supposed both to realize the party's objectives and serve the workers' interests by protecting them against administrators. In the post-Stalin period, union officials in factories cooperated with management and when the workers' interests came into conflict with the goals of plan fulfillment, the leaders tended to prioritize production tasks. Factory union committees, however, also tried to protect workers from abuses by managers (Evans, Jr. et al. 2006: 33, 40).

The new citizens, *Homo Sovieticus* were constructed based on a combination of old and new symbols of being a member of the state (*gosudarstvo*) in Russia. In the Soviet regime created during Stalinism, the relationship between institutions, public involvement, and personal life/subjectivity was constructed based on 'dissimulation:'

> The Bolshevik revolution did not erase the distinction between public and private and then re-establish it in a different form. Rather, it swept it away and replaced it, in the long run, with a division between the 'social,' which consists of transparent 'public' *and* 'personal' [*lichnyi*] lives, and an unseen, unrecognized private [*chastnyi*] which does not exceed the most intimate. The dissimulation covering this intimate sphere became the most profound practice of Soviet society. (Kharkhordin 1997: 360)

Learning to command the language of the communist ideology was crucial for a successful dissimulation. Applying Anthony Giddens' (1990) concept of a disembedding mechanism of the modern expert systems, the communist ideology may be seen as such a system operating within "Soviet modernity without civil society" in the 1930s (Kozlova

---

[7] *Nomenklatura*, members of the privileged social-political elite, were the holders of higher-level positions which only could be filled on the party's recommendation or approval. Lists of leading positions were kept in the CPSU Central Committee apparatus which held a monopoly on the power to fill the top positions of officials in the party itself, in government, army, security services, judicial organs, factories and enterprises, in the spheres of science, propaganda, and culture (Remington 1999: 34). The *nomenklatura* were served by a system of various privileges or indirect payments.

1996: 214). The formation of the Soviet middle class was interrelated with political participation and learning the language of communist ideology. In this type of modernity, "adherence to the communist ideology" was a way to combine "progressive values" with the old types of collective community. How did different groups reproduce the ideological language? For example, young peasants, whose parents-farmers had been denounced as enemies of the communist regime during the enforced collectivization in the 1930s, often moved to cities. In their diaries, participation in social activism is described as crucial for personal survival: "Recently I started to view social activism not as a way to make a career but as part of my body, of my existence, as bread necessary for my survival" (June 8, 1933, quoted in Kozlova 1996: 164[8]). While trying to survive, they learned to reproduce the ideological language by studying the texts of political leaders. They thus not only reproduced the discourse of state power, but also created certain social relations. A system of statements about society and self, a system of names and meanings constituted a foundation for mutual interpersonal understanding.

Their personal voice is barely heard in their diary texts which is a rather normative language filled with clichés from political brochures. The *Brief History of the CPSU* became a mask which was "impossible to take off from the face" (ibid.: 168, 170). For this category of people, the turning points of their personal life could be directly linked with official events such as the decree adopted in 1934. It stated that the right to vote would be returned to those denounced individuals who worked honestly for the state for five years. They were ready to forgive the state for the past injustices and to start to serve it: "I felt respect for the people who did that and this feeling may develop over time into love towards the state which does not despise me. Perhaps, it is a start of my new world view. The thought that I am accepted as a citizen in the common family of the USSR like anybody else obliges me to feel love to people who have done that for me. I find myself no longer among enemies, of whom I have to be afraid every moment and second." The former peasants thus become persons with a "communist world view." The Soviet citizen was, however, not a "political person and economic person" and would not be able to live in civil society (ibid.: 213, 214).

This example illustrates how 'dissimulation' via ideological language, and fear for the regime could be paradoxically interrelated with experiencing citizenship in terms of

---

[8] This and other quotes from Kozlova (1996) are in my translation from Russian.

kinship and readiness to love and to serve the state (see also Månson 1997: 40). While a new socialist sociality was shaped by transforming personal ties into formal-bureaucratic relations, it was not the same as that which was described by Max Weber. For example, Stalin was perceived not only as the "father of people" but also as someone who expressed "the right line of the party" and helped people to implement general laws of social development. The non-personal dimension thus became more salient than personal ties. At the same time, forms of sociality with roots in more traditional societies were replayed (Kozlova 1996: 198).

Another paradox of the Soviet socialist modernity and the voluntary organizations is that the objective of building communism and creating the New Man is supposed to be achieved by subsuming society and individuals to party control. The Soviet citizen was supposed simultaneously to submit to party leadership, nurture collectivist ethic and become an independent-minded and creative person (Yurchak 2006: 11). In the 1970s and the early 1980s, this paradox permeated the sociality within the *Komsomol* which was supposed to organize youth activities. The leaders were frequently trained to acquire the skills of reproducing ideological texts and conducting formal ritualized events. While the pure formal rituals and authoritative ideological discourse had to be reproduced, the leaders frequently also identified with the human and good aspects of the socialist state (ibid.: 96). The interaction between heads of the local organizations and the rank-and-file members was built on the friendly consensus of the need to follow the rules, although breaking them would result in official sanctions. The local heads of the organizations were often perceived simultaneously as the authoritative representatives of the state institution and as "one of us" (*svoi*) or 'normal people.' 'Normal people' signified a relatively free, creative life, not reduced to ideological automatism or idealist resistance (ibid.: 114, 118).

Informal Groups and Independent NGOs

During the 1950s and 1960s, informal, mostly non-political, groups not sponsored by the Communist party, began to appear. They were often founded by young people who sought new forms of leisure activities such as clubs of sports fans, rock music enthusiasts, poets, and the like. The All-Union Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural

Monuments acquired a large number of members (Evans, Jr. et al. 2006). Some associations wanted to satisfy the needs of people with different kinds of disabilities (White 1999). Since the early 1960s, the environmental movement emerged among scientists and writers (Yanitsky 1996, 2000b). The breach between the official Soviet values and politics and the alternative values was articulated with emergence in the mid-1960s of writers of "village prose" (*derevenshchiki*) (Petro 1995: 103). Often nationalist in orientation, these intellectuals raised issues connected with ecology.

After Stalin's death and the beginning of Khrushchev's policy of *thaw* in the 1950s, underground spheres of publicity started to appear including unofficial gatherings of intellectuals; *samizdat*[9] publications, tapes of bards, and the oral tradition of political jokes (Downing 1996). These spaces were circumscribed by primitive and laborious distribution technologies. The scope of the critique was limited because of the great danger of persecution and suppression by the state. While only a small group of political dissidents took the risk, many individuals were emotionally engaged in cultural images that were not politically sanctioned. For example, Vladimir Vysotsky, a popular actor and bard, was productive simultaneously in the legitimate cultural sphere, playing Hamlet in the avant-garde theater of Yuri Lubimov, and in the underground "singing of convicts in their own language" (Nielsen 1994). In the 1960s-1980s, the relative regular informal gatherings (*tusovka*) also took place in public spaces like cafés, ice cream shops, or clubs. For example, the café Saigon in Leningrad functioned during 1964-1991 as a special place for the counter-cultural bohemia of artists and poets, shadow-economy entrepreneurs, prostitutes, and drug addicts. The visitors were attracted by the intellectual discussion outside the official sphere of norms and constraints (Zdravomyslova and Voronkov 2002). From the mid-1970s, dynamic networks and local environments including family, friendship, neighbors, or colleagues built enclaves of information circulation, which became more important than the space of the official mass media and formal professional associations (Roos and Rotkirch 1998). Trust and a chance to discuss personal problems

---

[9] *Samizdat* media should be recognized as the stirrings of an alternative public sphere in the Soviet Union. The word was created from *sam*, self and *izdat*, publish; it appeared in the early 1960s as a new name for the thousands of the typed sheets that circulated illegally from friend to friend (Shane 1994: 27). The topics included officially forbidden poetry and political essays, or lists of individuals imprisoned for dissident activities. Historically, Soviet *samizdat* began to be an active media sphere following the post-Khrushchev repression of literary expression. A variety of concerns - religious, ethnic and nationalist, young people's, environmental, peace-oriented – slowly began to be expressed by these means (Alexeyeva and Fitzpatrick 1990).

made Soviet friendship an unofficial moral value. Friendship became an ultimate value in the situation of terror and mass denunciations (Kharkhordin 1999: 318).

Michael Gorbachev, who became Secretary General of the Communist party in 1985, aimed to restructure the Soviet economy and believed that resistance to reforms could be tackled by political changes that held ministers accountable to democratically elected politicians. He advocated a radical change in the electoral system, a choice of candidates, reform of the CPSU itself, and the growth of groups independent of the CPSU. In 1986, Gorbachev encouraged unofficial groups in support of perestroika. The idea was to create political and semi political associations among the loyal groups of the Soviet middle class which could act in support of perestroika or function as a kind of opposition parties by monitoring the government and the Communist party (Petro 1995; Tolz 1990). The decision was taken at the top to help the unofficial groups with premises, faxes, telephone lines, and other necessities (Reddaway and Glinski 2001: 122). Myriad of new social clubs and political groups formed, and subsequently larger movements and weak political parties (Urban et al. 1997; Hosking 1991). In 1990, the passage of the Law on Public Association provided the legal framework for the formation of a multi-party system (Butterfield and Sedaitis 1991). It occurred in a context of the remarkable waves of public contestation in the former Soviet Union. In 1995, the number of economic enterprises in which strikes took place, increased 34 times compared with 1990. During 1997, 17 000 more protest demonstrations took place in Russia compared with 1990. The number of participants in protest actions during this period increased almost ten times (Katzva 2003).

By the late 1990s, the wave of the protest movements, political euphoria, enthusiasm and civic activism were replaced with increased disillusion concerning public politics and collective protest action (Diligensky 1998: 233; Alapuro 2001). At the same time, the legal and economic status of the independent NGOs and non-commercial organizations were defined and negotiated.

The first autonomous social organizations were, however, hardly capable of channeling popular demands and representing interests in the political sphere (Fish 1991: 217). The official institutions were unable to deal with the new independent organizations as legitimate representations of societal interests. In addition, the governing institutions' power decreased. Independent groups subsequently faced weak state institutions. A second barrier was the continued controls on the mass media and the backwardness of

communications. The organizations were either not covered in the state mass media, or they received negative coverage. For example, the NGOs were often associated with facilitating economic crime. The alternative press remained small. Many organizations were unable to obtain computers and photo copiers, which complicated internal communication and the diffusion of ideas. Third, Russia lacked large-scale integrative societal institutions, such as the Solidarity movement in Poland. One additional obstacle was the political aversion and skepticism that most Russians felt (ibid.: 154-157).

The following sections describe the resources, opportunities, and constraints in the sphere of NGOs. First, the size, participants and cosnditions in the NGO sector are presented. Second, citizens' common perceptions of social problems and the risks that are faced in the context of the socioeconomic transition, changing civic values, and patterns of action including social activism and other strategies are depicted.

2. Size, Participants, and Conditions in the NGO-Sector

During Gorbachev's reforms, civil society was evoked as a panacea for political cynicism and disaffection. In the 1990s, however, the notion of civil society was replaced by discussions of political technologies, party-building, voting, and the like. In the mid-1990s, many associations, which emerged during the late glasnost dissolved. Some associations survived with the help of support from foreign donors and consultants and were reorganized into the so called Third Sector of non-governmental, non-profit organizations. Some of them have survived by other means (Yanitsky 2000b: 252).

The size of the voluntary sector grew rapidly in the late 1990s. Depending on which kinds of organizations are included, between 450 000-485 000 voluntary organizations were registered by 2000-2001 (Sevortyan and Berchukova 2002; Yakimets 2004; Russia, USAID 2001). About 60 percent are non-governmental and non-municipal organizations and are involved with social issues and services in the spheres of youth and children, women, ecology, people with disabilities, human rights, and so on[10] (Yakimets 2002;

---

[10] About 40 percent of the organizations are trade unions, state and municipal non-profit organizations, consumer cooperatives and societies, habitation property owners' associations, garden and summer house associations, religious organizations, non-state pension foundations, political parties and public political associations, stock

Russia, USAID 2001). At the same time, many active organizations or networks are not officially registered (Petrenko 2001; Sevortyan and Berchukova 2002). Researchers estimate that roughly one quarter of the officially registered organizations are active and engaged in civic issues. Approximately 2,5 million Russians are involved in these groups as employees and volunteers, providing assistance to about 30 million people (Yakimets 2002). The development of the non-profit organizations varies across the country's 89 regions. Stronger organizations with access to technological, financial, and human resources are located in the main cities (Russia, USAID 2000).

The heterogeneous sphere of the NGOs and the non-profits is formed through a combination of institutions, networks and strategies. First, it includes partly a range of Soviet legacy organizations which continue to offer useful services to various population groups, and partly new Western-style advocacy organizations. Although the party-state's control of women's councils, professional organizations, and societies for individuals with disabilities has ended, the organizational structures remained (Henderson 2003: 44; Fomin and Chikadze 1999). Many organizations from the Soviet era continue to provide services to disadvantaged groups. For example, Women's Councils (*zhensovety*) help women to find employment, conduct charity work for poor families or assist victims of domestic violence (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 310). They work more directly with the public than many Western-style advocacy NGOs. At the same time, the Soviet legacy organizations may hinder other forms of civic associations that are more autonomous from the state and more responsive to members. In some cases, they might maintain their official status and favorable financial situation, but do very little to help its constituencies (ibid.: 310). Although the activists sometimes still preserved the Soviet-era mentalities there are enthusiasts who also try to act differently (Henderson 2003; Fomin and Chikadze 1999). Further, some organizations that were formed in the early 2000s such as the politicized youth movements *Nashi* or the Young Guard, are influenced by Soviet organizational patterns. They preserve a hierarchical vertical management system and cooperate closely with the state (Mardar 2008: 35).

Second, during the late Soviet and post-Soviet periods, movements and organizations emerged simultaneously based on three types of demands including citizenship rights, material distribution, and post-industrial post-material values, such as

---

foundations, state-industrial chambers, business associations, and the like (Yakimetz 2002; Russia, USAID 2001).

ecology, identity, and everyday democracy (Fish 1991: 62; Markova 1999). The variety of voluntary organizations may be categorized by the character of objectives, issue, membership, relationship to the state authorities, sources of financial support, and other criteria (see Sungurov 1999b; Yakimetz 2004; Henderson 2003). It is difficult to create a clear-cut typology of voluntary organizations as many of them fit in more than one category[11] (Green 2002).

Despite the great number of officially registered NGOs, the number of people who participate in voluntary organizations is relatively low, compared to many other countries.[12] The average number of organizational memberships per person in Russia is 0.65 which can be compared to 0.35 in Bulgaria, 3.07 in South Africa or 3.59 in the USA (Howard 2003: 65). In addition, the number of non-profit organizations in Russia today (0.52 per one thousand inhabitants) is much smaller than it was prior to 1917 (7.14 per one thousands inhabitants) (Mardar 2008: 35[13]). The following section provides a more detailed explanation of general attitudes to participation in civic organizations.

Motivations for becoming involved in civic organization(s) vary. Some of the activists want to contribute to society and others are people who have experienced unfairness or social grievances and who join together. The Post-Communist Organizational Membership Study was conducted in Russia in 1999 with representative samples and aimed at estimating the relative significance of income, education, age, and gender for the average number of organizational memberships per person (Howard 2003: 92). The results indicate that people with higher levels of income and education are more likely to be members of organizations. Regarding age, the most active group is 35-44; subsequent age groups show a steady decline. The under-25 age group has relatively high levels of organizational membership. A generational shift is apparently taking place in Russia, with younger people participating more than their elders. Concerning gender, the

---

[11] Livshin and Weitz (2006) point out that in practice Russian NGOs tend to fall into one of three categories. Elite NGOs are relatively wealthy organizations with million-dollar budgets. They are often associated with big Russian businesses or serve as "VIP landing grounds" where former government officials can occupy an influential position after leaving office. Second, "intermediary institutions" such as museums and social welfare organizations have characteristics of both government and non-government bodies. Wealthy donors sometimes purchase works of art, advanced medical equipment, or other expensive items for their favorite organizations. Finally, "grass-roots organizations" are the most numerous and varied. These NGOs have pursued a variety of causes, both at the national and local levels. They pursue non-partisan social advocacy.

[12] According to the results of the social capital survey, less than 5 percent of Russians said that they belonged to a sports, music, or arts club, housing or neighbourhood association or a political party (Rose 1998: 11; see also Domrin 2003).

[13] Materials by courtesy of Tom R. Burns, professor at the Department of Sociology, Uppsala University.

findings show that men belong to organizations at higher rates than women. However, in Russia, women's participation rate is 88 percent of that of men – higher than in the Western (78 percent) and Eastern parts of Germany (75 percent). Organizational membership tends to be higher in larger cities (ibid.: 102).

Citizens rarely choose the non-profit sector as a career. One very optimistic estimate placed the number of people involved in the non-profit sector at about 1 percent of the country's adult population (Henderson 2008).

Independent NGOs do not have access to sufficient non-state material and human resources to be able to act as stable, recognized channels for expressing various social groups' demands to the state and the wider public (Sundstrom and Henry 2006). Civic activism in today's Russia is sometimes compared with dissidence, i.e. individual forms of protest and action (Sperling 2006). The NGOs have limited power in practice and are not institutionalized strongly in the society. They lack outreach activities and have difficulties in gaining public recognition and support for their activities. For example, public demonstrations by NGOs or protest movements are rare. In a 2001 survey, 55 percent of the respondents had never heard the term "civil society" (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 311). Donations are hindered by the financial hardships experienced by many citizens, their unfamiliarity with charitable giving, and their uncertainty about the intentions of the NGOs (ibid.). Instead of state-society engagement, some civic organizations are replacing the partially dismantled state bureaucracy and services. Non-governmental organizations thus fill the gap. For example, migrant groups are often provided information about housing and employment that are not offered by the state (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 316; see also Evans, Jr. et al.: Ch. 13).

Elements of censorship in the mass media, economic oligarchy and pervasive corruption have created an unfavorable environment for voluntary associations (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 314). Reliance on personal ties (*sviazi*) as a means of access and influence is also complicating the development of stable channels of dialogue between organized civil society and the state. Activists have to identify individual allies within decision-making structures who can assist them (ibid.: 312). When their particular contacts disappear from the institutional structures, the activists' influence over policy is eliminated.

The weak impact of civil society on the state in post-Soviet Russia is not only the result of the legacy of authoritarianism. It is also due to the powerful local and national criminal groups which are tied to all levels of government (Evans, Jr. et al. 2006: Ch. 6). They intervene in governance at all levels and sometimes openly threaten civic groups or journalists who stand in their way. By escalating the level of corruption and violence in state-society interactions, criminal groups cause citizens to be even more reluctant to address the state with their demands and concerns (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 315).

3. Post-Soviet Transformation and Civic Culture

During the 1990s, voluntary groups were built and acted in a context of political uncertainty, economic crisis, and moral confusion. Politics became an arena of open power struggles among new elite actors and a restructuring of governing institutions and ownership relations. In the mid-1990s, the disappointment with the results of reforms was increasing:

> During struggles against the authoritarian system, the Westernizing democrats declared the goals of achieving a law-based state responsible to people, affirmation of human rights and dignity, civilized market relations rewarding the honest and persevering labor. But what was the result of the victory of a certain coalition of "democrats"? [We have] a lying and utterly irresponsible state; ...wholesale corruption and criminalization of all spheres of life, defenselessness of citizens, powerlessness of the legislative and judicial authorities, legal nihilism, "glasnost" dissolving in front of our eyes, and an open cynicism of the power-holders. (Vorontzova and Filatov 1997: 4)[14]

Socio-Economic Grievances

The social price of the reforms was extremely high for a majority of the population. As a result of the "shock therapy" market reform that started in 1992, the productivity of the economy declined by 12-15 percent in the first half of the decade, inflation surged from 22 to 900 percent, and real wages fell (Henderson 2003: 42). The conditions had improved somewhat by 1998 but deteriorated again after the financial crash in August 1998. The

---

[14] My translation from Russian.

situation stabilized and improved in the early 2000s, mostly due to high oil prices in the international market.

The living standards declined and the probability of falling into poverty increased. By the end of 1995, real wages had fallen by 55 percent. Pensions and other social benefits declined severely as well (Silverman and Yanowitch 1997: 18). In 1995, personal consumption was about one-third below its 1991 level (ibid.: 19). The quality and the availability of free health care declined, which in combination with increased stress of daily life and other factors, resulted in increased mortality, suicides, and alcoholism (ibid: 25, see also Manning et al. 2000: 81). The cost of the reforms was distributed unevenly. The gap between the average income of the highest 10 percent and the lowest 10 percent increased from 3.44 times in 1991 to 13.5 in 1995 (ibid: 27). The rise of mass poverty was estimated officially to 29 percent of the population below the poverty line in 1995 (ibid.: 46). The so called "new poor" was a new phenomenon which included families with one or two children with both spouses employed in the defense industry, science, public health, and so on but who were nevertheless unable to escape poverty (ibid: 50).

The social safety net which during Soviet times was provided by the large industrial enterprises and the state has, to a large extent, been dismantled. During 1991-1995, state expenses for social issues, including welfare, public health, education and culture declined by 39 percent (Henderson 2003: 43).[15] In 1996-1997, a period of aggravated instability and power struggles between political and financial groupings was marked by long-term wages and pensions' arrears (Manning et al. 2000: 189). In 2007, according to All-Russia Centre of Life Standard, the income of 16,3 percent of the population was below subsistence level. In about one third of Russian regions between 25 and 72,5 percent of the population lives in poverty (Golovachev 2007).

Civic Culture

One of the major consequences of the Soviet 'double' public sphere was the formation of a behavior based on a dichotomy between the public sphere and the non-official sphere of

---

[15] However, at the most minimal level, the state subsidies for public utilities, such as free or almost free use of heating, electricity, water supply, transportation and other services were preserved. Similarly, a free public education and health care remained although in the most cases, more inferior to the fee-paying services (Manning et al. 2000: 384).

family and friends, and the widespread lawlessness and arbitrariness within the official administration. Oleg Vite (1996) points out that the patterns of interaction, thinking and feeling pursued in the non-official sphere could not enter the official arenas of social communication, although they were commonly known and accepted. At the same time, the formal legal norms which were proclaimed in the public discourse did not function in real everyday life. Individuals thus coped with their lives applying three types of normative orders. One of them was the written legal norms whose legitimacy was in doubt, another was the norms of common daily life practices, whose legitimacy might be considered temporary until the written rules were changed and restored. The third normative order was that of pervasive legal arbitrariness (see also Shlapentokh 1989).

The existence of incompatible normative orders opened up for corruption and abuse. People related to the public sphere with both cynicism and fear and they were not encouraged to take the written law seriously. As Richard Sakwa (1995: 956) stresses,

> patterns of daily life under communism were marked by series of dualisms, individuals turned one face towards family and friends in "communities of kindness," while they otherwise existed in a culture of fear, subordination and (mis)appropriation of state resources (which for understandable reasons was not considered theft).

Friends and family remained very important throughout the post-communist period. Many people invested in their own private circles and did not feel the need or desire to join civil society organizations (Howard 2003; Alapuro and Lonkila 2000).

Changes in Russian social values and attitudes towards social activism are documented in social research. The old value models based on the powers' "paternalist-prohibitive" attitudes and the ordinary citizens' "solidarity-collectivist" attitudes were largely replaced by "achievement-individualist-oriented" norms and values including all-permissiveness, striving for personal success, wealth, and open anti-sociality and cynicism (Khoros 1998: 235). Regulska (1998: 314) stresses that in post-communist countries, individualist ethos indirectly facilitates the exclusion of citizens from the political scene by the dominant political elites. The endorsement of liberalism by the political elites brought prominence to the 'individual,' which can be viewed as a reaction to the socialist times which only addressed an abstract human. Groups and individuals assert their value through emphazising differences. Liberalism also emphasises the sole responsibility of individuals for exercising their rights. Another dimension is that in communist countries

opposition to the official authorities was expressed on moral rather than political grounds, in the form of anti-politics. This rhetoric is still embraced by some local activists and is appropriated by the populist parties (ibid.). Aversion toward participation in politics publicly might be motivated in different ways. Diligensky (1998: 240) believes that it is a continuation of the Soviet "adaptive individualism" which implies that one relies "only on one's own forces" and that one can adjust to any political regime as long as it guarantees the minimal prosperity and freedom of conscience. People value their right on "right of non-participation," a possibility to be "left alone" (ibid.: 239). Another kind of "willy-nilly individualism" of a "silent majority" of the population is a result of experiences of grievance and marginalization (ibid.; see also Naumova 1999).

Many studies reveal a high degree of general mistrust of public institutions. According to the 2001 New Russia Barometer, political parties were mistrusted by 48 percent of the respondents and the parliament by 44 percent (Mishler and Rose 2005: 1056). Trust in some public institutions is still relatively strong such as the army (70 percent); the state security organs (57 percent), and the Orthodox Church (61 percent) (Gudkov 2001: 284). In the fall 2000, 78 percent of the respondents trusted President Putin, which might have been partly a reaction to the low credibility of other social institutions (ibid.: 289). Nina Naumova (1999) contends that levels of social dis-/integration, trust in political authorities, and the population's understanding of the meaning of the reforms are strongly correlated. Trust in social institutions and political authorities is not merely a question of deciding for whom to vote, but reflects a general attitude toward the course of the transformation. The bulging distrust in political institutions and alienation from the authorities correlate with an increased number of suicides committed in the 1990s. They increased by 17 percent in a sudden leap in 1992 and continued to rise during the following years. The number of suicides in 100 000 people was 38,1 in 1993, 42,1 in 1994, and 45 in 1995 (Gilinsky and Rumiantzeva 1997[16] quoted in Naumova 1999: 112).

Too many control mechanisms, a harsh system of law enforcement, overlapping and mutually contradictory laws create a culture of "presumption of guilt" (Bliakher 2002: 86). In a Russian-French comparative study on legal consciousness conducted in 1993,

---

[16] Gilinsky, Ya. i Rumiantzeva, G. Osnovnyie tendentzii samoubijstv v Rossii: sotziologicheskij analyz. *Peterburgskaia sotziologiia* 1997, 1.

Russian teenagers tend to associate law with "fault" and "punishment" which is explained by the Soviet legacy. In Soviet practices, the state's power was often not based on law, but used it in its own interests. Citizens' attitudes towards the state's power include a mix of avoidance, subordination, fear, and fascination (Kourilsky-Augeven 2004: 27-28). As a reaction to encounters with nearly limitless arbitrariness from the executive authorities, teenagers claimed that they have unlimited freedom and a right to ignore others (ibid.: 28).

The problems, risks, and fears experienced in daily life are highlighted in many opinion polls. A "shadow, semi-criminal society under official liberalism" flourishes partly due to the Soviet legacy of double thought and double action (Pastukhov 2002). Dodging military service, petty theft of materials from the workplace, not paying taxes are widespread. The semi-legal practices intensify when the formal institutions are inefficient (Levada 2000). When three out of five Russians did not receive their wages or pensions in March and April 1998, people responded to the crisis by using their own personal networks and begging, cajoling, or bribing bureaucrats into violating the rules (Rose 1998). In 1997, 40 percent of the respondents were most afraid of criminals, 34 percent of "the arbitrariness of the state officials and local bosses," and 24 percent of the "arbitrariness in the work of agencies of the legal justice" (Diligensky 1998: 241). In 1996-1997, half of the respondents were unable to stand up for their own interests, 20 percent appeal to 'state and voluntary organizations responsible for the services,' 25 percent believed that the courts could help them to solve problems, and 30 percent would choose to bribe somebody for 'a direct arrangement.' Twenty percent of the respondents were ready to participate in meetings, demonstrations and strikes, to create independent trade unions or engage in political party (Manning et al. 2000: 376, 379).

These numbers did not improve in the early 2000s. In 2000, two thirds of the respondents whose rights were encroached did not dare to resist as they believed that standing up for their own rights against somebody more powerful would only make things worse (Shabanova 2000: 406). In 2003, 23-36 percent of the respondents 'do not see any reliable way' to protect life or property when they are threatened (Semigin et al. 2003: 34). Almost half of the respondents would ask for help from friends and family, and half of them use the help of "influential acquaintances." About one third of all respondents would bribe an official. 18-27 percent of the respondents would appeal to a Russian court (ibid.). Even those who deploy new democratic intermediating institutions must often beg

state officials to "grant" them that to which they are entitled (Shabanova 2000: 407). Many people prefer that the voluntary organizations work more closely with the governmental agencies and that they are placed under their control. The state, not the citizens, is perceived to be the fundamental force in building a good society. Ordinary people rarely come into contact with voluntary organizations and do not trust them. These views are widespread not only among older people but also among the youth. As a focus group discussion in which university teachers in social sciences from Khabarovsk participated showed, the curricula still is based on the slightly corrected philosophy of 'strong state' like in the Soviet time (Baranova et al. 2001:10).

On the other hand, anti-etatist thinking is wide-spread. When the communist ideology, the main symbol of statehood, collapsed, the idea of the state was replaced by the idea of individual freedom. The notion of civic duty as service to the "Motherland and the cause of socialism" was devalued and a new understanding of personal calling and responsibility emerged. One is a purely selfish belief that "man lives for himself and his family and owes no one." Another widespread belief among youth is that "a person should serve society and people" or "a higher justice, God." When anti-etatist feelings predominate, social morality starts to change. For example, when people do not expect the state to be capable of reducing poverty, private mutual assistance and charity became increasingly common (Vorontzova and Filatov 1997: 5). Data about the anti-etatist thinking among groups of Russians are thus contradictory.

The ideals of democracy and human rights have gained greater importance in public opinion. The majority see a positive value in the market economy. The majority of the respondents in a survey thought that the "market should develop on the moral grounds." The surveys refute the prevalent ideas about the Russian people's antipathy toward proprietors and their cowtowing to "the supreme authority of officials." People are afraid of a "strong state" of the traditional Russian model and generally want to get rid of its absolute power. As the sense of duty towards "the state, the country, and the people" declines, the responsibility for moral values and principles of justice grows (Vorontzova and Filatov 1997: 7).

The legal culture seems to evolve towards more "socialized" and "judicial" conceptions of equality. For example, by 2000, teenagers no longer associated the idea of freedom with total freedom but rather with civil rights and respect for the freedom of

others (Kourilsky-Augeven 2004: 29). Compared to 1993, adolescents' sense of imposed duties was replaced by a sense of chosen responsibilities (ibid.: 31). Trust in the possibility to achieve justice through the legal system, however, remains low.

4. Human Rights NGOs and Civil Society

The human rights organizations and groups for civic control aim at monitoring the official authorities and advocating for legal justice on behalf of various marginalized groups (Sungurov 1999a). Groups focused on human rights comprise approximately 10 % of the associations (Henderson 2003: 46). They work in the sphere of social rehabilitation and the protection of victims of repression, prison reform, refugees, and forced emigrants, and the like. They function as advocacy groups by helping people to obtain what the government has promised, but which it has neglected to give them or pressuring the executive branch of the official authorities on behalf of various marginalized groups (Diligensky 1998). The human rights groups rarely receive financial support from the government or local businesses and are dependent on foreign aid (Henderson 2003: 46).

The contemporary network of human rights groups is historically related to the democratic movement which was rooted in the political underground of the 1960-1970s. An organized movement of dissenters, shaped in 1965-1967, raised human rights issues and acted by gathering signatures on petitions and disseminating copies of *samizdat* writings (Alexeyeva and Goldberg 1993). In their public writings, letters and petitions to the official authorities and the *samizdat* texts, the dissidents built their political identity and strategy around the socialist legality. The dissidents drew upon the official rights-based and law-oriented discourse, which became widespread in the post-Stalin Soviet Russia. A discursive break in the official rhetoric was associated with Khrushchev's 1956 report on Stalin's cult after which the rhetoric of norms and law begun to return. The dissidents secured a strong political position by identifying with a rights-based discourse (Oushakine 2001).

The concept of human rights, which was created by the Soviet dissidents, was based on the historical Russian understanding of social justice:

In the classic Russian culture, the concept of law was approached with deep mistrust. Therefore many attempts were undertaken to build a just society beyond the law and even against the law. In the 1960s, a profound shift occurred in Russian culture, when in a highly specific way a traditional Russian idea of justice was combined with the Western idea of law. However, it happened in an indigenous way, as the Iron Curtain remained solid. The human rights ideology came forth as a combination of the idea of law and the dreadful experiences of Soviet history. (Interview, November 3, 2001[17])

In 1968, the main journal of the dissident movement, *Chronicle of Current Events* was first published. After 1968, the movement became more political and learned to communicate their concerns via the media to the world outside the country's borders. In the early 1970s, the KGB tried to suppress the movement and by 1974 the first generation of dissidents had been imprisoned or forced to emigrate. While the dissidents received great publicity in the West, the movement included only a small percentage of the scientific and cultural intelligentsia and remained isolated from the majority of the Soviet citizens (Evans Jr. 2006: 43). Petro (1995: 132) notes that the human rights activists lacked a clear objective; the concept of human rights was too abstract to implement. The general population considered the dissident activists to be either alien or insane (Tchouikina 2003: 132). The community of dissidents included networks organized for offering aid to the political prisons and their families. Material support was gained from friends or work colleagues, the anonymous donors were mostly from the intelligentsia, or from foundations created in the West by Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn (ibid.).

The role of the dissidents was indirectly acknowledged when the official rhetoric of glasnost borrowed from the dissidents' language (Oushakine 2001). During the period of glasnost and perestroika, human rights groups expressed strong anti-establishment ideas and beliefs (Alexeyeva and Fitzpatrick 1990). The democratically oriented groups, however, were partly absorbed into the new political elite or abandoned by the old-new establishment. They did not achieve any administrative power or influence over the reforms (Reddaway and Glinski 2001). But a human rights discourse survived the breakdown of the USSR and became appropriated by various civic groups.

---

[17] Interview with a member of the *Memorial* NGO.

The Concept of Civil Society

The term civil society was borrowed from Western political discourse. It was interpreted by the Russian, Central and Eastern European activists as a realm of informal societal networks which emerged alongside the formal state sector. This reflects the way in which the communist system worked. The "stereotyped discourse of the public sphere combined with the rule of a secretive and clientelistic Party, left private networks, horizontal links, and face-to-face trust relations as crucial avenues of resource distribution" (Outhwaite and Ray 2005: 162; see also Hankiss 1988).

The notion of civil society was revived in the 1970s-1980s by social science scholars and political activists. Historically, civil society was perceived by most political thinkers from Locke through Hegel and Tocqueville as a sphere between the family and the state and a distinct set of socio-cultural norms enabling citizens to refute both the excessive state and atomized individualism (Outhwaite and Ray 2005: 147; Seligman 1992). Karl Marx, on the contrary, stressed the 'egoistic spirit of civil society' and saw it as a realm of conflict between special interests as opposed to the mutual responsibility within a social whole (Seligman 1992: 55). In the 1980s, the term was given a new life by activists of the anti-communist movements in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. They saw ideas of resistance to the socialist states, 'anti-political politics' and 'détente from below' as part of a rebirth of the civil society (Michnik 1999, quoted in Outhwaite and Ray 2005: 147). A 'genuine' civil society for the dissidents in central and Eastern Europe included that which was not determined by the Communist Party.[18] The central idea of civil society in the anti-communist movement is that it consists of the sphere of public discussions and citizens' voluntary associations which was neither merged with the market nor attached to the state. Through civil society people were able to overcome the post-communist chasm between the public and the private, expressed in the overt acquiescence to the system and the covert rejection of it. The revolutions of 1989 were not to oppose the state but rather to

---

[18] In the Western social theory, debate on "new social movements" and developments in the Eastern Europe led to a debate about the liberal state, democratic processes, trust, and social solidarity. The leftists represented for example by J. Habermas saw in the revolutions of 1989 a chance to create in Europe a *communicative* civil society (Outhwaite and Ray 2005: 147). The dissidents' ideas were compatible with the new left's visions of participatory democracy. The conservative scholars took the resistance to the socialist state as a confirmation of their view that citizens were resisting an oppressive state. For them, the civil society signified a triumph of capitalism over the socialist alternative (Hemment 2004: 220).

bypass, ridicule and undermine it. The autonomous self-organizing groups were to become an authentic public sphere alternative to the state (Outhwaite and Ray 2005: 160). In the words of the Polish scholar and politician Bronislaw Geremek,

> The magic of the word 'citizen' in Poland or in Czechoslovakia came from the widespread sense that it referred less to one's subordination to the state and its laws than to one's membership in an authentic community, a community whose essence was summed up in the term 'civil society' (see Bradley 2002: 1).

Russia did not have any mass movements or organizations like KOR or Solidarity in Poland. The notion of civil society entered the political and public vocabulary in the late 1980s with mass "citizens' initiatives" during perestroika, which were believed to contribute to the building-up of the 'civil society' (Belokurova 2001: 32; Yanitzky 1991).

Methods of Work and Experience of Isolation

Methods of work in the contemporary human rights NGOs include free legal consultation, assistance with legal proceedings, interceding with official instances on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged. Ideas and 'empowerment' techniques are disseminated during seminars addressed both to the mass population and to the NGO-activists. To influence the political elite, they lobby for legislative initiatives and organize rallies, demonstrations or theatrical actions. Information is exchanged and disseminated through their print periodicals, brochures, and Web sites on the Internet. Analytical reports, conference papers, as well as self-help instructions for conscripts, soldiers, prisoners, and other groups of the population, are published. International contacts and links are essential parts of their activities. Joint projects, actions, seminars, and conferences are organized in cooperation with women, peace, and religious movements, as well as with human rights organizations. Hearings on the human rights issues, organized in the framework of the United Nations and European Union, are attended.

The Russian human rights NGOs frequently perceive themselves as the builders of a civil society, positioned in the intermediate sphere between society and the power-holders (Dzhibladze 1997; Kevorkova 2001; Kolesnikov 2001). They claim to represent ordinary

citizens whose interests are not articulated by contemporary political elites.[19] The NGO activists distinguish their associations from the sphere of institutionalized politics such as political parties and official administration. Most human rights NGOs, perceive themselves as non-political, and insist on drawing a line between politicians seeking power and public organizations which are working for the sake of ordinary people and the common good. Patomäki and Pursiainen (1998) stress that many organizations are aware that people would not trust them if they are in any way associated with political activities. These attitudes are connected with Russian and Soviet practices of understanding politics exclusively in terms of the state.

The activists try to help aggrieved people to raise their sense of self-esteem so that "nobody can manipulate them for the political purposes" (Petrenko 2001). According to the human rights activists' writings, they wish to activate people's civic awareness (*grazhdanstvennost*). The goal is to create ties and consciousness among citizens outside the state thereby preventing the abuse of a person's rights, check the authoritarian state and resist the arbitrariness of the official authorities (HCAC Reports 1996: 6). The activists, however, feel that organizations are often isolated from citizens-non-activists:

> When our organizations gained a legal status, we were delegated responsibility to represent interests broader than those pertaining only to the members. However, most were disappointed when they turned to these organizations with their problems. They claim that these organizations are like those in the Soviet past; although they are called civic they in reality pursue their own narrow interests.[20] (Ibid.: 18)

The isolation of the human rights NGOs from the broader society and within the community of NGOs is related to two conditions: The first problem is that while the activists need to communicate constantly with society at large about what they are doing, they lack access to the means of communication. The only human rights newspaper was closed because it lacked financial resources. Other mass media outlets materials publish materials at a non-regular basis. For example, while there are ten-fifteen freelance journalists in Moscow who write about civic organizations, they have difficulty publishing

---

[19] At the First all-Russian urgent congress for human rights in January, 20-21, 2001 Yury Orlov, chairman of honor of the Moscow Helsinki Group, proposed to set up a party, which would work with the popular mass and help people: "Neither the Union of the Right Forces (SPS) nor Yabloko are political parties, but rather clubs. If after two president terms there emerges a party grounded on human rights concept, it will be a great success" (Veretennikova 2001).
[20] This and the following quotes from HCAC Reports (1996) are my translation from Russian.

their materials. The amount of print from the civic organizations is small, from 50 up to 1000 copies due to high costs of formally registering the NGO and the lack of financial resources for print. The style in which the materials are written makes them publications for the "own people" (activists) and "sponsors" (HCAC Report 1996: 18). This has to do with the second condition, the foreign financial grant system.

The activists stress that goals defined by donors differ from the activists' view on which issues are important at that particular moment. The grants are usually linked to projects aimed at developing "civil society" and a "law-based state" rather than offering aid to people who experience grievances. The activists therefore feel guilty towards thousands people who suffer. Further, the self-isolation of many NGOs has to do with a severe competition over financial grants (ibid.: 15-16). At the same time, it is considered wrong to concentrate only on protecting the interests of concrete individuals: "To focus attention only on the rights of certain individuals or groups without considering broader violations at the collective level is to betray the responsibility of a human rights defender" (ibid.: 27).

The activists frequently resent a weak response to their civic engagement from the general public. For example Marina, whom I interviewed in the pilot study, is a highly educated jurist who is employed in the project for creating a network of young human rights activists in different regions of Russia. The activists organize seminars which aim at informing and educating young people about human rights, organize public actions, and edit informational bulletins. Marina argues that a historical legacy of the Russian citizens' submissiveness to the official authorities continues. She stresses that

> Many young people do not have a clear understanding of what is happening around. Your values are the issue. Either you pursue your narrow selfish interests and want only to survive, or you stand on a civic position. … In some countries, a strong public opinion can pressure the authorities to change things. But here in Russia, on the contrary, everything is decided from above, but presented as people's opinion; and people readily accept this so called opinion as their own.
> …It is so strange to see how some people are crawling for civil servants: please, for God's sake, help me. But he is only a person whose job is to take care of your business. …the majority of people still believe that a civil servant is something like God or Tsar. (Interview, October 14, 2001[21])

---

[21] Interview with a member of The Young People Centre of Human Rights.

The activists hope to transform this 'passive' position into an 'active' civic position. As another activist told in the interview, he is involved in promoting "empowerment, an acquisition of power and self-confidence," and he believed that the notion of empowerment did not exist in the Russian language (Interview, April 2001[22]).

The academic intelligentsia is criticized for its readiness to accept blindly the ideas and rules of the official authority. Gregory was involved in the radical anti-establishment movement Democratic Union during perestroika. He argues that 'ordinary racism' becomes part of everyday life through the mass media images, the local administration, and voluntary organizations which cooperate with the official institutions. He believes that part of the social sciences in Russia encourages 'ordinary racism,' local policies of 'soft ethnic cleansing,' and that such social science education is harmful for the young generation. He created a small network of like-minded activists, who support his views and values and tries to find funding, which would allow him to pursue social research independent of the governing political elite (Interview, October 10, 2001[23]).

The organizations draw upon a discourse of knowing the rights, the private self, and a personal space which are usually not respected in the Russian conditions. The activists not only advocate for rights and check how laws are followed; they also attend to the moral grounds and demand improvement of laws. They also demand one-time decisions, based on the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to prevent abuses.

Summary

This chapter has shown that the Russian civic NGOs are not actually starting from scratch. Independent organizations existed previously, but were previously illegal. In post-Soviet society, social norms and patterns of association are still heavily influenced by the communist past. In the first decade following the collapse of the USSR, Russia's continued financial crisis provided a relatively unfriendly socioeconomic environment for the NGOs. The economic climate of the 1990s provided the impetus for organization and a focus on issues; but many NGOs struggled to find enough social and economic capital to survive. The non-profit sector that emerged in the first decade of the post Soviet period

---

[22] Interview with a member of The Centre for Development of Democracy and Human Rights.
[23] Interview with a member of the Memorial Society.

was relatively weak, fragmented, and poorly connected with political elites and with the populations it claims to represent. Many organizations are either holdovers from the Soviet era, or depend heavily on Western support for their survival. Leaders of many organizations perceive themselves mainly as concerned with concrete problems of people's survival. Only few NGOs attempt to shape the public agenda, public opinion and/or legislation. Many also lack a visible constituency. The large challenges facing NGOs include an unconcerned public and a divided civic sector.

Chapter 5

Interaction between NGOs and the State

Introduction

This chapter describes the interaction between the sphere of Russian NGOs and the state. States are currently important actors in the arena of civic activism. The chapter describes the way in which the Russian state and political system changed in the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s. It proceeds to outline how the legal status of the NGOs has been shaped. It shows that a major shift in the official concept of civil society occurred under President Putin´s term in the 2000s. Further, the evolving policy of the Russian state towards the sphere of NGOs is described. Finally, the chapter discusses how activists and leaders of some NGOs perceive the limits and possibilities of influencing the policy-making.

1. The Post-Soviet State and Political System

The post-Soviet socio-political system combines disparate elements as a result of changes and the continued Russian and Soviet legacy of powerful state bureaucracy that strives to preserve its political power. After the reforms started during glasnost and perestroika, the trend towards a more pluralistic society with a separation of powers continued from the late 1980s into the 1990s. The public sphere opened up for diverse voices, actors and interests. Western-style liberal democratic institutions were created. Politics emerged as a more or less autonomous sphere based on free political association and expression. The principles of liberal democracy, however, coexist with clusters of informal patronage networks and attempts by the Kremlin to co-opt or suppress potential rival centers of power (Sakwa 2004: 129). The general alienation of citizens from institutional politics did not decline but rather increased even more after the Soviet era (Kollontai 1999).

New Elites, Parties, and Mass Media

In 1986, Gorbachev called for fighting against Communist *nomenklatura*. He blamed managers for the economy's inefficiency, and hoped that elements of direct democracy might stimulate economic reforms. The semi-democratic alternative elections to the legislature in 1989 and 1990 were allowed to replace some of the conservative bureaucrats. Although the main Soviet political institutions were dismantled in 1990-1993, the new forces which rose to political power during the 1990s were closely related to the previous Soviet ruling strata. Candidates from the executives of large enterprises, the military-industrial complex, the higher echelons of the *nomenklatura*, including the intelligence services, entered the new Russian government (Reddaway and Glinski 2001: 171). By 1999, former party officials, together with former state officials, constituted a majority in the Russian parliament: 51,9 percent (Hahn 2002: 500). Former officials of the Soviet regime comprised 60 percent of the new regime's executives (ibid.; see also Kryshtanovskaya 2002: 34).

A unique *nomenklatura* capitalism was produced through insider privatization schemes in which industrial, financial, and resource-exporting clans and oligarchs were privileged (Hahn 2002: 513). Executive power merged with politicians and a new group of wealthy financiers and entrepreneurs. The state resources turned into the private owners' assets. Public assets and resources were plundered by private corporations and state apparatus (Khoros 1998: 238). The civil and legislative freedoms became a new resource for corrupted officials and organized crime (ibid.: 232). The linked unofficial economic and political networks became central to decision-making and the opportunities for public politics were limited (Vorozheikina 1994). During 1992-1996, the business elite consolidated into financial-industrial groups (so called oligarchs) which gained control over large industrial enterprises, transportation, construction, telecommunication, and print and electronic mass media. They were able to influence appointments to the government, lobbyism in the parliament and the shaping of public opinion via mass media (Kryshtanovskaya 2002a: 27). Corruption and degradation were the result of the merger between political power and big capital (Reddaway and Glinski 2001). The government became unable to fight corruption, guarantee public security, collect taxes and provide social welfare (Shevtsova 1999: 280). A grey zone developed in the economy in which

many corrupted officials, business dealers, and big part of the population were involved. 30-40 percent of GDP were estimated to have been produced and sold without paying taxes (Shevtsova 2003: 78).

In 1993, the super-presidential system was shaped by Yeltsin after the violent dissolution of the parliament granted more power to the president over the elected legislature and allowed the new-old elites to control the reform process. While the creation of political parties flourished in the late 1980s, the possibilities of smaller parties and movements to participate in the parliamentary elections were successfully limited by the ruling elite. In addition, the level of political identification with parties was low. Many parties did not have mass membership and were not seen as legitimate structures associated with different social-political projects. By 2000, the party building activism became less attractive and less accessible to most people. Total membership in all parties encompassed one percent of the adult population; party-politics became an "elite affair" (Sakwa 2004: 114).

Creating pro-government parties or so-called 'parties of power' became a mechanism through which the ruling groups within the country's political establishment attempted to influence the outcomes of the parliamentary and presidential elections (Mankoff 2003). The pro Kremlin United Russia party emerged victorious in the Duma election in 2003. The support gained by United Russia in the elections was linked with Putin's assurance that the party was important for the implementation of his policies. As the most political parties were without mass membership they tended to become election brands and their role was determined primarily by media holdings. In the mid-1990s, new, more professional, party politicians were given access to techniques such as opinion polls, public relations and political marketing services (Mickiewicz 1999).

All more or less influential mass media were controlled by the oligarchs until 2000 (Kryshtanovskaya 2002a: 45). The state mass media lost their dominant position due to a lack of financial resources. By the late 1990s, in addition to the state holding company VGTRK, three of the most powerful commercial politicized media holding companies included the media controlled by Boris Berezovsky, Vladimir Gusinsky, and the mayor of Moscow, Yury Luzhkov (Zassoursky 1999: 237-241; Zassoursky 2004). On the one hand, the emergence of private media outlets ended the dominant position of the official reporting and interpretation of events and increased pluralism in the media. For example,

the NTV channel, founded by Gusinsky´s financial corporation, challenged the official line on the first war in Chechnya in 1994-1996 by showing the brutality of the war (Mickiewicz 1999). On the other hand, the private owners were also a part of the ruling elite. The financial groups' investment in or sponsorship of the largely unprofitable media were made because of political and economic influence. The big owners of media could influence public opinion and use their connections with the politicians to get privileged access to privatized national properties. The politicians in turn could get funds for their election campaigns (Zassoursky 2004: 203). The media controlled by the private banks were often used for the purpose of "informational wars" against competitors or the enemies in the government particularly in 1996-1998 (Hagström 2000: 213; Zassoursky 2004: 80-94). The style of *kompromat* (compromising materials) and scandal prevailed, frequently at the expense of objective and fair reporting. The mass media lacked a serious public debate on crucial issues such as the economy and the development of political parties in Russia (Oates 2006). Journalists who wrote stories had to consider the needs of their "patron," or they would no longer have a job. Russia also became one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists (ibid.: 68).

The 'Stealth' Authoritarianism

The composition and ideological attitudes of the political elite started to change after the financial crisis in August 1998. Some of the larger businessmen were ruined. The Berezovsky and Gusinsky´s media empires were destroyed. They had to escape to the West in 2000; Khodorkovsky was imprisoned in 2004-2005. At the same time, politics continues to serve the interests of certain elite groups (Shevtsova 2003). In the early 2000s, the state strengthened its control over the television channels (Rantanen 2002). By the parliamentary elections in 2003, all the main TV channels were under the control of the government and could be used as an 'administrative resource' in a single direction. This resulted in the success of the party United Russia which was even supported by the president (Jack 2004: 321). The second war in Chechnya, which started in 1999, was also a catalyst for the effort of bringing the independent mass media under government control. In contrast to the first Chechenyan war, coverage of military operations on television was

tightly controlled and subtly 'managed' by the Kremlin (Simon 2005; Zassoursky 2004). Although some print outlets such as the newspapers *Obshchaya Gazeta* and *Novaya Gazeta* continued to oppose the official policy, the plurality and a range of reporting in the mass media were increasingly circumscribed. The power and ability of the journalists to inform the public were limited due to the unwillingness of politicians to accept a critical press, a weak tradition of professional journalism, and the audiences' readiness to accept 'sanitized' news broadcasts (Oates 2006: 69).

The authoritarian tendencies increased during Putin´s presidency in the 2000s and were often justified by the need to strengthen "law and order" in contrast to the uncertainty and chaos of the turbulent 1990s during Yeltsin´s presidency (Clark 2004; Shevtsova 2004). The president was frequently described by political analysts as the only person who "represents the people's opinion" (Naishul 2004; see Sakwa 2004: 69). The new reconfiguration of political institutions has been understood in terms of 'managed democracy' (Clark 2004) and 'monocentrism' (Zudin 2002). By the early 2000s, despite the circulation of a variety of ideological currents, forces which became successful in the parliamentary election were 'non-politically' orientated and openly allied with the presidential administration. The rhetoric of 'strengthening the state and the president,' the increased number of men from the security and law enforcement institutions in government,[24] the mass media's newly pro-governmental orientation, attempts to formalize further and 'line up' political and civic associations characterized the politics of the 'managed democracy.' Hahn (2004: 1) argues that the concept of managed democracy is not quite correct and describes the regime created under Putin´s presidency as the *stealth-authoritarian system*[25] (the Russian term is *khitryi avtoritarizm*, sly authoritarianism). This term signifies "a subtle, slight-of-hand, almost imperceptible authoritarianism that, by standing on the threshold of electoral democracy, sometimes seems to pass as one." This system is viewed as consisting of six interrelated elements:

> (1) a constitutional order that gives the executive branch and the president preponderant, but not dictatorial, power, enabling them to dominate and partially control legislative and judicial institutions and, most importantly, to run directly the organs of coercion and law

---

[24] Another change in the make-up of the elites in the early 2000s was the growth in the government bureaucracy of the size of so-called *siloviki* ('men of power'), representatives of military, security and law enforcement agencies and of the military-industrial complex (Reddaway et al. 2004: 5). Between 1998 and 2002, the presence of the military officers in the ruling elite on the high-level positions increased twelve times (Kryshtanovskaya 2002b: 162).

[25] See also the analysis of this political regime as "bureaucratic authoritarianism" in Shevtsova (2004).

enforcement; (2) weak formal institutions and rule of law; (3) strong informal institutions, networks, and practices - oligarchic groupings of firms, friends, and families penetrating the state and allied with state officials - and the broad use of *kompromat* and the threat of criminal charges to persuade actors to behave as desired; (4) a weak civil society; (5) often subtle violations of and maximum use of loopholes in the legal-constitutional order; (6) and control of the commanding heights of the country's mass media, the national television channels, from which the overwhelming majority of Russians get most or all of their news. Media hegemony allows the leadership to minimize the political impact of corruption, crime, and the regime's efforts to limit democracy. (Hahn 2004: 2)

In the context of 'stealth authoritarianism' the effects of the state's policies towards the NGO sphere are complex and contradictory. These effects operate in the environment of expectations and strategies shaped through the NGOs' interaction with the state in the 1990s. The following section explains how this interaction was shaped and legally defined from the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s.

2. The Legal Status of NGOs

There are several ways in which the post-communist states can promote and/or increase the costs of the development of civil society and non-profit organizations on the legal level. Legislation stipulates the conditions for registering and operating NGOs, and states potentially support the growth of the non-profit sector through laws which grant NGOs tax exemptions, offer funding, provide tax deductions to individuals and companies for donating money to them, or create systematic channels for contacts between state policy makers and organized groups of citizens which engage in the legislative and other initiatives (Henderson 2008). Legal definitions of various organizational forms and registration procedures, the permitted scope of political activity affect the non-profits' ability to pursue societal interests and check state power (Green 2002: 458-460).

In the 1990s, Russian governments established a regulatory framework to allow NGOs to operate by guaranteeing freedoms of speech, print, and association. While the Yeltsin administration did not attempt to hold back the non-profit sector and citizen activism, it also implemented relatively few policy initiatives to encourage it. At the same time, as discussed in the previous section, the state was weak as a result of the elite groups' competition over the power resources; it frequently lacked legitimacy and

material resources. In general, this period was characterized by a lack of legislation creating a friendlier environment for the NGOs. There were also a few formal mechanisms of communication between NGOs and government which would allow the NGOs access to influencing government policy (Henderson 2008).

In response to the growth in the number of voluntary organizations during the end of the 1980s, the government began to codify a set of laws and regulations to regulate them. In 1987, the legislation on public associations which had taken effect in 1932 was rewritten and adopted after several attempts. New draft laws in 1989 and in 1990 were attacked by jurists for placing the voluntary groups under direct government control and were also rejected (Tolz 1990: 35-36). A law "About voluntary associations" adopted in October 1991, allowed voluntary associations to exist through a formal procedure of registration without the approval of the official authorities, which was a major shift since the conditions of the Soviet regime (Zelikova and Fomin 1996; Yakimets 2004: 20). Subsequent laws including "On Public Associations," (1995), "On Noncommercial Organizations", and "On Charitable Activities and Charitable Organizations" (1996), established the legal status of noncommercial organizations. The legislation was apparently designed to allow civil society to function without state interference, and occasionally, with its help (Caiazza 2002: 28).

The effect of new legislation was dubious: While it created a space for voluntary activism it also limited it by requiring official recognition via a potentially obstructive labyrinth of bureaucratic regulations. The legal framework was unclear and registering frequently meant additional work for activists as well as additional costs in registration and lawyer's fees. Numerous documents had to be submitted, appropriate legal forms fitting the official list of subcategories of organizations had to be decided, and so on (Henderson 2003: 49). The legal procedures could be more or less directly used as a means to increase control and to favor certain profile organizations. For example, the organizations were required to renew their registration with the Ministry of Justice by June 30, 1999. In some regions, authorities abused the process to force groups to change their activities and mandates. In particular, there have been many attempts to outlaw organizations that monitor the conduct of governmental institutions, especially law enforcement agencies, such as human rights and environmental associations (McCrath 2002). Some of them were required drop the words "protection of human rights" from

their names and charters on the pretext that protection of human rights is the responsibility of the state, not of the NGOs (Dhzibladze 2002). At the same time, institutional channels for interactions between the NGOs and the state were designed. For example, the office of the Human Rights Ombudsman was established; in 2007 it received 48 235 complaints from citizens (Henderson 2008[26]).

The financial status of the public organizations essentially changed in the post-Soviet period. While they had previously enjoyed solid financial support of the Soviet state, prospective state support was now defined as tax advantages, subsidies, selective financing of social programs through grants, and contracting organizations on competitive basis (Zelikova and Fomin 1996; Yakimetz 2004: 20). Legislation at the local, regional, and national levels, however, remained contradictory and changed constantly. Federal laws also left huge loopholes for corruption and exploitation. Each regional and local administrative unit had its own taxation system. Organizations had to muddle through a complex system and usually did so without a lawyer; few could afford one, and the government did not offer legal aid (Caiazza 2002: 29, 30).

Donations by private businesses to the NGOs were relatively scarce in the 1990s. It has been explained by the lack of an advantageous tax structure for businesses donations to charities. Businesses could donate up to three percent of their profits, but owners were often unwilling to admit to making a profit, and thus attract state attention to their taxable incomes (Henderson 2008: 11). Another explanation includes the repressive political climate which makes it unpopular and dangerous for business leaders to support controversial issues. Many NGO activists report that like governmental officials, business leaders only support uncontroversial charity causes to create positive public relations images (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 313). In the 1990s, there was no functioning mechanism for private firms and corporations to sponsor NGOs.[27] Contacts with private businesses mostly take place "on the basis of personal ties" (Baranova et al. 2001: 7). Many activists admit that they are "ashamed to ask for money," while businessmen either barely know about voluntary organizations, or do not trust them (Besprozvannaja 2001). Even if the citizenry had money and time to give, there were no legal incentives to stimulate activism (Henderson 2008).

---

[26] Henderson (2008) refers to Annual Report of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation for the Year 2007.
[27] According to Livshin and Weitz (2006), charity giving by the Russian private companies was increasing in the early 2000s.

Since 1999, a series of tax laws have been adopted which stipulated that the NGOs have to pay profit taxes on their grants, value added tax on their free services and deliveries of humanitarian aid to individuals and organizations (Dzhibladze 2002). Russian tax legislation seems to be based solely upon a business model. NGOs lack an independent tax status for providing benefits to the local community. This is particularly due to government's distrust of the NGOs and philanthropists which are supposed to misuse tax benefits (Russia, USAID 2000, 2001, 2002).

If the state's policies towards civil society during the Yeltsin's administration can be described as "benign neglect," President Putin has established a "vigilant state" (Henderson 2008). This shift is accompanied by a changing official discourse which reinterprets the meaning of the civil society and NGOs through a less state-adversarial and more corporate stance, compared to the early 1990s.

3. The Official Discourse of a Civil Society

As explained in the previous chapter, NGO activists understand civil society as an informal community of citizens organized alongside and/or in opposition to the Communist /post-Soviet state.

On the contrary, the mainstream definition of civil society is shaped in a broader political-ideological context and official rhetoric. In the second half of the 1990s, two main currents in the public discourse of civil society, a *Zapadnik* and a Eurasian may be identified in the print and books published in Russia. The first one is based on the ideological current of Westernism (*Zapadnichestvo*) with roots in the nineteenth century. It views Russia's historical development in terms of 'catching-up with the West' (Patomäki and Pursiainen 1999: 64). Some authors state that the attempts to 'modernize politically' the former Soviet Union by Western type institutions of free elections, a multi-party system, freedom of speech, and so on have failed (ibid.: 65). In this interpretation, a law-based state and a genuine civil society may be created by a middle class of academics and industrialists and by a strong political leader (ibid.). The authoritarian state is viewed positively: It is able to combat the Mafia and the corrupt bureaucracy; it also permits the autonomy of individuals and groups in the non-political spheres (ibid.: 66).

The *Eurasian* worldview is based on that idea that Russia is a unique Eurasian civilization created by the eastern Slavs and Turks (ibid.: 62). Its proponents criticize *zapadnik* Yeltsin for trying to reshape the national mentality after a model of Western consumerist societies (ibid.: 70). They argue that the idea of a civil society is incompatible with a central Slavophil trait *sobornost* (togetherness). Civil societies in the West are extremely individualistic and consumption-oriented, which does not suit crisis-ridden Russia, where people should accept a moral of 'new asceticism.' Some Eurasians argue that civil society existed in the Soviet Union in the form of a 'politically united nation' which was destroyed after 1991. It was followed by a 'revolution of demands' and 'political infantilism' (ibid.: 70). Although elements of direct democracy were allowed and informal groups have emerged in the public sphere, they have a strong anti-state orientation. Russia's mission in world politics is to represent values of *sobornost*, solidarity, and collectivism in opposition to Western individualism (ibid.: 72; see also Patomäki and Pursiainen 1998).

The political rhetoric in the early 2000s has been increasingly reshaped in terms of 'liberal patriotism.' This discursive formation is based on the tendency to substitute the ideology of a radical market for an ideology of statism (Shevtsova 2003: 192). The main idea is to reinterpret the transition from communism to capitalism not as an imitation of the Western model, but rather as a version which fits Russia's culture and historical path (Jack 2004: 330). A discourse of civil society was incorporated into this new trend of political discourse.

Under Putin´s presidency, the meaning of civil society was linked more directly to the role of the state (Domrin 2003: 194). Many scholars and policymakers in Russia tend not to separate civil society as a domain that is independent from the state. The relationship between the law-governed state and civil society is believed to be one of "form and substance, a balanced and mutually restricting collaboration." Civil society was viewed as complementing and completing the law-governed state (ibid.: 201).

President Putin talked about the NGOs and civil society in a variety of speeches. His statements reflect a view of civil society and democracy, in which he wants both to join Europe and maintain the commitment to Russian traditions of centralized power and paternalism. His vision of civic activism is one in which "people, participating in civil

society, will regard as of primary importance not so much the idea of freedom, not so much the idea of interests, as the idea of service to a certain common cause" (quoted in Henderson 2008). Putin emphasized civic mobilization as patriotism rather than political protest. In his view, civic groups can serve as a force to pull the nation together in agreement on the main tasks facing the country. In speeches since 1999 Putin has complained both about the weakness of civil society and the inability of the state organs to effectively collaborate with it (ibid.: 18).

The Putin administration was interested in establishing closer links with and control over social organizations that work primarily on issues related to the concrete problems associated with people's lives. At the same time, Putin expressed suspicion towards Russian organizations that work on larger issues related to democratic freedoms and rights and which are often supported by Western foundations. In his State of the Union address in May 2003 Putin maintained that some NGOs were primarily concerned with obtaining financial resources from abroad, or served "dubious group and commercial interests" (Henderson 2008: 18). As a result, he argued, that these civic groups do not serve the real interests of the people, in contrast to the organizations on the ground who continue their work unnoticed (ibid.: 19).

The Kremlin has classified NGOs as either friendly or critical. Friendly organizations promote Russia's interests in economy and social sphere and create a positive image of Russia abroad. Critical organizations spoil Russia's image abroad (Mereu 2004).

4. The New Policy of the Non-Profit Sector

In the context of the increasing centralizing trends in institutionalized politics, a more active approach towards citizens´ associations was established during the Putin presidency. Formalized corporatist mechanisms of communication and financial support between the NGOs and the state increased. The new policy for the non-profit sector includes the creation of the Public Chamber, the reconfiguration of the Presidential Council on Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights, expansion of the Human Rights ombudsman's office, increased government funds for NGOs, legislation allowing social

service sub-contracting, and the Law on Local Self-Governance. The Duma has passed additional legislation regulating the non-profit sector (Henderson 2008: 17). The new policies have been met with criticism from academics and practitioners interested in developing democracy in Russia. Other authors stress that these changes rather than eliminating the opportunities for autonomous citizen activism, reshape the space of activism (ibid.).

In the summer and fall of 2001, Kremlin organized the Civic Forum, a conference that brought together several thousand civic activists from across Russia and key government personnel. This was the first time that government officials and NGO representatives met to discuss pressing social issues in an effort to create more channels of communication and greater cooperation between NGOs and the state.

The initiative was said to come up during a meeting between non-profit organizations and President Putin. The idea was further developed by groups connected to the Kremlin, such as the Public Opinion Fund, the Effective Policy Fund and regional NGOs. From the very beginning, well known large-scope human rights NGOs were not invited to participate. However, after criticism from the leaders of organizations like Memorial, Social Ecological Union, Confederation of Consumers' Societies, the Moscow Helsinki Group, the organizational structure of the congress was changed. As a result, the Forum's twenty-one-member organizing committee included seven government officials, seven members of pro-Kremlin NGOs, and seven members of "oppositional" NGOs (Alexeyeva 2001; Uzelak 2001).

The original plan was said to have been to organize the Civic Forum as an expression of support by the NGOs for the President at a single plenary meeting of five thousand participants in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. In addition, a Civic Chamber was supposed to be elected. It was supposed to be a national NGO council which would 'represent' the NGO sector in a dialogue with the official authorities. Some observers regarded the Civic Forum as an attempt by the government to create surrogate, parallel structures that would compete with independent social organizations (McCrath 2002: 333). The NGOs could be a political resource for mobilizing public support for the president in the anticipation of painful social reforms in housing, energy, and health care which might have generated public criticism (ibid.). Other observers, such as Gleb Pavlovskii, a Kremlin adviser and president of the Foundation for Efficient Politics,

claimed that the 21 agreements signed between the NGOs and the officials represented the foundation for cooperation between the state and society. The Civic Forum might have signaled the government's recognition that NGOs might be a useful partner in some areas (ibid.; see also Sakwa 2004: 127).

In 2002, the president reconfigured the existing Commission on Human Rights to create the Presidential Council on Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights, with 33 members from human rights and broad based social organizations as well as individuals from other institutions of civil society including political analysts, academics, and actors (Henderson 2008). At the same time, the status of the human rights NGO activists was regulated further by changes in the Code of Criminal Procedures and the Code of Administrative Procedures adopted in 2001 and 2002. For example, NGO activists and lay defenders were prohibited from representing people *pro bono publico* in court. Only professional lawyers, members of the bar, are allowed to represent their clients (Dhzibladze 2002).

In the fall 2004, the government legislation to create a Public Chamber including representatives of the civic organizations was discussed and subsequently passed on July 1, 2005. The key function of the Chamber is to submit recommendations to members of the Duma about domestic policy, legislation, and request investigations into potential breaches of the law and monitor state agencies. The members of the Chamber also serve on one of eighteen commissions that examine bills or provide advice and expertise to the Duma on a variety of pressing issues, such as public control over the activities of law enforcement and reforming the judicial system, information policy and freedom of expression in the media, health care, and so on.[28] Membership in the Chamber is decided from the top down: the president appoints one third of the members who will appoint another third of the members. The two thirds then will pick the final third who are nominated by regional social groups. This federal level Public Chamber is to be replicated at the regional level in Russia's 89 territorial units (Henderson 2008: 20).

In 2003, the Duma adopted the Federal Law on Local Self-Governance legislation, which may potentially affect the activities of the NGOs. Over one third of the regions began to put the legislation in practice in 2006. It provides additional formal opportunities

---

[28] See the official website at http://www.oprf.ru/ru/structure/comissions2008

for not just NGOs, for citizens more broadly, to organize and mobilize around particular interests (ibid.).

The federal government has started to provide financial support for NGOs. In 2006, the federal government authorized the Public Chamber to distribute 500 million rubles ($15 million) to NGOs in a grant competition. The following year, the amount was more than doubled to 1.25 billion rubles ($50 million) to fund grant competitions in projects related to youth; health; civil society; socially disadvantaged groups; education, culture and art; and to support social related research (Henderson 2008: 22). Putin also instructed business leaders to become more socially responsible, and declared 2006 the year of philanthropy to encourage businesses to support the government's four national projects: improving Russia's healthcare, housing, agriculture, and education. However, the philanthropy of Khodorkovky's Open Russia Foundation, which promoted the much more explicit political goal of developing civil liberties, was not encouraged (ibid.: 23).

Various levels of government continue to provide small funding and in-kind donations to voluntary organizations, such as office space or conference facilities, particularly in regions in which foreign funding is less available than in Moscow (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 313). State officials are, however, more willing to support more basic charity services including to veterans, individuals with disabilities, or orphaned children, than more radical advocacy NGOs which might have adversary relations with the state. Groups which agitate for rights and freedoms are not favored for state funding.

After the Civic Forum in the fall 2001, Putin signaled that state officials should co-operate with civic organizations. In February 2002, Prime Minister Kasyanov signed in a decree on establishing a dozen permanent NGO-ministerial working groups. All ministries were to report to him quarterly about their cooperation with the NGOs. A majority of the co-operation, however, remains on the level of pure declaration. Only few officials on the federal level genuinely recognize the benefits of cooperating with the NGOs. At the regional level, more substantial cooperation between the official authorities and NGOs were encouraged to mobilize the financial and human resources for addressing concrete needs in the local communities. Moreover, in some regions the activists are persecuted, organizations are denied registration or closed, offices are raided by the tax police, their leaders beaten up by the police, illegally detained or convicted (McCrath 2002: 333).

In 2006, the Duma passed legislation that increased the regulatory framework within which NGOs operate. The law amends four existing laws that govern the non-profit sector. It introduced several new requirements for public associations, non-commercial organizations, and foreign NGOs. The new requirements restrict who may form an organization in the Russian Federation, expand the reasons for which registration may be denied, and increase the supervisory powers of the state (Bourjaily 2006; Henderson 2008). Some maintain that while previous legislation was confusing, unclear, poorly drafted, and not particularly proactive, it was guided by the principles of information whereas the current legislation is inspired by the principle of permission (Henderson 2008).

In what ways has the Putin administration's policies affected the development of NGOs? The external reaction has been primarily negative. Kremlin is said to have created difficult requirements for the NGOs that seek foreign funding. Most Russian NGOs survive on donations from businesses approved by the Kremlin, or from the Civic Forum, a government organization that monitors NGOs. This prognosis, however, overlooks many of the complexities of the development of Russian NGOs (ibid.: 24). The design of the new channels of interactions between the state and NGOs has provided them with increased institutionalized access to policy makers. As a result, NGOs might get an increased role in policy making, advocacy, and service provision in some cases and potentially risk increased co-optation in other cases. Other authors stress that the autonomy of the civil society is compromised by a close relationship between the state and society (Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 316). A more corporatist arrangement of relations between the state and civil society may be suitable for states in liberal democracies in Western Europe. But these types of close arrangements might be dangerous for post-communist states in which there is a history of an authoritarian regime. During the post-Soviet period, many citizens tend to believe that the state's imposition of order is more important than democracy. Occupants of bureaucratic and political positions in turn tend to believe that the state should play a far-reaching role in governing society (ibid.: 318).

5. The NGOs' Influence on the State

Most NGOs continue to regard the state as having the main responsibility for social welfare, and themselves as its additional agency, which also should be supported. At the same time, many non-profits are critical toward the official social policy, dislike bureaucratization, or the officials' excessive efforts to gain control over them (Baranova et al. 2001: 7). A new understanding of the value of the NGOs' unique expertise in their areas of interest and new approaches to problems has emerged. The influence of foundations within the Third Sector results not from the monetary value, but more from their flexibility with regard to responding to needs, their willingness to innovate and take risks, and the pluralistic nature of their decision-making processes (Livshin and Weitz 2006).

Human rights NGOs have an ambiguous relationship to the state: they both strive to preserve an autonomous status and to cooperate. They thus differ from the so called social service NGOs primarily on the matter of financial independence from the state authorities. The economic resources have to be found from sources other than the Russian state: grants from international foundations and organizations; through partnership in joint projects like TACIS; offering services for a fee; or in some cases, donations from businesses. The government's initiatives to cooperation between the state and the civil society frequently evoke controversial responses within the human rights NGOs community.

The human rights NGOs strive to pressure power-holders to be guided by their new values. The activists are often skeptical about the ability of Russian officials to cooperate with the NGOs. Human rights NGOs nevertheless view themselves not as "in opposition to the authorities, but rather as illuminating the authorities about what they are doing wrong in the situations regarding individuals and society" (interview, October 14, 2001[29]). This method is based on the assumption that power-holders "can be slowly civilized and educated." The risk, however, is that non-state organizations can be turned into "a pseudo-civic adjunct to the state power … and lose their ability to represent the citizens who need be protected from abuse by the power-holders" (HCAC Reports, 1996: 21). The activists

---

[29] Interview with a member of The Young People Centre of Human Rights.

state that the human rights organizations generally failed to contribute to create "mechanisms able to ensure responsiveness of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities to citizens" (ibid.: 19). At the same time, the sphere of institutional politics became even more distant from ordinary citizens: "We can see that politics has become a sphere reserved only for the rich. Running an election campaign for the state Duma costs at least fifty thousand dollars while an average monthly income is three hundred dollars" (ibid.: 25).

There are, however, also some more positive experiences. For example, new institutional forms of interaction between NGOs and governments introduced through the Civic Forum have stimulated the debate on how the NGOs' social expertise can be applied in policy making. *Social* or *civic expert* is a new notion which has been introduced in the Third Sector. Grassroots civic experts accumulate unique practical knowledge of problem-solving through years of volunteering in their area of interest such as the conflict in Chechnya, local self-government, or other areas. For example, the NGO leader Svetlana Ganushkina, who was invited to the governmental Commission on Migration Policies and appointed as a member in the Presidential Committee on Human Rights, has been working with migration problems in an NGO for almost twenty years (Beliaeva, in Dorosheva 2003: 30).

Summary

This chapter showed that interaction between the NGOs and the state evolved during different post-Soviet periods. The results of the shift in the state's policies towards the non-profit sector, designed and implemented by the Putin administration, are complex. The sphere of civic NGOs tends to be more directly connected to institutionalized politics, which in the semi-democratic context, creates a potential risk that the organizations might be co-opted. In many cases, however, a debate and self-awareness within the NGO community has been stimulated and intensified as a result of higher degree of institutionalized state-society interaction.

Chapter 6

Western Donors' Gendered Interventions

Introduction

This chapter describes the complicated role played by foreign (Western) donors in the Russian sphere of NGOs. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the U.S., Western European governments, and private donors that were committed to global democracy assistance, promoted independent civic groups in Russia through funding and education. This chapter shows that Western donors' interventions which aimed at developing Russia's civil society were based on a gendered neoliberal agenda. Further, it describes the unintended effects of Western aid, such as the (re)production of (new) social hierarchies and enforcing a form of cultural imperialism. Finally, it explains how the access to Western assistance created opportunities for the Russian civic groups' agency and creative compromises.

1. The Donors' Neoliberal Gendered Agenda

As Russia started to open up to the rest of the world in the late Soviet era, exchanges between Russian and foreign civic activists and groups increased. As was showed in chapter 4, the first independent groups were often led by people from the intelligentsia, including networks and discussion groups which opposed the communist state. Many of them fostered international ties and relationships through the official social organizations, via academic research institutions or former political dissident activism. In the early 1990s, collaboration around different issues developed between Russian activists and activist groups in the U.S. and Western Europe. In the mid-1990s, these exchanges became institutionalized through the work of Western foundations and agencies. Western donors started to channel resources to civic groups as a part of their commitment to assist democratization and a market economy in post-communist countries (Hemment 2007). In

the 1990s, many Russian grassroots NGOs were neither entitled to any funding from the state, nor could they get income from membership fees or private contributions. The only available sources of income were thus grants from foreign foundations and commercial activities (Kay 2000). Bilateral and multilateral donors, international organizations and foundations were often the only forces, which actively worked to promote a non-profit sector. A new infrastructure for global democracy assistance was shaped. The Russian activists were offered funding, technical assistance, and management training for non-profit organizations. The government agency USAID was the most visible actor,[30] the European Union, Great Britain, Canada, and the Scandinavian countries also sponsored civil society programs in Russia. They were joined by international agencies such as the United Nations and the World Bank, and by foundations, such as George Soros's Open Society Institute, the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and international non-profit organizations such as the Eurasia Foundation, IREX and others[31] (Henderson 2003: 63). The levels of funding began to decline in the late 1990s and early 2000s, partly due to the changed priorities of international donors (Hemment 2007; Sperling 2006).

Neoliberal Civil Society

The global interventions and the new infrastructure for global activism were deeply ideological. After the demise of the socialist alternative and its vision of a just social order, a new neoliberal vision of developmental interventions took hold. The increased popularity of NGOs with governments and official aid agencies, particularly since the end of the Cold War, has been a response to changed economic and political thinking dominated by so called 'New Policy Agenda.' It was driven by "beliefs organized around the twin poles of neoliberal economics and liberal democratic theory" (Moore 1993, cited in Hulme and Edwards 1997: 5). Markets and private initiatives were seen as the most efficient tools for achieving economic growth and providing services to people. NGOs

---

[30] Sundstrom (2006a: 12) estimates that in 1990-2002 the total amount of U.S. government assistance to promote democracy in Russia was about $860 million.

[31] The European Union has been a major multilateral donor of civil society development through its program of TACIS; during the period 1991-2001, it spent about 750-800 million euros on democracy assistance in Russia (Sundstrom 2006a: 12). According to Henderson (2003: 70-71), the private foundation the Charities Aid Foundation granted over $6 million from 1993 to 2002. The MacArthur Foundation gave over $17 million to support projects in the former Soviet Union from 1991 to 1998. The Eurasia Foundation distributed almost $38 million in grants to the non-profit sector in Russia during period from 1993 to 2001 (ibid.: 7).

and grassroots organizations were also seen as a component of a strong civil society acting as a counterweight to state power (Hulme and Edwards 1997). Civil society was therefore understood firstly in terms of establishing markets. The new vision involved restructuring the economy and redrawing state/societal relations through cutting back the state's social responsibilities. The societal groups were to be responsible for caring for the old and the poor (Hemment 2007).

A new global apparatus for activism was created and universal strategies were exported to new regions of the development industry such as the former Soviet Union and Central Eastern Europe. Some of these strategies were concepts that originated in progressive struggles for social justice: human rights, participation, women's rights, and gender (ibid.: 139). The terms "NGOs," "non-profits," and "the Third Sector" were initially imported to Russia from the West. The Third Sector was imagined as the sphere of citizens' initiatives and a part of a trio of which the first and second parts were the state and the private business sector (Hemment 2004: 217). When in the 1990s the term civil society started to signify the triumph of capitalism, a shift occurred in the thinking of the development aid agencies. Donors directed money to advocacy NGOs. They were influenced by neo-Toquevillian visions of civic development and the main thesis in Robert Putman's *Making Democracy Work* (1993) that more horizontal or informal associational ties breed social capital which in turn nurtures democracy (Henderson 2003: 65). The goal of building a civil society in Russia has been considered a 'transition' towards a society similar to Western democracies (Mandel 2002: 280; Wedel 1998). Donors hoped that an independent sector of NGOs might replace the discredited bureaucratic state, decentralize services, and build democracy (Russia, USAID 2004). Assistance for democracy and civil society was linked to economic interests and market reform. A new middle class of property owners and entrepreneurs was assumed to emerge and nurture democracy (Henderson 2003: 281). Civil society became linked to the privatization aid. The international lending institutions and aid donors pressed for economic reform (Wedel 1998: 122).

Western donors' aid and education in post-socialist countries has been viewed as "development project" shaped through asymmetric global power relationships (Walck 1995). "Shock therapy" prescribed by the International Monetary Fund was implemented

by the Russian leaders with dreadful consequences for the population.[32] Soviet-era social guarantees such as universal free health-care, full employment, and state-subsidized day care were dismantled and new structures were not created in its place. The Russian people had to cope with new problems of unemployment and hyperinflation without a social safety net.

The 'good' and the 'bad' are intertwined in the Third Sector. The rapid growth of the NGOs, in the world as well as in Russia, has been viewed in disparate ways: as 'global civil society' of empowered grassroots movements or as Western colonizing projects (Hemment 1998; Appadurai 2001; Matthews 1997). "NGO-ization" is frequently seen as a Western intrusion that reinforces East-West boundaries. Western donor agencies are seen as "trying to enlighten Russians with symbols of capitalism such as market and privatization" (Bruno 1998: 171). "The west is the donor, the moderniser, the site of "know-how" while the east is cast as beneficiary, recipient in a relationship of structural inequality, an "outsider" who wants "in"" (Hemment 1998: 35). Actors in the "East" have accepted the designation "lesser" to some degree, because it confirmed their victimhood as individuals oppressed by the Soviet regime. This discourse became a part of their strategy for resistance. At the same time, however, it has the effect making the "East" more primitive and serves to legitimize Western-identified development projects. The post-socialist Other was reconstituted as disadvantaged and in need of "development" (ibid.: 36).

The Feminized Third Sector

The (Western) concepts of civil society and social capital are gendered (Gal and Kligman 2000; Adkins 2005; see also Bystydzienski 1992). In post-Soviet Russia, advocacy for

---

[32] International financial institutions played a central role in the contest between different scenarios of the economic reform in Russia. Western support was viewed as crucial for conducting reforms. In May 1990, Foreign Minister Shevarnadze argued that a Soviet transition to a market economy would require about $20 billion in loans and aid from the West (Reddaway and Glinski 2001:175). In 1990, the 500 days program of the reform was approved by the Russian Supreme Soviet. However, it was disapproved by the potential international financiers. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) economists' analysis of the Soviet economy was informed by an approach of 'shock therapy' which favors monetarism and unrestricted capital flows. The economic elite in the Soviet Union preferred the policy of immediate price deregulation in advance of legal privatization. The 500 days plan was shelved and the 'shock therapy' was adopted as program of economic reform in the fall 1991 (ibid: 177). In March 1997, following recommendation of the IMF experts, the policy of shock therapy was relauncehed despite the fact that the depression had reduced Russia's GDP by almost 50 percent (ibid: 532).

human rights, gender equity and women's rights were promoted through Western assistance to civic NGOs while welfare systems were dismantled during the economic structural adjustment. The NGOs were set up as an embodiment of a 'civil society' project which aimed to legitimize the state's reduction in social welfare (Gal 1997: 38). The societal organizations, staffed predominately by women, would instead provide social services. In critical scholarship, the new service-oriented NGOs are described as an apparatus which fills the gaps of the free market (Hemment 2007; Foley and Edwards 1997; Hemment 2004: 217). The NGOs deal with social problems which receive less attention due to the processes of market development. In contrast to state social service institutions, NGOs are based on a philosophy of self-help and self-reliance. For example, the activists of Crisis Center, which were established as a transnational feminist campaign against domestic violence, worked to make women realize that the state is not going to help them and that the only solution is to help themselves (Hemment 2004). The NGOs are part of a project aimed at educating citizens to take individual responsibility and claim their rights, while in reality social institutions and structures of citizenship (e.g. the rule of law, as in my case study of the SOMO NGOs) do not function (see Hemment 2007: 141).

The gendered agenda of Western donors interacted with processes of constructing a new gender order in post-socialist Russia. Social services were redefined as belonging to the private sphere, wherein individuals and families were supposed to take the ultimate responsibility (Zelikova and Fomin 1996). The civil society was reinterpreted in terms of a feminized Third Sector of social service NGOs. During perestroika, civil society was a key slogan defined in terms of political mobilization against the communist state. In the post-Soviet context, civil society has been redefined from a notion pertaining to dissident political agency (of men) in the Soviet period to a notion of social service offered by (female) NGO activists (Salmeniemi 2005). The meaning of the practices of the socially-oriented NGOs is cast in terms of solutions to the (private) problems of individual citizens. An additional distinction between private and public was made within the male public sphere of socio-political activity (Gal and Kligman 2000). The conceptual shift from 'civil society versus state' to the 'Third Sector with the state' is interrelated with defining civic activity as feminine:

> The idea of civil society as a third sector, not as a political opponent but rather as a helpmate of the state particularly in the social sector, entails a discursive shift from 'political and masculine' to 'social and feminine.' (Salmenniemi 2005: 748)

The political aspect of civic organizations tends to disappear in the framework of the Third Sector. If most civic activists are women, the Soviet hierarchic partnership between the state and women is being reconfigured. The Soviet state partly symbolically, partly materially appropriated the traditional male role in families; it created an alliance with women by defining motherhood as women's civic duty towards the state (Ashwin 2000). The post-Soviet state is framed as an unequal partner of 'social mothers,' i.e. women civic activists. The civic sphere is turned "into a sphere of care where women bear the social costs of the transformation" (Salmenniemi 2005: 748).

The feminization of the Third Sector has also been explained by the priorities of the international community which reified it by emphasizing gender-sensitive politics that promote women in the NGO-arena. It has also been explained by women's knowledge of foreign languages and their ability to connect with foreign donors; women's traditional interest in and taking responsibility for social problems such as disabilities, health and children's issues; a desire to escape corruption which is more associated with the formal political arena than the new civic arena; as well as women's secondary status -- a situation which opens avenues of participation which lack monetary reward due to men's lack of interest (Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 11).

While the sphere of non-profits is associated with femininity, institutional politics is considered a masculine territory (Gal and Kligman 2000: 95; Marsh and Gvosdev 2002; Shiraev 1999). In the political arena, men dominate formal government structures and establish political parties. Although NGOs play an important role in offering citizens opportunities to tackle community problems and engage in public advocacy, women nevertheless find themselves sealed off from other domains of political power. Civic activism has become the only arena open for them (ibid.: 2, 10; see also Kochkina 2007). I describe further in Chapter 8, section 3, how a gendered symbolic frame of the NGO activism constitutes a framework for women's civic activism.

As the following section explains, Western donors' interventions gave rise to widening gaps between the large well-equipped NGOs and grassroots civic groups and constituencies due to the formalization of the NGO sector. Further, the Third Sector provides a structural and symbolic framework within which the former Soviet elites are reproduced.

2. Formalization of Activism, Gaps, and Hierarchies

Although, as explained in chapter 4 of this dissertation, civil society is not completely new in post-Soviet Russia, the idea of projects funded by Western donors was that civil society needed to be created from scratch (Mandel 2002: 282, 284). Western donors ignored the important role of the Soviet legacy of informal networks of mutual favors and solidarity, and considered the Russian civil society only as a 'hostage to a totalitarian regime' (Hemment 1998: 64; Gal and Kligman 2000). The approach to developing activism was mainly top down. The idea was to build a few large NGOs from the start, then hope that they would multiply from the center outwards (Henderson 2008). As domestic support for NGOs and non-profit organizations was weak, the effects of Western and Westernized support were a strange mix. On one hand, assistance helped to create a non-profit sector that did not exist ten years previously. A new vocabulary for activists, a new way of visualizing and creating linkages with the state, political society, other civic actors and citizens were formed. On the other hand, as donors supported mainly the NGOs that promoted issues such as human rights and women's equality, they were working with a relatively narrow group of NGOs.[33] Further, donors tended to fund projects which they wanted to see, rather than responding to domestic demands. This resulted in a civic sector divorced from the Russian constituency on whose behalf they supposedly acted (Henderson 2008; Mendelson and Glen 2002; Sundstrom and Henry 2006: 312). While there was a great disparity between the resources obtained through Western assistance and indigenous sources, dependency on the external donors might have encouraged the activists to be more attentive to the preferences of the donors rather than of their constituencies. Instead of encouraging informal grassroots initiatives, the Western funding of NGOs served more to build centralized and bureaucratized NGOs, which were poorly connected with practical activities (Henderson 2003: 10). The development of managerial skills and financial accountability was emphasized in the Russian NGOs, rather than representing the interests of the constituencies and the broad public. The salaried members

---

[33] The donors' focus shifted towards smaller regional civic groups after criticism for favoring groups in Moscow (Richter 2002). Starting in the mid-1990s, USAID worked to expand beyond the major metropolitan areas, where the larger NGOs were located, by sponsoring small grants competitions to distribute money to smaller organizations located all around Russia. At the end of the Yeltsin era, programs such as "You the People," as well as the Community Service School Program, further move USAID away from the narrower NGO approach (Henderson 2008: 14, 15).

of the NGOs were encouraged to regard their activism as a career rather than a social engagement (Richter 2002). As many critics stress, the so called "NGO-ization" of the voluntary movements brought in their professionalization and bureaucratization. Some activists complain that foreign assistance has undermined the democratic horizontal structures that prevailed during the perestroika era, encouraging instead an elite network of hierarchical professional organizations that confuse their own interests with those of the movement as a whole (Richter 2002; Yanitzky 2000a). The donors exercise a tight supervision over NGOs. While the early groups were based on principles of openness and solidarity, "transparency" is a recurrent metaphor of project-speak (Sampson 1996: 129). "Transparency" suggests clarity of affairs, bureaucratic precision, economy and rational planning rather than a dream of a post-ideological world with no boundaries (Hemment 1998). Organizations devote much of their time and energy to prepare reports for donors and the Russian tax authorities, and to write new grant proposals.

Funds are hard to obtain in Russia. Those who work in NGOs supported by foreign grants are viewed as transnationally focused elite who has more in common with each other than with local populations or social movements (Mandel 2002; Sampson 1996). A new social/economic group of individuals who survive on funding from aid and cooperation projects in the Western-style NGOs appeared in the 1990s (Bruno 1998). They come from the technological and academic intelligentsia in the major cities; "a social group of well-educated, broadly 'middle-class' individuals who have acquired a 'know-how' of the workings and thinking of foreign donor agencies and who are actively using this to procure their livelihood" (ibid.: 186).

The Third Sector contributes to the formation of hierarchies and competition between groups. One effect is the reinforcement of differences in status between the intelligentsia, former communist elites and other groups in society (Hemment 2004; Mandel 2002; Kay 2000). The donors have to select the individuals and groups that become the recipients of funding. Former *nomenclature* cadres, often organized in patron-client networks with access to international contacts, have learned to manipulate the new opportunities. Many educated young adults with backgrounds in the intelligentsia served as consultants, brokers, and partners and depended more on Western contacts and opportunities than on indigenous ones (Wedel 1998: 92; see also Mandel 2002: 284).

The elitist social stratification among the activists' groups was reinforced due to donors' tendency to prioritize groups that use the "right" language (Bruno 1998: 171). "…Individuals who were very good at the "wooden language" of socialism have now mastered the jargon of democracy programs and project management (Sampson 1996: 141; Mandel 2002: 279). These professionals are able to adjust quickly to whatever project they happen to work for.

Some NGOs learned to respond to the priorities established by external agencies.[34] Proposals, which were 'too' local and which emphasized domestic issues did not receive funding as the Western donors could not relate to them (Mandel 2002: 284, 285; Henderson 2003: 10). The promise of Western money and access often inspired secrecy, suspicion, and competition among groups. Each group developed and guarded its own Western contacts (Wedel 1998: 92, 100). Organizations tend to concentrate on accomplishing a set of goals prescribed by the donors (Richter 2002).

One of the consequences of the Western funding is a discursive discrepancy between the funded NGOs and other grassroots groups on the one side, and the general population on the other. Groups that received funding tended to respond to the post-materialist values of the donors rather than to articulate the more urgent domestic issues (Henderson 2003: 10; Hemment 2004). Another problem is that the form of activism desired and promoted by Western donors is based on Western models. NGOs are encouraged to incorporate an advocacy strategy, which involves gaining access to decision-making processes and using the activists' expertise to advice and lobby decision makers on relevant policy discussions. This strategy is not always effective in Russian conditions where democratic norms or laws are frequently violated; the activists achieve few results (Richter 2002; HCAC Reports 1996: 22).

At the same time, many independent NGOs viewed foreign funding as a smaller threat to their autonomy than government funding. Access to resources offered by Western donors is invaluable for many groups. Although it is unequal, the interaction between recipient organizations and representatives for international donors constitutes a site of agency, mutual learning, and creative compromises.

---

[34] This kind of NGOs has been classified as DONGO, 'donor organised NGO' (Fisher 1997: 448).

3. Learning, Empowerment, and Fragility

The Russian activists' access to Western donors' and activist groups' intellectual, material, symbolic, organizational, and social (friendships, solidarity) resources created conditions for empowerment, creative compromises, mutual learning, as well as for an insecure and fragile work position. In a sense, the donors intended to teach the civic activists a new language, and a new way of thinking and acting. Western donors offered technical, monetary and moral support to activists in the voluntary sector. They regarded as primary goals to teach civic activists how to run an organization: define mission and goals, work with a constituency, register, social marketing, budgeting and so on. The office space, organizational newsletters, salaries for employees, computers, fax machines and copiers were funded. The activists were taught to connect with governments, other NGOs, and the public. The donors supplied trainers and training related to the civic development and the non-profit sector, sent leaders of groups abroad for international conferences and trips, financed translation of the necessary books from English to Russian, paid for research and supported domestic conferences and workshops for NGO activists. In addition, they provided moral support and encouragement (Henderson 2003: 64; Henderson 2008).

Although it is crucially important to criticize Western donors' intervention in the Russian NGO sphere, it is also important to move beyond the critique (Hemment 2007: 142). It should not obscure the potential for agency within the global exchanges. The arena of professional forms of activism is contradictory; and people who work within it, are aware of these contradictions, but try to make their activism matter (see Hemment 2007; it is also indicated in my material in the case of the SOMO NGOs). They cannot afford to abandon this arena based on critical arguments.

An analysis of the contradictions of the imported models of activism should be accompanied with a constructive political project. One example of this type of global activism is Julie Hemment's (2007) participatory action research of women's civic groups in Russia. Her own involvement in their work and relationships with them forced her to view global gendered interventions differently. She (ibid.: 143) stresses that while NGOs are often accused of de-politicizing resistance and co-opting activists, feminism in Russia and the imported concept "gender" became an explanatory framework that enabled

women activists to reinterpret the past and create new projects for personal and social change. The activists' perceptions of empowerment cannot be dismissed as evidence of the "production of neoliberal citizens" (ibid.: 145).

In addition, the discussion of NGOs as elite enrichment should be nuanced. Hemment (ibid.) points out the fragility of the activists' position and stability. Although involvement in NGOs can be regarded as a kind of career, it does not provide job security.[35] The NGOs are often materially impoverished. They are sustained through voluntary work and by the financial support of spouses, children, and extended family.

The detachment of a group of professional activists from their constituents cannot be blamed entirely on foreign assistance. Difficult economic conditions and the overall fragmentation of Russian society and state make activism so difficult that keeping the network alive could be seen as achievement in itself (ibid.). The mutual suspicion and competitiveness among the activist organizations also predates foreign assistance. Attempts to overcome fragmentation of the voluntary sector have been made through special programs. For example, in 1997, there was a less successful attempt to establish a coalition of the St. Petersburg's NGOs (Sungurov 1999a).

Summary

This chapter has shown that Western aid to Russian NGOs has been inspired by a gendered neoliberal missionary formula for development projects. The civil society-building has been interpreted in terms of establishing markets and cut backs in social services that used to be provided by the state. The social service NGOs which are mainly staffed by women, were to step in and fill the gaps of the market by providing services to disadvantaged groups. The result is a gendered distribution of power and resources; women tend to be associated with non-profit non-state sector. Women's activism is discursively framed in terms of a "feminized" Third Sector of NGOs. Civil society has been depoliticized and reinterpreted in terms of women civic activists' (unequal) partnership with the state. Further, civil society was viewed as a moralizing project which aimed at educating citizens to take individual responsibility, while the social structures

---

[35] One of respondents in Hemment's (2007: 84) study describes how women are being "used up" by their involvement into the Third Sector: "My heart aches when I think of how many excellent women I know who work in the Third Sector are ill. It takes so much from you, there is such uncertainty, we all get ill after a few years."

(e.g. the rule of law) were not there. In addition, Western intervention contributed to formalizing voluntary activism and establishing NGOs as a site of bureaucratized, professional, elitist activity distanced from local knowledge and grassroots citizens' initiatives. Western donors tended to create civic organizations from scratch instead of supporting the pre-existing grassroots groups. Finally, Western donors' policy of grants increased the competition and split between Russian NGOs by creating new hierarchies and stratifications among activists. At the same time, however, Russian activists' access to Western donors' and activist groups' intellectual, material, symbolic, organizational, and social (personal friendships, solidarity) resources created conditions for empowerment, creative compromises, mutual learning, as well as ultimately insecure and fragile occupation.

Chapter 7

Post-Soviet Gender Order and Women's Agency

Introduction

This chapter and the following one analyze a historically evolving gender order, which affects the limits and possibilities of women's socio-political self-organization in Russia. This chapter outlines the main shifts in the gender relations and women's positioning in post-Soviet Russia. It describes the Soviet state's hegemonic discourse through which new sexual morality was formed; it also describes a centralist organization of men's and women's engagement in family, sexuality, work, and politics. The position of women was defined as "working mother" and "chaste mother of the nation." Women's voluntary self-organization outside the Party-state was prohibited. Furthermore, this chapter highlights a sexualized and "privatized" category of woman, which started to dominate in post-Soviet Russia. Finally, it stresses specific forms of the daily life agency and resistance of women.

1. The Enforced Emancipation of Women

Apart from a brief period in the early 1920s when the feminists AlexandraKollontai and Irnessa Armand were allowed to head the Women's Department in the Party, conditions for women's emancipation were defined by the male leadership in the Communist party-state. The formulation of the issues and solutions for women's sexual discrimination during the Soviet period can be described as an "enforced emancipation" of women (Liljeström 1995: 412). This kind of emancipation policy did not include women's voices or a debate among women. Relationships within the domestic sphere never became a target of the official emancipation.

The Soviet gender system established by the party-state during the 1930s-1940s included a paradox. It included an ideological construction of the "new Soviet woman" – a pro-masculine androgynous creature, a socialism-builder who participated in social

production and political activities – while incorporating thinking in terms of gender polarization and women as a secondary sex representing the Mother, bodily dimensions, and family (ibid.: 418).

The foundation for the ideological and political organization of the Soviet society was formed by Russia's rural legacy. The rural society of the 1800s was organized through sex differential homo-sociality and patriarchal norms. Work tasks, places, and personal characteristics were perceived in terms of sex segregation. Biological fatalism and misogyny were pervasive. The hierarchical asymmetric homo-sociality in combination with stigmatizing regulative and control mechanisms ensured that women would prioritize the demands and expectations defined by men, family, and kin. At the same time, solidarity and ties of homo-sociality among women were weak (ibid.).

After the 1917 October revolution, a period of a lively public discussion in the 1920s reflected different opinions on a new sexual morality. It stressed that misogynist attitudes were part of the pre-revolutionary life which should be changed. The Party leaders' views about a new behavior, however, were based on moralistic puritanism. While the entire society became an object of the party's disciplinary methods and propaganda and while sexuality was suppressed in the Soviet society, women and girls were targeted through especially severe regulative measures. The new norms involved a category of women viewed as androgynous person by ascribing her masculine features based on thinking rooted in biological determinism. This way of constituting gender created contradictory expectations and demands concerning women's sexual identity and bodily representations: "the so called feminine attributes have at once to be smoothed away or hidden and maintained" (Liljeström 1995: 230).

In the 1930s-1940s, the Soviet gender order consisted of intertwining the pre-revolutionary sex differential and misogynist mentality based on biological-essentialist gender ideology with new ideological priorities. The ideal of *Homo Sovieticus* as a genderless androgynous asexual creature actually pertained to women. These women embodied the "new Soviet woman." Through a range of mechanisms, the party regulated women's duties and tasks regarding both paid work and motherhood. Discourse of biological determinism and a hierarchy between men and women was combined with sex equality (ibid.: 419). Although the official goals of the Bolsheviks were to achieve gender equality, they contradicted assumptions that were taken for granted of the domestic sphere

as women's 'natural' responsibility and of Woman as antithetical complement to Man (Goscilo and Lanoux 2006: 7).

A Soviet Working Mother

At the center of the Bolsheviks' politics was women's participation in paid work and the redefinition of motherhood. Women were integrated in the Soviet polity as they were mobilized to fulfill the state's Five-Year Plans, while they still carried full responsibility for childcare and domestic chores. The system of public day care and other social benefits, although inadequate in many ways, was developed to allow women to fulfill their double role of worker-mother (Rule and Noonan 1996: Ch. 6).

The fact that women were drawn into social production gave them larger economic and social independence from men. They were both guaranteed paid work and social benefits. To be a state employee meant more than to receive salary. The state often assigned the work places, which often provided apartments, childcare, shopping opportunities, and vacations. Although Russian men often maintained higher salaries and social positions than women, the man's salary was not solely responsible for the family's material and social status (Rotkirch 2000: 17).

Motherhood was politicized. Women were believed to raise "the children - not of the individual men - but of the socialist state" (Ashwin 2000: 10). Mothers were to act as mediators between the state and the child. While the position of men within the family was undermined, women were thought to be liberated from the patriarchal family and protected by the Soviet state. A new understanding of female virtue connected the obligations of wife and mother with an active contribution to the building of socialism. Particularly in the 1930s-1940s, the significance of motherhood and the role of women in the family were re-emphasized according to the Party's attempt to strengthen the institution of the family and to increase nativity. For example, abortion was prohibited in 1936-1955. According to the 1944 family law, women who had raised ten or more children could be titled Hero mothers (Liljeström 1995: 273, 276).

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Soviet public sphere remained a men's world. The myth of sexual equality and the ideology of a heroic worker-mother, however, were

preserved despite women's lower positions in the economy and politics. Moreover, in the 1970s women were criticized for having "lost their femininity" and become "masculinized" (ibid.: 340).

The gender-based separation between the private and the public spheres pertained to the construction of femininity and masculinity: Home was described as created by the "skilful and warm hands of a woman:" a "woman-wife could within family express her specific ability of creating trust, respect, mutual understanding, spiritual unity and emotional warmth between husband and wife" (Martynova, cited in Liljeström 1995: 367). This emphasis constantly conflicted with demands that women should actively participate in the professional work and socio-political activities. The exclusion of women from access to the leading positions and decision-making outside the homes was legitimized through a constant discursive construction of polarization between masculinity and femininity.

A paradox between a happily working androgynous, emancipated woman and a family-oriented mother of children had dire practical consequences for the lives of women (ibid.: 423). For example, in a letter from a working-class woman in the provincial town published in *Pravda* in 1988, a woman described her life in terms of extreme poverty and lost feminine identity. Her husband had abandoned her and her health had been destroyed by working shifts in the industry. She lacked elementary life conveniences, could not afford new clothes, cosmetics, or hair cuts. Her comment is, "it would be wrong to call me a woman, though I am not a man either" (cited in Liljeström 1995: 411).

A Chaste Mother of the Nation

Soviet Russia is an example of women's co-optation into a revolutionary movement, which promises to improve women's status in society. The Soviet state never succeeded in genuinely enfranchising its female population during the revolutionary struggles (Goscilo and Lanoux 2006: 10). Female revolutionary activists often encountered the dilemma of fulfilling the state's expectations of the New Woman, when they left their kin and families for the sake of political agitation and education. Women's political engagement and treatment by fellow revolutionaries was subsumed into surrogate motherhood. The Soviet

press fell back on stereotypes "lauding the women as virtuous, nurturing, self-abnegating maternal figures, though their very actions counted traditional gender roles" (ibid.; see also Liljeström 2000).

Women were socialized into the Soviet system and were expected to become the system's loyal agents. The Women's Department of the Party (*Zhenotdel*) was established in 1919 with the double aim of spreading the message of the Communist Party to the female masses and addressing women's needs. They were placed under the strict control of the Party (Stites 1978: 341). At the same time, the local branches of *Zhenotdel* not only organized meetings, distributed Party publications and established reading rooms, but also performed functions such as child and orphan care, food distribution, housing supervision and public health promotion. Stites (ibid.: 345) argues that the *Zhenotdel* represented "the working out ... of the feminist belief" and the Party feared that women might begin to define their own agenda. The *Zhenotdel* were abolished in 1930 after the 'woman question' was officially declared as solved (Liljeström 1995: 237).

The state tried to use women as disciplinary agents in its struggle for ideological and cultural transformation. For example, in the war against drunkenness women were portrayed and deployed as allies of the state in the struggle for sobriety (Ashwin 2000: 12; Buckley 1996). Another example illuminates how women were encouraged not to stay outside the officially designed public life. In the late 1930s, the officially supported "movement of housewives," called "public spirited woman," *Obshchetsvennitsa,* included women who were not directly involved in the social production. They were working without pay in hostels, canteens, schools, hospitals, factories, and offices (Buckley 1996). The movement was an attempt to turn married women into active supporters of the Party-state's economic politics.

Women were, however, involved in the political institutions primary as ideological workers at middle and low positions (Moses 1978). At the 20th Party Congress in 1956, which marked the beginning of de-Stalinization, the low number of women in leading Party positions was recognized. This critique, however, included mere a statement that women's responsibility for household and child care were the main obstacles for their advancement. It did not address the gender related grounds for women's discrimination. Women's Councils (*zhensovety*) were created at large workplaces to mobilize women for the implementation of Party policy. These organizations mainly failed to contribute to

increased gender awareness among women (Browning 1987: 118; Racioppi and O'Sullivan See 1997: 30).

Instead of access to positions that would give authority in policy decisions, women were ascribed an important iconic role in politics. A family role of 'dutiful mother' was projected into the public sphere as a symbolic model that represented political and social conformity (Novikova 2000: 122). Like in all other nations, Russianness is founded on notions of masculinity and femininity. Nationhood assumed a female form. In Russian, the grammatically feminine noun "*rodina,*" related to verb "give birth" (*rodit'*), conjures up the emotive, familial and ethnic aspects of nationhood (Goscilo and Lanoux 2006: 9). After the mid-1930s, political posters appeared which depicted a mother and a baby girl defending themselves against the intimidating Nazis. While it depicted the vulnerability of women and children it also showed a nation in need of protection against Nazism. During the war, the state and nation visually merged with family and motherhood. A well known poster *Za rodinu* (For mother-homeland) represents soldiers under the figure of a woman in red clothes with a flag in her right hand and her left hand around a little boy. This woman, a strong matron, was a personification of Mother Russia (*Rodina-Mat'*) (Liljeström 1995: 273). At the same time, Russian and Soviet heads of state fostered a cult of masculinity, epitomized by imperial Russia's all-male cadre of bureaucrats, military schools, and exclusive institutions of nobles, as well as by the Soviet Union's ideological founding fathers, New Men, and *Stakhanovite* workers. Stalin, who personified masculine omnipotence, institutionalized a militaristic machismo that relegated women to their traditional roles of domestic reproducers (Goscilo and Lanoux 2006: 13).

In literature, the Soviet woman was interpreted as the 'mother of a hero' (*Mother* by Maxim Gorky), a heroine who chooses duty over love (*Lubov' Iarovaia* by Trenev), or a romantic girlfriend of a dying protagonist fighting for communism (*Kak zakalialas' stal'*/How the Steel was Tempered by Nikolai Ostrovsky). In these works, "the traditional plot in Russian classical literature which revolved around relationships between spouses or lovers is replaced by the father-daughter conflict in which the father can be Comrade Stalin, the Soviet secret police, the army, or indeed the entire nation." Instead of promising his daughter a union with a man, the father offers her a chance to provide a noble service on behalf of the grand political endeavor (Azhgikhina 1995).

2. The Post-Soviet "Privatized" Woman

In the post-Soviet state women are no longer guaranteed work outside the home and social benefits have been dismantled. Motherhood has been redefined as a private institution and responsibility. Men are expected to reassume what is regarded as traditional 'male' responsibilities (Ashwin 2000: 2). Work and motherhood are no longer defined as duties to the state, which no longer monopolizes the patriarchal role. During the Soviet era, women tended to view having children as a useful and valued service to society. Mothers socialized in the Soviet era tended to claim that their children were something they "gave to state" (*rodila gosudarstvu*) (Zdravomyslova 1996, quoted in Ashwin 2000: 26). Now they are being taught that 'only you need your child' (Issoupova 2000: 39). The duty to participate in public production is substituted by the economic necessity to provide for the family (Temkina and Rotkirch 2002). While the role of mother is still important, the emphasis in women's "mother-worker" identity is on 'working' rather than on 'mother.' As the state system of social benefits has eroded, the significance of the personal social network and the kin has increased. Someone from the kin takes care of children and household while women work. Gender relations are thus constructed within the extended family, while the role of men in the family is marginalized. Another type of arrangement is when a working woman purchases private services for the household and child care, either by negotiating with the kin, privately hired care-takers, or the education and health care institutions in the private sector. Women are still perceived as having the full responsibility for the organization of the household (ibid.). A third type is the woman-housewife supported by the husband-breadwinner. Caring, motherhood, giving service combined with sexual attractiveness (a feature which was absent in the Soviet sexual order) are perceived as a woman's identity. A man is the central actor in this arrangement. A new type of gender arrangement is a so called "sponsored woman," based on commoditization of sexuality and a commercialized relationship (ibid.).

In the 1990s, women as a group became marginalized and impoverished. Neoliberal market-oriented reforms had a profound negative effect on women. They lost jobs and welfare provisions due to neoliberal structural adjustments. In addition, women, who remained responsible for domestic work including cooking, shopping and childcare, bore

the main burden of coping with the consequences of free market policies, in the form of high prices of food and services (Hemment 2007: 78). Data on poverty, gender, and age from the World Bank Report (1998) show that, women continue to be over represented among the ranks of the poor in post-Soviet Russia. Between 1990 and 1995, women lost seven million jobs while men lost two million (Rasnake et al. 2000). However, relying on their relatively higher levels of education, women have taken entry-level positions with opportunities for advancement. As a result, their income levels in managerial positions have begun to rise, from 50 percent of what their male counterparts earned in 1994 to 70 percent by 1997 (ibid.).

The number of women in political institutions declined considerably in Russia after the Soviet quotas of women's obligatory participation were removed[36] (Kay 2000: 55). After the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the Union of Russian Women (URW) created an electoral block "Women of Russia" which successfully ran in the parliamentary election campaign 1993. In total, women comprised 13.5 percent of the legislature. Although still low the number of women has doubled since 1990 (Rasnake et al. 2000). In the Upper House of Parliament, the Federation Council, women accounted for only 5.3 percent. At the regional level the proportion of women elected to local legislatures amounted to 9.9 percent (ibid.). After the 1995 parliament elections, the proportion of women in Duma fell to 10.2 percent in 1995 and to 7.7 percent in 1999. In April 2000, the percentage of women in Parliament was respectively 7.7 in lower chamber and 0.6 in upper chamber. In the Judiciary women made up 15.8 percent of the Constitutional Court justices (ibid.).

In the executive branch of the Russian government, women were represented at the bottom level of the hierarchical ladder. For example, in 1995, 44 percent of state bureaucrats were women, while they comprised only 3.9 percent at the upper level (Rasnake et al. 2000). In June 1996, President Yeltsin issued a decree "On Increasing the Role of Women in the System of Federal Bodies of State Powers ..." and subsequently nominated several women to administrative and judicial posts (ibid.: 20). In April 2000, no woman was appointed at the ministerial level and 19 percent of appointees at sub-ministerial level were women (ibid. 4-9).

---

[36] When situated in an international perspective the representation of women and the rate of women's participation in national politics in Russia is not as divergent than those in the United States (higher), very close to those in the western European states, though lower than those in Scandinavia (Gal and Kligman 2000: 94).

Under increasing competition for all resources in the market economy, women are discriminated against in crucial spheres of access to qualified well-paid work as well as to sources of institutionalized power. According to a survey conducted in 2002,[37] women experience discrimination in the labor market. More than half of women believe that men have more opportunities to find jobs according to their qualifications (57.8%), to get a job in general (52.5%), and are paid more (55%). Women see a clear discrimination in the sphere of politics which in contrast to civic activism allows access to institutionalized power. 52.7% of the respondents believe that men have more opportunities to participate in politics (Gorshkov and Tikhonova 2002).

There are only few spheres of life in which women experienced equal or even more rights and possibilities than men: Education (72.7%), family (70%), recreation during vacation (66%), leisure time (56.8%), and participation in civic life (50.7%) (ibid.).

Most women believe that their life situation deteriorated in the post-Soviet period. It became harder to receive education of one's own choice (65%), to find a job (80%), to meet a life partner (53%), to rear children (86%), to get a management position in the work place (47%), to manage a household (47,5%), or to protect oneself from violence (72%). At the same time, many women (45.8%) stress that they have gained more opportunities to realize themselves in business, politics and civic activity (ibid.).

'Sexual Liberation' Based on Traditional Roles

Traditional views of what constitutes 'normal' men and women, have acted as a vehicle for change in Eastern Europe. 'Freedom' was associated with the freedom to enact more fully a traditional feminine or masculine identity, without the restrictions of the socialist state (Watson 1993: 71). During *glasnost,* the communist policy of women's emancipation was criticized and rejected. It was officially acknowledged that the "solved" status of the women's question was a myth. Women held fewer leading positions and their upward mobility within the party lagged behind that of men (Buckley 1989: 201; Rule and Noonan 1996). In the seventy years of Soviet state power no woman was ever head of state and no woman (with exception of Alexandra Kollontai) ever joined the Politburo.

---

[37] Respondents were 1406 women in age groups from 17 to 50 years, from 12 administrative regions, Moscow and St. Petersburg (Gorshkov and Tikhonova 2002).

Exhausted by the need to carry the 'double burden' in an economy of shortages, women wanted to leave their workplaces at factories and boring offices and return to the home. 'Genuine liberation' of women was understood in terms of the consumption and lifestyle of the middle class women in the West (Lissyutkina 1999: 169). At the same time, the Western-style feminism was criticized as an element of left-wing political culture (ibid.)

Glasnost also allowed a reinforced conservatism in the official view on women as belonging back in the family. Differences between the public and the private spheres as well as between gender-based social roles and tasks were thus strengthened. Mikhail Gorbachev was among the most authoritative of those who openly expressed traditionalism. He emphasized that women did not have time for "pure feminine tasks" such as "to take care of the household, foster children and create a nice atmosphere in the family" and that this should be changed (cited in Liljeström 1995: 389; see Rule and Noonan 1996: 84). The ways of this conservative and traditional patriarchal reconstruction of the notion of femininity can be traced firstly in the descriptions of women's 'true nature' and 'eternal characteristics' and secondly, in the more active opposition of feminine stereotypes as an antithesis to a Soviet woman. Openly misogynist attitudes were expressed based on views on women as second class citizens, deficient people. For example, a professor in psychology argued that women intellectuals are "false women" (Liljeström 1995: 390). In the mass media the "over-emancipated Soviet woman" was made responsible for all kinds of social problems such as youth hooliganism, male alcoholism, and the high rates of divorces. The opinions that "women should not at all participate in politics" and "do not need work for her incomes" were publicized (ibid.: 390, 391). During perestroika and glasnost with the democratization and freedom of speech, new ideals created new expressions for sexualizing women's bodies and promoting a biological view on gender relations. On the one hand, the control over women's sexuality and fertility increased with the publication of manuals with advice on sexual behavior. On the other hand, women's bodies were commercialized in the name of "sexual liberation" and market economy. The number of visual images of sexual violence increased. Images constructing (hetero)sexuality constitute primary tools and ways for preserving male supremacy (ibid.).

The Intersection of Gender, Class, and Nation

Women are not a monolithic group; they are also defined socially through class, ethnicity, age, geographic region, and so on. National projects as well as class formation, which demand specific gender arrangements, invoke particular symbolic representations: For example, strong males such as fathers and warriors protecting chaste females, the mothers of the nation and its maidens, or responsible males supporting their wives and children. The changing status of men is thus inextricable from the changing status of women; they transform in tandem. They work through each other and are intricately tied to the emergence of class and national identity (Gapova 2004: 101).

Changes in the gender order are interrelated with the creation of a class system and the ideology of nationalism in the post-socialist context. After the late 1960s, social concerns about the emasculation of males were expressed in the Soviet Union. Gender debates were spurred by an article published in the leading publicist weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Zdravomyslova and Temkina 2001) which stated that Soviet men appear to be physically weak, more prone to diseases and to have a shorter life expectancy than women. They were not capable of taking care of themselves and needed supervision and guidance from their wives and mothers. Gapova (2004) argues that the reason for the perception of men as weak was related to the lack of "opportunities" for developing a traditional masculinity. In other words, the Soviet gender order made it difficult to confirm masculinity as constructed through access to "money" (broadly understood). Class is partially about income, and the Soviet "lack of masculinity" was the issue of a lack of class.

In this classless society, men's material resources were not superior to those of women who were generally materially dependent on the state and not on individual men. During perestroika, women were to be liberated from their dual role, and given the opportunity not to work and become better mothers and housewives. The "liberation" of women (an euphemism for sending them home) was linked with other social ideals such as glasnost and political reform, and therefore acceptable along with other bourgeois class values. These redefinitions are on the one hand related to the symbolic and material creation of a class system; on the other hand, to processes of imagining the nation. "The

national idea provides a justification for the emerging system of class and gender inequality by 'veiling' its true goals with nobler ones – those of 'national freedom,' and more specifically, of protecting 'our women'" (ibid.: 94). For example, throughout history the nation's military casualties were equated with its losses from abortion and contraception. The nationalist position combines patriarchal views on reproduction with liberal freedoms such as freedom of the press. Historically, liberty and equality were defined as attributes of the fraternity (Pateman 1988) from which women were excluded. Women are seen as bearers and reproducers of the national culture and therefore need to be "protected" (Gapova 2004: 95). Declining fertility rates, the abduction of Russian women into the global sex trade, and an exodus of Russian sex workers abroad have been paradoxically interpreted as signs of male humiliation (Goscilo and Lanoux 2006: 21).

In the post-Soviet society a social group of "the new rich" was produced mainly among the usually well educated and connected. Most of the young entrepreneurs, bankers and real estate brokers had a jump-start within the old Soviet *nomenklatura* and Communist Party or were highly positioned Komsomol leaders which included very few women (Gapova 2004: 97). The manliness of the "new rich" is also confirmed through a "sexual" consumption: new men's magazines publish high-quality pornography and a whole industry of high-class sexual services emerged. In the early 1990s, the editors of Russia's leading pornographic magazine *Andrei* claimed to bolster democracy and human rights in Russia through their struggle for "porn liberation." Such claims, however, conceal sexual exploitation and violence against women (Goscilo and Lanoux 2006: 21). The creation of a capitalist (Western-style) middle class and normative masculinity are connected; women became objectified in the process. The subordination of women takes the form of a "redomestication:" protecting women and generally placing them within the private sphere. It was believed that "the idea of necessity, of pleasure, of beauty, finally, of the sacredness of housework, of the work for their families, their children, their husbands and, by this, their own happiness" is most needed for women and that by adhering to it they will best serve the common cause (Gapova 2004: 98).

Reproductive choices were constrained: In 1998, federal funding for abortion was eliminated by a vote in the Duma (Sperling 2006: 166). Nationalist demagogues placed fertility issues at the top of the agenda. In 2003, they succeeded in limiting abortion rights for the first time since the Stalin era (Goscilo and Lanoux 2006: 20). Prostitution, which

increased formidably, is perceived not only as a social phenomenon but also a discursive metaphor for a national crisis. Russian authors continue to mythologize and romanticize the woman-prostitute as a symbol of suffering and redemption, or a symptom of the evil of Western capitalism. They thereby overlook the social problems of prostitution, sex trafficking, and the mail-order bride industry. The government declared sex-trafficking illegal and punishable by law only in 2003 (ibid.: 21).

3. Women's Daily Life Agency and Resistance

Through its policies and rhetoric the state sanctions and promotes certain femininities, while marginalizing or suppressing others. However, "this project is never complete, as women resist and challenge the state's notions of appropriate female identities and actions, and the state's impacts are spatially uneven" (Radcliffe 1993: 197). Women and men are active in constructing their own gender identities, within the constraints associated with the geographical and historical contexts. Changes in gender order might emanate at the level of individual interactions, in which sexual identity is materialized and norms are enacted in social practices.

In Soviet Russia, hierarchy and asymmetry pervaded the symbolic, structural and individual levels of the gender order. At the individual level, however, there were no premises or opportunities for formulating thoughts for a subversive counter-discourse. The expressions of protest were limited by punitive legislation, which stigmatized and suppressed deviant behavior. A prevailing biological definition of women's gender identity and their symbolic subordination turned the constitution of gender into a set of conceptions, which were difficult to articulate. Gender-related assumptions remained unarticulated "truths" that were taken for granted (Liljeström 1995: 423).

During different Soviet historical epochs, however, women expressed their discontent and protest in a range of specific ways. For example, in the 1930s during the enforced collectivization of peasants' private households, when the state expropriated grain, tension spread among peasants. Women's riots (*bab'i bunty*) became a common form of protest. Women stood at the village market and cried out their discontent and demands in a shrill tone. In the official press the riots were labeled as mass hysteria,

meaningless violence and disorder. The resistance strategy involved a certain gendered pattern. Women were able to protest, as they were less likely to be accused of "anti-Soviet" activity. When the authorities tried to restore order, however, the men could join the riot under the pretext of "protecting" their own wives, mothers and daughters. Women's riots were usually the beginning of a general riot in the village. The official press explained them as the result of the women's "backwardness," and their low cultural and political level. *Baba* was the "darkest" sector of the backward peasant people and viewed as children. The women therefore escaped punishment and the Party's reaction instead involved trying to improve propaganda work among peasant women. Violence was very seldom used against *bab'i bunty* (ibid.: 288).

Women's discontent included complaints at the kitchen table, embittered letters to the editor column in the Soviet press, and an increased number of divorces initiated by women and their refusal to accept the pro-natal pressure from the authorities (Liljeström 1995: 308). Women expressed more indirect protests by refusing to give birth to many babies, as demanded by the Party. After 1936 when abortion was criminalized, illegal abortions increased. In 1940, the number of births equaled that of 1935. Women had thus rebuilt social networks for illegal abortions. Instead of giving many births, women tried to take advantage of new opportunities for education and professional careers. They became aware of ways of life outside the traditional role. The Party's attempts to control women's sexuality were resisted by these choices (ibid: 292).

The officially endorsed identity of the 'working mother' coexisted with alternative informal arrangements of gender relations, such as a "shadow gender contract" (Temkina and Rotkirch 2002: 190-192). The Soviet women became skilful survivors in an economy of shortages, by managing the art of informal favor exchange *blat.* For example, they managed to buy food that was not available in stores or find place in a nursery through friends and friends of friends (Ledeneva 1998: 120, 121).

"Extended motherhood" (Rotkirch 2000) may be seen as a continued tradition of extended family as well as a strategic resistance to the official system. The double and triple burden of women and the inadequate system of public day care resulted in the need to rely on the help of their own mothers (*babushka*) to take care of household chores. The *babushka* had the major responsibility for unpaid household and childcare work. In Russian tradition, children were responsible for taking care of their elderly parents and

babushka repaid by caring for small children and the household. Despite the official propaganda which advocated a nuclear family consisting of parents and children, the families often included three generations. Practical solidarity between adult daughters and their mothers developed and the family became an unarticulated and disguised form of resistance against the Party's "nuclear family-oriented" directives (Liljeström 1995: 293).

A small feminist dissident movement emerged in the Soviet Union at the end of the 1970s including two groups with different social visions in opposition to the dominant ideological regime. One was based on the socialist ideals and social experiments of the 1920s and the other was founded on the religious identity of the Russian orthodoxy (ibid.: 308).[38] Most women did not, however, accept feminist ideas. First, the majority of Soviet citizens were loyal to the political leaders. Second, women lacked the experiences and traditions of a grassroots' mobilization. As women have to compete with each other for the scarce resources, ties of solidarity among them were undermined (ibid.).

Women instead strived for autonomy and self-realization by focusing more on family and efforts to look feminine. A contradictory cult of domesticity was a reaction to the official program of participating in the work force as a basic premise of liberation. Official emancipation was associated with poorly paid, dull or physically tough workplaces such as the railways or construction sites and facing misogyny and open violence from men. In this context, women longed for devoting themselves to family life, home, fashion, and romantic love. In the 1980s, traditional sexual identities of "real" men and women were increasingly viewed as a return to "normality" distorted by the Soviet system. A desire to look "feminine" was often not associated with the Soviet women's desire to attract a man. It was rather a protest against the dominant kind of femininity. Male chivalry has historically been absent in Russia and women's longing after a romantic chivalrous man was a way to articulate their needs (ibid.: 309, 413, 416; Lissyutkina 1999).

This context helps to understand why women rejected Western feminism, the knowledge of which was based on its defamed representation in the Soviet press. For most women, feminism equaled "lesbian women who hate men" and preaching a de-feminization of women, engaging in paid work and politics at the expense of devotion to family and childcare (Liljeström 1995: 414; see Sperling 1999).

---

[38] Feminist groups in contemporary Russia are described in more detail in chapter 8 of this dissertation.

In contrast to a devotion to family and the domestic sphere, other types of agency regard the workplace as a crucial way to flee from the drudgery of the family and household chores. For many working class women, their workplaces rather than their homes were the center of their life. The work collective provided a profound satisfaction. Not the official units, but rather informal groups created by women, including informal leaders and norms of mutual care and friendship. These collectives were sources of togetherness and communication (Liljeström 1995: 415). For example, in the autobiography of an elderly working class woman from a Siberian town, published in 1998, who periodically lived with a violent husband and his kin, work is experienced as "the friendly family" (Rotkirch 2004: 167). Work is the constant source of pride, success, and self-esteem in this woman's life. The workplace never betrayed her; it fed and healed her, and unlike her husband and sons, did not forget her birthday (ibid.).

A new female subject, able to articulate her own interests in the political sphere, began to emerge in post-Soviet Russia. The articulation of needs and interests of various groups of women is one link in the resistance against the "new" post-Soviet gender order. Creating women's groups and independent organizations, described in the next chapter, is a form of agency and protest in this new Russian context.

Summary

This chapter has shown that in Soviet Russia, the Bolsheviks' regime was established through the hegemonic discourse about the new (sexual) morality of *Homo Sovieticus* and the state's centralist organization of men's and women's varying involvement in paid work, family, sexuality, and politics. Women's voluntary self-organization outside the Party-state was forbidden. The "new Soviet woman" became a paradox through which the rural Russia's legacy of biological determinism, sexual polarization, and hierarchy between the sexes could be reproduced and modified in the Soviet society. At the same time, women expressed discontent, protest and resistance through specific forms of consciousness and agency in everyday life. Further, in the late 1980s and during the post-Soviet period, the tendencies of constituting a female subject as a sexualized and privatized category in opposition to the male-dominated spheres of politics and paid work became predominant.

Chapter 8

Women's NGOs and Feminism

Introduction

This chapter describes different types of women's NGOs and the emergence of a feminist movement in post-Soviet Russia. It clarifies the material and symbolic frameworks in which the women's groups' activities are imbedded. Further, it explains sources of tensions and negotiations between various types of women's NGOs. Finally, it describes the role of the transnational feminist groups and the concept of "gender" in the Russian women's movements.

1. Types of Women's NGOs

Since the perestroika, women-activists of different political orientations have started to organize according to their own interests, separately from men. They had often realized that women's issues were "overlooked by men" and that discrimination clearly is directed toward women (Sperling 1999: 57). New organizations have developed in different ways. Some organizations work mainly on an individual basis trying to help women during times of personal crisis. Other organizations try to achieve a long term change in women's status by criticizing overtly gendered division of labor and gender roles. Although the focus of the women's organizations are diverse, in scope, and strategies of actions, activists show a feeling of group consciousness as women and express the goal of changing the status of women in Russian society (ibid.: 30, 27). Various organizations have different access and approach to official politics. Some are able to pressure political representatives and others express distaste for contacts with formal politics. The reasons for self-organization "combined a need for self-help, crisis management and moral support with recognition of the advantages of an association in terms of lobbying activities on various levels and representation of the group's interests" (Kay 2000: 126).

According to various sources, one or two thousand women's organizations existed in Russia by the early 2000s (Richter 2002; Uhlin 2006: 61). These numbers do not include all existing organizations, as many women's groups have not registered for financial reasons.

Since the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, grassroots groups of women emerged as a protest against the political and economic direction of the reforms. Women's *unemployment* and impoverishment frequently spurred self-help associations. Organizations established in the late 1980s embraced various business groups, courses, enterprises, and provision of funds to protect women from unemployment and to cope during the decline in state welfare services. Many engage in reeducation and employment training programs, often in conjunction with branches of federal employment services (Sperling 1999: 227). Other organizations help women to find new jobs, to retain self-esteem and to deal with sexual harassment in the work place (Bridger 1998). In many cases, business and charity were combined.

Further, a large number of mutual support groups for *mothers* were created, such as single mothers, mothers with many children, or mothers of children with disabilities. Some large charity organizations were created which helped needy women and children (Sperling 1999, Kay 2000). Another type of organization included women's *political* clubs and advocacy groups which aim to promote women to decision-making levels in the political, economic, and cultural spheres. Other types of organizations include support groups for *professional* women which offering both material and psychological support; *crisis* centers and hotlines for victims of rape and domestic violence; feminist counseling and *consciousness-raising* groups; *research* groups specialized on women's issues. A number of women's groups are associated with political parties (Sperling 1999: 26, 27; Rule and Noonan 1996: 85; Kay 2000).

Several larger networks of women's groups were active throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s. They include the women's councils (*zhensovety*) of the former state organizations, and explicit feminist groups of intellectuals in the Independent Women's Forum (IWF), the Women's League and the NIS-US Women's Consortium. The network of women's councils is related to the Soviet legacy of official women's organizations.

Former State Organizations *Zhensovety*

Besides the new independent groups that were created in the 1990s, former state social organizations continued to function after they changed their organizational status. Many former official organizations *zhensovety* were revived during perestroika and subsequently reorganized as non-state groups which distributed material aid and organized events to celebrate holidays such as March 8th, the International Women's Day. In the late 1980s, these women's councils existed throughout the Soviet Union; there were about 230 000 councils with more than 2.3 million members. The *zhensovety* were mainly involved in social welfare and activists were "engaged as unpaid stopgaps for the system" (Racioppi and See 1997: 108, 109). Several researchers concluded that these organizations focused on activities that extend women's traditional roles; they tried to ease women's domestic work, child care and family relations.

In 1990, when state sponsorship of social organizations was withdrawn, the Soviet Women's Committee was transformed into the Union of Women of Russia (UWR), a voluntary union of women's councils and NGOs, which was not directly associated with the state. One of the priorities became to help women to adapt to economic reforms. Employment opportunities were described to women; instructors were brought from abroad to teach courses on the market economy to women who were trying to start their own businesses. The demand for services was far larger than what the Union could provide with its limited budget (Racioppi and See 1997: 78). The Union of Women of Russia also tried to increase women's political influence. In 1993, the Union successfully participated in the parliamentary election campaign. It formed a Women's Block with two other women's organizations (ibid., see Caiazza 2002: Ch. 4). In the State Duma, UWR acted first as a group with distinct political interests rooted in women's roles as mothers and wives. It supported policies that would help women to perform their roles of primary caretakers such as protective labor legislation, maternity leave, and child support stipends. Men were not perceived as recipients in these policies. UWR did not seek to change gender roles or to include men in women's traditional roles (Caiazza 2002: 53). Its approach to women's issues fit the dominant conservative gender ideologies.

Groups of Feminist Intellectuals

Another important actor in the women's movements during the 1990s and the early 2000s was the network the Independent Women's Forum, created mainly through the effort of academic women employed in women's studies research centers, established in Moscow and St. Petersburg and other major cities.

In Soviet Russia, political dissidents were not interested in feminism, believing that women's issues were not characteristic for Russia and that throwing out the communist regime would solve all the problems (Azhgikhina 2000: 10). Women who were involved in the dissidents' groups were assigned a secondary role of muse, assistant, and girlfriend. Some young women's refused to accept this patriarchal role division and formed the first women's groups (Zdravomyslova 1996: 47). As mentioned in the previous chapter, a small feminist movement emerged in Leningrad in 1979-1980: Its leader Tatiana Mamonova published an almanac "Woman and Russia" which was distributed through *samizdat*. The almanac expressed women's protests against the military invasion of Afghanistan, humiliations of female prisoners, abuses in maternity hospitals and women's prisons, and violence against women. The group, however, dispersed as its members were persecuted by the security police, and four were forced into exile (ibid.; Rule and Noonan 1996).

Another feminist group emerged in the late Soviet period among highly educated academic women. A few young women researchers in Moscow and St Petersburg were able to choose to write dissertations about women's issues (Posadskaya 1994). They were able to access and read feminist literature in English, which was kept hidden from the general public in the archives of libraries, *spetskhrany*, opened only on special official permission. For these researchers feminism was not a movement that articulated gender-based discrimination, but rather a way to connect with the progressive debate in Europe through reading and personal contacts. The late-Soviet feminist researchers did not pursue any political mobilization project; they were small loose groups. The activists were mainly interested in achieving individual change of consciousness, a 'self-realization.' They thus hoped to facilitate a moral change in society (Hemment 2007: 76). This type of feminism developed by intellectuals was not directed against men and patriarchy, but against the Soviet state. For example, the state was accused of not providing tampons. It

was also a protest against a Soviet "weak" male figure allegedly brought into being by the state (ibid.: 77).

The Soviet leaders had ratified the UN Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. As the situation for women deteriorated as a result of the democratic and free-market oriented reforms in the 1990s, official data on women's situation had to be collected and feminist scholars were in demand. Feminist researchers were able to study and criticize the processes of the reforms from within state structures (Hemment 2007: 78; Posadskaya 1994).

At the same time, some feminists organized outside formal structures. They started as a small, informal, friendly group of researchers called LOTUS (which in Russian means Getting Free from the Stereotypes). The 'informal' associations were officially registered when it became legal in October 1990. Moscow-based feminist groups and women's organizations met in 1991 and 1992 in the city Dubna to discuss women's issues and to create networks. The groups, however, remained small, and were mainly concentrated in university milieus. They were not well connected with each other, and were not oriented towards a broader mobilization (Hemment 2007: 79). The Dubna forum attracted attention from international donor agencies as a new movement of Russian women. By 1994, The Independent Women's Forum (IWF) included more than 300 organizations throughout Russia (Rasnake et al. 2000).

The Forum sought to ally itself with the feminist movements of the US and Western Europe. The leadership of the network was dominated by female academics. Many of them were involved in cooperative research projects and had visited the West to attend conferences and to present papers. They acquainted themselves with the work of women's organizations in Western countries.

The Network IWF collaborated with other pro-Western networks of women's organizations in Russia such as the Women's League. The Women's League was an umbrella organization established in 1992 and was open to any group that supported the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It was set up by women with good connections to government institutions. The activists considered Russia to be a deeply patriarchal and authoritarian society and intended to

empower women to become autonomous and to build a civil society (Racioppi and See 1997: 156).

2. Conditions for Organizing

Women's organizations are shaped within the material and symbolic framework of the formalized gendered Third Sector. In the 1990s and the early 2000s, due to the lack of a financial infrastructure for NGOs, some organizations have had to turn into small businesses thereby losing the sight of their primary goal of supporting women (Bridger 1998). Most organizations are run on a volunteer basis and they lack money and other material resources. The organizations do not primarily rely on membership dues, but depend on economic support from the local administration or Western donors. While some organizations such as the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers and crisis centers for women have a significant constituency for their services it cannot be mobilized to support the organizations financially or as a pool for recruitment to the movement (Sperling 2006: 165).

By the mid-1990s, many women's groups, particularly advocacy groups based in Moscow became the recipients of foreign grants. The feminist groups became well-funded, although they lacked ties with a broad constituency. At the same time, charities and service-providing groups received less foreign aid despite larger constituencies (ibid.: 163; Henderson 2003). A number of service-providing women's groups instead received financial support from state bureaucracies at the local and regional levels and some donations from Russian businesses.

Funding from Abroad

Funding from abroad has been offered to bolster the position of women in the wake of economic hardships as well as to foster Western-style gender equality in the non-Western world in general. Due to the Western funding of training sessions and conferences, women from different organizations, cities and regions have been able to meet each other

and network (Henderson 2003: 91). Foreign funding has made it possible to publish books about women's health, and sexual harassment at work written from an empowering feminist perspective (Sperling 1999: 229).

As explained in chapter 6 of this dissertation, however, one of the side effects of Western funding is that it has created power relationships, bureaucratization, and the problem of equal access to funding. Sperling (1999: 237) quotes one of the activists: "The foundations … act through a bureaucratic apparatus that they created themselves. And it is precisely in this sense that one can speak of the formation today of a new *nomenklatura* … within the women's movement." The IWF, Moscow Centre for Gender Studies, and some other organizations were perceived as privileged grant receivers (Henderson 2003).

As many feminist groups are detached from a domestic constituency, the women's movement is sometimes criticized for being "foreign" (Sperling 2006: 165). Strings were attached to the foreign grants. For example, while foreign donors prioritized certain issues defined in the transnational campaigns including domestic violence and human trafficking, Russian grassroots groups viewed economic issues of unemployment, housing, and child care as more critical (ibid.; Hemment 2004). Foreign grants and resources became centralized in the hands of "an insider, Westernized clique" within women's organizations (Henderson 2003: 121), by groups mainly located in the capital and big urban centers (Sperling 1999; Richter 2002). This situation created resentment within the women's movement. The unfunded groups believed that they would need to forge a clientelistic relationship with one of the program officers at the Moscow office to receive a grant (Henderson 2003: 137).

Women's Attitudes toward Civic and Political Activism

The symbolic framework of women's activism in Russia includes two key elements: a normalization of the "privatized" image of women and the feminization of the Third Sector of NGOs.

Women's organizations emerged in the context of the post-Soviet gender climate embedded in the dominant mass media, political and social discourse, in which the

perceptions of women as actually belonging in the domestic sphere were normalized (Kay 2000).

During the Russian transition to a free-market economy, open forms of discrimination of women in the labor market helped many activists to understand what the discrimination of women meant and in which ways women's problems differ from men's (Sperling 1999: 57). Discrimination based on gender and age is, however, often not recognized by women. The Russian feminist Anastasia Posadskaya explains that the effects of discrimination include a "kind of political and psychological paralysis" (cited in Racioppi and See 1997: 130). Women were unable to take action in part because of the dramatic changes in the public interpretations of their lives and partly because they have never been able to see themselves as independent agents:

> Women were always told by our propaganda that they are emancipated and have reached the highest levels of society… Now these women are fired from their jobs. Now these women are told that their real or natural place is at home, that they will be given a very early pension, so that the economy is not harmed by their inefficient labor. On a personal level, this is terribly frustrating, this produces confusion. (Ibid.)

Discursive factors partially explain why feminism as a social movement is currently so often rejected in Eastern Europe (Gal 1997). In the historically concrete civil societies only certain identities and activities can count as part of the public (see Flam 2001). The linguistic phrasing differs. For example, problems of increased prostitution and violence against women, which perhaps would be framed as "women's issues" in Western Europe, are understood in gender neutral terms as a result of the disorder produced by rapid economic changes. Women feel equal to men as *workers;* this feeling is retained from the official ideology of state socialism (Gal 1997: 43).

There is also evidence of a certain degree of awareness among women of gender-based discrimination and the importance of women's public organizing. According to a survey conducted in Russia in January, 2002, many women believe that it is possible and important to engage in civic activism and to increase the role of women's organizations in society. The majority of women (both members and non-members of NGOs) distinguish between notions of politics and civic activism. Women are mainly less interested in politics and more interested in civic activities, including among other things, the articulation of women's specific interests. They believe that the expression of women's

interest should dominate civic activism. Many women, however, do not want or do not have the opportunity to participate in such organizations (Gorshkov and Tikhonova 2002). Respondents tend to agree with the opposite viewpoints. For example, on the one hand, 58.7% do not see a difference between women and men's interests and contend that it does not matter who represents their interests in the political institutions as long as their interests are represented. On the other hand, approximately the same percent of respondents (61.8 %) contend that women are better able to represent and protect their own interests. The contradictory character of the women's perceptions might reflect the current lack of effective mechanisms for representing women's interests. As existing women's organizations do not represent these interests efficiently, women feel that it does not matter who actually represents them, although they stress that it is necessary (ibid.).

Moreover, about 70% of the respondents are unaware about the existence of women's organizations in their cities and regions.[39] The results of the survey show that the women's organizations are not very visible in politics and in the development of civil society. They are seemingly unable to articulate the interests of different groups of women. A range of women's needs and expectations from organizations include: psychological support in difficult life situations (54.4%), help to find a job (45.7%), to protect the interests of children; from leisure to issues articulated by the committees of the soldiers' mothers (42.3%), material support to women with a troubled economy (41.4%), to fight drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution, and so forth (26.8%), fighting all forms of discrimination against women (24%), protection from domestic violence (18.3%), help in starting one's own business (9.4%), political struggle for women's rights (8%). The high percentage of respondents who believe that the organizations should offer women psychological support is probably the result of the tremendous socio-psychological stress experienced by women during the last decade (ibid.).

In many post-communist countries, women identify political action with "masculine behavior, power struggles, private property disputes, corruption and hypocrisy" (LaFont 2001: 208). In Russia, the legacy of a profound split between the private and the public spheres, disapproval of female emancipation and gender equality, and weak civic

---

[39] This means that around 30 percent of the respondents knew about women's organizations, which probably shows that the role of women's NGOs became more visible since 1997. In a 1997 survey conducted by the Levada Centre only about ten percent of respondents knew and approved the activities of women's organizations (see Kochkina 2007: 119).

structures make it very difficult to articulate women's position in politics. According to survey data from 2002, only 13-22 percent of women believed that women and men have equal opportunities to be elected as a deputy of parliament, a member of government, or a president (Semigin et al. 2003: 99).

In-depth interviews with candidates to the local legislature in St. Petersburg in 1994 demonstrate that politically active women live with a feeling of inner split[40] (Temkina 1996: 169). They frequently present themselves as contradictory constructions. They are only involved in activism because their more desirable role in the family is not achievable at the moment. Women's behavior in politics might be viewed in different ways. It might be seen in terms of stereotyped gender-related features. 'Female attractiveness' is used as a weapon against men: "she must kill a man by her appearance" (ibid: 170). A female 'nature' gain particular significance: "a woman has a natural sense of protection. A man builds a house, a woman creates order there. … she will create stability and balance, she will be against confrontation" (ibid.: 171).

Women assert a 'woman-housekeeper' role in the political arena taking care of the social sphere and leaving other issues to men. At the same time, male politicians often play the 'woman card' by including a token number of safe dependable women in their team (ibid.: 11; see also Konstantinova 1998). Based on 'gynocentric' ideas, attributing different psychological natures to men and women, women-activists argue that female compassion can change politics if women enter into the political institutions (Sperling 1999: 63).

Women who choose a life of political activism generally do not act as strong advocates for women's rights. This lack of enthusiasm is explained as a reaction to the Soviet legacy which treated women's issues in a paternalistic manner and which was low in prestige. Emphasizing women's themes in the political life thus became associated with undermining one's professional standing. These politicians believe that issues of consolidating democracy and an effective economic system are more urgent (Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 11).

The members of the political movement Women of Russia which in 1993 entered the parliament viewed themselves as a 'social' force, which perhaps for a short time was

---

[40] Genovese (1993: 5) points out the conflict experienced by politically active women, who "must come to some understanding of herself as a person and as a political figure that resolves, manages, or represses the tensions between her merging self-view as capable of functioning effectively at the highest political levels, and the generalized social view that neither she nor any other woman has that competence."

pushing into 'political' roles (Buckley 1999: 159). Women's activism in politics was understood in terms of 'replacing' men, which was justified by the failure of men to defend the interests of the 'elderly, children and women' (ibid.).

The interpretation of women's civic activism is influenced by a biological-essentialist understanding of sexual differences, which in accordance with the Soviet past treats women's secondary position as the result of natural differences. Civic activism is associated with more informal collective action, home/family, and attributes which pertain to woman's perceived gendered role. Women who are involved in non-profit organizations are frequently constructed in terms of morality, collectivism, wisdom, and the ability to self-sacrifice (Salmenniemi 2005). Women's activism is framed through a metaphor of "social motherhood;" women are considered to perform the same tasks in the public-political sphere as they perform at homes: to care, nurture and raise children (Salmeniemi 2005: 746; see also Hemment 1999).

3. Tensions and Negotiations

Differences and divisions among women's groups create tensions as well as dynamic negotiations. The tensions and divisions are concerned with the framing of the significance of women's activism and the unequal access to the sources funding.

To many members, the activities of grassroots women's NGOs symbolize a challenge to the dominant images of women as persons who belonged at home and who could only act in politics as an adjunct to a man (Kay 2000: 132). At the same time, however, most organizations did not organize their work as - and did not perceive it - in terms of feminist from a Western perspective (ibid). Moreover, the notion of feminism was often criticized among women-activists as an expression of individualism and separatism, associated with a struggle against men (Sperling 1999: 64). This was one source of tensions among different groups, such as between the grassroots women's organizations and the Independent Women's Forum which allied itself with the feminist movements in Western Europe and the US on one side, and the Union of Women of Russia (UWR) connected to the Soviet past, on the other. The grassroots activists

associated The Union of Women of Russia with the official party-controlled Soviet Women's Committee and its network of *zhensovety* which were used for handing down party directives. They expressed distrust in the organization, which used to be run by members of *nomenklatura* (Kay 2000). On the other hand, the grassroots NGOs, which mainly focused on practical work to improve the lives of ordinary women, rejected excessive theorizing and abstract debates. Grassroots women's organizations distrusted the Independent Women's Forum (IWF) as a group of privileged academic women who published articles in the West and who were distant from practical approaches. In the 1990s, only a small group of highly educated women became interested in the theories of Western feminism (ibid: 177).

The UWR gained more credibility from its ability to provide practical support for women. The UWR's 'official' standing, however, also alienated its own members who described it as a large, faceless organization. They described their involvement with it in instrumental rather than personal and emotional terms. Some of the activists argued that the UWR members "are still the same party nomenklatura as before. It is not really the right organization to unite all women in a movement to fight for their rights" (cited in ibid.: 178).

On the other hand, after having been in contact with the IWF some of the grassroots organizations felt that they were not regarded as sufficiently 'feminist' and denied access to the Forum's networks: "They look down at us, you see they are all academics and ex-party types and they look at us as second or even third class citizens … they look on us just as a load of silly women who get together and sit around drinking tee" (cited in ibid.: 179). Feminism risked being viewed as a form of Western cultural imperialism. The West was associated with wealth, and Western feminism increased a sense of alienation from feminism among Russian women, faced with poverty and unemployment. "They go on all these trips, for no obvious reason. They aren't going to stay here and concern themselves with women drug addicts or keep on trekking to the town hall to fight for proper, decent conditions in the abortion clinic" (cited in ibid: 183). At the same time, however, activists and academics within the IWF discussed strategies for improving collaboration among different women's groups. Criticism about the lack of working-class women in the network dominated by the intelligentsia was common (ibid.: 185).

In contrast to Moscow and St. Petersburg, movements in smaller and more distant cities (for example, Ivanovo and Cheboksary) were more unified, but were tiny and less diverse. The groups in the smaller cities were not fragmented due to a perceived affiliation with the state or the Communist party. They did not receive any funds from Western foundations. In smaller cities, groups could easier forge political alliances within the elite. Members of the women's councils *zhensovety* held a seat in the city legislature or was the representative in the republic's parliament (Sperling 1999: 39, 40). In Moscow, the women's groups' opportunities to influence policy making on the national level were more limited. The motives for the organization differed between big and small cities. As a result of the economic crisis (e.g. in Ivanovo), the women's organizations were motivated by the impoverishment of the provincial residents. This factor was less important in Moscow, where despite the economic problems, many groups still were able to be devoted to non-material goals (ibid.: 41).

Global "Gender" and Transnational Negotiations

Although most women's organizations do not view their activities in terms of feminism, conceptions of "gender" and gender-based discrimination were introduced in women's movements by explicit feminist groups. As explained earlier, groups of highly educated women activists act as 'brokers' who negotiate contacts with international activists and Western donors' agency representatives. The concept of "gender" helped women to make sense of the socio-economic inequalities (Hemment 2007: 143). The intermediate role of Western-oriented activists in the Russian women's movement, however, was ambivalent. The "mainstreamed" conceptions of gender imported to Russia mainly represented the "cultural" feminism of Western white middle-class women and the development industry promoted by the international lending institutions (Ghodsee 2004; Hemment 2007).

As explained in chapter 2 of this dissertation, the transnational women's movement is characterized by asymmetric power relations (Mohanty 2003). The material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in non-Western societies are often not recognized by hegemonic white women's movements. The Western feminist approaches to Slavic women can also be short-sighted. Holmgren (1995: 19, 20) stresses that the legacy of Cold War rhetoric and the market-speak of Western developmental politics

(including "mainstream" feminism) continue to polarize women in Russia. Western feminists often focused on the Soviet women's achievements of guarantees of work, but dismissed aspects of their daily life and struggles including unrelieved domestic labor, the lack of consumer goods and services, and the political victimization they shared with men.

Russian women are historically not viewed in terms of gender. Feminism was denounced as a product of the ideology of privileged middle- and upper-class women. The category of gender was *a non-term* in pre-revolutionary Russian and Soviet societies. The unifying categories of oppression were class and resistance/allegiance to the state. In the Soviet Union, despite women's double burden and practical inequality *no campaigns for domestic revolution* emerged. The domestic sphere instead became enchanted as a space protected from the influence of the state. Despite the changes in society during the post-Soviet era, the domestic sphere is still often experienced as a counter pole to the sphere of unscrupulous business and ineffective politics. In the beginning of the 1990s, some women viewed the "return to the home" as a self-investment and a moral act. In post-Soviet society, women who face many material hardships are continuously conditioned to reject the allegedly middle-class bias of feminism with its focus on individual fulfillment (ibid.: 20, 21).

At the same time, *the dominance of state/society opposition* in Russia has a limiting impact on women's self-images and lifestyles. The role of the heterosexual good mother apparently continues to dictate most Russian women's ideal and obstructs an acceptance of more non-traditional identities such as lesbians and bisexuals (Holmgren 1995: 23).

It is important not to presume certain oppressions and impose solidarity. Despite inequalities of post-soviet capitalism and "male democracy," Russian women have not only been made victims and innocent accomplices, but could work the system to gain political and economic power (ibid.: 26). As many researchers have stated, however, in the post-socialist context a cultural feminism, which is imported from the U.S. and used by many local NGOs, tends to meet the special needs of women within the status quo, without challenging the decline of living standards and neoliberalism. The hegemonic Western culturalist-feminist conception of gender as an essentialist category of difference fails to recognize the complexity of the post-socialist context and the importance of understanding emerging class differences (Ghodsee 2004: 11).

To understand specific processes and oppositions in the Russian women's movement we need to explore how the struggle of women's groups against the impoverishing effects of the neoliberal reforms, the authoritarian state, sexism, and the attempts to impose 'from above' certain version of feminism, are linked.

During the post-Cold War period as international lending institutions started to promote ideas of gender equality and the need for women's organizations, "gender" became a new central concept in the development industry. It was "mainstreamed" into the agendas of the lending institutions. Like civil society and social capital, "gender equality" became a measure of states' democratic rank (Hemment 2007: 81). Western-oriented feminist women in Russia became a part of the global activism and the institutionalized and bureaucratized field of NGOs. Many women in elite organizations, however, were frequently skeptical about transnational campaigns run by foundations. They were not always sure how to apply the "project-speak" of the development industry to the Russian reality. They also felt uneasy about the material gulf that existed between them and the local groups of women in the provinces. They sometimes doubted the relevance of their work: "maybe the third sector and nongovernmental sphere are just a load of rubbish (*erunda*)? What is the difference between this and business?" (Cited in ibid.: 72).

Women's issues have been selectively defined within Western donors' projects. Campaigns that were defined by the donors were encouraged while "local" women's groups' projects were often excluded (ibid.: 83). The issues of class and material inequality were made invisible (Ghodsee 2004). The type of feminism that has achieved hegemony through gender mainstreaming is what Chandra Mohanty (2003: 6) has called a "free-market feminism," a "neoliberal, consumerist (proto-capitalist) feminism concerned with women's advancement up the corporate and nation-state ladder." Gender mainstreaming in the context of the Third Sector NGOs demobilized and co-opted social movements (Lang 1997; Hemment 2007). The concepts of gender and civil society have been emptied of their radical content.

At the same time, the Third Sector and the concept of "gender" are important in the imaginary repertoire of Russian women activists. Feminist concepts were renegotiated during the seminars held by transnational feminist advocacy groups for the Russian women's groups. At seminars, resources and discourses became objects of a struggle

(Sperling et al. 2001). Many women that mobilize against oppression in different forms do not conceptualize their activity as "feminist," but rather link their ideas to own national-historical and class-specific contexts. This process of mutual transformation involves conflicts and inequality in transnational advocacy networks (TAN).[41] Outside actors often have more resources, and their definitions of what is important to challenge, and of the other as "not feminist" produce controversy. Ideas and practices, however, interact with local contexts and are altered (ibid.: 1159).

In Russia, TAN's elite-focused tactics often came in conflict with alternative local strategies which rather seek to develop grassroots mobilization (ibid.: 1160). In the seminars, Russian women's groups argued that consciousness-raising at the local level, not institutional politics, should be the main focus of Russian women's groups. They criticized the American "experts" for not comprehending how little institutional infrastructure existed in Russia, that laws were rarely actually implemented, that it was meaningless to lobby politicians who lacked the power to do what was requested of them, and how little access to mass media meant. The main benefit of the seminars was considered to be learning "the technology to unite us," which included techniques for speaking in groups, listening to each other, forming networks around a concrete issue, and thinking about strategic actions at the grassroots level (ibid.: 1172).

Further, Russian participants challenged the American experts' tendency to think of women's issues in terms of family policy and employment. Women in the Russian groups framed their concerns more in terms of a wider community. They stressed that grassroots women need to confront the economic and social disorder: combat alcoholism, promote peace, and clean up environmental hazards. The Russian groups were more interested in issues related to peace and crime reduction than in family or employment policy issues. There were also different ways to make sense of civic activism. While Russian activists insisted on it being "not politics," the American activists saw it as "fundamental to politics." Russian activists, especially in their degree of opposition to the government, tend not to see their local practical resistance as politics. Feminist scholars, however,

---

[41] TAN mobilize small numbers of individual activists who use specialized resources of expertise and access to elites rather than relying on demonstrations of mass public support and overt confrontations with authorities. They offer opportunities for consciousness-raising experience and networking as well as models for effective local action (Sperling et al. 2001: 1157).

stress that as housework is not viewed as work even by its practitioners, civil society's practical grassroots politics is made conceptually invisible as politics (ibid.: 1171).

Summary

This chapter has shown that in the sphere of women's self-organization, former state organizations *zhensovety* coexist with the new independent grassroots NGO and small feminist organizations representing women-intellectuals. The unequal access to funding from abroad creates tensions and social hierarchies among women's groups. Feminism was denounced by most women's groups in the 1990s and the early 2000s. The mainstreamed concept of "gender" was introduced "from above" into the Russian women's movements through Western foundations' selective granting policy. At the same time, there is a slow process of renegotiating feminist concepts by different women's groups.

PART III

CASE STUDY OF THE SOLDIERS' MOTHERS NGOs

Chapter 9

A Brief History of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs

Introduction

This chapter briefly describes the emergence and activities of the SOMO NGOs during 1990-2004. It is mainly based on materials about the SOMO umbrella organization that is located in Moscow. The movement of Mothers was created and sustained in the socio-political context of the military draft arena, which is described in following two chapters.

Different SOMO Organizations

Various kinds of soldiers' mothers groups were formed in the 1980s. On the one hand, grassroots groups of soldiers' mothers united parents whose children had died or had been abused as a result of cruel hazing in the army barracks (*dedovshchina*[42]) (Pinnick 1997: 144). On the other hand, Committees of soldiers' mothers were officially established to undertake "preventive measures against the non-regulation relations,"[43] for example, in St Petersburg (*Smena,* April 13, 1988, quoted in Zdravomyslova, 1999: 13). Some of the organizations of soldiers' mothers, attached to the military draft commissions (*voenkomaty*), were established at the initiative of pro-reform military officers and active citizens. It was considered an attempt to improve relations between the army and society and to allow parents of soldiers to exercise civic control. During perestroika, these organizations were usually created within the Soviet institutions to democratize them. The activity of these Committees of soldiers' mothers attached to the military commissions was supervised and directed by the military staff (ibid.: 58). This type of organization continued to exist throughout the 1990s. Governments and military authorities initiated the creation of organizations similar to the SOMO, but under official control. In 2004, the

---

[42] A social and historical background of this phenomenon in the Russian army is explained in more detail in chapter 10 of the dissertation.
[43] An official term used to describe the norms of cruel hazing in the military barracks.

Ministry of Defense set up new Unions of the military servicemen's parents. Some local SOMO groups have changed their names and joined the governmental project (Deriglazova 2005: 8).

The Human Rights SOMO NGOs during Perestroika

The independent human rights organizations of the SOMO emerged as an alternative to the soldiers' mothers committees set up under the supervision of the military authorities. The SOMO movement is characterized by two goals: to protect the rights of military servicemen and potential draftees and to end the participation of conscripts in armed conflicts (Deriglazova 2005: 7; Kuklina 2004). In 1989, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers (CSM) was founded in Moscow and by the early 2000s the SOMO, whose coordination center was located in Moscow, claim a web of 300 regional committees and 2500 volunteer activists (Traynor 2000).[44] A separate human rights organization in St. Petersburg, established in 1991-1992, subsequently adopted a pacifist ideology with a religious tone (Zdravomyslova 1999; Hinterhuber 2001).

In Moscow, the core of activists consisted of mothers of students who had been drafted into the army after the educational deferments from the military were substantially circumscribed in 1980. In 1982, for the first time in seventeen years, full-time students were drafted into the military. A sudden change in the draft policy evoked debate and different kinds of protests from educators and students. In the spring of 1987, a group of educators opposed the draft of students by pointing out its disruptive consequences in a round-table discussion, which was published in the influential weekly *Literaturnaya gazeta*. In early 1988, educators wrote an open letter to Gorbachev campaigning for a reinstatement of student deferments. In the fall of 1988, a series of protests and demonstrations were organized by students in several universities around the country (Solnick 1998: 194, 199). While the Defense Ministry's draft policy was criticized, the military officials responded by mocking the educators (ibid.).

---

[44] To verify this number is difficult. However, a list of local branches issued by the activists from Astrakhan includes some hundred and fifty addresses (retrieved from http://www.astranet.ru/win/organiz/k.htm on April 10, 2001).

In the spring call-up of 1989, several students in the first-year class from the Moscow Energy Institute were drafted. One of their mothers, Maria Kirbasova, wrote a series of letters to the officials in the Ministry of Defense, protesting her son's assignment to a training program which did not fit his specialty (Solnick 1998: 195). As the young man became suicidal, the commander, told her: "So what? Look, when he hangs himself, we'll look into what happened" (Caiazza 2002: 124). Defense ministry officials routinely rejected mothers' requests and protests (Solnick 1998: 196). In the summer of 1989, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers (CSM), established in Moscow, initiated a sophisticated media and lobbying campaign targeting the deputies of the new Congress of People's Deputies. A widely read Moscow daily, *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, began regular coverage of the CSM's affairs. The activists set up a vigil outside the Kremlin. The mothers handed leaflets describing violence within the military ranks to the deputies of the Congress. The new deputies in their turn saw the CSM's demands as an opportunity to demonstrate the power of the new Congress by winning over the powerful Defense Ministry on an issue with broad popular appeal (Solnick 1998: 197).

As the Committees' activities began to receive coverage in the press, its ranks grew around the country. CSM affiliates sprung up in the Baltic States and in several regions across Russia, where it attracted parents whose sons were victims of *dedovshchina* or who were drafted into service despite ill health. Finally, under pressure from the activists, and a mass media campaign, the decision to release 176 000 students drafted in 1987-1988 was ratified in July 1989. This decision affirmed the power of the new Supreme Soviet and the fact that in the late 1980s, the national legislature became a forum through which the grievances could be redressed (ibid.: 199).

The CSM's new initiative was to demand a volunteer army. In the early 1990s, the activists worked with deputies of several Supreme Soviet Committees – the Committee on Public Health, the Committee on Youth Affairs, and others. Due to the pressures generated by the CSM, which relied on public support and the relatively independent media, military reform received top priority on the agenda.

Ill or victimized conscripts became the primary focus of the CSM's routine work. In 1989-1990, under pressure from the Supreme Soviet the military revealed their practices of filling draft quotas by calling up unfit conscripts (Solnick 1998: 202). Ex-convicts and invalids were often enlisted in the army; in addition, *dedovshchina* and ethnically related

violence forced many conscripts to flee their units. Many of them fled to local CSM organizations which offered them safety and counseled parents on how to process the complaints. The local chapters of the CSM held weekly meetings to advise parents on how to qualify their sons for legal exemptions from military duty on medical and family-related grounds. The activists organized a well-developed system of providing advice and protecting the rights of soldiers.[45] They obtained and distributed copies of the unpublished guidelines for medical deferments. The draftees were advised to come to the military commission with medical documentation and to argue for a classification of 'unfit for active service' (ibid.: 207, 208).

In 1990, under pressure from the activists, Gorbachev appointed a presidential commission which included soldiers' mothers and Supreme Soviet deputies to investigate the causes of non-combat deaths in military units (Solnick 1998: 204). The CSM and the Supreme Soviet lobbied to disband the military construction brigades (*stroibat*) which did not follow international treaties that ban the use of forced labor. Although the activists received support from some reform-minded politicians and members of the military, their initiative also evoked much irritation and concern from the military establishment. In 1991, the Defense Ministry tried to neutralize the institutions that challenged its authority. Reporters who covered stories of *dedovshchina* in the armed forces, and draft evasion as well as the outspoken young deputies in local soviets were called up for service. Mothers active in the CSM were viciously attacked in the military press (ibid.: 210, 211). In 1995, the activists struggled without success against the passing of a bill in which the Defense Ministry restored the two-year conscript service as it had support in the parliament (Caiazza 2002: 109).

Anti-War Campaigning

After the SOMO's forceful opposition to the military operations in Chechnya in the fall of 1994, they were less welcome in President Yeltsin's inner circle (Caiazza 2002: 136, 214). In 1994-1996, when reports from the conflict in Chechnya informed of civilian deaths,

---

[45] See about the methods of the CSM at their website http://www.ucsmr.ru/english/articles/article002.htm, assessed on February 6, 2006.

destruction and the deployment of poorly prepared soldiers to terrible conditions, the SOMO NGOs became one of most powerful voices in the broad anti-war campaigns. In November 1994, the CSM was the first Russian NGO to issue an anti-war statement. It organized and supported women who marched to the front lines in Chechnya and searched for missing soldiers and who entered military bases and dragged their sons-soldiers from units all over Russia. Many new grassroots organizations emerged and networking between organizations from different cities intensified. In addition, many international contacts were established during this period (Zdravomyslova 1999: 169). In 1995, the activists organized a March of Maternal Compassion and Protest against the War in Chechnya. Over 300 participants walked from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Moscow to the Chechen capital Grozny. The walk was organized by the CSM with support from various international women's and human rights groups, including the East-West Relations Committee and Quaker Peace Services. They aimed to draw public attention to the atrocities in Chechnya, to provide humanitarian aid to the region, to research and report on casualties in the region and to search for missing soldiers. As the planned route of the march proceeded directly down the line of military engagement in Chechnya, the demonstrators were stopped by the federal armed forces. 150 marchers were detained for five hours and forcibly returned to the city Narzan, outside of Chechnya.[46] In addition, the SOMO initiated dozens of other actions across Russia to protest the military actions in Chechnya, including picketing the State Duma, hunger strikes, and letter-writing campaigns. For example, during the first two months of the Chechen conflict alone, the presidential administration received more than 110 appeals from the SOMO groups. The presidential staff prepared an overview of the concerns for the president, entitled "On Appeals from Soldiers' Mothers" (see ibid. footnote).

Another dimension of the CSM's efforts to influence the military policy included lobbying on behalf of soldiers and officers associated with military operations in Chechnya (Caiazza 2002). Knowing that the Constitution allowed the State Duma to grant amnesties without approval from the Federation Council, the government, and the president, the CSM tried to convince the Duma to grant amnesty and immunity against

---

[46] See the CSM website at http://www.civilsoc.org/nisorgs/russwest/moscow/colleen/soldmat.htm, assessed on February 5, 2006.

legal prosecution for deserters and conscientious objectors. In 1995-1996, 500 soldiers who refused to fight in Chechnya on conscious motives were thus relieved of criminal charges.[47] After the end of military operations in Chechnya, when the general amnesty for the Russian and Chechen soldiers in captivity was passed by the Duma in 1997, the activists were able to convince most deputies to support the additional provision which included deserters and evaders (ibid.: 134; see also the CSM website[48]). Although it was a one-time measure, it created a precedent in the military service policy. Another initiative was passed by the State Duma in 1998-1999. It included amendments to the Law of the State budget concerning the burials and identification of members of the military killed in Chechnya. In 1998, the CSM campaigned for amnesty of 40 000 soldiers-fugitives who fled from violence in military barracks. It was passed by the parliament in June 1998.[49]

The SOMO's anti-war protests continued after the military operations were resumed in Chechnya in 1999. They issued Statements and open Letters addressed to the state authorities demanding a peaceful political settlement. In the early 2000s, the conditions in which the SOMO acted changed profoundly because the mass media became more effectively controlled by the military. Moreover, after the tragic events of bombings of the residential buildings in the cities Buinasksk, Moscow, and Volgodonsk the mood of nationalism and vindictive militarism increased (Caiazza 2002: 141). The SOMO found it more difficult to get press coverage and popular attention, but continued to organize press-conferences on human rights violations. They collected alternative statistics on the number of casualties in the war and demonstrated that the official figures of human losses were unreliable.[50] The activists sought more openness between the state and the population and called for the regular publication of official lists of the wounded, dead and missing in military action (Sperling 2003: 248). Unlike the period of the first war in Chechnya, not many other organizations went out with anti-war protests. Some mass actions were organized, however, such as a demonstration in Moscow on February 19, 2000 which attracted about 1000 people (Caiazza 2002: 244). Networking with branch organizations inside Russia, women's organizations in the former Soviet republics and from abroad remained important. Congresses and conferences served to consolidate the groups internally as well as to demonstrate their position to the broader society.

---

[47] See the CSM website at http://www.ucsmr.ru/english/ucsmr/history.htm, assessed on February 6, 2006.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] See the CSM website at http://www.ucsmr.ru/english/ucsmr/hra.htm, assessed on February 6, 2006.

In 2004, the United People's Party of Soldiers' Mothers was founded. The main goal of the political program was to implement the military reform (the CSM website;[51] Romancheva 2004; Kostenko and Melikova 2005). In October 2004, the activists took an initiative to begin consultations on peace negotiations between the SOMO and the representatives of Chechen fighters in exile in Western Europe. This action provoked a furious reaction from the official Russian authorities (Samarina 2004). The Duma deputy former military general V. Alksnis accused the SOMO in "performing the political order of the West … by destroying the defense ability of Russia." He suggested that the General Prosecutor's Office and the Minister of Justice start an investigation of the organization's financial sources (Deriglazova 2005: 8). However, a survey of women's opinions about the SOMO conducted by the Levada Center in November 2004 showed that 72 percent of female respondents believed that the "activity of SOMO benefits Russia" and only 5 percent supported the opinions put forward by the deputy Alksnis. 65 percent of the respondents positively evaluated the possibility of "the SOMO to be a mediator in peace-talks between Federal forces and Chechen separatists" (ibid.).

Domestic and International Recognition

The activists' role in promoting peace and human rights was acknowledged both within and outside Russia. Within Russia, the activists claim to represent about 4 million soldiers and sailors, about 8 million parents, the majority of male students and all the young boys of 16-18 years old and their parents.[52] The role of the SOMO in protecting servicemen and their parents' rights is widely recognized both by supporters and opponents of the movement. The organization is trusted, well-known, and is visited annually by dozens of thousands of draftees, deserters, soldiers and officers (Deriglazova 2005: 7).

The SOMO has been awarded a number of international prizes for their activities in Chechnya and their protection of soldiers' human rights. In 1995, they were honored with Sean McBride medal (Germany) and Prof. Rafto Award (Norway); in 1996 they received

---

[51] Press release "We Create a Party: United People's party of the Soldiers' Mothers," retrieved February 8, 2006 from http://www.ucsmr.ru/party/pressrelease.htm.
[52] See the CSM website, retrieved February 6, 2006 from http://www.ucsmr.ru/english/ucsmr/hra.htm.

the Right Livelihood Award (the Alternative Nobel Prize), and in 2000 Friedrich Ebert Foundation Award (Germany).[53]

While the military was initially annoyed by the activists, a better cooperation between the SOMO and the military staff had been established by the mid-1990s. On some occasions, they were able to resolve difficult cases on mass human rights abuses, to investigate cases and to punish the guilty parties. These instances, however, were exceptions rather than the rule, as the army practices of covering up abuses remained strong. At the same time, in most regions of Russia, the SOMO representatives have good contacts with both the local military units and draft boards (Deriglazova 2005: 7). While the governments after Gorbachev had to tolerate the movement's legitimate demands, they also tried to subjugate it. Since 1988, all governments have had meetings with SOMO representatives, replied to their requests and included them in the official commissions on military reforms and draft commissions. At the same time, there were attempts to limit the activity of Soldiers' Mothers to the areas of "mothers' competence" like visits to military units, organizing additional supplies to soldiers and creating a good image of the army through patriotic campaigns. Official criticism of the SOMO activities has been growing since the second Chechnya campaign started (ibid.).

---

[53] See the CSM website, retrieved from http://www.ucsmr.ru/english/ucsmr/history.htm on February 6, 2006.

Chapter 10

The Arena of Military Draft Politics

Introduction

This chapter describes the socio-political arena of military draft politics, in which institutional and ideological opportunities for the collective action of SOMO NGOs were shaped. It firstly outlines the Soviet tradition of military service and new challenges to the military draft system in the 1990s. It proceeds to explain the problems of hazing in the army and general discontent about military duty in post-Soviet Russia. Finally, the chapter describes the character of the military reforms policy pursued during this period of time.

1. The Shift in the State Military Politics

In the late 1980s, the new political thinking about foreign policy proclaimed by Gorbachev led to serious cuts in the military budget. This coincided with a crisis within the Soviet conscription army triggered by the Afghanistan war and a decline in the army's social prestige. These changes put the problem of military reform at the center of political struggles and public debate. During the 1990s and the early 2000s, the previous privileged position of the military sector and its immunity from public criticism were questioned.

A new phenomenon in the relations between the military and society was the appearance of protest movements and voluntary organizations which raised their voices against widespread brutality in the military barracks and legal violations during the regular military draft campaigns. They made these cases a matter of public debate and court investigation and promoted ideas for military reform (Caiazza 2002). The participants in the voluntary groups, such as the Soldier's Mothers, Memorial, the Antimilitarist Radical Association and many others, attempted to make the military policy more open to civilian control using the new opportunities of political activism. The limits and possibilities of civic activism in this sphere were often determined by the existing tensions between and among the political and military elites. At the end of the Cold War,

the need to maintain large armed forces seemed to have disappeared. The new political elite wished turn to cooperation with former enemies. In 1988, Gorbachev officially confessed that the war in Afghanistan was a mistake and the last troops left Afghanistan in February 1989. The new thinking in foreign policy, which included elimination of the Soviet military presence abroad and a qualitative cut-off of military manpower and armaments, annoyed the military as well as a section of the political elite (Deriglazova 2005: 4).

Historically deep-rooted trust of the Russian population for the armed forces was challenged in the 1990s (Sundstrom 2006a, 2006b). The increasingly eroding legitimacy of the armed forces and continued isolation of the military policy from the society during this period is the context in which a public debate on the problems of the enlistment system, poverty and lawlessness in the army took place.

Compulsory military duty is one of the key issues in the debate about military reform. According to the existing system, every man is eligible and could be drafted between the ages of 18 and 27 for service in the armed forces. A right to alternative service did not exist in the Soviet Union. It was granted for the first time in Russia by the new constitution in 1993, and was regulated by a law which was approved in July 2002 and took effect in 2004.

The Soviet Tradition of Military Duty

In Soviet times, military service was perceived not only as the means to guarantee national security, but also as an institution serving an important political socializing function. Service in the army was directly linked to the notion of patriotism and loyalty to the state and was considered valuable for individuals as well as for the state (Deriglazova 2005: 2). Beliefs and images about the Russian soldier and his exceptional courage and patriotism were important parts of the official propaganda (Golts and Putman 2004). The army was also seen as a means of ethnic integration in society because it brought together representatives of more than the USSR's ninety nationalities. For the less advantaged young men from the rural areas, where standards of living were much lower than in the cities, the army often served as a way of social mobility (Deriglazova 2005: 2). Service in

the Soviet army was also seen as an important phase in male upbringing and acquiring a masculine identity (Kay 2006). The universal draft was broadly accepted in the Soviet society. This can be explained by the tradition of conscription coming from the eighteenth century, by the attention given by the authorities to promote the acceptance of obligatory service in the army, and the positive image of the army created by the collective memory of the Red Army's victory in WW II (Deriglazova 2005: 3).

As military power was important for protecting the system from external and internal threats, the military was given a privileged status in the state and was one of the most developed sectors. In the political system, the political and military elites were tightly interrelated, and after Stalin's death they became corporate castes isolated and detached from the society. State control over the economy allowed directing funds for military aims, but there was no form of citizens' control over military institutions (ibid.: 3). Golts and Putman (2004: 124) relate the military's administrative autonomy and privileged position to the historical legacy. Since the rule by Tsar Peter the Great, the strength of the state has been associated with a massive military force and Russia's security was linked to the state's ability to draw upon the full capacity of citizens for national defense.

In the last decade of the Soviet Union, however, the number of draft age men had dropped significantly due to lower fertility rates. The attitudes toward military duty and especially the attitudes of the draft-aged youth changed. Military service started to be seen as an unpleasant obligation which interrupted education or professional training (Deriglazova 2005: 3).

2. Challenges to the Military Draft System

Due to the tradition of unquestioned authority of the military establishment, the military controlled the draftee policy and kept secret information about its principles and details. Soviet conscription policy was not openly discussed by the Party or defense officials (Solnick 1998). After 1987-1988, however, the issue of deferments and exemptions from military service became a matter of debate and political contests. The system allowed deferment or exemption from service in the army. The draft was supervised and

administrated by local draft board (*prizyvnaia komissiia*) which was supervised by military commissions (*voenkomaty*) directed by the Ministry of Defense. The draft boards granted deferments or exemption from the service in the army on several grounds such as being a sole source of support for parents, young children or siblings, full-time enrollment in higher or special secondary education institutions, and ill health (ibid.: 177). Health deferments were granted based on medical classifications defined by the Ministry of Defense which assigned each distinct physical or mental condition to a certain classification. However, the guidelines of the classifications were never published and appealing decisions made by medical certification commissions was difficult. At the same time, it was commonly known that deferments were often for sale and that *voenkomat* officials could be bribed to arrange them (Solnick 1998: 178). Urban middle class men could avoid the service in army by entering the full time high education or by resorting to bribes. "The army was developing an increasing class bias" as it seemed that mostly the rural and urban working youth lacking right to deferment was drafted (ibid.: 215).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the health of the draft pool continued to deteriorate due to poor nutrition, alcoholism and pollution and the number of legitimate draftees accordingly decreased. By 1980, the pool of eighteen-year-olds shrunk as military operations in Afghanistan required greater amounts of conscripts. The army faced severe problems with drafting a sufficient number of fit conscripts. By 1987, the Ministry of Defense revised the class of deferments, which were granted to students and to conscripts in poor health. The new medical guidelines limited the conditions for which draft boards could grant medical deferments. For example, youth with asthma, tuberculosis or with histories of mental disorders were no longer exempted from service (Solnick 1998: 192).

Another problem was that the defense planners set conscription goals regardless of the existing size of the draft contingent. As the new regulations about medical deferments were never published and appealing the decisions of medical certification reviews was almost impossible, local draft boards could fulfill their conscription goals by bending already weak guidelines even further. As a result, some of the conscripts who were drafted later proved to be unfit to serve (ibid.: 193). In general, the draftees' education level fell, and the number of draftees with a history of criminal activities and drug-use increased (Deriglazova 2005: 5). As a result of a shortage of eligible draftees, young conscripts with

inadequate training were sent into active operations during the first and second Chechen conflicts in 1994-1996 and after 2000 (ibid.: 6).

The worsened conditions of the military service are firstly related to the impoverishment of the army. As a result of a serious cut in the military budget, a reduction in the number of military personnel and the conversion of military and military-connected production, the share of military spending in post-Soviet Russia decreased from 15 percent of GDP by the late 1980s to 4.7 percent in 1992 and to its lowest point at 2.4 percent in 1998. In 2004, military spending was budgeted on a level of 2.69 percent (Deliglazova 2005: 4). The state budget share for national defense accordingly decreased from 20.69 percent in 1994 to 14.74 percent in 2003. Combined with a general decline in the level of income for the majority of the population, this all negatively affected the status and living standards of the military professionals. Especially the lower level military personnel became more impoverished along with the majority of the population. In the 1990s and 2000s, a 'new' military elite emerged which successfully lobbied for its interests and reached a high standard of living, while the majority of serving field officers, servicemen, draftees and military personnel continued to be one of the poorest social groups. Political leaders could not provide the resources necessary for investments in the army and support for military pensioners (ibid.: 4, 5). Due to the reduced budget and increased chaos, the army became unable to pay salaries, to feed, house, clothe, and train its troops properly. Health problems and mental disorders rose, and suicide levels were high. Crime and fraud thrived because of the terrible conditions; supplies and weaponry were stolen and sold by soldiers to illegal paramilitary organizations (Caiazza 2002: 104, 105).

The Hazing System of *Dedovschina*

During the decline in discipline among draftees and the deepening social conflicts in the army, new recruits became frequently subject to cruel hazing from officers and senior enlisted soldiers. This phenomenon called 'non-regulated relationships' (*neustavnyie*

otnosheniia) or *dedovshchina*[54] became especially widespread during the Afghanistan war (Deliglazova 2005: 3; Solnick 1998: 175, 184). Calling up a great number of individuals who had completed terms in prison introduced "a certain jailhouse order" to the military units (Solnick 1998: 203).

Groups of parents of soldiers collected accounts of internal violence and investigated deaths and beatings of their children. In 1990, they argued that each year at least 20 percent of military servicemen committed suicide due to hazing in the army (Solnick 1998: 185). According to statistics of advocacy group Mother's Right, up to 5 000 soldiers died of abuse or suicide in 1995 (Caiazza 2002: 106). In 1994, officially statistics stated 2111 deaths 432 of which were suicides. In 1996, murders within the armed forces increased by 27.3 percent and suicides by 24.5 percent according to the newspaper *Nevavisimaia* (ibid.). Many of these deaths were often associated with *dedovshchina*. Officially, 2 234 young men were victims of hazing in the army; fifty five of them died, and 335 were seriously injuried (ibid.).

In the late 1980s, journalists covered many manifestations of hazing which had previously never been discussed openly. Tragic consequences of brutality in military barracks were exposed in the press. In 1987-1988, the media provided great coverage of the trial of a young Lithuanian soldier Arturas Sakalauskas who was beaten, burned and raped by several of his fellow soldiers at night on a transport train. He answered by shooting them as well as a civilian conductor. The case was described in the popular daily *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* debated on TV- and radio-programs, used as material in the documentary film, and invoked a confrontation between the army and the civilian mass media. It was admitted in the course of investigation that the young soldier was frequently humiliated and abused in this military unit and that the commanders and political workers were permissive regarding the matter (Zdravomyslova 1999: 55; Solnick 1998: 185).

---

[54] The noun *dedovshchina* is derived from *ded* (or *starik*) which means 'old men' and is used about the conscripts who do a second or third year of the military service compared to the soldiers completing a first year of their service (Zdravomyslova 1999: 167). According to Kharkhordin (1999: 310), the system of hazing or "eldership" (*dedovshchina*) informally practiced in the Soviet army is an example of an informal collective-building within the frame of official *kollektiv*. It relied on the informal leaders ("the elders") who coerced new recruits to help to fulfill the requirements of the regiments. After a year of service the recruits themselves could become members of such group of informal leaders and start to oppress and harass the new conscripts. This informal hazing system was installed in the 1950s and became a common element in army training.

The military was annoyed that glasnost was applied to military affairs and that the cases of brutality were debated publicly. They usually argued that violence in the army rather reflects the poor "military-patriotic upbringing" that young men received at home and at school before they became soldiers (Solnick 1998: 187).

In the 2000s, crimes, *dedovshchina*, death in peace-time, diseases and poor living conditions remain in the Russian army. According to official statistics released by the Ministry of Defense in November 2004, 11624 crimes had been reported that year; 932 servicemen had died, 423 of which occurred during service. 24.6 percent of the deaths were suicides. Many crimes committed in the units were not investigated (Deriglazova 2005: 9).

Social Discontent about the Military Duty

Broad discontent about army service was officially documented for the first time in 1980 in a sociological survey about young men's attitudes. 13.5 percent of 2000 respondents did not recognize the importance and necessity of military service and 42 percent feared for "military discipline and obedience," supposedly reflecting concern over the hazing (Solnick 1998: 189). Several years of the war in Afghanistan, which had become known through eyewitness accounts by soldiers and journalists, demoralized the army. People throughout the country were touched by the effects of the war as the number of casualties grew and most families faced the risk of sending a relative off to fight in Afghanistan (see Sperling 2003). In the late 1980s, when press coverage of the Afghan war became more detailed and more combat veterans returned to civilian life, resistance to army service became more intense (Solnick 1998: 190). Previously isolated instances of draft evasion started to increase rapidly. The Party committees received many letters concerning Afghanistan and the draft (ibid.: 190, 181). Anti-draft sentiment started to increase in many non-Russian republics, especially in the Baltic, Georgia, Moldavia, and Western Ukraine. In 1990, several republics passed laws creating 'alternative service' for conscripts who were not willing to serve in the army. Draft evasion was thus in effect legitimized and went unpunished while local draft boards simultaneously granted more exemptions on recognized grounds (ibid.: 207).

The Russians have contradictory opinions toward obligatory military service. On the one hand, most of them do not actively oppose the right of the state to call people to military service. On the other hand, people do not condemn those who use all possible ways to avoid it (Golts and Putman 2004: 148). Draft dodging and evasion has been one of the consequences of the declining legitimacy of the army, due to the deteriorating conditions of the military service, the brutality and lawlessness in the army, and its involvement in the military operations in Chechnya. Military service is increasingly perceived not as a "sacred obligation" but as a source of danger to one's life and health. In 2002, 72 percent of respondents in a poll by the All-Russia Centre for Public Opinion did not want their relative to serve in the army.[55] Attitudes toward military service differ depending on social class, age, region, political preferences, and other factors. In a 2002 survey, 34 percent of the respondents said that they would serve and that young men must serve in the army while 17 percent stated that they would not serve and young men should have the right to choose. Three ideas about the army have been observed in Russia: Those embracing a 'traditionalist' idea see the army as an institution which provides career opportunities and helps to gain a higher status. According to the 'modern' idea of military service, the army is a necessary step in personal growth and maturity. From a 'post-modern' viewpoint based on the calculation of individual's losses and benefits, army service is perceived as a biographical failure.[56]

Public opinion polls in 2004 showed that the army occupied the third place among trusted institutions at the relative low level of 28 percent after the presidency and the church. The majority of respondents, 53 percent in 1998 and 71 percent in 2003, supported the elimination of the draft and the introduction of contract enlistment. In 2004, support for the continued draft increased to 40 percent while 54 percent remained in support of contract enlistment, according to results of the national survey[57] (see also Deriglazova 2005: 9).

---

[55] A report retrieved February 4, 2006 from http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=52&article=276.
[56] See the FOM, at http://bd.english.fom.ru/report/cat/societas/problem_soc/army_problem/ed024227, retrieved February 4, 2006.
[57] See a report by the VTsIOM January 24-28, 2003, at http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=52&article=141, retrieved February 04, 2006. This tendency shifted in 2005. In January 2005, the proportion became respectively 45 and 48 percent. See a report by the VTsIOM, at http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=52&article=1080, retrieved February 04, 2006.

Enforcement of the draft remained problematic in the 1990s and the early 2000s (Solnick 1998: 214). By 1996, fewer than 13 percent of those called up actually completed their military service (Caiazza 2002: 107). In 2004, the average national level of drafted men is 10 percent of the eligible pool. Moscow hold the record for the lowest number of drafted men – about 2.7 percent of those eligible, with 60 percent being classified as having "limited eligibility for health reasons" (Deriglazova 2005: 5). According to official and non-official statistics, between 30 000 and 40 000 young men dodge the draft every year (ibid.; Sperling 2003: 249). In 2004, the Ministry of Defense suggested that students' deferments be abolished due to the decreased number of eligible young men and continued draft dodging. This new initiative evoked a broad negative response in society (Deriglazova 2005: 9).

3. The Military Reforms

The problem of reforming the Soviet army became an issue of public debate. In December 1990, two competing proposals for military reform were published. One, prepared by a group of deputies in the USSR Supreme Soviet, suggested a rapid transition to a professional volunteer army and suggested that alternative service be permitted during the transition. The Defense Ministry offered less radical but nevertheless significant reforms, including a reduced term of service and alternative non-military service. The Ministry's draft was adopted as the basis for discussion (Solnick 1998: 211). In February 1993, the parliament passed a new law on military service. While universal military service remained the basic principle, the law contained provisions for alternative service and contract service; a volunteer service as a first step toward a professional army (ibid.: 214). In 1992, 1997, 2001 and 2003 several programs aimed at a reform of the military system were approved (Golts and Putman 2004).

Representatives of liberal political forces such as the parties Yabloko (Apple) and the SPS (the Union of Right Forces), supported a turn towards a professional and contractual army (Deriglazova 2005: 5). The main official argument against contractual service is that Russia cannot afford a professional army. On July 10, 2003, the government adopted a special program of military reform (Tsimbal 2003). The

implementation of the reform seems to be a difficult and prolonged process. By 2008, at most 15 percent of the armed forces will be composed of volunteers and universal conscription remains the main organizational form (Golts and Putman 2004: 151).

The right of conscientious objection was stipulated in Russia's 1993 constitution. Russia sought full membership in the Council of Europe, and the inclusion required provisions allowing conscientious objection (Caiazza 2002: 110). Solnick (1998: 211) argues that many people viewed alternative service as a replacement for the military construction brigades (*stroibaty*),[58] not as community or medical service. The law on alternative non-military service, which was introduced in the State Duma in 1994 and finally passed in July 2002, mainly reflected the pro-military faction's vision. The efforts of civic groups to influence the content of the law were unsuccessful. Many analysts considered the law on alternative service a punishment (Caiazza 2002). Each applicant for alternative service must prove his pacifist credentials before a military tribunal and serve up to 42 months (21 months for people with a higher education). Those completing alternative service are supposed to live in identical conditions to other conscripts, for a longer period of time, and their only privilege will be not to wear arms (Weir 2003; Waisberg 2004). Offering conscientious objectors a longer term of non-military service on construction projects satisfied the need for military construction brigades in the civilian economy.

Civilian control over the military is far from well developed. The content of the military reform developed in 2002 for the period 2001-2010 was never published in the open press (Deriglazova 2005: 9). The main direction of the reforms in the 1990s was to preserve or to rebuild Russia's military power without radical transformation. The political, social and economic conditions of the system of military duty, however, have changed. Russian society is no longer prepared to make sacrifices for the political and military elites' goals which no longer possess the necessary tools to force the society to follow. Deliglazova (ibid.: 10) stresses that military and political powers tend to see groups in society as an object rather than as a subject of politics and that there is no open debate or cooperation between the military establishment and society. Evading and

---

[58] When in 1987 medical deferments were revised by removing exemptions from chronically ill youth and youth with birth defects, they were classified as 'fit for non-combat duty" and were often assigned to military construction brigades (*stroibat*). The military construction troops were actually often employed in the civilian rather than the military economy (Solnick 1998: 201).

dodging the draft and deserting from the units may be seen as mass reaction to the problems in the army in this political context.

Summary

This chapter has shown that the arena of Russian military draft politics offered limited institutional and ideological opportunities for civic activist groups in the 1990s and early 2000s. Military politics became an issue of public debate after the end of Cold War and due to problems with enforcing the draft. The increased anti-draft sentiment has been related to the wars in the Northern Caucasus and to the brutal hazing in the military barracks, which were openly discussed in the mass media. The civic groups' efforts to advocate military reforms, however, achieved limited success due to a strong resistance from the powerful military establishment.

Chapter 11

Discursive Images of Soldier's Mother in the Russian Press

Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of discursive representations of soldiers' mothers in the Russian press. As explained in chapter 3, I selected thirty five newspaper articles published in 1998-2005 on the Russian Internet. Newspapers of different ideological orientations were included in the sample. I analyzed texts based on the research questions: What is the significance of certain use of language in the articles describing the arena of military draft politics? *How is the specific role of mother of a soldier put forward to address problems of the military service in the army?* I looked for the repetition of key words, phrases and images; consistency within and between texts; for patterns of variations. I tried to identify how alternative accounts are rhetorically counted and combated (Tonkiss 1998: 256, 257). I sought to understand how the use of language associated with the notions of mother and maternal feelings contribute to, or challenge, the hegemonic cultural meanings of sexual difference, class, nationality, and political culture. This kind of discursive analysis allows an understanding of a complexity of the ideological limits and opportunities faced by the SOMO movement in the arena of military draft politics.

This chapter describes three types of discursive images of mothers of soldiers identified in the press materials: ideological-hegemonic, counter-discursive, and legalist-pragmatic.

1. Ideological-Hegemonic Image of the Loyal Mother

Dominant ideological practices and discourses shape our view of social reality. Ideological hegemony operates through cultural forms, meanings, and representations which produce consent to the status quo and the positions of individuals within it

(Kincheloe and McLaren 2005: 309). The effect of such representations is subtle, ambiguous and situationally specific forms of domination (ibid.: 310).

A narrative discourse is an important cultural factor which some social groups might have en interest in controlling (Fahlgren 1999: 26). To tell a story with a beginning, middle and end is an efficient way of producing a discursive meaning. Through a narration individuals can be taught to live in a meaningful relationship to the social order in which they live their lives. A narrative creates a special way of seeing, a specific gaze, and a viewpoint. The need to represent a reality by telling a story is embedded in the wish to moralize the events which are described (ibid.).

Narratives represented in the mass media are embedded in a broader discursive context. The ideological-hegemonic image of a soldier's mother is interrelated with a mass medial discursive context reproducing cultural meanings of gender, nationality, and political culture.

Official Discursive Context

In the 1990s, images of war and gender in the mass media were often linked with Russianness, and a sense of national belonging. The images of Russianness not only reproduced national identity, but also represented a dream of masculinizing the "female" body of the country and reflected the nationalists' project of "saving the authenticity of Russian identity from the immoral Western influences" (Novikova 2000: 122). For example, in a series of clips, which were broadcasted on Russian television, optimism and manhood are reasserted through plots about war, peasant harvest and men's friendship. One clip showed two grandmothers washing a small naked boy. Washing had a special symbolic meaning of spiritual and bodily cleansing in Russian traditional culture. In this clip, it symbolizes the renaissance of masculinity while the preceding clips provide a context, inscribing the future of the boy into the tradition of defining war/peace as masculine/feminine in the Russian historical context (ibid.).

At the same time, these ideological-hegemonic representations in the mass media were challenged in the literary prose. In military memoirs published by two different women-writers, the symbolic link between masculine/military and the maternal/wifely is

reversed and reveals what had been silenced in the post-Soviet ideology. The Soviet war mythology produced a stereotypical image of a woman who was both a battlefield heroine and a good mother and wife. In the memoirs of women from the war in Afghanistan, the identity of a fighter for a larger cause given to them by the military is contrasted with the sexual exploitation of their bodies. There is humiliation and sexual harassment behind the masquerade of female agency. These women had to erase their war experiences to be able to survive emotionally and to match the cultural model of a virtuous worker-wife (ibid.: 127).

In the official political rhetoric, the mother of a soldier has been historically framed in different ways. During the Great Patriotic war in 1941-1945, in the official Soviet iconography, the Mother, pictured as a matron holding a baby boy in her arms, blessed the soldiers marching to the front to fight "For the Motherland!" (Liljeström 1995). On the contrary, during perestroika the female grief over the lost soldiers-husbands or sons was included in the official anti-military rhetoric. For example, at a Politburo session in October 1985, Gorbachev justified his proposal to end the Soviet military involvement in Afghanistan by reading aloud from letters of bereaved mothers, who questioned the political grounds of the war and criticized the government for sending untrained new recruits to military operations (Elkner 2004: 8). During the military operations in Chechnya, however, representations of soldiers' mothers in the press were again mainly associated with militarism and patriotism. The military encouraged parents to induce patriotism in their sons and thereby prevent further decline in the popularity of the military service. Mothers' organizations which criticized the military and problems in the Army were simultaneously denigrated in the press.

Elkner (2004) shows, that the military press and some other media outlets vilify and actively discourage the uncontrolled involvement of women's organizations in the problems of the military units. The SOMO activists used tactics of uninvited inspections of military units, gathered information about hazing and other forms of maltreatment of the conscript soldiers and distributed this information among other parents as well as via the democratic media. The credibility of the activists was questioned in articles published in the state military daily *Krasnaia Zvezda* in the early 1990s. The poll results, which measured the attitudes of the soldiers' mothers, were used to demonstrate that mothers are better informed about their sons' condition in the army than about current political affairs.

They were concluded to be politically illiterate and only concerned about personal matters. They were said to exploit a controversial public openness about *dedovshchina* in the army in order to keep their children away (ibid.: 4). Firstly, the protesting mothers were considered 'unbalanced ladies,' fuelled by female hysteria, egoistic and ignorant about politics and the armed forces. It was argued that the openness about the army's problems in the media needed to be restricted: "Only military people should read this, they understand it and are in the position to draw the correct conclusions, but there is no need to frighten mamas and grandmothers" (quoted in ibid.: 4).

Secondly, the SOMO activists were represented as bad mothers. They were blamed for being overprotective mothers who raised infantilized sons incapable of enduring army service. In the military's accounts of *dedovshchina,* the young recruits were called "mama's boy," said to be "feminized," weak, and selfish as a result of a "ladies upbringing" (Elkner 2004: 5). The military accused the members of the committees of soldiers' mothers of being poor patriots as none of their sons were fighting in Chechnya (Sperling 2003: 247).

Thirdly, the mothers-activists were called 'traitors,' and part of a conspiracy aimed to destroy the army.[59] Conservative military writers claimed that the "democrats" "created the movement of soldiers' mothers" to use them against the army and to demolish the Soviet Union (Elkner 2004: 5). The role of the activists was described as "speculation on the problems and tragedies of the army" (ibid.; Sperling 2003: 247). In the newspaper "New Petersburg" (28th June, 2000) the SOMO activists were accused of "pro-Chechen propaganda," encouraging draft evasion instead of "teaching draftees to fulfill proudly their duty to the Homeland."[60] In 2004, a series of publications questioned the SOMO NGOs' initiative to start negotiations with the Chechen leaders about a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The state officials advised the activists to hold themselves to their own tasks of defending the human rights of soldiers (Samarina 2004).

The usefulness of some SOMO organizations was questioned in the public statements of state officials (*The Moscow Times*, January 9, 2003; see also Deriglazova 2005: 8). The soldiers' mother activists were criticized for interfering in a matter of the state for which they did not have the necessary competence, and for supporting criminals,

---

[59] Pinnick (1997: 145) points out that in 1994, Yeltsin commissioned a report from his staff, 'On appeals from soldiers' mothers which concluded that the 'emotionalism' of these women's groups was exploited by political parties and movements 'to advance their own political demands.'
[60] Retrieved December 2000 from http://www.city.spb.ru.

namely the people who dodge the draft. When it became known in 2004 that the SOMO activists had founded a political party it evoked a scandal around the organization. They were accused of being financed by foreign organizations and by the oppositional 'oligarch' Boris Berezovsky who was living in exile (Ampelovsky et al. 2004).[61] An official assignment was given by the State Duma to the Moscow Office of the Public Prosecutor and the Ministry of Justice to inquire into the activities of the Moscow CSM. The organization was claimed to be associated with an "anti-army campaign" "financed by Western money." Moreover, the activists were said to have nothing to do with soldiers' mothers, but rather "professional political actors who receive salary, have hundreds of offices all over Russia, and carry out propagandist and publishing activity." According to Alksnis (2005)[62] they used "saint title of soldier's mother" as a mechanism for "laundering money." The SOMO organization was associated with professional politics and opposed to the "mothers" who "make sacrifices for the sake of homeland."

The SOMO HR NGOs are sometimes accused of publishing information which is used by draftee-aged young men to avoid military duty. Ol'kina (2001) stresses that the SOMO "describe in detail how the military service can be escaped; After a careful reading of these books practically any draftee can be illegaly freed (*otmazat'*)." A slang word *otmazat'* in this context refers to faking a disease or paying bribe in order to be exempted from Army service.

The Brave, Selfless, Patriotic Mother

The ideological-hegemonic image of the soldier's mother in some newspaper articles is produced through recurrent themes that describe a brave, selfless, and patriotic woman. The dominant cultural meaning of gender and nationality are linked to a moral loyalty towards the homeland, the Russian Orthodox religion, and the army.

The article "Soldiers Call Her Mother" (Kulikov 2000) describes how a woman courageously went to Chechnya in search of her son who had been kidnapped by the Chechen warriors. She sold her apartment to collect money to pay a ransom to the

---

[61] See also at the website of the radio station *Echo Moskvy,* October 20, 2004.
[62] At the website of the party *Rodina* (Motherland), retrieved January 11, 2005 from http://www.rodina.ru/interview/show/?id=218.

kidnappers. Her son was eventually killed by the Chechen warriors with brutish cruelty for refusing to convert from Orthodox Christianity to Islam. His commander, who first assumed that he had deserted from his unit, granted him posthumously Order of the Courage and honored his mother for raising a good son. The local church helped the woman to buy back her apartment. She eventually found some consolation in the thought that her son "perished not only for his faith but also for his Fatherland." "In Chechnya, he defended us, his friends and family;" he was not "a traitor." When the second war started in Chechnya in 1999, she followed it on television. She saw that soldiers were badly clothed, and decided to gather humanitarian aid and to send clothes to them. The soldiers were grateful and wrote her a letter. A mother learns to accept the tragic reality of human loses in the time of war and to be proud over a heroic death of her son. In a symbolic sense, she continues to be a Mother, now for the Russian soldiers doing their military duty in Chechnya.

A soldier's mother is described as loving, courageous, psychologically strong, and a loyal citizen. Her love for her son is a central trait and she endures enormous sacrifices trying to find and rescue him. The name of woman in the article, Lubov,' means "love" in Russian.

While the story describes tragic events including macabre details, there are few linguistic expressions of grief and distress. The woman is instead represented through intense activity, which is expressed through a plentiful usage of verbs. The article, which is only 2.5 pages long, includes about fifty verbs pertaining to the image of a mother. Of these verbs, 42 words signify action. Only 3 words signify feelings of pain and shock, such as "gave a cry" (*poplakala*), "was horrified" (*byla potriasena*), "remember fragmentary" (*pomnit otryvkami*).

The woman's strength is stressed by a comparison with her husband, who died on the fourth day after the son's funeral: "The man's heart did not stand [the pain]. But how was it for a woman to survive such experience?" The underlying meaning in this comparison confirms a gender difference. Strength and courage are linked to selfless voluntary work and care about the Russian soldiers. The woman overcomes her grief by being "useful to others." She travels regularly with humanitarian aid for solders in Chechnya: "Now is not time for crying, I must help."

Another key theme that recurs throughout the article and which is related to the image of the mother of a soldier is a contrast between "bestial" Chechen "bandits" and honorable young Russian soldiers. Nationality is reproduced and linked with gender and political loyalty.

One additional recurrent image in the article is the contrast between "simple people" (*prostyie ludi*) and "official authorities" (*vlast'*). The officials are described as indifferent to "a mother's pain" and sexist. An advice which the unit commander gives to the mother is: "find a warrior, become his mistress, and he helps you to find your son." The officials are careless and inefficient, which is showed by the "crazy way" to organize the military operations in Chechnya. In addition, they perceive citizens first as criminals: the woman's missing son was assumed to have deserted and was sought by the police at the mother's home. The article stresses several times that the official authorities did not help the woman in any way and "people in the big offices do not care about the destiny of a soldier's mother." The main idea around which these themes cluster is that people should not rely on the state for help; they should rely instead on self-help and self-organization.

As a result, this discursive representation of a soldier's mother expresses the meaning that protection of Russianness (religion, territorial borders and human lives) should be a concern of "simple" people, strong women, and loving mothers. This interpretation of ideological-hegemonic discourse adds to the analysis of feminization of the Third Sector in chapters 6 and 8, which showed that female civic activists were constructed as those who were to bear the social costs of the transformation.

The theme of a mother's selfless voluntary work is represented in the other articles in the sample. Voluntary activism of members of the military servicemen's families is linked with self-help, charity, and a close cooperation with the state and military authorities. For example, a short article describes how a group of mothers of soldiers mourn their sons who perished in Chechnya. Supported by the city administration and the local draft board, they decide to plant an apple tree garden in memory of their sons (Yuzhnyi 2000). Matrosova (2003) characterizes activists of *All-Russia Charity Union of Servicemen's Families,* established in 1991 by wives and mothers of officers, as "serving the Fatherland." They started a charity campaign Help to Russia's Soldiers aimed at gathering and sending necessities to the soldiers in Chechnya. They also help the families of

perished soldiers and officers, cooperate with the Defense Ministry, the voluntary organization Generals for Democracy, and participate in the television program Maternal Field of Russia. An article Charity Marathon (w. a., 2000) informs about a charity campaign "People, a Force Against Terrorism and Violence" organized by *Council of the Servicemen's Parents of Russia* together with the president's administration under the patronage of the president and Russia's Patriarch Alexii II. The article Right to a Dignified Life (Pavliutkina 2003) describes a meeting of organizations of widows and bereaved mothers with the military deputy candidate of the Duma. The women presented their demands and proposals to a Moscow city military procurator who was running in the parliamentary election campaign. They asked that the Duma deputy candidate work to ensure that the military draft boards do not take bribes, deserters return to the military units, and the like. They demand improvement in draft laws and expanded social guarantees for military retirees, individuals with disability and relatives of perished servicemen. The article supposedly shows that the political authorities pay attention to the mothers and widows; that they are given an opportunity to submit their opinions and demands concerning military policy. At the same time, through such discursive representations a gendered power asymmetry in the political institution is normalised and confirmed.

Another theme in the discourse of loyal military mother is the extreme poverty of bereaved mothers of soldiers in a society divided by class. This population group depends on scarce social support from the weakened state. The article Bereaved Mothers were Shown Attention (Khazova 2001) describes how, the mothers of soldiers who perished in Chechnya were granted financial aid of (the ridiculously low) sum of 638 rubles (about twenty U.S. dollars) in the State Duma. The money was collected during a "star auction" organized in one of the night clubs in Moscow and was divided between 869 families registered in the NGO *Mother's Right.* It says that social class differences determine who is sent to the war: "We sold clothes of pop-stars to rich people who do not participate in the military operations in Chechnya in order to help the poor people who participate in the military operation in Chechnya." Another article stresses that social protection of mothers who lost their sons in Chechnya is insufficient; women have to struggle for survival, especially widows who lost their only breadwinners. They are frequently unable to pay their apartment rents for months (Politkovskaya 2004b).

2. The Counter-Discursive Image of Mother-Activist

The dominant discursive meaning of the mother of a soldier is contested in articles written from a perspective of self-organization of citizens against the 'totalitarian' and unresponsive state. The article *You have to fight, my dear son: Once again about mothers in the Chechen war* (Politkovskaya 2000) provides a negative image of a mother of soldier acting in accordance with the official pro-military politics. A soldier, who runs away from his military unit dislocated in Chechnya, is taken care of by a local woman. She hides him and feeds him, and contacts his mother. However, the mother won't come after her son. On the contrary, "by her own hands she sends him to the military prosecutor office" and then back to the army. The writer stresses that the family is a private sphere which should be guarded from the interference by the state and ideological brainwashing. She argues that the mother's biological instinct makes her predisposed to resist these encroachments: "What is happening with mothers? What is happening in our country? …the biological instinct once again steps back and surrenders to intensive political propaganda" (ibid.).

Bogoslovskaya (2000) stresses that a human life never was valued and spared in the Soviet Army; this legacy continues today. The manpower is only "cannon fodder" delivered by civilians to ambitious military commanders. The strategies of the organization of soldiers' mothers are described as "a method of defense developed for the totalitarian society." "The scheme is the following: You say here are the laws, according to the laws I demand my rights, I am not evading my duties, but give me my rights. What can be argued against that?" The SOMO activism is embedded in a human rights rhetoric of the "classic liberal doctrine with its basic principles of freedom, equality, individualism and a state ruled by law:" "When a family manages to defend a son's right to life, health, and human dignity during his enlistment and military service, when it is possible to achieve that without paying bribes, by the legal way, then people change and turn into Citizens. They come to the organization of Soldier's Mothers like winners" (ibid.). The SOMO activists need to teach the parents how to protect themselves by using the legal code: "Not all the parents were capable even to formulate their pain and their trouble in the official letter. They neither knew where to turn to" (ibid., see also Politkovskaya 2004a).

Other articles stress, that behind the official attacks on the Soldiers' Mothers activists is an attempt to disguise the inefficiency of the military institutions. The activists try to protect soldiers from hazing by the officers. Soldiers often run away from their units and head directly to the SOMO offices. This irritates the military and they attack the activists, using minor violations of formal organizational procedures as a pretext, or insinuating that they work for foreign money, and the like (Pas'ko 2003). The army's organization is old-fashioned and therefore inefficient. Instead of trying to look into the wrong military strategies, however, the military accuse "women who give birth to soldiers'" (Latynina 2004). The activists are accused of living on large financial grants from Western foundations. In reality, however, the human rights-defenders are very poor; they occupy only a tiny office which is usually overcrowded by soldiers and mothers "with sad eyes." The way in which they use the grants is thoroughly documented and strictly reported. At the same time, the state officials receive grants from international foundations as well. For example, the Ministry of Defense received a grant for medical rehabilitation and production of prosthetics for wounded servicemen. When activists applied for financial aid on the behalf of a soldier, however, their application was turned down (Politkovskaya 2004a).

The SOMO activists highlight violations of soldiers' rights by the state and military officers. They highlight the illegal usage of soldiers as a free labor force, which became more widespread in the post-Soviet army since market economy relations have entered the army. For these crimes, the courts sentence high ranking officers only to mild punishments. It therefore remains lucrative for them to involve soldiers in for example building private summer houses. Soldiers do not complain or report these violations to the public prosecutor because they still escape the misery and violence in the military barracks (Kostiukovsky 2005). This exposing role of the activists is stressed in many mass media articles. The activists also accuse the military of the scandalous scale of embezzlement of the army's resources, which they believe explain the poor conditions in the army and the increased draft evasion (Kondrashov 2001).

Loving Mother and Party-Politics

In the mid-1990s, the Russian media represented the SOMO movement as "not violently angry but simple, gentle, peaceful mothers looking for their sons" (Caiazza 2002: 128). The horrible consequences of *dedovschina* were often revealed in the press through images of mothers who were indignant over the "heartlessness" of the military officials (Reif 1998). The unpopular character of military politics is illustrated by images of maternal grief of mothers of soldiers (Politkovskaya 2001). Other articles do not describe the Soldiers' Mothers activists as grieving over their loss, but rather as strong, smart and capable of organizing to protect of their own and others' children. Every tragic story of soldiers and their mothers become a matter of concern for the SOMO activists; they try to understand soldiers' difficulties and to help. They also try to approach these problems from a larger political perspective on the army as a whole (Bogoslovskaya 2000).

The Mothers' decision to found a new political party - the United People's Party of Soldiers' Mothers - is described as an unusual action. It is justified with a reference to an emergency caused by the current political situation. For example, this initiative is described as being "enforced" on and "squeezes out" the women (Politkovskaya 2004c). It has to do with the fact that the parties *Yabloko* and the *SPS* failed to be elected into the parliament in 2003. These were parties which the Mothers could mainly lobby for their military reform initiatives and receive help in cases when a Duma deputy inquiry was necessary to protect the soldiers. The major motivation behind the Mothers' initiative is to represent the interests of ordinary people by putting an end to the universal conscription army system. The party is created 'from the earth' by the ordinary women, who in contrast to the political establishment, lack large economic and administrative resources (ibid.). The genuine grassroots character of this party is said to be proved by the fact that the activists follow their strong maternal feelings rather than a rational sense: "The *Soldiers' Mothers* employ primarily their passion for protecting our children and our trust in them doing that sincerely. No any other political capital. Their joint pressure aimed at protecting children and sweeping off everything standing in its way comes from the very nature of a human being" (ibid.).

The SOMO are represented as mothers whose sons were in Chechnya and who sacrificed their own health for rescuing them. They are deeply inspired to put enormous

energy into their mission including a political struggle for peace and military reform (Politkovskaya 2004a). The mothers' political activism is justified and defended from the officials' accusations by referring to their biological maternal instinct.

The language of gender-based discrimination of women is rarely deployed when talking about soldier's mother. It did, however, emerge in the articles that commented on women's political party building. The first congress of the SOMO party is described as a "project based on the academic category of gender" marked by extraordinary emotional atmosphere: "If our men could not stop the terror, it means that women need to take care of that, we cannot let our children to be enemies, exclaimed a deputy from Dagestan" (Zakatnova 2004). One of the activists stressed that "until now all the conversations about the uniting of the democratic forces were hindered by the men's refusal to give way to women" (Kostenko and Melikova 2005). It is stressed that "women's interests are not represented in Russian politics: we lack strong women's parties and women's organizations able to influence the official power" (Barabanov 2004).

3. The Legalist-Pragmatic Image of Mother-Expert

The SOMO human rights groups are presented in some articles, not only as opposing the government, but also as promoting a new 'civilized' mode of resolving conflicts between a citizen and the state via legal investigation. The activists are represented by an image of civic experts in the sphere of the draft law.

The human rights groups of mothers are praised for nurturing a new mode of behavior among citizens. Kulikov (2002) stresses that *Mother's Right* encourages bereaved parents of soldiers not to keep silent if they believe that the commanders of military units are guilty of the deaths of their children. They should persecute the units legally and it is the last responsibility, which they can fulfill, towards their children: The state should be "punished by ruble." The bureaucrats usually resist the claims and create special formulations of the causes of a soldier's death which allows the units to escape legal charges. It is, however laudable that "citizens have learned to resolve the conflicts with the state in civilized legal way." It is unlikely that court persecutions might help to stop *dedovschina*, but the fact that citizens initiate legal cases not only against other

citizens but also against the state organs is seen as a positive trend (Kulikov 2003; Babakin 1999).

This kind of mass media images represents the SOMO activists as having specific expertise concerning the legal and procedural aspects of enlistment in the military service. The weekly *Kommersant Ъ Daily* and the magazine *Profile* refer to the SOMO activists as an authoritative source of information about draft campaigns and military reforms. Journalists refer to the SOMO's critique about deficiencies in the work of local draft boards as an additional argument in favor of transforming the conscription-based army into a contract-based army (Barinova and Rudnev 2005: 32).

Non-activist mothers need information on how to act in situations of conflict. In the weekly *Aif* the readers' letters are answered and commented in a regularly published column "Society -- The Army". Current issues about the draft policy are debated in the column by lawyers, the military public prosecutor, and members of the SOMO NGOs.

In the comment on a letter from the parents of a draft-aged man, who sued the local draft board for not accepting their son's medical diagnosis, the lawyer stresses, that the courts tend to ally with the local officials. She advises the parents to undertake a more 'offensive' stance and to sue several state agencies in different courts. The lawyer points out that "complaints and legal prosecutions are the weapons for reassuring the rights of an individual." A young man is allowed to stay home during the court case, which can take a long time (Borta 2004). The members of the SOMO NGOs advise the readers on how to find information about receiving deferments from army service on medical and other grounds (Vais 2005). They stress that mothers and relatives should not trust the medical examination conducted by the military-medical commission under the local draft board. They must arrange a medical check-up of the potential draftee in advance by competent specialists independently from the draft board. The relatives have to 'fight' for a correct judgment of the military-medical commission on the case. The SOMO activists explain how the unjust decisions can be appealed (Kochetova 2000). They point out what is legal and what is not. For example, the military draft committees illegally arrange raids on the potential conscripts in the streets (Markov 2004). The SOMO NGOs publish statistics of parents' complaints on the local military draft committees. They show that the draft committees striving to fulfill the draft norms take advantage of parents who are ignorant about their legal rights. A failure of medical commissions to accept a diagnosis obtained

from the medical centers thereby enlisting chronically sick draftees might have tragic consequences (Tuchkova 2000).

The human rights organizations protest against deploying new, untrained recruits, who have not been examined properly by medical and psychiatric experts to a combat zone (Nikitina 1999). The military operations in the Northern Caucasus make serving in the army even less attractive. The previous decree by the president that the new recruits could be sent to Caucasus only after at least one year service and by a voluntarily agreement was changed. Conscripts could be sent to the hot spots after six months of military service and without consent. The human rights SOMO activists argue that this decree is only semi legal and that it violates human rights; it was signed under pressure from the Ministry of Defense (ibid.).

Summary

This chapter has shown that at least three kinds of discursive images of soldier's mother may be identified in the sample of Russian newspaper articles. In the official discursive context, war and gender in the mass media were often linked with a sense of national belonging. The ideological-hegemonic image of a soldier's mother is interrelated with this context. The mother is represented as courageous, selfless and patriotic. It is stressed that not the official authorities, but "simple people" and self-sacrificing mothers take responsibility for the problems in the army. This discourse supports the dominant cultural meanings of gender, class, nationality and political loyalty to the regime. There is consistency between this discourse and the feminization of the Third Sector of the NGOs.

The second discursive image of the mother of a soldier is counter-discursive and is produced from the perspective of the regime-critical human rights groups. It describes mothers as biologically predisposed to protect the rights of her family and sons from an undemocratic state. The third discursive image is legalist-pragmatic. Mothers are represented as activists and lay experts in the sphere of draft law. They act as brokers between the official draft institutions and the families of draftees. In contrast to the counter-discursive image, this discourse represents mothers-activists not as opposing the state, but rather as promoting a "civilized" legal way to resolve conflicts in the state.

Chapter 12

Maternal Framing in the State Military Field

Introduction

This chapter focuses on how the SOMO participants express claims and grievances of the soldiers' mothers as a social group and how they use a narrative of motherhood to make sense of belonging in non-governmental activism. It examines how the 'maternal' reframing of the activists' shared experiences and strategies interacts with their social position and power relationships within the gendered arena of Russian military draft politics. Reframing is both a strategic and a social process. It is a mechanism by which the institutional discourse in the military policy arena, the SOMO movement's ideology, emotional culture, and interpretative frames are connected in the activists' social practices. As explained in chapter 11, other authorized speakers and institutionalized discourses of a 'loyal soldier's mother' constrain the claims made by the activists. The activists use the 'maternal' reframing, partly to accommodate and partly to challenge a dominant discursive construction of motherhood disseminated in the arena of state military politics.

The chapter studies the following questions: 1) How and why are the SOMO's collective identity and strategies of delivering services to the aggrieved constituency framed through a narrative of motherhood? How do the activists constitute the 'injustice frame'? 2) How are the SOMO NGOs socially positioned through gender, socioeconomic status, and regional location within the military draft politics arena? How does 'maternal' framing interact with the SOMO positioning? 3) What actors are represented as the Other in the movement? How do the SOMO oppose the military's construction of mothering in the NGO field?

1. Maternal Grievance and Advocacy

Networks of SOMO activists emerged primarily as mutual support groups of mothers whose sons were serving in the army. The groups, which I studied, view themselves as a movement

representing the claims of mothers of soldiers. They construct a collective identity through a set of narratives, symbols, and feelings which are linked in different ways to a mother-child bond and mothers' experiences of grievances. The maternal frame is in its turn related to the *issue* of military draft diagnosed as a social problem. At the same time mothers, "naturally" worried about their sons-soldiers, are identified as actors who are entitled to have an opinion on this issue. The military, officials, and the state are pointed out as responsible for the soldiers' problem. The following section explains how some activists became involved in the movement through a process in which their emotions and interpretation of their personal maternal grievances are framed as social injustice and transformed as a result of becoming activists.

The Maternal Identity of Activist

When asked how they joined the SOMO movement, several respondents told of their painful experiences from the time when their sons were serving in the army as conscript soldiers. They became involved as a way to find resolution for their personal strains associated with the suffering of their sons-soldiers. The activists' personal grievances, however, are transformed and framed as social injustice. The meaning of activism is interpreted by Irina and Masha as a voluntary and selfless "service to others" and caring about saving the lives of young men.

When Irina's elder son was serving in the army she visited him in his military unit. He always showed up covered with bruises and seemed deeply depressed. It was obvious to Irina that he was beaten up and bullied by other soldiers or officers in the unit. Although she was sick with worry for her son's life, she did not know what she could do to help him: "I was in despair. The only thing one can do [in this situation] is to pay bribes" (interview, November 20, 2000). Her younger son has a weak heart and she was afraid that he would not be able to survive a term of military service. She knew that he probably should receive an exemption from the military duty, but the medical commission at the local draft board did not acknowledge his medical diagnosis. As a single mother, Irina could not afford to pay bribes or to pay for a visit to a private medical clinic, where her son's diagnosis might have been defined and documented. Despair and anxiety for her sons' destiny pushed Irina to look for extraordinary ways out of the situation. She turned

to the Soldier's Mothers organization where she was able to get financial aid, necessary information and advice. Her younger son eventually received exemption from the military service and her elder son was dismissed early from the army. This experience had a profound effect on Irina. Her involvement in social activism transformed her feelings of powerlessness and eventually changed her worldview. In the SOMO, the ideology of human rights taught her to view her situation in a completely different way:

> I realized then that there is a lawful way to resolve such situations, that I do not need to pay bribes. I was very depressed at that time, but this experience gave me a new motivation to continue to live. I wanted to share this feeling with the others and I engaged enthusiastically in this work. (Interview, November 20, 2000)

Looking back on her past experiences, she recognized that she did not understand many things and was acting like a 'little mother,' who was ignorant of her own rights. She started to see her individual problems as part of social problem which led her to build a new self-identity as a 'counselor' helping others. In the SOMO NGO she tries to help mothers as well as soldiers who are victims of hazing in the military barracks and to educate them about the possibilities of protecting their rights in these situations.

Another respondent, Masha's path into societal activism also started in the painful maternal experience which pushed her to seek a contact with other mothers. Her story illustrates how self and society intertwines when individuals are brought together due to similar problems and become recognized as activists by others. In 1987, when her son was 16 years old, she started to think about his future service in the army. It was a period of ongoing war in Afghanistan and she was afraid that her son would be sent there. She wanted to find ways to avoid his enlistment in the army. It was during the period of glasnost when the newspapers wrote relatively openly about controversial issues. So Masha both heard from the other people and read in the newspapers that there were groups of soldiers' parents whose sons were missing in Afghanistan. For the first time in her life, she started to be interested in politics and broader societal issues.

She tells that even if her family was lucky, because in 1989 when her son was drafted, the Soviet troops had already left Afghanistan, political tension started to increase in the country and many violent ethnic conflicts erupted in different regions. Her son's unit was sent to Azerbajdzhan, a Soviet republic in the south, and was assigned to a military unit which recently withdrew from Afghanistan.

> In December, 19, 1990, the Soviet troops entered the capital Baku and tragic events followed. I do not know if his unit participated in them. But as I know they were sent to suppress the uproars in Tbilisi. My son suddenly found himself in the combat unit on a war footing. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

In the interview, Masha tells about her personal worries and a "natural" concern for her own child with the help of language and symbols which constitute the SOMO's shared group narrative. The fear and anxiety she felt about her son are transformed into a feeling of indignation, and thinking in terms of collective tragedy and soldiers in general:

> It was a kind of inner protest… naturally, I feared for my son's life. I wanted also to understand what happens to our children, suddenly the soldiers started to be killed in Azerbajdzhan, during Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It was a real military operation in which the soldiers were killed and peaceful citizens lost their lives. I was alone [with these feelings] and I wanted to do something, to intervene in this tragedy. This condition pushed me to search for women who felt in the same way. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

A core group of activists emerged as a basis of the future NGO:

> They were just mothers who gathered in the evenings, wherever they could, often in the High School of XXX, which offered them a room. We had a lot of agitated discussions… We, a core group of 15-20 people, who organized the meetings, saw or phoned each other regularly. General meetings with other mothers were crowded, up to 500 people gathered. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

> We were trying to somehow resolve our own problems but the other women started to consider us as a kind of Committee. They came to us with their problems, folks, little mothers … so we dealt with our own problems and at the same time learned how to help the other people. We so to say undertook such a mission. And we learned and grew into it, gradually, step by step. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

Similar to Irina, who described how she was transformed from a 'little mother' into a human rights activist, Masha's story shows how spontaneous ties of solidarity between mothers were eventually partially formalized and structured as a relationship between core activists and other women who were offered help.

At the same time, many activists' relationship to the constituency is very informal and felt as a relationship built on genuine compassion. This rule of emotion in the shared culture of the organization creates opportunities for continued interactions. Masha stresses that her empathy to mothers and young draftees resulted in years of tireless voluntary work:

It is a certain state of soul. I feel that I cannot live in the other way, without this work, it became my way of life. Even when I was at home with my newborn baby, I continued to give consultations to women in the neighborhood. My elder son says to me, you do not need to work all the time. But I feel that if I do not help and do not teach them how they should manage things, a boy might get into trouble, he can be killed. If something happens to some boy, I feel, I could have prevented that, I am aware of that all the time. I feel like an ambulance, which must arrive on time. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

This quote shows how maternal identity and solidarity with other mothers' sons is linked with the self-identity of activist. The maternal narrative constitutes a foundation for the SOMO activists' *motivational* frame, through which they are encouraged become involved in the movement. Constructing 'maternal' readiness for a selfless 'caring labor' (see Ruddick 1984) operates also as a *diagnostic* frame which helps to convince others that a problem needs to be addressed. The following section analyzes how the ties of 'natural' love between mother and son is an important symbolic tool that is applied to convince others of appropriate strategies, tactics and targets (*prognostic* frame) and to represent the SOMO as entitled to have opinion on the problem of the military draft.

Dear Little Boys - Acting on Behalf of Soldiers

The *injustice frame* in the SOMO's shared culture is created based on the activists' conviction that a conscript soldier is an especially vulnerable and legally not well-protected category in the Russian society. The soldier is a victim of widespread *dedovschina,* lawlessness in the closed institution of the army, and violation of the draft laws by the military recruitment boards:

> While a military serviceman recruited on the basis of a contract can decide to end a contract a conscript soldier does not have a right to choose. Further, the existing system in the army allows concealing crimes committed against a soldier; murder can be presented as an accident or a suicide. Soldiers are [powerless] people, completely at the mercy of the others. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

> Boys, who are recruited in the army as conscripts, became wounded and disabled. In their encounters with the bureaucrats they are humiliated and denigrated. They say, they can't stand it, it means that the state needed them [in the military front], but nobody needs them here [in the civilian life]. The pension is tiny, and they are not entitled to any social benefits. They are left alone, isolated with their kin. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

In the regular lectures at the SOMO's School of Human Rights, which I attended during the fieldwork, it is often stressed that in Russia's long history of totalitarian militarized state conscript soldiers were always the lowest social strata treated as "canon meat" and "dirt under the nails" (Participant observation notes, November 2000). The activists refer to sociological publications, according to which the Russian/Soviet army is an institution which systematically suppresses soldiers' individuality and autonomy (Levinson 1999).

Furthermore, the SOMO represent soldiers as 'children.' They stress that 16-year-old draftees routinely invited to officially register with the draft committee and newly recruited 18-year-old soldiers are just teenagers. They are thus especially vulnerable and their mothers should protect them. The SOMO's shared culture draws upon the idea of mothers' biological instinct to protect their own children. Applying Sara Ruddick's (1984) notion, mothers are ideally capable of "preservative love:"

> Let's say like this. Who is a mother? What is our original mission? …we give birth, we give life to a human being, isn't it so? And everything is said by this. If we give life, we are also responsible for the preservation of this life. (Interview, October 1, 2001)

Following this line of argument, it seems obvious, that mothers-activists should take care of injured aggrieved soldiers and that they also are entitled to have opinions on the issue of the military draft. Moreover, they should be given important positions in the institutions representing soldiers' interests:

> It has been said here about the establishment of the Department of Social Protection for Military Servicemen [at the Ministry of Defense]. I think these departments should be headed not by the military, but by us. We are not social workers, but we are the main link between military servicemen and their parents. And we are parents who suffered the pain of loss. (The Third International Congress, 2002: 57)

By linking the frames "soldiers as children" and "a strong mother-child bond," activists formulate their movement's anti-war and anti-draft goals, and lay claim to represent the opinions of mothers in military policy-making. They thereby accommodate the ideological-hegemonic discourse of a loyal mother of a soldier and challenge the marginalization of women's NGOs in military politics. The following quote exemplifies how maternal framing operates through the image of "soldiers as yesterday schoolboys" in

the speech given at the Congress of the SOMO representing NGOs from different regions all over Russia:

> What are our demands? It is obvious that we cannot stop the war. But we can demand to reestablish the rule that only those soldiers who served no less than twelve months and who volunteered, should participate in military operations. Of course, it is only a tactical move, which does not resolve the problem of war, but it anyway serves our goal in the long run.
>
> But our main efforts should be concentrated on the goal to abolish the principle of conscription in the army. Otherwise, we cannot resolve problems of state security in Chechnya and these problems will continue to be placed on the shoulders of yesterday's schoolboys. A huge pyramid including a large-size government, state administration, and all burden of state security are put on the shoulders of a little soldier. We must struggle against that. Eighteen-year-old boys cannot bear this burden and pay with their own lives. At age of eighteen they are not aware of how precious life is, they think it will last for ever… but it is taken away from them! (The Second International Congress, 2000: 36)

The activists feel that they carry the ultimate responsibility for the lives of the soldiers who contact their organization. They stress that they actually do not intend to extract any selfish gains from their membership in the organization. It is volunteer work which can be compared with a selfless caring work of a mother:

> If you are working like a mother, this work is absorbing and very hard. You work and think only about one thing: how you can help a person. Because we know, they come to us like to an island of last hope. If they do not receive help here, it is finished for them! We never ask anything for us personally, [as members of the organization]. We know that at stake are the lives of boys and mothers who come to us. We perceive our tasks responsibly. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

The pressure of responsibility is so heavy that the activists even have to seek a psychological help to learn how to cope. This is their way of managing the emotion of anxiety:

> When a boy comes to us and you see that his situation is terrible, but you do not know how you can help and you keep thinking of him all the time. Sometimes you wake up in the middle of night and suddenly find a solution to his problem. We realized that to work like this is not very healthy for us. So we turned to a psychologist at the State University and they helped us to get rid of that. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

Motherly feelings are a necessary reference in cases when the activists intercede with the military on behalf of soldiers who have run away from their military units. When

they make phone calls to the military commanders, they describe the soldier as 'dear little boy' (*mal'chishka*). The military, amused or irritated, argue that soldiers are no longer 'children.' Finally, they have to tolerate the activists' way of talking. In some cases, the military refuse to listen to the SOMO's arguments that a soldier ran away because of *dedovschina,* and that he should not be punished, but on the contrary, should be offered help. The activists contend that they say these things, because they rely on maternal guts which cannot be deceived. They also can deploy the laws strategically; they sometimes take photos of bruises and wounds on young men's bodies which can prove that there were marks of violence when a soldier arrived at the SOMO office.

> We refer to the fine print part in the criminal code which stipulates special treatment of cases when "soldier is forced to leave the military unit." If a boy came to me, all in bruises, beaten up, if he is exhausted and dirty, what can they say? Sorry, but I am a mother, I know how my child feels and I would never let him look like this! Any mother, any woman reacts immediately: something is wrong! (Interview, December 28, 2004)

Belief in the importance of protective maternal love is so strong among the anti-draft activists that they vilify mothers who are unwilling or incapable of protecting their sons-soldiers:

> In principle, mothers who want to give their sons away to the army are an exception. We perceive such women as freaks, as freak mothers. Not every mother has the skills to transform their love into concrete actions, but the majority succeeds in achieving this goal. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

This quote illustrates how the activists create a collective identity by drawing a symbolic boundary between 'good' and 'bad' mothers. Being a 'good' mother is not a biological instinct, but rather a result of a reflexive action and taking a stand. The identity of a 'good' mother is perceived as a consequence of a political action. This can be compared to the point made by Sara Ruddick (1989), discussed in chapter 2 of this dissertation, that engagement in the anti-military struggle does not arise automatically from woman's biological instinct, but is created through conscious efforts.

Expressing a feeling of solidarity and empathy towards young soldiers who unable to stand *dedovschina* often run away from their military unit, the activists create an affective term 'little runaway' (*begunok*) which they use instead of the official notion 'deserter.'

This way of speaking contrasts the formal language of the military. This creates a symbolic boundary between the "we" of activists, on the one side, and the military, and non-activist mothers, on the other side. When rescuing soldiers is framed in terms of helping the 'little runaways,' a conventional gendered construction of mothers-activists as caring and compassionate is partly reproduced and partly challenged and revised through bridging the frames of 'mothering' and 'human rights protection.'

For example, Olga works with helping soldiers and mothers who have problems very similar to those she had experienced herself, during her son's military service. She explains that when a soldier is beaten up and constantly bullied in the military barrack, it is extremely difficult to prosecute those who are guilty. Nobody dares to witness as soldiers know that they will have to stay in the same unit until the end of their service. When a soldier runs away from his unit and appears in the SOMO office, the activists therefore have to find another way to help him. They most often try to prove that he is ill and should be retired from the military service before the end of the term.

A SOMO activist accompanies a runaway soldier on his visit to the military prosecutor and act as his 'societal defender.' They try to prove that he had to run away from the military unit because his life and health were threatened. Olga stresses that the parents are most of all afraid of the military prosecutor:

> The parents are terrified by the thought that their 'little runaway' might be prosecuted as a criminal for leaving his military unit without permission. I think this fear is caused by a deep distrust to the legal system. (Interview, November 20, 2000)

SOMO activists encourage mothers of draftees to collect medical documents about their children's health condition and not to feel ashamed to document officially their sons' diseases. The activists know that the military medical commissions often ignore draftees' health problems which usually deteriorate in the army. In order to prove that a runaway soldier has health problems, the activists establish contacts with the medical clinics which are autonomous from the military draft system, so that they can obtain the necessary documents to use in court trials or in negotiations with the military.

Olga usually helps a soldier to get examined by such 'civilian' physicians. After all necessary documentation is sent to the public military prosecutor and military commanders, the soldier is sent to the military hospital for observation, and there "the

major fight takes place between parents and the military medical staff" (interview, November 20, 2000).

By inventing "new words" the activists challenge taken for granted beliefs of mothers who usually incorporate the official top-down language, used by the military commanders and jurists, constitutive of hierarchical subjugation in the state military field.

> The military unit commanders call them "deserters." The parents usually talk about "leaving the unit by own will." This is a prosecutor's formulation which the parents use. Parents consider their child to be guilty while he is actually a victim. Such psychology of servile submission is engraved in our consciousness. It is brought from the experiences in the Soviet Union. To get rid of it is rather difficult. We want people to understand that they have a right to life, dignity, health and a right to defend these rights according to law. (Interview, November 20, 2000)

The SOMO thus try to reframe a stigmatizing 'deviant' subject position of soldier deserter. A new word *begunok* allows an interpretation which enables them to advocate for the needs of young soldiers. Instead of positioning him as a criminal, the soldier is presented as victim of the system. He is potentially an active citizen "able to defend his rights." In addition, the mother's own feelings of empathetic relation to her child, which are wiped out by the masculine official state-legal discourse, are brought to the forefront. Olga can easily identify with the mothers' concern about their sons as she herself experienced similar situations. The gender regime in the state-military sphere can be challenged by allowing soldiers' vulnerability to be expressed and privileging parents'/women's lived experiences within a bureaucratic institutional framework. The activists hence construct an oppositional sub-universe of meaning by politicizing the needs and interests of mothers/parents of soldiers.

Due to their devoted work and ability to achieve concrete results, organizations receive recognition and respect among soldiers and the broad public. Those, whom the activists have helped before, might phone and congratulate on New Year Eve, which is one of the most popular holidays in Russia. Word of their organization is spread among people; friends and relatives of those who have received help from the organizations. Signs of gratitude, acknowledgement, and trust from ordinary people constitute the movement's moral capital. For example, Katia protests loudly when I ask if their constituency is felt like visitors or clients of NGO:

> Visitors!? One soldier, whom I helped three years ago, was here a couple of days ago. He said that he still remembers that here was the only place where nobody shouted at him, listened to what he had to say and helped him. Visitors are those who receive something and then leave and never come back. But if people come back, it means that they understand our work, it means that they support us. They can come to us again like to the old friends when they need help or advice. It is great, because it means that people trust us. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

As many examples in this chapter illustrate, motherly emotion and the idea of a mother-child bond is an important symbolic resource in the movement (see also Lally 1999[63]). The central significance of a maternal narrative in the SOMO movement can be explained from a feminist perspective. It states that social constructions of women and men's experiences are formed in societies organized via divisions into women and men's spheres of life. For example, Dorothy Smith (2004) stresses that women's standpoint is embodied in the foundation of childrearing, family and compassion for others. This perspective provides an explanation for the fact that the participants of the SOMO are mainly women. In addition, we can explain why some young men in the age of draft, who join the SOMO groups as volunteers, usually do not become members of the organization. Considering the gendered character of citizenship and legal framework in the contemporary nation-state (Yuval-Davies 1997), women activists are relatively freer than men to participate in the anti-draft movement. For men, participation involves a greater risk as they can be legally charged with avoiding military duty.

Further, the significance of the maternal narrative in the SOMO has been explained from the perspective of social movement theory of framing. Caiazza (2002) stresses that the SOMO's great popularity in Russia has been explained by the fact that the group's ideology resonates with the dominant social constructions of women's gender identity in terms of motherhood. This dissertation argues, however, that, even if women are structurally positioned as primary caregivers, which generates predictable emotions, the significance attributed to these emotional responses is a result of cultural and situational processes. As the following sections in this chapter show, the interpretation of maternal emotions in the SOMO movement shifts across various local groups of activists. Moreover, in the SOMO's shared group culture, maternal love is interpreted in a way

---

[63] "I don't know where mothers get their courage. They don't think of danger. When I was looking for my son, I felt my own life made no sense if my son was killed. Why should I live if he was dead?" (Lally 1999: 1)

which allows the activists to *deintegrate* from the official meaning[64] ascribed to the voluntary activism of soldiers' mothers in the arena of military politics.

In the Russian public sphere of the early 2000s, issues of the army and military draft were often incorporated into the nationalist rhetoric. The anti-draft and anti-war groups trying to assert their socio-political agency were therefore sometimes openly harassed in the mass media or co-opted by the official military administration. The SOMO's ability to sustain an independent status in the NGO field depends on the activists' limited access to the material, human and cultural resources accrued from a social position within a disadvantaged constituency. The following section explains how the interpretation of the maternal collective identity and civic agency is related to the various activist groups' different access to resources.

2. Resources and Positioning in the NGO field

The SOMO groups draw a line between themselves and the voluntary groups of soldier's mothers set up within the framework of other formal organizations, such as the government, military agencies and mass media organizations. Some respondents stress that from the very beginning, they strived for a horizontal participatory network able to articulate the mothers' own perspective, and particularly not only the viewpoints of bereaved mothers.

"Own Horizontal" Organization

Ludmila said that although new voluntary organizations including groups of soldiers' mothers, appeared in the late 1980s, they were still organized as top-down and were governed and directed from above. Moreover, their work seemed to have been deliberately disturbed and limited by the power-holders:

> Different organizations of soldiers' mothers were created, both official and unofficial, for example, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers at the House of Military Officers, the

---

[64] See about the hegemonic-ideological discourse about a mother of soldier in chapter 11 of the dissertation.

Committee at the daily newspaper *Smena*. In 1991, the Committee for Social Protection of the Military Servicemen under President and the Committee under the Superior Soviet were set up and included parents of soldiers who had been killed. But every time when I made phone calls and needed something, either nobody was there or nobody cared about the matter of my concern. Parents' organizations were pitted against each other. We even saw once how some members started to punch one another. This atmosphere was created in order to block organizations and to obstruct their impact on larger society. (Interview, November 8, 2000)

Ludmila saw groups of soldiers' mothers in the picket lines, narrating their horrible stories, marching in demonstrations towards the parliament building, sitting in hunger strikes and demanding laws about social benefits for mothers whose sons-soldiers had been killed. At some point, she understood that all these efforts were quite pointless. She realized, for example, that soldiers' mothers were frequently manipulated by politicians, more interested in their personal political careers than in representing the mothers' needs:

At an international human rights conference, I promoted a talk of XXX. She was a mother of a soldier who had been killed in the military barrack in a beastly brutal way; stabbed to death by forks. At the conference she was used as a screen for a parliament deputy XXX who in his turn helped XXX to be appointed a Minister of Defence.

Such mothers of soldiers were facing the hardest conditions. They could not share their sorrow with anybody, because [in the Soviet time] it was not allowed to open the coffin and to tell the truth [about how the soldier had died]. And the women were eating themselves from inside, because they knew the truth [but had to keep silent]. Such a mother could be paid attention, flattered and taken care of. [Imagine that] a woman living in a little village receives a telegram, which says, put on you a black dress and headscarf and come to Moscow. She is brought to Moscow and is allowed to stay in a hotel. She is invited to the party congress and demonstrated like in the theater. At the same time they arrange their own business and political careers behind her back. (Interview, November 8, 2000)

Ludmila was appalled to realize that in the new civic organizations political activists were more often engaged in power struggles than in discussing and formulating political visions:

After the People Fronts, we had the experience of creating political parties. We saw with our own eyes what was going on. We wrote the program of the Democratic Party expressing ideas from the bottom of our hearts. I tried to discuss questions; party is a superstructure over a base, but who constitutes our base? What are we going to do afterwards? They said, we'll see when we are there. It is like the Bolsheviks; first we gain the power and then we'll see. I understood that all these parties and voluntary organizations are still established according to the totalitarian principle of a pyramid, including leaders and subordinates. (Interview, November 8, 2000)

Ludmila's experiences of political activism led her to the idea that mothers could defend their interests only if they create an own "horizontal" organization. She and a couple of her friends decided to create an organization in which "everybody is equal, there are no bosses and no subordinates, but a strict discipline and a common goal" (interview, ibid.). The emergence of an independent organization of soldiers' mothers met mixed reactions from both the already existing voluntary groups of bereaved soldier's mothers and from the military establishment:

> We gave an announcement on the radio – a *social* organization of *Soldiers' Mothers*. We emphasized that we were different [from the other SOMO organizations]. The representatives from the General Staff were the first to pay a visit. The anarchists came with a black flag and tried to give us an image of an aggressive group. There were some scolding articles in the press. XXX [chairwoman for the SOMO NGO cooperating with the military draft commissions] phoned and staged a scandal: what right do you have to call yourselves mothers of soldiers!? What is exactly the percentage of the perished soldiers at your organization!? (Interview, November 8, 2000)

Maternal Framing and Material Resources

The movement has been framed as mothers organizing independently of the military. To sustain an organization costs money, and like many other grassroots groups, the SOMO cope with a reality of material scarcity and have limited access to resources. The organization's first period was particularly difficult. In the beginning, the activists received a small office space with subsided rent, but they lacked technical office equipment. They could only work as volunteers, after working at their ordinary jobs. They were uncertain of how they could help mothers and what methods they should apply in the voluntary work.

> The XX party gave us a room and a telephone. It was a tiny room, which became so crowded that no air was left to breathe. Crowds of people poured in. I remember I was standing in the corner of the room, had got neither a pen nor any experience, felt completely overwhelmed by all these problems. In the beginning, only the broken-hearted women whose sons had been killed would come. Men did not come at all. The young boys did not come.
>
> The atmosphere was depressing, sounds of sobbing, and a constant smell of tranquilizers. It was very hard also because we often did not know what to do and how to help people. We were giving consultations and kept records in our journal. We worked this way for

four years. Then the Soros Foundation helped us, they gave us a computer, a fax and a copying machine. (Interview, November 9, 2000)

The SOMO need to pay rent, materials and equipments, communication costs, and salaries to staff and hired lawyers. They also try to remunerate members who work full-time in the office. Groups of SOMO activists, located in different regions of Russia, have different access to resources. Their resources are also circumscribed through the activists' positioning by gender, socioeconomic status and regional location.

Gender and Socioeconomic Status

Not all members of the organizations can afford to work without pay. Some of them receive pensions, are employed elsewhere, or are supported by their family members, but some depend on the small salaries they can receive for full-time work in the SOMO office. Many respondents' involvement in voluntary work has been prompted by their unemployment. They started to work more regularly in the organization after they had lost their paid jobs. Many women were affected negatively by the post-Soviet transition to a market economy which created a large group of 'new poor' (Silverman and Yanowitch 1997). In a situation when the position of women in the labor market became weaker compared to the state-socialist era, the role of the economic support of sons and husbands, and family in general, has increased. For example, Masha worked in the factory until 1994 and had to quit her job because her wages decreased rapidly to a ridiculously low level. In addition, she was not paid regularly. Thanks to the economic support of her husband and her elder son she was able to become a full-time volunteer in the organization. The respondents sometimes attribute their inability to find job to gender and age. Katia received help from the organization and was able to rescue her son-soldier during the war in Chechnya. She was asked if she could stay and assist the SOMO activists. At that time she was laid off from her job, and she decided to volunteer in the organization (interview, December 28, 2004). The loss of her job made her feel depressed: "at that time I was 45 years old, for a woman it was extremely difficult to find a job." At the time of my research she was supported financially by her husband, son and sister; she said that her family believed that their organization "is doing a necessary job" (ibid.). Zoia was also

unemployed when she came to the organization. Support from her son and husband allows her to work as volunteer. Voluntary work is also a way for many women not to lose their professional competence by applying it in the NGO, which is regarded as a meaningful occupation beyond the scope of paid jobs.

Bourdieu (1986) and Foley et al. (2001) maintain that while an individual may have access to resources in a specific social network, the network as a whole may be embedded in an oppressed constituency.[65] Based on this theory, I analyze how the SOMO activists' access to social capital is related to a positioning of networks of women-activists within the broader system of social stratification. Not only do most of the respondents belong to the category of a relatively poor, but the SOMO social networks as a whole are also placed into a disadvantaged constituency. Young men and parents who go to the SOMO NGOs usually are residents of regional small cities or villages. They tend to enlist in the army because they cannot afford to enroll in higher education, or to bribe officials in the draft board to get an exemption from the army. "The rich people are not interested in our movement. They either bribe their children out of conscription or send them to study abroad. Our army is predominately of a peasant and working-class character," says one of the SOMO activists (interview, January 4, 2005).

In many cases, respondents stress that NGO activists' work fills the void left after the retreat of the welfare state. Many families face tremendous difficulties when their son-soldier becomes injured during the military service and needs expensive medical care that is not provided by the state. Pavla (interview, October 1, 2001) told me about a soldier who lost his arms, legs and an eye after a grenade explosion. His mother wrote a letter to the SOMO asking for advice about how she could cope with situation. The one-time subsidy of 75 000 rubles offered by Ministry of Defence was not enough to pay for prosthesis. She had to quit her job because according to the existing legal framework, she received only a ten-day-leave for taking care of her son. The activists unsuccessfully

---

[65] Social capital is linked to a possession of a network of relationships of mutual acquaintance, recognition and undertaking obligation to act in accordance to certain norms and rules (Bourdieu 1986: 248-249). The extent to which an individual is empowered by participation in the social network depends firstly on the structure of the network itself and the individual's position within it. It depends secondly, on the social location of the entire network within the broader socioeconomic context, which shapes the ways in which specific networks link or do not link their members to resources (Foley et al. 2001: 276-277).

sought financial aid from the Red Cross, banks, and private firms. After the soldier's story was broadcast on television and published in the press, several individuals and organizations donated money for the prosthesis. Pavla (ibid.) stresses that existing bureaucratic framework is poorly adjusted to such situations:

> We have thousands of such mothers who ask us for help. They risk to get fired from their job. In principle, they can receive a four-month-leave for taking care of a handicapped relative, but to receive a formal status of a handicapped often takes a very long time.

External Funding

It is particularly difficult for the human rights SOMO NGOs to find domestic sponsors due to the controversial character of their anti-draft movement:

> The problem is that many other organizations are able to secure funding inside the country but we cannot. Those who have money are not interested in helping us. They do not have problems with their sons, and they are not interested in the problems of the army. They can send their sons to the Great Britain to study and let them stay there permanently, no problems! On the other hand, to help us means for them to ruin their relationships with the official authorities. (Interview, January 4, 2005)

The SOMO groups, like some other human rights and women's organizations are therefore dependent on funding they can receive from Western donors. They thus have to adjust to the 'social life of projects' (Sampson 1996) defined according to the priorities of various Western foundations. [66] They try to learn to write project applications. The salaries to the unemployed activists which can be secured via funding from the international sources are still meager and irregular.

> We have to adjust to those goals which might be funded by the foundations. We need to think how to write about our work in such a way that they can understand it. They are delighted to find money for us but we also need to help them. It is really a hard work.
>
> If salaries are built into the project, it usually includes one or two employee positions. For example, we have now three salaries in a German project, each $200 a month. In sum, we receive 600$ US and split them between those who work here every day because they do not have any other possibilities to get a work elsewhere. But when the project grant comes to an end, it is the end of funding, and it is like adieu! We do not have any salaries. We do

---

[66] The need of the Russian NGO activists to adjust to the Western donors' priorities has been discussed in chapters 6 and 8 of this dissertation.

not collect membership fees, what kind of fees we can talk about anyway!? (Interview, September 28, 2001)

Funding from abroad has become an indispensable resource for facilitating the consolidation of the movement. The women were able to run many inter-organizational training seminars, learn more about the legal system and the functioning of the courts, and hold their congresses. "It meant glasnost and it gave us a possibility to gather people," says Ludmila (interview, January 4, 2005). The activists realize, however, that they are less prioritized within the Western politics of sponsorship partly due to their involvement in the sphere of military affairs and partly due to the fluctuating character of the international political market:

> Before the Chechnya war nobody wanted to help us and we were not in contact with anybody. Once we tried to make something about it and even somehow put together a project application, but we did not understand at that time that you need to have special skills for writing an application, which we did not have. They did not even reply to us.
>
> Later on, many sponsors said to us that they could not help us, because "it is your inter-state problem." Certainly, the military sphere is an especially tender spot for every state. However, the outbursts of our energy during the First Chechnya war persuaded them somehow, and so they started helping us. But still, I can tell you we are sitting on the hungry ration. When we make a project together with the Centre for the Human Rights it is another thing, but our own particular theme does not suit their priorities. (Interview, January 4, 2005)

The tendency to be overlooked by Western sponsors increased when the priorities at the international NGOs lending market shifted after the terrorist attack on the US in 2001. In the early 2000s, the activists accepted grants offered by the former Russian financial oligarch in exile Boris Berezovsky, whom many Russians perceived as a political opponent of Putin's regime. The activists were not interested in the political motivations behind Berezovsky's charity activities; they were happy to receive the financial means for hiring lawyers to represent the aggrieved soldiers' interests in the legal court.

Groups of the SOMO that are located in the big cities in the European part of Russia and which include women-intelligentsia with foreign language skills are in a more privileged position compared to regional groups and groups whose members are mainly women from working-class background.

Maternal Frame and Regional Differences

The SOMO's collective identity is shaped through multiple interpretative frames of different groups located in big cities and various regional centers. The maternal framing in different SOMO groups varies depending on their location on Russia's uneven socio-economic map, which is divided into a 'center' of more prosperous European big cities and a 'periphery' of disadvantaged regional cities and rural areas. The way in which the various groups deploy interpretative schemes is illuminated in the stenographic materials of two congresses of activists, held in 2000 and 2002 and attended by around a hundred representatives of various SOMO groups.

Differences between the activists' groups are related to the local conditions in the regions including different ways of organizing the relationship with the local administration. Activists' personal biographies are also an important factor. While groups in the big cities include/represent often mothers of young men who are able to obtain exemption from military duty, regional groups include/represent bereaved mothers or mothers of sons who are fulfilling their military service. Group ideology is another difference. Regional groups tend to focus more on the pragmatic social issues such as social benefits and entitlements of retired soldiers. Groups in the big cities (including often representatives of the former Soviet intelligentsia) are more interested in developing the movement's anti-militarist and anti-draft orientation.

In the regions suffering economic decay, young men in the draftee age are often unemployed or unable to enroll in tertiary educational institutions. In the regional organizations, activists stress that their local conditions, differ from those of the capital city and St. Petersburg; many mothers of large families cannot afford pay for their sons' professional education. These families view military service as a possible way out of poverty and unemployment; young draftees hope to be able to get professional training, they want to stay in the army on a contract after the end of the mandatory service and earn money. They agree to serve in the 'hot spot' of the Northern Caucuses. The regional SOMO groups seek to establish a working cooperation with the local governments and to protect the interests of these families. They demand that the state provides medical treatment, jobs and housing to the retired soldiers and war veterans. Some groups try to help soldiers to receive medical rehabilitation after retirement or so called "combat

money" which is often not paid fully or on time (The Third International Congress, 2002: 60). While some of these organizations have been established with support from the local administration and branches of the Communist Party others were not:

> Our committee has existed from 1989. We work on the voluntary basis, without any financial support. First, everyone donated a ruble each and we bought envelopes, paper and pens, it was organized by the district committee of the Communist Party. When a military unit was stationed in our town, we checked how soldiers were fed, clothed, and washed. We celebrated the boys' birthdays. We were fifteen or twenty persons, who brought their own food; meat, salads, ham. We arranged send-offs of every soldier when he was recruited in the army. We established a Day of a Draftee; it was actually our initiative. But the new administration does not support us at all; they even do not help us with the office rent. Now, my elder son served in Chechnya, but none of the soldiers in our region received "combat" money. The boys do not have jobs and do not enjoy any social benefits, they got nothing. (The Third International Congress, 2002: 60)

This interpretation of the SOMO objective clashes with the anti-war position of other groups. At the Congress, leaders of many groups called for a more principled anti-militarist standpoint among the SOMO. They criticized mothers who let their sons be recruited to the military forces that were participating in the operations in Chechnya. For example, one organization received a letter from a mother who wrote that because their family was very poor her only son enlisted in army and volunteered to go to Chechnya in order to earn money. In the army he became prosecuted and jailed because he stole food. Now his mother was begging the SOMO to help her to extract the money that her son had earned from the military authorities. While the group was thinking of some plan to help the woman, the leader decided that they should not reply her request:

> My colleagues were shocked by my decision. But at that moment I realized that as long as we help them to receive the so called "combat" money and to obtain social benefits and privileges – they will continue to enlist in the army and continue to serve in Chechnya. We, women, who during these ten years accumulated much larger experience than any little mother, have to explain them that to participate in a war on the territory of your own state is a disgrace. We are simple Russian women and we should stop to pretend that we represent some kind of elite of progressive women. We should not write statements and resolutions of Congress, but a letter of a mother, a letter from one mother to another mother and to explain that she must foster a son who refuses to earn money through destroying other families and places of origin. (The Third International Congress, 2002: 79)

Differing interpretations of the movement's goals and collective identity of the SOMO lead to internal divisions among activists. The leader of the Committee admits that they cannot strive to achieve some formal unity in the movement:

> We cannot cooperate with the organizations which take money from parents and say: "It is not to me, but I need to pay a bribe to the officer." We cannot cooperate with the organizations which say: "Everything is all right. Our soldiers serve in good conditions. We have been there and brought them everything they need. We are not against the conscription – it's all right if it continues to go on." We will never have the same strategy as them. So we can unfortunately not say that we are united. (The Second International Congress, 2000: 53)

3. The "Others:" The Little Mother and the Military

The opportunity to create an organization and to have access to a free zone of 'home space' (Bhabha 1994) provides the opportunity to create a new ideology, emotional rules and transforming the collective identity of a soldier's mother. As explained in chapter 10, the military administration possesses symbolic power and resources, which allow it to impose a certain definition of the role of women in voluntary organizations. As a result of interpretative and emotional work in the SOMO, the conventional definition of collective identity of a mother-activist in the state military field is challenged by constructing the 'Little mother' as the "Other" of the movement. As the following section shows, activists' self-understanding is related to "cognitive-moral liberation" (Flam 2000: 74), experienced as a movement from the 'kitchen into politics.'

Moving "from the Kitchen into Politics"

Many respondents described how their maternal self-identity underwent a transformation when they became members of the NGO and learned about the human rights ideology. The maternal identity can frequently be empowering in interactions with the military. At the same time, it is more often associated with a marginalized position in a context as women tend to be excluded from actively participating in the social-political sphere. Some

respondents described how they realized that their own consciousness has changed and that they try to raise political awareness of mothers-non-activists. This kind of narratives shows that the women have recognized their subjugated position as a result of their involvement in the NGO.

Masha stated that she was confused, frustrated and felt lonely when her son-solder was sent to the 'hot spot.' She was unable to help him and stated that at that moment of her life she felt like "just a little mother" (*mamochka*). She was 35 years old, "too young to be involved in politics, especially for a woman who spent her whole life in the kitchen" (interview, September 28, 2001). She admits that she "lacked experience, knowledge, and resolution" (ibid.). Her feelings of confusion and powerlessness, however, turned into a sense of pride and self-assertion when she became a member of the SOMO Committee.

'Little mothers' is also how the activists slightly sarcastically call the mothers of soldier who show up at their organizations, often sick with worry, weeping and barely receptive to the activists' ideology of empowerment. Nina said that she understands well how those women, who come to the meeting at the SOMO NGO for the first time, feel: "They do not understand much of what is said here. It is exactly the way I felt when I came here; I was in a hurry and wanted only to get an answer to one little concrete question" (interview, November 20, 2000). The activists thus use a slightly ironic notion of 'little mother' to try to *deintegrate* their self-understanding from the conventional images of women as lacking political awareness and the mothers of soldiers as consumed by feelings of grief. They nevertheless also express empathetic understanding of other women.

The Soviet Legacy and Compliant Femininity

According to activists, the expression 'little mother' is also sometimes used by members of the military who are annoyed by mothers who interfere in the draftees' routine medical check-ups in the military commission: "Little mother, leave the room please!" (Interview, November 28, 2000). In the activists' vocabulary, 'little mother' is more likely to signify women's naïve attitudes toward the representatives of the military institutions, the official political propaganda, and their inability to have an opinion independent from their

husbands, who often argue that their son should fulfill military duty. According to activists, such women continue the Soviet mentality by embodying a blind unreflective loyalty to the regime:

> These people are not responsible and reasonable … In an idiotic manner they are prepared to hurt their own child for the sake of the so called public good [embodied] by the state. It is like in this song, … "people and Party are united," which means that we need to make sacrifices for the defense of the homeland. This is a song in the spirit of the Stalin times.

> The young people understand it all very well and do not trust anybody blindly. But these little mothers come here in a flock: oh, the military commissar told me that he will not be sent anywhere [to the zone of military operations], the unit commander promised me!

> We try to beat out of them this infantilism already at the stage of the military draft. We try to make them to realize that, firstly, the country is involved in war, secondly, that besides a military commissar there exists a law and other things which matter; and finally, that they should not pay bribes to anybody! (Interview, January 23, 2003)

These quotes illustrate a strategy of *breaching* (Benski 2005: 59), that is, creating the effect of 'disaffection' with the dominant cultural norms and taken-for-granted loyalty to the state (Flam 2005: 21). By articulating these symbolic meanings they also reject the historical position of "inert mother of nationhood" (Gal 1997: 43).

Some women's inability to take an active political stance from the grassroots' perspective is another sign of a continued Soviet mentality which the activists reject. They are disappointed by the fact that particularly in the beginning of their movement, many people turned to them as to official agency. They dropped by and wondered "whom should I leave my application to?" (Interview, October 28, 2000). Many women who come to the organization do not believe that the members are grassroots activists who mobilize by their own efforts. The respondents are appalled by this misunderstanding:

> I tell them, girls, we are mothers just like you. We are a voluntary organization! They look at me for a few seconds and say: No, you can not have such a power if the government does not support you! (Laughing). (Interview, December 28, 2004)

Many times people even tried to accuse the SOMO activists of their mistreatment by the local draft boards. The activists interpret such attitudes as a Soviet legacy of the passive reliance on the state, they call it *sovok* ('dustpan' - a denigrating metaphor for a Soviet person) and *izhdivenshchetvo* ('parasitic smugness'). The inability to distinguish between organizations set up by citizens from those supported by the official structures, is

a result of the Soviet legacy, which the activists discuss at the seminars at the School of Human Rights.

Other aspects which seem to prevent non-activist women from getting involved in voluntary organizations in the post-Soviet society include the reemerging patriarchal ideas that woman's place is at home:

> Sometimes some mothers volunteer to work in the organization. But they stay only until their child gets the military card. Then they have their own matters to take care of even if they do not work. I would tell them, try to use this occasion to realize yourself somehow! I am not myself a person who can stand being a housewife. But many women enjoy that. They get busy with husband, child and a cat. In a sense, I can understand them, how much can we earn here? 3000 ruble sometimes, but not always. Still, I cannot stay at home, I just feel so useless, both to myself and to other people. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

The movement does, however, recruit new members. The activists describe this process as growing grass – "slow, quiet, but steady and persistent" (participant observation, field notes):

> It is necessary that a plant grows… our organizations grow from below. We cannot just send somebody to the regions. We can ask some little mother, please help us. If she wants she will help but if she doesn't, she won't. They decide it themselves. But people do join [the movement], and they are terrific people! (Interview, January 23, 2003)

Opposing the Military's Maternal Frame

A symbolic link between the struggle for peace and woman/mother is central in the articulation of the SOMO's protest against the current military policy:

> In *Krasnaia Zvezda*[67] they either state that we fight against international terrorism or deny the fact that a war is going on in Chechnya. Anyway, nobody talks about peace. But we want peace. This is our principle position, as mothers of soldier, as mothers in general and as women. (Interview, January 4, 2005)

The activists admit that they apply the symbol of mother strategically: "The military said it to us themselves: You are using the high status of motherhood. Yes, it is right, we do! But actually we wish to accomplish something else" (interview, January 23, 2003). The activists try to oppose the military's definition of a maternal organization.

---

[67] A newspaper of the Ministry of Defense.

The SOMO activists stress that in order to protect the interests of soldiers they had to carry out many functions which actually belong to the realm of the state:

> By the initiative of the regional governor, the military draft committees send the soldiers who return from the military zone to our organization. In our region, those who served in the zone of local conflicts are entitled to some social benefits. When they came to us, we check their documents and military cards to make sure that their injuries and participation in the military operations are registered. In eighty percent of cases, they are not written down in the documents! Actually, it is not our work, but we must help children, we explain that it is important for them. It seems that as social organizations we substitute the work of the state organizations. We must make them do their jobs properly. (The Second International Congress, 2000: 109)

The activists strive to cooperate with the military and local governments to be able to help the soldiers. As a result they perform the tasks which contribute to positioning women-activists as playing secondary roles in state politics. The activists are, however, aware that the voluntary work of Soldiers' Mothers organizations is partly exploited by the local administrations, which often try to give them the responsibility of responding to citizens' complaints and dealing with complicated individual cases. Indirectly, the indispensable role of the activists is recognized in this way.

> We have taught our colleagues, if the local officials refuse to assist you, tell them, all right, tomorrow, I will close the office and send all people to you. Then they come immediately with apologies and say, you misunderstood me, and so on. No doubt that they need us. (Interview, January 23, 2003)

At the same time, the activists from organizations in the large cities usually try to dismiss attempts to take control over their organizations. At the Congress, a chairwoman wants to make clear that representatives of the military authorities should not expect them to fulfill 'compassionate (*zhalostlivyj*) female work,' although the activists never refuse to help soldiers and their families. She stresses that they are an independent organization which does not take orders from the military:

> I want to stress *that we do not owe anything to anybody*. We *ourselves*[68] started to do this voluntary work in order to help our children and grandchildren. Therefore, only those who work here can demand something from the committees of soldiers' mother. I understand that it is very tempting to shift off on women's voluntary organizations, questions of compassionate help to those people whose sufferings can be blamed on the state. Of

---

[68] Emphasis in the original text.

course we are helping and will continue to help them. But I wish that not all responsibility is put only on us. (The Third International Congress, 2002: 38)

The activists admit that even if they are able to help many families of soldiers, in the conditions of the existent political system it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to achieve broader goals beyond urgent individual complaints. The symbol of Ambulance, central in Masha's maternal narrative about the activist identity, quoted in the beginning of this chapter, gains another meaning in Galia's reflections about constraints and limits they experience in their movement. She stresses that the official authorities try to define their goals in terms of a routine practical work and prevent them from articulating political goals:

> In this situation, they set an absolute limit for us: You may work with the individual complaints. And we work with them very efficiently, and we get along with the authorities, we can resolve any individual complaints. But it does not change anything. With every new draft, new complaints come. Some time ago, we could pressure the Duma to adopt amnesty [for soldiers-runaways] or an amendment to the law. But now, they have cut our wings. We became a kind of Ambulance, but our strategic goal actually is to abolish the conscription system. (Interview, January 4, 2005)

Summary

This chapter has shown that the goals, values, and strategies of SOMO activism are interpreted and negotiated among and within the heterogeneous groups of activists with reference to the troubled experiences of mothering a son-soldier within a disadvantaged constituency. These experiences are narrated from a gender and class position within a context of economic scarcity, dependency on uncertain sources of external funding and the welfare state's retreat. Maternal love to one's child is an important empowering cultural resource, and is crucial for the activists to gain acknowledgment and support in the broader society. At the same time, the symbol of loyal soldier's mother is imposed through dominant discursive practices in the state military arena. The SOMO movement is expected not only to collaborate with the authorities, but also to stay away from independent action. The SOMO are partly aware of the oppressive conditions in which they act. Constructing 'little mother' as the "Other," the movement disidentifies from the compliant femininity, implied by the ideological-hegemonic construction of motherhood in the state military discourse.

Chapter 13

Emotional Work in the Human Rights Community

One afternoon in the late fall of 2000, a small group of women, who had just attended a workshop "School of the Rights: Save Your Son," organized by the human rights voluntary organization *Soldiers' Mothers*, was standing in the street outside the building. They seemed to be very upset and talked intensely. One of them, with marks of tears on her face, was nervously smoking. She suddenly addressed me when I was passing by, leaving after a day of fieldwork in this NGO:
– Tell me, what shall I do? We received a letter from the military committee. They want to draft my son. But he is my only son! Should I hide him at my relatives' in the countryside!?

(Participant observation notes, November 2000)

Introduction

The previous chapter showed that the SOMO's maternal frame and new rules of feeling in the field of military draft politics are interrelated with the activists' social positioning through gender, socio-economic status, and center-periphery location. This chapter examines the way in which the SOMO oppositional sub-universe of meaning is produced and sustained with a focus on the human rights framing and emotional work associated with it.

The SOMO's identity of human rights advocates is shaped in the context of the official authorities' benign, hostile or degrading attitudes toward their movement, in a society characterized by widespread lawlessness, chaos, and political violence. One set of questions examined is: How does the SOMO activists' shared interpretative schema grow out of their narratives about human rights, and civil society? How have their strategies come to include the efforts to build the 'rule of law' from below? What role is played by symbols referring to the collective memory of the Soviet dissidents' high moral ground and exemplary deeds and how is it incorporated in the human rights frame? How is the 'alternative' symbolic reality created and maintained through interactions with the trans-/national human rights groups and routine storytelling? How do feelings of solidarity and confidence allow the SOMO activists to manage anxiety and fear?

The second set of questions is: How do the SOMO activists try to help their constituency and simultaneously to transform the collective identity of soldiers' mothers? How do routine interactions, including offering legal help and experiences of self-expansion, help to maintain solidarity with the larger community of mothers? What are the limits of solidarity, due to differences in ideologies and personal lifestyles? How are mothers-non-activists encouraged to overcome demobilizing feelings of resignation and cynicism and to learn to feel solidarity, anger, and pride for being able to resist injustice directed against their sons?

1. The Sub-Universe of the Human Rights Community

The construction of 'alternative' symbolic reality and strategies in the SOMO movement are partially the outcome of *emotional and cognitive-organizational* processes (see Flam 2000: 71). These processes allow the activists produce and protect their sub-cultural values, beliefs and self-images associated with human rights ideology. They accomplish a cognitive-emotional liberation, which "involves detaching loyalties and other positive emotions from the institutions and organizations to which they were hitherto attached" (Flam 2005: 31). As a result of such emotional liberation, their old emotional attachments fade and new emotional bonds are constructed. Individuals become more open to joining like-minded individuals in the social movements. This process includes working on new obligatory rules of feeling among the participants. In this chapter I show that 'emotional work' (Hochschild 1979) in the SOMO's practices is both an unintended effect of its shared group culture and the result of more conscious methods developed by the activists.

Confidence and Solidarity

The SOMO civic groups were created during the rise of the democratic movement when many former Soviet dissidents became leaders of the new human rights organizations. Establishing social ties with them and learning their philosophy and methods of anti-

authoritarian struggle, helped to shape the SOMO's ideology and repertoire of actions. It also instilled a stronger sense of collective power:

> When we started to work in 1989, we purchased the brochures the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was like the baton passed on by the Dissidents: Here is a document and you [the government] have ratified it, so let us work according to it. At that time XX played a great role in the movement. When he was released and came back from detention, he saw that the new organizations emerged, and because he knew members in the XX personally, he tried to help us to mutually coordinate our work, he phoned everyone and kept us informed posted. It meant obviously a great deal at that moment that we emerged as a united coalition, not just as some isolated separate groups. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

The SOMO borrowed from the book of a Soviet dissident[69] a tactic of civil disobedience by sending many official letters of complaint demanding constitutional rights (interview, November 8, 2000). Some of the activists became acquainted with the human rights ideology through their own participation in the democratic movements in the late 1980s. The new interpretive lens and types of social relationships are incorporated into respondents' autobiographic narratives. By routine storytelling, activists make the new social relationships and symbols into a common sense of their oppositional symbolic-cognitive reality. At the same time, a new emotion culture – shared norms about appropriate feelings - is developed. One example of how the activists internalize the norms of their sub-culture is emphasizing that one feels profoundly ashamed after failing to behave in the 'right' way. Shame is a self-control mechanism, which we feel when we believe that we fail to live up to certain norms and standards (Flam 2005: 22).

For example, Ekaterina told in the interview that she had been interested in social activism since her adolescence. In her youth, she had learned about the Soviet dissidents through the friends of her family, whose parents were killed during the Stalinist terror in 1937. The friends of her family were members of an underground youth group, which signed the protest statement against the repressive action of the Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia in 1968. In the 1980s, their friends got killed in a car accident, supposedly arranged by the Soviet security police. She says that it was a tremendous shock for her. She admits that she always knew that something was "wrong" with the Soviet system:

---

[69] *And the Wind Will Return* by Vladimir Bukovsky. Bukovsky lives in Great Britain, Cambridge since 1976 but became an important figure in the democratic political groups in Russia in the 1990-2000.

I was not apolitical […] I wanted to know what was going on. I always listened to the 'enemy' radio.[70] But at the same time I was an active *Komsomol* member and in principle I was living within that system. I cannot say that I stood up [and protested] somewhere in the square. I am still ashamed that I did not do that. I knew about Afghanistan, I understood that we were not defending our interests there and that the war was a crime. I was 22 or 23 years old then and I could have expressed a critical opinion in the public forum. (Interview, November 9, 2000)

In the interview, Ekaterina assesses her own way of behaving in the past from the perspective of her current moral and cultural norms developed through her participation in the anti-militarist movement. It reflects her process of emotional-cognitive liberation – although she was 'living in the system' she started her deintegration by withdrawing her emotional attachments to its norms and values.

There is a cyclical relationship between the culture and micro-structure of social interactions. The SOMO sub-cultural norms and rules of feelings create new opportunities for interactions with Russian and international human rights advocacy groups; beliefs and rules of feeling are internalized and reinforced through these types of interactions and established social/organizational ties. The SOMO have established contacts with the Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. For example, during the first war in Chechnya in 1995, the SOMO helped many soldiers' mothers to travel to Chechnya to bring back their sons. Some of the SOMO and the Chechen women's groups were invited to the UN session to make a so called "independent presentation" about the conditions of human rights in Russia (interview, November 9, 2000). They first listened to the Russian government's official report and then presented their own report, photos, and other documents about the war. The SOMO had prepared the materials and the report in cooperation with other human rights NGOs in Russia. Their picture of reality was obviously different from the presented official viewpoint: "When blood was flowing like water in Chechnya, the Minister of Justice stood and told that in Russia we have achieved harmony in relations between different ethnic groups" (interview, ibid.). The "we" of the movement is produced and associated with revealing what they see as a truth and therefore felt instilled with a higher morality than their opponents.

---

[70] The Soviet citizens were forbidden to listen to the critical anti-Soviet-oriented radio station Voice of America.

The activists attended training seminars arranged for the NGO members where they acquired both the new organizational skills and learn about the human rights philosophy. For example, one of the respondents went to Warsaw in Poland for two weeks to attend workshops at the Human Rights School run by a well-known activist Mark Novitsky. She says that it helped her to become more confident about her sense of belonging in the movement. She felt a part of a larger international human rights movement, not only a member of a relatively isolated group of women, frequently intimidated by the official authorities.

> I became convinced that we have a lot in common with the philosophy of human rights. How we talk about these things at our School of Rights is similar to how the matter is treated at the Helsinki Foundation. It gave me more confidence. (Interview, April 20, 2001)

Activists feel emotional energy when they participate in the movements' rituals such as international conferences and workshops. A sense of confidence and solidarity in the SOMO are produced through routine exchanges of practical knowledge among the Russian and international human rights organizations. On one occasion, I attended and taped a meeting between the SOMO leaders and a representative for the Norwegian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights. It took place during the second war in Chechnya and B. was a member of the official group from Norway which was planning to go to Ingushetia in the Northern Caucuses to meet with refugees, local authorities, and NGOs. He came to the SOMO to receive first hand information about the situation in the Northern Caucuses from their perspective.

The way in which the participants talked in a relatively informal manner, sometimes rapidly exchanging brief remarks and finishing one another's sentences produced a feeling of solidarity at the meeting. Norwegians spoke in English with one of the SOMO leaders. She in her turn translated her colleague's answers into English. As they exchanged views on the factual situation, they simultaneously negotiated their interpretation of the meaning of certain events:

> B.: Have you been during those years in contact with someone who is a terrorist or whatever you call it, who is fighting on the Chechen side?
> Olga: You cannot look at the Chechen people through the lens of two colors – terrorist or not.
> B.: No, but I do not want to use those expressions.

> Olga: We cannot even look at them as 'fighters' or 'non-fighters.' I remember during the first war one of the women said to me: Olga, I know your position and I know that you are with us and I like you very much, but you are my enemy. And I said, and it was really my feeling, that I understood her. After what happened to them, I would feel in the same way.
> B.: Ok. (Meeting, September 28, 2001)

When the discussion concerns matters that B. and the SOMO members do not understand in the same way, laughter is a way to diffuse embarrassment generated by diverse beliefs and to maintain a sense of solidarity among the activists. For example, responding to B.'s question about the SOMO statistics on the human losses during the war, Olga states that the official statistics underreport the number of the human losses by at least two and half times.

> B.: Do you have any idea of how they are dating this statistics?
> Olga: How they are counting the losses? If there are bodies after the military operation, they are counted. But those who have disappeared are not counted.
> B.: so there are … missing soldiers?
> Olga: a soldier who has disappeared is neither counted as killed nor as missing, he is just a criminal.
> B.: (silence)
> Anna: (laughing)
> Olga: (smiling): He is a criminal, officially he is a criminal. And nobody sends documents to search for these soldiers, because they are just criminals. Neither those who are wounded and die afterwards in the hospitals, are counted as the losses. They just have not returned. We have many such examples on how the level of the human losses is made look lower. We can give you our written report on this matter. (Ibid.)

The laughter in this conversation seems inexplicable and absolutely inappropriate unless it is understood as a way of diffusing shame/embarrassment (see Summers-Effler 2005: 144), which arises due to the Norwegians' difficulty to understand what the SOMO activists mean. At other moments during the meeting, laughter also serves to confirm the common interpretative schemes of the speakers:

> B.: How do you see your organization treated by the government or maybe more precisely, by the military structures?
> Olga: Our organization is not treated by the government at all. (Laughter)
> B.: Ok. (Ibid.)

In a different way, a broader feeling of solidarity among the SOMO activists is produced through the powerful image of the movement as able to rise above the 'narrow' political issues and presenting an Appeal to the Government:

Dear female friends, dear eternal soldiers' mothers! I say eternal, because some of us lost a child, others are devoted permanently to the work with soldiers. Chechnya is a horrible disaster, for all of us. Let us talk about those boys who will, with God's help, go through this slaughter-house and survive. The war will follow them the rest of their lives. They will continue to fight, when they are asleep, because their mental health is broken. Therefore, let us appeal to the Government. They may call it whatever they want: a war, a conflict, or fight against the bandits. But they should establish a social status of military servicemen who participate in this slaughter-house. A child who returns from war should be protected. (The Second International Congress, 2000: 105)

Managing Fear among the Activists

Members of the human rights movement are aware that they live with a constantly lurking danger of repression and physical assault:

Some people use words carelessly saying, in our civil society and so on … but in reality we do not have any civil society, none! But we want to build it, we are dreaming of the time when it will exist and we lay our brick in the foundation of this civil society. And we understand that somebody has to carry out a work which is ungrateful and messy, because we know that murders happen and heard about threats [against us]… We see that some people who actually have a good relationship with us do not want to get involved and they avoid to mention our name publicly, because … you know, God protects those who watch out for themselves. (Interview,[71] April 19, 2001)

In the very beginning, we undertook consciously a tactic of keeping a low profile; we realized what a dangerous place we were poking our noses into. Towards the state officials, we played a role of fool-girls: we know nothing, we can nothing. (Interview, November 8, 2000)

The activists have to manage anxiety and fear of verbal or physical assault on a daily basis. As explained in sociology of emotions, the social superior expresses anger in order to make people in inferior positions obey the established social rules (Flam 2005). In the interviews, the SOMO activist told about experiences of confrontation with anger and hatred openly expressed towards them by the military or the police. For example, in the late 1980s during the perestroika Ekaterina joined the democratic movement People Front. She stood in the pickets, marched in the demonstrations, and helped the non-Communist candidates to run election campaigns. Once she was arrested by the police and was prosecuted for participating in the 'unsanctioned' demonstration. She was kept many hours at the police station. When she was going to be interrogated, one of the policemen whispered to her that she should demand to be represented by a lawyer. The chief

---

[71] Interview with a female member in the human rights organization Civic Watch.

policeman became furious, swore and shouted at her: "You want democracy! I'll show you a democracy!" (Interview, November 9, 2000). Ekaterina stresses that at that time she did not know much about her rights; if it would have happened to her now when she is a NGO activist, she would not feel so afraid and powerless as she did then. Her present colleague Olesia in the SOMO, who was then a member in the human rights movement showed up at her trial to speak in her favor, although they did not know each other personally at that time.

This story not only illustrates and reproduces the feeling of solidarity in the movement. It is also an example of the activists' belief in the importance of "knowing your rights" and the ability to protect one's rights through the legal system. These notions are important symbols in the SOMO's shared culture. Routine storytelling about applying legal methods in their daily work with the soldiers also highlights how references to the law might protect the activists from the verbal assault by the military. For example, Sveta is an unemployed lawyer who volunteers in the SOMO organization. Although she stresses that the activists have established good working contacts with many commanders of the military units, she nevertheless talks about her experience of being assaulted when she was helping one illegally drafted soldier to be retired from his military unit:

> When I had to go to the military unit and to talk with them, I realized that it is not possible to talk to these people in the normal human way. They scream, yell at you, and try to prove something … I realized that with these people … you can only communicate through the law. I went then to the public prosecutor and obtained the official protest from him. With this protest in the hand I returned to the unit, and … easy and quite, they even drove the child to the gate by car and let him go outside the territory of the unit.
> When they see that I grasp quickly how to apply the law, they won't mess with me. Usually, they are then willing to compromise, not letting it lead to a legal action. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

The "law" works almost magically in this story. Telling these stories has the unintended effect of mitigating the SOMO activists' fear and anxiety. It also gives weight and meaning to the main symbols such as the "law" and "legal way," which is the basis for a shared group culture. A feeling of enthusiasm in the movement is thus produced and sustained.

At their mass meetings, some activists advocate the need to study the laws and to apply them in the daily work of mothers-activists as the means to win respect and compliance from the military:

> Juridical ignorance causes the rude behavior of the military who do not respect the Committees of Soldiers' Mothers as partners with whom they work in the normal way. But if we work at protecting the rights through the legal courts, we *receive respect* and can be considered as [legitimate] organization. (The Second International Congress, 2000: 110)

The SOMO activists also manage their fear and anxiety more consciously. Laughter plays important role in the movements (Flam 2005: 29; Goodwin and Plaff 2001). Natasha talks about frightening experiences of being the object of the hostile attitudes and nationalist propaganda in society and the methods of managing this feeling. At the human rights NGO workshop she learned how the Polish *Solidarnost* movement used ironic laughter and dramatic effects as fear-management devices:

> There are some fearful words signifying a category into which you are terrified of being positioned. For example, they call us the "fifth column" or there is a notion of "Chechen terrorist." Those are really frightening words! God save, if you are stigmatized by them. The activists of the Polish Solidarity used to make special t-shirts on which such words were written: for example, Chechen terrorist. People wore these t-shirts and went around in the city. (Interview, April 20, 2001)

The SOMO draw on the analogous methods with elements of humor and 'role play' in their own training seminars organized for the mothers and fathers of potential conscripts to help them to mitigate their fear of police and the military drafting board.

Recognizing that one is a part of the transnational human rights movement is an important aspect in the construction of the SOMO's collective identity. It helps to feel that they have high social status in a certain milieu, which in turn generates a sense of pride among the activists. At the same time, they explicitly establish an important rule of feeling - which is that one refuses to feel intimidated, suppressed, and silenced:

> My viewpoint is that there are people with heightened sensitivity for social justice - what Lev Gumilev[72] called 'passionaries.' When they apply this feeling not only to themselves but also to other people and when they are ready to help other people – they are human rights advocates. In 1998, I attended the World Congress on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration on Human Rights. …I felt that we all are united by a common feeling that we want that everything done fairly. When I came back, I said, guys, we do it all right. At the Congress I heard a lot of phrases like "our government does not hear us, our authorities do not recognize us, we cannot accomplish this and that." But in our community, it is not accepted just to complain. If you are not heard, it means that you cannot make yourself

---

[72] Lev Gumilev (1912 - 1992) is dissident historian, geographer, and ethnographer in the Soviet Union. His "passion" theory is concerned with the human ability to sacrifice for the sake of ideological purposes.

heard, if you cannot get things done, it means that you do not use the right methods, if you do not manage it on your own, ask for help. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

The fear is also managed as a result of socialization into the role of human rights advocate through internalizing the movement's values and norms. For example, Irina sees her role of a human rights activist as educating people about the risks of political passivity and ignorance in the Russian society. At the interview, she described vividly those risks and drew a picture on a sheet of paper:

There is Moloch which devours our dear children, and here are people who like an obedient flock move into the jaws of Moloch. I feel myself like a Guide. I tell people, do not go there, but here goes a path leading to the sun and happiness. Some people actually come here and maybe a large number of them do. You see, here is a nice grass-plot with flowers, they stay there. But if you take one step further, you bump into the barbed wire surrounding this place. This is how things are in our state: If you say something too daring, you will be silenced. Very few people move further and come over the wire. It is not easy; most of us choose to stay in a place between the Moloch and the barbed wire. (Interview, April 20, 2001)

The significance of the transnational human rights community for the SOMO is illustrated by the role the Western mass media play in their movement. In many cases, they are crucial for the ability of the Russian activists to make their critical voices heard by audiences of the domestic mainstream mass media. For example, when some of the SOMO organizations were accused by a Duma deputy of "working for Western money" against Russian interests and attacked in the popular Russian newspaper (see chapter 7 in this dissertation), a response in favor of the activists appeared in the French newspaper Le Monde (interview, January 23, 2003). The SOMO's relationship with Russian journalists is complicated. For example, Masha (interview, ibid.) stated that when they first started their movement during the perestroika only foreign journalist interviewed and wrote about them. The largest Russian commercial newspaper *Kommersant* and others subsequently started to publish materials with reference to them as a source of information. In this way, "somehow some kind of a pressure takes place." For a long time, however, the journalists treated the soldiers' mothers as "the marginal simple women (*baby*)" (ibid.) and did not recognize them as a serious political actor. This situation seemed started to change after the Civic Forum in the fall of 2001:

> After the Civic Forum, they started to accept that we also have no less right to discuss the military reform than the politicians and the militaries do. It is essential that the journalists no longer see us as just the marginal simple women (*baby*). Now, everything that we speak about is taken seriously. But they still think all the time that we are the parents of the killed soldiers. They ask, were your members' sons killed? No, in our organization nobody's sons were killed. (Interview, January 23, 2003)

Most journalists still take the position "I see nothing and hear nothing" regarding the problems of military draft politics unless they have a personal attachment such as draft age children (ibid.).

One additional device of managing fear among the activists is participating in the mass meetings and listening to the public speeches. For example, the activists stress that the movement could overcome the tremendous obstacles – the contempt and the denigrating attitudes they face as a movement of women in the masculinized and male-dominated institution. This generates a feeling of pride among the audience.

> In 1995, every lieutenant, not to mention generals and Ministers of Defense, kept saying to us: "Who are you? Where do you poke your noses into? The armed forces!" The Committees of soldiers' mothers have proved that civil society in Russia is not without us. They say that women are powerless and ignorant. But we made the military listen to us, to start with. Then we began to influence the situation in the army. The military understood that we the SOMO activists won't leave them alone until we get our way, no matter what is the rank of the officer. They understood they cannot get rid of those simple women (*baby*), so it is better to cooperate with them. Now they understand that we are not chicken. (The Third International Congress, 2002: 51)

Legal Help and Self-Expansion

The activists produce and maintain solidarity with the larger community of potential supporters of the movement by offering legal advice and help to mothers and soldiers. They view themselves as a "bridge of legal justice between the power-holders and the citizens" (interview, December, 28, 2004). It is a typical frame in the activists' self-presentation:

> We are not playing in the legal field. We are playing in the field of lawlessness. Although legislation exists, the laws of the Russian Federation live their own life, and people live their own life. As a human rights movement, we must link life and laws together. We can

make the state to act according to laws. If we work correctly, professionally and persistently, we can achieve better results. (The Second International Congress, 2000: 71)

Through routine interactions with people outside the circle of the core human rights activists, solidarity is produced via the SOMO activists' experiences of self-expansion – of "enlarging one's self to include another or others" – which are felt as rewarding (Summers-Effler 2005: 137).

Firstly, the activists had to educate themselves in order to be able to offer qualitative legal help on a voluntary basis.

We have accumulated tremendous experience. We know what to do and how to do it because we studied the laws. The military, the public prosecutors, and the doctors understand that we know a lot and that we use the laws in the correct way. They know that it is difficult to argue with us. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

The activists have learned to orient themselves in the complicated sphere of the laws, diverse decrees, administrative and legal documents concerned with the mandatory military service. They have developed their legal skills combined with practical knowledge about the situation in the local military units and contacts with the military commanders:

In the morning one boy came [to the organization]. He was bullied in his military unit and he ran away. Probably, he was recruited in the army illegally in the first place. We will decide where to put him for the medical examination. Beyond this, I will write an official complaint on his behalf. I already know how the system works in this military unit, so I am not just sending a letter somewhere. I write that it concerns such person due to such causes and we ask to do this and this. In principle, they never refuse to do what we ask. Really, we do not ask that much and only what [the soldier] is entitled to according to the law. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

Sveta, a lawyer-volunteer in the organization, stresses the SOMO's innovative role in developing legal practice. They were the first, she argues, to discover a special area within a jurisprudence they call "the draft law." It includes not only the legal code but also the numerous decrees by which military life is ruled. Most citizens are not familiar with these documents. The activists' diligent and creative studies have produced a lot of knowledge about the draft law:

> In the beginning, we did not know how to work with the legal courts. We found one guy - he has worked in twenty years in the office of the chief military prosecutor. We always ran to him with our questions. I cannot say that he helped us, but he could tell us what is legal and what is not, and then we had to find a way within the limits of the law, and to understand how we can use it in our interests. Therefore, with time we gain such high skills, our women are real masters! (Interview, January 4, 2005)

Sveta helps parents of the conscripts who take legal action against the local drafting boards. She stresses that legal investigations are demanding; they frequently become protracted and can take up to a year due to the many delays and misunderstandings. Partly it depends on the fact that local drafting boards often do not show up in court, and partly on the limited knowledge of judges about the sphere of the draft law. She says that the SOMO members work patiently with some judges, showing them and explaining content and meaning of documents, with which judges are often not familiar (interview, December 28, 2004).

The SOMO published a brochure "We go to the court: Opinions, examples, information" in which they document how they work with judges, formulating questions, informing, and trying to make them understand and persuade them to consider their perspective 'from below' on the legislation and legal practices in the sphere of the military draft.

The Expansion of Self

Solidarity with the larger community is produced through interactions with the aggrieved soldiers/military officers and mothers. Unselfish help to others generate a rewarding feeling of expanding the self. This enjoyable feeling helps to sustain the activists' engagement in the movement despite their hard and unpaid work in the organizations.

> This work is really addictive. I have already got used to helping people, because I feel it is really rewarding to see the result of your work with your own eyes. I usually visit the military draft boards and it is really great to see what you can achieve.
> And then it spreads from mouth to mouth among people, and new persons come to us all the time. You see, in our country people are generally very ignorant about their legal rights…and some cases especially tug at your heart-strings. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

The activists stress that some people are unable to understand what motivates them to continue with their work. For example, one journalist called them "fool girls working for free" (ibid.). The women, however, find other benefits in their voluntary work, besides the satisfaction of the pure material needs:

> I realized that working in the Organization is my calling. I really enjoy helping other people and I do not wish to do anything else. Even if I do not receive a salary, the moral satisfaction is tremendous! When I help someone, and they come to me and say, now we finally got the military card, thank you! I can not tell how much happy I am. My soul is singing and I want to dance of joy. (Interview, December 29, 2004)

The emotional-cognitive liberation, which the activists accomplish, imbues them with a feeling of personal development. Katia recognizes that she has developed a new sense of solidarity with women and a habit of thinking about grievances of people, outside her own family:

> The work in the organization taught me to see other people and to relate to them in a different way. When you live your ordinary life and do not come in contact with these problems, it seems that life is more or less as it should be. Everything is all right at home, nobody is hungry. What else does a woman need? And it never comes across your mind that at the same moment another woman might be crying because somebody has unfairly humiliated her and abused her son. But now it became so that you live not only by your own life and by concerns of your family and kin, but you also care for lives of the other people in your surrounding. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

Ira relates her socio-political engagement and voluntary work to her existential searching and a profound shift in personal value system and sense of self-identity:

> For me, it is clearly a task of serving other people. I have come a long way in this task. Previously, I searched for earthly values. I thought that love to a man makes life worth to live, later on children constituted the main meaning of my life; afterwards I thought that achieving a success was the most important thing. But finally I realized that none of that was giving anything to me. Now I feel that God is the most important in my life and other things should be submitted to it. I realized that I have got a gift from God. It is a talent to listen to people, to understand them and to be a counselor. (Interview, November 20, 2000)

However, this kind of solidarity has limits. The activists frequently express disappointment and bitterness about the differences in the beliefs and standpoints between them and the larger community of their potential supporters. The SOMO want to transform people's consciousness and hope that their concept of civil society and 'rule of

law' can spread among as many people as possible. They therefore stress that they see their organization as the opposite of a charity organization. People should not be the passive receivers of help and expect the activists to do things for them. As one respondent put it, "we are not giving a fish but rather a fishing rod" (interview, November 15, 2000).

> Aid can be given in different ways. We want to see that it is not taken in the consumerist manner, that a person does not only receive help but is also learning something. We tell: We are going to teach you what to do, where to turn to, if it is needed we will support you, we'll write an intercession. But in the first hand, it is your decision to do what you are going to do, keeping it within the limits of law. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

> We understood that we as an organization do not matter at all. The most important task is to hand over information to people; the information, which is concealed from people. So, we are saying to them, here you are, you get it all, there are these experiences and such methods, but we cannot interfere, the choice is yours. (Interview, November 8, 2000)

The activists stress that they wish that mothers and young men were more supportive of the movement's ideological message.

> Many people are happy to get freed from the obligation to serve in the army, and they stop there. Only a few of them adopt the philosophy of human rights and move further. (Interview, November 20, 2000)

> People have basically a commonplace attitude to the war in Chechnya, like, do not let them draft my son but I do not care about the rest! They are just visitors, 99.9 percent of them! It was some period in the past, when many of them volunteered to work here, for example, to answer phone calls and things like that, but not anymore. Maybe, people just got used to the fact that they can receive aid without pay and they take advantage of that. (Interview, December 29, 2004)

2. Emotion Work among the Constituency

Through their routine interactions with the larger community the activists encourage women and mothers to overcome demobilizing feelings of resignation and cynicism and to learn to feel solidarity, hope, and pride for being able to resist injustice directed against their sons.

Recognizing Fear

One of the central problems discussed by the activists concerning mothers and young draftees is their fear of the bureaucrats in the military draft boards. Activists try to explain the causes of this feeling to people, and to make them to recognize their fear, and to teach them ways in which they might overcome it.

Local SOMO organization regularly arrange The School of Human Rights to inform mothers/parents and potential conscripts about the legislation on the military draft, to teach them ways to protect their own rights, and to help with advice on individual cases. In one of the organizations in my study, the School was held twice a week. When I conducted my fieldwork in the fall 2000, up to 80-100 persons usually participated in the lectures and seminars (see also Hojer 2004). The activists usually start by asking the audience to explain why they came here and what kind of problems with the military service they are trying to solve. Many concrete detailed questions are asked and people generally express fear, frustration, and uncertainty.

The activists usually give a short lecture introducing the basic ideas in the Law on military service, the Russian Constitution, and the UN Declaration on Human Rights. In the interviews, activists stated that many parents of the conscripts in the post-communist society are especially ignorant about their *rights*, because the Soviet system (and the situation remains the same today) has primarily socialized them into awareness about their *duties* (interviews, December 28, 2004; November 9, 2000). During the lectures, the activists explained in a concrete way, what every mother/family should do, and which steps to take, in order to get a legitimate exemption of her son from the military service. The most complicated cases of exemption, with which the activists were dealing, concerned with a draftee's poor health.

An important part of the lectures was the historical experience of living in the 'totalitarian' system. The parents who attended the School belong to a generation which experienced and was formed by the Soviet history of militarized society, political terror, and wars. Individual fear for the bureaucrats was explained as a result of the Soviet people's historical collective experiences. Mothers and young men therefore have to work with their fears and get rid of them in order to resolve their problem with the military draft board. One of the methods used at the workshop was role play in which women and men

worked in pairs, performing the roles of "bureaucrat" and "citizen," and others (field notes, November, 2000). Mothers and draftees were also to memorize articles from the constitution and the parts of the law on military service which they should quote during their encounters with officials in the military board (see also Hojer 2004).

A doctor was occasionally invited to the School to give a lecture about the negative consequences of the Soviet health system on the reproductive health of women; one of the topics that was usually discussed was birth traumas, which is experienced almost by everyone due to wrong routines at the birth clinics (for example, it was pointed out that newborn babies were taken away from mothers and only brought back for breastfeeding). Based on this information, activists argued that "no one is healthy" in the post-Soviet society (field notes, November, 2000). Mothers were told that it is their responsibility to write down a list of her son's diseases since early childhood as well as the family's history of alcoholism, mental diseases, and violence. Mothers are also recommended health centers which could be trusted to carry out an "independent" medical examination of draftees. Mothers were to collect the necessary medical documentation and to write an official letter of complaint if the local military board refused to accept documentation or, as it happened often, to make them disappear.

One additional method of managing fear was to build small "support groups" among the mothers and draftees, to exchange information on the local draft boards and to accompany one another to the military committees during the medical check-ups.

Alexander is a university student who attended the School of Human Rights and also worked for some time as a volunteer in the SOMO organization. According to the activists, he experienced a lot of fear of the military draft board bureaucrats (interview, November 18, 2000). Alexander refused to serve in the military. He associates the army with violence of which he disapproves. "The only war I can justify is a defensive war; I think that very few people want to serve in the army and fight in Chechnya" (interview, November 19, 2000). The meaning of civic duty and the military service has changed radically since the end of the Soviet society:

> What does it mean to fulfill a duty to the homeland? Those who serve in the army do not fulfill their duty to the homeland but rather their duty to the marshal or the chief commander. Leaders, military or civil, do not embody the homeland. In the past, it was a different society and the attitudes toward the army were different. Nowadays, it is rare that

people talk about civic duty, morality of war and of the armed forces. The discussions are of more mercantile character.

If you have money, you can avoid conscription, you can pay a bribe through your contacts or directly to them; it costs 2500 USA dollars, or you can buy the necessary medical documents and to acquire an exemption from the service. (Interview, November 19, 2000)

Alexander refused to bribe the military officials. He explains why he became active in the SOMO organization:

For me, it is important to help who like me are called up to the military service and rack their brains not knowing how to solve this problem. They are depressed, in despair, lack self-confidence, and are extremely anxious about stepping over the threshold of the military committee. Why are people so afraid of bureaucrats in general and of the military committee in particular? There are some objective reasons for why one should be afraid of them. But still I think we should not do that. We are afraid of the bureaucrats because we are not used to demand something from them or at least to ask them of something normally as human beings. We are used to beg them and to ask for mercy and to belittle ourselves. (Ibid.)

Alexander gained a temporary exemption from the military service because of his university studies and was trying to receive a permanent exemption on medical grounds. The military committee has turned down his request once. He was going to claim that he was unfit again. He asked a "group of support," including two mothers, one SOMO activist, and me (the field researcher, sociologist) to accompany him during the medical check-up this time. When he presented his claim, doctor who examined him refused to pay attention to his claim. We, the support group, were waiting in the corridor. When Alexander asked us to come in into the examining room to witness how he was treated, the doctor became furious, he swore at Alexander and ordered him to strip naked in front of us. He obviously intended to embarrass and humiliate the young men in this way (field notes, November 17, 2000).

The SOMO activist explained to me afterwards that this doctor was infamous - many people were hurt by him - and that this local drafting board was known for cases of corruption: "They have a system of taking bribes there. Therefore, we must do something to shake them" (interview, November 18, 2000). After what happened to him in the local draft board Alexander decided to sue the doctor and he received an official apology from him.

Relying on the ideas discussed at the School of Human Rights and support gained from the SOMO, Alexander managed his fear and a sense of personal demeaning. A

conviction that he was doing the right thing helped him to turn his distressing visit to the military-medical check into a protest action. Based on his activism in the SOMO he expresses his alternative understanding of the meaning of civic duty, which is a feeling of compassion and solidarity towards his peers and is willing to volunteer to help them. His interpretation of the social identity of a male citizen has changed and obviously differs from the conventional meaning.

Instilling Hope and Pride

As a result of the SOMO rituals and the interactions between the SOMO activists and mothers in the larger community, people are encouraged to view their feelings and experiences as the consequence of the broader societal and historical processes in Russia. They are not, however, encouraged to feel anger towards the state bureaucrats. The activists try to instill hope that bureaucrats might change, "they are also people;" they can get to know the law and to learn to obey the law (interview, November 20, 2000).

Religious belief is viewed as a source of psychological strength and a means of maintaining solidarity and hope among both core activists in the organization and among them and the larger community:

> Actually, we can not steer how "support groups" act. People are different, some of them are conscious, others are not, some are combative others weak, some are well prepared, others are not prepared at all; some have lost their maternal instinct while for others, their son's life is the most precious thing in the world. All these circumstances lie beyond our control. Therefore, we rely on the will of God. We usually refer to the prayer which says, "Do not wait to be consoled but console yourself the others, do not wait to be understood but try to understand the others, and do not wait to be loved but love yourself the others." This expresses very clearly what we mean: Those who are helping other people will receive help in return. (Interview, October 28, 2000)

The School of Human Rights is a routine ritual in the practices of the SOMO organization. It starts with a collective prayer, and follows certain procedures. The meaning of workshops, lectures, and individual consultations is interpreted within the frame of the SOMO's shared culture, as explained in this chapter.

To make mothers to feel pride instead for shame and fear is another important task and focus in the work of the SOMO activists. One of the methods is to focus on women

who "succeeded" in resolving their dispute with the drafting board during the School of Human Rights. They are invited to tell their story in public. These mothers are called "victorious" (*pobeditelnitza*) and they sometimes produce proudly her son's "military card" which is personal ID card given back by the military board to those who have retired or who have been permanently freed from the military duty (field notes, November 2000).

Summary

This chapter has shown that the emotional work and process of cognitive-moral liberation produce signs of newly emerging collective identity of human rights advocate in the SOMO movement, which struggles for women/mothers to be recognized as political agents in the state military sphere. The activists encourage a dis-affection from routine emotions of loyalty to the state. By participating in the SOMO actions and routine rituals, women learn to manage their fear of the anger directed at them by social superiors (policeman or state military official). They also learn not to suppress their own anger felt in moments of unjust treatment and humiliation of them and their sons. They learn not to be ashamed of being 'bad' mother of a 'deserter'/unfit for the military service – allegedly not able to raise a physically fit and patriotic male child. The new moral norms and rules of feeling include hope and contempt directed towards the official authorities, solidarity with soldiers' mothers, pride of their ability to protect their sons' legitimate rights, and their ability to manage fear. The activists work in order to enable their constituency to overcome demobilizing feelings of resignation and cynicism. New standards of injustice and new principles of civic bonding are thus developed.

Chapter 14

Creating a Grassroots Women's Movement

Calling all sisters. Calling all
Righteous sisters.
Calling all women. To steal away
To our secret place. Have a meeting
Face to face. Look at the facts
And determine our pace. Calling all
Women. We want to reach – first and
second
And Third world women
Come together!

Socialism, capitalism, communism
Feminism, womanism, lesbianism
Here-and-now or futurism
We just can't afford a schism
We got to get together or die.
Now is the time for an evolution
Let's all search and find a solution
For how we'll make it to the next
revolution
Or die. Oh yes.
And don't forget your lunch!

Calling all Women, Ruby Dee[73]

Introduction

As showed in chapter 13, the SOMO create an 'oppositional' reality of a human rights community while forging confidence and a sense of solidarity, which are necessary for critical action undertaken by a subordinated social group. This chapter examines why and how the SOMO activists start to identify themselves as part of the Russian and transnational women's movement and decide to set up a political party. It shows that they attempt to give a voice to grassroots women in the political arena, where women are marginalized and/or represented by elitist/intellectual feminist groups. The chapter examines how the SOMO create grassroots women's movements in the context of the partly bureaucratized and depoliticized NGO field. The SOMO disidentify from discourses and groups, which depoliticize the interpretation of the needs of grassroots women or incorporate it into the formalized sphere of "civil expertise" or elitist feminism.

---

[73] In *My One Good Nerve* (1998), Wiley, John & Sons, Inc., p. 168.

The grassroots women's movement is created as an "imagined community" (Mohanty 2003) through connecting women's various struggles, staged from social locations of gender, class, nation, and culture. In its collective identity frame, the SOMO incorporate the feminist pro-Western concept of "gender" bridging it with frames of grassroots, human rights, anti-draft, and maternal movement.

The questions examined in this chapter are: 1) How do the SOMO articulate the politicized interpretations of the needs of the soldiers and the mothers needs, as opposed to the entrenched gendered discourses in the pro-government organizations in the NGO field? 2) Why and how do the activists disidentify from the styles of some human rights NGOs and feminist NGOs in the political arena? 3) How and why do they renegotiate their perceptions of the sphere of party politics? 4) How do they reinterpret the concept of "gender inequality" from a perspective of grassroots women's anti-military and anti-draft human rights movement?

1. Making an Issue of Mother's Needs

The gender identities of men and women are crucial for the state's ability to maintain military armies (Forcey 1994; Ruddick 2004). The state-military institutions are supported and sustained through a gendered discourse about a masculine soldier and a self-sacrificing mother. In Soviet Russia, as explained in the chapters 10 and 11 of this dissertation, symbols of the Soldier and the Mother of a Soldier have been central in the state's ideology and the politics encouraging certain kinds of male and female behavior. These powerful images were important symbolic tools deployed in the state's ideological apparatus. The meanings and behaviors which challenged the state-military institutions were excluded from official politics. For example, questions concerning disciplinary problems among soldiers and officers including the inadequate life conditions for soldiers and staff in the army were not openly discussed. Further, women's experiences and grievances with regard to their sons' military service were not articulated in the political arena. They belonged to the sphere of "family," personal and domestic relationships and were therefore sealed off from mainstream politics. "Official politics" and "domestic life" are thus constructed as separate and closed domains (cf. Fraser 1989). As a result, the

conventional definitions of men and women's civic duty are taken for granted: Men serve in the military and die for the nation if necessary. Women give birth to and raise sons to become brave and loyal soldiers.

In post-Soviet Russia, the conventional definitions of men and women's gender identities associated with national identity are continuously reproduced in different ways. For example, as shown in chapter 11 of this dissertation, the definitions are reproduced through mass media images of soldiers' mother(s), which present women feeling pride over their sons' heroic deeds. The dominant definitions are confirmed in the shared culture of the pro-state voluntary groups of soldiers' mothers, subscribing to the 'compliant' (Connell 1987) versions of femininities. Taking up the position of "social mother" in the Third Sector NGOs, the activists confirm the partnership between the state and women civic activists, bearing the social costs of the post-Soviet transformation (cf. Salmenniemi 2005; Hemment 2007).

The Controversy over *Dedovschina*

The respondents in my study call the pro-state soldiers' mothers' NGOs "parallel" organizations, stressing that they are supported by the military officials who are trying to curb the influence of human rights SOMO in society. The human rights SOMO constitute a counter-hegemonic public, which politicize the interpretation of definitions of men and women's gender identities linked with membership in the nation-state. For example, they make an issue of the grievances of mothers in the cases of *dedovschina* when their sons are abused in the military barracks. By including women's feelings in the public debate, the SOMO renegotiate the boundary between the "official political" and the "domestic" spheres established by the dominant groups.

Dedovschina is a controversial subject in the arena of military service politics. Its widespread scope and gravity is denied by the pro-government soldiers' mothers' NGOs. A controversy around *dedovschina* reflects the diverse standpoints of women's organizations, expressed in the public debate between the pro-government and the human rights Mothers' organizations published in the press. The following part of this section briefly describes the content of this debate and shows how the human rights SOMO

politicize their interpretation of soldier's mothers' needs and how the depoliticizing interpretation is produced in response.

The Ministry of Defense has cooperated with the organization the *Council of the Military Servicemen's Parents of Russia* since 1991 (Falichev 2004). In May 2004, the organization held its seventh Congress which discussed questions about rebuilding the prestige of the military service, social protection of the servicemen, the role of family in the patriotic education, and pre-army training of the youth. The Congress was attended by officials from the military and civilian ministries as well as the state administration. The organization's chairwoman stressed that military service was always important for "real men" in Russia; she appreciated the opportunity to meet the state and army officials, and the new politics of "cooperation between the civil society and the state." In the military press, in the article Consolidation of Efforts: An Open Dialogue between the Army and Civil Society the *Council* is praised as a "constructive organization which helps the armed forces to work with the servicemen and draftee-aged youth" (ibid.). The activists were given credit for being concerned, not about "personal interest but rather about the state affairs." The Congress has been described as "uniting." Its participants decided to establish the public offices opened for the draftee-aged youth and staffed by volunteers soldier's mothers and personnel from the Educational Departments in the military units (ibid.).

In response to this event, the chairwoman of the human rights organizations of Soldiers' Mothers stated in another publication that the *Council of the Military Servicemen's Parents* cannot be considered part of the civil society (Mukhin and Samarina 2004). The Ministry of Defense supports the voluntary organizations, which persuade parents not to hide their children from their military service. It has helped the *Council* to set up the branch organizations all over the country and ensured the cooperation of the local military draft boards with them.

The article Maternal Mandate contrasts the standpoint of the pro-government *Council* with the views of the human rights organization *Mother's Right* (Chernova 2003). The author stresses that the human rights organizations of soldiers' mothers are critical of the Soviet traditions; they embody a modern democratic approach to the reform in the army, to civil society, and the legal system. According to this approach, one cannot perceive the military service as young men's civic duty towards the state. In the modern

high technological army, 'brains' are more necessary than the 'canon fodder.' The army should therefore be formed on a voluntary and professional basis. According to the author, this reform is still not implemented, because conscript soldiers are exploited as a free labor force for economic and political causes. As the current generation of children is being brought up in privately run kindergartens and schools, however, the boys are not indebted to the state. Their parents do not need to feel like 'serf citizens" that have to repay their debt to the state by letting their children serve in the army. The article argues that the phenomenon of *dedovshchina* is widespread in the army and that everyone is exposed to it, either as victim or as perpetrator. Parents should therefore try to get a deferment from the military service if their sons are not strong enough. If a soldier is abused in the barracks, a mother should immediately interfere and take her son out of the military unit. It is better to violate the bureaucratic system than to lose a son. They should also write an official complaint to the Public Prosecutor (ibid.).

In response to the standpoint of the human rights organization of mothers, the leader of the *Council* contended that every male citizen should be trained for military operations, because of the unstable security situation (Chernova 2003). According to her, the conditions in the army are not so horrible - *dedovshchina* occurs only in some units, not everywhere. Even if the officers frequently use the conscript soldiers as free labor, it is not of great importance. The most important thing is that they are fed and accommodated properly. She did not support the idea of professional army, but advocates a reduction in the term of the military service. The subject Basics of military training should be reestablished in the secondary schools, like it was in the Soviet times. She rejects the idea of alternative military service, because young boys usually are not used to do household work, and are therefore better suited for military tasks. The work of the voluntary organizations is to reassure mothers that their sons will be all right in the army. The activists visit the military units regularly, bring presents, and arrange concerts and birthday parties for soldiers. Not all the military commanders are cooperative, and the women have to convince them that their presence in the unit has good effect. If a boy is abused in the barrack, the leader of the *Council* encourages his mother not to try to take her son out from the unit but to come to their organization. The NGO activists write a complaint to the military commander and ask for medical examination and disciplinary measures (ibid.).

This printed debate reflects the role played by the counter-hegemonic public constituted by the human rights SOMO groups. The experience of mothers is a starting point in the HR SOMO's critical perspective on the problem with violence in military barracks and the institution of the army as a whole. A conflict between individual and the state-military institution is brought into the public sphere. The activists argue that as the relationship between the family and the state has changed, the definition of civic obligation should be reinterpreted. The HR SOMO stress that in the post-communist state it is impossible to demand that young men serve in the army based on principles of public good and loyalty to the state. The mandatory service in the army actually has become a form of exploitation of a free labor force, including mainly men from large and poor families. The military service should therefore be a voluntary and paid occupation.

The activists contend that the former Soviet relationship between the state and women has changed. While the relationship used to be defined in terms of kinship-like reciprocity (cf. Ashwin 2000; see also Ch. 7 of this dissertation), women in the post-Soviet society should demand that their maternal rights are legally protected and respected by the state representatives. For example, at the Congress of the soldiers' mothers groups, the activists wanted to warn the parents of conscript soldiers not to "trust" the staff in the military draft boards:

> Parents are for some reasons so trusting. They think, he is a doctor, he will see that a boy is sick and make an objective decision. Unfortunately, in this country, your child is no longer needed by anybody except you! The doctor or the military committee does not care. So tell the parents: "Do not give up until you have tried all the possible means! Go to the legal court." Recently, the organization Mother's Right won the court case of Dimitry who was recruited in the army and died of heart attack after seven weeks. His mother struggled with the draft board for two years but she did not know that she could appeal to the court. Explain to all parents that they can appeal the decision of the draft board; they should not be afraid to go to the court. (The Second International Congress 2000: 115)

The politicization of the interpretation of soldiers' and mothers' needs is a result of the activists' constant struggles in different social and geographic locations. For example, even if *dedovschina* has been relatively widely discussed in the central mass media since the late 1980s, deaths in the military barracks during peace time is a very sensitive and controversial topic of public discussion in the regional cities. A member of the SOMO from Siberia describes the strong resistance they faced when they brought up the issue:

Why do we receive coffins from places where there is no war? Boys die of diseases, of hunger, of lack of medicine, of *dedovschina*. The most horrible is that they kill and eliminate the evidence, and call it an accident. We edited a Book of Memory for those who died during peace time in Siberia. The military committee refused to tell how many soldiers were killed, but I managed to get the numbers from the local social agency. It took two years to edit the book and to find sponsors for publishing. They demanded to "remove all the materials concerning deaths in the military barracks." The military committee was against the publishing of the book. (The Second International Congress 2000: 75)

Disidentifying from the Pro-State SOMO

The SOMO activists reinforce the identity of the human rights movement by disidentifying from the "compliant" (Connell 1987) femininity represented by the voluntary groups of mothers which cooperate closely with the Minister of Defense:

> They are not human rights organizations, but are attached to political power-holders. The Minister of Defense pats bereaved mothers of soldiers on the back, invites them to the Day of the Army on February 23 and the ceremony of the Military Oath. They are asked, "Bless your son, Mother," and so forth. (Interview, January 4, 2005)

There is an ongoing debate and divisions among the women's groups within the field of state military politics. Some voluntary groups, argues Olesia, depoliticize the movement by limiting it to pragmatic and uncontroversial issues. Such groups are obviously favored during official events arranged by state officials. For example, at the Civic Forum organized by the president's administration as a series of round tables with participants from citizens' NGOs and from the government, a leader of a less controversial SOMO group was elected as a chairwoman at the section on the military reform in the army. Olesia tells about her experience of participation in Civic Forum:

> It was a struggle. You know, the idea came actually from the president's administration. The initial idea was to 'stand the NGOs up in the line' (*postroit'*), to appoint a boss and to work with organizations through one single boss. I said no, I am not going to take part in this mess; we let nobody coordinate us. But we were lucky this time.
>
> In the list of the participants from the so called organizations of soldiers' mothers, were three swindlers. A long time ago we distanced ourselves from some groups, because they took payments from people. The topic we proposed for the discussion was Military service, military reform and human rights in the army. XX from the organization XX was appointed a chairwoman of our Round Table. I phoned her in advance and she sent me a

list of questions for discussion. I was stunned: "Civic control over the form of the military service personnel's underwear." I knew they were toads, but that they were such fools?! It took the price! However, XX got sick! So I chaired the discussion instead of her. (Interview, January 23, 2003)

The military authorities represent the army as a uniting national symbol, around which the Russians should unite, against 'those from abroad.' A representative for the local government specifies exactly what they expect the SOMO to do:

> What kind of help do we want to receive from the committees of soldiers' mothers? First of all, to work with the health care system, it is so bad that the medical board let boys with mental disease, drug addicts and alcoholics to pass through. … The committees of soldiers' mothers should also pay attention to the education system. So many different parties emerged, that it is impossible to understand what they are about. But the questions of patriotism, education of our youth stand on the second, third place or are denied completely. [….] I believe, comrades that committees of soldiers' mothers should not be in opposition to the military and the army. Let us together, in alliance, decide all the questions, so that the problems of the army do not agitate society so much. (The Third International Congress 2002: 17)

The military authorities want the various groups of soldiers' mothers to be organized as one organization that will cooperate with the military under their guidance. They disapprove and reject the political character of the SOMO groups:

> Before lunch, I felt like I attended a political rally where parties, movements hold speeches, mostly of an anti-military character. I wanted to leave. I thought, where are those mothers, where is their pain, where are the tasks they formulate, and where are their proposals? …The soldiers' mothers are like a feedback signal to the military administration system. When we have regular communication concerning concrete matters, not some political ideas, we can work unanimously. Why separate two sides -- here are we, mothers, and there are you, the generals? I can tell you, we have eight generals whose sons perished in Chechnya. You should not stand in opposition to the army. You are mothers and we are children, speaking symbolically. … We should be solving our problems together. (The Second International Congress 2000: 58, 59)

The human rights SOMO try to resist the military's attempts to co-opt their movement. Based on the officially recognized idiom of rights and civil society, the activists are able to substantiate their claims with help of the vocabulary of the human rights movement. They can negotiate compromises in the Third Sector, use narrative conventions about state/society opposition, maternal identity, and so forth to construct a collective story of their movement, and the new mode of civic activism within the framework of the autonomous NGO. Drawing upon these resources, the SOMO politicize

the interpretation of the needs of soldiers' mothers and resist the hegemonic and conventional discourses, in which women's positioning is defined by intersecting social categories of gender and national identity.

2. "Courage" in the NGO Field

When I ask Olesia in the interview about her view on the women's movement in Russia, she says that the women's coalition (The Women's of Russia[74]) in the parliament became "a failure, they turned out to be weak" (interview, January 23, 2003). She stresses that in politics it is important to show "courage, [which means, to try to achieve] something important, something that really matters, otherwise it all becomes meaningless!" (Ibid.) Based on the analysis of her and other respondents' interviews, formalization and collusion with the political elite sometimes prevail in the NGO community. For example, some of the human rights NGOs and women's organization tend to be bureaucratized and easily accept compromises with the political elite, which leads to corruption of important principles. When the non-governmental sphere is institutionalized as the Third Sector of non-profits, providing a "social service" is sanctioned and sometimes directly supported by the state. When the NGO activism is interpreted in terms of "civil expertise," it tends to be depoliticized and activists are turned into helpmates of the state bureacracy.

Resisting Formalization and Collusion

The human rights NGOs are often involved in monitoring the political-legal system rather than concrete work with citizens' social problems (interview, November 12, 2000[75]). At the same time, interviewees in my study stress that the HR activism has changed and the new meaning of a rights-defender appeared in post-Soviet Russia:

---

[74] The Women of Russia constituted of three groups the Union of Women of Russia (the heir of the USSR's official organization the Soviet Women's Committee), the Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Russia and Women of the Fleet, was elected in 1993 to the parliament but did not reach the 5 percent barrier in order to qualify for the 1995 Duma elections (see Buckley 1999; Caiazza 2002: Ch. 4).
[75] with a member in *The Civic Watch* NGO.

There is a new understanding of a HR defender. He is not just writing [political] statements, but is helping people to learn about their rights and to assert them. At the seminar in 1995, the old school HR movement argued that HR defenders should stand up for fundamental rights and freedoms. But activists from the regions said, we should go to people and protect them, in a law-abiding and civilized way. (Interview, October 11, 2001[76])

Organizations become more professional; they both collect information about a certain problem and offer help to people. It is because it is morally wrong only to collect materials without trying to help people and you will not get the information, unless there is a constant flow of people [coming to your organization]. (Interview, October 3, 2001[77])

Many HR activists, however, are skeptical about the way in which this subtle balance between collecting information and helping people is maintained in practice. Activism frequently takes a form of "chewing information about HR violations"[78]

For Marina, a SOMO member, the HR NGOs differ from the other kinds of voluntary groups, because they try simultaneously to resolve 'individual cases' and transform the 'system' (interview, January 4, 2005). The SOMO believe that many organizations actually do not pursue the principles of the human rights philosophy: "they know about it but do not take seriously" (interview, April 20, 2001). The question is if such organizations can be seen as belonging to the civil society. One of the respondents stresses that the term "rights" refers to different dimension than individual/group "interest:"

Many organizations calling themselves HR-defenders exist more like official agencies. There are more akin to bureaucrats than to HR activists. I think that many of those who call themselves HR-defenders mix up the notions of human rights and of group interests. The latter belongs rather to the sphere of politics or private interests. This confusion of the notions probably has to do with our Soviet legacy. If we had some voluntary organizations that time, they were organizations of the disabled and of similar kinds. That is, they defended the interests of a certain group, their needs in the narrow sense of the word. But we must distinguish between a person's interests and rights (Interview, April 20, 2001).

---

[76] with L., member of *The Memorial* NGO.
[77] with C., member of *The Memorial* NGO.
[78] "Unfortunately, our human rights activities are often limited to various coming-together, round tables, and endless conferences. They occur nearly every week - it can be the Civic Forum, Democratic consultation, Anti-military Committee, and so on. This is obviously slightly bureaucratizing the human rights movement; it needs more lively force. Most often everything ends up with the endless monitoring and chewing of information about the human rights violation. Well, such projects are supported by the foundations, and some of them are certainly useful. [...] But when voluntary organization duplicates sociological research in a primitive form, it is not very good either." (Interview with K., a human rights activists, Assistant of a parliament deputy, October 15, 2001)

The SOMO activists are critical of some organizations, which merely collect information about the government's violation of human rights, but do not propose any policy for changing the situation:

> The very idea of monitoring is then corrupted. We have learned that the goal of monitoring is to try to influence future development. You should not only gather information, but you should also accomplish something concrete in order to improve the situation. It is what the Poles have taught us in the School for Human Rights of Marek Novitsky. (Interview, January 23, 2003)

What makes it difficult for the SOMO to cooperate with some HR NGO activists is that they "love politics," which sometimes results in immoral compromises, when they participate in the Working Groups in the parliament. For example, some HR NGOs were unable to resist pressure from the military within the parliamentary working group which discussed the Law on the Alternative Military Service. These organizations, according to Olesia (interview, January 21, 2003), seem not to "really care" about the matter because "they did not have people behind them." What they care about is the "formal procedures." Many HR activists have learned skills to "conduct elegantly negotiations and conferences … Even if they are not going to run election campaigns, they still want to be perceived as political figures." She even argued that some activists behaved like "traitors" during the discussion of the draft of Law on the alternative military service. During their Congress, the SOMO expressed their standpoint in a discussion of the official politics of the alternative military service:

> I believe that we must stand firmly on the principles we believe in. Certainly, I can understand that there are political games and compromises. But it is what the politicians do. The HR organizations must formulate their own principles and pressure them upon the parliament. We do not need to sabotage their work but we must explain why a citizen has a right to follow his own conscience and should not be punished for that. (The Third International Congress 2002: 24)

The so called 'pseudo-organizations' of HR activists appear as a result of the conditions of financial scarcity in the NGO field. The HR community is marked by material poverty in general and by profound differences between the "elite" and the "proletarian" in particular. Social differentiating depends on the grant policy of the international foundations. The grants are offered mainly to well-known HR activists and organizations, most often located in the central big cities. For example, young activists or

activists who are not fluent in English have little chance of getting a grant (interview, October 12, 2001[79] and October 14, 2001[80]). The subject of alternative military service became "fashionable" in the early 2000s and grants were available from many Western foundations for organizing workshops and conferences. As a result, some not serious "dead-born trickery organizations" were formed by individuals who wanted to survive and earn money (interview, January 21, 2003). The major problem with the formalized and bureaucratized NGOs is that "people come to them with hope and leave with nothing" (ibid.). Olesia presents her own interpretation of a 'professional' position of a human rights activist setting it apart from the sphere of formally institutionalized politics:

> You should stand firmly on the professional position: I am a human rights defender; I defend the rights of those who come to me. But if you start like a politician to take into consideration their [the military's] interests, or to try to gain something for yourself, then you lose everything. (Interview, January 21, 2003)

Olesia (ibid.) stresses that new organizations appear in "astronomic numbers" but she knows several "serious" organizations which she can trust; she knew that they "will do everything correctly."

Women's movements also suffer from colluding with the official political establishment. The reputation of the Duma coalition Women's of Russia was ruined in the eyes of the SOMO, because it was unable to work for peace during the first Chechen war. The SOMO reject a system of gender quotas in political institutions; they advocate finding other ways to resolve the problem of women's marginalization in institutionalized politics:

> Yes, it became so that we do not have women in politics… But I do not think that [quotas] is a solution. It does not matter if you are a man or a woman; the important thing is what kind of person you are. (Interview, October 1, 2001)
>
> At the seminar arranged by the Council of Europe we had heated debates about the quota system in politics; they said, 30 percent of women should be elected. Well, I said, we had women in the parliament and what is the result? The Union of Women of Russia is a continuation of the [Soviet] Committee of Soviet Women. [During the first Chechnya war] they sent a swift answer to our appeal: "We cannot support your initiatives." They meant it was all right to fight the Chechen people; the only thing they cared about was that our soldiers should be fed properly. It was an absolutely Bolshevik position. The result of their absolutely male behavior is that now it is difficult for women to get elected at all.

---

[79] With a member of *The Interregional Foundation "For Civil Society"*.
[80] With a member of *The Human Rights Centre of Youth*.

> Now women [from our movement] try to get elected at the local level for a start, in order to restore the reputation of women politicians. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

The Soviet legacy of incorporating women's organizations into the state-bureaucratic system makes the activists inclined to mistrust organizations which cooperate with the official elite and which are not rooted in local communities. At the same time, grassroots women's groups such as the young lesbians, an organization which appeared in 1995, have won the respect of the SOMO by the fact that they "honestly stood in the anti-military pickets" together with them (interview, January 23, 2003).

Resisting the "Civil Expertise" Structures

According to the SOMO activists, the efforts of the state to supervise and to build the civil society in Russia from above tend to reproduce the gap between society and bureaucratic structures. For example, the Commission for Civil Society and Human Rights was set up under the presidential administration. The Commission includes the leaders of many human rights NGOs, well-known journalists, artists, political scientists and others. Olga stresses that the Commission plays a significant role mostly by informing the president about the existing problems. It cannot, however, solve the concrete practical questions. For example, the SOMO activists tried for two years to lobby for the increasing the extremely low pensions paid to the conscripts with disabilities who had been injured in Chechnya. While they received a positive resolution from the president, the question was not solved due to bureaucratic obstacles. Olga ponders the appropriateness of the membership of the SOMO in the Commission and thinks that they should perhaps leave it as a form of a public protest. The Commission is necessary, however, as at least some channel for a "conversation with the Power," because the "government is unresponsive and difficult to reach out to" (interview January 4, 2005).

Olga constantly works to reach a deeper and a more consistent understanding of politics, the NGOs and civil society in Russia. She explains why she thinks it was so difficult to reach a decision on the question the SOMO had raised in the Commission:

> Why was it impossible to resolve this practical problem? It is because we, non-governmental organizations, we act in the civil society. But they over there do not have

such mechanisms which would force them to do something. They only use general slogans, but every department is entangled in its own interests, and every person is busy with his own business. The Power (*vlast*) became more and more closed and alienated from society. They develop in two different directions, without coming into any contact with one another. (Ibid.)

She points out that the initiative of the president's administration to establish a Civic Chamber to represent the civil society is a reaction of the political elite to the fact that the population has lost trust in the parliament after the Duma became subsumed under the authority of the president:

> While they try to preserve the one-man management in the Duma, they create the Civic Chamber which allegedly will advise the Duma on what issues are important. But the members of the Chamber are in the first round appointed personally by the president. They are in the second round choosing others and so on. You can understand, how extremely strict are the criteria for choosing the candidates. Apparently, it will be a governed Civic Chamber. It will talk in the name of Civil Society, like yes, President, this law should be adopted. It is like in the Soviet time, when we had such public organizations. (Ibid.)

Olga describes the crucial role of the genuine grassroots organizations in fostering future political leaders capable of bridging the gap between the political elite and ordinary citizens.

> The existing political elite consist of a narrow group of people who constantly appear on television and radio programs and so on. They seem to run out of ideas and to lack political resources. Obviously, we cannot expect to hear any new ideas from them.
> People understand that the power-holders are by themselves and ordinary people are by themselves. On the contrary, we are one bone and one flesh with ordinary people. Some of our leaders in the regional organizations are terrific women, remarkable leaders! (Interview, January 4, 2005)

The SOMO thus try to resist the bureaucratized and depoliticized style of NGO activism, by which needs and interests of ordinary people often cannot be articulated due to the political and administrative structures in the authoritarian state and/or a dominance of Western donors in the NGO sphere.

3. Creating Grassroots Women's Feminism

In the mid-1990s, the SOMO did not consider feminism to be relevant to their movement:

> Feminism, for me, is a movement for women's rights. But the thing is, that was never relevant to me, because in our country, nobody had rights… Why should we talk about women's rights, when everyone is without rights? We shouldn't make separations: we're just citizens… Maybe when basic rights are observed, when a citizen can be a citizen …then there can be some supplementary rights for women, some supplementary women's struggle… Nobody in the organization thinks that women are particularly oppressed (interview May 12, 1995, quoted in Sperling 1999: 72).

These perceptions started to change in the late 1990s and early 2000s when the activists began to become more interested in feminism. As Galia told me, "gender is something new for us but we learn to work with it" (interview, January 4, 2005). The SOMO movement had, however, in practice already struggled for the opportunities of women to influence social institutions:

> We can say that in the first years of their existence the organizations of soldier's mothers just did not think about what place they occupy among other women's organizations and if their work is anyhow related to the problem of pursuing gender equality. They just work in order to change the situation and norms of behavior in the army, trying to protect every soldier, who was abused, beaten up, or humiliated and to stop the arbitrary attitudes of the military powers towards inductees. (W.a. 2002: 8)

As the following section shows, however, the SOMO's contacts with other women's organizations and feminists were riddled with tensions and disagreements. The respondents in my study perceived feminism as a Western product and a movement of the Russian academic elite.

Encounters with the Elitist Feminism

The SOMO came in contact with Western women's organizations through their travels abroad. While they were able to learn a lot about the women's movement, they saw a great gap between them and Western women's organizations regarding their activism's material conditions:

> I was lucky and went twice to the U.S. within the projects "Women and the American Political Life." I've seen how they work and can see why they do not understand how we work over here. Their organizations are supported by the state via some kind of social mandate. When we say that we have problems paying the office rent, purchasing the office technology, they do not understand it because they do not need to think about it. For them, an NGO member is like being a privileged baroness: I have got it all and an incredible office, and I can delegate the tasks and communicate easily with others. For them, such a thing as organizational problems does not exist! (Interview, September 28, 2001)

As shown in chapter 12, most of the SOMO activists belong to and represent the groups, which the post-Soviet transformations have left financially impoverished. In addition, the activists are disadvantaged due to the grant policy of the domestic and Western sponsors. How and why the activists became engaged with the issue of gender politics is partly related to their positioning among women's organizations in the NGO field, and partly to their marginalization in the official politics. The SOMO started to call themselves women's organizations when they realized that a focus on "gender" in the materially differentiating NGO field might help them to find new sources of funding. They were resourceful, and were able to take advantage of their skills to write project applications and of their established social ties with the Western donors' representatives in Russia:

> At some point I have noticed that we are often invited to different conferences and meetings arranged for women's organizations, although formally we are not regarded as a women's organization … When we attended meetings, we understood that in reality we are the true women's organization …
>
> When the last year in the fall these organizations went to the USA and had a very nice trip and networking, we thought, look at all tremendous sums of money flowing into gender programs. What are we waiting for? Why don't we give it a try! We were inspired and wrote a project. Fortunately for us, just at that moment we met personally a representative from the Canadian Foundation responsible for the support of the Russian women. She approved our project. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

The SOMO felt at the same time that they were not fully accepted into the formally existing network of women's organizations. In addition, they did not believe that they belonged among organizations, which they perceived as mainly elitist and pro-Western:

> In the beginning, all these outings [of feminists] nearly spoiled the whole thing, because everything was baked on the American yeasts, this kind of women's movement does not suit us… Of course, individual help and policy are necessary, but the ladies ruin their own

status through these [programs with] Arbatova[81] and things like that. They should have focused instead on the principled things! (Interview, October 23, 2003)

The SOMO activists classify their movement among the broader community of women and they feel alienated by the individualist ideology in the pro-Western version of feminism which was brought in and became widespread in post-Soviet Russia. In addition, the SOMO reject the concept of women as a "victim" of the system. The SOMO construct their feminist ideology around a more collectivist and action-oriented concept of woman:

> XXX[82] says that women should be protected because they are weak and so forth. This way to perceive a woman as an object of protection is not right! Take for example our movement, we have never been weak and [we refuse to see women as weak]! That is why they never accepted us into their coming-together. [They say to us], you are not defending the interests of women. Can you understand that? We responded, well, certainly we are not, if one ignores such interests of women as the rights of a mother, a wife, a sister, and so forth. (Ibid.)

Women in the SOMO react to the ways in which the issue of gender inequality is represented by the feminist organizations of academic women. The word 'gender' is borrowed from English and is pronounced with a hard consonant [g] in Russian. While some researchers have tried to translate it into Russian (see Aristarkhova 1995), it is mainly used in the form of a direct transcription of the English word. The word is not comprehensible to anyone who is not educated in gender theories. The SOMO try to find ways to make the concept of gender widely known among ordinary people. They spread knowledge about it among broader publics of women and the members of the military with whom they come into contact:

> Their way of understanding gender is very narrow, purely narrow-scientific. We are trying to inculcate the term of gender among the broad public, to throw it into the sphere of the military institutions, we invited all organizations [to our Congress] and discussed the concept of gender with everyone. It is very important. My long experience tells that people should get used to the new concept and only then they eventually start to feel it. (Interview, October 23, 2003)

---

[81] In the mass media, feminism has been popularized by Mariia Arbatova, a writer and the regular co-host of a television talk show called *I Myself* (*Ia Sama*) (see Sperling 1999: 4).
[82] Reference to Consortium of women's non-government organizations; see more about it at their website http://www.wcons.org.ru, accessed February 17, 2006.

Bridging Feminist and Anti-Draft Frames

The SOMO activists construct the grassroots women's movement by bridging a feminist frame with an anti-draft/anti-military frame. The activists' position in the political sphere is ambiguous. As explained in the following sections, while enjoying popularity and respect among people they also stress that they are excluded from opportunities to influence policy decision-making. Two examples in the following section illustrate how the activists construct gender difference and recognize inequalities with reference to the post-/Soviet pattern of gender relations and structures.

Recognizing Gender Inequalities

Some of the respondents argue that women should not be perceived as weak although their power is circumscribed to a sphere of 'informal' power. I started my discussion of women's position in the Russian society with Anastasia by asking her a question about why women, not men predominate in their movement:

> I.: The majority of activists in the Soldiers' Mothers are women. Is it because it is women who mostly take care of family and children?
>
> Anastasia: It is obviously so. It is very common in our country! All housework has been shifted onto the shoulders of women.
>
> I.: I can see that men are well represented in the political parties and the government, but in the voluntary organizations women predominate. It seems like women work hard without pay…
>
> Anastasia: It is so because our men are mostly demagogical. Take any man. For example, your husband, was he ever interested in what and how you purchased for the household? He usually does not care how a woman manages to keep things going, how she uses the salary which he brought her. Now, it has become ever more like this. And our deputies, they are sitting in Duma year after year, many of them since the Soviet times. They are used to talk about things. When I see the laws they adopt, I became really worried [about the future of our society]. Our men, they still are the same as they were in the [Soviet] past.
>
> (Laughing) The main problem we have is that we, women are just stronger than our men.
>
> I.: …do you feel that women have fewer opportunities in life?
>
> Anastasia: Oh Lord! I never thought and felt that I have fewer opportunities than men.

I.: Isn't it so that it is mostly men who have official power?

Anastasia: Precisely, they have power only officially! […..] they have ruined the army, they are not capable to manage practical affairs. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

The topic of conversation is obviously sensitive for Anastasia. The questions I ask are apparently perceived as slightly offensive. A tone of a light irritation in her answers can be explained by the SOMO's ideological standpoint, which tries to resist the "mainstreamed" feminist standpoint that women are victims of social oppression. In order to make her point that women "are stronger than men," Anastasia even for a moment "takes over" the role of interviewer and confronts me with a half-rhetorical question, "Are you married? How was it in your marriage?" On a whole, she expresses an ironic and rather denigrating attitude towards men. Many ideas and images of the late Soviet discourse are reproduced in her talk. It says that women continue to have the primary responsibility for household work and that they do not feel discriminated against. They tend instead to see the problem of gender relations in terms of men who are "weak" and incapable of managing the practical matters.

Olga explains in her interview that certain forms of discrimination of women on the basis of gender continue to occur and have become worse in the post-Soviet times. For example, she says that women predominate in their movement because in the most families men tend to take the role of breadwinner. There are, however, exceptions:

> Sometimes fathers come. They take responsibility for their [sons-soldiers] and do everything [necessary to help them], often even better than women. I think it depends on the situation in the family.
>
> I.: Is it more an exception than a rule?
>
> Well, yes. During the Soviet time, both men and women worked. Unfortunately, during the last ten-twenty years, it became more usual that fathers work and earn more money. It is just how it has become now. […] I think that it has changed due to the existing attitudes toward women. We had such attitudes also during the Soviet times, when with the same level of education … and maybe even higher level, a woman had to be ten times better than a man in order to be promoted. Such attitudes have become stronger now. Well, maybe except for the commercial structures, where woman is self-employed and a boss. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

Women-activists' ambiguous attitudes toward participating in party politics reflect their marginalized positioning in this gendered sphere of political life.

Positioning in the Party-Political Sphere

The respondents express an ambiguous and double-edged relationship to the party-political in many different ways. While they loathe institutionalized politics, and choose and value not to be part of it, they search for opportunities to influence it.

Some of the respondents were involved in the democratic movements and political party building during the perestroika, but became disillusioned and disenchanted by their experiences. As was shown in chapter 12, the activists came to realize that the grievances of soldier's mothers are often cynically exploited by men who aspire to political careers. Other respondents stress that women in the soldiers' mothers' groups from the very beginning were skeptical to the sphere of party-politics but their attitudes evolved over time. For example, Masha stresses that women in the SOMO groups were initially not interested in being drawn into the sphere of *politika*:

> We, women, decided at once that politics are not for us. I mean, we never joined any political movement and were always far away from the debates on how we like or dislike this regime. We were always very independent and our demands were always directly linked to [questions] related to the conditions in the army. But certainly, everything is interrelated. After a while, when we examined and understood the situation in the army, we started to formulate and present our proposals to the Duma, our parliament. (Interview, September 28, 2001)

Luda stresses that their organization chose a strategy of keeping a distance from the sphere of institutionalized politics, because they needed time and space in order to think through forms of their work from a perspective of ordinary people:

> We needed time in order to understand better the goals of our organization and in order to gain recognition from people. We act in the middle part of the pyramid of power, among the broad mass of people. For a while, we kept a low profile and worked quietly, knitting our networks. (Interview, November 8, 2000)

Natasha says that their movement's source of power is not to participate in formal politics, but the moral authority gained from being recognized by ordinary people. To her,

politics means 'power' asserted with help of political PR-technologies and manipulation of public opinion. When I ask her if she feels that NGOs often lack political power, she disagrees: "I would not see it in this way; I am not a PR-person, I do not seek power" (interview, December 28, 2004).

> Our organizations have enough influence on those structures which we want to influence: the military institutions. We can always turn to the military prosecutor, military-medical commission, and the Ministry of Defense… if necessary we can turn to the Constitutional Court, and the Ministry of Justice, in order to protest against illegal orders…   I can tell that even if we do not have open power, we have a power of social influence as a civic organization which has earned a certain authority. (Ibid.)

The activists stress that they try to be flexible and to create strategic alliances with different political parties. None of parties, however, was able to represent fully the ideas of a "program" they developed, including the military reform putting an end to the system of conscription army. At the same time, the women point out that the SOMO's access to the institutional sites of political decision-making has declined since the parliamentary elections in 2003. The situation changed drastically after the authoritarian tendencies started to increase in politics in the early 2000s:

> We kept a relatively close contact with the delegates in two previous convocations of the Duma - many of our women worked as assistants to the deputies. We could participate in the legislative activities; we expressed our opinions to the deputies and they formulated proposals at the sessions of the parliament. But after the last election, it seems that the deputy body is like a scorched earth for us, there is nobody left to cooperate with. They won't listen to us, voting is conducted according to the superior's orders. (Interview, December 28, 2004)

The SOMO now realize and stress that the human rights organizations' activity has a political dimension, although it is broader than interest group politics. They do thus not protect only the interests of members of organizations or their constituency:

> We do not only defend the interests of the people who come to us, but we act in the broader scope, in the political field. The Declaration of the Human Rights was signed by the government, and therefore politics is always present. We do not simply defend the rights of the soldiers, but we demand to establish peace in Chechnya; we do not simply show that the conscripts' rights are violated, but we demand that the conscript army be abolished and we say that the present law of alternative military service is not fair. (Interview, January 4, 2005)

Creating a People's Party of Soldiers' Mothers

Representatives in the regional organizations of the SOMO submitted a proposal to create a political party. The maternal frame is central in public discussions at the mass meetings which frame women-activists as "independent" force in the party-political arena:

> It seems to me that authority and role of the SOMO is decreasing. For example, the mass media refuse to cooperate with us because we do not give them enough with the "fried" facts. Many SOMO leaders have joined different political parties, and therefore the authority of organizations in the local administrations has diminished. […]. I propose to create our own party. We need a party which is not dependent on anybody. As a result of the recent elections not a single woman was elected into the regional parliament Duma of Tomsk, there are only bankers and the gas company owners. Who will protect families? (The Third International Congress 2002: 34)

A member of the SOMO organization from Nizhnii Novgorod, reinforced the feeling of enthusiasm framing the event of the Civic Forum in the fall 2001 as a sign of women's power:

> After the Civic Forum, I understood that the top of our state, the government, started to realize that they cannot survive without listening to the opinion of society. It is our female power that we forced men to listen to us and to consider our opinion. Perhaps, the time has come to think about the status of our movement. We do not need to contend for our position in the civil society, everyone know us very well. But we must to mobilize as a special political force. (The Third International Congress 2002: 51)

The SOMO members forge a link between their grassroots movement and transnational feminist /institutionalized women's movement:

> What is women's lot in all the conflicts all over the world? They are forced to deal with consequences of decisions which were not made by them, and which they do not accept. And it is what we are dealing with, all these problems, payment of combat money, soldiers who are taken as prisoners, missing, injured or return from the army with psychological scars. It is we who are dealing with all these problems but it was not we, who made all these decisions. So, let us address the international community. I propose to write an appeal to all national and international women's organizations and to ask them for support. Let us not forget henceforth that we are women's organizations and let us take advantages of that for pressuring the authorities and increasing our influence on it. (The Third International Congress 2002: 40).

This quote illustrates how the maternal, anti-draft, human rights, grassroots, and feminist frames have started to be connected in the shared culture of the SOMO groups. In

the interviews given to the mass media, journalists at the first foundational meeting of their Party, the delegates stressed its maternal and grassroots-oriented character: "we are united in our efforts to grow a healthy future generation, and we are indeed a people's party formed from below" (Staff Writer 2004).

Speakers at the SOMO's Congress maintain that the SOMO have to think of Russia's women's movement in terms of their collective responsibility:

> I have to say that at the present moment the women's movement is in decline. One proof of that is that women's organizations failed in the parliamentary elections. 50% of the population is female, but they could not collect five percent of vote. It is a failure of women's politics in Russia. And it is also our fault, I think. (The Second International Congress 2000: 63, 64)

Reinterpreting Feminism

At the mass meeting in their Congress, the activists introduced the new concept of "gender equality" to the participants. They stress that they need to find new strategies to be able to influence Russia's political elite:

> We need to find additional methods by which to influence the official authorities. One question which might seem strange to you concerns the role of the SOMO in strengthening gender equality in Russia. … If we can work with it and grasp its meaning, it can become a powerful means of influencing the power-holders. We are an organization at the level of grassroots. … This theme is very important for us. We can add it to our status of human rights organization and to become one of the strongest women's organizations in Russia. (The Third International Congress 2002: 18)

The SOMO's standpoint which merges the struggle for articulating women's needs with the anti-military perspective is unique among the women's organizations:

> I think that the SOMO is a real movement, a movement covering all Russia. It is the first powerful movement engaged in the concrete activities. […] I disagree with those who say that this Duma is better than the previous. How is it better if it includes only 0.76 percent of women? Women's experience is not taken into consideration when the decisions are made. Nowadays men look down at women - like, they knew nothing. But we know! The Head of Department of Educational Work [at the Defense Ministry] should be a woman. Women should be members in the Council of Security [in government] and the Commission which is being organized at the moment. They say we do not have such

women. Yes, we have. They are present here, and there are plenty of them. (The Second International Congress 2000: 65)

There are some activists with a constructionist-feminist perspective among the participants in the loose network of the soldiers' mothers groups. They articulate their critical viewpoint on the way gender identities are reproduced in the practice of the SOMO by excluding men from participating in the movement. For example, an activist from a regional city says:

> Our movement is women's movement and those present here are only women. …We usually pay no attention to men. My son is 16 years old and is to be registered in the military committee. The military committee asks me, do you think that your son is ready to serve in the army? They ask me, not his father. It means that the military committee excludes men too. Fathers themselves do not show much enthusiasm for participating in the movement.
>   To be able to transform all these gender rights, we need to raise our men [in the proper way]. Why aren't they socially active? We do not like men, view them with contempt. (The Third International Congress 2002: 77).

The SOMO create a link between the gender perspective and the anti-war with help of the feminist vocabulary which highlights that male politicians use their political power to make war.

> Both the women in the zone of the military conflict and in the women's non-government organizations try to repair the consequences of violence, or more precisely, the consequences of the political decisions which eventually lead to wars and conflicts. And these decisions are not made by women, but by politicians, most of whom are men. Even in the most democratic countries, the influence of women on the decisions concerning the most important questions of peace and war is very weak. (The Third International Congress 2002: 7).

The SOMO reinterpret feminism from a perspective of the significance of women's activism in the sphere of the state military politics. The task is "not to get confused by the so-called woman's question and to use it in our interests" (interview, December 28, 2004). While the "woman question" is perceived as "advancing women's own rights," the SOMO strategy is to "position ourselves as equal partners of the state and equal participants in the decision-making process in the military sphere" (Documents 2004). The SOMO's position is shared by many other grassroots women's organizations. Sperling et al. (2001: 1173) note that at the seminars sponsored by U.S. women activists,

most Russian participants tended to view the issue of gender inequality in relation to problems of peace and crime reduction, rather than in terms of policy for support of family and women's labor employment, stressed by the American leader of seminars.

The activists refer to the UN resolution from 31 October 2000 which they use in their daily work and have included it in their training seminars about "gender strategy" with the regional SOMO organizations.

> Half of the population does not participate in making decisions on whether we wage a war or not, whether we send people to death or not, whether we make them starve to death or not. Nobody ever asks about our opinion on that! We tried to resist that in the Soviet time and during the war. We tried to explain that they cannot send people to fight against their will using the system of a conscription army, not to mention the moral aspects. But now the UN has heard us. The Security Council adopted a resolution that the state should take into account the opinion of women's organizations during the discussion and deciding on matters of war, peace and security. It is a binding document! Russia must follow it! (Interview, January 23, 2003)

When the SOMO prepared an All-Russian conference Path to the Peace, they proposed that the official authorities set up a plenipotentiary working group, including them and other women organizations. This group would work 'transparently;' women should participate not only in discussions, but also in the decision-making. The president's administration officials, however, were not sure on which legal grounds such groups could be built. "At the moment, it is useless to think about the mechanisms for realizing the UN resolution; nobody has a clue of what it is all about!" (Ibid.) When the SOMO sent the Ministry of Defense an invitation to their Congress with "gender equality, war, peace and security" on the agenda, the military officials phoned and asked: "What is gender?? We looked through three dictionaries but we did not find this word!" Telling me this example, the respondents explained that they work with "introducing an abstract and new term of gender" (ibid.).

At the same time, the activists draw upon images and beliefs which reflect the essentialist perception of gender differences, according to which women possess traits that make them radically different from men. For example, the SOMO's final report on the project Including Gender into the Strategies of the Soldier's Mothers (2002: 27) says that their "woman-oriented (gender) strategies" mean "staying outside the system; being creative, pursuing a constructive dialogue, formulating skillfully a task for a man; following an instinct of life preservation; rejecting violence; not being very ambitious, but

shrewd and ready for self-sacrifice, flexible, maneuvering and tolerant, trusting own intuition and feeling responsibility, love and pride."

Summary

This chapter has shown that firstly, the SOMO can politicize the interpretation of soldiers' mothers' needs and resist the hegemonic discourses about masculine soldiers and self-sacrificing mothers. They draw upon symbolic resources including the officially recognized idiom of rights and civil society, historical narratives about state/society opposition, maternal identity, and agency of the autonomous NGO activist. Secondly, the SOMO disidentify from depoliticizing and bureaucratized styles of some HR and women's NGOs, which have become incorporated in the institutionalized political structures and discourses. In addition, they renegotiate their perceptions of party-political activism and incorporate a strategy for autonomous party-building in their repertoire of strategies. The activists thus challenge the gendered boundary between the masculinized state /party-politics and the feminized civic activity of the Third Sector in the civil society. Finally, the SOMO critically reinterpret the "mainstreamed" feminist concept of "gender equality" by bridging a feminist frame with frames of grassroots, human rights, anti-draft, and the maternal movement.

Chapter 15

Conclusions

This dissertation has aimed to contribute to the understanding of Russian women's collective struggles with a focus on how female NGO activists try to transform their gendered identities in the context of the depoliticized civil society in post-Soviet Russia in the early 2000s. By analyzing the HR SOMO organizations, the dissertation has aimed to develop a gender-theoretical perspective on the maternal social movement in the context of the NGOs. Based on my theoretical framework, I focused on the following interacting aspects of the social movement (Flam 2008; Kamenitsa 1998; Caiazza 2002):

1) The way in which activists find political structures favorable or constraining,

2) The way in which they draw upon their established social/organizational ties and identities,

3) The way in which they manage resources to create a new – assertive and critical -- collective identity.

I analyzed how processes of gender positioning impact these aspects of social movements (Taylor 1998; Kuumber 2001; Radcliffe 1993; Caiazza 2002). The findings of my research suggest different possible expansions and revisions of earlier empirically based research of the SOMO movement on the one hand, and development of concepts and theories of gendered social movements, on the other. The key findings of my research and possible expansions and revisions of earlier research and theories are presented in the following three sections regarding political opportunities, social/organizational ties, and collective identity in the women's/maternal movement.

Political Opportunities, Gender Regime, and Framing Goals

Existing studies on maternal movements in the post-Soviet context (and elsewhere) are based on different empirical models. My research found several similarities between my

results and other research of Russian maternal movements (the SOMO) (Caiazza 2002; Hojer 2004; Oushakine 2004; Sundstrom 2006a, 2006b; Zdravomyslova 1999). My findings, however, expand and revise several of the concepts in those studies.

Regarding a link between the SOMO's goal framing and the socio-political and ideological context in Russia of the early 2000s, Sundstrom (2006a: 56) argues that the great popularity of the SOMO can be explained with the concept of normative *frame resonance*. The movement is framed in terms of physical harm to innocent victims relying on the universal norm against violating the integrity and dignity of the body. This is also in agreement with international research that finds that movements framed in terms of *human suffering* are successful (ibid.:73). Sundstrom points out that the political aspects of the anti-draft /militarist SOMO movement do not resonate to the same extent in Russian society.

Caiazza (2002: 7, 8) relying on a political opportunity structure approach distinguishes between institutional and ideological opportunity structures. A country's ideological opportunity structure consists of its political cultures and ideologies. Political actors base their strategic choices on their reading of the institutional structure, available organizational resources, and the way in which they define their own identities. Caiazza (ibid.: 115) shows that the SOMO were able to achieve success through 'female consciousness' and a collective image that was consistent with the prevailing ideology about motherhood in contemporary Russia. She (ibid.: 139) also points out that *traditional gender identity* proved to be an ambiguous resource in a group of the Soldiers' Mothers activists. While gender ideologies contributed to their ability to manipulate public opinion, they also weakened the group's credibility with state actors. Official actors dismissed the Mothers' claims as apolitical and irrational.

I extend and partly revise these findings by developing a gender-theoretical perspective on a link between the construction of a movement's goal and the political opportunities.

The results of my study show that the SOMO emerged in the context of political changes during Gorbachev's glasnost, including greater openness in the mass media, democratization of the parliament, new possibilities for citizens to stage public protest actions, and the destabilization of the Soviet institutions. As a result of these changes, mothers /women-activists were able to take advantage of the new opportunities to

articulate grievances and claim to have a say in the military draft politics. The political and ideological opportunities available to the women's grassroots NGOs, however, evolved in the 1990s and the early 2000s.

I analyzed the way in which a gender regime in the Russian NGO-sphere shapes, enables, and constrains the SOMO. By integrating a critical feminist redefinition of the mainstream social science concept of 'political,' into the theoretical framework I approached politics as including a dimension of discursive articulation of civic agency beyond the established formal institutions. A discourse of *human suffering* is interrelated with offering help to the aggrieved population groups, soldiers and their family members. In the institutional context of the Third Sector of NGOs a discourse of human suffering is related to formally organized social services and a discourse of "civic expertise." A gender-theoretical focus on the Third Sector of NGOs enables an analysis of the way in which 'woman' as a political category is constructed in Russia's social arena in the early 2000s. Women's movements take place within institutional arenas that are structured through gender regimes (Taylor 1999). Insofar as civil society organizations tend to be co-opted into the state administrative system, women are expected to participate in 'social motherhood' and as helpmates of the state, not as political activists. My results show that the activists are aware of the exploitative and oppressive aspects of women's voluntary work in the NGO-sphere. Charity and social service are not the SOMO's primary goal, but rather are viewed a measures prompted by the crisis-ridden situation in the Russian army and society. Moreover, the activists view the fact that they spend significant amounts of energy on intervening in the individual cases of aggrieved soldiers at the expense of their anti-draft/military goals as a problem due to the external constraints imposed on the movement by the ruling regime.

Further, the concept of *framing* is revised in my study, as I explain in more detail in the following section. Although gaining broad public support is an important factor in social movements in liberal democratic societies, it may be less significant in the social movements operating in "repressive" political contexts. In such movements, creating an oppositional universe of meaning by trying to *reframe* the mainstream cultural beliefs and norms may be more central than outreach strategies (Flam 2000). Based on this theory, I highlight a major significance of the anti-military and human rights frames in the SOMO.

In addition, I revise the relationship between the ideological opportunity structure and the symbolic resources available to protest groups. Based on a critical feminist concept of 'political' (Fraser 1989), I analyze a multilayered ideological context as a space in which depoliticized, oppositional, and expert discourses clash and coexist.

By applying a discourse analysis to the sample of articles in the Russian press, I have shown that the ideological context is not only shaped through hegemonic discourses, but also through counter-discourses in the sphere of the military draft politics. As I showed in chapter 11, at least three kinds of discursive images of soldiers' mothers may be identified in the sample of Russian newspaper articles, including hegemonic, oppositional and pragmatic-legalist discourses. In addition to the ideological-hegemonic image, a counter-discursive image of soldiers' mothers is produced from the perspective of human rights groups that are critical of the regime. In the legalist-pragmatic discourse, mothers-activists are represented as lay experts in the sphere of draft law. They act as brokers between the military draft institutions and the families of draftees. Mother-activists are represented as promoting a "civilized" legal way to resolve conflicts in the state. Through a revised concept of ideological opportunity, I point out that symbolic resources beyond the conventional gender ideology are available to the activists. The SOMO thus partly challenge and partly reproduce traditional gender identity images.

Oushakine (2004) examined a regional SOMO organization of activists whose sons had died. The depoliticization of this mothers' movement is explained by its lack of access to the discourse of civic rights compensated by a reactivation of the discourse of memory (ibid.: 76). These women are dependent on the local state administration and are passively incorporated in the existing political regime climate. They do not accuse the state of the deaths of their sons, but rather create a physical space in which the memory of their sons is iconized. Women's collective identity is thus constructed as a "community of grief." This way of articulating grievances does thus not help women to overcome their isolation from society, which is generally indifferent to their sufferings (ibid.: 71).

I extend the depoliticization model of interaction between the maternal movement and the state administration by pointing out tendencies for the SOMO NGOs to become co-opted through the *civic expertise* discourse.

Gender and Social/Organizational Ties

Hojer (2004: 43) applies a multilevel analytical model of gender. Maternal identity is constructed through women's shared feelings that authority over and responsibility for their sons *does not end with giving birth and raising them.* Mothers' emotions are thus cognitive constructs situated in the context of specific culturally and historically constituted social realities. The role of women and men are imbedded in the Soviet state's ideology and gendered divisions of labor in society. A 'maternal' community is thus constructed by women in the everyday context of activism in SOMO.

According to Hojer, the social change produced by SOMO occurs in several arenas. Among other things, women recast their biographical stories in terms of the organization's narrative about the "totalitarian state," they learn to perceive the relationship between mothers and the state in the legal terms of rights, instead of the moral terms of family-like reciprocity. A vision of a new social world emerges in the interaction between the mothers and the bureaucrats, in which the women strive to act as citizens who are able to reclaim their constitutional rights instead of begging the state bureaucrats and fearing their displays of force. In addition, change results from this vision spreading throughout the entire society (Hojer 2004: 46).

My study developed and extended this model by pointing out that social change is enabled through the creation women's self-organization, which involves an emerging collective sense of solidarity among the members. To be able to self-organize women have taken advantage of the new social structure in the post-Soviet context: the NGO. It is, however, an institution of a double nature. On the one hand, it is a *mobilizing* structure which brings together activists, and their constituency, and allows networking with other civic groups. On the other hand, NGOs are an *official* structure; which entails both opportunities and risks. The SOMO strive to create autonomous "horizontal" organizations which articulate the mothers' own perspectives on the problems of military draft and military politics.

Organizational structures are gendered. Advantages and disadvantages, exploitation and control are patterned and perceived through a distinction between male and female, feminine and masculine (Acker 1990). The informal social networks, family, and kin ties are usually more important for women's self-organization than formal organizational

structures, from which they tend to be excluded or positioned in secondary roles (Taylor 1999).

As my results have shown, the SOMO use informal friendships with the like-minded, exchanging mutual favors with allies, as well as the family/kin bonds as crucial social resources for resisting tendencies of being co-opted, isolated, or limited by the official authorities. As I showed in chapter 14, human rights SOMO activists view the "parallel" pro-government organizations of soldiers' mothers, which are supported by the military organs, as ideological opponents. The SOMO are also skeptical about the bureaucratized and conformist styles of some human rights NGOs and feminist women's organizations, which have become incorporated in the institutionalized political structures and discourses.

In the Russian political sphere, men predominate in the political parties and the parliament while the Third Sector of social service NGOs is feminized. Relying on informal networking, the SOMO were able to build up a political party-organization. The activists thereby challenge the gendered boundary between the masculinized state /party-politics and the feminized civic activity of the Third Sector in the civil society.

Reframing the Collective Identity of Mother

Collective identity framing is an important factor in women's social movements contextualized in the gender order of a particular society. The results of my research are consistent with existing theories of gendered social movements, such as Ruddick's (1989, 2004) theory of maternal thinking in peace movements; Taylor's (1999) analysis of the transformation of maternal identity through collective (feminist) action; the concept of gendered civil society of NGOs in post-Soviet Russia (Salmenniemi 2005); and the existence of simultaneous and diverse struggles in transnational women's movements (Mohanty 2003).

I have integrated several aspects of these theories with the feminist concept of gendered civil society (Pateman 1988; Kligman and Gal 2000) and the concept of "reframing" (Flam 2000) for the purpose of analyzing a *change of gender consciousness /identity* on the small group level in the maternal movement.

My work refocuses the concept of framing into the concept of *reframing*. Some theorists have stressed that the framing of collective identity and actions by groups of activists is not merely a rational, discursive and strategic process (della Porta and Diani 2006: 86; Goodwin and Jasper 2004). Framing engages the activists' personal life-stories and emotional investments in subject positions (for example, motherhood), as well as collective memory and traditions. In addition, Flam (2000) stressed that framing theory has been developed in regard to social movements in Western democracies. *Reframing* of mainstream social norms and values is defined as the activists' production of a shared "oppositional" sub-universe of meaning and feeling through which high-risk movement is sustained in the context of "repressive" regimes (Flam 2000). I suggest that this theoretical refocusing is relevant in explaining gendered social movements in the post-Soviet authoritarian societies. I apply the concept of reframing in order to understand and explain the role of gendered social movements within the post-Soviet NGO-sphere and in line with the research developed by Flam (2000).

I also propose a framework for understanding the different meanings gender identity may have for groups of women who participate in maternal movements. First, my research findings show that maternal identity means *different* things to activists and non-activists. The activists challenge conventional ("depoliticized") constructions. Furthermore, maternal identity is constructed differently among various activist groups, depending on the members' socio-economic status and regional location. I thus have expanded the concept of collective identity framing in maternal movements by applying an *intersectional gender* perspective on women's group culture. Various interpretations of mothers' group identity can be understood by considering the effects of gender, class, nation, and local culture on the shared group cultures.

It was also important to understand these processes in terms of embodiment. How do we explain that collective identity framing is both a strategic and an embodied process? I have integrated the concepts reframing, emotional work, and gender-construction in maternal movements, defining them as part of processes of *deintegration*.

Reframing is an "oppositional" activity, which involves deintegration from the mainstream cultural norms, beliefs, and rules of feeling (King 2005). To give up established social ties often associated with feelings of loyalty and gratitude might produce feelings of anxiety and fear. These feelings among the activists therefore need to

be managed in the movement community. (Re-)Framing processes enable and are enabled (and constrained) by the reproduction of mobilizing structures, such as social networking, routine rituals in formal organizations, ties of friendship, solidarity. The forms and availability of mobilizing social structures are shaped and limited by the historical and political conditions (Kamenitsa 1998).

By applying this set of theoretical ideas I explained how the symbol of Mother is enacted both strategically and as a result of the social embodiment of gender identity. I have shown how a new – more assertive and critical – collective identity of mothers is produced in the SOMO and how identity of 'privatized subjectivity' of 'little mother' is transformed into a self-assertive identity of the human rights activist.

The way in which the maternal collective identity is constructed in the SOMO is partly based on the idea embedded in social practices of mothering (child-care) which in Russia is almost exclusively done by women. Mothering, and being the mother of a soldier, has also historically been attributed a high moral and symbolic value in the Soviet political system. In the post-Soviet context of socio-political and moral crisis and uncertainty, however, being a soldier's mother is frequently associated not with feelings of pride, but of fear, despair, and shame, due to the grievances of their sons-draftees. The SOMO activists create a critical oppositional discourse through which they articulate the mothers' needs and interests. The activists invest emotionally in a position of the empathetic and responsible mother. This self-image intertwines with the construction of the "social injustice frame" drawing upon stories about maternal grievances and action on behalf of the aggrieved soldiers, named as "children" and "dear little boys." Connecting the frames "soldiers as children," "natural mother-son bond," and the movement's anti-draft position, allows the activists to claim their right to have a say in the arena of the military draft politics. Combining micro-structuralist and cultural-constructionist perspectives on the SOMO social movement, shows that the activists help to manage feelings of fear and anxiety through routine storytelling about mothers' grievances and organizational rituals of selflessness. A shared group culture is created; women's frustration and shame are transformed into righteous indignation, emotional energy, enthusiasm, and solidarity. At the same time, the activists disidentify from what they see as the compliant femininity represented in the image of a 'Little mother' as the Other. It refers to socially passive and conformist women who are inclined to trust blindly the

military authorities and/or indifferent to the issues outside the sphere of their domestic lives.

The results of my empirical research thus indicate that the SOMO in particular and maternal social movements in general, (might) not reinforce gender stereotypes. On the contrary, they produce shifts in conventional gender identity. In her analysis of SOMO groups Caiazza (2002: 132, 133) states that the SOMO's collective identity frame includes both "manipulation of [gender] stereotypes and belief in their underlying truth." She claims that mothers' feelings of fear and panic play a role in engendering (traditional) female consciousness, into which the SOMO could tap. I elaborated further on the role of emotions in the maternal movement and was able to show that the framing of gender identity in the maternal movement involves important *shifts in the activation of traditional images of gender identity*. Caiazza's model of maternal identity framing can subsequently be revised by also taking into account a dimension of deintegration from existing mainstream beliefs and rules of feeling, and a design of new 'obligatory' rules of feeling in a shared group culture of the protest movement.

My results also highlight the way in which the practices of the SOMO NGOs resist a reproduction of traditional femininity and motherhood at the structural-institutional level. Ruddick (1989) and Forcey (1994) stress that a traditional femininity within the framework of the nation state order is intimately intertwined with the legitimate (military) state violence. In addition, in the Russian Third Sector, social service NGOs are constructed based on a principle of a partnership between female NGO-workers and the state. The civil society tends to be governed from above. The military officials expect and demand that the SOMO activists exercise a 'social motherhood' in the arena of the military draft politics. The effect of the activists' emotional work is disintegration from the mainstream nationalist construction of maternal identity. As I showed in chapter 13, gender consciousness is changed by drawing on the other essential symbolic resource, the human rights frame, which is reinterpreted from the perspective of practical work with a particular constituency, while the activists become aware of the exploitive aspects of social service NGOs within the post-Soviet state. The point I want to emphasize from my research is the way in which *Maternal* and *Human Rights* frames are reconstructed as part of resisting the co-opting effect of the dominant symbolic-institutional structures in the political sphere.

By applying the concepts of deintegration, emotional work, and reframing to the maternal NGOs, I explain that in the context of the post-Soviet "stealth authoritarianism" participants of human rights SOMO NGO are involved in emotional work which frames women's collective identity through feelings of hope and/or suspicion, but not anger, towards the officials of the political regime which is characterized by high levels of violence and lawlessness. The collective identity of the SOMO is further reframed through critical re-interpretation of the intellectualized "mainstreamed" feminist concept of "gender equality" through bridging a feminist frame with a maternal frame, state/society opposition frame, and practically-oriented local grassroots frames. This finding confirms the relevance of research which point out the tendencies of hegemonic white women's movements to appropriate the struggles and suppression of the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in non-Western countries (see Mohanty 2003; Holmgren 1995; Ghodsee 2004).

In summary, a gender-theoretical perspective on the maternal social movement in the context of post-Soviet NGOs has been developed by integrating concepts reframing, deintegration, and emotional work with gender construction theory in the study regarding the activists' perceptions of political opportunities and constraints, available social and organizational ties, and a construction of more assertive collective identity.

Summary

A sphere of non-governmental organizations emerged in the course of the turbulent democratic reforms in post-Soviet Russia. By the late 1990s, a Third Sector of social service-oriented NGOs was shaped as a result of the formalization of the spontaneous socio-political activism.

The concept of civil society, a key slogan in the anti-authoritarian movement during Gorbachev's glasnost, had been depoliticized by the early 2000s. The shift from 'civil society versus state' to the 'third sector with the state' was interrelated with defining civic activity as feminine (Salmenniemi 2005: 747; Kligman and Gal 2000). Women were supposed to work in the social sector of NGOs as a helpmate of the state, not as political activists. Groups of women-activists have responded and adjusted to this context in different ways. A range of independent women's NGOs emerged. Many of them aimed at resolving concrete social issues, such as the Soldiers' Mothers (SOMO) groups, were formed as well as various self-help, professional, and feminist groups.

The SOMO NGOs were studied as a case of a maternal movement providing needed social services to aggrieved groups of soldiers (Caiazza 2002; Sundstrom 2006a). In this thesis, I argue that the SOMO also can be studied as a movement related to the Soviet legacy of dualist social organizations and oppositional cultural movements, and to the contemporary human rights and women anti-militarist activists' networks. It is important to analyze the gender processes within this movement, as the SOMO articulate women's concerns and agency in the context of the masculinized arena of the Russian army.

This study's main research problem is how and why the identity of the civic activist is enacted, interpreted, and reframed in the human rights SOMO NGOs within the gendered arena of the military draft politics in Russia in the early 2000s. The aim is to understand and explain women-activists' experiences contextualized in the feminized Third Sector of NGOs and to contribute to a gender-theoretical perspective on the maternal social movement in the context of NGOs in post-Soviet society.

The SOMO NGOs are studied based on a theoretical framework that includes the concept of gender as an analytical and political category designed and sanctioned within the hegemonic frameworks of nation state order and political regime; a combination of the micro-structuralist and cultural-constructivist perspectives on social movements; and the idea that

gender is an important factor in the emergence and outcomes of women's protest groups and maternal movements.

Gender ideologies are often part of implementing nationalist projects and the building of nation-states. While men are usually positioned as controllers of the state and the dominant group in the reproduction of political regimes, women are associated with the role of the biological reproducer of nation, unremunerated childrearer, transmitter of culture and men's helpmate (Hearn and Parkin 2001; Fraser 1989; Yuval-Davis 1997). The performance and the control of violence is an essential part of the membership in the nation-state. While men dominate in the reproduction of militarism and wars, women and children also participate in these collective actions in different ways.

Further, women are mainly excluded from the formally institutionalized politics and associated with engagement in the local community groups (Ferree and Merrill 2003). Feminist researchers have shown that the distinctions between the "political" and the "social" or "moral" are based on criteria that are connected to gender. The 'male as the norm' often operates in political and social analysis and this type of research excludes much of women's expertise and political concerns (Abbott et al. 2005). Girls and women may be alienated from politics and socialized into 'silence' (Flam 2008). Women's social positioning is often characterized by 'disrespect' expressed through physical violence and denial of rights (ibid.). At the same time, women cannot be viewed as a singular group based on shared oppression. Women are constituted as women through a complex interaction between class (socio-economic status), sexuality, nationality, geographic location, historically shaped political culture, and other frameworks.

Inspired by Fraser (1989), I approach the political sphere as being constituted through the coexistence and struggle between three kinds of discourses which interpret the needs and interests of social groups: oppositional, depoliticizing and expert discourses. *Oppositional* forms of discourse arise when needs are interpreted "from below." These groups insist on speaking publicly of needs that were previously depoliticized and that these needs receive the status of legitimate political issues. The oppositional discourse is *depoliticized* and resisted by powerful organized interests who have been shaping hegemonic need interpretation to their own ends. *Expert* discourses are the means of translating politicized needs into objects of potential state intervention; they are connected with social science and legal and administrative discourses.

Gender order (and regime) impacts the emergence, course and outcomes of social movements. The impact of gender can be studied regarding social movements' political and

ideological opportunities/constraints, mobilizing structures and collective identity. In women's maternal movements, conventional compliant femininity defined in the biological-essentialist terms can be partially reproduced, challenged and transformed.

Movements emerge when forms of social oppression may be recognized and alternative versions of social reality and self-identity are produced and sustained. They help the process of overcoming emotional ambivalence and reinforce feeling of anger and righteous indignation while suppressing the feeling of shame and fear (Jasper 1998; Flam 2008). Movements are constituted through a set of structured face-to-face interactions, rituals, which generate emotions including pride, satisfaction. They are also a result of a shared group culture, i.e. symbols, meanings and feelings, increasing 'emotional energy' and encourage interactions with bystanders and opponents. Concepts of *reframing* social reality, *deintegration* and *breaching* are central for understanding of how and why social movements emerge and achieve social change. Further, concepts of *solidarity-building* and *self-expansion* help to explain how movements are sustained and interact with bystanders and potential recruits.

The dissertation is based on an analysis of secondary literature concerned with voluntary associations and gender order in Russia and a qualitative case study of the Soldiers' Mothers (SOMO) human rights NGOs. Empirical data were collected via explorative and semi-structural interviews, participant observation, analysis of the documents produced by the SOMO activists, and a discourse analysis of articles in the Russian press.

The informants were selected through strategic convenience sampling and snowballing. Two separate organizations of the human rights SOMO located in different large cities were included in the case study. Women are the core activists in the organizations; both organizations mobilize around the same issue of human rights in the military draft arena. They have, however, developed different ideologies and group cultures. This sampling was not driven by a concern for representativeness of the case for the civil society or the women's movement in post-Soviet Russia. The choices of respondents and interactions were instead driven by a conceptual question about forms and sense-making of grassroots women's/mothers' civic activism. I needed to see different instances of the construct of maternal activism, in different places, with different people (see Miles and Huberman 1994). The intention was not to generalize the findings to other settings.

In a pilot study, I carried out 36 explorative and semi-structured qualitative interviews with members of 14 human rights NGOs, located in two different large cities. In the main study, 22 interviews with 17 activists of two different SOMO NGOs (2 men and 15 women)

were conducted in five rounds during my repeated trips to Russia in 2000-2005. The semi-structured interviews in the main study lasted from 45 minutes to an hour and a half; all interviews were taped and transcribed. The respondents were asked about five-six topics concerning their interactions with 1) the constituency of mothers and soldiers 2) the state and military institutions 3) journalists 4) Western donors, organizations from abroad 5) other NGOs, and 6) gender as a factor in their socio-political activism.

I used observation and participant observation to complement and go beyond the activists' verbal narratives in the interviews. I collected and analyzed two kinds of documents: the SOMO's written and electronic documents and 35 articles about soldiers' mothers (activists) published in the Russian press in 1998-2005. The analysis of the activists' documents widened the study's empirical scope. In addition, it allowed me to analyze the cultural processes during mass meetings among the local SOMO groups within the movement. Discursive representations of the soldiers' mothers in the Russian mass media were analyzed in order to describe the discursive context in which the movement was created and sustained.

Part II of the dissertation shows that many NGOs in post-Soviet Russia struggled to find enough social and economic capital to survive. The NGO sector was relatively weak, fragmented and poorly connected with political elites and with the population it claims to represent. Only few NGOs attempt to shape the public agenda, public opinion and/or legislation. The Soviet legacy of state-society opposition has partly continued in the post-Soviet conditions. As a result of a shift in the state's policies towards a non-profit sector designed by the Putin administration in the early 2000s, civic NGOs tend to be more directly tied to institutionalized politics. In the Russian semi-democratic context, this potentially creates a risk of co-optation of organizations.

Western donors' aid to Russian NGOs has been inspired by gendered neoliberal formula for development projects. The social service-NGOs, mainly staffed by women, were to step in and fill the gaps of the market through providing services to disadvantaged groups. As a result, a gendered distribution of power and resources was produced; women tend to be associated with a nonprofit non-state sector. In addition, Western intervention contributed to formalize and bureaucratize voluntary activism and NGOs were shaped as a site of elitist activity distanced from local grassroots citizens' initiatives. At the same time the Russian activists' access to Western donors' and activist groups' intellectual, material, symbolic, organizational and social resources created conditions for agency/empowerment, creative

compromises and mutual learning, as well as a form of occupation (Hemment 2007; Henderson 2003).

Women's voluntary self-organization outside the Party-state was prohibited in Soviet Russia. The "new Soviet woman" was a paradox through which the rural Russia's legacy of biological determinism, sexual polarization and hierarchy between sexes could be reproduced and modified in society. In the late 1980s and in the post-Soviet period, the tendencies of constituting a female subject as a sexualized and privatized category in opposition to the male-dominated spheres of politics and paid work became predominant. In the context of the post-/Soviet sexual order, women express discontent, protest and resistance through specific forms of consciousness and agency in everyday life. The former state organizations *zhensovety* coexist with new independent grassroots NGOs and small feminist organizations representing women-intellectuals. Most women's groups denounced feminism in the 1990s and the early 2000s. The mainstreamed concept of "gender" was introduced into the Russian women's movements through the Western foundations' selective granting policy. At the same time, different women's groups are involved in a slow process of renegotiating and accepting feminist concepts.

The arena of military draft politics in Russia offered limited political and ideological opportunities for women's civic activist groups in the 1990s and early 2000s due to a strong resistance from the powerful military establishment. In the public discursive context the ideas of patriotism and national belonging became predominant after the beginning of military operations in the Northern Caucasus in 1994. At least three kinds of discursive images of the mother of a soldier may be identified in the sample of the Russian newspaper articles. The official discourse represents the Mother of a Soldier as courageous, selfless and patriotic. It states that "simple people" and self-sacrificing mothers and not official authorities should take responsibility for the problems in the army. There is consistency between this discourse and the feminization of the Third Sector of the NGOs; mothers are supposed to pursue charitable voluntary work in cooperation with the official authorities.

The second discursive image of soldier's mother is produced from the perspective of the regime-critical human rights groups. They describe mothers as biologically predisposed to protect the rights of their families and sons from the undemocratic state. The third discursive image is legalist-pragmatic. The mothers are represented as grassroots lay experts on military draft law, and act as brokers between the draft institutions and the families of the draftees. This discourse represents the mother-activist as promoting a "civilized" legal way to resolve the conflicts.

The maternal narrative is central in the SOMO's interpretative scheme. The movement's goals, values and strategies are interpreted with reference to the troubled experiences of mothering a son-soldier within a socially disadvantaged constituency. Maternal love to one's own child is an important empowering cultural resource. At the same time, interpretations of the civic identity in the maternal movement shifts across different local groups, depending on the activists' socio-economic status and geographic (center-periphery) location. The SOMO are aware of the oppressive conditions in which they act. Constructing the 'little mother' as the "Other" they detach from the symbol of a loyal soldier's mother and the compliant femininity imposed through the dominant discursive practices in the state military arena.

The activists are women who have gone through a process of emotional-cognitive liberation and strive for the recognition of mothers of soldiers as political agents in the state military sphere. The SOMO try to instill a feeling of disaffection from a routine emotion of loyalty to the state in mothers-non-activists. Through routine rituals performed by the SOMO activists, women learn to manage their fear of the anger directed at them by social superiors (policeman or state military official), not to suppress their own anger felt in moments of unjust treatment /humiliation of them/their sons; not to be ashamed of being a 'bad' mother of a 'deserter'/unfit for the military service – allegedly unable to raise a physically fit and patriotic male child. The new moral norms and 'rules of feeling' include both hope and contempt directed towards the official authorities, solidarity with soldiers' mothers, pride of their ability to protect the legitimate rights of their son, and their ability to manage fear.

The SOMO politicize the interpretation of the soldier's mothers' needs. They draw upon the officially recognized idiom of rights and civil society, the Soviet legacy of state/society opposition and a maternal narrative frame. In the Third Sector of NGOs, the SOMO disidentify from depoliticizing and bureaucratized styles of some human rights and women's NGOs, which tend to be incorporated in the institutionalized political structures and discourses. The SOMO activists also renegotiate their attitudes towards party-politics and include a strategy of autonomous party-building into their repertoire. They thereby challenge the gendered boundary between the masculinized state/party-politics and the feminized civic activities of the Third Sector of NGOs. Finally, the SOMO activists critically reinterpret the "mainstreamed" feminist concept of "gender equality" through bridging the intellectualized feminist frame with the frames of local grassroots' activism and human rights anti-draft maternal movement.

This dissertation has aimed to contribute to the understanding of the Russian women's collective struggles in the depoliticized civil society in post-Soviet Russia in the early 2000s.

Through the analysis of how female activists in the HR SOMO organizations try to transform subordinated gendered identities, the dissertation has aimed to develop a gender-theoretical perspective on the maternal social movement in the context of the NGOs. My research found several similarities between my results and the results of other studies of Russian maternal movements (the SOMO) (Caiazza 2002; Hojer 2004; Oushakine 2004; Sundstrom 2006a; Zdravomyslova 1999). At the same time, my findings suggest possible expansions and revisions of empirically based research of the SOMO movement on the one hand, and concepts and theories of gendered social movements, on the other.

A gender-theoretical perspective on maternal social movements in the context of post-Soviet NGOs has been developed in the dissertation by integrating and applying a set of concepts reframing, deintegration and emotional work with gender construction theory in the case study of the SOMO NGOs, regarding the activists' perceptions of political opportunities/constraints, available social/organizational ties and construction of a more assertive collective identity.

Firstly, the extent to which the activists assess their political opportunities as favorable or constraining depends on changes in the gender regime within the institutional arena in which the movement is created. The gendered institutional and ideological contexts shape women's opportunities to stage collective protests and formulate political goals. My results show that the activists are aware of the exploitative and oppressive aspects of women's voluntary work in the NGO-sphere. Charity and social services are not the SOMOS's prime goal, but rather are viewed as measures prompted by the crisis situation in the Russian army and society. Moreover, the activists view the fact that they spend much energy on intervening in the individual cases of aggrieved soldiers at the expense of their anti-draft/military goals as a drawback due to the external constraints imposed on the movement by the ruling regime.

Secondly, to be able to self-organize women have taken advantage of the new social structure in the post-Soviet context: the NGO. On the one hand, the NGO is a *mobilizing* structure which brings together activists and their constituency, and allows them to network with other civic groups. On the other hand, NGOs are an *official* structure; which entails both opportunities and risks. The organizational structures are gendered, which means that advantages and disadvantages, exploitation and control are patterned and perceived through a distinction between female and male, feminine and masculine (Acker 1990). The informal social networks, family and kin ties are usually more important for women's self-organization than the formal organizational structures, from which they tend to be excluded or positioned in secondary roles (Taylor 1999). As my results have shown, the SOMO use the informal

friendships with like-minded, exchanging mutual favors with their allies, as well as the family/kin bonds as crucial social resources, to resist tendencies of being co-opted, isolated or limited by the official authorities. The SOMO are skeptical about the "parallel" pro-government organizations of soldiers' mothers, the bureaucratized and conformist styles of some human rights NGOs and pro-feminist women's organizations. The SOMO were able to build a political party-organization by relying on informal networking. The activists thus challenge the gendered boundary between the masculinized state/party-politics and the feminized civic activity of the Third Sector in the civil society.

Thirdly, this study has explained how the symbol of Mother is enacted strategically and as a result of a social embodiment of gender identity. I have shown how a new – more assertive and critical – collective identity of the mothers is produced in the SOMO and identity of 'privatized subjectivity' of the 'little mother' is transformed. Combining micro-structuralist and cultural-constructionist perspectives on the social movement, the analysis shows that the activists use routine storytelling about the mothers' grievance and organizational rituals of selfless help to manage feelings of fear and anxiety and produce solidarity and emotional energy. The effect of the activists' emotional work is disintegration from the mainstream nationalist construction of maternal identity.

References

I. Literature

Abbott, P., Wallace, C., Tyler, M. (2005) *An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.

Acker, J. (1990) Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: a theory of gendered organizations, *Gender & Society*, 4: 2.

Adkins, L. (2005) Social Capital: The Anatomy of a Troubled Concept, *Feminist Theory*, 6: 2.

Akin, M. (1995) Activists for Civil Society in Russia Fade into Woodwork of Daily Life, *Christian Science Monitor*, 87: 163.

Alapuro, R. (2001) Reflections on Social Networks and Collective Action in Russia, in S. Webber and Liikaner, I. (Eds.) *Education and Civic Culture in Post-Communist Countries*. N.Y.: Palgrave Publishers.

Alapuro, R. and Lonkila, M. (2000) Networks, identity, and (in)action: A comparison between Russian and Finnish teachers, *European Societies*, 2: 1.

Alexeyeva, L. and Fitzpatrick, C. (1990) *Nyeformaly: Civil Society in the USSR*. America: Helsinki Watch Press.

Alexeyeva, L. and Goldberg, P. (1993) *The Thaw Generation: Coming of Age in the Post-Stalin Era*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh.

Appadurai, A. (2001) *Globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Aristarkhova, I. (1995) *Trans-lating Gender into the Russian (Con)Text*. Working Paper. 6. Centre for Comparative Labor Studies. University of Warwick, Department of Sociology.

Ashwin, S. (Ed.) (2000) *Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*. London: Routledge.

Baranova, I., Zdravomyslova, O., Kigaj N., Kiseleva, K. (2001) *Otnoshenie naseleniia k blagotvoritelnosti v Rossii* (The Attitudes of the Population towards Charity in Russia). Moskva: CAF.

Becker, H. (1998) Tricks *of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research while You are Doing It*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Belokurova, E. (2001) Konzeptziia grazhdanskogo obschestva v possijskom prochtenii: obzor publikatzij poslednikh let, in Mikhaleva, G. and Ryzhenkova, S. (Eds.) *Grazhdane i vlast: Problemy i podkhody* (Citizens and Authorities: The Problems and Approaches). Moskva: Tzentr izucheniia sovremennoj politiki.

Benski, T. (2005) Breaching events and the emotional reactions of the public: Women in Black in Israel, in Flam, H. and King, D. (Eds.) *Emotions and Social Movements*. London: Routledge.

Bhabha, H. (1994) *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Bliakher, L. (2002) "Prezumpziia vinovnosti." Metamorfozy politicheskikh institutov v Rossii ("Presumption of Guilt." Metamorphoses of the Political Institutions in Russia). *Pro et Contra*. 3: 3.

Bradley, J. (2002) Subjects into Citizens: Societies, Civil Society, and Autocracy in Tsarist Russia, *The American Historical Review*, 107: 4.

Bridger, S. (1998) Tackling the market: the experience of three Moscow women's organizations, in Bridger, S. and Pine, F. (Eds.) *Surviving Post-Socialism:Local*

Strategies and Regional Responses in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) The Forms of Capital, in Richardson, J. (Ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education.* New York: Greenwood Press.

Bourjaily, N. (2006) Some Issues Related to Russia's New NGO Law, *The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law*, 8: 3.

Browning, G. (1987) *Women and Politics in the USSR: Consciousness Raising and Soviet Women's Groups.* Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books.

Bruno, M. (1998) Playing the co-operation game: strategies around international aid in post-socialist Russia, in Bridger, S. and Pine, F. (Eds.) *Surviving Post-Socialism: Local Strategies and Regional Responses in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.* London: Routledge.

Buckley, M. (1989) *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union.* New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Buckley, M. (1996) The Untold Story of Obschestvennitsa in the 1930s, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 48: 4.

Butterfield, J. and Sedaitis, J. (1991) *Perestroika from Below: Social Movements in the Soviet Union.* Boulder: Westview Press.

Bystydzienski, J. (Ed.) (1992) *Women Transforming Politics: Worldwide Strategies for Empowerment.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bystydzienski, J. and Sekhon, J. (Eds.) (1999) *Democratization and Women's Grassroots Movements.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Caiazza, A. (2002) *Mothers and Soldiers: Gender, Citizenship, and Civil Society in Contemporary Russia.* New York and London: Routledge.

Charmaz, K. (2005) Grounded theory: objectivist and constructivist methods, in Denzin, N., Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Clark, W. (2004) Russia at the Polls: Potemkin Democracy. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 51: 2.

Clowes, E., Kassow, S., West, J. (1991) *Between Tzar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in the Late Imperial Russia*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Crossley, N. (2002) *Making Sense of Social Movements*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Collins, R. (2001) Social Movements and the Focus of Emotional Attention, in Goodwin, J., Jasper, J. and Polletta, F. (Eds.) *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Collins, R. (1990) Stratification, Emotional Energy and the Transient Emotions, in Kemper, T. (Ed.) *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Connell, R. (1987) *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Davies, K. (1999) Närhet och gränsdragning – att nå andra sorters kunskaper genom deltagande observation, i K. Sjöberg (Red.) *Mer än kalla fakta*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Delanty, G. (2002) *Medborgarskap i globaliseringens tid*, översättning: Per Larsson. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Della Porta, D. and M. Diani (2006) *Social Movements: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

de los Reyes, P. and Mulinari, D. (2005) *Intersektionalitet*. Malmö: Liber.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Dekker, P. and Uslaner, E. (2001) *Social Capital and Participation in Everyday Life*. New York: Routledge.

Deriglazova, L. (2005) To fear or to respect? Two approaches to military reform in Russia, *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies*, 3.

Diligensky, G. (1998) Stanovlenie grazhdanskogo obschestva: kul'turnye i psikhologicheskie problemy, in Kholodkovsky, K., Diligensky, G., Peregudov, S. (Eds.) *Grazhdanskoie obschestvo v Rossii: Struktury i soznanie* (Civil Society in Russia: Structures and Consciousness). Moskva: Nauka.

Domrin, A. (2003) Ten Years Later: Society, "Civil Society," and the Russian State, *The Russian Review*, 62.

Downing, J. (1996) *Internalizing Media Theory: Transition, Power and Culture: Reflections on Media in Russia, Poland and Hungary 1980-95*. London: Sage.

Dzhibladzhe, G. (1997) Human Rights in Russia: What Can NGOs Do? in Micgiel, J. (Ed.) *Perspectives on Political and Economic Transitions after Communism*, New York: Columbia University.

Edwards, B., M. Foley, and M. Diani (2001) *Beyond Tocqueville: Civil Society and the Social Capital Debate in Comparative Perspective.* Hanover: University Press of New England.

Elkner, J. (2004) *Dedovschina* and the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers under Gorbachev, *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies*, 1.

Evans, Jr. A., Henry, L. and Sundstrom, L. (Eds.) (2006) *Russian Civil Society: A Critical Assessment.* Armonk N.Y.: Sharpe.

Esseveld, J. (1999) Minnesarbete, i Sjöberg, K. (Red.) *Mer än kalla fakta.* Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Fahlgren, S. (1999) *Det sociala livets drama och dess manus. Diskursanalys, kön och sociala avvikelser.* Umeå universitet. Institutionen för socialt arbete.

Fangen, K. (2005) *Deltagande observation*. Malmö: Liber.

Ferree, M. and Merrill, D. (2003) Hot Movements, Cold Cognitions: Thinking about Social Movements in Gendered Terms, in J. Goodwin, J. Jasper (Eds.) *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion.* London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Ferguson, K. (1987) Male-Ordered Politics: Feminism and Political Science, in Ball T. (Ed.) *Idioms of Inquiry: Critique and Renewal in Political Science.* N.Y: State University of New York Press.

Fine, M. (1994) Working the Hyphens: Reinventing the Self and Other in Qualitative Research, in N. Denzin and Lincoln, Y. (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Newbury Park: Sage.

Fish, S. (1991) The Emergence of Independent Associations and the Transformation of Russian Political Society, in Dallin, A. and Lapidus, G. (Eds.) *The Soviet System: From Crisis to Collapse.* Boulder: Westview Press.

Fisher, W. (1997) Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices, *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 26.

Flam, H. (2005) Emotions' map: a research agenda, in H. Flam and D. King (Eds.) *Emotions and Social Movements.* London: Routledge.

Flam, H. (2000) *The Emotional Man and the Problem of Collective Action*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Flam, H. (2001) *Pink, Purple, Green: Women's, Religious, Environmental and Gay/Lesbian Movements in Central Europe Today.* N.Y.: Columbia University Press.

Flam, H. and Beauzamy, B. (2008) Symbolic Violence, in Delanty, G., Wodak, R. and Paul Jones, P. (Eds.) *Identity, Belonging, and Migration.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Flam, H. (2008) *Silence, Protest, Emotion*. Paper presented at the Doctoral Workshop at the Department of Sociology in University of Gothenburg, October 2008.

Foley, M. and Edwards, B. (1997) The Paradox of Civil Society, *Journal of Democracy*, 7: 3.

Foley, M,. Edwards, B., and Diani, M. (2001) Social Capital Reconsidered, in Edwards, B., Foley, M., and Diani, M. (Eds.) *Beyond Tocqueville: Critical Society and the Social Capital Debate in Comparative Perspective.* Hanover: University Press of New England.

Fomin, E. and Chikadze, E. (1999) *Blagotvoritelnost kak sotzialno-kulturnyj fenomen v Rossii* (Charity as a Socio-Cultural Phenomenon in Russia). Sankt Peterburg: Izdatelstvo Chernyshova.

Forcey, L. (1994) Feminist Perspectives on Mothering and Peace, in Glenn, E., Grace Chang and Forcey, L. (Eds.) *Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency*. New York, London: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1993) *Diskursens ordning.* Stockholm: B. Östlings bokförlag.

Fraser, N. (1989) *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory.* University of Minnesota: Polity Press.

Gal, S. (1997) Feminism and Civil Society, in Scott, J., Kaplan, C. and Keates, D. (Eds.) *Transitions, Environments, Translations: Feminisms in International Politics*. New York and London: Routledge.

Gal, S. and Kligman, G. (2000) *The Politics of Gender after Socialism. A Comparative-Historical Essay.* Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Gamson, W. (1985) Goffman's Legacy to Political Sociology, *Theory and Society*, 14: 5.

Gamson, W. (1992) *Talking Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gapova, E. (2004) Conceptualizing Gender, Nation, and Class in Post-Soviet Belarus, in Kuenhnast, K. and Nechemias, C. (Eds.) *Post-Soviet Women Encountering Transition.* Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Genovese, M. (Ed.) (1993) *Women as National Leaders*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Ghodsee, K. (2004) Feminism-by-Design: Emerging Capitalisms, Cultural Feminism, and Women's Nongovernmental Organisations in Postsocialist Eastern Europe, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 29: 3.

Giddens, A. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity, Blackwell.

Green, A. (2002) Comparative Development of Post-communist Civil Societies, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 54: 3.

Greenfeld, L. (1992) Kitchen Debate, *New Republic*, 9/21, 207: 13.

Golts, A. and Putman, T. (2004) State Militarism and Its Legacies: Why Military Reform Has Failed in Russia, *International Security*, 29: 2.

Goodwin, J. and Jasper, J. (2003) *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Goscilo, H. and A. Lanoux (2006) *Gender and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Russian Culture*. Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press.

Gudkov, L. (2001) 'Reformy i protzessy obshchestvennoj primitivizatzii' (The reforms and processes of social simplification), in *Kto i kuda stremitsja vesti Rossiju?* (Who and Whereto Strives to Lead Russia?). Moskva: Moskovskaia shkola sotzialnyh nauk.

Gustafson, P. (2002). *Place, Place Attachment and Mobility*. Göteborg: Department of Sociology.

Hagström, M. (2000) Control over the Media in Russia, in Ekecrantz, J. and Olofsson, K. (Eds.) *Russian Reports: Studies in Post-Communist Transformation of Media and Journalism.* Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International.

Hahn, G. (2004) Managed Democracy? Building Stealth Authoritarianism in St. Petersburg, *Demokratizatsiya*, Spring, 12: 2.

Hahn, G. (2002) *Russia's Revolution from Above: Reform, Transition, and Revolution in the Fall of the Soviet Communist Regime*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Hall, S. (1996) Who Needs Identity? in S. Hall and P. Du Gay (Eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity.* London: Sage.

Hankiss, E. (1988) The "Second Society:" Is There an Alternative Social Model Emerging in Contemporary Hungary? *Social Research*, 55: 1-2.

Hellum, M. (2002) *Förförd av Eros. Kön och moral bland utländska kvinnor bosatta på en grekisk ö.* Göteborg: Göteborg University.

Hearn, J. and Parkin, W. (2001) *Gender, Sexuality and Violence in Organizations: The Unspoken Forces of Organization Violations.* London: Sage.

Hemment, J. (1998) Colonisation or Liberation: The Paradox of NGOs in Postsocialist Societies, *The Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 16: 1.

Hemment, J. (2004) The Riddle of the Third Sector: Civil Society, International Aid, and NGOs in Russia, *Anthropological Quarterly*, 77: 2.

Hemment, J. (2007) *Empowering Women in Russia: Activism, Aid, and NGOs*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Henderson, S. L. (2003) *Building Democracy in Contemporary Russia: Western Support for Grassroots Organizations.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Hinterhuber, E. (2001) Between Neotraditionalism and New Resistance – Soldiers' Mothers of St. Petersburg, *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 19: 1.

Hochschild, A. (1979). Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure, *The American Journal of Sociology,* 85: 3.

Hopkins, D., McKie, L. Watson, N., Hughes, B. (2005) The Problem of Emotion in Care: Contested Meanings from the Disabled People's Movement and the Feminist Movement, in Flam, H. and King, D. (Eds.) *Emotions and Social Movements*. London: Routledge.

Hosking, G. (1991) The Beginnings of Independent Political Activity, in Dallin, A. and Lapidus, G. (Eds.) *The Soviet System: From Crisis to Collapse*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Hosking, G. (2001) *Russia and the Russians: A History.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Holmgren, B. (1995) Bug Inspectors and Beauty Queens: The Problems of Translating Feminism into Russian, in Berry, E. (Ed.) *Genders 22, Postcommunism and the Body Politic.* N. Y: New York University Press.

Howard, M. (2003) *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hulme, D. and Edwards, M. (Eds.) (1997) *NGOs, States and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Issoupova, O. (2000) From Duty to Pleasure? Motherhood in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia, in Ashwin, S. (Ed.) (2000) *Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia.* London: Routledge.

Jack, A. (2004) *Inside Putin's Russia*. London: Granta Books.

Jasper, J. (1998) The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions In and Around Social Movements, *Sociological Forum,* 13: 3.

Joas, H. (1996*) The Creativity of Action*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Kamenitsa, L. (1998) The Complexity of Decline: Explaining the Marginalisation of the East German Women's Movement, *Mobilization: An International Journal*, 3: 2.

Katzva, A. (2003) Rossia 1990-kh: Protestnoie dvizhenie (Russia of the 1990s: The Protest Movements), *Otechestvennye zapiski*, 3.

Kay, R. (2000) *Russian Women and their Organizations: Gender, Discrimination and Grassroots Women's Organisations, 1991-96.* London: Macmillan Press.

Kay, R. (2006) *Men in Contemporary Russia: The Fallen Heroes of Post-Soviet Change?* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Kemper, T. (1990) Social Relations and Emotions: A Structural Approach, in Kemper, T. (Ed.) *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Kharkhordin, O. (1999) *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kharkhordin, O. (1997) Reveal and Dissimulate: A Genealogy of Private Life in Soviet Russia, in Weintraub J. and Kumar, K. (Eds.) *Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Reflections on a Grand Dichotomy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Khoros, V. (Ed.) (1998) *Grazhdanskoie obschestvo: Mirovoj opyt i problemy Rossii* (Civil Society: International Experience and Russia's Problems). Moskva: Editorial URSS.

King, D. (2005) Sustaining activism through emotional reflexivity, in H. Flam and D. King (Eds.) *Emotions and Social Movements.* London: Routledge.

Kincheloe, J. and P. McLaren (2005) Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research, in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kleres, J. (2005) The Entanglements of Shame: An Emotion Perspective on Social Movement Demobilisation, in Flam, H. and King, D. (Eds.) *Emotions and Social Movements*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kochkina, E. (2007) Sistematizirovannyie nabroski. Gendernyie issledovaniia v Rossii: ot fragmentov k kriticheskomu pereosmysleniiu politicheskih strategij. (Notes with structure: Gender research in Russia), *Gendernyie issledovaniia*, 15.

Kollontai V. (1999) Social Transformations in Russia, *International Social Science Journal* (UNESCO), 159.

Konstantinova, V. (1998) *Vlast i zhenschina. Zhenschina vo vlasti.* (Power and woman. Woman in the structures of power), in *Prava Zhenshin v Rossii: Issledovaniie realnoy praktiki ih sobludemiia i massovogo soznaniia*. Moscow: MCGI.

Kozlova, N. (1996) *Gorizonty povsednevnosti sovetskoi epokhi: golosa iz khora* (The Horizons of Soviet Daily Life: Voices from Chorus.) Moscow: Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Science.

Kryshtanovskaya, O. (2002a) Biznes-elita i oligarkhi: itogi desiatiletiia (The Business Elite and the Oligarchs: Results of the Decade), *Mir Rossii*, 4.

Kryshtanovskaya, O. (2002b) Rezhim Putina: liberalnaia militokratiia? (Putin's Regime: A Liberal Militocracy? *Pro et Contra*, 7: 4.

Kuehnast, K. and C. Nechemias (2004) *Post-Soviet Women Encountering Transition*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Kourilsky-Augeven, Ch. (2004) Images and Uses of Law among Ordinary People, *Droit et Cultures*, Special Issue.

Kuumba, K. (2001) *Gender and Social Movements*. Lanham: AltaMira Press.

Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Laclau, E. and Mouffe, Ch. (1984) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso.

LaFont, S. (2001) One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Women in the Post-Communist
States, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 34.

Lang, S. (1997) The NGOization of Feminism: Institutionalisation and Institution Building
within the German Women's Movements, in J. Scott, C. Kaplan and D. Keates (Eds.)
Transitions, Environments, Translations: Feminisms in International Politics. N.Y.:
Routledge.

Ledeneva, A. (1998) *Russia's Economy of Favours: Blat, Networking and Informal
Exchanges.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Levada, Yu. (2000) Homo Post-Soveticus, *Obshchestvennyie nauki i Sovremennost'*, 6.

Levinson, A. (1999) Ob estetike nasiliia (About the Aesthetics of Violence),
Neprikosnovenny zapas. Ocherki nravov kul'turnogo soobschestva, 2(4).

Liljeström, M. (1995) *Emanciperade till underordning: Det sovjetiska könssystemets
uppkomst och diskursiv reproduktion.* Åbo: Åbo akademis förlag.

Liljeström, M. (2000) The Remarkable Revolutionary Woman: Rituality and Performativity
in Soviet Women's Autobiographical Texts from the 1970s, in Liljeström, M.,
Rosenholm, A. and Savkina, I. (Eds.) *Models of Self: Russian Women's
Autobiographical Texts.* Helsinki: Kikimora Publications.

Lissyutkina, L. (1999) Emancipation without Feminism: The Historical and Socio-Cultural
Context of the Women's Movement in Russia, in Bridger, S. (Ed.) *Women and
Political Change: Perspectives from East-Central Europe.* London: MacMillan
Press.

Lipovskaia, O. (1992) New women's organisations, in Buckley, M. (Ed.) *Perestroika and
Soviet Women.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Livshin, A. and R. Weitz (2006) Civil Society and Philanthropy Under Putin in The
International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law, 8: 3.

Lorber, J. (1994) *Paradoxes of Gender.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Mandel, R. (2002) Seeding Civil Society, in Hann, C. (Ed.) *Postsocialism: Ideas, Ideologies
and Practices in Eurasia*. London: Routledge.

Mankoff, J. (2003) Russia's Weak Society and Weak State: The Role of Political Parties.
Problems of Post-Communism, 50: 1.

Manning, N., Shkaratan, O., Tikhonova, N. (2000) *Work and Welfare in the New Russia*.
Aldershot: Ashgate.

Mardar, I. (2008) Transformations of Social Activism in the USSR/Russia (a large city case-
study), in Yanitsky, O. (Ed.) *Modernization in Russia: Challenges to Research and
Education.* Moscow, Barcelona: Taus.

Markova, O. (1999) Empiricheskoe issledovanie sfery dobrovolnoj assotziirovannoj zhizni
kak institutzionalnogo bazisa grazdanskogo obschestva (Empirical Study of the Sphere of
Voluntary Associational Life), in Sungurov, A. (Ed.) *Grazhdanskoe obschestvo: pervye
shagi.* Sankt Peterburg: Norma.

Marsh, Ch. and Gvosdev, N. (Eds.) (2002) *Civil Society and the Search for Justice in Russia*.
Lanham: Lexington Books.

Matthews, Mervyn (1994) Pluralism and the New Press in Russia, in Saivetz Carol R. &
Anthony Jones (Eds.) *In Search of Pluralism: Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics*. Boulder:
Westview Press.

Melucci, A. (1996) *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age.*
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Melucci, A. (1989) *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in
Contemporary Society.* London: Raduis.

Mendelson, S. and Glen, J. (Eds.) (2002) *The Power and Limits of NGOs: A Critical Look at Building Democracy in Eastern Europe and Russia.* New York: Columbia University Press.

McAdam, D. (2001) *Dynamics of Contention.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

McNay, L. (2000) *Gender and Agency: Reconfiguring the Subject in Feminist and Social Theory.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Mickiewicz, E. (1999) *Changing Channels: Television and the Struggle for Power in Russia.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Miles, M. and Huberman, A. (1994) *An Expanded Sourcebook: Qualitative Data Analysis.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mishler, W. and Rose, R. (2005) Political Consequences of Trust?: A Test of Cultural and Institutional Theories in Russia, *Comparative Political Studies*, 38: 9.

Mohanty, C. (2003) *Feminism without Borders: Decolonising Theory, Practicing Solidarity.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Moses, J. (1978) Women in Political Roles, in Atkinson, D., Dallin, A. and Lapidus, G. (Eds.) *Women in Russia.* Hassocks: The Harvester Press.

Mouffe, Ch. (1992) Feminism, Citizenship and Radical Democratic Politics, in J. Butler and Scott, J. (Eds.) *Feminists Theorize the Political.* N.Y.: Routledge.

Månson, P. (1997) Stat, nation och nationalism i Ryssland: Ett historiskt perspektiv, i R. Larsson (Red.) *Nationalism i förskingring.* Göteborg: Göteborg University.

Naumova, N. (1999) *Retzividirujushchaja modernizatzija v Rossii: beda, vina ili resurs chelovechestva?* (Perpetual Modernisation in Russia: Misfortune, Fault or Resource of the Mankind?) Moskva: Russian Academy of Science, URSS.

Nichols, T. (1996) Russian Democracy and Social Capital, *Social Science Information*, 35 (4),

Novikova, I. (2000) Soviet and Post-Soviet Masculinities: After Men's Wars in Women's Memories, in Breines, I., Connell, R., Eide, I. (Eds.) *Male Roles, Masculinities and Violence: a Culture of Peace Perspective.* Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Oates, S. (2006) Media, Civil Society, and the Failure of the Fourth Estate in Russia, in Evans, Jr. A., Henry, L. and Sundstrom, L. (Eds.) *Russian Civil Society: A Critical Assessment.* Armonk N.Y.: Sharpe.

Oushakine, S. (2004) Vmesto utraty: materializatsiia pamiati i germenevtika boli v provintsialnoy Rossii (Instead of Loss: The Materialisation of Memory and the Hermeneutics of Grief in Provincial Russia), *Ab Imperio*, 4.

Oushakine, S. (2001) The terrifying mimicry of samizdat, *Public Culture,* 13 (2).

Outhwaite, W. and Ray, L. (2005) *Social Theory and Postcommunism.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Parker, A., Russo, M., Sommer, D and Yaeger, P. Introduction, in Parker. A., et al. (Eds.) *Nationalisms & Sexualities.* New York: Routledge.

Pastukhov, V. (2002) Law under Administrative Pressure in Post-Soviet Russia, *East European Constitutional Review*, 11: 3.

Pateman, C. (1988) *The Sexual Contract.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Patomäki, H. and Pursiainen, Ch. (1998) *Against the State, With(in) the State, or a Transnational Creation: Russian Civil Society in the Making?* UPI Working Papers, 4.

Patomäki, H. and Pursiainen, Ch. (1999) Western Models and the 'Russian idea:' Beyond 'Inside/Outside,' *Discourses on Civil Society, Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 28: 1.

Peterson, A. (2001) *Contemporary Political Protest: Essays on Political Militancy.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Peterson, A. (1992) *Women as Collective Actors: A Case Study of the Swedish Women's Peace Movement, 1989-1990.* Göteborg: Department of Sociology.

Petro, N. (1995) *The Rebirth of Russian Democracy: An Interpretation of Political Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Petukhov, V. (2002) Politicheskaia aktivnost' i grazhdanskaia samoorganizatziia rossiian (Political Activism and Civic Self-Organization of the Russians), *Obschestvennyie nauki i sovremennost*, 6.

Pinnick, K. (1997) When the Fighting is Over: The Soldiers' Mothers and the Afghan Madonnas, in Buckley, M. (Ed.) *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pipes, R. (1995) *Russia under the Old Regime*. London: Penguin.

Posadskaya, A. (1994) A Feminist Critique of Policy, Legislation and Social Consciousness in Post-socialist Russia, in Posadskaya, A. and others at the Moscow Gender Centre (Eds.) *Women in Russia: A New Era in Russian Feminism*. London: Verso.

Putman, R. (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Racioppi, L. and See, K. (1997) *Women's Activism in Contemporary Russia.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Radcliffe, S. (1993) People Have to Rise Up – Like the Great Women Fighters: the State and Peasant Women in Peru, in Radcliffe, S. and Westwood, S. (Eds.) *'Viva:' Women and Popular Protest in Latin America.* London: Routledge.

Radcliffe, S. and Westwood, S. (Eds.) (1993) *'Viva': Women and Popular Protest in Latin America.* London: Routledge.

Ragin, C. (1992) Introduction: Cases of "What is a case?" in Ragin, C. and Becker, H. (Eds.) *What is a Case: Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rantanen, T. (2002) *The Global and the National: Media and Communications in Post-Communist Russia.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Reddaway, P. and D. Glinski (2001) *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms: Market Bolshevism against Democracy.* Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Reddaway, P., Lapidus, G., Ickes, B., Saivetz, C. and Breslauer, G. (2004) Russia in the Year 2003, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 20: 1.

Regulska, J. (1998) 'The Political' and its Meaning for Women: Transition Politics in Poland," in Pickles, J. and Smith, A. (Eds.) *Political Economy of Post-Communist Transformations.* London: Routledge.

Remington, T. (1999) *Politics in Russia*. New York: Longman.

Repstad, P. (2007) *Närhet och distans: kvalitativa metoder i samhällsvetenskap*. Översättning Björn Nilsson. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Richardson, L. (1995) Narrative and Sociology, in Maanen, J. V. (Ed.) *Representation in Ethnography.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Richter, J. (2002) Promoting Civil Society? Democracy Assistance and Russian Women's Organisations, *Problems of Post-Communism*, 49: 1.

Rigby, T. (1991) Mono-organizational Socialism and the Civil Society, in Kukathas, Ch., Lovell D., and Maley W. (Eds.) *The Transition from Socialism: State and Civil Society in the USSR*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Roos, J. P. and Rotkirch, A. (1998) Fält i skuggan av fält: sensocialismens dubbelliv, in Broady, D. (Ed.) *Kulturens fält*. Göteborg: Daidalos.

Rose, R. (1998) *Getting Things Done in an Anti-Modern Society: Social Capital Networks in Russia*. Glasgow: Centre for the Study of Public Policy. University of Strathclyde.

Rotkirch, A. (2000) *The Man Question: Loves and Lives in Late 20th Century Russia*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki.

Rotkirch, A. (2004) 'Coming to Stand on Firm Ground': The Making of a Soviet Working Mother, in Bertaux, D., Thompson, P., Rotkirch, A. (Eds.) *On Living Through Soviet Russia*. London: Routledge.

Ruddick, S. (2004) Maternal Thinking as a Feminist Standpoint, in Harding, S. (Ed.) *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies.* London: Routledge.

Ruddick, S. (1984) Preservative Love and Military Destruction: Some Reflections on Mothering and Peace, in Trebilcot, J. (Ed.) *Mothering: Essays in Feminist Theory*. N.J. : Rowman & Allanheld.

Ruddick, S. (1989) Mothers and Men's Wars, in Harris, A. and King, Y. (Eds.) *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics.* London: Westview Press.

Rule, W. and Noonan, N. (1996) *Russian Women in Politics and Society*. London: Greenwood Press.

Ryen, A. (2004) *Kvalitativ intervju – från vetenskapsteori till fältstudier*. Malmö: Liber.

Sahlin, I. (1999) Diskursanalys som sociologisk metod, i Sjöberg, K. (Red.) *Mer än kalla fakta.* Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Sakwa, R. (1995) Subjectivity, Politics and Order in Russian Political Evolution, *Slavic Review*, 54: 4 (Winter).

Sakwa, R. (2004) *Putin: Russia's Choice.* London: Routledge.

Salmenniemi, S. (2005) Civic Activity – Feminine Activity? Gender, Civil Society and Citizenship in Post-Soviet Russia, *Sociology*, 39: 4.

Sampson, S. (1996) The social life of projects: Importing civil society to Albania, in Hann, Ch. and Dunn, E. (Eds.) *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*. London: Routledge.

Schirmer, J. (1993) The Seeking of Truth and the Gendering of Consciousness: The Comadres of El Salvador and the Conavigua Widows of Guatemala, in S. Radcliffe and Westwood, S. (Eds.) *'Viva': Women and popular protest in Latin America.* London: Routledge.

Scheff, T. (2007) A Concept of Social Integration, *Philosophical Psychology*, 20: 5.

Scheff, T. (2008) Tillitens emotionella bas och dess följder, in Wettegren, Å., Starrin, B., Lindgren, G. (Red.) *Det sociala livets emotionella grunder*. Malmö: Liber.

Seale, C. (1998) Qualitative Interviewing, in Seale, C. (Ed.) *Researching Society and Culture.* London: Sage.

Seligman, A. (1992) *The Idea of Civil Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Semigin, G., Galkin, A., Oganis'ian, Yu., Patrushev, S. (Eds.) (2003) *Forum 2003. Sotzium i vlast'* (Forum 2003: Society and Power). Moskva: Mysl.'

Shabanova, M. (2000) Individualnaia i sozietalnaia svobody v reformiruemoj Rossii (Individual and Societal Freedoms in Transforming Russia), in Zaslavskaia, T. (Ed.) *Kuda idet Rossia? Vlast, obschestvo, lichnost* (Where is Russia Heading? Power, Society, Individual), International Symposium, January 17-18. Moskva: Intertzentr.

Shane, S. (1994) *Dismantling Utopia: How Information Ended the Soviet Union.* Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks.

Shevtsova, L. (1999) *Yeltsin's Russia: Myths and Reality.* Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Shevtsova, L. (2003) *Putin's Russia.* Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Shevtsova, L. (2004) Kak Rossiia ne spravilas s demokratiej: logika politicheskogo otkata (How Russia Failed in Democracy: Logic of Political Retreat), *Pro et Contra*, 8: 3.

Shiraev, E. (1999) Gender Roles and Political Transformations, in B. Glad and E. Shiraev (Eds.) *The Russian Transformation: Political, Sociological and Psychological Aspects.* London: Macmillan Press.

Shlapentokh, V. (1989) *Public and Private Life of the Soviet People: Changing Values in Post-Stalin Russia*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Silverman, B. and Yanowitch, M. (1997) *New Rich, New Poor, New Russia: Winners and Losers on the Russian Road to Capitalism*. Armonk N.Y.: Sharpe.

Simon, G. (2005) *Russian Crisis Management Communications and Media Management Under Putin*. Working Papers, No. 85 Uppsala: Department of East European Studies, Uppsala University.

Skeggs, B. (1997) *Formation of Class & Gender: Becoming Respectable.* London: Sage Publications.

Smith, D. (2004) Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology, in Harding, S. (Ed.) *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies*. London: Routledge.

Snow, D., Rochford, Jr. E., Worden, S., Benford, R. (1986) Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation, *American Sociological Review*, 51.

Snow, D. and Benford, R. (1992) Master Frames and Cycles of Protest, in Morris, A. and Mueller, C. (Eds.) *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Solnick, S. (1998) *Stealing the State: Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Sperling, V. (1999) *Organising Women in Contemporary Russia: Engendering Transition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sperling, V. (2003) The Last Refuge of a Scoundrel: Patriotism, Militarism and the Russian National Idea, *Nations and Nationalism*, 9: 2.

Sperling, V., Ferree, M., and Risman, B. (2001) Constructing Global Feminism: Transnational Advocacy Networks and Russian Women's Activism, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 26: 4.

Sperling, V. (2006) Women's Organisations: Institutionalized Interest Groups or Vulnerable Dissidents? In Evans, Jr. A., Henry, L. and Sundstrom, L. (Eds.) (2006) *Russian Civil Society: A Critical Assessment.* Armonk N.Y.: Sharpe.

Stites, R. (1978) *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism 1860-1930*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Summers-Effler, E. (2005) The emotional significance of solidarity for social movement communities: sustaining Catholic worker community and service, in H. Flam and King, D. (Eds.) *Emotions and Social Movements*. London: Routledge.

Sundstrom, L. (2006a) *Funding Civil Society. Foreign Assistance and NGO Development in Russia*. Stanford: Stanford University.

Sundstrom, L. and Henry, L. (2006) Russian Civil Societ: Tensions and Trajectories, in Evans, Jr., Jr. A., Henry, L. and Sundstrom, L. (Eds.) *Russian Civil Society: A Critical Assessment*. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe.

Sundstrom, L. (2006b) Soldiers' Rights Groups in Russia: Civil Society through Russian and Western Eyes, in Evans, Jr. A., Henry, L. and Sundstrom, L. (Eds.) *Russian Civil Society: A Critical Assessment.* Armonk N.Y.: Sharpe.

Sungurov, A. (1999a) Organizatzii-posredniki v structure grazhdanskogo obschestva (Intermediating Organizations in the Structure of Civil Society), *Polis*, 6: 5.

Sungurov, A. (1999b) (Ed.) *Grazhdanskoie obschestvo: pervyie shagi.* (Civil Society: The First Steps). St. Petersburg: Tsentr Strategiia.

Swidler, A. (1986) Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies, *American Sociological Review,* 51: 2.

Taylor, V. and Whittier, N. (1995) Analytical Approaches to Social Movement Culture: The Culture of the Women's Movement, in Johnston, H. and Klandermans, B. (Eds.) *Social Movements and Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Taylor, V. (1999) Gender and Social Movements. Gender Processes in Women's Self-Help Movements, *Gender & Society*, 13: 1.

Tchouikina, S. (2003) Anti-Soviet Biographies: The Dissident Milieu and its Neighbouring Milieux, in Humphrey, R., Miller, R., Zdravomyslova, E. (Eds.) *Biographical Research in Eastern Europe.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Temkina, A. (1997) *Russia in Transition: The Case of New Collective Actors and New Collective Actions.* Helsinki: Kikimora Publications.

Temkina, A. and Rotkirch, A. (2002) Sovetskiie gendernyie kontrakty i ih transfromatsiia v sovremennoy Rossii (Soviet gender contracts and their transformation in contemporary Russia), Sotzis, 11.

Temkina, A. (1996) Zhensky put v politiku: gendernaia perspektiva (Women's Way into Politics: A Gender Perspective), in Zdravomyslova, E. and Temkina, A. (Eds.) *Gendernoie izmerenie sotzialnoj i politicheskoj aktivnosti v perekhodnyj period*. Sankt Peterburg: Tzentr nezavisimykh sotzialnykh issledovanij.

Tolz, V. (1990) *The USSR's Emerging Multiparty System*. New York: Praeger.

Tonkiss, F. (1998) Analysing Discourse, in Seale, C. (Ed.) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: Sage.

Turner, B. (1994) Outline of the Theory of Human Rights, in Turner, B. (Ed.) *Citizenship and Social Theory*. London: Sage Publications.

Uhlin, A. (2006) *Post-Soviet Civil Society: Democratisation in Russia and the Baltic States*. London: Routledge.

Urban, M., Igrunov, V. and Mitrokhin, S. (1997) *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vartanova, Elena (2001) Media Structures: Changed and Unchanged, in Nordenstreng, K., Vartanova, E., and Zassoursky, Y. (Eds.) *Russian Media Challenge*. Helsinki: Kikimora Publications.

Vite, O. (1996) Izbirateli – vragi naroda? Razmyshleniia ob adekvatnosti elektoral'nogo povedeniia i faktorov na ee uroven' vliiaiushchikh (The electors – enemies of the people? Some reflections on the adequacy of the voting behaviour and the factors influencing it), in Anninsky, L.A. et al. (Eds.) *Etika Uspeha*, Vol. 9. Tumen'- Moskva.

Volkov, V. (1994) Glasnost kak praktika. K istorii politicheskoj kommunikatzii v SSSR (Glasnost as practice: on history of political communication in the USSR), *Lichnost i vlast*, 1.

Vorontzova, L. and Filatov, S. (1997) "The Russian Way" and Civil Society, *Russian Social Science Review*, 38: 3.

Vorozheikina, T. (1994) Clientelism and the Process of Political Democratization in Russia, in Roniger, L. and Günes-Ayata, A. (Eds.) *Democracy, Clientelism and Civil Society*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publisher.

Waisberg, P. (2004) The Duty to Serve and the Right to Choose: The Contested nature of Alternative Civilian Service in the Russian Federation, *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies,* Issue 1.

Walck, Ch. (1995) Global ideas, local realities: the development project and missionary management in Russia, *Journal of Organizational Change Management,* 8: 4.

Walsh, D (1998) Doing Ethnography, in Seale, C. (Ed.) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: Sage.

Watson, P. (1993) Eastern Europe's Silent Revolution: Gender, *Sociology*, 27 (3).

Wedel, J. (1998) *Collision and Collusion: The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe, 1989-1999.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Widerberg, K. (1996) Women's Experiences – Text or Relation? Looking at Research Practices from Sociological and Feminist Perspective, *NORA*, 2.

White, A. (1999) *Democratization in Russia under Gorbachev 1985-91. The Birth of the Voluntary Sector.* Houndmills: Macmillan Press LTD.

Yakimets, V. (2004) *Mezhsektornoie sotzialnoe partnerstvo: osnovy, teoriia, printzipy, mekhanizmy.* (Intersectional Social Partnership: Grounds, Theory, Principles and Mechanisms). Moskva: URSS.

Yanitsky, O. N. (1996) *Ekologicheskoje dvizhenije v Rossii.* Kriticheskij anakyz (The Ecological Movement in Russia) Moskva: Institut sotziologii RAN.

Yanitsky, O. (2000a) Pressa soediniala ludej v 'grazhdanskikh initsiativakh' (The Press United People in 'civic initiatives'), in Murashev, A., Naishul, V. et al. (Eds.) *Pressa v obschstve 1959-2000* (The Press in Society). Moskva: Shkola Politicheskikh Issledovanij.

Yanitsky, O. (2000b) *Russian Greens in a Risk Society.* Helsinki: Kikimora Publications.

Yanitsky, O. (1991) *Sozialnye dvizheniia: 100 interv'iu s liderami* (Social Movements: 100 Interviews with the Leaders). Moskva: Moskovsky rabochij.

Yin, R. (2009) *Case Study: Design and Methods* (4th ed.). London: Sage.

Yurchak, A. (2006) *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Yuval-Davis, N. (1997) *Gender & Nation*. London: Sage.

Yuval-Davis, N. and Anthias, F. (Eds.) (1989) *Woman, Nation, State.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Zassoursky, I. (1999) *Mass-Media vtoroj respubliki* (The Mass Media of the Second Republic). Moskva: Izdatelstvo Moskovskogo Universiteta.

Zassoursky, I. (2004) Media and Power in Post-Soviet Russia. Armonk: Sharp.

Zdravomyslova, E. (1999) Ot sotsialnoy problemy – k kollektivnomu dejstviiu: pravozaschitnaia organizatsiia "Soldatskiie materi Rossii" (From a Social Problem to the Collective Action: The Human Rights Organization "Soldiers' Mothers of Russia"), in Kostushev, V. (Ed.) *Obschestvennyie dvizheniia v sovremennoi Rossii*, St Petersburg: Institute of Sociology, RAN.

Zdravomyslova, E. (1999a) "Peaceful Initiatives: the Soldiers' Mothers Movement in Russia" in Breines I. & D. Gierycz & B. Reardou (eds.) *Towards a Women's Agenda for a Culture of Peace*. France: UNESCO Publication.

Zdravomyslova, E. and Voronkov, V. (2002) The Informal Public in Soviet Society: Double Morality at Work, *Social Research*, 69: 1.

Zdravomyslova, E. and Temkina, A. (2002) Krizis maskulinnosti v pozdnesovetskom diskurse, (The Crisis of Masculinity in Late Soviet Discourse), in Oushakine, S. (Ed.) *O Muzhe(N)stvennosti*, Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie.

Zdravomyslova, E. (1996) Kollektivnaia biographia sovremennykh rossijskikh feministok (Collective Biography of Contemporary Russian Feminists), in Zdravomyslova, E. and Temkina, A. (Eds.) *Gendernoie izmerenie sotzialnoj i politicheskoj aktivnosti v perekhodnyj period.* Sankt Peterburg: Tzentr nezavisimykh sotzialnykh issledovanij.

Zelikova, Yu. and Fomin, E. (1996) Problemy stanovleniia blagotvoritelnogo sektora v Sankt Peterburge (Problems of the Establishment of a Charity Sector in St Petersburg), in *Blagotovoritelnye organizatzii Sankt Peterburga, Spravochnoe izdanie.* Sankt Peterburg: SPb filial Instituta Sotziologii RAN.

Zudin, A. (2002) *Rezhim Vladimira Putina: Kontury novoj politicheskoj sistemy* (The Regime of Vladimir Putin: The Outlines of the New Political System). Moskva: Moskovsky Tzentr Karnegi.

II. Published Sources

Dorosheva, N. (2003) *Grazhdansky Forum. God Spustia*. (The Civic Forum: One Year Later) Moscow: Charities Aid Foundation.

HCAC Reports (1996) *Grazhdanskoie obschestvo v posttotalitarnoj strane*? (Civil Society in Post-Totalitarian Society?), Reports and Documents of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Committee Round Table, September 16-20, Moscow: HCA Committee.

My obraschaemsia v sud: Mnenia, Primery, Informatzia (We Attend the Legal Court: Opinions, Examples, Information) (2003). Moskva: the CSM.

Sevortyan, A. and Berchukova, N. (2002) *The Nonprofit Sector and Government in the Russian Regions: Patterns and Proposals for Collaboration*. Moscow: CAF.

Tretij Mezdunarodnyj Kongress soldatskikh materiei (The Third International Congress of the Soldiers' Mothers) (2002), Vystuplenia i documenty. Moskva: the CSM.

Vkluchenie gendernoj sostavliauschej v strategiu Souza komitetov soldatskikh materej Rossii (Including gender perspective in the strategies of the Soldiers' Mothers of Russia) (2002) Moskva: Kanadsky Fond Podderzhki Rossijskikh Zhenschin.

Vtoroj Mezhdunarodnyj Kongress soldatskikh materej (The Second International Congress of the Soldiers' Mothers) (2000), Vystuplenia i documenty. Moskva: The CSM.

III. Internet Sources

Alexeyeva, L. (2001) *A Letter to the Centres of Support of the NGO, to the non-profit Organizations*, retrieved from http://www.hro.org/actions/cfrum/oa.htm.

Azhgikhina, N. (1995) *Women as Presented in the Russian Media*, http://www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/cn6/1996/media/rmediaen.htm, retrieved August 25, 2004.

Azhgikhina, N. (2000) Empowering Russia's Women: Will Their Potential Be Tapped? *We/Myi*, http://www.we-myi.org/issues/millenium/journal.html, retrieved October 19, 2001.

Barabanov, V. (2004) V Rossii sozdaetsja partiia soldatskikh materei (A Party of Soldiers' Mothers is Created in Russia), *Solidarnost,*' February 11, http://www.solidarnost.org/article_new.php?issue=27&section=57&article=512, retrieved January 20, 2006.

Diligensky, G. (2001) *Sushchestvuet li v Rossii grazhdanskoie obshchestvo?* (Does the civil society exist in Russia?), retrived from http://www.fom.ru/ reports/frames/d010260.html

Falichev, O. (2004) Konsolidatziia usilij: Otkrytyj dialog mezhdu armiej i grazhdanskim obschestvom (Consolidation of Efforts: An Open Dialogue between the Army and the Civil Society), *VPK, voenno-promyshlennyj kur'er*, May 26. Retrieved January 20, 2006 from http://www.vpk-ws.ru/print.asp?pr_sign=archive.2004.36.articles.chronicle_01.

Gorshkov, M., Tikhonova, N. (2002) *Zhenschina novoi Rossii: Kakakia ona? Kak zhivet? K chemu stremitsja?* (A woman of a new Russia; What is she like? What does she want?),

http://www.fesmos.ru/Publikat/10_Woman%20new%20Russia2002/Woman_rus_10.html
Moscow: Russian Independent Institution of Social and National Problems.

Henderson, S. (2008) *Shaping Civic Advocacy: International and Domestic Policies towards Russia's NGO Sector*, retrieved December 28, 2008 from http://evans.washington.edu/files/HendersonAdvocacyChapter.pdf.

Hojer, M. (2004) *Reforming habitus, reordering meaningful worlds. Soldiers' Mothers and social change in postsocialist Russia*. University of Copenhagen. Retrieved July 25, 2008 from Anthrobase.com. http//www. anthrobase.com/Txt/H/Hojer_M_01.htm.

Kevorkova, N. (2001) My - volontery (We are volunteers). Retrieved from http://2001.novayagazeta.ru/nomer/ 2001/83n/n83n-s13.shtml

Kolesnikov, A. (2001) "Sumasshedshiie" v bezumnom mire ("The mads" in the crazy world), retrieved from http://forum.grani.ru/civil_society/articles/crazy/print.html

Matrosova, Ye. (2003) Bol'shaia sem'ia Marii Bol'shakovoj (A Big Family of Maria Bolshakova), *Uchitelskaja gazeta*, retrieved February 6, 2006 from http://www.ug.ru/03.10/pv5.htm

McCrath, T. (2002) *Nations in Transit: Russia*. Hartwick College. http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/nispacee/unpan007959.pdf. retrieved February 16, 2004, pp. 328-344.

Nielsen, F. S. (1994) *Soviet Culture - Russian Kul'tura: Culture, ideology and globalisation in the Soviet Union and thereafter, as compared to similar Western phenomena*, retrieved from http://www.anthrobase.com/Txt/N/Nielsen_F_S_02.htm

Oslon, A. (2001) *Predisloviie k knige "Pogovorim o grazhdanskom obshchestve*": Moskva Institut Fonda Obshschestvennoie mnenie. 2001. (Introduction in the book "Let us talk about the civil society"), Moscow: Institution of Public Opinion Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.fom.ru/reports/ frames/short/pz0106.html

Ol'kina, M. (2001) Armiia – eto diagnoz, uvereny Soldatiskiie materi (The Army is a Diagnosis – is the Conviction of the Soldiers' Mothers), Kommersant Ъ Daily, retrieved November 13, 2006 from http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.html?path

Petrenko, K. (2001) Obshchestvennyie organizatzii v Rossii (Public organizations in Russia), retrieved November 20, 2002 from http://www.fom.ru/reports/frames/d010261.html

Rasnake, R. Isbell, K., Allison, Ch. Et al. (2000) *The Economic, Democratic, and Social Status of Men and Women in Eurasia and Southeast Europe*. Washington: Aguirre International for Europe & Eurasia Bureau, USAID, April, Ch. 12. Retrieved from http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACK729.pdf

Russia, USAID Report (2000). Retrieved from http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/2000/russia.pdf

Russia,USAIDReport (2001). Retrieved from http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/2001/russia.pdf

Russia, USAID Report (2002). Retrieved from http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/2002/russia.pdf

Russia, USAID Report (2004). Retrieved from http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/2004/russia.pdf

Veretennikova, K. (2001) *Kukhni ustupili mesto zalam.* (Kitchens are substituted by the halls: the all-country human rights activists unite), retrieved from http://www.vremyamn.ru/cgi-bin/2000/10/6/2

Weir, F. (2003) Going AWOL: Russian Soldiers Desert en Masse, *Russia Weekly, Johnsons Russia List*, 237: 12, retrieved from http://www.cdi.org/russia/237-12.cfm

Yakimetz, V. (2002) *Mekhanizmy mehzsektornogo vzaimodeistviia* (Mechanisms of Intersectional Interaction), Report presented at the 2nd Russian Social Scientific Forum, February 21-23, St. Petersburg, retrived from http://www.blago.ru/news/22-02-02spb.pdf

IV. Newspaper Articles

Ampelovsky, V., Romanov, M., and Davydov, A. (2004) Materi-oborotni (Mothers-Werewolves), *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, October 22.

Associated Press, Soldiers Told Not to Turn to Activists, *The Moscow Times*, January 9, 2003.

Babakin, A. (1999) Vojna ne vse spishet (Not Everything is Written Off by the War) *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, July 16.

Barinova, M. and Rudnev, D. (2005) Dembelsky akkord voenkomov (Military Draft Boards Earn Money on Retiring Soldiers), *Profil*, No.48 (462), December.

Besprozvannaja, P. (2001) Blagotvoritelnost – eto biznes, a ne poproshajnichestvo (Charity is a Business, not Begging), *Pchela*, No. 34, July – August.

Bogoslovskaya, Ye. (2000) Soldatskiie Materi na 'Russkom ostrove' (Soldier's Mothers at the Russian Island'), *Chas Pick,* No. 3 (106), January 26.

Borta, Yu. (2004) Lechit'sja ili sluzhit? (Recive Treatment or To Make Service?), *Argumenty i Fakty*, December 9.

Chernova, N. (2003) Materinsky zakaz (Maternal Mandate), *Novaya Gazeta*, October 6.

Golovachev, V. (2007) Uletet' sho li na severa? (Shall I Fly Away to the North?), *Trud*, July 21.

Khazova, S. (2001) Materiam pogibshikh okazali znaki vnimaniia (Bereaved Mothers Were Shown Attention), *Nezavisimaia*, February 16, 2001.

Khramchikhin, A. (2004) Grazhdansky control nad armiei v Rossii dekorativen. (Civil Control over the Army in Russia is Ornamental), *Nezavisimaia*, June 11.

Kochetova, I. (2000) U osennego prizyva checheno-tadzhidskii privkus (The Fall Draft Has a Chechen-Tadzhic smack), *Argumenty i Fakty*, September 27.

Kondrashov, A. (2001) Pochemu prizyvniki ne khotiat sluzhit'? (Why the Conscripts-To-Be Do Not Want to Make Service?), *Argumenty i Fakty*, June 13.

Kostenko, N. and Melikova, N. (2005) Ryszhkov prinial na sebja materinskiie obiazannosti. Respublikanskaya partiia poglotila vliiatel'nuiu no bezzaschitnuiu obschestvennuiu organizatsiiu (Ruzhkov Took upon Himself Maternal Respondibilites. Republican Party Swallowed an Influential but Defenceless Social Organization), *Nezavisimaia*, October 18.

Kostiukovsky, A. (2005) Soldatovladelchesky stroi (A System of Soldier-Serfs), *Argumenty i Fakty*, October 12.

Kulikov, V. (2003) Dedovschina v rublevom ekvivalente (Dedovschina Counted in Ruble), *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, November 5.

Kulikov, V. (2002), Dedovschina dobralas' do generalov (Dedovshchina reached the generals), *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, August 30.

Kulikov, V. (2000) Soldaty zovut eje mamoj (Soldiers Call her Mother), *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, January 28.

Lally, K. (1999) Courageous Mothers Make Russia Quake, Government and War No Match for Women, Baltimore Sun, November 20, distributed by *the Johnsons Russia List*.

Latynina, Yu. (2004) Armiia kotoraia proigryvaet i zhaluetsia na zhenschin (The Army which Loses and Blaims the Women), *Novaya Gazeta*, October 25.

Markov, D. (2004) Opiat' oblavy! Prizyv posle vyborov (Battues Again! A Call-Up Campaign after the Elections), *Argumenty i Fakty*, January 5.

Mereu, F. (2004) Kremlin Looking for Loyal NGOs, *The Moscow Times*, June 25.

Mukhin, V. and Samarina A. (2004) Zhensovet protiv soldatiskikh materej (Zhensovet against Soldiers' Mothers), *Nezavysimaia*, November 10.

Naishul, V. (2004) "Rossiia kak khudozhnik ne prodavshij ni odnoj kartiny" (Russia is Like an Artist Who Never Sold Any Painting), *Izvestiia*, March 23.

Nikitina, S. (1999) Osennij prizyv poka idet ne prosto (The Fall Call-Up Campaign is Going Not Easy So Far), *Nezavisimaia*, November 3.

Pas'ko, G. (2003) Admiral otzenil svoiu bol' v million rublei, a stradaniia materei (The Admiral Assessed his Pain for One Million Ruble, but the Sufferings of Mothers of Perished Soldiers are Assessed by the Courts for the Maximum 50 Thousand Ruble), *Novaya Gazeta*, September 11.

Politkovskaya, A. (2004a) Bor'ba za mir smertel'no opasna: gosudarstvu meshajut soldatiskiie materi (Struggle for Peace is Deadly Dangerous: the State is Disturbed by Soldier's Mothers), *Novaya Gazeta*, October 25.

Politkovskaya, A. (2000) Nado voevat' synok: Esche raz o mamakh v chechenskoj vojne (You Have to Fight, My Dear Son: Once Again About Mothers in the Chechen War), *Novaya Gazeta*, March 20 - 26.

Politkovskaya, A. (2001) Pravo na proschaniie. Zavershilas' tragediia dlinnoiu v shest strashnykh let" (Right to Take Farwell. A Tragedy Which Lasted Six Terrible Years is Over), *Novaya Gazeta*, April 2.

Politkovskaya, A. (2004b) Strana Zamedlennogo Dejstviia: Kan zhivut sem'I pogibshikh Geroev Rossii (A Country of a Delayed Action": How the Families of Perished Heroes of Russia Live), *Novaya Gazeta*, August 19.

Politkovskaya, A. (2004c) Vsie nachinaetsja s prichala #0. Sozdana partiia soldatiskikh materei (Everything Starts at the Moorage No.0. A Party of Soldiers' Mothers Has Been Established), *Novaya Gazeta*, November 11.

Pavliutkina, I. (2003) Pravo na dostojnuiu zhizn (A Right for a Dignified Life), *Krasnaia Zvezda*, December 5.

Reif, I. (1998) Beg v kirzovykh sapogakh (Running inTarpaulin Boots), *Trud*, February 5.

Romancheva, I. (2004) Soldatskikh materei prizvali v politiku (Soldiers' Mothers Called-in in Politics), *Nezavisimaia*, February 5.

Samarina, A. (2004) Soldatskikh materei vse-taki ne pustili v Evropu. (Soldiers' Mothers Still were not Let to Go to Europe. Counsellor of the President Advised them to Engage in Human Rights Protection), *Nezavisimaia*, November 23.

Staff Writer (2004) Soldiers' Mothers Form Party, *The St. Petersburg Times*, November 9.

Tuchkova, A. (2000) Po kostiam brat' vsekh (Everyone with Flat Feet Should Be Drafted), *Nezavisimaia*, June 23.

Traynor, I. (2000) Russian Mothers Mobilise against Chechnya Campaign, *The Guardian*, February 3.

Tsimbal, V. (2003) Rossii nuzhna armiia ne tolko dlia ' malykh vojn.' (Russia Needs the Army Not Only for the 'Small-Scale Wars.' Every Year Fathers and Mothers of Draftees-To-Be Pay Bribes for 20 Billion Ruble), *Nezavisimaia* NVO, No. 24.

Uzelac, A. (2001) Kremlin Convinces NGOs to Play Ball, *The Moscow Times*, September 18.

Vais, A. (2005) Plan voenkomata i kliatva Gippokrata (The Plan of the Military Draft Board and the Hippocrates Oath), *Argumenty i Fakty*, March 10.

Without author (2000) Blagotvoritel'ny marafon (Charity Marathon), *Nezavisimaia*, April 27.

Yuzhnyi, A. (2000) V chest pogibshikh budut tzvetsi yabloni (Apple Trees Are Going to Blossom in the Honour of the Bereaved Soldiers), *Segodnya*. 7 days, April 21.

Zakatnova, A. (2004) Mat' soldatskaia. Komitet prevraschaetsja v partiiu (Mother of Soldier. A Committee is Turned into a Party), *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, November 9.

V. Unpublished Sources

Dzhibladze, G. (2002) *Challenges Facing Russian NGOs in the Times of Vladimir Putin.* Unpublished Paper. Moscow, the Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights.

Kuklina, I. (2004) *The Committee of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia for Gender Equality, in "Women in an Insecure World,"* Geneva: The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) (Forthcoming).

Documents of the SOMO (2004) *Women for Peace – Against War and Violence: The Crucial Problems of Women Peaceful NGO Activities,* Private Archive.

GÖTEBORG STUDIES IN SOCIOLOGY

1. Furåker, Bengt (ed): *Employment, Unemployment, Marginalization. Studies on Contemporary Labour Markets*. Department of Sociology, Göteborg University/ Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm 2001.
2. Berglund, Tomas: *Attityder till arbete i Västeuropa och USA. Teoretiska perspektiv och analyser av data från sex länder*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2001.
3. Larsson, Bengt: *Bankkrisen, medierna och politiken. Offentliga tolkningar och reaktioner på 90-talets bankkris*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2001.
4. Blomquist, Bo: *Förskolebarnets relation till sin familj. Förändrade förutsättningar och föreställningar 1950-1990*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2001.
5. Hansen, Lars: *The Division of Labour in Post-Industrial Societies*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2001.
6. Gustafson, Per: *Place, Place Attachment and Mobility: Three Sociological Studies*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
7. Rigné, Eva Marie: *Profession, Science, and State – Psychology in Sweden 1968-1990*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
8. Persson, Anders: *I kräftans tecken. En historiesociologisk studie av cancerforskningens samhälleliga villkor i Sverige och USA under 1900-talet*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
9. Brnic, Anita: *Speaking of Nationality. On Narratives of National Belonging and the 'Immigrant'*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
10. Korp, Peter: *Hälsopromotion - en sociologisk studie av hälsofrämjandets institutionalisering*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
11. Sobis, Iwona: *Employment Service in Transition: Adaptation of a Socialist Employment Agency to a Market Economy. A Case Study of Lodz, Poland 1989-1998*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
12. Hellum, Merete: *Förförd av Eros. Kön och moral bland utländska kvinnor på en grekisk ö*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
13. Carlson, Marie: *Svenska för invandrare – brygga eller gräns? Syn på kunskap och lärande inom sfi-undervisningen*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2002.
14. Hansson, Agneta: *Praktiskt taget. Aktionsforskning som teori och praktik – i spåren på LOM*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2003.
15. Engdahl, Oskar: *I finansvärldens bakre regioner. En studie om finansiella offshore-marknader och ekonomisk brottslighet*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2003.
16. Rolandsson, Bertil*: Facket, informationsteknologin och politiken. Strategier och perspektiv inom LO 1976-1996*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2003.
17. Schedin, Stefan: *Ekonomisk ojämlikhet. Inkomstfördelning och inkomstskillnader i Sverige under 1980- och 1990-talen*. 2003. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2003.
18. Morner, Claudia G: *Självständigt beroende. Ensamstående mammors försörjningsstrategier*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2003.

19. Wennerström, Ulla-Britt: *Den kvinnliga klassresan*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2003.

20. Wingfors, Stina S: *Socionomyrkets professionalisering*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2004.

21. Tursunovic, Mirzet: *Fostran till demokrati: Tre sociologiska delstudier av bosniska ungdomars politiska socialisering*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2004.

22. Alinia, Minoo: *Spaces of Diasporas: Kurdish Identities, Experiences of Otherness and Politics of Belonging*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2004.

23. Chronholm, Anders: *Föräldraledig pappa – Mäns erfarenheter av delad föräldraledighet*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2004.

24. Seldén, Daniel*: Om det som är. Ontologins metodologiska relevans inom positivism, relativism och kritisk realism*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2005.

25. Winell-Garvén, Irene. *Vägen till Parnassen. En sociologisk studie av kvinnligt konstnärskap i Sverige 1864-1939*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2005.

26. Engström, Pär: *Samtal och ledarskap. En studie av medarbetarsamtal i grundskolan*. Doktorsavhandling. Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2005.

27. Eydal, Gu∂ny Björk: *Family Policy in Iceland 1944-1984*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2005.

28. Ekbrand, Hans: *Separationer och mäns våld mot kvinnor*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2006.

29. Eriksson, Ylva Ulfsdotter: *Yrke, Status & Genus. En sociologisk studie om yrken på en segregerad arbetsmarknad*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2006.

30. Flisbäck, Marita: *Att lära sig konstens relger. En sociologisk studie av osäkra framtidsinvesteringar*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2006.

31. Berntsson, Paula: *Lärarförbundet, förskollärare och statushöjande strategier*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2006.

32. Latta, Mia: *Public Transfer and Private Help. Support Networks of Marginalised and Poor individuals in Sweden in the 1990s*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2007.

33. Persson, Sofia: *Läraryrkets uppkomst och förändring. En sociologisk studie av lärares villkor, organisering och yrkesprojekt inom den grundläggande utbildningen ca 1800-2000*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2008.

34. Bengtsson, Mattias: *Individen stämplar in. Arbetet, facket och lönen i sociologisk belysning*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2008.

35. Sjöstrand, Glenn: *Gåvan i Gnosjö. Företagares relationer i ett industriellt distrikt*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2008.

36. Pellbring, Mats: *Laissez-faire, systemkritik eller reformism? En studie av den svenska opinionsbildande globaliseringsdiskursen i dagspress, 1992-2001*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2008.

37. Bjarnason, Tómas: *Social Recognition and Employees' Organizational Support*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2009.

38. Jagudina, Zaira: *Social Movements and Gender in Post-Soviet Russia: The Case of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs*. Doktorsavhandling, Sociologiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 2009.

**DOKTORSAVHANDLINGAR VID SOCIOLOGISKA INSTITUTIONEN
FR O M 1995**

59. Börjesson, Mats: *Sanningen om brottslingen. Rättspsykiatrin som kartläggning av livsöden i samhällets tjänst under 1900-talet.* 1995.
60. Ljung, Margareta: *Lyft jorden mot himlen - växande i kvinnogrupper och kvinnliga nätverk.* 1995.
61. Björkemarken, Mariann: *Implementeringsanalys som komplement vid utvärdering - en fråga om perspektiv och förklaring.* 1995.
62. Håkansson, Kristina: *Förändringsstrategier i arbetslivet.* 1995.
63. Blomsterberg, Marianne: *Garanterade karriärer? Om social styrning och sysselsättningspolitik för ungdomar.* 1996.
64. Kohlström, Gulli: *Identitetsförändring vid anpassning till funktionshinder/handikapp.* 1996.
65. Larsson, Patrik: *Hemtjänsten ur tre perspektiv - En studie bland äldre, anställda och ledning.* 1996.
66. Oskarsson, Hermann: *En klasstrukturs uppkomst och utveckling. Akureyri 1860-1940.* 1996.
67. Thörn, Håkan*: Modernitet, sociologi och sociala rörelser/Rörelser i det moderna: Politik, modernitet och kollektiv identitet i Europa 1789-1989.* 1997.
68. Einarsdottir, Torgerdur: *Läkaryrket i förändring. En studie av den medicinska professionens heterogenisering och könsdifferentiering.* 1997.
69. Åberg, Jan-Olof: *Det rationella och det legitima. En studie av utvärderingars teori och praktik.* 1997.
70. Pham Van Bich: *The Changes of the Vietnamese Family in the Red River Delta.* 1997.
71. Lalander, Philip: *Anden i flaskan. Alkoholens betydelser i olika ungdomsgrupper.* 1998.
72. Eriksson, Birgitta: *Arbetet i människors liv.* 1998.
73. Bartley, Kristina: *Barnpolitik och barnets rättigheter.* 1998.
74. Nordström, Monica: *Yttre villkor och inre möten. Hemtjänsten som organisation.* 1998.
75. Stier, Jonas: *Dimensions and Experiences of Human Identity. An Analytical Toolkit and Empirical Illustration.* 1998.
76. Jerkeby, Stefan: *Slutna cirklar. Om civila moståndsrörelser i Norge och Danmark 1940-45.* 1999.
77. Oudhuis, Margareta: *Vägen till jämlikhet. En analys av den svenska arbetarrörelsens syn på effektivitet och emancipation i arbetslivet.* 1999.
78. Johansson, Anna: *La Mujer Sufrida – The Suffering Woman. Narratives on Femininity among Women in a Nicaraguan Barrio.* 1999.
79. Theandersson, Christer: *Jobbet – för lön, lust eller andra värden.* 2000.
80. Carle, Jan: *Opinion och aktion. En sociologisk studie av ungdomar och miljö.* 2000.
81. Öhrn, Ingbritt: *Livet, identiteten och kronisk sjukdom. En socialpsykologisk studie av unga vuxna diabetiker.* 2000.
82. Mossberg Sand, Ann-Britt: *Ansvar, kärlek och försörjning. Om anställda anhörigvårdare i Sverige.* 2000.
83. Berglund, Tomas: *Attityder till arbete i Västeuropa och USA. Teoretiska perspektiv och analyser av data från sex länder.* 2001.
84. Larsson, Bengt: *Bankkrisen, medierna och politiken. Offentliga tolkningar och reaktioner på 90-talets bankkris.* 2001.
85. Blomquist, Bo: *Förskolebarnets relation till sin familj. Förändrade förutsättningar och föreställningar 1950-1990.* 2001.
86. Hansen, Lars: *The Division of Labour in Post-Industrial Societies.* 2001.

87. Björk, Micael: *Upplösningens dialektik. Bildningsmål och politisk modernitet i Sverige kring sekelskiftet 1900.* 2002.
88. Gustafson, Per: *Place, Place Attachment and Mobility: Three Sociological Studies.* 2002.
89. *Rigné, Eva Marie: Profession, Science, and State – Psychology in Sweden 1968-1990.* 2002.
90. Persson, Anders: *I kräftans tecken. En historiesociologisk studie av cancerforsk-ningens samhälleliga villkor i Sverige och USA under 1900-talet.* 2002.
91. Brnic, Anita: *Speaking of Nationality. On Narratives of National Belonging and the 'Immigrant'.* 2002.
92. Korp, Peter: *Hälsopromotion - en sociologisk studie av hälsofrämjandets institu-tionalisering.* 2002.
93. Sobis, Iwona: *Employment Service in Transition: Adaptation of a Socialist Employment Agency to a Market Economy. A Case Study of Lodz, Poland 1989-1998.* 2002.
94. Hellum, Merete: *Förförd av Eros. Kön och moral bland utländska kvinnor på en grekisk ö.* 2002.
95. Carlson, Marie: *Svenska för invandrare – brygga eller gräns? Syn på kunskap och lärande inom sfi-undervisningen.* 2002.
96. Hansson, Agneta: *Praktiskt taget. Aktionsforskning som teori och praktik – i spåren efter LOM.* 2003.
97. Engdahl, Oskar: *I finansvärldens bakre regioner. En studie om finansiella offshore-marknader och ekonomisk brottslighet.* 2003.
98. Rolandsson, Bertil*: Facket, informationsteknologin och politiken. Strategier och perspektiv inom LO 1976-1996.* 2003.
99. Schedin, Stefan: *Ekonomisk ojämlikhet. Inkomstfördelning och inkomstskillnader i Sverige under 1980- och 1990-talen.* 2003.
100. Morner, Claudia G: *Självständigt beroende. Ensamstående mammors försörjningsstrategier.* 2003.
101. Wennerström, Ulla-Britt: *Den kvinnliga klassresan.* 2003.
102. Wingfors, Stina S: *Socionomyrkets professionalisering.* 2004.
103. Tursunovic, Mirzet: *Fostran till demokrati: Tre sociologiska delstudier av bosniska ungdomars politiska socialisering.* 2004.
104. Thörn, Catharina: *Kvinnans plats(er) – bilder av hemlöshet.* 2004.
105. Alinia, Minoo: *Spaces of Diasporas: Kurdish Identities, Experiences of Otherness and Politics of Belonging.* 2004.
106. Chronholm, Anders: *Föräldraledig pappa – Mäns erfarenheter av delad föräldraledighet.* 2004.
107. Seldén, Daniel: *Om det som är. Ontologins metodologiska relevans inom positivism, relativism och kritisk realism.* 2005.
108. Winell-Garvén, Irene: *Vägen till Parnassen. En sociologisk studie av kvinnligt konstnärskap i Sverige 1864-1939.* 2005.
109. Engström, Pär*: Samtal och ledarskap. En studie av medarbetarsamtal i grundskolan.* 2005
110. Löfstrand, Cecilia: *Hemlöshetens politik – lokal policy och praktik.* 2005
111. Eydal, Gu∂ny Björk: *Family Policy in Iceland 1944-1984.* 2005.
112. Ekbrand, Hans: *Separationer och mäns våld mot kvinnor.* 2006.
113. Eriksson, Ylva Ulfsdotter: *Yrke, Status & Genus. En sociologisk studie om yrken på en segregerad arbetsmarknad.* 2006
114. Flisbäck, Marita: *Att lära sig konstens regler. En sociologisk studie av osäkra framtidsinvesteringar.* 2006.

115. Berntsson, Paula: *Lärarförbundet, förskollärare och statushöjande strategier.* 2006.
116. Latta, Mia: *Public Transfer and Private Help. Support Networks of Marginalised and Poor individuals in Sweden in the 1990s.* 2007.
117. Persson, Sofia: *Läraryrkets uppkomst och förändring. En sociologisk studie av lärares villkor, organisering och yrkesprojekt inom den grundläggande utbildningen ca 1800-2000.* 2008.
118. Bengtsson, Mattias: *Individen stämplar in. Arbetet, facket och lönen i sociologisk belysning.* 2008.
119. Sjöstrand, Glenn: *Gåvan i Gnosjö. Företagares relationer i ett industriellt distrikt.* 2008.
120. Pellbring, Mats: *Laissez-faire, systemkritik eller reformism? En studie av den svenska opinionsbildande globaliseringsdiskursen i dagspress, 1992-2001.* 2008.
121. Bjarnason, Tómas: *Social Recognition and Employees' Organizational Support.* 2009.
122. Jagudina, Zaira: *Social Movements and Gender in Post-Soviet Russia: The Case of the Soldiers' Mothers NGOs.* 2009.