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INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**A CASE STUDY ON IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG RUSSIAN YOUTH:
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN MOSCOW**

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the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Social Anthropology**

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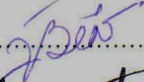
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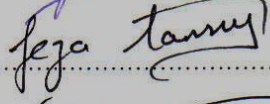
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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies identity formation of the Russian Youth among the University students in Moscow. Russian society is rapidly changing. Since mid 80's concepts such as *glasnost*, *perestroika*, and *democratization* play a major role in the Russian society affecting all segments of the society. After the breakup of the USSR, market economy and a more democratic system have been the main model for Russia. However Russia struggles with the aftermath of the breakup of the Soviet Union. *Negative population growth, alcoholism, crime, health problems, drug abuse, terrorism* are some of the problems Russia has faced in the last twenty years. These problems and the effect of the *globalization* undermine the National Russian identity leaving young Russians in uncertainty of present and future.

This work concentrates on the above mentioned issues and its effect on university students. The policies of the Russian government, such as *youth programs* and *official patriotism*, to solve the problems of the Russian youth are covered. The ideas of the university students about identity issues and particularly *everyday life* of Russian students are presented with an *emic* view. This research is based on a *fieldwork* in Moscow. *Participant observation* and *in-depth interviews* have been used to collect data, and the data collected is organized in a *descriptive* manner. Key concepts include: *identity formation, Eurasianism, the West, terrorism, religion, and education.*

ÖZET

Bu tez Moskovadaki Rus üniversite gençliğinde kimlik oluşumunu incelemektedir. Rus toplumu hızla değişmektedir. 1980'lerin ortasından beri *glasnost*, *perestroika* ve *demokratikleşme* gibi kavramlar Rus toplumunun bütün kesimlerini etkilemektedir. SSCB'nin ayrılmasından sonra piyasa ekonomisi ve daha demokratik bir sistem Rusya'nın temel yapı taşlarını oluşturmaktadır. Bununla beraber, Rusya Federasyonu, Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması sonrasında meydana gelen sorunlarla müdalece etmektedir. *Negatif nüfus artışı*, *alkol kullanımı*, *suç oranları*, *sağlık problemleri*, *uyuşturucu kullanımı*, *terrör* vs. Rusya'nın son yirmi yılda karşılaştığı bazı temel sorunlardır. Bu söz konusu sorunlar ve *küreselleşme* Rus ulusal kimliğinin zayıflamasına yol açmakta ve Rus gençliğini bugün ve gelecek hakkında belirsizliğe itmektir.

Bu çalışma, yukarıda bahsedilen konular ve bu konuların üniversite gençliğini üzerindeki etkisi üzerine yoğunlaşmaktadır. *Gençlik programları*, *resmi vatanseverlik* gibi Rus hükümetinin gençliğin sorunlarını çözmek için uyguladıkları politikalar kapsamıştır. Üniversite öğrencilerinin kimlik konuları üzerinde kendi düşünceleri ve özellikle *günlük yaşantıları emic* bakış açısıyla sunulmuştur. Bu araştırma Moskova'da gerçekleştirilen *saha çalışmasına* dayanmaktadır. *Katılımcı gözlem* ve *derinlemesine mülakatlar* bilgi toplanması aşamasında kullanılmış ve toplanılan bilgiler *descriptive* şekilde tasniflenmiştir. *Kimlik oluşumu*, *Avrasya*, *batı*, *terrör*, *din*, *eğitim* anahtar kavramlar arasında yer almaktadır.

1 INTRODUCTION

Russia is the largest country in the world with an area of 17,075,200 square kilometers. It “occupies much of easternmost Europe and northern Asia stretching from Norway to Pacific Ocean and from the Black Sea to the Arctic Ocean (“Country Profile”,2006:3). Russian Federation has the seventh most populous country in the world, and in 2006, the population of Russia is estimated to be over 142 million (“Country Profile”,2006: 4).

Except tropical climate, Russia covers all climate zones. It has a vast variety of natural sources: an estimated 6 percent of the world oil reserves, and one-third of the world’s natural gas reserves is in Russia. The official language of the Russian Federation is Russian, but approximately other 100 languages are spoken. The official state religion is Russian Orthodoxy. However the fastest growing religion is Islam (see Religion), (“Country Profile”, 2006: 4-6).

Russia practically enjoys a 100 percent literacy rate and almost 7 million students are enrolled in higher education programs in 2005 (see Education). From age six until age 15, nine years of basic general education is compulsory. As a principal, health care in Russia is free but private health care system is rapidly growing (“Country Profile”, 2006: 4-6).

Russia has a rich history and culture. Russians enjoy art, literature, music, and they have contributed to the world’s culture heritage in numerous ways. Russians consider themselves to be a well educated nation and have presented many great writers to the world in the nineteenth century such as Pushkin, a great poet, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy as two great novelists in world literature. Russian classical ballet is also gone on to reach worldwide acclaim. They have made a unique contribution to the development of ballet. “Ballet was introduced in Russia together with other aristocratic dance forms as part of Peter the Great's Westernization program in the early 1700s” (“Ballet”,1996: 1). For example *Bolshoi Theatre* is an historic theatre which gives performances of ballet and opera. During the soviet-Era “Bolshoi Ballet” became a well-known name in the West (“Bolshoi Theatre”, 2007: 1).

Russia has also contributed to the world in the domain of science. “Biology, chemistry, materials science, mathematics, and physics, were fields in which Soviet citizens have excelled (“Science and Technology”, 1987:1). For example the USSR had competed

with USA in Space exploration: it launched the first man-made object to orbit the earth and later the first human spaceflight (“Space Exploration”, 2007:1). Actually science is emphasized at all levels of educations in Russia. Although the education system is slowly deteriorating, it still has the highest percentage of university or college degree in the world which is over 40 percent (“Culture Background”, 2007:1).

The capital city of Russia, Moscow, is a business, scientific, cultural centre which attract thousands of tourists every year (Cultural and Educational tourism, 2007:1). For example, the golden ring of Russia which is a ring of cities northeast of Moscow is considered to be “open air museums”. They represent the unique monuments of Russia between 12th and 18th centuries such as monasteries, cathedrals, and churches. These cities include Sergiyev Posad, Pereslavl-Zalesskiy, Rostov Velikiy, Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Ivanovo, Gus-Khrustalny, Suzdal, Vladimir, Rybinsk, Uglich, and Alexandrov. “These towns are among the most picturesque in Russia and prominently feature Russia's famous onion domes” (“Golden Ring”, 2007: 1).

However despite Russia’s rich culture, history and its contribution to the humanity, years of strict political controls and failed planned economy (after 50’s) slowed down the progress of the country. In order to ameliorate the not-well going Soviet system, a set of new concepts was introduced under Gorbachev’s presidency. However Gorbachev’s reforms got caught “between criticism by conservatives who wanted to stop reform and liberals who wanted to accelerate it” (“Gorbachev’s”, 1997:1). These discussions and criticism led the country to a new economic system which changed the entire Russian society which is still in progress. Much of history of Russia since 1990’s is based on these fundamental changes.

In the last twenty years serious changes have occurred in Russian Society. These changes were vast, acute, and to an extent unexpected in that Russian society went through a period of harsh stagnation, experienced uncertainty, sorrow, and upheaval so that many things in Russia have ultimately changed. After the dissolution of the Soviet Russia, within only a few years’ time, the average life expectancy dramatically decreased for both genders indicating the severe changes in life standards. “Between 1990 and 1996 the average life expectancy for Russian men fell from 64 to 57 years, and for women, from 74 to 70” (B.B.S., 2004:1).; and “it is the steepest drop experts have seen at any time in recorded history” (“Russia”, 1995: 1).

It is arguable whether the new system has solved the problems of the Soviet Union. According to Tenaglia, “If communism gave rise to many kinds of social problems, the attempts by Gorbachev and Yeltsin to move toward democracy and a market economy have only made those problems worse. And their efforts to transform the system into something that Gorbachev used to call ‘normal’ and ‘civilized’ have actually given rise to new sources of discontent, new forms of deviant, or illegal, behavior and ever greater travails for the Russian people” (1). During this period of uncertainty and rapid change, a number of young or middle-aged, ambitious—as well as lucky—and well informed Russians seized the opportunities in their favor and became outstandingly rich in a matter of a decade while millions of ordinary Russians suffered and found it extremely difficult to cope with the new system and the ongoing processes. “The average Russian citizen was left confused, angry and feeling much worse for it all than before the fall of the Union” (B.B.S.,2004:1).

Perestroika, glasnost, and democratization (demokratizatsiya) were the historical events that reshaped the society in late 80’s and early 90’s insofar that they brought about the entire Union. With the arrival of a market economy, many values of Russian society altered, and/or were completely abandoned, requiring a new understanding of social values, expectations and model building.

It is worth noting that even after fifteen years, reasons that ended the Union are still a point of contention. In the early 90’s, in books, articles, magazines, and periodicals these reasons and their effects on society were discussed from numerous perspectives. Not only this but also the search for a better life and a hope for the future were and are the never-changing subjects of Russian and international media reflecting the doubts, hesitations and questions of Russians of any age.

Many examples can be given from the media to illustrate the contents of these discussions. Here, I randomly chose two articles from *Newsweek* and the Turkish edition of *National Geographic* to show the characteristic of these discussions. Although arbitrarily chosen, the article in *Newsweek* is interesting for showing the gap between the rich and the poor while giving many examples of breaches of law in the mid 90’s whereas the *National Geographic*, reporting from the early turn of the century, shows some tangible results of the policies followed and the expectations for the future.

Dating back to December 19, 1994, the *Newsweek* article is questioning the new money in their “special report”. The cover page headline reads, “Russia’s Filthy Rich” while the sub-headline reads, “Russia: Moscow is awash in new money from explosion of commerce, legal or not. Will furs and finery lead to envy—or emulation”.

This headline, relatively short in wording but bold and suggestive in content, explains a good part of the large picture in the mid 1990’s. Describing Moscow’s everyday life, the article claims that life standards of rich Russians are “conspicuous even by Western standards”. The article continues by giving many examples, rather in an ironic way, about the oddities of the market economy such as how a socialist factory director could become a capitalist overnight (*Newsweek*, 1994:34-38).

In the 2000’s, with more hindsight and with some tangible results of the policies of the recent past, people have started to consider Russia retrospectively. Thus the article in *National Geographic* is rather an example of this kind. This twenty-nine-page-long report, issued November, 2001, is trying to give an overall country profile while promoting a reasonable hope for the future and relating some recent success stories. This optimism can easily be captured from the headline of the article: “Rusya Yükseliyor” [Russia is on the Rise] (*National Geographic*, 2000:(46-75).

These two articles summarize the main approaches and the public voice of Russia since the end of the Union. I think the time that has passed after the collapse of the Union can be examined in at least two periods. The first period is the period of initial shock in Russia and the rest of the world, everyone trying to cope with and diagnose the reasons that ended the Union while agents were trying to keep the nation’s head above the water. In accordance, the beginning of the second period is when the preliminary results of the discussions and policies of the first term were available, which can be loosely taken as the beginning of the 2000’s.

Reasons that ended the Union, although important, are only a part of the jigsaw puzzle while now what is more important is which direction the country will go and which identity models will be followed by the youth. However the current situation tells us that Russia has acute contemporary problems to resolve such as poverty, public health, drug abuse, crime, and terrorism.

Poverty in Russia is related to the overall weakness of the economy and the problems of the transitory period needed to build a market economy. Stories about people becoming rich overnight can be commonly heard throughout Russia. Although this is still an intense problem in the society, Russians in general and the youth in particular tend to be quite sarcastic about it. For example, a flamboyant Azeri, two Russians (all of them students), and I were having a night out, socializing and talking about Russia. At one point, the Azeri student told me an anecdote at which both Russians laughed and agreed that, although it was a cynical joke, it had some truth in it: two rich Russians were dining in a Restaurant in Moscow. One of them, after looking at his friend's tie for a couple of seconds, complimented that the tie was very elegant and asked how much actually he paid for it. His friend, with a content smile on his face, replied that he had bought it from the shop around the corner and paid 2.000 dollars in cash. He also added that he was glad that his friend liked it. Yet his friend with a sign of open disapproval, frowned and criticized him, "Are you stupid, the same tie is sold for 2.500 dollars just a block down from where you bought it."

As cynical it is, the point is in Russia there are people with serious amounts of money—and according to the Azeri student, and as it is approved by the Russian students—they do not know what to do with it. A number of my informants told me that it was all about bringing in a new idea: "In Moscow there were hundreds of people who were literally ready to throw money at anything if you could only bring them something new and untried". At this juncture, even before referring to the other end of the spectrum, such instances can be taken as indicators of a highly disturbed or unbalanced distribution of income which causes severe poverty throughout the country.

The nation's budgetary problems also seem to have reduced the money that could be allocated to public health. A financially suffering health care system is actually an antecedent of inadequate nutrition, high abortions rates, underpaid health workers, and these are a few of the long list of health problems in Russia (Wren,1994:2-3). There have been a number of attempts to improve the crumbling healthcare system; nevertheless health problems in Russia continue to be a grim problem. The following excerpt from a report released by the United Nations (UN) should give us a better understanding of the current situation in Russia:

Almost one in 150 people in Russia lives with HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis and other health problems are spiraling, "HIV infection in the Russian Federation has acquired an epidemic character," the United Nations Development Agency (UNDA) said. According to a UNDA statement, 860,000 people live with

HIV/AIDS in Russia, [It is also] "one of 22 countries with high tuberculosis and with the highest TB mortality rate in Europe ("Russia's Report", 2006: 1).

It is also worrying that many Russians suffer from alcoholism and alcoholism-related depression; Russia has one of the highest suicides rates in the world (Danilova:2007 1). The UN report underlies that "changing men's lifestyle habits that include excess alcohol consumption, drug addiction and smoking is key to solving the country's problems" ("Russia's Report",2006:1).

After my fieldwork in Russia one of the anecdotal stories I kept telling my friends was that if Moscow's streets, for one reason or another, were to stop being cleaned for two or three days in a row, we would not be able to walk on the pavement due to the piles of bottles thrown anywhere in the street, and probably the number of bottles around the city would challenge the number of residents living in Moscow. However, Russians did have a strong network for cleaning the streets, and although my story contains some exaggeration, I can say that Russians of all ages consumed much alcohol, and at least according to some of the elderly people with whom I had a chance to talk mentioned to me that alcoholism was one of the biggest problems of Russia if not the first.

The reasons for such high alcohol consumption as well as drug addiction and smoking are related, according to the UN, "with stress reduction measure and ways of demonstrating manhood, growth of suicides among men is an extreme form of reaction to growing socio-economic pressure and inability to perform the traditional role of breadwinner" (1).

Drug abuse is a pressing phenomenon in Russia, and it is reported that there are 1.5 to 4.5 million drug addicts. There are many reasons that increase drug consumption; the following list is only a few of them: loosely controlled borders, difficult-to-trace money transactions related to unregulated finance system, and many unemployed chemists and doctors creating new synthetic drugs such as more potent amphetamines (Tenaglia, 2005:3).

Police officers admit that "over the past five years, the problem of drugs in Russia has worsened considerably," and "today it is a serious and dangerous social problem". Even Yeltsin announced that "another terrible thing has caught up with us, drug addiction among teenagers, and we had not time to even prepare for this" (3).

Crime is another widespread, tenacious problem in Russia that draws a lot of attention. Crimes such as a 13-year-old teenager killing her younger brother and sister after an unsuccessful rape attempt or a 14-year-old schoolboy murdering an 8-year-old boy and demanding ransom from his parents for the body are examples to show the level of the problem (4). Moreover organized crime is spread all over Russia.¹

In 1996 there were 8,000 criminal gangs in Russia. In 1993 there were 5,700, over 300 of them operating internationally. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) has estimated that 40 percent of private business, 60 percent of state-owned enterprises, and more than half of the country's banks are controlled by organized crime. One wonders how the other half survives. Banks are considered to be insolvent since the crash of August 1998. The rest are suspected of being money-laundering fronts for the government and businesses. Most private enterprises pay protection of up to 30 percent of their profits to organized crime (Pelton, 2005:1).

According to my Azeri informant whom I mentioned earlier, again in the presence of two other Russians, "In Russia, in order to say that one has a capital of 1 million dollars, one should actually have 1.5 million dollars." Although it sounds paradoxical, the reason is very simple: they need the other half a million dollars to keep the Mafia away and secure their 1 million dollars.

The Minister of Affairs, Boris Gryzlov, told journalists that the number of crimes committed in 2002 was 14 percent less than the previous year, and added that they "follow the entire situation and [their] analysts have registered a subsiding wave of crime" (Pravda:2000, 1). Yet it is still difficult to claim that crime has declined much.

In addition to this, racism is another type of dangerous crime:

The number of Russian young people who affiliate themselves with the skinhead movement is more than 15,000 people. [. . .] Extremist groups are a serious destabilizing factor for the country's social and political development. [. . .] According to the interior ministry's [Komarov] information, there are 2,500 active skinheads and about 100 leaders of various levels in the Moscow region. [. . .] There are forces in Russia that "try to make a political capital" by

¹ Films about Mafia and Crime are popular in Russia. *Брат*, Brother, by Сергей Бодров, is an interesting film depicting Russia and organized crime in the 90's. According to the writing at the back of CD-case, Brother is the first film about "new Russia". It gives us a very good idea about Crime and Mafia in Russia; the only reservation I have about the film is that ordinary people and their problems were not included much in the plot, but it is worth watching to understand the level of organized crime in Russia.

luring youth into informal extremist groups, said Komarov. According to his account, the process is supported by mass media. Propaganda is aimed, first and foremost, at teenagers aged between 13 and 17. In 2002, law enforcers opened 71 criminal cases related to the skinheads. Thirty-one of them were forwarded to the court. 16 people were found guilty of various offences (“Number”,2003: 1).

I was constantly warned by foreign students not to go to parks alone or wander around late at night. Although this very little—if not at all—dissuaded me from doing the things I wanted to do, they apparently had many reasons to warn me about the risks involved. During my stay at least one Chinese student who was staying in one of the dormitories in my neighborhood was severely beaten by skinheads and hospitalized. A worse case scenario was that one of the *ahran* (*охрань*) (the security person) working in my dormitory with some of his friends had beaten another student to death and escaped. What makes this story drearier is that this security person was someone I knew and spent time before this unfortunate incident. In other words, in Russia it is difficult to anticipate where danger might come from, and there are different sorts of threats for the person in the street; and one has to be cautious and make compromises to avoid danger.

So far I might have unfortunately depicted Russia as a jungle where only the bad or the worse live, but this is not true. After spending a few weeks in Russia, I met interesting, well-educated people who know the problems of the country and want to solve those problems as well. I had the opportunity to be accepted by different student groups. I spent most of my time with a group of 10 to 12 students who were very close friends. They welcomed me in their circle, taught me about Russian culture and language, invited me to their home towns, and treated me as their friends. With these people with whom I still keep contact and some others, I had the chance to see how Russian youth think and live. I must note that after I had spent time with them, Russian films, music, and literature started to mean much more than it did before. They assisted me to become immersed into their culture, and in a surreptitious way they showed me other aspects of the Russian culture which is completely different than the profile I mentioned above. They had problems of the world’s youth in general such as the uncertainty about the future, generational clashes with their parents, dreams about the future, but they were also very kind young adults who enjoyed their lives, and particularly their lives were not at all shattered by Russia’s problematic situation although they were aware of all the current problems.

They were not in the habit of underestimating the problems of Russia, but they were rather ironic about them. This ironic thinking pattern probably helped them to cope and is a compromise for hoping that the future will be better. Also mystifying the problems was another way of dealing with them. The well-known poem written by G. Fedor Tutchëv (Г. Федор Тютчев) in 1860 is a very good example to show their approach about Russia:

Russia is a thing of which
the intellect cannot conceive.
Hers is no common yardstick.
You measure her uniquely:
in Russia you believe! (see appendix 9.1 [1]), (Jude, 2000:311).

For understanding the rudiments of Russian identity one has to take Russian history into account in its historical context. According to Dağı there are three major elements that shape both foreign policy and the national identity of Russia: Orthodoxy, a strong and sacred state, and a messiahian culture (15). These notions make an important reservoir for Russian identity; yet the collapse of the Soviet Union brought a number of unresolved problems. First the rapid change in flow of information, the increase of globalization, and the dissociation of upper identity and the national identity of Soviet Russia have caused fractures in understandings the individual, local, and national identity (21). In addition to this, open questioning of nation-state ideologies and constantly weakening and/or weakened nationalism over the globe—results of globalization—entail new problems in the formation of identity.

At this junction, Russia is struggling against the effects of globalization on one hand, while trying to solve local problems—building a new system based on market economy is but one of the many obstacles—in its attempt to form a new identity that would guide the society at large. Whatever model will surface, it is most likely to inherit the characteristics of the above-mentioned criteria and find a solution for the long-disputed problem of the navigation of the country: the West or the East. Yet one thing is sure that many things have changed in Russia and as it seems some of them are going to continue to change in the near future affecting the culture from the bottom to the top (not necessarily in this order).

1.1 Fieldwork

My fieldwork activities consisted of participant observation and in-depth interviews (see appendixes). In addition to the fieldwork, as a part of my scholarship, I had Russian

classes approximately five hours a day for five months.² It should be noted that a five-month stay in Russia or somewhere else is hardly enough to get a full picture of the culture—it is also arguable if such a task is ever possible even when the duration of stay does not play a role. However, in the anthropological tradition, it is preferable to stay one full year, four seasons in the field and thus complete the yearly cycle. However, due to time, budget, and institutional constraints, I stayed in the field from the end of December, 2003 to the beginning of June 2004; a total of five months and one week.

This work is a partial requirement of a Master thesis, and it is trying to elaborate neither any theoretical novelty nor in-depth theoretical discussions of the Russian Youth, but to give *just one* account of the Russian youth in a descriptive manner, and discuss the dynamics that shape identity formation. Thus this thesis is portraying, in large, an emic view to understand both the processes and possible results of identity formation of the Russian youth. However, it is important to note that none of the results of this study is necessarily amenable to generalization nor of all Russian youth; fieldwork in another region or the same region but with another group of people may change the research. Yet, I hope this fieldwork can help to understand the nature and limits of the conflicts pertaining to identity issues in a rapidly changing society and provide an example for further studies.

My fieldwork, contacts with Russians, readings about Russia, and discussions with different experts persuaded me to think that the resolution of identity problems in Russia is open-ended. In other words, it is difficult to make an educated guess about the future of Russia since there are so many contradicting agents, ideas and ideals that any prediction can only be tentative. Yet this intellectual activity, trying to understand our neighbor, is becoming ever important.

The days of being stigmatized as a communist for learning Russian are in the past. Yet these long prevailed suspicions about communist countries caused us to be cut off from Russia and the countries behind the so-called “iron curtain”. However in the last ten years, personal, institutional, and economic affiliations in Turkey and Russia are improving rapidly.

² Due to my fieldwork agenda, such as visiting people, doing interviews etc., I was not asked to attend some of the classes, especially towards the end of my stay there. Yet I followed most of the classes which played a vital role in the process of immersing into the culture and later during the interviews.

These developments in the relationship between these countries certainly require a better understanding of Russia.

Finally, I want to give a loose but suggestive example to understand the duality in Russia. During my stay in the dormitory I literally came to understand that there were two ways of dealing with problems in Russia: the normal or legal or the expected way and the abnormal or illegal or the unexpected way—and as I realized that the latter way was how, in fact, most people forcibly solved their problems. For example, in the dormitory I stayed, the doors were to be closed at 12:00 o'clock every night and opened at 6:00 o'clock in the morning according to the regulations. Thus between these hours it was not possible to enter or go out of the dormitory except during emergency situations. Yet soon I came to learn that people solved this obstacle in a number of ways: one way was to talk to the *ahran* (*охрань*) (the security person) and tell him (in my dorm they were always males) that they (students or other people living in the dormitory) had to come late, and whether he could be kind enough to let them in after the doors would be locked. Of course this favor had to be returned by another small favor, say, with a drink or with something to eat or with any other appropriate convenience. Another way to deal with this problem was to have a spare key for the emergency exit and to sneak in through the back door without encountering the security man. At this point we come to an important crossroad—front doors and back doors. This front door back door analogy is to be found not only in the dormitory but many in many other parts of the social life in Russia. Hence, In Russia there are front doors and back doors. One can always go through the front doors or the back ones. Is it the result of 70 years of communist regime and the current social uncertainty many Russians prefer and/or forcibly use back doors? Regardless of the reasons why people use back doors, the end product is inefficiency and corruption. One can anticipate that once the proclivity for using the back doors can be reduced, a more transparent and corruption free system can flourish favoring the society at large. The choice of Russians, front doors vs. back doors, will continue to affect the Russian society as a whole, and any future modeling of identity formation as well as other issues will have to address and resolve this very problem.

1.2 Objective of the Study

There are two main reasons why this thesis is written. One of the reasons is that it is a partial requirement of a master's degree in Anthropology, and all candidates must, first, design a research project then go to field and analyze their findings and then finally report it

in a master's thesis to accomplish the above-mentioned requirement. This is evidently one of the major reasons why I did this research—gaining the basic skills an anthropologist needs for further studies. Yet, although this is a necessary process, the choice of a subject and its justification is another issue which can be difficult to rationalize for any research candidate, particularly when the research is being carried out through a monitoring institution.

However, it is this choice that makes a painstaking process bearable, and it is an academic practice to justify reasons—to rationalize the objective of the study—that lay behind the choice of any academic research. To this end, in accordance with other research projects, this research had both professional and personal objectives.

There were several reasons that affected the choice of my topic. In the 80's, unlike today, talking about communism in general and about USSR in particular was enough to be labeled as a communist in Turkey by the majority of people. It was enough for many people to be labeled as communists for simply having found with a book or document written in Russian or any Cyrillic language in general—let aside learning Russian or going there. Although, today, in the relatively liberal world we live in, this might seem to be farfetched, it was a common problem then. For example, even in *late* 90's—to be precise, in the summer of 1997—when I wanted to start learning Russian in Istanbul, I was asked to bring a petition from the company that I was working for to be allowed to be enrolled in a private course for Russian. When I frowned, I was told that this was a common practice and, unless I was a student this was the standard procedure. Moreover this fear of communism distracted and deteriorated—intentionally or unintentionally—most of the information we acquired about Russia although they were our next door neighbors. For these reasons it was very difficult to find accurate information about the USSR, except when you were working for certain institution, and/or you had the chance to visit the country. This, as expected, usually formed an intentional layer of mystery surrounding the USSR created by different agents depending on their agendas.

After Russia opened its borders, many people rushed to various countries including Turkey. However, this did not change the lack of information—or create accurate and reliable accounts—about Russia because the many women that came for prostitution did not help much about the problematic country profile. If we follow the numerous accounts of Russian profile through the media, such as newspapers or the Internet, we all “*knew*” for what Russians were worth: they all had “*loose*” morals—it took only a short while to find a

pejorative name for Russian women: Natasha (Russian women in general Slavic women in particular that are supposed to have only sex in mind).³

Meanwhile, many entrepreneurs started flourishing attempts to improve economical ties between the two countries. Moreover cross-cultural marriages tightened the mutual relations on the cultural level. However, doing business is actually dealing with culture to a certain extent, and probably many people noticed that there was a gap of information between the countries; particularly about the changes that occurred in Russia during the late 80's and 90's. To overcome this problem, there have been many research projects exploring different aspects of Russian society to understand our neighbors with a more realistic profile—to say that they are more than just a bunch of loose people—and to bridge the information gap mentioned above. These research projects covered both Russians living in Turkey, mostly on economical and cultural levels, and projects that mainly concerned politics or international relations.

Considering the mystery that surrounded the USSR due to political reasons and the lack of knowledge of current events in Russia, I was interested to go to Russia and do some fieldwork so as to understand our neighbors and see the world through their own eyes in their natural environment. To the best of my knowledge, this was the first anthropological fieldwork done by a Turkish anthropologist in Russia over an extended period of time—slightly more than five months—for a master's thesis. Thus, along with the requirement of doing fieldwork for a master's thesis, providing some accounts of Russian culture and, hopefully, adding anthropological fieldwork in Russia to the corpus of information and providing an ethnographic account to the literature was the second main purpose of this research which was unique at least at the time this fieldwork was carried out.

Once, the fieldwork location and the topic were chosen, I started to think about the focus of the study because there are many aspects of Russian culture that one can easily spend a lifetime considering. The formation of identity among Russians made sense to me because, this topic, in a way, lets one explore the differences between the past and present providing

³ This is not a new tendency in Turkey against Russians. In 1920's, when White Russians fled to Istanbul, people were quick to name Russian women “хорошо”, horoscho. Хорошо is all right, very, very well or good for Russian, and it was used with a pejorative meaning against Russian women. Today this negative approach towards particularly Russian women is still rampant. One can check the entry “Rus kızları” (Russian girls), on <<http://sozluk.sourtimes.org/>> to see this trend.

further opportunities to explore the political reasoning behind it—which was a topic I was interested in. However, although this was in my mind, I have to note that later in the fieldwork this part played a less important role, although I had not completely abandoned it.

Thus, before going to the field, I was interested in the political processes that formed identity formation, but later in the process of my fieldwork the very formation of identity seemed to be more interesting so that I shifted my interest to focus more on the processes of formation of identity rather than the political reasoning and dynamics of the identity formation. Identity formation in this respect, political or not, is important because, since the dissolution of Soviet Russia, an essential problem arose in forming a model that would provide ground for the different people that form Russian society. It is these models that unite people of different interests under one flag. However this is easier said than done if we take into consideration the effects of globalism in large working against nation states and undermining, for better or worse, its principles. Yet globalism might be the least of problems in Russia because the forced and rapid implementation of the market economy has reminded us of the wild capitalism of the past which affected the masses on a very large scale. It is this change and uncertainty that makes difficult to come up with a prevailing model for identity formation although it is not the only reason. Different agents—from average citizen to politicians or well-informed, ambitious, young or middle aged people—are struggling for power with in the dynamics of a rapidly changing society; it is interesting to observe the ideas that govern identity formation.

Besides these more theoretical and general reasons why I chose this topic, I will also briefly mention some personal reasons and the role of chance in selecting my topic, which might provide a more complete picture of the activities that covered my fieldwork. To start with, any research project is dependent on a budget, and my getting a scholarship from the Russian Federation was a decisive factor that enabled me to do fieldwork in Russia, and moreover the city and the university I did my fieldwork at were also related to scholarship availabilities in Russia. If I had gone to another in another city or university I would have done my fieldwork in that environment.

On the personal level, I was very interested in the so-called “iron-curtain” countries due to the mysterious feelings they always evoked in me. In addition to this, I fall into the category of people who believe that language skills are among primary skills one needs to have in doing fieldwork. Although I had to spend serious amount of time improving my

Russian in the field, my previous Russian experience was a decisive matter on choosing one field over other possible fieldwork locations.

In short, it was the historical ties between Russia and Turkey and the current need of more theoretical and first-hand knowledge about Russia, my interest in a rapidly changing society relatively less known to us, identity issues and their relevance, and finally some personal factors such as receiving a scholarship or knowing some Russian as well as the requirement of fieldwork were the main factors that shaped the objective and the focus of the study.

2 RESEARCH AREA AND FIELDWORK ACTIVITIES

Between the end of December 2003 to June 2004, five months and a week, I was in Moscow doing fieldwork. During this time I went to a couple of other towns when invited by my informants, although I stayed ninety percent of the time in Moscow. With the exception of the first two weeks, my daily activities, in general, were divided into four parts: joining morning classes, spending time with students and my informants, studying Russian, and finally, taking field notes. Although I tried to follow the same program in the first two weeks, I had to solve the initial problems of being in the field such as meeting the relevant people, trying to move into the dormitory from the hostel I was staying at, and collecting a number of documents as well as health certificates from the local hospitals. After the first two weeks, except joining morning classes, all other activities could happen in any order although the order I presented above was the most common one. I shall explain each of these activities to give a better picture of the physical boundaries of my field and my activities during the fieldwork.

Morning classes (also sometimes in the afternoon) were a part of my scholarship and played a vital role in immersing myself in both the culture and the language. This helped me mingle with my informants and provided a better understanding of the people and culture. The classes involved information about Russian culture, history, music, literature, media, and films, and they provided me with a good basis as a crash course on both the language and the culture. Students in my class were all Chinese students studying Russian language and culture back in China for some time, mostly for one or two years. They were in Moscow to improve their knowledge of Russia and Russians. This caused me some difficulty in the beginning, as they were already speaking somewhat advanced Russian, but with some diligent work, I managed to catch up with them later. During those classes, I had around 520 hours of Russian studies, enabling me to follow my informants better. However, I have to mention that toward the end of my stay, I missed many classes to spend more time with my informants and to visit some of the places they lived.

My dormitory was only seconds away both from the building where my classes were held, and the building where lectures were held. The former building was used by only prep students—it was also used as a hostel and dormitory—and the latter building was where to find most of the undergraduate students. Doing participant observation and spending time with my informants was the most important activity in the field, and as expected this took

most of my time. My dormitory was 10 minutes away from the metro station *Yugo Zapadnaya* (*Юго-Западная*), and I spent a lot of time around the dormitory and the campus. The university that hosted me was called Moscow State Pedagogical University (*MSPU*) and it was a prestigious university for students who wanted to become teachers or work in the teaching industry in general. In the *Yugo Zapadnaya* (*Юго-Западная*) area there was also another university called *International University* (*Mejdu Narodniy Universitet, Между Народный Университет*). This university hosted mostly international students, and it too was ten minutes away from my dormitory. I spent also some time in this area because I was interested in seeing Russian and international students in the same environment. As a matter of fact there were quite a number of international students at my University as well, but International University was particularly popular for its international students as its name clearly suggests it. Another place I spent an important amount of time was *Frunzenskaya* (*Фрунзенская*) where the main corpus of the university was located. Here, too, I spent a lot of time in the cafeteria with students, and I also used the library in this building in the afternoons because it was open approximately one hour later than the library at *Yugo Zapadnaya* (*Юго-Западная*).

Studying Russian, for doing my daily assignments for the class, and understanding my informants better, was a routine activity, taking a few hours almost everyday either in one the three libraries or in my dormitory⁴. The libraries located at university buildings at *Yugo Zapadnaya* (*Юго-Западная*), *Frunzenskaya* (*Фрунзенская*), or the public library named Yuri Gagarin at the opposite of the metro station *Yugo Zapadnaya* (*Юго-Западная*). I used those three libraries alternatively to both change environment, practically studying in different places, and for mingling with as many people as possible. All of the three libraries were commonly used by students, and on Sundays only the public library was open. Therefore it was possible to find many students at least at the weekends. In addition to this, every Thursday, for one hour and a half, there was a colloquium in the ditto public library on different topics about Russian culture and politics which provided me with much information about contemporary issues of Russian culture. As a principle I attended all the colloquiums and became a natural member of the ditto group, and I came to know most of the people that attended those colloquiums. Again on Thursdays, as one of the rare spare-time activities, I regularly visited the campus of the renowned MSU (Lomonosov Moscow State University),

⁴ See appendix (sample language diary). for my progress in the Russian language.

the first university founded in Russia, at *Vorobievyy Gory (Воробьевы Горы)* to play chess around seven o'clock for a few weeks, but later when it had started to overlap with the colloquiums, I had to sacrifice my chess evenings. Sometimes when I had no time to study during the day time, I studied late in the evening in my room before going to sleep.

Taking field notes was, too, a difficult and time consuming activity which was inescapable. I took most of my field notes right before going to sleep or sometimes in the morning before my classes started. I tried to keep field notes as organized as possible, but there were cases where I had to write things a few days after they had actually occurred.

In other words, in the field I studied Russian and did my daily assignments which enabled me to immerse in the culture, spent most of my time with my informants during the day or night time around three campuses and my dormitory, and finally recorded my activities and observations as fieldwork notes.

However, I should note two things before going into details. First, although most of my fieldwork activities were in the above mentioned locations, they were not confined to those places. My fieldwork, on a larger scale, was anywhere I went in Russia. During this time, wherever I went and for whatever reason I was there, I continued to do fieldwork. This included my time-out around the Red Square or the occasional walk in a local park or simply the time I spent on a train going from one place to another. I should particularly mention that all these activities, seemingly minor, provided some immense data which gave me a deeper insight into Russian culture. In a broader sense, the time I spent *here and there* expanded my experience and offered me some low frequency practices that I could otherwise not learn.

In addition to this I visited two cities for an extended period of time; one 4 days and the other, in two visits, a total of, 5 days. These two cities were, respectively, *Kurchatov* and *Suzdal*. In both cases I was invited by my informants to spend time with them which were the highlights of my fieldwork because I was treated as a family friend staying in different flats and places supplying me, again, invaluable data about the everyday activities of my informants.

Second, arguably, I did not strictly confine my fieldwork activities to Russia, Moscow. I had met a number of Russian students, who guided me at Yeditepe University before going to the field. Especially one of them, both in Turkey and Russia, became a key informant for

me. We first established a more formal relationship. He was teaching me Russian, but later while in Russia and after my return to Istanbul—when I was in Russia, he, too, was there, and while this thesis was being written he was working in Ankara—we continued to meet occasionally becoming good friends, staying at each other’s flats, and being cultural guides for each other—he helped me with the Russian culture, I helped him with the Turkish culture—we have been sustaining both formal and informal as well as a reciprocal relationship to date. Also after I had returned and started analyzing my fieldwork notes, as it happens in most post-fieldwork activities, I came across with only-if-I-had-asked-this-as-well type of problems, and in such cases, again, Russian students that are studying at Yeditepe University or the ones I know from different places provided me great help. All these activities, I suppose, should be taken loosely as fieldwork activities although they did not strictly happen in Russia.

A routine day for me in the field would mean me waking up around eight o’clock (sometimes later if I had gone to bed late). Almost right after I woke up, if I had not written the previous day’s fieldwork activities, and if I did not have something more urgent, I would write my fieldwork notes. After I finished my fieldwork notes, I would usually join classes and after class, again depending on my time time-table, usually around 11:30, I would start spending time with my informants depending on the plan of the day. However, most of the time, I would be, as mentioned above, in one of the two buildings, either at the campus at *Yugo Zapadnaya (Юго-Западная)* or in one at *Frunzenskaya (Фрунзенская)*. Spending some time in and around the campus, if I had no more class that day, as soon as possible, or (if I had some class in the afternoon after that class). I would spend some time in the library studying. Later around six or seven o’clock the second and usually the most active part of my day would start.

In the evening, I would spend most of my time with my informants either in their respective rooms with a group of students or out together socializing. Since most of the students preferred to stay awake late in the evening, I too would stay with them sharing all sorts of everyday activities until late in the morning. Many of those nights involved drinking because, as expected, most university students in their early twenties liked to party, and my joining them meant doing everything they did which is, as a matter of fact, a serious part of participant observation.

However this is not as *fancy* as it may sound because first I had to get used to consuming serious amount of vodka which was not something I was used to perform in Istanbul, and second although, I did not have any health problems in Russia, I lost a total of nine kilos due to indulging myself during the participant observation, and having some problems getting used to local food although I am very easygoing with food in normal situations. As a personal account, I shall note one instant which shows my pre and post mentality about drinking: on the plane, while flying to Russia, one of the passengers, probably Russian, had ordered spirits very early in the morning. This was not a common act for me, and I could not really appreciate how one would like to drink so early in the morning. However after having spent five months in the field mostly with students, on my return flight around the noon time, although I did not order any spirits, I did think whether or not I should order something to drink.

It would be wrong to say that my informants and I drank every night, or suggest in any way that all Russian students were heavy drinkers, but rather as a fieldwork note I want to mention that drinking was a frequent activity in the field because my informants preferred to drink as a social activity, and as a result of participant observation I did become a *member* of my group to a certain extent that I thought of ordering spirits on the return flight.

Thus in the evenings my fieldwork activities consisted my visiting different informants in their respective rooms and talking about Russian and Russian culture as well as joining to their evening activities in all respects for five months. Except these activities I sometimes went to a park near my dormitory for refreshment, the Red Square, *Arbatckaya* (*Арбатская*), *Ohotniy Rad* (*Охотный Рад*) and spent time in the central area of Moscow *Centralniy Okrug* (*Центральный Округ*) trying to be as observant as possible while visiting frequently book stores, metro stations (spending time at stations was an everyday activity for Russians, particularly at *Ohotniy Rad* (*Охотный Рад*) midsize to big stores (for example *GUM* (*ГУМ*), a big shopping center adjacent to the Red Square). During these occasions I experienced *the Russian way* of doing things and met interesting people who shared their knowledge about their culture with me.

The above mentioned locations were the physical borders of my field. I rarely left that circle except exploring the city some more and taking a few time-breaks in the field for some refreshment; hence my daily routine was repeated approximately for five months until I left the field.

2.1 Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework of the Study

The writing process of any fieldwork activity must address four issues: “(1) The assumed relationship between culture and behavior (the observed); (2) the experiences of the fieldworker (the observer); (3) the representational style selected to join the observer and observed (the style); [and] (4) the role of the reader engaged in the active reconstruction of the tale (the audience)” (Maanen, 1988:xi). Although it might be relatively easy to summarize the concerns and representational issues governing a fieldwork activity in a few headings as above, the theoretical and practical consequences of an academic pursuit, usually drive from lengthy and complicated discussions of literature. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to go into these complicated discussions, but two issues are important in the process of the justification of the research methodology. First, I think, the observers should note their sensitivity and awareness of the theoretical discussions in literature, and second, in terms of writing about field experience and the methodology employed in the field, it is inescapable to touch upon these issues at a certain level at least.

There are usually two representational styles or approaches of fieldwork activities—the *idiographic* approach and the *nomothetic* approach. The idiographic approach emphasizes “the holistic nature of ethnography and the distinctive nature of information discovered” (Woods qtd in Denscombe, 1998:71). “The nomothetic model of explanation, on the other hand”, seeks to “provide the greatest amount of explanation with the fewest number of casual variables to uncover general patterns of cause and effect” (Denscombe, 1998:71).

However there is also a middle consideration or view employed with fieldwork data and findings. “Somewhere towards the middle of the spectrum lies the view that “idiographic” and “nomothetic” approaches are not mutually exclusive, and that we can have both rich and intensive description *and* generalizability” (Woods qtd in Denscombe, 1998:72). In this research my approach was more idiographic, as mentioned in the introduction, but there are also parts in this thesis where I followed the nomothetic approach. For example, in the chapter where I discuss about who is Russian and who is other, I made certain generalizations that it shows nomothetic approach is too used in this research. Yet in the final analysis this research is more idiographic than it is nomothetic.

In other words, this thesis is not trying to generalize fieldwork findings, nor does it construct or test any theoretical approach. It is mainly trying to provide detailed descriptions

based on first hand observations. However, on certain occasions, there might be some attempts to generalize certain aspects of the cultural traits that seemed to be part of society at a broader network than one-time observations so that certain cultural traits, that are not one-time observations, can give us some idea about the subject culture in general.

2.1.1 Fieldwork

Spending five months with my informants and joining their everyday activities allowed me to have better access to different aspects of the youth culture in general. Being with my informants at university, outside, inside, within the four walls of a flat, with the presence of other informants or sometimes being in person gave me the opportunity; to see different traits and aspects of the Russian culture.

As a topic, I tried to concentrate on the lifestyles of university students, their understandings and beliefs to understand the dynamics that affect identity formation of the Russian youth through university students, because everyday life, too, provides us with research data worthy of considering (Denscombe,1998:68). For this reason, I spent five months and one week in the field spending my time with my informants, to an extent, living like them, doing the things they did, and eventually, as far as I am concerned, becoming one of the group.

It is actually very critical to claim that I became a member of the group, but I shall share the reasons why and how I think this happened. To start with we continued to increasingly spend more time together, finally reaching mutual rapport and reciprocity. Both during the daytime and in the evenings, we socialized and shared the same environments both indoors and outdoors. Another factor that helped me to establish a strong rapport with my informants was my ongoing efforts to learn Russian at a proficient level.

When we met the first time in January, 2004, our talks were based on half talking, half-mimicking and missing many essential parts in most conversations. My broken Russian and unfamiliarity with their customs made my informants laugh genuinely, but at the same time this process warmed us up to each other and hastened the rapport building process. However, during the second half of my fieldwork I did gain confidence in Russian and could sustain a near fluent conversation explaining things at length and understanding most of the conversation going on. This gradually enabled me to get even closer to my informants. Third,

I did my best to join in all their activities, listening to same music, following the same routines, and particularly attending their long student parties created, again, mutual confidence in each other. Besides following their routines, another element that helped was my helping them extensively on English; reciprocity: they helped me with their culture and I helped them with their assignments, translations, proofreading. Finally, two of my informants I. and Ka. invited me to their hometown which I took as the final indicator of a strong rapport, and this strong friendship continued even after I left the field—we are communicating to this day.

As I mentioned before, the choice of the field was not much under my control other than accepting or refusing to go to Moscow, MSPU University. However, although the dynamics beyond my control played a major role for determining the research location, once I went there and spent some time, I had the chance to choose my informants, on the basis of availabilities and mutual agreement, with whom I wanted to spend time, and moreover I could spend time at different campuses. Spending time in a “natural” environment with various groups of students assured the *naturalness* of the field—meaning not a designed setting but a natural one on its own. Through my experience in the field, I observed that the field was a *typical instance*. In other words, the field was a typical, natural setting that was a fairly *self-contained entity* and had fairly *distinct boundaries*. However, I did bend the boundaries of the field a little by interviewing some Russians before and after the actual fieldwork for both “understanding” what-is-to-come in the field and for filling in some of the missing parts of the puzzle that caused me problems after I had left the field survey although they contributed a lot to my understanding of the wider picture. Again on a result of these side-interviews and observations I feel more content in situating the study group into its place properly.

Both of these pre- and post-field activities were limited in terms of time and formed practically a small percentage of the work. From another point of view having some contacts with Russians before I had gone to field was quite crucial in the field. Particularly one of my key informants, K., whom I met in Istanbul, helped me much for the initial entrance to the field. He introduced me to different people and alleviated, to an extent, the cultural shock. Later, S. became my gate-keeper and introduced me to my primary group of informants. I met him on the elevator, and he invited me to his room after asking whether I was interested in drinking with him and his friends. Grasping the occasion, I joined a group of very liberal students, and they later became one of the two main groups for me. Thus, although I met him

completely accidentally, he provided me the access to the people I had been trying to access for research purposes.

2.1.2 The Observer Effect

Another important factor researchers must be aware of in the field is a very common phenomenon known as the *observer effect*. Observer effect is the effect caused by the researchers in the field by the presence of themselves. When people become aware of being studied, they can react in a way that is not usual. They can be embarrassed, and/or they can try to disguise their normal practices or be defensive about being under observation by an outsider. This phenomenon is known as the *observer effect* (Denscombe, 1998:47-8).

Theoretically speaking, my access to the field should have created, to an extent, change in the environment; however I think this change was a marginal one and in most likelihood insignificant. To best of knowledge, I avoided disrupting the *naturalness* of the setting by allowing all agents to play their routine roles. On a macro level my presence in the field did not change or alter the behaviors of agents. In other words, the field as an entity or space was quite inelastic to my existence because it had its own elements and dynamics that my existence was not particularly important or essential for the environment; I was rather another exchange student from another country staying in the dormitory than an anthropologist in the field. In other words as an anthropologist, I was merely another agent there and therefore did not attract any particular attention. For this reason my involvement with the field, on the macro level, did not affect the agents.

In short, although at least some of the agents had a very clear idea of what I was doing there, it was, practically, impossible to explain the purpose of my visit to each and every student in the university. In the field and I was *unimportant* in general; merely another student. Hence no matter whether they knew or not why I was there, student or agents continued their daily routines paying little attention to my presence.⁵

In my near approximation, the micro level, my informants were naturally more elastic to my existence—at least in the beginning. However, as time passed, my informants got used

⁵ In order to avoid a misunderstanding, a detail should be particularly mentioned here: although I was another student in the university, the field, it was not an unmanageable size for observation. On the contrary, the field was a manageable amount of space to provide both a broad planning opportunities and minute details.

to my being there and I established a strong rapport as I gradually became a member of the group. They stopped particularly thinking about my presence as an anthropologist, and instead we started interacting as a group. Yet this interaction was a natural interaction as it could be expected in any fieldwork where as anthropologists gain knowledge about cultures through inhabitants of the field, inhabitants, too, gain knowledge about their own culture as well as learning a lot probably about the anthropologist's culture through the given interaction—the pay off of the relationship at hand, so to speak. Nevertheless, thanks to the rapport between us, I do not think that the *observer effect* was an obstacle during the fieldwork.

2.1.3 Ethical Considerations

Before going to the field my research proposal was closely monitored both my supervisor and the department in terms of ethical concerns. My institution, as a principle, is very strict and sensitive about ethical issues, and every research proposal must address this subject in detail.

In terms of ethics, I did inform each one of my informants about the purpose of my visit to Russia and the aim of the research in detail. At the start I clarified my institutional attachments and how I was going to use the data I was collecting. I informed my informants about these issues both after getting introduced and before in-depth interviews. I mentioned them that I was going not write their names or details in the research report, and I was going to use the data I collected only for research purposes. For this reason throughout the thesis I chose to give only the first initials of their names when I speak about them.

My informants were very comfortable with my research, and they even helped me with my questions from time to time. The only small reservation they had was why I wanted to record the interviews. They asked how I was going to use those cassettes. However once I explained them that I needed those cassettes for analysis and guaranteed them that the information I collected would be kept confidential throughout the research, they agreed to my using a recorder during the interviews. Actually I also mentioned to them that I could switch off the recorder at any time whenever they were not comfortable with it. However I did not encounter problems with that, and they were very comfortable throughout the interviews. Nevertheless for different reasons I did not have the chance to record each and every interview; particularly during the occasional or random semi-formal interviews in some situations.

In summary, *voluntary participation*, *no harm to participants*, and *confidentiality* were among the main concerns that I obeyed both during the fieldwork and the course of writing. Yet in reporting I sometimes avoided some of the details *mostly* of the fear of possible harm to some of my informants. The privacy of my informants, at times, led me to ignore certain findings. I hope to use such findings in future projects which would justify my observations whenever I feel certain that the information provided would and could do no harm to those who confided in me. A report should not only give the positive findings or a partial picture, but my understanding of confidentiality requires this reservation. However, the reader should know for one reason or another some of the findings that could be central to my analysis are not included in this text.

2.1.4 Data Collection

There are a number of methods to collect data. “*Horses for courses*” is a common approach in data collecting in the social sciences. This means one should use the necessary set of techniques to collect data from the pool of research techniques that would be appropriate with the assumptions of one’s discipline and for the purpose of the research. In accordance with that, “the possibility of employing more than one method stems from the fact that the various methods contain their own set of assumptions about the nature of the social world and the kind of data that can be produced to increase knowledge about the world” (Denscombe, 1998:83-84).

During the fieldwork, I used primarily two methods to collect data: (A) Participant observation, the primary approach in anthropology for collecting data, (B) semi structured in-depth interviews. Besides these two main approaches, literature survey was, too, a time-consuming activity. Before and during the field I continued reading about Russia and theories about identity formation. My reading about Russia, both before and after the fieldwork, was more concentrated on Post-Soviet Era and/or the period of dissolution of the USSR. . In Turkey, I read a variety of topics on identity formation. These readings were partially suggested and directed by my supervisor, and some of them were dictated by the available sources I could reach. The approaches I read pertaining to process of identity formation covered usually anthropological, sociological, and political perspectives.

In Moscow, I tried to read more about contemporary issues; however until the very end of my stay in Russia, it was still somewhat difficult for me to follow local newspapers

with ease due to a lack of the advanced vocabulary used in newspapers and literature. Yet I was able to follow current events through either discussions with my informants or English newspapers that were available in the library of the universities

Probably the most arguable issue concerning the span of the fieldwork was that I did not have the chance to complete a full cycle in the field, spending four seasons. The reason for this was institutional and financial. I took a leave of absence for six months to spend in the field, and it was, principally, the maximum amount of time I could leave the institution. In addition to this, although I received a partial scholarship from the Russian Federation, which covered lodging and the course on Russian Language and Culture, I had to cover most of my expenses myself. Yet I think an almost six month's residence in the field gave me, to an extent, a satisfactory amount of time to get mingled with my informants and come back from the field with a fair amount of data for the project in mind. I intend to go to Russia again for further fieldwork and to complete the cycle by additional research projects in the future.

Finally, it is important to mention that researchers have baggage which they bring to the field. This baggage affects the interactions of the researcher with the denizens and the data collected by the researcher. It is an impossibility to be a fly on the wall unless the researcher becomes a participant of the field. Researchers "have no way of standing outside these to reach some objective and neutral vantage point from which to view things 'as they really are'" (Denscombe,1998:73).

In other words any account of fieldwork activities is "partial—an edited and abridged version—which owes something to the ethnographer as well as the culture or events observed" (Denscombe,1998:73). In a way, accounts of fieldwork activities are constructed accounts and are affected by dynamics related to the researcher's self.

2.2 Fieldwork Location: Moscow

Moscow city is where I did my fieldwork. Most of my participant observation and the experience gained in the field with the exception of a few cases were in Moscow. It is the capital city of the Russian Federation, and more than 10 million people live in the city—which is around 7 percent of the whole population ("Moscow", Wikipedia,2007:1). Besides the inhabitants of Moscow, every day more than one million visitors, mostly tourists, visit the city. There are 5 airports, 9 railway stations and 2 river boat ports in Moscow. The length of

the underground lines exceeds 260 kilometers to more than 160 metro stations, new ones are continuously added” (“Moscow”, 2007:1).

Moscow, a financial, cultural, and political center of the country, attracts many people both from within the country and abroad. It is a global centre of culture. In Moscow there are more than 70 theatres. Hundreds of museums host rich collections of paintings, graphic art and sculpture. Bolshoi Theatre, Tretyakov picture gallery, Museum of fine arts named after Pushkin are only a few of the many to mention. Also, throughout the city there are many concert halls and cinemas (“Cultural”, 2007:1).

It is probably the most developed metropolitan part of the country. Most of my informants were happy to live in Moscow, and they mentioned Moscow was unique that it was “a state within a state”. In other words Moscow was like another country within the country due to its complex and unique characteristics. When I mentioned this characteristic of the city to one of my informants (F.G1), he explained me why Moscow was important:

Eighty percent of all the finance is concentrated in Moscow. Some part of it is also in Petersburg and the rest negligible percentage is distributed in all over Russia. In other countries finance is distributed evenly. It is unimportant where you live. Moscow is a state within the state. Therefore, the whole Russia, by all forces, are trying to come here. Moscow is growing every hour. Now here lives around 15 million people and this is not an accurate number (see appendix 9.1 [2]).⁶

Moscow is a big center, and millions of people trying to reach there. Actually this popularity of Moscow can be found occasionally in classic Russian literature as well⁷ Thus doing Research in Moscow was particularly promising in the sense that it was a metropolitan area that everybody wanted to come and live. There were a number of Universities and institutions in Moscow that students from all over the country came to study in Moscow.

⁶ The official population of Moscow is 10.4 million people. However this number is based on the people with “official papers”. There are also a serious number of people living in Moscow without any documentation. The police and other responsible divisions re constantly trying to find these people and deport them from Moscow. With the presence of these people, it is believed to be that the actual population of Moscow is around 15 million people or more.

⁷ For example The Three Sisters by Anton Chekhov (1901). is a play that tells the story of the three Prozorov sisters who live in a small town of Russia who formerly lived in Moscow. The sisters refuse to do anything to improve their lives and constantly want to go back to Moscow. The play depicts the life of Russians and their experiences of its era.

Students with different ethnic background living within the Federation, international students from other countries, businessmen, and workers around the world visited Moscow to study and work. This allows one to see the interaction among Russian students with different ethnic backgrounds and international students, and the citizens of the city with other visiting groups. Probably this is unique to Moscow and more difficult to find other parts of the country at this extent.

Although this was an advantage in terms of the Research, one should also mention certain disadvantages about Moscow as well. First life in Moscow was faster compared to anywhere else within the Russian Federation. People were more distanced and superficial in their relations with others. This distance and superficiality was constantly mentioned to me by different people including students and my informants. There were students who were comparing Moscow to Petersburg. Some students preferred Petersburg over Moscow because of the fact that it was less crowded and people were friendlier in general.

Besides this there were certain critics about Moscow that it did not represent Russia because in Moscow everything was glamorous, but if one left Moscow and visited the suburban parts of the city or better other cities, one would see that the rest of the country is not as developed as Moscow was. Related with this, the rhythm and the standards of the life around the country was so different that Moscow was not representative, and if one did not see other parts of the country one would miss a lot in terms of understanding Russia. For example this “fact” was explained to me by one of my informants (A.).

One of the greatest problems is also the problem of the distant centers. After all in Moscow life is easier than it is in the outskirts... For example, in other cities—in Siberia, in Kamchatka—life is considerably more difficult. Russia is a very big country.a highly developed center and weakly developed outskirts... [2a]

As mentioned, Moscow has its comparative advantages and disadvantages for research. Yet it is a city of complex and rich opportunities. Moscow was probably one of the best fieldwork locations for my research. I had the chance to see the workings of the Russian society and culture directly in its capital city—with its history, architecture, cultural diversity, sports opportunities, leisure and entertainment activities, education, science and research, economy, and demographics.

3 RUSSIA

The Russian national emblem is the two headed eagle with one head turned westward and the other eastward. It lucidly epitomizes the dual nature of Russian society, with historical and cultural roots in both the Orient and the Occident (Panarin, 1999: 3).

Glasnost and perestroika flunk the carriage out of control [...] The havoc has not ended. The hope must be that the drivers start to consult the passengers about the route to be taken (Service, 2002:346).

3.1 Russia

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, formally, at the end of 1991, the Russian Federation, along with fourteen “new” nations, emerged as the major successor of the Soviet Union (“Introduction”, 1996:1). Even after the dissolution, Russia remained the largest country in the world with nearly 150 million people. Russia, along with Turkey, is one of the two countries in the world that whose land is partially in Europe and partially in Asia. This unique nature of Russia has been both its strong and weak spots for a long time in its history. Ivanov, a former minister of foreign affairs of the Russian federation, states that “in the course of the last century, one of the central issues in discussion on Russia’s foreign policy was how to balance its European and Asian interests” (“Introduction”, 1996:1).

Besides its dual nature, Russian Federation is both the successor of the former Soviet Union and Tsarist Russia, and this intertwined characteristic of Russia plays an important role on its temperament. Although the Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union are not the main concerns of this work, it is essential to understand both eras in terms of their enduring impacts on Russian culture hence on Russian identity. It is important because during the fieldwork I noticed that they still affect the society at large, and any picture without them will perplex anyone interested in the subject. For example, I was invited to see the presentations of graduation projects of fine art students before a jury where the dean of the faculty who was also a member of the jury gave a long opening speech about fine arts, Russia, and how much the students endeavored within the last four years especially emphasizing their graduation projects. During one of the rather long breaks of applause, one of my informants bent toward my ear and told me that he, the dean, was a monarchist and promoted the ideals of monarchy.

First, I thought this was a joke, but later I realized that she, my informant, was serious. Keeping this piece of information in mind, later during a focus group interview, I told one of the participants about this story and I asked him about monarchy. He (and others participants) explained monarchy in general but when one of the participants in the group asked him what he personally thought about it, he first said that he will talk about it later, but finally he avoided answering the question.

In addition to the monarchist views and its variants, there exists another tenet in Russia, national liberalism, and this view is probably stronger than the former. By and large, it is probably nourished by Russia's imperial and communist past. Panarin claims that in Russia there are people who would like to live under a kind of national liberalism:

Some people in Russia would like to believe that is going to be a kind of national liberalism. Sure, they say, several basic elements of liberalism will be abandoned. We have learned the painful lesson that money goes to places like China rather than to places like Russia, where freedom of speech is not backed up by economic security. So, there is no reason to bother much about freedom of speech, but every reason to create a better environment for foreign and domestic investment. We have also learned that weak countries' arguments fall on deaf ears. So, there is every reason to pump some of the remaining resources into the army and flex our muscles in the Caucasus some, so that our arguments will be better heard. Our people love to see this, so it will also serve to further consolidate the society. But in general we will remain committed to the development of a market economy, as the modern liberal society will remain our purpose and ideal (2).

Despite the fact that these two examples may sound like two extreme cases, I have seen and heard many examples that did remind me of these two examples.⁸ Thus I noticed that besides internal and external problems of contemporary Russian society and the ongoing transformation attempts of both economy and society after late 80's, there are also problems of a deeper nature down in the heart of the society whose roots go back in time. Yet, it would be both misleading and restricting to suggest that Russians' approach toward their country is limited or fixed only with in the ditto trends. It is probably true that Russians tend to grow uneasy against the West, for they believe the West did not and does not keep their promises, and "the calls of Western leaders for more democracy and openness are perceived as inconsequential or hypocritical" (2-3), but however, even the so called "anti-westernism" is

⁸ In fact, I did not know these tendencies in Russia before the fieldwork; however, after the fieldwork, during my more intense reading, I came across with such views, and some of the apparently distinct cases I experienced during my fieldwork, after having read such accounts, make more sense.

quite debatable as a recent survey shows that Russians are neutral toward Americans (Gerber, 2002:1).⁹

In fact, young Russians have generally positive attitudes toward the West. Many Russians want to visit, to study, and to work in the West. It is a possibility that some of their motivations for sympathizing with the West might have been influenced by the economical situation in Russia like elsewhere—the desire to have better work conditions, and the high standards the West share in common, and/or to go to better places, at least in terms of economic opportunities—yet Russians preference for the West should not be reduced to only economical motives. Russians’ contact with the West is a long known journey, and, Russia, herself, indeed, is a part of the West. Russia and Turkey, whose lands fall into Europe and Asia, share another destiny regarding their relations with the West. This parallelism between the two countries is the modernization and westernization processes that have started long ago.

A third year student of Russian Literature asked me a question which was unexpected during a conversation at a local café near the university. He asked me what I, personally, thought about Russia’s place in the world; was Russia in Europe or Asia, and he continued with whether Moscow was a European city, say, like Berlin or London. The question, as far as I comprehended, reflected his own hesitations about where Russia belonged to. With the shock of this inextricable question, I faltered a few words which did not satisfy any of us, but in return asked his opinion about the same question. His answer was that Russia is half in Europe and half Asia; however, I think he, too, was not sure while answering his own question. Yet, the nature of this question is very common to many Turkish people regardless of the answer which might be given. Although some people have a very clear answer for this question—any possible answer is okay—, it challenges many other Turkish people, and the

⁹ Two details should be mentioned for precision. First, in the article what was surveyed was not “anti-westernism” but “anti-americanism”, yet my assumption is that, at least in this context, Americanism and “antiwesternism” might be used alternatively. Second, Gerber notes that “anti-American sentiment appears to be more widespread among the young and among elites. Therefore, its political influence may be greater than its numerical implies” (1). Although his remarks are important and might hold, I did not observe a particular strong anti-westernism/Americanism through out my fieldwork; it is also interesting to note that (international) students who explicitly did not sympathize with the West rather tend to be more related with Islamic countries and/or background. The survey reports that for 18-29 age group, people were 64% neutral, 13% positive, and 23% negative; and my observations, at least for the mentioned group, are in the same direction with the survey.

context in which he asked his question is very similar with the same question that Turkish people ask to foreigners with same degree of hesitation.

In the past century, this Dual nature of Russia impelled many researchers. For example Trubetskoi, to characterize it with Eurasianism suggests that “[Russia], situated between the European and Asian continents, was nonetheless geographically and thus ‘objectively’ quite separate from both”, and it formed a culture “that absorbed and blended both European and Asiatic elements, transforming them in the process into a homogeneous synthesis that belonged to neither realm” (Bassin, 2003:2). In such a rich complex of dynamics, Russia has a paradoxical unity which she brought along with her imperial and communist past to present day. Yet these historical problems are only a limited part of the picture. At the present Russia is compelled to deal with problems such as democratization and privatization of the society, amendment of the social problems, integration with the rest of the world, and the prolonged border disputes in the Caucasus.

3.2 Contemporary History of Russia after 1980

3.2.1 Gorbachev’s Period

In the last twenty years, in Russia, three concepts occupied an important space in society. The first two of these three concepts are now part of world’s common glossary as they are used in Russian, and the third concept is one of the most challenging issues of our age almost in all contemporary societies. These concepts are *perestroika*, *glasnost*, and *demokratizatsiya*. Respectively they are rebuilding or restructuring, openness and/or public voicing, and democratization.

All the three concepts becoming household words in Russia, domestic policy programs conducted in Gorbachev’s rule based on these concepts (“Prestroika”, 1996:1). These programs changed Russia beyond anyone’s expectations—no one expecting that these programs would lead to dissolution of the Union—but “we just can’t go on like this” is, now, an historical phrase (White, 1994:3) that Gorbachev cried was probably an omen for what was to come.¹⁰

¹⁰ He was emphasizing USSR’s economic problems and suggesting that a change was necessary, in the process of becoming the general secretary.

Gorbachev defined these concepts which later became national programs based on these concepts to improve the policies of the Soviet Union as he opposed to “Brezhnev’s leadership as a time of ‘stagnation’ in Soviet public life” (Service, 2002:110). As these programs were being introduced, staggering events were taking place in the Soviet Union that affected the path and the outcome of those programs in an unanticipated way. For example, the melting down of the nuclear reactor in Chernobyl was handled, by the Soviet officials, in such an ineptitude way that *glasnost* which was originally introduced as “a policy of liberalized information flow, aimed at publicizing the corruption and inefficiency of Brezhnev’s policies and colleagues” was now transposed to “the process of calling into question the whole Stalinist system”, that “inevitably led to questions about the wisdom of Lenin” reaching even in so far as to “open questioning” of the “raison d’être” of the Soviet Union (“Glasnost”, 1996:1-2).

It is arguable that, as Yalçinkaya (1997) claims, both *glasnost* and *perestroika* were a certain degree of deviation from *Marxist-Leninist* ideology and past policies of the Soviet Union (206). However it is essential to take into consideration that the intention was not to bring about the union; the idea behind *glasnost* was not to cause radical changes in the society which would lead to open questioning of the entire union. Gorbachev’s aim was to improve the system as he believed that “it was quite feasible if the ‘human factor’ was called more fully into play, and if the reserves that existed throughout the economy were properly utilized” (White, 1994:4). Yet, “it was this ‘ossified system of government’, with its command-and-pressure mechanism’, that was now the main obstacle to *perestroika*” (White, 1994:7). Hence, *glasnost* was a necessary step to restructure the economy that “the level of growth had been declining since at least the 1950’s”, and as Gorbachev explained, “if the sale of alcoholic drink and of Soviet oil on foreign markets were excluded, there had been no increase in national wealth for at least the previous 15 years” (White, 1994:8).

3.2.2 Glasnost

In other words, *glasnost*, initially, was not a goal for “openness” or “transparency” but rather an instrument to be used for reconstruction of economy. Freedom of speech, and democratization were not the ultimate goals, but nevertheless through its own dynamics, *glasnost* turned out to be completely different than what was planned (Gurkow, 1991:244-5). Seeing the green light, Press, people, and states in the union all seized the situation very quickly and acted accordingly. As Cooper states, “Baltic states were the first to attempt to

draw tangible benefit from *perestroika* and *glasnost* that would meet their national aspirations” (62). The media reported “numerous examples of mismanagement of resources, waste, ecological damage, and the effects of this damage on public health” (“Glasnost”, 1996:1). Individuals, mostly intellectuals, were raising their dissatisfaction with the system openly. Soon demands all over the union for autonomy or independence as well as freedom of speech were clearly audible; *glasnost*, beyond anyone’s expectations, undermined the union insofar that what was to come was no more reversible than it ultimately led to the historical end of the union.

3.2.3 Perestroika

On the other hand, *perestroika*, in economics, “meant greater leeway in decision making for plant managers allowance for a certain degree of individual initiative and the chance to make a profit” (“Perestroika”, 1996:1). The centrally planned economy was lagging to meet the needs of its day, and its inefficiency was common to anybody. According to B.B.S (2004) Russians were cynical about their planned economy and even coined a verb to express the inertia of the system which is now used ironically:

[. . .] “we [Russians] pretend to work; they pretend to pay us.” Great cynics that they are, Russians even coined a verb, *штурмовщи́нствовать*, meaning “working quickly to make up for lost time,” which was used to define that sudden burst of activity they exhibited during the last six months of most five-year plans. It’s no longer appropriate or even humorous (1) [*штурмовщи́нствовать* is bold in original].

Many other examples can be given to discuss problems of the planned economy in Russia, but I think a more attention-grabbing subject was—the historical, interesting debate in Russia, pertaining economy—at what stage socialism was. The discussions included whether it was developing or developed or having already past that level, whether it transposed into a communist society. I suspect, with the hindsight we have today, it may seem rather absurd for some of us to discuss this issue as one can claim that economy in Russia, for decades, was in stagnation. Yet, it seems to be that, Russians held this issue dear, and it was a serious matter which had to be dealt with solemnly. White (1994) explains the discussions and reactions of fellow Russian politicians:

[...] Khrushchev had promised that the USSR would construct a communist society ‘in the main’ by 1980 in the Party Programme that was adopted under his leadership in 1961. His successors swiftly dropped that commitment and

began to describe the USSR, from the early 1970's, as a 'develop socialist society', whole evolution into a full communist society was a matter for the distant future. Brezhnev's successors in turn made it clear that the USSR was at the very beginning of developed socialism, whose proper development would require a 'whole historical epoch'. Gorbachev, for his part, avoided the term 'developed socialism' and opted instead for 'developing socialism' in effect a postponement into the still more distant future of the attainment of a fully communist society (9).

In other words, the levels of socialism and growth were issues of on going debates in Russian society, and according to Gorbachev, economic reform was the key to all their problems. Thus in his address to the Central Committee in 1985, he called “‘for further changes and transformations’ and for the establishment of a ‘qualitatively new state of society, in the broadest sense of the word’. It was changes in the economy, however, that would be decisive in any development of this kind” (White, 1995:222).

In this sense, perestroika was Gorbachev's initial policy to overcome economic stagnation and inertia that would ultimately lead a developed society, and *glasnost*, as far as I understand, was the planned means for reaching mentioned level of economy and abundant society, for he believed a constant flow of information was desperately necessary to prevent corruption and motivate people. Although *glasnost* meant to be an instrument for *perestroika*, the suppressed effects of years of abrasive restrains were so strong that *glasnost* caused unanticipated results in all segments of the union which entirely overturned the relationship between the two concepts.

3.2.4 Democratization (Demokratizatsiya)

In 1987, Gorbachev called for democratization (*demokratizatsiya*) which meant “the introduction of multicandidate—not multiparty—elections for local party and soviet offices” as his reform required a more liberal stand (“Demokratizatsiya”,1996: 1). Gorbachev permitted non-governmental organizations and *Komsomol'skaya pravda* reported that informal groups were “growing as fast as mushrooms in the rain”; Gorbachev had to continue his reform efforts under critics of both conservatives and liberals—conservatives wanted to stop reform, liberals wanted to accelerate it (1).

However, circumstances were ripening for multiparty system although Gorbachev's intentions were different (1). An important figure Boris Yeltsin, brought to Moscow by Gorbachev, was rapidly gaining power through his nonconformist speeches, demands—he

was on the side of liberals who wanted to accelerate reform—and elections. Soon, in April 1991, in a referendum for the introduction of a presidential system people supported Yeltsin and elected him as the president in June. Later in the same year in August, the military, who wanted to stop the reform, namely the old guard, tried an abortive coup which was grounded on that “Gorbachev was ill and a temporary state of emergency had been imposed on the country”. In spite of this, Yeltsin, who was legitimately elected by people, overtly risked his life and as one of the most memorable event in the recent history stood on a tank outside the Russian parliamentary building triggering people to fight against the coup. Hence the coup lasted only for three days. “Gorbachev returned to what he himself referred to as a ‘different country’”. Yeltsin, causing Gorbachev to resign, seized the opportunity and declared that “the Soviet Union could no longer be saved” (Bowker, 2000: 3-12). Finally in December 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed leaving all sorts of problems to be solved by future generations and set herself into a transition period of which no one has yet clearly predicted for how many years this burdensome transition period is going to last.

According to White (1994), “it was far from clear, in fact, why the Soviet system had collapsed so ignominiously at the end of 1991” (11). He discusses that the decline of economic growth, repudiation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its political legacy were among a number of reasons why USSR failed, but “what had been rejected, and what had been retained, was still unclear years after the apparent demise of the world’s first socialist society” (11). Perhaps it is not very clear why it failed, but the problems it left behind herself are known to many scholars. Since USSR has collapsed, Russia has been trying to solve complicated problems such as democratization of the country, sustaining a stable growth in economy, solving festering social problems, resolving border disputes, challenging fundamentalism, and maintaining constructive relations with her neighbors and the rest of the world. Some of these problems and their effects on identity construction will be dealt in the following chapters.

4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF IDENTITY FORMATION

Identity discussions are among the most adverse topics of the recent past. When one studies questions that govern identity issues, one starts, soon, asking questions such as “what is identity,” “what types of identity exist,” “when and how the ‘identity’ concept has become a problem” and so on. Although many questions as such and of others may arise in discussions, I will try to limit myself within the limit of the questions above to cover the central discussions referring to identity issues.

4.1 Identity Concept (What is Identity?)

Identity concept has been discussed in various disciplines of social sciences including psychology, sociology, social psychology and anthropology. If we consult on Merriam and Webster American dictionary, identity is defined as the following: (1) a: sameness of essential or generic character in different instances b: sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a thing: oneness; (2) a: the distinguishing character or personality of an individual: individuality b: the relation established by psychological identification.¹¹ Although this definition may give us an overall understanding of the concept of identity, when we think of identity in terms of social sciences, we usually mean *social identity*, and use a more detailed definition:

In sociology and political science, the notion of social identity is defined as the way that individuals label themselves as members of particular groups (e.g., nation, social class, subculture, ethnicity, gender, etc.) [“identity” (social science), 2007:1].

If we try to simplify this definition, Güvenç (2000) may provide us a more straightforward one. According to him, identity, in its simplest form, is the answer to the question “who are you, of whom are you,” individuals, people, groups or societies give (3). The interesting point is that when one answers who one is, one also answers who one is not. In other words, who we are implicitly answers also the question who we are not (3).

The above definition of identity is based on the choice of the self. In other words it is us who we decide who we are and who we are not are by simply saying who we are and/or of whom we are. However there is at least one more aspect of identity. It is who people think we

¹¹ The dictionary contains five definitions of identity but here only the first two meanings are covered.

are and of whom we are. Although one's own definition of one's own identity is important, without this point (how others define one), identity is incomplete.

Identity is a naming. Identity is giving or attributing names to a part or whole of a relationship and/or a set of relationships. It is situating of one's own and *others* at a certain place on the bases of his/her own position or status, experiences and culture at a certain point in time (Erhan, 2005:3) [bold is added].

As such identity is both how one defines oneself and others define one; as such identities defined/assigned as an action of more than one agent but agents. Moreover it is necessary to consider that identity is not always a *singular* and *fixed* thing. Identity and/or identities may be gained, lost or change in time. "Depending on time, space and setting (i.e. context), it is formed, developed, shaped, altered, changed, revised, modified, reinforced [. . .] Identity, in a sense, 'multiplies' in and for itself on the basis of stability, plasticity, multi-dimensionality and complexity of human relations. Therefore identity of the same person or group is both variable and multi-dimensional" (Erhan, 2005:3).

4.2 Types of Identity

When one starts defining one's identity, it is important if there is only one type of identity, or can one define and be defined with various identities. In social sciences, we usually talk about three types/levels of identity. They are (i) individual identities, (ii) personal identities, and (iii) political (national) identities (Güvenç, 2000:4-5).

Individual identities are used to distinguish one person from the other. Individual identities are usually identities that are given from certain institutions: our identification cards, driving licenses, bank cards are part of our individual identities. Whereas personal identity shows one's relationship with institutions, clubs, and one's voluntary, emotional attachment with different organizations. Such identities may have legal proofs in the forms of identification cards or not (Güvenç, 2000:4-5).

Along with our individual and personal identities, we also have political (national) identities. National identity defines the relationship of the individual with the state, and attaches the individual to the state (Dağı, 2002:15).

Occasionally national identities, too, may be visible through documents such as a passport or a visa but it is usually an abstract boundary assumed to exist between individuals and the state.

All these different types of identities, although they have similarities with each other, have different functions. In traditional societies, identities were formed through customs, and it is believed that identity notion was not a problem in traditional societies (Güvenç, 2000:4-5).

4.3 Identity Problem and Choice of Identity

The rise of states and the related derivative construction of nations has made identity issues a point of contention. As Güvenç argues that, individual identities though subject to change, are usually one-to-one relations and cannot be forced from outside. However personal identities and national identities do not always coincide and the gap or the conflict between personal identities and the national ones may result in identity problems¹². Following the laws of a state or serving to its the interests may not be enough as states also want agents to believe national myths and carry the national identity like a uniform with pride and without any questioning. Nation states, by large, dictate identity on its agents to preserve its existence through time. While Nation states persist to unite its people with a national identity, individuals are not always willing to compromise. At times, an agent or groups of people living in one state may have a different perception about their own identity. People may have an understanding of their identity in the form of a historical continuity which is prior than of the national identity. This is not a surprising incident because individuals or people may have different identity choices (Güvenç, 2000:5-8).

In such a case we usually talk about an identity crisis, and as the gap of choices widens the crisis deepens. Individuals or people may have more than one identity and might be willing to preserve it. Güvenç notes that if people or societies know about their past and history, they would also know who they are and/or of whom they are. Thus, there should be no identity problems (Güvenç, 2000:9). However as identity is formed by also how others

¹² Identity and personality should not be confused. Although personality is related with identity they cannot be used for one another. Personality is the behavior of an agent (social entity). which can be observed by others. However identity is how one perceives oneself and relates with whom and corollary to this how one is perceived by others.

define us, people or societies may experience identity problems in this respect. Our choice of definition of identity may not correspond to others definition which usually ends with a conflict.

More democratic societies tend to accept multiple identities. Multiple identities living peacefully in one place can be seen as one possible solution of the problem, but this is not such an easy goal to reach. It seems that as nation states continue to exist problems related to identity and identity choices are likely to exist.

5 IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG THE RUSSIAN YOUTH

5.1 Introduction

Identity and identity formation of any group may get complicated to study because it involves a broad list of topics. The ethnic diversity in Russia and the enormous size of the country makes this task even harder. Yet this study is not trying to generalize or test theories about identity formation, but to introduce the ideas and the everyday lives of a group of university students I met during my fieldwork in Moscow.

First I tried to introduce the processes that affect the identity formation in Russia and then support it by the current policies of the state for the Russian youth. These chapters cover more a theoretical and historical approach pertaining identity formation in the Russian Federation. The information presented in these chapters is based on the research and papers of other scholars; yet I incorporated both my informants' ideas and my fieldwork observations with existing data.

After introducing a theoretical and a historical background I presented some information on Russian education system and my informants ideas about their education. Later I tried to discuss who a "Russian" is and who "other" among students. In this section I extensively relied on the interviews with my informants and my fieldwork observations. These chapters usually contain translations of my interviews recorded during the interviews. The original Russian quotations are included in the appendixes to make the reading process easier. The interested readers may have an access to the original material via following the numbers in the square brackets at the end of each translation. Most of the time I used Babel Fish for faster translations—the free automatic translation service offered by Altavista.com. Yet I always edited those translations and asked help from various native or near native speakers of Russian to check my translations.

Activities my informants joined in their daily routines such as indoor and outdoor activities give us an idea about the life standards of my informants. In short I tried to give a synopsis of my informants' lives. This information should help to the reader to move from the theoretical level to more practical levels. It also includes my fieldwork activities since I spent most of my time with my informants. These chapters mostly based on my fieldwork observations and the first hand experience gained through participant observation.

The next two chapters deal with topics affecting identity formation in the Russian society selected both on available data and particular interest such as religion or terrorism. These chapters involve both the current situations based on historical information and my informants' opinions at the same time. My informants' ideas on certain important topics that are introduced in the first chapter about "processes that affect the identity formation" and their expectations in Russia are discussed here.

I also discussed their opinions and expectations about economy, open market, the West, politics, and future to give a better idea that affect their personalities. In this chapter most of the material presented in the text is my informant's own ideas which I learned during in-depth interviews.

The focus in all the mentioned chapters was how the generational change affects the Russian youth. How the values and beliefs of the Russian youth are affected under a rapidly changing society and how this changed students. In order to this I tried to introduce both the current theoretical situations and my informants' ideas about those issues. I added my personal observations gained through participant observation to be able to clarify and understand the processes that affected identity formation at a deeper level.

5.2 Processes that Affect Identity Formation among the Russian Youth

5.2.1 Generational Change in Russia

More than fifteen years have passed since the break-down of the USSR. Several years before the break-down there had been already a number of changes in Russia that significantly altered values of Russian society—glasnost, perestroika, democratization. These new concepts, in contrary to what planned, ended the Soviet Union—a new federation was built, market economy was adopted.

These events meant a generational change in Russia that took place in the last twenty years. It was unanimously agreed that a short-term decline in the well-being of Russian society caused by the transitory period was inescapable. This transitory period was the result of changing from communism to capitalism. Older people, the bulk of the society, suffered more during the transitory period. Since the transitory period was going to take a long time, all hope was laid down on the younger generation that only they would benefit from all the structural change and the reforms (McFaul,2002:1).

First it is important to mention that since 1917, it is the first group of young people in Russia living in i) an independent country; (ii) a capitalist economy; and (iii) a “free” political system. This difference of young people in Russia makes them different and they share different opinions than of their parents’ For example we know that the younger generations seems to be more pro-market, pro-democratic, and pro-Western (McFaul,2002:2).

After 20 years of transitory period Russia recovered to a certain extent, and is expecting to continue its economic growth (The spur of this rapid development has been the high global energy prices).:

The country's GDP (PPP) soared to \$1.5 trillion in 2004, making it the ninth largest economy in the world and the fifth largest in Europe. For the year of 2007, Russia's GDP is projected to grow to about \$1.2 trillion nominally (31.2 trillion rubles) that would be about \$2.3 trillion PPP [purchase power parity] and would make Russia the second largest economy in Europe Russia's economics ministry has revised forecasts for 2007 GDP growth from 6.2 to 6.5%” (Russia, 2007:1).

Since the future depends on the young people it is important to know what Young Russians believe and the factors that may change young Russians’ beliefs. In this chapter I will not go into the details of those processes, but rather name them and give a brief explanation of the current situation mostly based on Michael McFaul’s paper on this topic. Details about those concepts and the opinions of my informants will be introduced in the following chapters.

McFaul discusses both what Russians believe and the factors that may change young Russians’ beliefs in length. According to him Young Russians believe in the market economy and there is a positive correlation between age and support for capitalism. In addition, although the support of democracy is related with education level, the most important factor again seems to be age: “the younger one is in Russia, the more likely one is to embrace democratic ideas”. Russian youth is neither too optimistic nor naïve about relations with the West, but they clearly express more pro-Western opinions than their parents. Young Russians were more suspicious about the West until a few years ago, but the war against terrorism formed a sense of connectivity or between the West and Russia (2-6).

The major issues that may change the opinions of Russian youth can be summarized as terrorism, non-democratic developments, economic instability, demographic issues, and integration into the West.

Terrorism related with Chechnya is the soft-underbelly of the Russian Federation and younger people are opting for a peaceful solution more; yet they know that the solution to the problem will take time. However young people's support in the government and such is related with the success of the war against terrorism. The younger generation is also for democracy, and if Russia became a full-blown dictatorship, Russia's youth might mobilize to resist it. The development of Russian economics is highly dependent on oil market. It is possible for Russia to experience economic instability in the following years as the recent past indicates. The response of the youth is difficult to predict, but since they experienced at least one economic breakdown, the Russian youth may be expected to be more resilient the next time (McFaul, 2002:12-14).

Russia has been suffering a long-term increase in the mortality rates. In Russia deaths are exceeding births by 700,000 per year. Alcoholism, poor life standards, and HIV are the major reasons for this decline. In the next two decades these problems will create serious problems and the responds of the society to these problems is likely to be among the most important issues to be solved by this generation's era (McFaul, 2002:15-16).

Finally integration into the West is another problem that the Russian youth must deal with. In the recent years, People's expectations increased about joining organizations such as NATO and EU. Although there are certain expectations, the more likely scenario is that Russia will not join those organizations. The balance between expectations and the structure of the Russian society will play an important for the Russian youth (McFaul, 2002:15-16).

5.2.2 Youth Programs

The result of systematic transformation and globalization was huge. High levels of unemployment, underemployment, an estimated 40 percent rise in Juvenile crime since the early 1990's, rampant drug abuse, alcoholism and sexually transmitted diseases particularly HIV, high mortality rates among the youth (15-24 age group) were only some of the problems that affected the youth (Blum, 2005:2).

These problems of the Russian youth, documented by academics and state bureaucracies pressed the need of a youth program and a policy that should be followed by the authorities. A post soviet youth policy was first shaped "under the former president Boris Yeltsin in early 1990's but the policy remained institutionally and ideologically

underdeveloped” (2). Later Vladimir Putin addressed the youth policy issues at a larger scale. The policies adopted under his presidency include two terms. The first policy program covered years 2001-2005, “Youth of Russia 2001-2005” and the second policy program is for years 2006-2010, “Youth of Russia 2006-2010”. According to Blum (2005) the first policy program adopted ambiguous goals, and the goals were not met due to inadequate funding and opposing priorities at regional level. However the second policy program, Youth of Russia 2006-2010, has relatively smaller number of priorities, and they can be summarized in three major objectives: (i) informing the youth about the changes in the society and helping them to take an active part in society; (ii) fostering the innovative youth actions; and (iii) helping the youth that are in difficult living conditions to integrate into society. Besides these important goals, the youth program also addresses important concepts such as morality, individualism, social responsibility, national identity and family life in order to fulfil the first three objectives. More detailed descriptions of these objects are explained by Blum (2005):

1) “Informing the youth of potential developments in society and drawing them into social practice.” The first component of this encompasses a number of measures (including interactive multimedia) designed to enlist young people in addressing the priority areas of policy. With regard to drawing young people into social practice, the government’s plan is to fund (and, in doing so, to co-opt) youth groups involved in such productive endeavors.

2) “Fostering youth's innovative activity.” This initiative is connected to planned improvements in education, especially through strengthening critical reasoning skills and increasing access to computers (in keeping with the federal “E-Russia” program). In addition to promoting Russia’s competitiveness in such areas as science and engineering, the goal is to produce a new generation of market-oriented and information-savvy entrepreneurs.

3) “Integrating into society youths who are in difficult living situations.” This broad category includes invalids, orphans, migrants, social deviants, addicts, ex-convicts, and young people living in hot spots (like Chechnya). While the specific means of achieving such integration vary from one category to the next, the common underlying assumption is that youth alienation may be diminished (and productivity enhanced) by giving young people a stake in society, through a combination of fulfilling work and involvement in politics

Two other important thrusts of youth policy supplement these fundamental goals. The first is inculcating a healthy way of life, based on morality, rational individualism, social responsibility, and national identity. The second is strengthening the family, which consists of encouraging young married couples to have children (including the construction of adequate housing), as well as supervising their approach to childrearing (2-3).

According to Blum (2005) these additional objectives are related with two important processes. The first one is the cultural globalization and its threat to national identity and second one is caused by demographical facts that the Russian population is in a decline over a number of years (3).

5.2.3 Official Patriotism in Russia

The overwhelming changes in 1990's in Russia resulted in planning new youth programs to re-establish certain values in Russia. It is aimed to help the youth to improve their life standards, and become better individuals. Yet these youth programs are only the first step of a larger program. Indeed cultural globalization throughout the world has affected Russia, and authorities employed certain programs to secure the national identity and Russian culture against the negative effects of globalization.

Besides cultural globalization, Russia also dealt with Terrorism caused by two Chechnyan wars (1994-96 and 1999). Prolonged Chechnyan guerrilla activity in the southern mountainous regions and terrorist attacks in major cities caused hundreds of Russians to die. This provoked further demoralization in the society and caused nationalist ideas to gain ground (see Timeline: Terrorism in Russia). Terrorist attacks caused a strong prejudice against People from Caucasians and this thread is associated with the Islamic radicalism. Thus the call for official patriotism is the result of cultural globalization and terrorism.

Official patriotism/education is “laid out in the official program for 2006-2010, as well as in various ancillary statements and projects, the primary thrust of patriotic education is the cultivation of loyalty to the fatherland, including obligatory military service (and calls not to evade it)” (Blum, 2006:2). According to Newsru webpage, official education was going to be funded by the government for five years:

The Russian government introduced a national patriotic youth education program in July [2005] to promote national and state values. The program, which has received funding through the year 2010, will support films, festivals, competitions, software development and the promotion of state symbols and the national anthem. The program will also earmark funding to “confront attempts to compromise and devaluate patriotic ideals in the mass media, literature and art,” (qtd in. “Regional News”, 2005:1).

The patriotic education also emphasized military and militaristic virtues. For example the following quotation from Putin explains this nature of the patriotic education (a meeting with representatives of a pro-presidential youth group in May 2006).:

We must explain to the entire generation of young people that the question of whether or not to serve in the army should not even come up for a young person to begin with. We must all realize that without the army there would be no country. Nobody should have the slightest doubt on this score. No army, no Russia (Blum, 2006:2).

In other words, the patriotic education encourages the revival of certain values for the Youth. It promotes continuity between Tsarist, Soviet and post Soviet periods. It aims to establish a link a bridge between pre-communist, communist and post-communist eras, and particularly publicized by Putin for the first time since Yeltsin's presidency (Service:2002, 194-5). The emphasis is given to outstanding achievements in Russian history and particularly to military victories (Blum, 2006:2).

Patriotic education was planned to start in late 90's by Putin. He ordered school textbooks to be rewritten about national history and compulsory military training to be re-instituted in the school curriculum. However at that time it was not immediately clear to anyone how to achieve these goals including Putin himself (Service, 2002:194-5), and it took several years to implement the policy.

Yet the patriotic education system embraces more than only the school curriculum and the teaching of the victories of the Russian military. Its scope includes a set of activities for "patriotism and business", "private morality", and "proper reproductive behavior" (Blum, 2006:3). Particularly "proper reproductive behavior" can be associated with the problem of the population decline in Russia.

One can anticipate that patriotic education has profound implications for Russia's political future In short Official Patriotism aims "national identity, social order, state strength, and the symbolic role of the military for each of the above. Thus, patriotism is understood as an integral part of the emergence of a cohesive and self-confident Russia, capable of asserting itself as a great power on the world stage" (Blum, 2006:2). The affects of this policy was usually already visible in the talks, beliefs and doings of my informants as I occasionally noted the nationalistic tendencies in among students and the desire for a strong and powerful nation.

5.3 Who is Russian and who is Other among the Russian Students

5.3.1 Russians and Rossiyanins

In Russian Federation, according to CIA World Factbook, 79.8 percentage of the population is Russian, 3.8 percent Tatar 2 percent Ukrainian, 1.2 percent Bashkir, 1.1 percent Chuvash, and 12.1 percent other or unspecified. “Russians are an East Slavic ethnic group, primarily living in Russia and neighboring countries; the English term Russians is also used to refer to citizens of Russia, regardless of their ethnicity” (“Russians”, 2006:1).

Russians are the most numerous ethnic group in Europe and one of the largest in the world with a population of about 137 million people worldwide. Roughly 116 million ethnic Russians live in Russia and about 18 million more live in the neighboring countries. A relatively significant number of Russians, around 3 million, live elsewhere in the world, mostly in North America and Western Europe, but also in other places of Eastern Europe, Asia and elsewhere (“Russians”, 2006:1).

Since about 80 percent of the population of the present Russian Federation is Russian, it becomes important to understand who Russians are. However, it is difficult to define “who or what is Russian” due to the complex history and structure of the Russian Federation. Who is Russian was a major question I repeatedly asked to all my informants and myself during the fieldwork, and the questioning of this concept led me to understand that this is a complicated issue to be answered for anyone. Who the Slavic people are in general and East Slavic people in particular, may help us to identify Russians as the word “East Slavic ethnic group” is a part of the definition of Russian:

Based on archaeological and linguistic evidence, historians theorize that the Slavs formed as an ethnic group in the middle of 2nd millennium BC in the area that is now split between Poland, Czech republic, Slovakia, western Belarus and northwestern Ukraine, [and] the East Slavic people are a Slavic ethnic group, the speakers of East Slavic that evolved into the Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples (“Early East Slavs”, 2006:1).

According to the definitions above, Russians are (a) an ethnic group of people that live mainly in Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Byelorussia sharing the same language and history, and (b) citizens of Russia regardless of their ethnicity. However this twofold characteristic of the word Russian sometimes is considered not to be politically correct, and therefore it is substituted with *Россиянин*, Rossiyanin, which is politically more appropriate. Rossiyanin refers to anybody or anything within the Russian soil. Thus, there are two

concepts used in Russia: Russian and Rossiyanin. Their usage and the difference between the two words are important to understand the identity issue in Russia today:

In the Russian language, there is a word "russkiy" [Russian] which may serve either as a noun or an adjective to designate an ethnic Russian (a noun) or anything ethnically Russian (an adjective) -- Russian art, Russian literature, Russian architecture, etc. There is also a word "rossiyskaya" (pronounced "rossiy-ska-ya"). This geopolitical term served to designate the entire multinational country, as well as anything within the country. And this is the word that Peter I used -- "Rossiyskaya Imperia." A citizen of the country in this terminology became a "Rossiyanin," i.e., a citizen of the "Rossiyskaya Imperia," not a "Russian." One could be a member of any of around 400 ethnic groups living in "Rossiya," but everyone was a "Rossiyanin." This is quite analogous to the term "American" used to designate anyone living in the U.S., regardless of one's ethnicity ("Rossiyanin", 2006:1).

Russia has a complex history and numerous relationships with different countries and nations encompassing various ethnic groups. Therefore the word "Russian" as a concept involves certain historical and contemporary issues. But in order to understand the extent of the complexity involved in the concept of "Russian", it should be noted that there are at least three important factors to define Russians as we can deduce from the definitions above. In addition, there the ones I acquired in the field through either direct explanations of my informants and my personal experience through participant observations.

These three important factors that can define a "Russian" are (a) the ethnic background—closeness to ethnic Slavic group— (b) language—speaking Russian—and (c) the closeness in life styles, practices, and values to those of Russians . I will talk about these issues in details.

Through interviews or participant observations, I learned from my informants that when one identified him or herself as Russian and spoke the language that person considered to be Russian. Quoting one of my informants (A.) will help us to see this point of view.

Native Russian. You do want to know who is Russian. Russian is someone who loves and respects his or her native land. Whose mother, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, were Russian. Thoroughbred Slav (see appendix 9.1 [3]).

This was how the eighteen year old sociology student A. defined Russians during our interview which emphasizes both nationalism, "who love and respect their native land", and the ethnic background, "whose mother father grandfather great-grandfather were Russian".

Another definition was provided from a history student (A.C.) which emphasized the cultural unity than the ethnic background:

Most of it is the mentality. Russian. I will give you an example from a book. The book mentions the beginning of the Second World War: In the book there is a story (moment) when Germans approach Mozhaïsk (a city in Russia), our army captured the German tanks and several Germans were taken as prisoners of war. One of those Germans said to one of our Georgian soldier: “You do not even speak in Russian, how come you are Russian?” But he [the soldier] answered: “We are all here for the war of Russians.”

Russian- this was anyone who stood in the trench; who flew the plane; who worked at factories. They were [are] all Russians (see appendix 9.1 [4]).

That was how my informants defined Russians. Some of them were highlighting the Slavic background but almost everybody was in accordance with the cultural unity that is free of ethnic background which is known as being a Rossiyanin.

In short, as I acquired from my informants when one spoke Russian—sometimes even this was not necessary as we can see it in the quotation—and identified him or herself as Russian they would be Russians. Although I tend to take these explanations reflecting the fact, I must mention that the actual reality was a bit more complicated than this simple explanation implied.

For example, my observation is that one’s closeness to Slavic ethnic background was a very important factor for being accepted as Russian even when the other factors too were fulfilled—even if one spoke perfect Russian and called one’s-self Russian: for example although people from the former Soviet Union coming from Asia spoke perfect Russian and called themselves Russians, it was sometimes not enough to be accepted as “Russians” as I sensed and learned from those people. Some people from different ethnic groups told me that they could be seen rather as outsiders or they do not feel themselves Russians although they spoke perfect Russian.

5.3.2 Others

Indeed, there were at least two pejorative words used by Russian students for non-Slavic but Russian speaking students either that are black or dark-skinned or coming from Asia or for mainly anybody that was not Slavic: *cherniy* (*черный*), black, and *hach* (*хач*), (*хач* means cross in armenian). Although *cherniy* means black and covers black people it is widely

used for non blacks as well including dark-skinned people and Asiatic students whereas *hach* is more for people coming from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Daghestan, Chechnya. Although there is this slight difference in the usage, essentially, both of the expressions were used alternatively for the same purposes including all non-Slavic people who were disliked according to my informant D., will-be stylist and a hairdresser.

U: Today, I also heard the word *hach* (*хач*). What does that mean?

D: *hach* (*хач*), it is also *cherniy* (*черный*).

U: What difference is there between *cherniy* (*черный*) and *hach* (*хач*)?

D: There is no difference. People simply say the both (see appendix 9.1 [5]).

In other words both concepts were used to describe non Slavic students, usually Asiatic students that could speak fluent Russian but had a slight accent and/or students that could be easily distinguished by Russians by their non Slavic features mostly Asiatic features. My informants provided me alternative definitions for *cherniy* (*черный*):

It is not the color of skin. It means that you are not Slav. Crests, Belorussians are believed to be Russians—they are Slavs. But if you appear to be something else, that is it. Skinheads never walk alone; they walk in groups. Once I saw a girl with dreadlock. Skinheads do not like rap music. They simply beat her up although she was Russian. They consider that rap music is "black's" music. But in reality what difference does it make who listens to what?[informant D.], [see appendix 9.1 6]

In the mind of many young people they [*cherniy*, *черный*] are people descending from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Daghestan, Chechnya. And they (young people) do not love them. They also have their reasons for that. People who were born in Russia have pride in themselves.... When a Russian girl dates a non-Russian fellow, they think "What, a Russian fellow is not sufficient for her?" There is such a fight going on [informant A.C.], [(see appendix 9.1 [7]).

It is difficult to comprehend the subtle differences between these two words, but *cherniy* *черный* was the common name given for all non-Slavic students whereas *hach* (*хач*) was a more specific word and used for students that were coming from the above mentioned countries. Yet they could be used alternatively for stigmatizing students that had non-Slavic background.

In order to give a full picture, these people who were referred as *hach* (*хач*) or *cherniy* (*черный*) were in fact people who had certain problems with mingling with the Russian

students. As my research did not involve students from the former Soviet Union or non-Russian students, I did not have much chance to ask them why they had such problems or why they were having difficulties to integrate with society, but nevertheless I spent some time with them, and the critical problem was the incompatibility of the world views or cultures of the mentioned group of students with Russian students or vice versa with respect to education, background, religion, social status, and other possible variables that would form one's identity. My observation for this reason was mainly the lack of mutual understanding from both groups of students. In other words, the aforementioned dislike seemed to be a mutual one and many of those students were seriously critical about Russian students in general and more openly about Russian girls.

Those students who were referred as “cherniy” (“черный”) or “hach” “хач” could almost always speak fluent Russian, and therefore they could easily communicate with Russian students very easily. Their relations with Russian students were by and large more than just casual information exchange. They would spend time together in same environments and socialize, but there was some level of clumsiness in the nature of the relationship that would surface at various times particularly in jokes. Russian girls were usually at the center of those jokes and at least some of the students that are called “cherniy” or “hach” shared similar ideas about Russian girls..

Ironically, they would usually call each other or themselves with the same names Russians were using—this was an open indication that they themselves knew the problems very well.

On the other hand there were also a group of Russian students who again came from the former Soviet countries but accepted Russian values more and would speak perfect Russian—They usually reject to speak their mother language, at least in public. These students seemed to mingle quite well with Russians—I am referring to Russian students from the non--Slavic ethnic group. Yet even these people who spoke standard or very near standard Russian and accepted Russian values were sometimes critical about Russians (i.e. Russians with the Slavic background). For instance, on my way to *Kurchatov* on a train one of the passengers from Azerbaijan with whom I had chance to talk to for a while them told me that, no matter what they did and how successful they were, they would never be praised by Russians, and they would be treated as “*second class*” people.

The other half of the same phenomenon involves students with a Slavic background from other ex-Soviet countries, for example students from Ukraine. About these students I did not hear any pejorative adjectives, but for them the decisive factor was how well they spoke Russian. For instance some of them would never mention that they were Ukrainians—I had certain informants whom I thought that they were Russians for a long time and learned actually later that they were Ukrainians; particularly those who could completely master the language and wouldn't be distinguished as foreigners.

5.3.3 Language

Actually this is an acute problem between Russia and Ukraine. I had met certain Ukrainians both in Russia and before going there, and they were usually mentioning to me that many Ukrainians refused to speak Ukrainian in public because it was looked down on by others. While I was staying in Moscow, it was possible to listen to television programs about this competition between the Ukrainian Language and the Russian Language.¹³ One of my informant's, T., grandparents were from Ukraine but she never liked to mention this in public nor did she speak any Ukrainian though she mastered it.

In total language one was one of the most important issues in determining being Russian and therefore students from the former Union, with Slavic or non-Slavic backgrounds, who called themselves “Russians” deemed significant to speak Russian to a point where they stopped speaking their mother tongues in public.

However one should mention that the status of commonly taught languages had a different position among students. For example I was used to go to the cafeteria in my dormitory and talk with different people there. In some of those occasional conversations I spoke English or German with international students or Russians who were studying those languages. Whenever this was the situation, people that were present at the table either joined or preferred to listen to it. Although this is quite normal, when my Azeri informants spoke Turkish with me or among themselves, we were reminded that we were in Russia and we must better speak Russian.

¹³ Ukrainian officials were willing to pass a law that banned to teach Russian in high schools in Ukraine. This issue was highly debated on television channels in Russia during my stay in Moscow.

To my best knowledge, no one was ever forced to use particularly one language, but it was evident that Russian was promoted and all the other languages—except commonly taught ones—were not very welcome. Thus Russian language and one’s proficiency in using it was a decisive factor for being Russian. Thus Azeri students or students from the USSR with or without the Slavic background who spoke any language other than Russian would be labelled as other.

It is particularly necessary to emphasize the importance of the language, and I can give a striking example for this: towards the end of my fieldwork, after a long night with my informants, I was called by one of them, “Tiy Russkiy” (“Ты Русский”), “You are Russian” because I was speaking near fluent Russian. From a personal point it was a complement for me, but more importantly it demonstrated that I have immersed with the group I studied. I think, He said this because my constant efforts to learn their language and culture was approved and supported by him.

In other words, speaking Russian was an important criterion to be accepted Russian. Yet to what extent is a critical question and my observations led me to think that along with the language, a very important factor was closeness to Slavic background. This issue is actually complicated, and I cannot claim that I have a complete understanding of the situation, but I will try to explain what my informants offered me and what I understood through my affiliations with them that I can give a better picture. If I can explain who is accepted Russian by Students in general, we would be closer to understand who is Russian and who other is.

5.3.4 Notes from the Fieldwork

For this purpose I want to introduce a scale with two ends, one end showing Russians and the other end “others”, and if we could approximately position certain groups of people from different backgrounds or ethnic groups on this scale we would have a better idea about who is “Russian” or who is accepted as Russian as well as who is not by students.

Towards the close end of Otherness, we can place Chinese students. In Moscow it was possible to find many Chinese students and with respect to the factors I gave above one can naturally understand why Chinese students were on the far end of “being Russian” and very close to the “other”. Aside from being a non-member of the Slavic ethnic group, their language was completely different from Russian and only a small percentage of Chinese

students could speak Russian well. Finally life styles and values of Chinese students were very different than the Russian students. This discrepancy between “Russian” and Chinese students caused problems between each other, and we can easily say they were among the others.

A larger group of students were the students from the former Soviet Union. Those students, as contrast to Chinese students, were closer to be accepted as Russians. Yet as I introduced above those students should be examined more carefully. We can divide students from the former Soviet Union into two: those who could speak Russian well and who adopted Russian values more and those who spoke Russian with an accent and who did not like or adopt Russian culture much (usually the students from Caucasian). . The former group of students was closer to be accepted as “Russians” than the latter one. In accordance the latter group as still better of Chinese students in the sense that at least on average those students had a better command of the Russian language than Chinese students.

All other international students would go somewhere in between Chinese students and the students from the former Soviet Union. Sometimes they were readily accepted by Russian students depending on their backgrounds. The more one had western standards of life and spoke commonly taught languages of world, particularly English, the more one was integrated with Russian students. In other words, besides the Russian language or Slavic background, life standards or world views were too important. International students, representing the Western standards were more readily accepted by Russian students than others. Of course they would not be perceived as Russians, but they had more chances to mingle with Russian students and receive acceptance compared to some other students due to their western background.

However the most favored group of students were students from Slavic countries. Obviously they looked like Russians, they spoke the same language and their world view’s were closer to that of Russians. Except certain situations, they would almost be accepted as Russian by Russian students. It is vital to notice that although certain students from the Soviet Union spoke Russian as good as the students from countries like Ukraine and adopted a very similar life style to that of Russian students, it seemed that students from Slavic countries were accepted more. This was when Slavic background played its vital position.

In short if we take Russian students with Slavic background and Russian ancestry as “Russians”, students from other Slavic countries, such as Ukraine, followed them. Then comes the international students with western background. Students from former Soviet Union would be sometimes somewhere after students from other Slavic countries and before international students or sometimes after international students depending on their backgrounds as I tried to explain above. Finally Chinese students were closest to “other” among Russian students.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I must mention one more time that these lines reflect my observation of the students in Moscow State Pedagogical University (MSPU) in Moscow during my stay between December 2004 and May 2005. Their definitions for being Russian and my observations do not conflict with each other, but my observations should be seen as attempts to explain subtle differences among groups of students and some covert dynamics that are going among the students. Many of my informants, although they did not always explain it in the way I tried to, were critical about students from the former Union and vice versa. Russian students were particularly not happy about Chinese students and they openly expressed their reservations about them.

As a matter of fact students from China and the former Union with dark features were much likely to be attacked by Russian Skinheads, and this can be taken as a clear indicator of a problem with Chinese students—they are seen as “others” by Russians.

On the other hand, although students from Africa were close to “other”’s position, they were sometimes better-off if they adopted Western life styles and spoke good English. This is another indication to show the importance of language and life styles in order to be accepted among students.

5.4 Education Life

The activities involving education was taken seriously in the Russian Federation. First I will summarize the formal structure of the higher education system of the Russian Federation, and then I will introduce my host university in Russia, MSPU in general. Finally I will explain my informants’ opinions about their education system and their university and the general problems they face during their studies.

5.4.1 The Structure of the Russian Higher Education

Higher education system plays an important role in the Russian Federation, and we can easily follow this by checking certain statistical information:

Education in Russia produces 100% literacy. About three million students attend Russia's 519 institutions of higher education and 48 universities. As a result of great emphasis on science and technology in education, Russian medical, mathematical, scientific, and space and aviation research is generally of a high order.

Nowadays, the country has 685 governmental higher education institutions, all of these having state accreditation. Besides, 619 non-governmental higher education institutions have been licensed for educational activities, 367 of these having been given accreditation in the past decade. Thus, the number of higher education institutions is 1,304 (1,162 of which are accredited). In 2003–2004, the total number of students of higher education institutions was 5,947,500, including 5,228,700 and 718,800 in governmental and non-governmental education institutions respectively (“Education”, 2007:1).

Normally undergraduate degrees take four years to complete in the Russian Federation, but certain studies will take a longer time to finish—such as medicine which takes six years to complete. Eighty percent of the university curriculum is controlled by the “state educational standards” where the rest twenty percent is regulated by the university itself. During their studies, students should complete research papers, projects and pass the state final exams. In order to receive the undergraduate degree students must complete a final diploma project which usually takes two semesters to finish. Students holding a bachelor’s degree may attend the Specialist Diploma and Master’s degree programs and it takes additional two years to complete these programs. In order to take one of these degrees students must write and defend a thesis as well. However the Magister degree is introduced recently and it did not exist during the Soviet period (“Education”, 2007:1).

After obtaining a Specialist's or Master's Degree, a student may enter a university or a scientific institute to pursue postgraduate education. The first level of postgraduate education is aspirantura (аспирантура) that usually results in the Kandidat nauk degree (кандидат наук, Candidate of Sciences). The seeker should pass three exams (in his/her special field, in a foreign language of his/her choice, and in history and philosophy of science), publish at least three scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals, write a dissertation and defend it. This degree is roughly equivalent to the Ph.D. in the United States. Only 1 in 4 Kandidats reaches this grade (“Education”, 2007:1).

This is the overall structure of higher education system in Russia. However most students usually complete only an undergraduate degree. Successful and devoted students attend post-graduate studies.

In the Russian education system students are graded with a note scale 1 to 5 where 5 is the best possible grade. The lowest passing grade is 3, satisfactory. Students with all grades four or better are graduated with a red diploma, *krasniy diplom* (красный диплом), which is the equivalent of graduating with an honor degree.

The top universities in the Russian Federation have competitive entry requirements. Every year, students must pass special entry exams before they are admitted to the universities. These exams may be very difficult to pass, and as my informants explained, they are a source of stress for the students before entering the university.

Higher education institutions are not completely free of charge in the Russian Federation. In State schools one third of the students pay, but yet state universities are considered to be free. Students with high grades usually receive a small amount of scholarship to support their studies. This scholarship is given by the State. Actually I, too, received the same scholarship during my stay in Moscow. This scholarship is not much. It was roughly equivalent of 20 dollars (2004) per month, but it usually covers transportation and accommodation in dormitories. Non-state universities are not free, and students must pay tuition fees to study in those institutions. Yet it is important to mention that in The Russian Federation, almost invariably, state universities are more prestigious compared to private institutions, and students prefer state universities as long as they may enroll in those institutions

5.4.2 My Host University: Moscow State Pedagogical University (MSPU)

MSPU was founded in 1872. It was the first higher education institution that offered courses for women—the Moscow Courses for Women (MCW). In 1918 MCW became the second Moscow State University (MSU). In 1921 the pedagogical department established and the university was preparing teachers for village schools. Besides preparing teachers for village schools, the university had work practice and the guidance of schools and kinder garden (“Brief”,2007:1).

“In 1930 MSU became the first pedagogical Institution in the Soviet Union” (MSPI). At the end of 1950’s MSPI was the leading school for graduating young teachers. Finally in 1990 MSPI was transformed into MSPU (“Brief”,2007:1).

Today (2007) the university hosts “18 departments, 104 chairs, 2 scientific and research institutes, 14 educational centers. The university includes about 23 000 students and 2 000 post – graduates and about 2 000 faculty staff. MSPU occupies a high position in the hierarchy of Russian Universities and productively cooperates with international universities” (Brief, 2007:1).¹⁴

5.4.3 My Informants’ Opinions about their Education System

Students had various ideas about their education system. Many students’ ideal was to finish their education as quickly as possible and start working. However, the system required them to pass the university exam to enroll a faculty. It was possible for a student to spend some time before they started studying or to be stressed if they cannot enroll to the faculties in which they wanted to study. Second enrolling to a university was just the beginning; according to the students, instructors could be too *demanding* that sometimes it was not possible to finish their studies in four years.

Actually students, including international student, complained about their universities and faculties almost all the time that the grading was not in fact fair. International students complained that instructors were never happy with their Russian. According to the International students, they were usually getting low grades compared to the Russian students per se the language. If a Russian student would get four for a particular paper, they would get three. It was not because that their paper contained less information or less new ideas but because their paper would have more grammar mistakes, and although those mistakes would not affect the readability in general, they would get a worse grade.

Russian students had a different idea for their low grades. They usually complained about the system and corruption. I mentioned earlier that in Russia corruption is a serious problem and probably present in most domains of the social life. Therefore it should not be too surprising, if the education system is too vulnerable due to corruption. Many students in

¹⁴ <<http://www.mpgu.edu/index.htm>> is the official web-page of the MSPU. Information about the university is available both in Russian (more detailed). and English.

different occasions complained about the fact that if they gave small gifts to their instructors, they would get a higher grade say four instead of three or five instead of four. As a matter of fact they also complained that the entry exams could too be unfair. Knowing a professor at the right department could provide access to a particular faculty whereas not knowing one could mean to wait at least for another year before enrolling that faculty.

Here I particularly want to mention that, these claims were not made only by the students in MSPU but also by the students in various universities. I had talked students from MSPU, GIMO, International University, and MSU. Students in those different universities had similar ideas about the grading system and the entry exam.

Students were not only critical about their education system. They were also very content with the high standards of their education system. Their instructors, as they mentioned, were of the best class. I had met a few international graduate students and they complemented on the level of their instructors' knowledge of the literature. Actually this should be treated as common information since many eminent scientists are known throughout the world from Russia.

Yet in general they mentioned that student's interest in a good education was constantly declining since good graduation did not mean a good income. Given the fact that the Russian Federation was going through a serious of economical and political changes, they were more interested in earning money to have a good life than to have a good education. Plus professors, too, were trying to find alternative jobs to have more income since their salaries were not much. This caused a further decline in the education system since both professors and students were interested in alternative stuff then the education system.

For example I heard through students that once being a teacher was a highly prestigious job but not anymore:

U: What sorts of jobs do young people prefer? Which jobs are more prestigious [literally have a higher image]? I heard that before it was good to work as a teacher. Today, people say that it no more a good job, almost an unpopular profession.

Student: Yet it is true. Today the best jobs are being a director of a firm or businessman [informant A.], (see appendix 9.1 [8]).

However students I met from various faculties and universities made me think that the education standards are still very high in the Russian Federation. Most of the students after completing their undergraduate degree are accepted by the prestigious universities of the world. Moreover one could easily notice their accumulated knowledge in their subjective fields once they start talking about it.

My scholarship covered a language class in MSPU; thus I had the opportunity to see the language training in Russia. My instructors took their task very serious that we learn Russian. These classes are the equivalent of the language prep schools in Turkey. I will only say that if professors are as serious as they were in those prep schools, it is no wonder why Russian education system is successful in graduating well trained individuals.

5.5 Everyday Life of a University Student

It is neither easy nor appropriate to make stereotypical generalizations about culture or people. This is not the purpose of this chapter but to give a descriptive view of my informants' everyday lives and activities. However, even this is difficult because they were, to start with, studying in various departments that their daily routines and duties were different, and besides this my informants had different life styles or perspectives that all these details affected their leisure time activities as well as the choice of cliques. Obviously even these few details make it impossible to give a complete picture of my informants in a generalizing manner.

In addition to this, gender issues is another element that we cannot overlook. In other words, the portrait given here should be taken as an incomplete attempt and subject to many generalizations. Here I present the everyday, average activities of my informants with a few examples from their lives.

My first group of informants usually have a nine o'clock start. They would have had left their rooms already before nine unless they were overtired from the previous night. Their lessons would normally continue until noon time with a few breaks between classes for ten minutes. In those short intervals they would spend most of their time by chit-chatting about the problems that student have. After classes they would do various things depending on their personal time tables.

The sorts of activities they did would depend on the season of the year. Since winters heavily affect life styles in Russia, during the winter they had to spend most of their time with indoor activities as opposed to spring or summer time activities. Starting from the spring, as soon as the snow starts melting, most of their preferred activities took place outdoors.

5.5.1 Indoor Activities

These indoor activities during the day involved both studying in libraries and training sports and spending time with friends. They would mostly hang around, in average, in groups of three to four people. Sports they played could range from swimming to badminton or body-building to ice hockey.

I should mention that sports had a particular importance for Russian people in general and people of various ages were constantly doing sports. For example skateboarding was a very popular sport in Moscow. My informants weren't particularly interested in it, but it was possible to find people of all ages skateboarding near the metro stations Vorobievy Gory (*Воробьевы Горы*). In my circle of students, they were rather interested in football or body-building.

Russian students as well as Russian adults took sports or other leisure time activities very seriously whether or not they were doing it as a side track along with their education or professional career. They would respect other students who were excelled in such activities and support them whenever a situation arose. One of the strong tell-tale signs of the importance Russian people gave to these activities was easily traced in their conversations.

For example, one of the most surprising things for me was the way my informants repeatedly introduced each other to other people: it was very common to tell one particular thing their friends could do well, right after they had introduced them. If the other person had any special talent, that would also be mentioned right after the first person's specialty. For example it was very usual to hear a conversation of the following sort when someone introduced two people to each other in any given time: this is Ivan; this is Boris; get to know each other (see appendix 9.1 [9]). Right after this entrance, the person would add Ivan plays the guitar well, and Boris is on the swimming team of our university, etc. Although this may sound like a usual activity, I must particularly emphasize that this was very common among many people I met. They would almost always introduce the other party with something he or

she was doing well. This was noted by me because I think this shows the importance Russian people give to excellence and commitment in one's affairs that they would introduce their friends with something they do, and express their adoration for their friends. Probably this is possible to find in the Turkish culture to an extent, but what made it special with the Russian culture was the frequency of this behavior. According to my observations, this was the case at least half of the time.

Another important issue is the way they did those activities. I observed a constant tendency to share things and help each other during many of those group activities. I will give an example from how they played football to show their understanding of sharing of the sources: usually there was only one indoor pitch to play football but at least three teams that would like to play. Their solution to this problem was two teams playing against each other only for *ten minutes*. In the end of the ten minutes the leading team or the first team that scored three goals within those ten minutes would stay in the pitch and the losing team would be substituted with the first one in the queue, and the cycle would continue as long as they wanted to play.

These practical solutions were to be found in other aspects of the social life too. Another such practical solution was how they managed waiting queues. They would very rarely wait in the queues standing but who ever came last would ask "Kto posledniy" ("кто последний"), "who is last", and then wait for the person who answered that question to finish whatever was necessary. After him he would do the thing for which he or she was waiting, say, talking with a manager in his or her office. If someone else came after him or her and asked the same question, this time he or she would answer "ya" (Я), "I" and the new comer would wait until the new, last person finishes his or her thing.

Besides the time they spent with their friends some of my informants had various part time jobs to support their education. These jobs included working in fast food restaurants or shopping malls or giving English lessons to high school students or working for design companies as part-time artists or assisting in kindergarten for children's supervision and training. All these part-time activities were necessary for many students, particularly students coming from the Soviet Union.

5.5.2 Outdoor Activities

My stay in Russia covered the winter to spring. Therefore I did not have much chance to see outdoor activities of students during the summer. Yet Russian students did not miss any chance to enjoy outdoor activities as soon as the weather allowed them. Thus, starting from early spring indoor activities would leave its place to outdoor activities.

My observations about outdoor activities mostly limited to the likes of my informants and I should mention that it is practically impossible to explain the diversity of outdoor activities students could join.

Yet there was one type of gathering most of the students seemed to like it: students would usually gather at the courtyard of the university and spend extended period of time there socializing. Usually there would be at least a group of four or five students playing a music instrument on either side of the courtyard. There would be also other groups of students talking and listening to the live music playing. These gatherings in the courtyard would usually take place between course breaks or usually after the class in the afternoon.

My informants usually like to go to the forest for picnic near the university and spend time there. First this type of activity was popular among many other students and usually one would see different groups of students, groups of 5 to 15 students, gathering in the park and enjoying the first days of the spring.

In order to go to these picnic activities, students would meet in groups, and after a quick shopping from the local markets, they would go to the nearby forests for picnic. These picnics would involve lots of work from the group members so these activities were useful in creating a group feeling or solidarity. Those activities would involve, after shopping, collecting dry branches for the camp or barbeque fire. Although it may seem to be an easy activity it would take around two hours to collect the tree branches and preparing the fire for the barbeque. After the barbeque students were usually very careful to not to leave any litter behind them so another rigorous activity would start to make sure first the fire is safely extinguished and then no litter is left behind. In short a day in the forest would take around six to seven hours consuming the whole day.

5.5.3 Dormitory Life

However, probably the most active time of the day for my informants besides daily lessons was the time they spent in dormitories. It was regular to visit each other in their respective rooms or arrange parties on a regular basis in certain rooms or in the common gathering rooms, say, for birthdays.

It was also regular for almost all students living in the dormitory to meet on staircase landings for smoking and spending some time there talking to each other about various things. These gatherings would sometimes take hours talking in groups or these goings in and out were so regular that there were always some groups to find on the staircase landings unless the majority of a particular floor were non-smokers.

For this reason it was almost always possible to find someone laughing or seriously discussing the matters of the day for extended periods of time on staircase landings. At least my informants were regular visitors of those staircase landings that I too spent time in those habitual meeting places of different students. In those places it was also possible to find other inhabitants of the dormitory such as civil workers or guest visitors from other cities or institutions. In other words these small spots on each storey had a special importance for meeting people from different rooms or departments.

Dormitory life occupied an important part in the lives of most of my informants as dormitories were used to socialize with other students. I should mention that dormitories had different standards in Russia, Moscow. One could live in very good dormitories in single or double rooms from about \$100 a month to \$20 a month. The more expensive dormitories had better facilities and were more liberal in its regulations. I had the chance to visit at least two different types of dormitories. The dormitory of Gimo and the International University were the ones I had access to see in detail.¹⁵

For example Gimo's dormitory was well organized in terms of high hygiene standards as well as functioning facilities e.g. the common kitchen. On the other hand, the International

¹⁵ Gimo is a very popular university for students of international relations and politics. It was a highly prestigious university, and students studying in this university usually had very promising profiles. The international University was well-known for the wide spectrum of countries of origin of their students. It was possible to find students from China to Africa in this university.

University's dormitory's overall rating was most likely not as high as the Gimo's dormitory, but it had more liberal regulations (Gimo's dormitory had stricter rules for visitors in general (compared to the International University) or opening and closing hours of the dormitory than the dormitory of International University).¹⁶

My room was located in one of the dormitories of MSPU in *Yugo Zapadnaya (Юго-Западная)*, composed of three buildings close to each other. Each building had 15-16 stories with two wings joining to the center of the building. The buildings are visualized in the shape of an "H" with the main entrance in one of the long walls.

Right after the entrance, walking across a short floor, one would reach the connecting joint of the "H" shape between the wings. This was where the elevators were located. There were four of them and these elevators were carrying the whole traffic of the building starting from early in the morning till late at night. However, the problem with the elevators was that they would usually break down for extended periods of time, and they were rather dodgy. Yet it was always possible to find an interesting conversation on the elevators since they could easily take 15 people. As a matter of fact I met one of my key informants on an elevator on my way to the top floor to go to the student's cafeteria.

On each wing there were six to seven complexes. Each complex consisted of one common kitchen, at the entrance of the complex, one common bathroom, and one common toilet. In addition to this there were two separate rooms in every complex. The number of students staying in each room would change with respect to crowdedness of the dormitory. It would vary between two to four people; three would be the average. Thus the number of students staying in each complex would vary from four to six and eight in some rare cases.

However, this was only the official number of students that could stay in one room. At times of visiting with friends or during certain gatherings the number of students in one room could easily reach up to seven, eight or more students. Yet this would happen only when they were visiting each other, and most of the guests would leave for their respective rooms before dawn. Only one or two visiting friends from other cities or dormitories could stay overnight in that room, as long as the approval of the others was at least implicitly taken as well.

¹⁶ I should note that my knowledge about these dormitories are limited with of a few hours, and the rest of the information I have of those dormitories were formed by my informants' ideas about their dormitories.

Students would gather for various reasons. They could meet to study together or talk while drinking soft beverages. Yet one of the most frequent reasons to visit each other was partying. Those room parties, which would usually spill over to the halls, would include at least both of the rooms in one complex, if not two or more complexes at once. These parties were easy to find on almost every floor and usually with more than one party going at a time. In other words, during the winter most of the leisure time activities of students would take place either in their flats or dormitories. A party, normally, would go on until late in the morning depending on the day of the week, daily workload, and the dispositions of the students.

However those parties were regular, first not all of the students took place in those activities. There were also students who did not like such parties much or just seldom joined a few of them and/or who left early for various reasons. Second, due to the fact that the weather was very cold, it was difficult to spend time outside, and the prices were very high that most students could not afford to go out very often. Under these circumstances these parties were regular activities of the dormitory students through out the week.

Students would usually socialize during those parties. They would have fun all together, sing, dance, and talk until late in the morning. In those parties, it was regular to consume alcohol, and the dominating drink was either vodka or beer. Third, there was an unwritten but pretty well functioning labor of division in those parties as well. As it was also confirmed by my informants, male students would usually bring the food and/or drinks where female students would simply prepare and cook the food brought.

Yet a few critiques can be mentioned here about this division of labor. A few of my informants talked with me about this labor of division. They were mostly the critiques of female students. Female students were complaining that in general, men were not very active in house-work and were shirking their responsibilities. When I directed this question to my informants at a group atmosphere of only male students, one of them told me (half seriously) that in Russia women were responsible for such things, and it was true that men were a bit lazy, but their responsibility was to go to war and sacrifice their lives when they had to defend their countries.

I did not have opportunity to ask female students' opinions about men's position, but male students were very confident of their position, and they rarely took any initiative to share

the tasks of the female students. Actually this issue seems to be a recurrent topic at different layers of the daily life. I listened to many stories that men were passive at home, and Russian women made most of the decisions in the households.

Interestingly, in Turkey I had the chance to listen to the story of a very different observation from an entrepreneur who worked with Russians in Laleli-Aksaray, Istanbul: That entrepreneur mentioned that it was Russian women who always bargained for a better deal in every transaction while Russian men had no such skills in addition to being very passive in fact..

Besides these regular activities, dormitory life would also contain other mid-to-low frequency items that could be experienced by various groups of students. For instance, whenever a possibility arises, students would go out to the roof and spend some time there—such as watching the moon eclipse.

My understanding of what I observed is that dormitory life had fairly distinct boundaries. namely: Russians students with other Russian students, Russian students with foreigners, and finally Russian students with authorities. Although the sort of activities that could take place in a dormitory may seem to be limited, it provided essential information understanding group activities among Russian students and allowed me to get to know to most of informants. To this end, my observations in the dormitory consist an important percentage of my fieldwork.

5.5.4 Students as Security People

At the entrance of each building, dormitory or not, it was regular to find a security person, *ahran* (*охран*), for twenty four hours a day. They were responsible for keeping the dormitories secure by arranging goings in and out from the building. However I shall add that my observations about these people—particularly the ones that were working in dormitories—were very negative, and potentially they had potential to create more problems than they ever solved. These security people were usually senior students also staying in the same dormitory or students working there on a part-time basis.

These people had some sort of power that other students did not have due to their position in those buildings. As I mentioned before, it was necessary to be in good terms with these people so as to enjoy certain privileges other students did not have, such as letting in the

guests or visitors inside easily or going out any time in the night and/or checking in late in the morning for a prize, which was usually given in the form of a small gift. However as I mentioned earlier, the overall regulations of the university had an impact on these details. For example Gimo University was rather flexible (compared to my university) about having guests while the entrance to the International University dormitory was open for twenty four hours as explained by the students living there. As a result it was less likely a need to tip the security to do certain things against the regulations.

Since having guests and checking in after 12 o'clock were restricted in my dormitory, security people had certain privileges that other students could not easily enjoy. I am in no position to discuss the logic of the dormitory regulations in the university. Nor do I have such an intension. All I want to do is to openly express that some those students experienced far more power than they ever should have had thanks to their position as security people.

Several students as my informants were highly critical of them. Their comments about the security people were usually expressions close to this: "They are brutal, little experienced, little educated but extremely extravagant, thinking very high of themselves. They think they have right to have anyone or anything as they wished." (informant, T.). Here, again, I am not trying to belittle the tasks they were doing, or I am not trying to represent them as unwanted and/or unnecessary. On the contrary a few of them were fairly well educated people with pleasant characters, while a great many of them were causing the sorts of problems I mentioned above.

To back up my words, I want to give a dramatic example to show the extent of problems these people could cause. One of those security guys whom I personally knew well was allegedly involved in beating to death of an international student of Asiatic origin. This security person was missing after authorities had started to search for him. The suspected security officer was not alone in this action which he was accused of and his accomplices were caught the following day—According to information circling among the students, they too were security people.

5.6 Selected Topics Affecting Identity Formation

5.6.1 Identity and Climate

One of the distinct characteristics of the Russian Federation is its harsh climate. This tough climate of the country and its effects is visible in all areas of life. “only small parts of Russia are south of 50° north latitude and more than half of the country is north of 60° north latitude, extensive regions experience six months of snow cover over subsoil that is permanently frozen to depths as far as several hundred meters. The average yearly temperature of nearly all of European Russia is below freezing, and the average for most of Siberia is freezing or below. Most of Russia has only two seasons, summer and winter, with very short intervals of moderation between them” (Glenn, 1996:1).

One of the first things one should get acquainted in Russia is its heavy snowing that covers everywhere for six months. Russians may seem to cope with snow and cold easily, but particularly for a foreigner who has not been used to living in such a climate this easiness with the climate is something to be observed and admired. For instance after the first three weeks of my stay I realized that actually walking in the snow was much harder than it seems to be and it was actually a potential risk to fall and injure yourself. I even thought and made a list for myself in my diary how to avoid falling while walking.

Starting as early as five o'clock in the morning, civil workers would start opening roads and removing the snow with bulldozers almost everyday and this process had to be repeated several times throughout the day depending on the amount of snow. This task seemed like a routine part of their life and people in general and students in particular seemed to know how to cope with snow or cold.

I think this harsh climate affected people in general. Everybody had to struggle and fight with the difficulties of the climate resulting in tough, challenging personalities. This was the case for kids, adults, and elderly people. One could easily see ladies of 70 years or more climbing up very slippery stairs on a very steep hill without anyone's help while kids literally running and rolling down on the snow from the very same hill for fun—it was indeed dangerous.

Moreover students or adults not only learned how to live and survive with this climate but also they had preserved their styles without compromising. For example almost all

Russian female students including adult women liked to wear shoes with very tall and thin high heels throughout the year. It was somewhat difficult to walk for me even with my boots but they could dexterously move from street to street in these high heels.

In short Russia has more winter than summer. There may be many days in a row when one will not see the sunlight at all or only for a few minutes.¹⁷ The struggle against the climate starts everyday early in the morning and continues all day long, and this cycle repeats itself for a life time. This causes people to develop ways to learn how to live with the cold and how to supply the needs of the everyday life. Meanwhile people rarely like to quit their preferences so not only they learn how to live with it but also fight to preserve their styles. This nature of Russia causes fighting, struggling, tough people because it is the only way to survive under this demanding climate.

5.6.2 Religion

In Russia majority of believers belong to the Orthodox Christian church. Orthodoxy plays an important role in the formation Russian identity (see introduction). Yet the history of Orthodoxy and other religions in Russia went through a difficult time after the revolution between 1917 and 1980. Although religious freedom was allowed in the constitution, religion was practically forbidden. There was a systematic Marxist-Leninist propaganda and atheistic repression which undermined religion in Russia—the census of 1937 shows that 55 percent of the population believed in God. For example membership of the communist party and the membership in a religious organization were not possible at the same time. All religious activities were strictly under the control of the government, and openly expressing religious choices would be the end of a successful career in the society (Service, 2002:89-90; “Religion”, 21 June 2007:1).

After the 1917 upheavals, the Russian Orthodox Church has traversed a hard and tragic road. The early years of the Soviet regime were particularly trying for it. The Land Decree of October 26, 1917, deprived the Church of the bulk of its lands. The worst hit were the monasteries. In its another decree, made public on January 26, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars (the government) separated the church from the state and school. As a result, all

¹⁷ I come from a country which has a Mediterranean climate in general. The sun and the sunlight is available throughout the year even during the winter, and therefore It was something for granted for me. I personally understood the importance of the sun and sunlight and how it may affects one’s mood in Russia —particularly the lack of it.

church organizations lost the powers of legal entity and the right to own property. To have the decree put into effect, a special liquidation committee was set up to evict the monks from their monasteries, many of which were destroyed, not without acts of vandalism, in which church utensils and bells were melted down and shrines containing relics were broken open (“Religion”, 20 June 2007:1).

The repression against religion was decreased during the Second World War II because “the government wanted to gain support of Christian nations in the fight against fascism. But as the war ended, restrictions were once again put on expressing such beliefs” (Religion Introduction) My informant, F.G2, too supported this..

When the Second World War started, they [the government] started to back [literally raise] religion for the support of people. Especially during that time, they stopped persecuting religion (see appendix 9.1 [10]).

Until 1980’s it was difficult to practice religion in Russia. People that believed in God had to practice their beliefs in secret. I asked about religion and religious practices in Russia to my informants. Almost invariably they too told me that religious practices were repressed in Russia. For example my informant A. explained it as such:

Yes, during USSR it was like this [referring to religion]. Russia is a denominational state. Here there are both Christians and Moslems. During communism all religions were persecuted. For example, they baptized me not in Russia. In Russia all churches were closed. I was baptized in Ukraine. Now everything is free (see appendix 9.1 [11]).

However after 80’s this started gradually changing: first the relationship between the state and the church changed in the hope of revival of Christianity (“Religion”:20 June 2007, 1). “Glastnost and the breakup of the USSR have provided for far more religious freedom than under the Communist rule, and since then, many people in Russia have been attracted to various religious faiths” (“Religion”:21 June 2007:1). Moreover “The millennium of Christianity in Russia in 1988 was celebrated on a grand scale. In that year, 1,610 new religious communities, most of them of the Orthodox belief, were registered in the country” (“Religion”, 21 June 2007:1).

Today there are around 9000 religious organizations in the country. These organizations include the Orthodox Church, Moslem associations, Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, Evangelicals, Old Believers, Roman Catholics, Krishnaites, Buddhists, Judaists, and Unified Evangelical Lutherans (Religion Profile). The Main Religion of Russia is Russian

Orthodox Christianity around 75 percent of the population who define themselves as believers, and then follows Islam with 19 percent of the population. Since the break down of the SSCB, many churches and monasteries have been returned to their owners in 1990's. Yet the number of believers is still not very clear. Statisticians estimate the number of believers in the whole federation around 40 percent. However a high percentage of population is believed to fear to express their religious beliefs openly ("Russia", 26 June 2007:1). I asked my informants about the current situation in the country with regard to religion, and how the state recently approached towards religions. They told me there was a struggle going on between religions, but now there was religious freedom, and it was even supported by the government.

Once can meet Putin at all religious holidays. The president attempts to bring the people closer to God [literally faith]. Even now Putin awarded two representatives of the Protestants from the old Pentecostal—who were there in communistic times—with a second degree order Ryahovskii and Muurzov for their service to the country. The war between the religions still continues, and Orthodoxy is considered to be the main religion. Now there are both Protestantism and Orthodoxy, moreover Catholics and others. Now, Protestantism started developing very strongly. Orthodoxy, it is a passive thing. It is more than a tradition. But Protestantism gathers enormous forces, and it is growing. They have more active members [informant F.G2](see appendix 9.1 [12]).

In Russia it was possible to meet missionaries all around the world. For example I met a few missionaries in Moscow trying to attract people to go to services that were held in certain parts of the city. I too was invited to one of those services. I attended the service and according to the participants those gatherings were being held over the years and their community was growing. However most of the participants were either foreigners or middle-aged people. During religious holidays most of the central churches were full that people had to attend the services also in the courtyard of the churches. Yet in appearance those services were too followed mostly by middle-aged people. I did not see many people that could be students while I was walking in the streets during those services.

I asked my informants how the youth thought about religion: My informants provided me two different perspectives. One perspective is that now in Russia religion is free so that there are more believers in the youth. These young people were open to religion and expressed their beliefs liberally because they were raised in a different environment than their parents. Their parents had a more distant approach towards religion and did not openly talk about religion as they children do. In addition to this some of my informants believed that

believing in God increased the morality in the society that it reduced drugs, crime to a certain extent. This was a good thing to experience and they hoped a further increase in the number of believers that it would counterweight the “evil” in the society.

They are neutral. This is how people are. Many girls go to church. They believe in God, but it was not like this before the revolution. Before the revolution the upbringing occurred from the childhood. But the parents of the contemporary youth grew with communism; then love of God was not inculcated in them. Now it is possible that everything will be different. For example, I (a girl) believe in God, but my mom is totally passive. She does not go to church. Here, some people believe in God whereas some people stand aside with narcotics and crime. But there is hope that Christianity and believing in God [literally faith in God] will make society healthier that it will become a counterbalance to all the existing evil in the society which occurs now [informant F.G2] (see appendix 9.1 [13]).

The second approach was somewhat more skeptical about the rise of the religion in the country. For example one of my informants, (A.C.), mentioned that he questioned whether this sudden rise in the number of believers was related with “fashion”. Politicians were supporting religions and the public was simply following them. It was good if the believers genuinely wanted to live and express their religious beliefs, however according to him it was difficult to draw the line between the two.

I am at a loss. Earlier orthodoxy was not legal. , now it is popular. On television they show many politicians going to church. Politicians think that if they go, people will go too. This is a complicated question, and it is not possible to answer it unambiguously: before, temples were closed, but now all of them are restored and everyone goes to temples. This can be either good that the spiritual culture is restored, or for many people it is just paying tribute to the fashion, and this is why they may be going to temples (see appendix 9.1 [14]).

In general students seemed to be openly expressing their beliefs in religion. As a result of glasnost no one seemed to be deprived for their choice of religion or religious practices. However linked to the communist past of the Federation, there were still more non-believers in the society than number of believers. Most students had either a neutral approach towards religion or openly mentioned that they are not very religious: “I am not a very religious person” [14a]. This seemed to be the most dominant answer my informants chose to give. Moreover neither going to church nor practicing religious customs was common among students. Religious activities seemed to be rather the domain of not students but middle aged and old people.

Yet finally I should mention that this liberal approach was towards Christianity, atheism and other common or non-common religions but Islam. Many people seemed to be less welcoming about Islam. Coming from Caucasians and being a Moslem was enough for many people to be suspicious about someone since majority of students as well as the man in the street associated Islam with terrorism.

5.6.3 Terrorism

Terrorism has been a serious problem in Russia. Since 1999 there has been a series of terrorist attacks in the Russian Federation.¹⁸ These attacks are usually linked to Chechnya and Al-Qaeda (Kupchinsky, 2004:1). Particularly terrorism related with Chechnya is a very complicated issue and its details are beyond the scope of this thesis. However as Service mentions “Russia since 1991 cannot be understood without consideration of the wars in Chechnya” (152). I will not go into the details of those wars, but discuss the terrorism related with Chechnya and its affects on students. First I must note that I will only express my informants’ opinions on Terrorism and how they read those terrorist strikes; particularly the ones related with Chechnya.

When I asked my informant A.C. about the terrorist attacks in Russia he mentioned it was an international problem, and then explained the links of terrorism with Al-Qaeda and Chechnya.

This is a problem of the entire world, not only Russia. The ancestor of international terrorism was Bin laden, the invulnerable leader of Al-Qaeda. It is CIA created him [literally gave birth] in Afghanistan against USSR, but he then went out of control and started a war against America, for example (the famous skyscrapers). This is a global network, for example, in Chechnya it is necessary to search for the leaders to destroy the flow (see appendix 9.1 [15]).

After he explained his opinions about the terrorism in Russia, he explained the situation in Chechnya related with terrorism.

In Chechnya now everything is getting gradually normalized. Innocent civilians begin to work, restore houses, but I simply believe that the people of Chechnya were against the band headed by Basaev. For example the people, with whom it is necessary to fight; the people whom the entire world recognized as international terrorists.

¹⁸ See appendix “Timeline: Terrorism in Russia” for the most significant strikes since 1999.

And now in Qatar the consequence is the killing of one of the leaders of the Chechen formation, well this is not important. People will understand; everybody watches TV. During one of the broadcasts, there was a ridiculous report about the Russian special services that they have long hands, but short feet, i.e. they cannot manage to run away from where they stretched their hand. I think terrorism is impossible to beat. This is a world wide partisan movement, and its consequence is perishing the innocent people. I think this is not only the problem of Russia but the problem of the whole world.

It's necessary to establish special services. The countries devastated from terrorism must gather groups that can respond quickly; groups equipped with the contemporary technology (see appendix 9.1 [16]).

Hence according to my informant A.C., it was a world wide problem, and its roots linked with Chechnya and Al-Qaeda. Terrorism had to be fought by well equipped and trained specialists. Yet this problem could only be solved with international support. However he knew that civilizations were too affected in this.

Many of my informants had similar opinions, according to them this was a problem related with Caucasus in general and Chechnya in particular. Actually I had mentioned that students from Caucasus and the students from other parts of the Russian Federation did not get along well. They were usually critical about each other and although this was not always put into words, there was usually some level of unspoken tension which was there. This unpopularity of the people from Caucasus is known in the literature as well:

[...] Russians do not lack hostile prejudices about other ethnic groups. They dislike on a grand scale, and their attitudes have more than a trace of imperial condescension. Antagonism is strong towards certain peoples of the North Caucasus and the Transcaucasus, an antagonism strengthened by Chechen terrorism and the wars started in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999. One survey suggests that 6 per cent of Russians fear persons of Azeri nationality and that 38 per cent feel either irritated by them or mistrustful towards them (Servic, 2002: 118).

The students I knew from Caucasus were usually complaining that they were usually stopped and searched by the police in the streets of Moscow. This was common knowledge to everybody. Terrorism and Chechnya was linked and almost any student I talked immediately mentioned this link. For example while I was talking to my informant A. he, like others, immediately mentioned terrorist strikes as a problem of the war related with Chechnya.

Now life in Russia stressed enough. Earlier it was considerably more calm. There are many terrorist attacks. I hope, it will end soon. Terrorist strikes and violence are connected with the [Chechen] war. [16a]

I also asked the reasons of the Terrorist attacks in Russia and what the terrorists wanted. My informants mentioned that it is difficult to understand the reasons behind terrorism, but in general they related it with Islam and Wahhabism¹⁹.

Here it is big money involved for commercial profit. Everything is connected with their ideology of Wahhabism. It is difficult to gain an understanding immediately, one needs to study this problem for a long time to understand the reasons of terrorism. But I think the reasons are ideological. This is Islam; many people think that Islam is militant [informant A.C.], (see appendix 9.1 [17]).

Also my other informants backed this idea. According to my informants The Chechen terror was related with Islam and their ideology. Moreover some of them mentioned that it was related with certain economic reasons as well:

Because for Chechens everything depends on faith; they are Muslims. But Russians are oriented to Europe and European methods to try to fight in Chechnya.

In Chechnya there is oil, and this means a lot of money. Therefore they want to get separated from Russia. They wanted independence and authority [informant F.G2] (see appendix 9.1 [18]).

My informants told me that finishing terrorism required finding and eliminating the reasons behind terrorism. Any real solution against terrorism had to base on this idea.

In order to solve this problem, it is necessary to eliminate the reasons behind terrorism. The reason of the terrorism is the persecution and the war in Chechnya. The reason is that they do not let people live where they used to live... Hatred exists between the people. Those people should not hate each other ... They want to be independent in their country, but unfortunately this is politics.

They have illegal jobs, they sell weapons. This is how terrorism continues, especially in the large cities [informant A.] (see appendix 9.1 [19]).

Politics was one of the reasons of the Chechen terror. One of my key informants K. mentioned to me verbally that actually if the government wanted to finish the terrorism they could do it. He was ashamed that the government, *intentionally*, did not solve the problems

¹⁹Wahhabism is a movement within Islam based on the 18th century teachings of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. The objective of Wahhabism is to revive the ritual and conceptual purity of Islam.. Followers of Wahhabism believe that their faith should be spread around the world and that they have a special obligation to defend Islam, with violence if need be, in countries where it is already well established (“Wahhabism”:2007, 1).

behind the terrorism and eventually finish it. This was an interesting argument. I had the chance to reformulate this answer into a question and ask it to a speaker during a presentation about Terrorism. My question had an immediate impact on the presentation. Participants of the colloquium, around 15 people, discussed my question for about 20 minutes. Unfortunately I missed some of the answers due to language limitations, but at least some of the participants said that I was right with my question, and it was part of the reason. Later some of the participants congratulated me on my question.

When I asked them what they think about the future and whether it was going to be better my informant in the focus group seemed to be a bit pessimistic about terrorism and told me that future was difficult to guess.

It will not be better for anybody. Authorities will benefit from it. Russia is against the separation because in Russia there are many small countries like Chechnya, and if Russia permits the separation of Chechnya others will follow. The whole world supports the terrorists and Chechnya. They give financial support. Well, of course, the answer to this question we do not know until to the end [informant F.G3] (see appendix 9.1 [20]).

Thus terrorism in Russia was related with Wahhabism, a strict form of Islam, and Chechnya. My informants knew that the nature of the conflict was complicated. On one hand Chechnya wanted its independence, but on the other hand Russians were not willing anything of the sort on the ground that other small countries could follow the same path. The problems were economical and political. In the course of the wars between Chechnya and Russia many civilians died and suffered.

Extensive terrorist strikes in major cities made everybody wearisome and people became suspicious of anybody from the Caucasus region resulting in more dispute and dislike for each other. As I mentioned before this dislike was visible in everyday life as well. Probably pejorative expressions like *hach* (*хач*) or *cherniy* (*черный*) were related with this lack of confidence too.

It is difficult to predict the outcome of these problems. It is particularly important to know that the problems regarding the Caucasian area is not new. Armed conflict goes back to the nineteenth century and mutual prejudices existed in times of *Pushkin*, *Lermontov*, and *Tolstoi* as well since these writers too wrote about the problems in this region (Service, 2002: 152). Yet it is important to understand these problems and how Russian students react against

them because it is a topic that interests and affects the society in general and students in particular. Students are the supposed politicians, doctors, soldiers, and teachers of the future. Their ideas are important in terms of the identity formation of the students as Service mentions that contact with the people of Caucasus has always an impact on the Russian sense of identity (Service, 2002: 152).

5.7 Student's Opinions about Russian Federation and Expectations

In the field, I usually asked my informants about the problems of the Russian Federation and their expectations of the future for themselves and the Russian Federation in the next ten of fifteen years. Whenever we talked about Russia they presented various problems of the country and hoped that those problems would be solved in the future. The topics for the future usually covered the following topics: economic problems, corruption, relations with Europe and America, terrorism, and the brain drain.

5.7.1 Opinions about Economic and Political Problems and Expectations

According to many students the most dramatic problem of Russia was the economic and political problems. If they could solve those two problems a good future was possible for the Russian Federation. For example my informant, A.C., explained his expectation about Russia in the next decade:

Well it is necessary to look at the person who will be in power in the next 10 to 15 years. Who will be it. Who will have the power for the next four years. It seems that Putin will remain for four years. Everything depends on the economic and political perspectives. Now, if we can change it even only 2 to 3 percent in those four years everything will be very good. It is better, if he was the successor of himself.

So that he would continue in the same way.. So that he would stick to the same course. So that then something would change. So that in the end [one] would compromise; the strictness of power and to have all the 100 percent. if one speaks about perspectives, then, now, I cannot complain that I live badly (see appendix 9.1 [21]).

In other words, for A.C., it was the economic and political perspectives that would change the country. Yet these changes were going to take time. He was aware of the fact that such changes would take time; first 2 to 3 percent and then more. Moreover for this purpose, he claimed that economic and political continuity and consistency were required at the cost of democratic freedom. He was ready to pay the price (the strictness of power/authority). Until

then one should not complain about his or her life standards. It was to be done and he wanted it done.

Yet he was strict. Maybe one should consider the fact that he was a historian. He knew the history of USSR and the Russian Federation more than the average people outside. However not everybody shared his opinion about Putin and his policies. Opinions about Putin were varying. Some students were supporting him much meanwhile some other were really opposing him though they, too, were in favor of economic and politic change.

For example one of my informants, Y. a student of electronics, was very critical about Putin: first he mentioned that he thought that the future of Russia was “dark” and “unknown”. He claimed that many tourists were visiting the country but only Moscow. Russia was not only Moscow. Tourists had no idea of the problems of the country. If only they had left the city about hundred kilometers and visited *prigoradi*, suburban parts of the city, (пригороды), then they would see how different was everything. Finally when I asked his opinion about Putin, he said that Putin was a “puppet” because it was the mafia and the street gangs that were actually in power.

However, I think more students were positive than negative about Putin. When I was talking with another informant (Ka.) that I mentioned that people say Putin is a good president. she agreed on this comment:

Yes he is better than the former ones. He is neutral. Some people think that he is passive, but we like him (see appendix 9.1 [22]).

Economic –problems were too important. Almost invariably everybody agreed that economic problems or problems related with economy (such as industry, infrastructure) were one of the biggest problems of Russia. Students mentioned it as such and expected it to be solved in the future. My informant A. shared his opinions with me:

Probably, the biggest problem is connected with economy. They don’t give work to all people; they don’t pay everybody enough; they do not worry about all pensioners (see appendix 9.1 [23]).

As my informants were undergraduate students they were expecting to have good jobs after they graduated. However they had worries about finding good jobs as B. mentioned it. In Moscow it was possible to find plenty of job advertisements, but not all of them were among the jobs that university graduates would like to work. Either the salaries were not high or if

they were good jobs, employers expected candidates to have work experience. Therefore it was a problem for students to find good jobs.

Both to gain some experience and support their studies most of the students had some part time jobs. Depending on their studies, most of my informants were working. For example one of them was a teacher in the kindergarten teaching children drawing, or a teacher in a private language school teaching English.

Almost all students wanted to be rich and preferably get rich quick. Since good education not necessarily meant a good job, students did lose some interest in good education. Yet they were also aware of the fact of the economic problems of the country. For example my informant A.C., the history student, explained his views about the industry of the Russian Federation as the following:

The second big problem is that our industry was collapsed during Yeltsin and Gorbachev's lifetime. Around 60 percent was collapsed, and now big investments are necessary to restore it again. If I could advise the President what to do, I would advise him to raise the level of industry 60 to 70 percent yearly (see appendix 9.1 [24]).

According to A.C, the industry of the country had collapsed and it was necessary to build it again. Actually most of my informants were comparing the life standards in USSR and in the Russian Federation. Some were in favor of the life standards in USSR and some others preferred the current situation. The ones particularly liked the life standards in USSR mentioned that everybody had a house, a job. Everybody was able to go on a vacation too which is now a luxury many cannot afford.

However, although USSR had certain advantages, students also mentioned the problems of USSR. They noted that everything was kept artificially under the state control and this caused the break down of the system. During the focus group we had in the dormitory one of the participants told me the following about Russia and other participants of the group seemed to agree with her comments:

[Economy] was more stable and artificially they created an average standard. No one, indeed, knew what was in the West. Everybody was content. Everybody received equal amount of money. Everybody could afford to go somewhere convenient in Russia [USSR], but now they cannot. There are the very rich and the very poor.

Everything became accessible and free. Before it was not the development of a particular business; the state owned everything, and therefore it did not matter. But this was not correct. Artificially they attempted to keep everything under control, and this is why everything collapsed [informant FG3] (see appendix 9.1 [25]).

Students' expectations about future of Russia about economic and politics can be summarized as such: they wished a better economy and a stable political situation in the country. In general they were critical of the current situation in the country. They knew the changes would take some time, and investments had to be made. They thought during USSR time people had certain advantages and certain disadvantages. Most of them were not expecting to go back in time, but definitely wanted better life standards with more freedom. Although some pessimistic opinions existed, they were rather optimistic about the political and economic future of the country. Their preference was to wait and see policy.

5.7.2 Opinions about the West, the Russian Federation, and Expectations

Russian students were also very concerned about the Russian Federation and its relations with the rest of the world—particularly Europe and the United States of America. I mentioned before that where Russia belongs—Europe or Asia—is still a heavily discussed topic. Since there is lengthy literature about this topic, it should not be surprising that students too were interested in this topic regarding now and future.

Their interest in those countries were not only limited to the relationship they have with the mentioned countries, but students also assess their country's level of development by comparing their life standards with that of the western countries. More over, although many people wanted to go and work in those countries, they were critical that talented and educated people of Russia leaving the country—another obstacle against the development of the country.

Within the next few years Russia will improve and strengthen its relations with the West.. Russia must reach a new level of development; it must have the same level [of development] with other countries. Russia is an enormous, rich country, rich with its natural resources and minds, rich with its talents. Many people go to America. In America salaries are better and the standards of life are different. Russia is deprived of its talents and minds... if all these talented people do not leave and go to the West, then, Russia will develop and reach a new level [informant A.], (see appendix 9.1 [26]).

Many students were interested about the lifestyles in the West. Many well educated professionals had left the country after the dissolution of the SSCR. Many students had similar dreams. They wanted to go to developed western countries for better opportunities.

Another student in the focus group suggested that it was necessary to make people love their country. Love for the “native land”, patriotism, was the solution. In addition it was necessary to make investments in the outskirts of the country that life standards would improve in the whole country outside Moscow as well. This was her suggestion so that people first stop leaving the country and then eventually make them respect the mother land.

It is necessary to give the idea, to populate the idea, of patriotism in people. It is necessary to inculcate patriotism, love for the native land. I think one of the reasons why people want to go abroad or love the West is that Russia is second class. It is necessary to distribute the wealth [lit: finance] in small cities. In Moscow there is a high level of development, but in small cities it is very low. [informant FG3], (see appendix 9.1 [27]).

I mentioned before that one of the interesting questions I faced was where Russia belongs. Although this question is asked in Turkey too (about Turkey), I was not expecting to hear it in Russia. This question was also related whether or not the Russian Federation should join the European Union. My informants, almost unanimously, mentioned that the Russian Federation should join the Union. They mentioned that it would take time but Russia should be part of it, and the Russian Federation had a special position both in Europe and Asia. It was a country that was part of the two continents and should stay like that: When I asked my informant A.C., during the in-depth-interview, where Russia belongs, he replied as the following:

Eurasia, so to say. Many people live in Asia, in the Caucasus, Dagestan, Tatarstan, Bashkiriya. . Many live in the central Europe. For example, one should not separate Siberia from them. It is our territory, which united the country.

Politicians, they know little about the history. One is not allowed to divide the country. This entire history was combined by blood. But they speak about dividing the Russia into two: Europe and Asia. This is not right, and it is dilettantism. Russia is both in Europe and Asia, and this is unique (see appendix 9.1 [28]).

Unlike some people suspect, students in general, my informants in particular did not seem to be anti-American or anti-western. On the contrary they were willing to join the European Union and keep good relations with America. Yet they were definitely criticizing

American policies in Iraq. A few students, for example my informant A.C., had negative opinions about America, but the general tendency among my informants or students I had met was positive about America. Many of them were willing to move to America if they could to have better lives.

However, as I mentioned, not everybody was happy with this on going “brain drain” to America or Europe. They wished better life standards which were equal to the developed western countries, but first they had to start with avoiding the loss of skilled and educated Russians. In short they wanted to be a part of the developed world with better life standards while preserving national dignity and integrity.

5.7.3 Opinions about Problems and Expectations

Besides problems and expectations about the economy, politics, the West, there were also some other problems that affected the society such as drug abuse, alcoholism, and Aids.

My informants mentioned that those problems were very acute and it was necessary to find ways to avoid them. For example while I was talking with my informant A.C., he suggested that alcoholism and drug addiction were serious problems and they were correlated with loss of jobs. .

In Russia is a problem with job placement... especially alcoholism and drug addiction in the youth [After the fall of USSR many people lost their jobs and] this was the reason for the new wave of alcoholism. Today many people drink because they are not occupied. If someone does not study and work, then nothing remains for him other than to go to drink and gather with friends (see appendix 9.1 [29]).

Thus, regardless of its reasons, drug addiction and alcoholism were very serious problems in Russia. my informants FG2., informed me that every year 250.000 people were dying because of alcohol abuse, and students, adults, men, women, told me that alcoholism is one of the most important problems of Russia in different occasions. Yet when we talked about how to prevent it no one knew how to solve the problem. However since they saw it as a corollary problem of loosing jobs or not having something to do, keeping people busy and finding them good jobs can be a solution to alcoholism.

[. . .] Now came the time that if we do not work nothing happens. Therefore stereotype people who were accustomed became alcoholic. They were

depressed. And, in the period of crisis only strong spirits rose. [C] (see appendix 9.1 [30]).

So my informant FG2 claimed that joblessness and depression were the primary reasons of alcoholism. Then in order to avoid alcoholism the conditions in the country should be improved. This could at least help to solve the problems related to alcoholism.

5.8 Findings and Analyses

When one thinks of Russia and Russians, one of the first things one would mention is that Russians are very individualistic people. During the fieldwork, my interaction with Russian students provided me several occasions to see and understand the limits of this individualistic approach. At times this characteristic of them can become so sharp that one can say “survive or perish” is a key element in Russia.

This individualistic approach combined with the harsh climate and the Soviet legacy may cause someone, particularly a foreigner, to feel isolated and abandoned. In the field, I was told that many Chinese students chose to go back because they had problems adapting the system. Interestingly, I was warned about this fact by a Chinese student on the third or the fourth day of my arrival: she told me that she hoped that I would learn “it” quickly. Thinking that she was referring to the language, I told her that I speak the language. However she immediately explained me and said that she was not referring to the language but the “system”. When she told me this the first time, I could not immediately conceive what she meant, but after a month or even weeks in Russia, I understood to what she was referring.

There is “something” in the Russian system—which I think is the Soviet legacy—that one very quickly realizes in Russia. This is the “cold”, “reserved”, and the very “strict” attitude from people to people during face to face interactions in public and particularly the official life. People are quick and demanding in orders, reluctant and distanced during the services. Simple procedures could take many days to complete, and there was almost none sympathy involved face to face interactions.

This made me question the “know-how” of the Russian system. I think this strictness of the system is highly related with the soviet legacy, but the harsh climate must have an impact on this as well. People, due to the climate and the strictness of the system, are very

individualistic, and one is on his or her own in this vast country. Therefore “survive or perish” is a reality in Russia.

This approach was evident in social life too. In different occasions, I noticed that regardless of age or gender everyone was expected to take care of themselves and bear the consequences of their choices.

Russians and foreigners who lived long enough in the country know how to deal with this difficulty. I met many students, usually international students, who told me that it was indeed difficult to live in Russia, but Moscow was “beautiful”. Thus there is even “beauty” in this difficulty. Once one got used to living in Moscow, one would never wish to leave it.

However it is also important to mention that many students told me— sometimes as a reply to my questions and sometimes voluntarily—that Moscow was unique in this approach and life outside Moscow was different. Petersburg was less formal to start with and villages were completely different.

Despite this “coldness” and “strictness” in public life; social life is a complete different story. Russian students very quick to socialize and once they socialized, they would really help each other. Socialization process among students is based on eating, drinking, and spending time together. Whenever an opportunity arose, they were quick to take it. Sometimes it was funny to see the same “strict” and “cold” person to become easy-going warm and friendly just after five minutes of conversation or a glass of vodka.

Students liked to spend time together both indoors and outdoors socializing most of the time. Moreover there was constant sharing and helping within the groups or from groups to groups.

Thus one can say that public life and social life are distinctly separated. This dichotomy of public life and social life is very visible in Russia. “Cold” and “strict” looking people/students, given the opportunity, could immediately become just the opposite which at times was difficult comprehend.

Russian youth is a very success oriented group of people. Everybody I met or heard of had the same approach. During conversations, successful individuals would be praised and respected as much as possible. This may seem pretty average and evident elsewhere, but I

think the height of this appreciation was stronger among the Russian youth. I mentioned before that it was a common practice to introduce people with something they did well. Actually many students, besides their formal studies, were busy with other activities such as sports, music or languages. Russian students did not like to postpone things in life. For them their professional career and personal life progress together. It is possible to find many students who are married and continue their studies at the same time or work full time and study.

Another aspect among the Russian youth is the evident strong patriotic feelings. In Russia nationalism is on rise. There are many reasons related with this trend. First the terrorism has had a huge impact on Russian society. The results of the Chechnyan wars were not very promising for Russia; hundreds of people died because of these wars and the terrorist attacks. After dissolution of the USSR, the history of the Russian Empire and the USSR was neglected for a while. Yet as some years passed, now the continuity of the Russian tradition is aimed: Tsarist, Soviet and post Soviet periods.

Thus there is a search for a continuous Russian history embracing pre-communist, communist and post-communist eras to improve and strengthen the national morale. This search is related with cultural globalization and its threat to national identity. In addition there is a negative population growth in Russia. In order to preserve the national identity and control the negative population growth in Russia, a state promoted “official patriotism” is practiced.

Now school curriculums have been updated for several years, and this policy is funded by the government at least until 2010 to reach the desired goals. Thus it is not surprising that there is an ongoing rise on nationalism in Russia including students.

Particularly ideas such as monarchism, national liberalism are discussed and supported by some students. There are students who openly express that they prefer a strong Russia like in the communist times. These ideas are nourished by Russia’s imperial and communist past and now supported directly from the state.

Russian students are solemn in national pride. Whenever there was an official day “women’s day”, “army day (or men’s day)” or the celebrations of the end of the World War II and so on, they took it very seriously. National days and holidays are seriously celebrated

among the students. Everybody celebrates these mentioned days with genuine feelings (It was very unlike the way some Turkish youth handles those days). In such days national solidarity is on its peak.

Yet a serious problem among the youth is the rampant increase on racism. Caucasians in general and dark skinned people in particular are the target of the skinheads. Chinese students are, too, within the risk group. Pejorative slang words like *cherniy* (черный) or *hach* (хач) are used to describe such people. These people and the blacks have the status of “others” among Russian students. International students constantly mentioned that they feared of skinheads. Students from such countries preferred to go in groups and avoided going out at nights. Racism and skinheads are a threat to Russian society. The government is trying to control and reduce racism in Russia. Apparently, rampant racism is one of the most important problems to be solved.

It is also important to mention the language disposition in Russia. Russian students are very proud of their mother tongues, and see it as a very powerful language: it is possible to hear many students say, “The great [and] powerful Russian language” (see appendix 9.1 [31]). This expression is said to be used first by Puskin and now became a trademark expression among Russians. Whenever they feel to emphasize how beautiful and strong Russian is, they utter this sentence.

It was interesting to observe that in Russia almost everything was in Cyrillic alphabet. Except a few places such as Mc Donald’s, it is very difficult to find something written in the Latin language. Language was a crucial factor to be accepted Russian by students. If one spoke the language then he or she was in the “code”. Corollary to this speaking faulty Russian or even Russian with an accent was solely a reason to be an outsider.

I noticed that Moscow Russian was considered to be the pure language of the educated and sought to be spoken by others as well. Many students coming from Ukraine or other Slavic countries almost never spoke Ukraine in public. Some of them particularly mentioned it was not a very good idea to speak those languages. In short in Russia people speak Russian. The only exception of this was commonly taught languages and particularly English.

Russian students are open to the West and ideas spread from the West. This interest of people in the West is not something new. Russia it is located both in Europe and Asia, and

because of its location there are discussions where Russia belongs. This topic is related with the geopolitics of Russia, and the dominating opinion is Eurasianism. That is Russia belongs to both Europe and Asia but not only one of them. This approach, however, is not enough to finish the discussions or the appreciation of Russians. Yet although young Russians are interested in the West, they are also cautious about it.

After the breakup of USSR, Russians in general had positive opinions about the West and future. However after a short while these positive opinions became more cautious and as well as suspicious as Russians usually claim that the West did not and is not keeping its promises to Russia. Yet, again, a sense of “closeness” of “Westernness” is reinstated after 9/11 terrorist attacks in America—in the name of the war against the terrorism.

Russian students were, open to America and the West. Many students told me that people were always open to new things coming from the West. It is not easy to predict the direction of the relationship with the West because opinions about the West tend to change time to time and students to students, but one thing was very clear: young people are more open to West than their parents. It is obvious that the West will be one of the major interests for students in the future too.

There are certain critical problems that await the Russian youth: These problems are alcoholism, drug abuse, health problems—particularly HIV—crime and negative population growth. Unfortunately alcoholism is a very serious problem in Russia. Many students consume alcoholic beverages everyday. Particularly young people that cannot find a good job or education end up consuming alcohol everyday. Where alcohol stops drugs fill the gap. High levels of Juvenile Crime and HIV are rampant in the society. Worse of all there is still a negative growth in Russia around 700.000 people a year.

It seems that this generation of Russia will have to deal with these problems by large in the following years to come. Today Many Russian students are market oriented and becoming rich has become the main motivation. However corruption is a major problem in all segments of the society from top to bottom. Living in Russia more than a few months and not facing a problem which is related with corruption is almost impossible. Sooner or later, young people or grownups learn how to cope with the system. Money comes before values.

Democracy is another critical issue. Since late 80's due to concepts such as glasnost and democratization (demokratizatsiya), Russia became a more open society. Problems are discussed different opinions are voiced. Students were happy about democracy and supported freedom of speech. My informants were only opposing certain topics that would intercept with national interests. Actually in Russia there has been the tradition of having strong and insightful leaders. Sometimes this tradition and the notions of democracy conflicted in their minds.

Many Russian students were therefore passive democrats. They did not believe much in the democratic system because it did not solve problems of the system. Hence they were not very interested in politics or politic parties. Yet many of them were supporting Putin as he seemed to be diligent, strong and an insightful leader which fits into the tradition of Russia.²⁰ Thus democracy was good for freedom of speech but not that good when it interrupted with national interests. This was how many students seemed to express their ideas.

Russian students live in a rapidly changing society. Today Russia has recovered to an extent with the help of selling energy resources. Russian youth also affected by this rapidly changing society. They face many different problems and their world is different than of their parents. As discussed a declining birthrate, AIDS epidemic, crime, alcoholism, drug abuse, terrorism, economic problems, uncertainty about future, integration with the West are the types of problems they face. These problems affect the Russian youth in a negative way. Yet the state is trying to solve some of these problems by implementing polices such as *youth programs* or official patriotism to reduce the burden of the youth. Yet despite all these problems, almost everyone I met or my informants in particular showed a positive attitude about future.

I noticed two major advantages of the Russian youth: first they did not like to postpone things. Whatever problem they had they lived through with those problems and did not loose their hopes. For them family life, education, fun, success in business were not separate things. They balance all these things in life which I think is an advantage of the Russian youth. The second advantage is that there was a strong solidarity between people.

²⁰ It is a common trend in post-communist countries to experience lower participation in politics than their Western neighbors. Interest in politics among the Russian youth corresponds to the regional average (McFaul:2002, 9-10).

Although corruption and some other problems seem to undermine this characteristic of the Russian youth, they still valued friendship and cooperation which help them through difficult times.

6 CONCLUSION

This study focused on Russian youth. I received a grant from the Russian Federation and stayed in Moscow for five months. Since I resided in MSPU, I worked with particularly the students that studied and stayed in the dormitories of MSPU. I spent five months with them and tried to understand and join everyday activities of my Russian informants. The time I spent with my informants helped me to understand how Russian youth deals with some of the problems that are mentioned above and provided me first hand information and experience related with those problems which I introduced in the text at length.

To this end I did participant observation and held in-depth interviews to understand how Russian youth thinks about the current situation in Russia and how their identities are affected through these processes.

In this work I did not discuss theoretical views or made generalizations about identity formation, but tried to i) provide a country profile to introduce the changes Russia is going through in the last twenty years; ii) the processes that affect the identity formation of the young people; iii) current policies implemented by government to protect and guide the Russian youth; iv) share my informants' ideas about selected topics such as education, West, religion, terrorism and future.

I had two main objectives to go to Russia and conduct a fieldwork. First to gain the fieldwork skills anthropologists need which is considered to be the *rite of passage* in the field. Second due to conscious and unconscious activities of various agents and the historical background, it was difficult to gain accurate information about Russia in Turkey for the average person. Although his has started to change even before this research was carried out by continues relations between the two societies, it is still debatable if the new information gained about Russia and Russians is accurate and reliable.

In short I give *one* account of Russian youth in a descriptive manner and discuss the dynamics that affect identity formation. Thus this thesis is portraying, in large, an *emic* view. Yet, I did not limit myself only with this approach and used other styles such as *ethic* or *nomothetic* approach when seemed appropriate. Throughout all steps of this research ethical considerations played a vital role as I personally assign a high value to this topic and as required by the department.

Since 1917 it is the first generation of young people that live in a capitalist economy and a free political system. Younger generations in Russia tend to be more pro-market, pro-democratic and pro-Western. It is appropriate to talk about a generational change in Russia in terms of mentality.

Young Russians are hugely affected by the economic situation in the country. However the current high global energy prices ameliorated the economic situation in Russia for the past several years. The concepts that affect the opinions of the Russian youth by large are economic instability, democratic developments, demographic issues, integration with the West, and terrorism.

Since the results of systematic transformation and globalization are huge, the need of a youth program and policy that should be followed by authorities was inescapable. A policy program called *Youth of Russia 2006-2010* is implemented by Putin to reach the goals of i) informing the youth about the changes in the society and helping them to take an active part in society; ii) fostering the innovative youth actions; iii) helping the youth that are in difficult living conditions to integrate into society.

How these policies will affect the Russian youth and whether the objectives will be reached is going to be available in the next few years. However there is another important policy implemented by Russian authorities which desires special attention. After the breakup of the USSR the continuity of the Russian history experienced a break for over a decade between the present and the past. Yet it is important to remember that Orthodoxy, a strong and sacred state as well as a messianic culture are major elements that shape national identity of Russia (Dağı, 2002:15). Thus a continuity between pre-communist, communist and post-communist eras was necessary to build to secure the national identity and Russian culture against the negative effects of globalization. This led a state supported patriotism in Russia which is called *Official Patriotism*.

Another reason for official patriotism was terrorism, and against the Islamic radicalism this policy is supported by the state. Throughout my fieldwork I came across with various variants of nationalism supported by the youth. This new official patriotism may increase even more national tendencies in Russia which will most likely have an impact on the Russian youth. This new policy will be funded at least between 2006 and 2010.

In other words a new nationalist wave in Russia may arise in the next few years among the Russian youth even at a higher level than it is present at the moment. This brings us to the point of discussing *who is Russian* and *who is other* in Russia.

It is a common fact that many different ethnic groups live in Russia, and therefore it is important to unite all people under an umbrella term. This concept is *Rossiyanin*. It refers to anybody or anything present within the Russian soul. Yet the ethnic background, language, and life styles are the dominant factors to be accepted Russian and these concepts play a vital role in society.

During my participant observation in Moscow and throughout my contacts with my informants and international students, I came to learn that Caucasian People in general tend to be the “other” among Russian students. Chinese students were too among the others. Many Russian students were cautious about Caucasians due to terrorist attacks and had problems with Chinese students due to large number of visiting Chinese people and their reserved and closed life styles.

Thus it will be interesting to observe the results of official patriotism particularly when we consider the delicate situation in the country in terms of identity issues. Rampant racism is a problem officially excepted in Russia towards people with dark features and Chinese people.

The higher Education system plays an important role in the Russian Federation, and the quality of education in Russia is still very high. Russia is particularly advanced in medical, mathematical, scientific, and space and aviation research. However as my informants mentioned several times certain unfair processes became a part of the education system in Russia particularly due to economic corruption. Today for many students it is important to finish their studies as quickly as possible and make money in a rapid fashion then to study further.

During the fieldwork I was told about the “coldness” and “strictness” of the system and social life. It is true that there is such a reserved, distanced attitude from people to people in public life; however all my informants were close and warm people. This “coldness” and “strictness” of the system is completely irrelevant when one starts to build one to one

relationships. I have experienced many examples supporting this, and almost all the activities I joined provided me enough evidence to claim this.

Yet particularly the difficulty of public life in Russia, aside from the current transformation of society, is related with its climate, and one should always take the climate into consideration to understand certain peculiarities of the Russian society. The struggle with the cold and harsh climate conditions is the part of everyday routine in Russia.

Students, regardless of all the problems mentioned, are usually contend with their lives, and try to enjoy their lives to the most. They usually attend student parties, seriously practice sports, work part-time to support their studies and help each other in many different ways. As I mentioned in the text, solidarity among Russian students are very high. One striking example was how they celebrated and attended all national days and holidays of all types.

Students, in general, shared optimistic expectations about the future. For them economic and political problems were among the most important issues. They hoped for a better Russia, but expressed that changes would not happen over a night and would take time. They were particularly critical about the non-urban parts of the country and mentioned that there was a huge difference between the rural and urban parts of the country.

Russian students were very disturbed by terrorist attacks. These attacks made Russian people in general and Russian students in particular suspicious of anybody coming from the Caucasus region. They also link terrorist attacks with fundamentalist Islam. However it is important to mention that some of the problems in the Caucasian region dates back to nineteenth century, and this region has always played an important role on the Russian sense of identity. It is difficult to guess the outcome of the problems in the region in the short run; however it would be logical to think that it will continue to be one of the major elements that will shape the ideas and thoughts of the Russian youth in the near future.

Russian students are very liberal at issues involving religion and faith. In Russia it is possible to meet missionaries from all over the world, and there is a rise in the number of religious organizations in the country. Until 1980's religion was practically forbidden in Russia. Today it is free to openly express one's beliefs in religion. However linked with the

communist past, many students were non-believers and they openly expressed their attitude towards religion.

For centuries, Russian people have been torn between Asia, Europe, authoritarianism, and liberalism. This struggle produced some of the world's greatest composers, artists, writers, and scientists. Today, it is difficult to guess about the near future of the Russian society since it is rapidly changing. Now a new project is being carried out in Russia after centuries: the market economy with a democratic model. One should wait and see if this model will survive the test of time. Probably corruption is among the biggest obstacles in the course of changes. Russian youth has been definitely affected by these changes and the identity issues are even more complicated than before. Whatever model will surface for Russia and Russian, it will have to address identity issues. As history and practice show, these issues must cover at least the topics of nationalism, democracy, the West, terrorism, social problems, and religion.

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9 APPENDIXES

9.1 Quotations from Interviews in Russian

- [1] Умом Россию не понять,
Аршином не измерить:
У ней особенная стать-
В Россию можно только верить.
- [2] В Москве сосредоточено 80% всех финансов России. Какая то часть в Питере и ничтожная часть финансов рассредоточена во всей России. В других странах всё равномерно. Неважно где живёшь. Москва это государство в государстве. Поэтому вся Россия всеми силами пытается прийти в Москву. Москва растёт с каждым часом. Сейчас здесь 15млн и то это неточная цифра.
- [2a] Также одна из самых больших проблем это проблема удалённых центров...В Москве всё таки жизнь легче, чем на окраинах...Например в других городах –в Сибири, на Камчатке жизнь намного сложнее...Россия- очень большая страна....Сильно развитый центр и слабо развитые окраины ...
- [3] коренной русский. Вы хотите знать, кто такой русский. Русский человек- это тот, кто любит и уважает свою Родину. Тот у кого мать, отец, дед, прадед – все были русские. Чистокровный славянин.
- [4] Большое и широкое это понятие- русский, я приведу вам пример из книги.
Книга описывает начало 2 Мировой войны, там есть момент, когда немцы подходят к Можайску (город в России)* , и наша Армия удерживают удар танкового корпуса, и несколько немцев было взято в плен. несколько немцев было взято в плен, и немец сказал этому грузину :»Ты же не говоришь по-русски, какой же ты русский.?» А он ответил :» Мы все здесь, на войне, русские.»
Т.е русский-это был просто человек, который стоит напротив в окопе, летит на самолете, работает на заводе – все это русские.
- [5] У:...я вот еще слышал сегодня хач, а что такое хач?
D: Хач это и есть черный....

У: а разница есть между хачом и черным?

Д:- Нет разницы нет, просто и так , и так говорят.

[6] Это не цвет кожи, это значит то, что ты не славянин. Вот говорят хохлы, белорусы, русские- это славяне. А если ты выглядишь по- другому, то все. Скинхэды никогда не ходят по одиночке, они толпой ходят , вот я видела в метро шла девушка с дрэдами, а скинхэды не любят рэп, и ее просто избили, хотя она русская. Т.е они считают, что рэп – это «черная» музыка. А на самом деле какая разница кто что слушает ?

[7] В понимании многих молодых людей это [черный] выходцы из Азербайджана, Армении, Грузии, Дагестана, Чечни. И их не любят. На это тоже есть свои причины. У людей, родившихся в России есть своя гордость когда русская девушка идет с нерусским парнем, думаешь : » Что ей русских парней не хватает ?» Вот такая борьба идет.

[8] Я--Какую работу предпочитают молодые люди ...Имидж какой работы выше? Я слышал раньше работать преподавателем было хорошо. Сегодня говорят, что это не хорошая работа, почти непопулярная профессия...

Студент: Да это правда ...Самая лучшая работа на сегодняшний день это-предприниматель, директор фирмы, бизнесмен .

[9] Это Иван, Это Ворис познакомьтесь

[10] Когда началась 2-я мировая война начали поднимать религию для поддержки народа. Тогда перестали гнать религию. Именно в этот период.

[11] Да во время СССР это так. Россия- это много конфессиональное государство . Здесь много и христиан и мусульман. Во времена коммунизма все религии были в гонении. Меня ,например, крестили не в России. В России все церкви были закрыты. Меня крестили на Украине. Сейчас всё свободно.

[12] Путин бывает на всех религиозных праздниках. Президент пытается приблизить народ к вере. Даже сейчас 2ух представителей протестанства, старых пятидесятников, которые были при коммунизме, Путин наградил Орденом 2ой степени , Ряховского и Мурзова , за заслуги перед отечеством. До сих пор война между религиями продолжается и основной религией считается Православие. Сейчас есть и протестантизм и православие, даже католики и др. Сейчас очень сильно начал развиваться протестантизм. Православие оно пассивное. Больше традиций. А протестантизм набирает огромные силы и

растёт. Там более активные члены.

[13] Они нейтральные. Кто как. Очень много девушек ходят в церковь. Верят, но не так как до революции. До революции воспитание шло с детства. А так как родители современной молодёжи выросли при коммунизме, то к ним не привита любовь к богу. Сейчас возможно всё будет по другому. Вот например я (девушка) верю в Бога, а вот моя мама вообще пассивна, не ходит в церковь. У нас есть часть верующих людей, есть часть которая ушла в сторону с наркотиками, криминалом. Но есть надежда что христианство, вера оздоровит общество и это станет противовесом всему этому злу которое сейчас происходит.

[14] Я затрудняюсь, раньше Православие было нелегально, сейчас это популярно. По телевизору многих политиков показывают, ходят в церковь, они считают раз они ходят то и народ пойдет. Это сложный вопрос,однозначно ответить нельзя, раньше закрывались храмы, а сейчас все восстанавливается и все ходят в храмы, может быть это и хорошо, что восстанавливается духовная культура. А может быть ходить в храм для многих это просто дань моде....

[14a] Я не очень религиозный человек

[15] Это проблема всего мира, не только России. Прародителем международного терроризма был бен Ладен- неуязвимый лидер Алькаиды. А его ЦРУ породили против СССР в Афганистане,но он потом вышел из под контроля и начал воевать против всех- Америки, например (знаменитые небоскребы) это глобальная сеть , например, в Чечне и нужно искать лидеров , что бы уничтожить все течение.

[16] В Чечне сейчас все понемногу нормализуется, мирные жители начинают работать, восстанавливают дома, но я уверен, что простой чеченский народ был против, что туда пришли банды во главе с Басаевым , т.е. люди, которых весь мир признал, как международных террористов, с которыми нужно бороться

И вот сейчас в Катаре идет следствие по делу убийства одного из лидера чеченских формирований , ну это не важно , люди поймут, телевизор же все смотрят.. В одной из передач было очень смешно сказано о российских спецслужбах, то, что у них длинные руки , но короткие ноги, т. е. не успевают убежать оттуда, куда они руки протянули. Я считаю, что терроризм неворозможно победить . Это партизанское общемировое движение в результате действий, которого гибнут невинные люди.Поэтому я считаю, что это не только проблема России- это общемировая проблема.

Нужно создавать особенные спец службы, которые смогут бороться с терроризмом. Страны, которые повержены терроризму должны собрать группу быстрого реагирования , оснащенной современной техникой.

[16a] Сейчас жизнь в России достаточно напряжённая. Раньше было намного спокойнее. Много терактов. Надеюсь, скоро это пройдет. Теракты и насилие всё это связано с войной.

[17] Здесь замешаны большие деньги, за коммерческую прибыль, все связано с их идеологией ваххабизма . Трудно разбраться сразу, нужно долго изучать эту проблематику, понять причины терроризма. Но я считаю, что это идеологические какие-то причины. Это мусульманство, многие считают его воинственным

[18] Потому что Чечня, у них все идет от веры, они мусульмане, а русские они ориентированы на Европу и европейскими методами пытаются бороться в Чечней.

В Чечне есть нефть , а значит много денег и поэтому они хотели отсоединиться от России. Независимости хотят и власти .

[19] Чтобы решить эту проблему нужно убрать причину возникновения этих терактов....Причина этих терактов – гонения и война в Чечне ...Причина в том, что людям не дают жить там где они жили ...Возникает ненависть между людьми....эти люди не должны друг друга ненавидетьОни хотят быть независимыми в своей стране ...но к сожалению это политика....

Черными делами занимаются, продают оружие. Отсюда и идет терроризм, особенно в больших городах.

[20] Нет никому лучше не будет. Власти будет лучше. Россия против отсоединения, потому что в России много таких маленьких, как Чечня , государств и если они позволят отсоединиться Чечне и другие захотят. Террористы всего мира поддерживают Чечню, дают деньги...

Ну, конечно, этот вопрос нам не известен до конца ..

[21] Ну надо смотреть на того человека который будет через 10-15 лет у власти. Кто будет до него. Кто придет на следующие 4 года к власти. Останется ли Путин на след 4 года. Всё будет зависеть от экономических и политических перспектив. Если в сейчас в эти 4 года хотя бы на 2-3 % что-то измениться то это будет очень хорошо. Лучше, чтобы он был преемником.

Чтобы он продолжал тот же путь. Чтобы он придерживался тех же курсов. Чтобы потом ещё что-то изменилось. Чтобы в конце достигнуть компромисса между строгостью власти и получить все 100 %. Если говорить о перспективах, то я сейчас не могу пожаловаться что мне плохо живётся.

[22] Да лучше чем все предыдущие. Он нейтральный. Кто-то считает, что он пассивный. Но нам он нравится.

[23] Наверное, самая большая проблема -это проблема связанная с экономикой. Не всем людям предоставляют работу, не всем людям платят достойную зарплату, не о всех пенсионерах могут заботиться....

[24] Вторая большая проблема- это то, что при Ельцине и Горбачеве была развалена наша промышленность. Около 60 процентов было развалено , а сейчас нужны большие вложения, чтобы восстановить. Если бы я мог посоветовать Президенту, что делать, я бы посоветовал поднять промышленность на уровень 60-70 годов.

[25] [Экономия] была более стабильно. И искусственным образом создали такой средний уровень Никто ведь не знал, что на Западе. И все были довольны. Деньги получали все одинаковые, каждый мог позволить себе поехать куда угодно внутри России, а сейчас нет. Есть очень богатые и очень бедные люди.

Все стало доступным и свободным. Раньше не было развития частного бизнеса, все было государственным, поэтому и было уровниловка. Но и это неправильно , искусственно все пытались сдерживать, поэтому и развалилось все.

[26] В ближайшие годы Россия будет улучшать и укреплять свои отношения с Западом. Россия должна выйти на новый уровень развития ...должна встать вровень с другими странами....это очень огромная и богатая страна богатая и природными ресурсами и умами...богатая талантами. в Америку очень много уезжает.там и зарплаты больше и уровень жизни другой Россия лишается талантов и умов... если все эти таланты не будут уезжать на Запад то Россия будет развиваться и выйдет на новый уровень.

[27] Надо дать идею , заселить идею , чтобы патриотизм прошёл в народе ... Нужно привить патриотизм, любовь к Родинеэто одна из причин ...любят Запад , за границу... считаю что Россия это 2ой сортТакже нужно распределять финансы по мелким городам ...В Москве высокий уровень развития ... а в мелких городах очень низкий.

[28] Евразия, так сказать много народа живет и Азии, и на Кавказе, Дагестане, Татарстане, Башкирии. Многие в Центральной Европе, например, Сибирь, нельзя разделить все это, наша территория, которая объединилась в одну страну.

Политики они мало знают об истории, нельзя разделять страну. Это всю историю соединялось кровью, потом. А говорить о том, чтобы разделить на Европу и Азию Россию- это неправильно и дилетански. Россия - это

уникальная наполовину из Европы, наполовину из Азии.

- [29] в России есть проблема с трудоустройством...особенно молодых.алкоголизм наркомания.... [После падения СССР многие люди потеряли свою работу и] это было причиной новой волны алкоголизма. Сегодня многие люди пьют потому, что они ни чем не заняты. Если человек не учится и не работает, то ему больше ничего не остаётся как пойти и выпить, собраться с друзьями
- [30] ...Сейчас наступило время, когда если не работать, то ничего не получится. Поэтому привыкшие к стереотипам люди они и оказалась спиваться, были депрессии.И только сильные духом в период кризиса и поднялись. [С.]
- [31] Великий могучий русский язык

9.2 Semi structured In Depth Interviews

I used semi-structured In-depth interviews to collect data from my informants. Questions below show the overall focus point during the interviews, but it is not limited to only those questions. Depending on the informants, the course of the interviews developed naturally covering their interests and the topics they wanted to talk about.

QUESTIONS

Introduction

Thank you for accepting to participate in this interview. This research is the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in social anthropology. I am working on identity formation among the Russian youth, and I would like to ask you a few questions about it. All the data I will collect during this interview will only be used for research purposes, and your name and all other sensitive data you may give will be confidential. I will record this interview to use it as part of my research work later. However if you feel unconfident or want me not to record this interview for any reason, you can tell me to stop the recording anytime.

General Questions (everybody)

- Can you please talk about yourself?
- What are your interests?
- Do you work?

Questions about the Russian Federation and USSR (everybody)

- Can we talk about Russia? How do you see life in Russia in general?
- Can you compare and contrast the life style today in Russia with that of USSR?
- How was life during the SSCB?
- How is the relationship of Russia and the West/ Europe/ America/ the world? Where does Russia belong?
- What is the biggest problem of Russia today?
- What is the biggest difference between USSR and the Russian Federation?

Questions about identity and young people (everybody)

- Who is Russian? How do you define Russians?
- What do young people like in Russia?

- How/what do young people think about the Russian Federation?
- What are the problems of young people in Russia?
- Who are skinheads?
- What do skinheads want?
- What/who is cherniy (черный) and хач (xach)? What is the difference?
- What do you think of nationalism in Russia?

Other Questions (will be asked depending on their interests)

- What do you think of Glasnost and perestroika?
- What do you think of democracy in Russia?
- What do you think of corruption in Russia?
- How do you find the education system in Russia?
- Do you like the education system in Russia?
- What are the strong and/or the weak points of the education system in Russia?
- How do you see the future in Russia? (in the next ten or fifteen years)
- What do you think of terrorism in Russia?
- What do you think of religion? How was it before and now?
- How is the economy of Russia? What do you think about it?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you for your participation!

9.3 Sample Interview²¹

9.3.1 The Original Interview

U здравствуйте! сначала представьтесь, пожалуйста кто вы?²²

- Я А.С²³., сын офицера Армии бывшего СССР , он был офицером Российской Армии, полковник в звании, сейчас заместитель одного из инженеров одного из крупных предприятий России, производящих нефтегазовую продукцию.

Не будем называть это предприятие, чтобы по разным причинам никого не скомпрометировать.

U вы там работаете?

-Нет не я, это мой папа, а мама на том же предприятии работает бухгалтером. Сам я работаю в компании занимающейся дисконтными картами. Я студент 4 курса исторического факультета

U значит вы через год заканчиваете?

-да

U мы можем поговорить о сегодняшней жизни в России? Что вы думаете? Что вы считаете?

-Да, вы можете задавать мне любые вопросы. Я могу ответить , как я вижу жизнь, какой она будет, о нашей внутренней и внешней политике.

U- сегодня какие проблемы в России? Самые большие проблемы?

-Самая большая проблема- это большой бюрократический аппарат. Ездят по дороге с мигалками, а на самом деле для простого народа они не делают ничего. Многие могут со мной не согласиться, но я считаю, что чиновники -это главная наша проблема. Они тратят большие деньги из бюджета страны на свое содержание.

21 I interviewed all my informants in Russian. The Transcriptions were done by Aliaksei Sakalouski.

22 This interview made in May 2005, in the dormitory of MSPU.

23 . Names are kept anonymous. Only the initials of names are given.

Вторая большая проблема- это то, что при Ельцине и Горбачеве была развалена наша промышленность. Около 60 % было развалено , а сейчас нужны большие вложения, чтобы восстановить. Если бы я мог посоветовать Президенту, что делать, я бы посоветовал поднять промышленность на уровень 60-70 годов.

U что бы вы сказали о коррупции?

-Коррупция- это большая проблема, существует везде и в правоохранительных органах и в конторах, на местах, и на высоком уровне и на местном уровне, в разных городах. Это проблема, которую нужно решать жестко и строго.

U- Говорят, что коорупция это самая большая проблема России и, решив ее, можно решить и остальные проблемы. Поэтому я спросил про это...

- Да, это важная проблема- борьба с коррупцией на местах. Потому что, например, хороший экономист не сможет открыть свое дело, потому что у него нет определенной суммы, чтобы заплатить чиновникам для того, чтобы они дали свое согласие на это.

Еще многие дети в школах не знают таких моментов истории, которые все должны знать с первого класса. Например, Великая Отечественная Война.(ВОВ)*. Спрашиваешь: « Назовите 3 великих стражения ВОВ?»

Максимум , что назовет современный 11-класник, это-Битва под Москвой, потому что каждый год бывает праздник в честь этой битвы. Многие школьники Москвы не знают, что была Сталинградская битва, кто там командовал. Поэтому я считаю, это тоже надо исправлять. Народ, который не знает героических моментов истории=—это народ, который потерял.

На первом курсе нам сказали , что человек может не знать физики и математики, но он должен знать историю. Тот человек, который не знает свою историю-это невежественный человек.

U. Почему это случается в России?

Я могу высказать свою точку зрения . Сейчас у нас гласность и я могу сказать то, что думаю. Я, как историк, считаю, что демократический режим правления в России это не тот режим, который нам нужен. Я понимаю Западную Европу, они испокон стремились к этому. У нас было крепостное право в то время как у них уже происходили

революции, свержение монархии. Россия должна найти сильного человека-лидера, который сможет сказать: «Вот это можно, а это нельзя.» Только тогда русский народ будет сильным.

Исторически сложилось так. Америка , например, боролась за демократию с Англией. У нас же этого не было . Был царь, потом после царя пришёл Сталин к власти, тогда мы были сильны. Он в чём то просчитался как многие думают , у него были ошибки, он не верилв Бога , но , наверное, на то были свои какие-то причины, чтобы не верить..На самом деле он смог собрать вокруг себя народ и не зря говорят, что в трудные времена народ должен быть сплоченным. Люди должны объединяться, несмотря на национальности . Если человек из Грузии или Армении это не повод, чтобы его обижать.Я не уважаю фашистов, фашизма в России быть не должно, потому как в ВОВ Россия потеряла 32 млн человек, больше такого быть не должно!

У- что насчет скинхэдов?

Российские скинхэды не знают истроии этого движения , оно пошло из Англии . В Англии на это была своя причина- перенаселение эмигрантами , которые стали дешевой рабочей силой , отнимающей рабочие места у коренных агличан, поэтому они начали бороться за свои права. Это есть и в России- приезжие- это дешевая рабочая сила, работодателям это выгодно, чтобы человек делал ту же работу за меньшие деньги.

Движение фашизма и нацизма у нас есть . Я считаю, что эти люди не достойны уважения. Не правильно унижать человека по рассовому признаку.

У- Что значит , когда на человека говорят «черный» или хач?

- В понимании многих молодых людей это выходцы из Азербайджана, Армении, Грузии, Дагестана, Чечни. И их не любят. На это тоже есть свои причины.

У людей, родившихся в России есть своя гордость когда русская девушка идет с нерусским парнем, думаешь : » Что ей русских парней не хватает ?»

Вот такая борьба идет .

У-Если бы итальянец приехал в Россию, ты бы ему сказал черный??

-Ну итальянца можно узнать сразу по речи. ...Италия -это всетаки Западная Европа.Когда я был маленький, моя прабабушка рассказывала, город наш называется Фрязино, от того, что там жили итальянцы. Это была знаменитая семья, люди, которые строили Кремль. Эта земля была подарена монетчику Ивану Фрязину из Италии. Значит и во мне есть частичка итальянской крови, поэтому я считаю, что с человеком любой национальности можно общаться наравных. Даже в спорте команда Терек из Грозного(*Чечня*)* взяла кубок России по футболу.

У-В России я слышал тако: *умом Россию не понять*. А что вы понимаете под словом русский?

- Большое и широкое это понятие- русский, я приведу вам пример из книги. Книга описывает начало 2 Мировой войны, там есть момент, когда немцы подходят к Можайску (*город в России*)* , и наша Армия удерживают удар танкового корпуса, и несколько немцев было взято в плен. У одного командира был водитель грузин, и немец сказал этому грузину :»Ты же не говоришь по-русски, какой же ты русский.?» А он ответил :» Мы все здесь, на войне, русские.»Т.е русский-это был просто человек, который стоит напротив в окопе, летит на самолете, работает на заводе – все это русские. Я могу сказать, как историк, что в то военное время была идея, шли в бой за Родину, за матерей, детей. А сейчас слишком много партий, и каждая толкает свою идею для народа. Должна быть одна Партия одна власть. Чтобы Партия думала для народа, а власть принимала решения можнго ли так делать или нельзя. Поэтому тогда одна партия- одно движения смогло объединить много народов.

У-Какой была жизнь в России раньше, и сейчас. Есть ли разница?

- Кто-то может сказать, что во времена СССР были дефицитными товары, я могу сказать, что в СССР инженеры, учителя, военные могли нормально жить. Они могли прокормить семью, накопить на машину. Вот мой дедушка за 2 года накопил на «Москвич» (*недорогой автомобиль Российской марки*).*

А сейчас товаров изобиле, но не кажлдому все это по карману. Если ты не воруеть, то простому человеку доступно купить максимум модель «Жигули» (*недорогой автомобиль Российской марки*).*. Но если хорошо поработать то на подержанную иномарку (*автомобиль иностранных производителей*)* можно собрать.

У-А если вам нужно было определить, сейчас негатив или позитив для России? --
Сейчас негатив.

У-что вы думаете о перестройке и гласности? Что вы понимаете под этими понятиями и что они изменили в России?

-Перестройка- это не только изменение экономического состояния страны, но и перестройка политического строя. Либерализм –это шаг вперед, демократия , гласность слишком много всего и сразу появилось, свобода свалилась на Россию, и народ просто не знал, что делать. В то время появилось много партий. Это было не нужно, мы были очень сильной Державой, и могли помогать другим, тому, кому хотим. Мы старались держаться военного нейтралитета. Помогали Африке. Мы знали свои интересы , и могли ,согласно им , помогать другим странам. Мы четко и твердо знали , это наш режим, более адаптированный для нас, чем для Западной Европы и Америки. Те мы знали , что в тех странах, кому мы помогали , сможем добывать полезные ископаемые нефть, газ или алмазы, сотрудничать с ними.

А сейчас даже Югославия не смогла сказать четко НАТОвскую позицию , даже по Ираку. Хотя Путин говорил с позиции военной теории, что и Афганистан- это практически одно и то же, что это очень страшная партизанская война. Очень трудно бороться с Саудовскими странами, это тоже самое, что Франция или Англия боролась с племенами кочевников. Это такие жуткие моменты истории.

Я думаю Ирак, мусульманская страна, он сам найдет то русло, по которому должен пойти. Я не думаю , что при Саддама Хуссейне Ираку было плохо, хотя он был жестоким.. Эмбарго я считаю, что это Западная политика . Это просто боязнь Запада перед усиливающимся режимом.

У- да я понимаю. Это очень трудная тема. Все в мире говорят об этом. Сегодня какие отношения между Россией и Европой?

- Сейчас отношения хорошие и претензий ни у кого ни к кому нет. Может быть не выплачивают долги , оставшиеся от СССР Западу, но в целом отношения теплые и дружеские. Многие государства солидарны в некоторых вопросах с нами, как ,например, Германия и Франция, которые не поддержали войну в Ираке. У нас есть хорошие приятели в Европе, в которыми мы можем обсудать многие вопросы.

U- А что насчет Европейского союза , Россия тоже хочет вступить в Евросоюз?

- Евросоюз-это хорошо для России. Появятся выходы на Мировые рынки Европы, для экономики это перспектива.

U-А для Америки? Сейчас Америка многим дает кредит.

-Американцы- это очень хитрые люди . У них никогда не было цельной территории. Был Север и Юг, война за независимость , гражданская война, глобальных войн, как Европе не было . Америка всегда смотрела, как люди начинают воевать, если кто-то побеждал, то поддерживала их. Почему они помогали СССР? Они видели, что Германия начинала побеждать, они знали что если мы проиграем, то они проиграют англию, Штаты и все.

Больше никому будет встать между Германией , США и Англией.

U-Я сейчас хочу поговорить немного по другой теме. Я приехал несколько месяцев назад и сам видел теростический акт в Москве и это бывает очень часто...Что вы думаете о терроризме и почему это есть в России?

-Это проблема всего мира, не только России. Прародителем международного терроризма был бен Ладен- неуязвимый лидер Алькаиды. А его ЦРУ породили против СССР в Афганистане,но он потом вышел из под контроля и начал воевать против всех- Америки, например (знаменитые небоскребы) это глобальная сеть , например, в Чечне и нужно искать лидеров , что бы уничтожить все течение.

U-особенно в Чечне?

-В Чечне сейчас все понемногу нормализуется, мирные жители начинают работать, восстанавливают дома, но я уверен, что простой чеченский народ был против, что туда пришли банды во главе с Басаевым , т.е. люди, которых весь мир признал, как международных террористов, с которыми нужно бороться

И вот сейчас в Катаре идет следствие по делу убийства одного из лидера чеченских формирований , ну это не важно , люди поймут, телевизор же все смотрят.. В одной из передач было очень смешно сказано о российских спецслужбах, то, что у них длинные руки , но короткие ноги, т. е. не успевают убежать оттуда, куда они руки протянули. Я считаю, что терроризм невозможно победить . Это партизанское общемировое движение в результате действий, которого гибнут невинные люди.

Поэтому я считаю, что это не только проблема России- это общемировая проблема. Нужно создавать особенные спец службы, которые смогут бороться с терроризмом. Страны, которые повержены терроризму должны собрать группу быстрого реагирования , оснащенной современной техникой.

У-А что они хотят? Что происходит между Россией и Чечней?

- Здесь замешаны большие деньги, за коммерческую прибыль, все связано с их идеологией ваххабизма. Трудно разбраться сразу, нужно долго изучать эту проблематику, понять причины терроризма. Но я считаю, что это идеологические какие-то причины. Это мусульманство, многие считают его воинственным

У-А что насчет религии в России? Как было раньше , меньше людей верили ? сейчас же можно говорить свободно о религии?

- Я затрудняюсь, раньше Православие было нелегально, сейчас это популярно. По телевизору многих политиков показывают, ходят в церковь, они считают раз они ходят то и народ пойдет.

Это сложный вопрос,однозначно ответить нельзя, раньше закрывались храмы, а сейчас все восстанавливается и все ходят в храмы, может быть это и хорошо, что восстанавливается духовная культура. А может быть ходить в храм для многих это просто дань моде....

У- Россия это большая страна- часть в Европе, часть в Азии. Где вы видите Россию?

-Евразия , так сказать много народа живет и Азии, и на Кавказе, Дагестане, Татарстане, Башкирии. Многие в Центральной Европе, например, Сибирь, нельзя разделить все это, наша территория, которая объединилась в одну страну.

Политики они мало знают об истории, нельзя разделять страну. Это всю историю соединялось кровью, потом. А говорить о том, чтобы разделить на Европу и Азию Россию- это неправильно и дилетански.

Россия - это уникальная наполовину из Европы, наполовину из Азии.

У-Я хочу задать вопрос о Турции. Сейчас в России много бизнесменов из Турции, много строек. Что люди думают о Турции в России? Какое отношение между Турцией и Россией. Я особенно интересуюсь этим, потому что я из Турции.

-По-моему между Россией и Турцией нет разногласий, ценятся турецкие строители. Многие здания построены либо болгарами либо турками .

У- Много товаров из Турции?

-Да , много.... в Турции дешевые драгоценности, золото.

Большим спросом пользуются турецкие курорты. Хотя я считаю, что лучше российских рек и озер нет ничего.

У-а что россияне думают о турецких людях?

- Нормально относятся. Мы к вам отдыхать, вы к нам работать.

Нормальные экономические отношения. Мы вкладываем деньги в ваш туристический бизнес, а вы занимаетесь строительством .

У-что вы думаете о Путине?

-Владимир Владимирович- это отдельная тема. Это наш Володя, ну что о нем говорить? Он собой показывает здоровый образ нации, не пьет и не курит, занимается дзюдо и продвигает спорт. Путин это лучший вариант для России. Посмотрим, что он сделает для России. 4 года -это пока малый срок. Нельзя его строго судить, посмотрим.

У-я знаю вы уже устали, но я хочу задать еще несколько вопросов, потому что вы много знаете о России и это очень интересно. Я вижу здесь очень много китайцев. Я вляюсь ли это проблемой для вашей страны ? Они работают здесь, и мне интересно, что люди думают о них?

- С китайцами – это дружба народов) СССР и Китай дружили. Было освобождение Китая советскими войсками в августе 1945 года. Сейчас много китайцев приезжают сюда на учебу .Люди считают, что наше образование хорошее-пусть приезжают и учатся.-

У..Мой последний вопрос. Что вы думаете о будущем в России. Через 10-15 лет?

- Ну надо смотреть на того человека который будет через 10-15 лет у власти. Кто будет до него. Кто придёт на следующие 4 года к власти. Останется ли Путин на след 4 года.

Всё будет зависеть от экономических и политических перспектив. Если в сейчас в эти 4 года хотя бы на 2-3 % что-то измениться то это будет очень хорошо. Лучше, чтобы он был преемником.

Чтобы он продолжал тот же путь. Чтобы он придерживался тех же курсов. Чтобы потом ещё что-то изменилось. Чтобы в конце достигнуть компромисса между строгостью власти и получить все 100 %. Если говорить о перспективах, то я сейчас не могу пожаловаться что мне плохо живётся

У ...Вам плохо?

- Нет ,наоборот я не могу пожаловаться на жизнь. Бесплатное образование

У ...Последний вопрос...что бы вы ещё хотели сказать?

Считаю, что нужно всем странам дружить, никогда не ссориться. Я могу сказать Бушу: ”Буш, уйди из Ирака. Не нарывайся на проблемы. Народ не поймёт тебя, там гибнут невинные люди из твоей же армии”. Каждый народ имеет право на своё самоопределение,если он суверенен и не входит в часть какого- либо государства. Если бы Дагестан и Чечня не входили в состав России, а всё было бы по-другому. Никто не принуждал их входить в состав России. Многие из них были рады, так как для них это означало возможность развития.

9.3.2 English Translation of the Interview

U: Hello, First, can you please introduce yourself?

-I am A. C, the son of a former Soviet Army officer. He was an officer in the Russian Army with the rank of colonel; now a deputy engineer of a major Russian enterprise, which produces oil and gas products.

We will not give the name of this enterprise in order to not compromise anyone for a number of reasons

U: Do you work there?

-No, I don't. It is my father, but my mother works in the same company as an accountant. I work in a company dealing with discount cards. I am a fourth year student in the history department.

U: It means you are going to graduate in one year?

- Yes.

U Can we talk life in Russia today? What you do think about it? How do you see it ?

-Yes, you can ask me any question. I can answer it as I see life and how it will in our domestic and foreign politics.

U: Which problems are there today in Russia? What is the most important problem in Russia?

-The most important problem in Russia is bureaucracy. They drive along the road with flashers, but in reality they do nothing for ordinary people. Many people may disagree with me, but I think our main problem is our officials. They spend a lot of money from the budget for their upkeep.

The second big problem is that our industry was collapsed during Yeltsin and Gorbachev's lifetime. Around 60 percent was collapsed, and now big investments are necessary to restore it again. If I could advise the President what to do, I would advise him to raise the level of industry 60 to 70 percent yearly.

U: What would you say about corruption?

-Corruption is a major problem. It is everywhere. It is in the law enforcement organs and offices, both in high and low levels, in different cities. It is a problem which should be dealt rigidly and strictly.

U: People say that corruption is the most important problem in Russia. If you can solve this problem, you can solve rest of the problems. This is why I asked this...

-Yes, this is an important problem, the struggle against corruption. For example a good economist is not able to start his own business because he does not have the specific sum to pay to officials so that they would give their agreement on it.

Yet many children in schools do not know some moments in history that they all should know in the first grade. For example, the World War II (WWII). If you asked them to name three great battles during the WWII.

The maximum that a contemporary 11-class pupil can name is the battle near Moscow, because every year there is a holiday in the honor of this battle. Many schoolboys in Moscow do not know about the Stalingrad battle and who commanded there. This is why I think that this must be corrected. People, who do not know the heroic moments of history, are people who are lost

In the first year of school, we were told that people may not know physics and mathematics, but he must know history. A man who does not know his story is an ignorant person.

U: Why is this happening in Russia?

-I can express my point of view. Now I think I can say that we have *glasnost*. As a historian, I think that a democratic regime of administration in Russia is not the regime which we need [which is necessary for us]. I understand that the West Europe strived for it [democracy] since old times. We had serfdom when they had already a revolution to overthrow the monarchy. Russia must find a strong leader who can say, "This is possible, and this is not possible." Only then Russian people will be strong.

Historically it happened like this. For example America fought for democracy against England. We did not have this. There was the tsar then after the tsar Stalin came to power. Then we were strong. But he miscalculated about something as many people think: he made mistakes, he didn't believe in God...But maybe he had his reasons not to believe in God. In fact, he managed to gather people around him, and as people wisely say, that in hard times people must unite, despite [their] nationality. If a person is from Georgia or Armenia, this should not be a cause to offend him. I do not respect fascists; in Russia there should be no fascism because in the WWII Russia lost 32 million people. This should not happen again!

U: What about skinheads?

-Russian skinheads do not know the history of this movement. It came from England. England had its reason: the overpopulation of immigrants which became the cheap labor force. They [immigrants] took work places of the native English, and therefore they [English] started to fight for their rights. This exists in Russia too - foreigners - this cheap labor force, it's advantageous for the employers that people do the same job for less money

We have the movement of fascism and Nazism. I think that these people are not worthy of Respect. Movement of fascism and Nazism, we have. I believe that these people are not worthy of respect. It is not correct to humiliate people on their race.

U: What does it mean when someone says “cherniy” or “hach”?

-In the mind of many young people they [cherniy, черный] are people descending from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Daghestan, and Chechnya. And they (young people) do not love them. They also have their reasons for that. People who were born in Russia have pride in themselves.... When a Russian girl dates a non-Russian fellow, they think “What, a Russian fellow is not sufficient for her?” There is such a fight going on.

U: If an Italian came to Russia? Would he still be called “cherniy”?

- Well an Italian can be understood immediately from his speech. ... Italy is still Western Europe. When I was small, my great-grandmother said that our city is called Fryazino because Italians lived there. It was a famous family, who constructed the Kremlin. This land was given to minter Ivan fryazin from Italy. This means there is also some Italian blood in me. Therefore I think that people from any nationality I think that people from any nationality can communicate as equals [with each other]. Even in sport the team “Terek” from Grozny took the cup of Russia in football

U- I heard this in Russia: “the intellect cannot conceive Russia”. What do you understand about the word Russian?

-Most of it is the mentality. Russian. I will give you an example from a book. The book mentions the beginning of the Second World War: In the book there is a story (moment) when Germans approach Mozhaisk (a city in Russia), our army captured the German tanks and several Germans were taken as prisoners of war. One of those Germans said to one of our Georgian soldier: “You do not even speak in Russian, how come you are Russian?” But he [the soldier] answered: “We are all here for the war of Russians.”

Russian- this was anyone who stood in the trench; who flew the plane; who worked at factories. They were [are] all Russians. As a historian, I can say that during the war times there was the idea to fight for the motherland, for mothers and children. But now there are too many parties and each of them pushes its own idea for people. There should be one party, one

authority that the party would think for people. The authority would take decisions if it is possible to do something or not. So when there is one party, one movement can unite many people.

U: How was life in Russia before and now? Is there any difference?

-Someone can say that in the times of the USSR products were in short supply. I can say that engineers, teachers, servicemen could have normal lives in the USSR. They could feed their family, accumulate enough money for a car. Here, my grand-dad accumulated enough money for "Muscovite" [a cheap Russian car model] in two years *

Now products are enough products, but not everybody can afford it. If you do not steal, "Zhiguli" [a cheap Russian car model] is the maximum model that is available to buy for an ordinary person. But if one works hard, one can buy a second hand foreign car.

U: If it was necessary for you to choose, is it negative or positive now for Russia?

Now it is negative.

U: What do you think about perestroika and glasnost? What do you understand under these concepts and how did they change Russia?

-Perestroika is not just the change of the economic state of the country, but also the reconstruction of the political system. Liberalism is a step forward. Democracy, glasnost too many things have appeared in a very short time. Freedom fell on Russia, it came so suddenly, and people just did not know what to do. A lot of parties appeared at that time. This was not necessary. We had a very strong state and could help whoever we wanted. We held the neutrality of the military. We helped Africa. We knew our interests, and according to them, we could help other countries. We clearly and firmly knew that our regime suited us more than to Western Europe and America. We know that in those countries, whom we helped we would be able to extract minerals oil, gas and diamonds, and cooperated with them.

But now even Yugoslavia could not clearly say the position of Nato, even on Iraq. Although Putin spoke from a position of a military theory that Afghanistan is almost the same, it is a very terrible guerrilla war. It is very difficult to fight with the Saudi countries. It is the same

as, France or England fought with the tribes of nomads. These are such terrible moments of history.

I think Iraq is a Muslim country, it will find itself the way to go. I do not think that Iraq was bad with Saddam Hussein, although he was cruel. Embargo, I think, that is a western sort of policy. Basically, they fear that regime, which grows stronger.

U: Yes I understand. This is a very difficult topic. The whole world talks about this. Today how is the relationship between Russia and Europe?

Now the relations are good and there are no claims from each other. Maybe the remaining debts from the USSR to the West are not being paid, but more or less the level of relationship is warm and friendly. Many states have the same position with us in some questions; for example Germany, France who did not support the war in Iraq. We have good friends [pals] in Europe, that we can discuss many questions with them.

U: How about the EU? Russia also wants to join the EU?

EU is good for Russia. It opens new ways to the world market of Europe; it is promising for the economy.

U: and [what do you think] for Americans? Now American gives credit to many

Americans are very smart [cunning] people. They have never had a coherent territory. There was the North and South, the war for independence, the civil war, a global war. In Europe it was not like this. America has always watched when people started to fight: when someone won, Americans supported them. Why did they help the USSR? They saw that Germany started to win; they knew that if we had lost the war, they would have lost England, and all the States.

U: Now I want to talk about another topic a bit. I came here a few months ago and saw terrorist attacks in Moscow myself. And it happens quite often. What do you think of terrorism and why is this happening in Russia?

-This is a problem of the entire world, not only Russia. The ancestor of international terrorism was Bin Laden, the invulnerable leader of Al-Qaeda. It is CIA created him [literally gave birth] in Afghanistan against USSR, but he then went out of control and started a war against

America, for example (the famous skyscrapers). This is a global network, for example, in Chechnya it is necessary to search for the leaders to destroy the flow.

U: particularly in Chechnya?

-In Chechnya now everything is getting gradually normalized. Innocent civilians begin to work, restore houses, but I simply believe that the people of Chechnya were against the band headed by Basaev. For example the people, with whom it is necessary to fight; the people whom the entire world recognized as international terrorists.

And now in Qatar the consequence is the killing of one of the leaders of the Chechen formation, well this is not important. People will understand; everybody watches TV. During one of the broadcasts, there was a ridiculous report about the Russian special services that they have long hands, but short feet, i.e. they cannot manage to run away from where they stretched their hand. I think terrorism is impossible to beat. This is a world wide partisan movement, and its consequence is perishing the innocent people. I think this is not only the problem of Russia but the problem of the whole world.

It's necessary to establish special services. The countries devastated from terrorism must gather groups that can respond quickly; groups equipped with the contemporary technology.

U: But what do they want? What is happening between Russia and Chechnya?

-Here it is big money involved for commercial profit. Everything is connected with their ideology of Wahhabism. It is difficult to gain an understanding immediately, one needs to study this problem for a long time to understand the reasons of terrorism. But I think the reasons are ideological. This is Islam; many people think that Islam is militant

U: How about religion in Russia? How was it before? Is it possible to talk about religion freely now?

-I am at a loss. Earlier orthodoxy was not legal. , now it is popular. On television they show many politicians going to church. Politicians think that if they go, people will go too. This is a complicated question, and it is not possible to answer it unambiguously: before, temples were closed, but now all of them are restored and everyone goes to temples. This can be either good that the spiritual culture is restored, or for many people it is just paying tribute to the fashion, and this is why they may be going to temples.

U- Russia, it is a big country, partially in Europe, partially in Asia. Where do you see Russia?

-Eurasia, so to say. Many people live in Asia, in the Caucasus, Dagestan, Tatarstan, Bashkiriya. . Many live in the central Europe. For example, one should not separate Siberia from them. It is our territory, which united the country.

Politicians, they know little about the history. One is not allowed to divide the country. This entire history was combined by blood. But they speak about dividing the Russia into two: Europe and Asia. This is not right, and it is dilettantism.

Russia is both in Europe and Asia, and this is unique

U- I want ask a question about Turkey. Now there are many businessmen in Russia from Turkey, many construction sites, What do people think about Turkey? How is the relationship between Turkey and Russia? I am particularly interested in this because I am from Turkey.

-In my opinion there are no differences between Turkey and Russia. Many buildings are constructed by either Bulgarians or Turks.

U: Many products from Turkey?

-Yes many. Cheap jewellery, gold in Turkey. There is big demand for Turkish resorts although I believe that there are better rivers and lakes.

U: And What do Russians think about Turkish people?

-Normal. We rest in your country and you work in our country. Normal economic relations. We invest our money in your tourism business and you build constructions.

U: What do you think of Putin?

-Vladimir Vladimirovich is a separate topic. Is it our hobby to talk about him? He shows a healthy means of a nation. He does not drink or smoke; he does Judo and promotes sports. Putin is the best option for Russia. Let us see what he will do for Russia. Four years is still a little time. It is not possible to judge him strictly. Let us see.

U: I know that you are tired, but I want to ask a few more questions because you know a lot about Russia and it is very interesting. I see here many Chinese people. Is this a problem for your country? They work here, and I am interested in what people think about them?

With Chinese people: it is the friendship of peoples. Russians and Chinese people are friendly. It was the release of Chinese and Soviet troops in August 1945. Now many Chinese people are coming here to study. People think that our education is better. They come and study.

U: My last question: what do you think about the future in Russia, in 10 or 15 years?

-Well it is necessary to look at the person who will be in power in the next 10 to 15 years. Who will be it. Who will have the power for the next four years. It seems that Putin will remain for four years. Everything depends on the economic and political perspectives. Now, if we can change it even only 2 to 3 percent in those four years everything will be very good. It is better, if he was the successor of himself.

So that he would continue in the same way.. So that he would stick to the same course. So that then something would change. So that in the end [one] would compromise; the strictness of power and to have all the 100 percent. if one speaks about perspectives, then, now, I cannot complain that I live badly

U: Is it bad for you (life)?

-No, on the contrary. I cannot complain. Free education.

U: last question: what would you like to say more?

-I believe that all countries should be friends, never quarrel with each other. I can say to Bush, "Bush, walk out of Iraq. People will not understand you. Innocent people die." Every people has the right to self-determination, if people have sovereignty and they are not part of any state. If Dagestan and Chechnya were not part of Russia, and it would be all different. No one is forced to participate in Russia. Many of them were happy because it meant to development for them.

9.4 The List of Key Informants

The following list consists of my key informants. It includes all the informants that I cited in the thesis and the ones that do not directly exist in the thesis, but who were yet important informants.

Name	Age	Gender	Occupation
A.	18	Male	Sociology, first year student, he provided me access to many international students from the Middle East due to his interest in Arabic.
A.C.	22	Male	History student, fourth year student. A friend of my informant D. I knew him little, but he provided me essential information about Russian culture.
D.	18	Female	Will be stylist, and a hair dresser, second year student.
F.G1	23	Male	Fine art student, third year student..
F.G2	22	Female	Fine art student, third year student.
F.G3	22	Male	Fine art student, third year student.
I.	21	Male	Free lance, my closest informant who invited me to <i>Kurchatov</i> .
K.	24	Male	Graduate student, International relations, my first informant both in Turkey and Russia.
Ka.	19	Female	Fine arts student, second year, close friend. She invited me to Suzdal She helped me with Russian, and I helped her with English .
M.	22	Male	Physics, second year student, one of my closest informants.
S.	22	Male	Natural sciences, second year student, my gate keeper.
T.	21	Female	Studied English literature and Russian literature, fourth year student, close friend. She helped me a lot with Russian and Russian culture.
Y.	19	Male	Electronics, second year student.
Z.	20	Male	History, from Caucasus region, we discussed a lot about Russia. He provided me comparative reasoning of both Russian students and students from Caucasus region.

9.5 Sample Language Diary

9.5.1 Introduction

This is a day-by-day-kept diary, originally in English, for my progress in Russian between 29.12.2003 and 5.06.2004. I had two reasons to keep this diary. The first reason was to note my progress in the language. It involves some of my encounters with Russians, their language and culture, and my thoughts about these issues at the time of happening. Through this diary one can trace my progress in the language and the problems I had faced in the field mostly in terms of language acquisition. Second, some years ago, I was influenced by Wilga M. Rivers's similar diary for Spanish language to provide case-study material.²⁴ For the very same reason I wanted to provide some case-study material: to this end this diary should be seen as a sophisticated, Turkish, language learner's encounters with Russian.

Although this diary kept day by day, there are a few exceptions of this such as when I did not have the opportunity to take daily notes, or when I forgot to write an entry on the day of happening but incorporated at a later date. Yet such entries are mentioned in the diary as well as long as I remembered to note them down in the original diary, but such cases are actually rare.

Notes that are introduced within brackets mean that I added them while I was typing the diary, but they did not exist in the original one. However such notes should be taken as the natural part of the diary because they were the ideas in my mind when I was making the actual entries. In addition to this I should mention that I sometimes preferred not include a few entries which originally existed in the original manuscript. This choice was to keep my informants anonymous and there are a few entries that are rather private in nature, and I was not willing to add them. Such cases are noted in the diary although there are only a few instances. Finally for clarity, and style I did change the word order of my entries or the flow of ideas, and frequently the sentence constructions along with some words, but these changes add no more than the intended purpose and otherwise is noted as mentioned above.

The actual diary is kept until the last day I left Russia. Yet here I only added my entries for January and a few days in February.

²⁴ Rivers, M., Wilga. Teaching Foreign Language Skills. 2 ed., Chicago Press: 1981

30.12. 2003 (my first entry one day after my arrival)

- Things turned out to be a bit different than I had expected with my scholarship. Due to the problems with registration and accommodation, I lost my enthusiasm a bit and did not register as much as I did yesterday.
- When I am upset I tend to swear in German silently.
- I try to speak English, but not many people can speak English.
- I find my way asking people in Russian. First I try English. If I get no reply, I go in Russian.
- Face expressions tend to work. If you look puzzled and helpless, they try to help you. People start speaking English only when you look helpless.
- In the afternoon, I got more energetic. I slowly started registering again. I learned the word клей: glue.
- I really feel annoyed when people start almost shouting when I cannot understand them.
- I bought a can of coke from a drugstore. I could not follow everything the shop keeper told me, and I thought [due to somewhat his high tone] he swore at me. I went in Turkish saying, “I cannot understand you Dude!” As a reply the guy asked me where I was from in a polite and friendly way. We spoke for a minute or two. I realized that I was [obviously] wrong in my assumption and reaction.
- I have to learn how to say “something” in Russian. I want to say can/may I ask you something, but I cannot since I do not know it. Instead I say, “Можно вам српшешевать...” [is it possible to ask you...]

31. 12. 2003

- While I was waiting in the registration line at the faculty, I talked with a Chinese girl for half an hour. We managed to talk. She had to simplify her structures and vocabulary whereas I had to use facial expressions a lot. Nevertheless it was a friendly chat.
- My first informal contact with a native speaker. I think I understood her.
- I can follow the instructions at metro better.
- I imitate and repeat what I hear other people say to improve my pronunciation.
- I still swear in German silently.
- There is a problem with my spelling in English. Although I rarely make spelling mistakes, my friend from Istanbul with whom I correspond in English asked me what happened with my spelling because it was full of mistakes, for example I wrote, [several times], “kome” instead of “come”.
- I learned праздник, удача, жаль, опаздывать/опоздать
- In red Square, I met an American group. We spoke English, and I was very pleased with that. We ran a long conversation. There were many people around us, and they wanted to speak with us. I translated between them and our group. I realized that despite my weaknesses I can speak Russian

- After the blast near my ear [firework] I swore loudly in German—Schisse.

01.01.2004

- I met Konstantin [a friend, an informant and formerly my Russian teacher from Turkey who also speaks fluent Turkish]. We went to his flat, and he introduced me to his sister. We spoke English, Russian and Turkish. When I feel relaxed, I speak better Russian.
- A few new words: постепенно: gradually; пересодка: umsteigen; дед мораз [loosely the equivalent of Santa Claus]; снегурочка [a very beautiful woman—seen as the daughter of дед мораз]; соговое кольцо: the avenue which circles around Moscow
- I learned that actually there is a difference between “с новым годом” and “с новым годом” (the stress must fall on the first o on годом). The latter one means “happy new year” literally “for the new year” where the former one means “for the new reptiles”. I felt embarrassed since I used both of them alternatively.
- Bits by bits I understand more.
- Yesterday and today, I studied how to ask directions; it immediately made a difference.
- Romanian interrupts when I speak Russian. [I was often speaking Romanian before I arrived Moscow]

02.01.2004

- Etiquettes are different for many things. When people are shopping it is very different than I am used to it [it made certain things more difficult for me to follow such as non-verbal communication]
- Is there a way to learn motion verbs easily? Someone has to take the sting out of it!
- I am still listening to the native speakers. I wish I had brought a radio.
- I ask people how to get to the metro station or other places for the sake of practice. I seem to understand. I noticed that older people are more understanding.

04.01.2004

- I learned ten new words about transportation.

05.01.2004

- Today I spoke with different people in various languages [English, German, Russian, and Turkish]. I had to speak with some international relations students whose Turkish was more or less fluent. Then I had to speak German with a female student and [Russian and English on other occasions]. I used my four languages effectively. To my surprise, this did not cause any problems. Occasionally, when I speak one language after another and particularly when I continue switching them, I tend to substitute words from other languages. This time, it happened only once or twice; yet after I spoke German for about twenty minutes, I noticed that I was substituting German sentence structure while speaking Russian (particularly rule of 123 or 321; [for example “зафтра пойду я в кино” instead of “я зафтра пойду в кино”]—“ich gehe morgen ins Kino”/“morgen gehe ich ins Kino”).

- In the morning, I had to introduce myself in Russian to my new classmates. Before my class was arranged, a Russian lady [head of the department of Russian prep school] interviewed me to decide my level in Russian. Interestingly, I could understand her extremely well and made myself clear [equally well]. Is it because she is used to working with foreigners?
- After hesitating for a while and taking my approval she asked me to join a group of students which was actually quite ahead of me²⁵ (an advanced group).²⁶
- Now I can understand people a bit better but my sentences are fragmented.
- In the Evening I spoke with a Chinese girl for half an hour, and it was very difficult to follow her because she asked questions about my profession and its details. I felt all my brain cells working [and searching] for words and expressions. This feeling is very similar to the one I had in Germany in 1996 when I was there for the first time. From that experience, I know that if I practice, I will learn soon, but I am afraid incase I fail [Actually I was rather overwhelmed by what was to come and how much I had to study to learn Russian].

06.01.2004

- I started communicating more with natives. Now I can follow them better if I have a clue about the subject.
- Today I talked with the manager (M.) of my department. She phoned the manager of the hostel. I could follow almost everything with the help of two key words: платить (to pay) and [скандал] (scandal). Key words are like parachutes.
- When people ask me directions or similar things, I avoid any conversation by saying “я говорю не много по-русски” (I speak Russian a little). I think, my avoiding such questions is not only a language problem but also the lack of any practical knowledge of Moscow. I cannot dare answer.
- In the evening I met three teenagers, and with one of them I spent the rest of the evening. I seriously realized that in real case situations involving social conversations [real colloquial conversation] I am at an infant level. We had to speak both English and Russian to communicate. Their spoken English was roughly equal to that of my Russian but their level of comprehension was way better than my comprehension of Russian. Thus I admitted to myself that I had much more to do before I come to understand [rapid] Russian and its slang.
- My trophies of the night, in terms of languages, are two new expressions: блин (f*) and ты клевый чувок (you are a cool guy).²⁷

²⁵ I always tend to perform better than my actual level at such interviews due to practice. I have the skill to avoid complex constructions while giving most of the answers that the interviewer would like to hear.

²⁶ Then I had assessed them as an advanced group. Yet, now, I think upper intermediate or pre advanced would have described them better.

²⁷ the former word is used very often like its English counterpart, and, to my best knowledge, it is milder than it is English equivalent; yet the latter expression would, as it was confirmed by a number of native speakers, only be used by teenagers, and it is not as cool as it actually sounds.

07.01.2004

- Today I went skating with native speakers. I tried to speak with them as much as possible. Later on an Azeri guy joined us who could also speak fluent Turkish. He, two other guys from our group, and I went to a pub. We started talking but somehow I was really lazy. I spoke Russian very little.
- At 2:30 am I encountered a real problem. The doors of the hostel were locked, and I was not warned that they are always locked at 12:00 am. I talked with the security in Russian unexpectedly fluent like. After talking and bargaining for a while, he let me in for some Rubles. I could not believe that I could bargain with him [very successfully].

08.01.2004

- I had my first real class with my time-table, books and notebooks.
- During the class, I noticed that I was going to be mostly on my own [in terms of group synergy] because nine Chinese students and I did not really make much sense together. I realized that class members are important in language learning by providing synergy.²⁸ However one Chinese girl T. helped me tremendously. I was as if under her protection.
- This class, as I mentioned before, is ahead of me, but now I realized why the lady who interviewed me wrote on a piece of paper “≈” to show my level of Russian. I think, if I really work, I can catch up with them.
- Again problems with moving to the dormitory.²⁹ It makes me to speak Russian with various people. I know that I make mistakes but they can understand me.
- In the morning, I started sharing my hostel room with a Russian Zoologist C. I had a chance to talk with C in the morning and evening.
- My English spelling got back to sort of normal.

09.01.2004

- A pleasant chat with C in the morning.
- I missed my classes because of the dormitory problem. I talked with M., and she phoned the director of the dormitory. Again I could follow a lot.
- In the afternoon, I had to speak to the security of the hostel. For the first time I spoke very fast!
- People started correcting my Russian. Does that mean, now, I speak at a level which can be corrected? People also started completing my sentences when I search for words.³⁰

²⁸ Probably any group activity depends on their members' harmony at large. Yet I assume it might become even more evident in activities such as language learning when group's synergy can escalate understanding and learning.

²⁹ I was still staying at the hostel due to my mysteriously missing medical documents.

³⁰ Now I know that this is extremely vital in language learning. When people start completing fragmental sentences, one starts learning the missing parts of a language like a child does—naturally and fast. This is to say

- I started making spelling mistakes in Turkish. This is weird! Turkish is a phonetic language. I transpose letters.

10.01.2004

- I started studying Russian Grammar. I made a plan for myself which, I know, I cannot follow thoroughly, but it is good to have an overall plan at hand when learning a foreign language.
- Books are important for language learning. I am very satisfied with my books. Although I use different books, I shall note the following books as my primary sources: Khovronina, S. and A. Shirochenskava. Russian in Exercises. 7th ed. Moscow: Russki yazyk Publishers, 1997 (Actually I have several editions of this book. The edition I am working with is the most user-friendly edition, but I was also quite contend with the former editions. This is a must book for anyone who wants to study [better exercise] the Russian grammar seriously.). Pulkina, I. M. A short Russian Reference Grammar. Ed. P.S. Kuznetsov. Moscow: Russky Yazyk Publishers, 1993. Orschel, Hans. Langensheidts Kurzgrammatik: Russisch. Berlin: Langenscheidt, 1995 (Neubearbeitung von Erwin Wedel). Heinze, Ludmila. Langensheidts Grundwortschatz: Russisch. Berlin: Langenscheidt, 1998.
- When I study grammar in Moscow, I pay attention to the peculiarities of the language which I would [probably] skip in Turkey. In the country, where the language is spoken, details make much more sense.

11.01.2004

- In the evening I met five teenagers. They wanted to talk with me despite my limited Russian. I realize that I have two problems: a) openings! I do not know how to start a conversation. I seriously lack basics and know-how. I need more than [just] book phrases. b) due to lack of my breadth of vocabulary, I cannot go in details and/or sustain any conversation. My conversations are superficial.

12.01.2004

- I am still studying in the hostel. Since my health certificates are missing, I have to have them reissued. This incident has upset me a lot. I am under two contradictory effects: On one hand, because I am upset, I do not want to study any Russian (the negative effect), but yet on the other hand I have to speak with many people to solve my problems (in other words to survive), and for this purpose I have to study seriously (positive effect). These two effects together create an interesting outcome.
- At the hospital, while waiting for the doctor, I spoke with a Russian lady. I myself initiated the conversation. I suppose this was my first successful social conversation—explaining what has happened to me in the last two weeks [it was a relief to talk to someone and be understood].
- [It is believed that] when one is under pressure or when is upset, foreign languages, usually, deteriorates. My experience is quite the opposite: I was so upset [better

in a class environment instructors should never let students get away with fragmental sentences since teachers usually understand what students say. Instead they should always complete the missing parts of the sentence, and thus giving students the chance to learn in a very efficient and natural way.

frustrated] to pay everything twice [and spend time with it], but as a matter of fact I could speak better.

- I had a successful conversation with L (the Russian Lady) and the doctor in the hospital.
- In the last two weeks, I had to communicate with at least fifteen different officials whom I met for the first time. I had to find addresses, travel in the city extensively with public transportation while asking directions, make explanations, listen to orders and directions, and so on. All these [demanding] tasks improved my languages abilities/[skills] much that no book could probably offer. I suppose such a [rapid] improvement, in normal conditions, would take two to three times more.
- In the afternoon, I studied Russian according with my plan.

13.01.2004

- I went to the hospital for the result of the analyses. I spoke with various people and I could manage to understand the given [directions] and orders.
- At one point, one of the female doctors phoned another doctor and informed her that I was going to her office. On the phone, she said, “Он говорит по-русски очень плохо” (he speaks Russian very badly). I felt really disappointed. “Плохо” (badly). I would understand but “очень плохо” (very badly)? I think she was unfair.
- In the afternoon I studied adjective declinations [according to my plan]
- My English spelling deteriorates again. I stopped using German, but now a few Romanian words started interrupting: in the morning, I said, “Gata” (Romanian for ready) instead of “готов” (transcription: gatov).

14.01.2004

- Interestingly, all of a sudden, I started understanding most of the bulletin boards around me! I do not know how this happened. Only a few days ago I could follow them with difficulty. It is a subconscious process!?! (I usually use the same stations/places).
- I tried a few times to direct my conversations to detailed and definitely unnecessary subjects.³¹ For example, I complimented the doctor on her wrist watch and we talked about it for a few seconds.
- In the morning, I had a class about Russian culture. In the first hour, I understood everything; the second hour we talked about the Russian miniature Art for 90 minutes. I almost understood nothing. Later we watched a documentary film about the Russian-German war in 1242. Literally, I only understood “понял” (understood) when one of the actors replied to another one in the film. For the rest, for me, it is a complete mystery what happened, and why happened. I suppose it has something to do with open and closed doors. You open one, but the next which is still closed [might] ruin everything.

³¹ I was trying to see, what I could and what I could not.

- In the evening, I had a difficult chat about politics with my new roommate [not the zoologist]. Although I told, [I suppose], what I wanted to say, it seems to be still too early to speak about such topics.

15.01.2004 (this entry was written after the next one)

- It became a routine to talk with different people about the dormitory problem.
- I found a good way to start conversations. First, I say, “Я плохо говорю по-русски” (I speak Russian badly).³² This secures me a margin of error to make mistakes, and it also gives me the right to ask things again. And usually I get compliments after conversation that actually my Russian is not that bad. It makes me feel better.
- Around noon time, I studied some Russian.

16.01.2004

- Finally I moved into my new dormitory. Despite the fact that it is hardly in livable conditions, I feel better. My roommates are two Chinese students. They can speak Russian (my overall assessment is that they have a working knowledge of the language), but their pronunciation seems to be weak. I hope spending time with them will not affect my poor pronunciation as well.
- According with my plan, I finished (reread) the introductory lexical and grammatical course (55 pages in two days).³³ I started repeating the prepositional case (I think, this is my strongest case of the all six cases).

17.01.2004

- I met with my key informant K. and played football, He spoke Turkish and Russian. I tried to change the language to Russian as much as possible. He is very well aware of the difficulties of learning a language, and therefore he usually explains cultural concepts and important words. I feel very comfortable with him.
- While playing football, I said “здрасвиуме” (hello, *formal*) to a 16 or 17 year old teenager. Later on, I was warned that I had to say “здрасмвий” (again hello but using the second person singular instead.). Although I did know the difference very well, it was automatic! At early levels, speaking a language in an automatic way might cause funny/[unpleasant] situations, and [hopefully this was only a funny one].
- In the afternoon we had some conversation (four people) about how I met the teenagers I mentioned before.³⁴
- I realized [with regard to the previous entry] I try to escape speaking Russian and prefer English when subjects get difficult and vice versa when subjects are easy.
- I learned two important phrases: “На сколько я знаю”, “as far as I know”, and “На сколько хорошо возможна”, “as good as possible”.

³² In the diary, to be precise, the entry for the Russian sentence was slightly different in the word order: “Я говорю по-русски плохо”.

³³ The first book I mentioned. See the entry for 10.01.2004.

³⁴ Here, a few issues are removed for privacy reasons.

- I need to study verb conjugations. I usually do not use the corresponding endings, and they verbs with “-ся” (reflexive verbs) are wrong most of the time. In addition to this, I need to learn perfective forms of verbs.
- In the evening, I watched some television. Due to aerial problems, I had access to only one channel, but better than nothing. I can understand some, but I cannot make the big picture [yet]. However it is good to watch television because now I can pay attention to pronunciations more carefully.

18.01.2004

- Today I was going to meet K., but he did not show up. I wandered around the Red Square looking at shops, reading around and listening to people.
- On my way back to the centre, I thought that it takes a lot of time to boot one’s self in a foreign language. I made some analogies between operating systems and foreign languages. I thought of window 3.x generation. It was not a real operating system but merely an interface between the user and the Dos. In other words, it was reformulating/ [reprocessing] our commands into a code system which the Dos would understand. Later on, as years passed windows became a real operating system making a direct communication between the user and the computer. I think, in the same way, I use English like windows 3.x generation to make myself understood in Russian. I still cannot think in Russian and use English as the interface. The day I will be able to think in Russian the system will boot up; however it takes such a long time.
- In the evening I met with two Turkish PhD students studying in Russia; R. and Ö. Later on, a Russian student studying law joined us. R was living with a Russian family and Ö was living with a friend of him. There was an obvious gap between them. Although Ö has been living for a longer time in Russia, R., was talking better. I think this is the effect of living with a Russian family.
- I was glad that I could make myself understood in Russian and even make simple jokes.

19.01.2004

- Now, I suppose, I came over the first cultural shock. I do not feel as frustrated as before. I also feel that studying years of Russian (although with long intervals and limited hours per week-- two or three hours) started telling of. I make a lot of mistakes and talk slowly. However I started noticing my accumulated knowledge. Despite the fact that I still do not know some subjects in Russian grammar, the ones I know are enough to learn others on my own. I started thanking my former instructors for teaching me the essentials of the grammar.
- In the evening, I met two new Russian students. We talked about general things. I felt that I could communicate. Later on four friends of them joined. I saw how Russian is unfolding in the real time. It was difficult to follow, but I paid a lot of attention and concentrated on how they use interjections.
- I realize that my pronunciation is getting better as well. I have problems with the following sounds: -и, -й, -е, -ё, -ь, -я. I still cannot manage to pronounce soft letters properly.
- I finished studying the prepositional case.

20.01.2004

- I started the Accusative case. This case is my second best case.
- Recently I concentrate more on the grammar.

21.01.2004

- Continued studying accusative.
- In the evening, I spoke with Romania; I did not like the way my English sounded. It was not my everyday English. I felt as if I did not speak it for several years.
- One of my instructors gave me a new book to study. Русский Язык Как Иностраный: Удивительные Истории: 116 Текстов для Чтения, Изучения и Развлечения: Н. С. Новикова, О. М. Щербакова, Москва, 2002. The level of texts in this book is excellent for me. On every page, either on the left or the right margin there are English counterparts of the new words. I think such books help a lot in language learning.

22.01.2004

- Today I feel down. Although I study very regularly, I still make the same mistakes. I notice my weaknesses more, and they irritate me. While I was talking with an acquaintance she changed her face from shape to shape, as if she was drinking a very bad bottle of wine. It demoralized me a lot.
- I am studying animate nouns in the accusative plural. The last time I had studied this topic was at least three years ago. Its difficulty annoys me (I noticed that I have forgotten this subject much).

23.01.2004

- I continued studying the accusative case. Late in the night, I studied класть/положить-лежать; ставить/поставить-стоять; вешать/повесить-висеть. The last time I had studied this topic was during the winter of 2001 with the Russian Lady E. Then out of laziness, I resisted learning these important verb pairs and their peculiarities. She was very disappointed with my performance on these verb pairs. However, I noticed that I still remember the overall picture although I had to study all night long for their peculiarities.
- In the evening, a young Russian girl N. asked me to accompany her while she was eating. I noticed or better reinforced that (if desired) with mutual understanding and help people can speak pretty well in a foreign language even if their level of the language is limited.. Moreover this might be one of the best ways to learn a language (like children). She kept the pace like a mother.
- In the afternoon I paid for the dormitory. We had a pleasant conversation—civil workers and me. They asked about the weather in Turkey. To my surprise I could talk about it for a while (of course not flawlessly). At one point, I mixed the prepositional case with the accusative case. I wanted to say: “в прошлой неделе” (last week) but I said “в прошлой неделю” (нелелю is accusative). Although I could sense that something was wrong, I could not correct it on the spot. I remembered the correct form after the talk, on my way to metro.

24.01.2004

- Finished the accusative case.
- I started understanding when people are talking to each other. It happened just like the way it happened with the bulletin boards. I do not know how this happened. Is it the effect of studying regularly or watching television or simply getting used to the sounds of the language or the combination of all? I still cannot follow everything and my understanding is very fragmented, but now I can follow some sentences.
- Finished the first chapter of “Russian as we speak”. Memorized the text.
- Everyday I pay more attention to the accent marks on words. I do not like to read the books without accent marks.

25.01.2004

- I started the dative case. This is my second weakest case.
- I might be mistaken that I started understanding people around me. I was at the Red Square and could not really follow people.

26.01.2004

- Continued studying the dative case.
- I noticed the word проблем, Russian for problem is not проблем but проблема. I felt upset because of my mistake. For years, I have said, mistakenly, “У меня проблем” (I have a problem), and “У меня нет проблема” (I do not have any problem).

27.01.2004³⁵

- Finished the dative case.

28.01.2004

- I started the genitive case. It is one of my cases which is neither good nor bad. I might have slight problems with the nouns in the genitive plural.
- My pronunciation needs serious improvement. When I speak with people, many of them change their faces (the way when one eats something sour).
- I am getting impatient. I want to skip and read further pages of my book. I allow myself to skim and scan but stick with my plan.
- My spelling got ever worse (English).
- My first try to read a Russian newspaper, badly failed. Probably still early. It is not only words but the complex sentences and constructions. In Russian, I am starting to read unconsciously.

29.01.2004

- I continued the genitive case. Peculiarities of the genitive plural are tiring, but I study it especially carefully. On paper, I usually get hundred percent correct or make a few mistakes with the vowels which has to be inserted into the last syllable. However I

³⁵ I have omitted the writing of one entry of this day.

usually get it wrong when I have to speak it. On the street I repeat (1 рубл; 2, 3, 4 рубля; 5 рублей, and etc.).

- I studied how to pronounce весь, всё, вся, все, всего, всей, etc. Now all is okay except весь. I get весь correctly fifty percent of the time. My problem is with “в”.
- For the first time, I realize why Russian is accepted as one of the fairly difficult languages (The problem is not learning the rules but applying them. Too many different declensions, conjugations, verb aspects, etc.).

30.01.2004

- Today, I did not study grammar but had various contacts with native speakers. In the evening, on my way to the МГУ two girls stopped me. As usual I said “мнѐ еще трудно говорить по-русский”, (It is still difficult for me to speak Russian) [this is an improvement for me. I used to say, “Я плоха говорю по-русский] and waited them to leave. On the contrary they asked how to get to the closest metro station. That I know! I said “прямо, прямо, прямо”, (straight, straight, straight) (this is something I acquired in the streets. In text books, it is only прямо, but in the colloquial language if one wants to say, “Walk straight for a while”, one uses this expression) and “налево. Через пятнадцать минут...” (and to the left in fifteen minutes).
- Later on, at a book store, I was looking at CDs on a stand which I could turn. Another lady was doing the same. At one point she made a gesture of disapproval, “chik”. She didn’t like that I was turning the stand. That was too much. For the last one month everybody had the liberty to hit me in the streets, shops, metro stations constantly and living without saying a word. I said, “Я тоже смотрю” (I am looking at it as well) with a bold manner. It worked and she did not reply. This was my first confrontation with a native speaker, and I got away with it. I wonder what I could have really done if she had accepted the challenge. Maybe she understood that I was a foreigner and out of deep courtesy, which I could not appreciate at the moment of talking, decided to let me get away with it (This will be always a mystery).
- On my way back to dormitory another girl asked me something which I could not understand. At the metro station, like other Russians, I decided to drink a beer. While I was drinking and looking around, a half-drunk man approached near me and started talking. I was alert by this unexpected company and trying to avoid him without letting him sense it. I could hang on the conversation with some of the key words he was using. Then another girl approached and asked for fire. They talked for a minute or two and to my surprise he left. She turned at me and explained that he was homeless and was going to ask for money if she had not come. I thanked her and chatted for twenty minutes. She had to repeat almost everything twice or more that I could follow her.
- Late in the night I studied some vocabulary.

31.01.2004

- I forgot to write that German seriously interrupts for the last two or three days. When I was ordering something at the cafeteria, I stopped myself on the verge of saying, “Ich hätte gern eine Tasse Kaffe”(I would like to have a cup of coffee).
- I studied the genitive case

- At one point, I was doing some exercises with the genitive case, words много, мало, сколько, etc.). There was one exercise with the following words: (мясо, рыба, хлеб, молоко, etc.). Although words following много and others should be declined with the genitive plural, the latter list of words and similar ones are declined in the genitive singular because they are plural by nature.[their English counterparts are words like information or luggage] There was no explanation about it, and I could solve the puzzle after reading other books. I do not know how many people would do this, but when we write text books, we have to see the problem with the layman's eyes.

01.02.2004

- I continued to study the genitive case. My impatience is every growing.

02.02.2004

- I continued studying the genitive case. I noticed that I have weaknesses with formation and uses of the comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives, numbers and their declensions, usage of different cases denoting time, and the predicative regarding person.
- I studied numbers and their declensions
- In the evening, I, coincidentally, met E. where I met him before. We talked about the sightseeing of Moscow. I understood more than before.
- My problems with spelling prevail. Today German interrupted several times when I was speaking.

03.02.2004

- I studied numbers and their declensions. I noticed that practically I knew nothing about numbers except 1 with the nominative case, 2,3,4 with the genitive singular, and 5 and more with the genitive plural. For example, I used to say, “В работаете до два часа?” (are you working until two o'clock?) I would not understand why people were looking so puzzled at me whenever I uttered numbers. I thought that the problem was with my pronunciation. However, the standard way of what I wanted to say was, “Вы работаете до двух часов”.After I learned how numbers work, I solved exercises on genitive case denoting date and time.
- I talked with a Farsi student studying Arabic language and literature in Russian. Our conversation made me reassure that my language abilities have definitely exceeded survival needs. Now I need more vocabulary. Since I came, I did not learn many words or did not especially work on that because I had many weaknesses with structures that extra vocabulary would have allowed me to speak words one after another, but I would have continued making same funny mistakes. I am establishing a firm knowledge of the Russian grammar. Practically, in terms of the reference grammar, only one case, the instrumental case, is ahead, and in addition I have a few problems with the motion verbs. The rest is relatively simple for me. Soon I will start studying vocabulary intensively.

- I am building my place of loci for new vocabulary.³⁶ Until now, I rarely used mnemonics because there was nothing to memorize but to learn. I used mnemonics only to memorize a number of consonant alternations. At the moment, I am planning to spare my room in the dormitory, GUM (the shopping center in Red square), and the area around my dorm as place of loci.
- I shall make a special entry about Langenscheidt for providing such succinct and well-organized books. Without the two books I am reading, I would not be able to learn the peculiarities of numbers that easily.

04.02.2004

- I studied the genitive case (genitive with prepositions из, с, у, and others) and repeated declensions of numbers.

³⁶ A technique used to learn new vocabulary with the help of mnemonics. However I did not use this method much in Russia although I had learned many words in Romania with the same technique.

9.6 Timeline: Terrorism in Russia

The Moscow metro blast is feared to be the latest in a series of terrorist attacks in Russia that have killed hundreds of people. Here is a timeline of the most significant strikes between 1999 and 2004:

August 31, 1999	A bomb explodes in an underground shopping center near the Kremlin, injuring 20 people.
September 1999	Bombs destroy apartment blocks in Moscow, Buynaksk and Volgodonsk, killing 200. The government blames Chechen rebels, who in turn accuse Russia's secret services. Then-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin responds by sending troops into Chechnya for the first time since 1997.
June 7, 2000	In the first attack of its kind in the breakaway republic of Chechnya, two Russian special police are killed in a suicide car-bombing near the regional capital Grozny.
July 2-3, 2000	Chechen guerrillas launch five suicide bomb attacks on bases of Russian forces within 24 hours. In the deadliest, at least 54 people are killed at a police base near Grozny.
August 8, 2000	A bomb in a busy Moscow underpass kills eight people.
October 23, 2002	About 50 Chechen rebels seize a Moscow theater and take about 800 hostages. After a three-day siege Russian forces storm the building using gas, killing most of the rebels and 120 hostages.
December 27, 2002	Chechen suicide bombers ram vehicles into the local government headquarters in Grozny, bringing down the roof and floors of the four-story building. Chechen officials say about 80 people killed.
May 12, 2003	Two suicide bombers drive a truck full of explosives into a government administration and security complex in Znamenskoye, in northern Chechnya. Fifty-nine people are killed, and scores hurt.
May 14, 2003	At least 16 people are killed in a suicide bomb attack during a religious festival in the town of Iliskhan-Yurt, east of Grozny. 145 are wounded.
June 5, 2003	A woman bomber ambushes a bus carrying Russian air force pilots near Chechnya, blowing it up and killing herself and 18 other people.
July 5, 2003	Two women suicide bombers kill 15 other people when they blow themselves apart at an open-air rock festival at Moscow's Tushino airfield. 60 are injured.

- August 1, 2003 A suicide bomber kills at least 50 people at a military hospital in the town of Mozdok in North Ossetia bordering Chechnya.
- September 3, 2003 Six people are killed in an explosion on board a commuter train near the Northern Caucasus spa town of Pyatigorsk, but police say it is not the work of Chechen rebels.
- December 5, 2003 An explosion on a commuter train in the Stavropol region north of Chechnya kills at least 36 people and injures more than 150.
- December 9, 2003 A suicide bomber in central Moscow kills at least five people.
- February 6, 2004 A rush-hour blast kills at least 30 people and injures 70 on a metro train in Moscow.

Source: "Timeline: Terrorism in Russia". CNN. 6 February 2004. June 17 2007.
<<http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/europe/02/06/russia.timeline/>>.

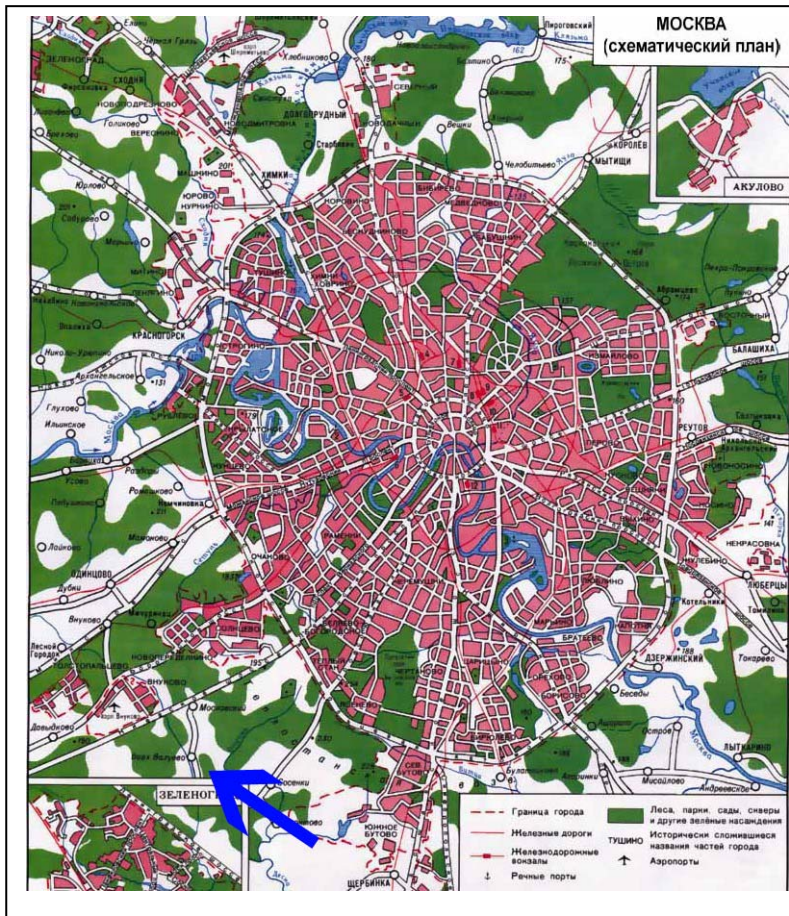
9.7 Maps and Plans

9.7.1 The Map of Russia



Source: "Map of Russia." 04. July 2007 <<http://emperors-clothes.com/maps/russia.htm>>

9.7.2 The Map of Moscow³⁷



Source: "Moscow Systematic Map." 04 July 2007. <<http://chaos.ssu.runnet.ru/conf1/images/chema8.jpg>>.

³⁷The arrow shows the approximate location of MSPU and the dormitories.

9.7.3 Moscow Metro Plan³⁸



Source: "Moscow Underground Plan." 04. July 2007. < <http://www.hotelcosmos.ru/rus/img/mapmetro.jpg> >.

³⁸ 1. The administrative building of MSPU and classes; 2. MSPU (see also the photographs), classes and dormitories (including my dormitory); 3. Sports center where people go skating; 4. The brown ring the most metropolitan area of the city; 5. Arbatskaya (арбатская), the cultural center of the city; 6. The Red Square and shopping centers are located here.

9.8 Photographs³⁹



PHOTOGRAPH 1: (May, 2005) Moscow State Pedagogical University (MSPU) building and its courtyard, the main entrance, during the spring



PHOTOGRAPH 2: (Feb. 2005) Moscow State Pedagogical University, during the winter

³⁹ Photographs are taken by Umut Lacivert Kazankaya



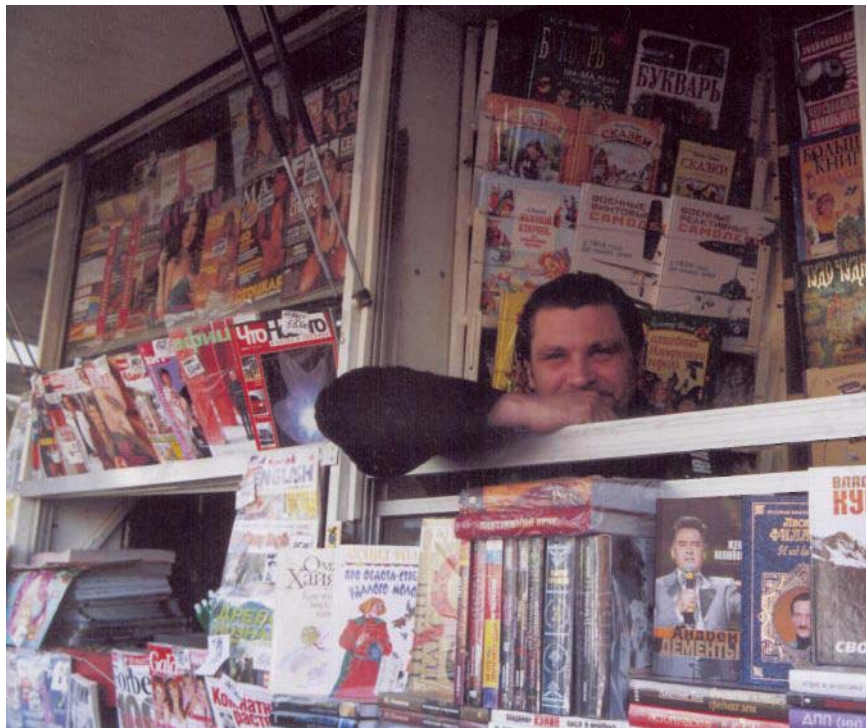
PHOTOGRAPH 3: (May 2005), students socializing in the courtyard of Moscow State Pedagogical University during the spring



PHOTOGRAPH 4: (March 2005), the library of Moscow State Pedagogical University, midterm week. Due to lunch break there are fewer students than normal



PHOTOGRAPH 5: (May 2005), three of my informants and I. On the side street to the dormitories of Moscow State Pedagogical University



PHOTOGRAPH 6: (March 2005), a book seller and a diving instructor who invited me to his van where he sells book. We spent the day together in his van selling books and talking about the USSR and the Russian Federation with a group of four people

9.9 Curriculum Vitae

UMUT LACIVERT KAZANKAYA

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EDUCATION

- Feb. 2002—Aug 2007 Yeditepe University Istanbul
Social Anthropology (MA), (English medium university)
- Sep. 1995—June 2000 Mugla University Mugla
Economics (BA)
Sociology (BA, Double Major)
- Oct. 1994—July 1995 Bosphorus University Istanbul
Computer Programming Certificate Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Sep 2006—Jan. 2007 Yeditepe University (Anthropology Dep.) Istanbul
Part-Time Lecturer (English medium university)
- Courses Given**
- Introduction to Sociology
 - Statistics for Social Sciences
 - Computer Skills for Social Sciences I-II
- Sep. 2000—Sep. 2006 Yeditepe University (Anthropology Dep.) Istanbul
Research Assistant and Part-Time Lecturer (English medium university)
- Courses Given**
- Statistics for Social Sciences (2 semesters)
 - Computer Skills for Social Sciences I and II (8 semesters)
 - Seminars for various institutions on “How to use SPSS”
 - Study Hours of History of Economics, Introduction to Social Sciences, Introduction to Sociology, Social Change

LANGUAGES

- Native Language: Turkish
- Fluent: English, German, Russian
- Near Working Knowledge: French
- Elementary Proficiency: Romanian, Chinese

