

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATIONAL ARMIES AND  
THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO  
ARMY RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS IN GERMANY AND BRITAIN**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

In the recent histories of Britain and Germany there has been a strong relationship between the military as a national institution and the concept of national identity, although in very different ways. This is because of the two nations' experiences of the Second World War which, though military in nature, were shared by the entire population. This thesis aimed to investigate whether recent changes in international relations have affected this bond. Different research methods were employed to compare findings from this case study with existing literature: content analysis was used to investigate the different recruitment strategies of the British military and the Bundeswehr, while questionnaires recorded reactions to these adverts by members of the target group and also established current attitudes towards the nation and the military. This was followed by in-depth interviews with current and former members of the military in both countries in order to examine diachronic changes in attitudes. The thesis concludes that although national identity amongst young people still serves as a form of identification, the decision to make the 'ultimate sacrifice' for the nation is largely determined by self-interested considerations rather than a strong sense of national loyalty.

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## Introduction

A country's foreign policies and thus the use of its armed forces are no longer solely determined by national interests but are also largely affected by international bodies such as the UN and the EU, thus questioning the extent to which foreign policy is still "underpinned by the myths of nationhood and national identity" (Wallace, 1991, p. 68). Soysal points out that while the concept of citizenship has taken on a more transnational character, identities today are still considered to be territorially and nationally bounded (in Fink et al., 2001, p. 66). This development challenges the link between the imagining of national communities (Anderson 1983) and the "patriotic duty, loyalty and responsibility" (Strachan, 2000, p. 71) that it is historically associated with.

This thesis examines the interplay between national identity and the armed forces as a crucial national institution. It assesses the way in which recruitment advertisements for the armed forces are constructed in order to appeal to primarily young adults and how they reinforce or create the image of the military profession, including in relation to notions of gender and ethnicity. Comparing adverts from two European countries – Great Britain and Germany - will establish the extent to which understandings of national identity affect their production and investigate whether national identity remains a strong motivation for military recruitment.

The army as a national institution is often neglected when it comes to the study of national identity. While there has been considerable research into aspects of language and geography and the importance of institutions promoting a sense of national community, such as a central education system and the media (Anderson, 1983, p. 114), investigations of the army in relation to national identity are few and far between (Longhurst, Plowman). The army however used to be, and still is, considered by many European states to be the 'school of the nation', instilling national values in its members (Krebs, 2004, p. 85). Furthermore, being a foreign policy tool, it also represents the nation abroad, thus not only actively shaping internal identities, but also upholding identity barriers through confrontation with 'the other'. The structure and purpose of national armed forces have evolved

significantly over the last few decades (Caforio, 2003, p. 118) and, as they are inextricably linked to notions of national identity, and this has necessitated a reassessment of some of the components that comprise national identity such as territory and sovereignty. Although defending national territory remains one of the armed forces' key rationales, it is no longer one of its main concerns and despite still fighting for individual countries, armies often report to multi-national commands (Haltiner and Klein, 2002, p. 16).

We live in a world full of identities that transcend national boundaries due to the impact of globalisation and many countries including Great Britain and Germany have declared multilateralism and integration into international organisations as the prerogative of their foreign policy agendas. Nation-states are no longer the key players, as illustrated by the majority of military operations now being carried out by multinational forces under the command of international organisations (Fleckenstein in Arrington, 2002, p. 547). Yet, nation-states are still in need of national armed forces. Most governments now favour all-volunteer professional armies and due to no longer being able to achieve their needed military strength through compulsory drafts, national armies rely heavily on recruitment campaigns (van Doorn, 1975 and Burk, 2006). The biggest sacrifice that one could make, to give one's life, has always been in the name of the community of primary identification – tribe, kingdom, nation. Today, identities are often more plural and allegiances become diluted. One thus wonders whether a sense of national identity can still be called upon in order to recruit new soldiers and if citizens are still willing to die for their fatherland. Furthermore, it raises the question of whether national identity can be adapted in order to facilitate army recruitment or if marketing strategies need to be based on other values.

Stefan Berger argues Germany's national identity was largely repressed which led to a reshaping of national consciousness after the Second World War (1997, p. 39) making it difficult to draw on its recent military history and traditions in a positive way. Although contemporary Germany still recruits soldiers through its conscription, numbers are dwindling and active recruitment is

gaining in importance. This study considers the Bundeswehr's approach to advertising with regards to its problematic history and its new role in international relations. Germany's case is contrasted with that of Britain, which has constructed a comparatively unblemished military history, allowing for a more positive utilisation of this element of British identity. Being one of the allies who ended the Second World War and liberated the world from Nazism has left many Britons feeling proud of their armed forces, but this leaves questions as to the affect of such history on military advertising in times of heightened levels of European integration and highly criticised "preventive warfare".

This study investigates whether differences in the construction of national identity in the two countries become evident or whether post-national trends have resulted in a detachment from these elements altogether. An investigation of the aforementioned issues takes place in form of a content analysis of three British television adverts as well as two television and one radio advert produced by the Bundeswehr. In order to put the findings into context, the content analysis is followed by an examination of a survey conducted with British and German target audiences. The survey consists of two questionnaires: one of which was filled in by young people between the age of fifteen and twenty-five before watching/listening to the adverts of their respective armed forces and which established their attitudes towards their nation and the armed forces. The other questionnaire, completed after being shown the clips, logs how the advertisements are perceived by their target audiences. This quantitative study is accompanied by a number of in-depth interviews carried out with Germans and Britons who either volunteered to join their armed forces some decades ago or are at the beginning of their military career. The purpose of these interviews is to sample diachronic changes in attitudes and motivations.

Due to the ever-changing definitions and purposes of national identity and the armed forces, practical research can only reflect a nation's attitudes in a specific place and time. It is thus crucial not only to triangulate different types of quantitative and qualitative research, it is also important to place this primary empirical research in a wider academic context. This is achieved in the following

two chapters. Chapter 1 provides a thorough discussion of theories that form the basis of this research. The literature review concentrates on issues surrounding national identity, especially focusing on (military) history and the role of the Second World War for identity formation in Britain and Germany. The second chapter comprises of a comprehensive evaluation of the research methods used for this thesis and highlights strengths as well as weaknesses of the way the empirical data was collected. It includes a brief section on the concept of television advertisements and their impact on public attitudes. The thesis concludes by arguing that although national identity amongst young people still serves as a form of identification, the decision to make the 'ultimate sacrifice' for the nation is largely determined by self-interested considerations rather than a strong sense of national loyalty. This study shows that evolutions of both the concept of national identity and the role of the armed forces have led to the erosion of their previously symbiotic relationship leading to a 'normalisation' of the military profession.

## **Literature Review**

The most far-reaching war in history, the Second World War, ended on May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945 and since then no global war has taken place. However, there have been less than thirty days without a war taking place somewhere in the world (Kende in Jackson, 1997, p. 9). International relations are still largely characterised by violent conflicts, thus emphasizing the key role of armed forces as foreign policy tools. Recent decades have seen unprecedented levels of integration that go beyond mere economic cooperation, especially in Europe and multilateralism has surged to the top of many countries' foreign policy agendas. Yet despite extensive international military cooperation under the auspices of the UN and NATO, armed forces have remained national in character. The nation-state remains the primary provider of military force. Soldiers still fight for their country and as a result armed forces are still inextricably linked to notions of national identity present in today's society (Mileham in Anderson and Seitz, 2006, p. 37). With the majority of military personnel being volunteer professional forces, fighting for one's nation has been transformed from being a civil duty to being a conscious decision involving an evaluation of one's identity or identities.

There is no doubt that over the last 65 years, the structure and purpose of most armed forces have undergone significant modifications in order to adapt to changes in global politics (Burk in Caforio, 2003, p. 125). Similarly, national identity is a fluid concept made up of numerous different elements which are constantly reinterpreted. This literature review focuses on the interplay between identity and (the construction of) national history - both concepts aim to secure the survival of the supremacy of the nation-state: "Just as memory and identity support one another, they also sustain certain subjective positions, social boundaries, and of course power" (Gillis, 1994, p. 4). Beginning with a brief outline of the conception of national identity that forms the basis of this thesis, I then proceed to examine the relationship between national identity and the armed forces as a national

institution in Germany and the Britain. Here, special focus is placed on one key aspect of national identity – the way history influences a nation’s attitudes towards its armed forces.

### *The Composition of National Identities*

It is first necessary to note however that in addition to an imagined historical continuity that produces national pride, there are other elements that contribute to the formation of national identity as social reality. Smith considers the composition of national identity to be a certain “territorial boundedness, a shared nature of myths of origin and historical memories, a common bond of mass, standardised culture [and language], a common territorial division of labour and mobility and a unified system of common legal rights and duties” (1992, p. 60). Furthermore, Anderson stresses the importance of a centralised education system and the mass media in representing the envisaged epitome of the nation and ensuring the propagation of homogenous cultural values (1983, p. 7). This is accompanied by a “decentring and suppression of other ‘non-national’ identities” (Kosher in Gillis, 1994, p. 220) which effectively unites the people of one nation against outsiders (Colley, 1992, p. 311). It is a pastiche of all these elements that contributes to the formation and preservation of national identity making it “fundamentally multi-dimensional” (Smith, 1991, p. 14). This also implies that at any point in time, each element may be modified, (re-)activated or discarded depending on internal and external circumstances.

“On a general level, the term national identity describes the basically positive, subjectively important emotional bond with a nation” (Tajfel and Turner in Blank and Schmidt, 2003, p. 290). This statement asks for a clarification of the much (mis-)used term ‘nation’. A nation is constituted by “an actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold common. A nation is a grand solidarity, constituted by the sentiment of sacrifices which one has made and those that one is disposed to make again” (Renan in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994, p. 17). Anderson further clarifies that a nation is a community in which one will never know or meet most

fellow citizens (1983, p. 6). Such a positive identification with the nation does not occur on its own however. Renan's definition of the term 'nation' dating back to 1882 indicates that the rise of the nation-state as governing power necessitated the development of a new form of community identification perceived as intrinsic due to the imagining of a shared past, present and future. It can therefore be deduced that, as the desire to live with strangers and the will to fulfil civil duties imposed by the state has to be generated, a state's national identity is a modern construct and an ongoing process. It can "change and shift in time, even in the course of quite short periods" (Hobsbawm, 1990, p. 11) depending on how it is conveyed. The importance of a common legacy is also emphasised by Fulbrook (1999, p. 17) and many argue that although a state as a legal entity might be able to exist, every nation requires an identity grounded in an interpretation of history in order to function (Sheehan, 1992 and Wallace, 1991). A feeling of sharing the same past is achieved through the process of, as Eder remarks, "getting one's history wrong" (1994, p. 8), and as Wallace points out through creating myths that "look back to a golden age, a heroic era which shaped the national character" (1991, p. 70). According to Fulbrook, it is in particular the "stories of battles fought and victories wrought, of bitter defeats and returns to fight another day, of national heroes and martyrs who played a role in the struggle to bring the nation to its current moment in the present" that form a nation (1999, p. 233).

#### *The Impact of Changing Social Structures and Values on the Concept of National Identity*

A question that arises is whether trends of recent decades such as globalisation and multilateralism have eroded the importance of the nation-state and thus also rendered national identity rather superfluous. Ther argues that previously unchallenged dominance of the nation-state has undoubtedly been brought into question as supranational integration has taken on an unprecedented magnitude (2008, p. 45). He then goes on to argue nevertheless that since the nation-state has become politically disempowered, "belonging to a nation and hence having a

national history seems to be of increasing relevance” (p. 48). This is backed up by Smith, who argues that people will always strongly identify with their nation as “cosmopolitan globalism is deracinated and lacking communal memory” (in Bell, 2003, p. 70). Hall believes that globalisation has triggered a strengthening of identities within the nation-state as well as an amplification of transnational relations (1993, p. 354). While I would agree that national identity (and also regional identities) have maintained their significance and in some countries have experienced resurgence, the influence in relation to the impact of national identity on the armed forces has yet to be fully explored. It is necessary to consider the influence that global trends, such as individualisation and the diversification of identities, have on a person’s willingness to risk their life for something they identify with. Janowitz argued in 1978 that “feelings of national identity remain deep-seated and are readily mobilised in periods of tension and crisis” (in Kumar, 2000, p. 125). There is no doubt that in times of difficulty, there is a heightened sense of ‘community spirit’. But, already in 1989, Burk affirmed that rising “hedonistic concerns” institute a certain reluctance to perform military service (p. 69). Such a line of argument would imply that a dilution of identities has taken place which affects people’s attitudes towards duties and sacrifice. This thesis aimed to test such a hypothesis.

### *The Importance of the Armed Forces as a National Institution - The British Case*

In 1993 Hedetoft states that “in the discourse surrounding national identity, death, suffering and sacrifice in the service of one’s country occupy a central position” (p. 281). As these associations stand in sharp contrast to a perceived growing reluctance to make such a sacrifice, it is crucial to determine the place that the army as a national institution holds in society. In order to be able to undertake a thorough investigation of current public attitudes towards the armed forces and their interactions with national identity, a country-specific examination of notions of history, memory and the armed forces as a national institution is required. I begin with a discussion of Britain and its armed forces. Although their relationship is arguably less exceptional than that of Germany and the

Bundeswehr, it nevertheless has a complex national identity. Questions concerning the interplay of various national identities within the Britain have previously been considered in great detail (Hall, Kumar, Ward) but the focus here will be on an overarching British identity in relation to the British armed forces. In terms of international relations, it seems that Britain is a nation that is trying to retain a strong sense of national identity. This view is underlined by a survey carried out by Dandeker which establishes that “when asked what makes them proud, after their families and nationality, British people opted for the more traditional British institutions such as the Royal Family and the armed forces” (2003, p. 494). Traditions are crucial in creating boundaries between in and out groups as well as in establishing a sense of historical continuity. The fact that the armed forces are frequently mentioned reveals that British national identity remains deeply interwoven with its military history.

Hedetoft observes that a large fraction of British national identity is made up of “myths and symbols related to war or warlike situations” (1993, p. 283). This is further illustrated by the fact that Britain has not been invaded for quite some time. It emerged as a victor from the Second World War having liberated Europe from Nazism, a fact which has reinforced the public’s pride in its military. This generally positive interpretation of military history means that part of British national identity today is still a belief in a superior “moral quality of Anglo-Saxon institutions” (Wallace, 1991, p. 72). Indeed Wallace even goes so far as to say that because of the trend towards a diversification of identity, pride in this dimension of national tradition and foreign policy may have become the “only remaining source for unreserved national pride; the only aspect of national identity with which all the people of these islands now readily identify” (ibid, p. 74). Despite conscription being abandoned in 1960, being attached to the armed forces arguably remains a vital component of ‘being British’. Thatcher cleverly used memory not only to secure her power, but also to incite support for Britain’s military intervention during the Gulf crisis of the early 90s when she alluded to the British people’s courageous, resolute and competent character in times of war (Hedetoft, 1993, p. 284) as well as

Britain's "national identity and ancient traditions and heritage, which have done so much for the world" (in Wallace, 1991, p. 70). While these statements are still being used today, they were made almost twenty years ago and their validity has been overshadowed recently. Britain's involvement in the highly contested military intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq has brought into question the strong belief in its ostensibly long-established morality. This is reinforced by a seemingly missing (or at least only indirect) link to the defence of national sovereignty which is normally legitimised by national identity (ibid, p. 68). It becomes obvious that in the case of Britain, there is no doubt that the relationship between national identity and military action is reciprocal and the two intensify one another (Posen in Caforio et al, 2006, p. 118), but at the same time one has to expect a more contemporary, critical approach by the British public towards its armed forces. As this case study covers material from the years immediately after the beginning of 'The War on Terror', it attempts to suggest whether the armed forces have had to modify their marketing approaches in line with growing scepticism about the British military's moral judgements.

#### *The Importance of the Armed Forces as a National Institution - The German Case*

Whereas the British nation successfully relied on its armed forces to defend its sovereignty twice in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the German military was largely responsible for the devastation and misery experienced by large parts of Europe including Germany during both world wars. As Hoffmann and Longhurst remark, it is indisputable that past military experiences weigh heavily not only on foreign policy making today (1999, p. 145), but also on understandings of Germany's national identity. The country had been a relatively young nation-state still in the process of generating a sense of national identity when Hitler came to power in 1933. Hence one of the most important preconditions of national identity, according to Smith and Fulbrook a shared legacy of the past, was rather limited. Instead, claims to moral and cultural superiority constituted a vital part of the national rhetoric. These were however eradicated through the extraordinary crimes committed by the Germans

(Sheehan, 1992, p. 165). It is therefore not surprising that von Dohanyi comes to the conclusion that “nothing defines [...] German identity so profoundly as the legacy of the Holocaust” (in Barnard, 2008, p. 173). This complete defeat not only made any identity based on the glorification of previous war efforts impossible, it also resulted in an erosion of Germany’s sense of identity with and loyalty to the nation-state (Arrington, 2002, p. 531). Two separate armies were established after the division of Germany. Yet due to the fact that German unification resulted in the dissolution of the East German ‘National People’s Army’ into the Bundeswehr, and also led to the controversial and complex discarding of East German military history (Danyel in Mueller and Volkmann, 1999, p.1139-1149), the focus here will be on West Germany.

In 1946, the Social Democratic Party’s Schmidt announced that Germany “never wanted to send [its] sons into the barracks again” (Frevert, 2004, p. 260) and at the time of the “Petersberg agreements” Adenauer publicly declared that there were no plans to discuss rearmament (Granieri, 2003, p. 37). These statements reflected the government’s complete rejection of militarism as a component of German identity triggering the creation of a societal climate in which “all things military [...] were despised at worst or awarded second-class status at best” (Arrington, 2002, p. 536). That history is constantly being reinterpreted and activated in the national interest however becomes obvious when considering the state of West German society during the establishment of the Bundeswehr in 1955. With strong pacifist tendencies amongst the public, even pointing out that a new German army was needed in order to help the Western world contain the threat from the Soviet Union did not stop mass protests taking place. But the government went ahead with its plans and created the Bundeswehr, which was not only designed to deter rather than fight wars, but also “represented a crucial break with the past” (Hoffmann and Longhurst, 1999, p. 146-7). Although former Wehrmacht personnel made up a large part of the initial intake, the Bundeswehr was to be completely different from its predecessor in that it was to be closely embedded in society through the concept of the ‘civilian in uniform’ – a soldier who would not blindly follow orders but think

about his actions (Kuemmel, 2009, p. 16). The installation of new West German armed forces was accompanied by a shift in the way victims of the Second World War were commemorated; with the arising rearmament debate public mourning of Wehrmacht soldiers started to be encouraged (Kuemmel and Leonhard, 2005, p. 517) and an “overarching tendency to extricate the Wehrmacht from the historical context of National Socialism and to present the war as an ahistorical fate” emerged (Plowman, 2010, p. 223). Efforts to legitimise a new military in West Germany stood in marked contrast to blaming the army for the atrocities that took place under Hitler. However, decades later, Germany’s persisting troubled relationship with its armed forces and the associations still drawn with its Third Reich equivalent became apparent in the way the Bundeswehr dealt with the “Wehrmachtsausstellung” [The Army Exhibition] during the 1990s. The ‘Wehrmacht’ had previously been bestowed a sort of victim status, but this photo exhibition for the first time openly revealed the extent to which the German Army had been involved in the atrocities of World War Two. It showed German soldiers involved in executions of so-called ‘partisans’, Jews and the civilian population of occupied countries (Niven, 2002, p.143-174). Despite the narrative of training citizen soldiers, the Bundeswehr would not allow its members to visit the exhibition in uniform and prohibited participation in public discussions (Nolan, 2001, p. 121).

There is no doubt that the end of the Second World War marked a caesura in Germany’s national identity and has ever since deeply affected the way Germans feel about their nation (Berger, 1997, p. 39). Worsthorne uses the word ‘lobotomised’ to describe post-war Germany (in Wallace, 1991, p. 73). For a long time, it was claimed that national identity was repressed and an SPD politician even disclosed that the government had actively tried to create a sort of anti-nationalism that made the nation-state the source of all evil in German history (Berger, 1994, p. 57). A state however needs its citizens to feel they belong to an ‘imagined community’ and so other ways to develop pride needed to be explored. Habermas purported Germany should resort to constitutional patriotism and be proud of the way in which it “succeeded in ensuring a lasting combination of both

democracy and stability for the first time in Germany's turbulent history" (Fulbrook, 1999, p. 186). How to incorporate the experiences of the Second World War into German identity was extensively debated during the late 1980s and remains an omnipresent topic of discussion in German society. Public national pride however has only really manifested itself in the shape of being proud of German exports and national sports teams and Arrington observes that even in the twenty-first century, most German people do not know the words to the national anthem (2002, p. 544). Being proud of the armed forces and ceremoniously mourning the deaths of soldiers, as is the case in many neighbouring countries, continues to be absent from the public sphere. Instead, Haltiner and Klein believe that a denationalisation and collectivisation of traditional military tasks (in Werkner, 2003, p. 18) has been taking place ever since the rise of multilateralism following 1945. Germany is deemed to be the 'catalyst' of European integration and Gaus deduces that this is being utilised to fill the vacuum in Germany's national identity (in Hedetoft, 1993, p. 287). Indeed, surveys have shown that identification with Europe amongst Germans is considerably higher than in other European nations (Kriesi et al., 2004, p. 237). However, as Germany's economic and political strengths have constantly grown, so has its confidence. Habermas argues that "a nation with a strongly developed self-image or identity will behave in a much more consistent and forceful way than one which does not have such an identity" (in Kriesi et al., 2004, p. 268) which supports Hedetoft's claim that Germany is starting to manifest the need for "a 'full', 'normalised' national identity" (1993, p. 288). Fulbrook is of the opinion that a lot of young people in Germany are "simply fed up with having the Holocaust rammed down their throats. They simply want to be allowed to be normal, unburdened by the immense legacies of the national past" (in Barnard, 2008, p. 173). As with Britain, a trend towards a shift away from previous conceptions of national identity in relation to the Second World War can be noted. While Britons have become less tolerant of their nation's military actions, Germans although far from accepting the armed forces as part of German identity, increasingly acknowledge the Bundeswehr's role. Recruitment efforts have only reached German mass media in recent years and the research

carried out will indicate the extent to which attitudes towards the armed forces are still dominated by negative interpretations of national identity and a refutation of militarism.

## **Research Methodology**

Employing appropriate research methods to carry out empirical research is crucial and largely determines the quality of the findings. In order to accurately investigate the case study of armed forces TV recruitment adverts in Britain and Germany in relation to notions of national identity, a number of different research methods were used for this thesis. This chapter gives an insight into why and how they were applied, considers problems and obstacles that had to be overcome and discusses advantages and disadvantages that became apparent during this study.

“The formation and transmission of group standards, values, attitudes and skills are accomplished largely by means of verbal communication” (Cartwright in Kassirjian, 1977, p. 8). While most media critics would argue that verbal messages that are broadcast visually have a great impact on society, the precise impact is still being contested which is why my research is centred around a number of television adverts (and one radio advert). There is a brief examination of the TV advert as a mass medium and its role in cultural research. Content analysis is used to explore themes and dissect the recruitment strategies of the British and German armed forces. This method is complemented by two questionnaires. The first one is employed to record the target group’s attitudes towards national identity and the armed forces. The members of the target group are then shown the recruitment advertisements of their country and are subsequently asked to fill in a second questionnaire which logs their impressions of the commercials. In order to render this study as comprehensive and detailed as possible, this quantitative approach is followed by a qualitative analysis which consists of a number of in-depth interviews with people who have either joined the armed forces recently or who are now retired.

Already in 1977 it was apparent that due to the “vast integration of television into our daily lives, and its potential for shaping viewers’ behaviour” (Resnik and Stern, p. 50), television adverts were a type of text that needed to be considered when investigating notions of national identity. As

adverts can be regional, national and international in nature, they have to be constructed in different ways in order for the viewer to identify with them and consequently be able to influence his/her behaviour. As Hall notes, “visual signs and images, even when they bear a close resemblance to the things to which they refer, are still signs: they carry meaning and must be interpreted” (1997, p. 19). This interpretation of TV commercials puts their content into context and thus reinforces their validity. Furthermore, there is a constant cycle of re-validating norms and behaviour as adverts “both reflect and generate certain representations; they create and reproduce culture” just as consumers also “consume and produce meanings” (Pickering, 2008, p. 72). It is on the other hand also obvious that there is a certain element of escapism present in the majority of advertisements that triggers aspirations and longing for self-actualisation through the advertised product. When analysing the recruitment adverts, one has to keep in mind that they are constructed in a rather similar way to ‘normal’ adverts in the way that they try to sell a great product that will enhance one’s life; i.e. arguably they are not ‘mini-documentaries’ giving you an authentic insight into the profession. Whether that would ethically be more appropriate for a job that potentially involves killing and being killed is a question worth addressing.

#### *Content Analysis as a Tool for the Examination of Adverts*

Content analysis was chosen to examine the primary sources of this case study because it is a “systematic, objective and quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 1). Moreover, as it is often in the form of themes that issues, values and beliefs and attitudes are discussed (Kassarjian, 1977, p. 12), it is this method that best accommodates a detailed thematic deconstruction of the chosen recruitment advertisements. Neuendorf makes the valid point that any human inquiry is essentially subjective (2002, p. 11). As a researcher, one tries to adhere to Durkheim’s principle of attempting to abandon all preconceptions (in Seale, 1998, p. 254), but bias can never be completely ruled out when analysing media content. Content analysis is a quantitative method through which large amounts of data are normally studied. It has to be noted that due to the

scope of this thesis, only a relatively small number of adverts were considered. It is therefore inadvisable to make broad generalisations from the findings. To counteract these shortcomings to some extent however, where available, sources were chosen randomly from different campaigns over the last five years to increase representability. I decided to use three advertisements from each country for a number of reasons. Firstly it has to be said that the number of Bundeswehr adverts, both on radio and TV, is very limited. In fact, to my knowledge there have only been three television commercials (of which two are almost identical) and a number of radio commercials. This, and a striving for variety, is why I have included a radio advert in the German selection. Following on from that, I wanted an equal amount of sources from both countries. This reasoning was accompanied by further practical considerations. As the clips were to be shown during school lessons, time constraints made three advertisements an appropriate number. All visual material was accessed through Youtube and the radio advert could be downloaded from the marketing agency's website. As content analysis is the study of the message itself rather than the communicator or the audience (Kassarjian, 1977, p. 9), it is very interesting to juxtapose these findings with those from the survey carried out with the target audience. This allows for an assessment of the extent to which the commercials generate and reinforce societal values and how they affect the relationship between national identity and the armed forces.

#### *Quantitative Logging of Opinions and Attitudes Using Surveys*

A large part of this study consists of a survey carried out with young people in Britain and Germany. As an "important goal of survey research is to understand the choices people make between alternative courses of action or objects" (Krosnick, 1999, p. 555), this method was selected to obtain a reasonably large sample of opinions and attitudes. As Gee points out, the recruitment material produced by the armed forces is primarily aimed at children and adolescents (2007, p. 2). Due to the focus on recruitment adverts, I chose to study people who are in the process of making career

choices and thus conducted my study with the age group of 16 to 24. There were two questionnaires: one to be filled in before watching the advertisements to note down existing attitudes towards the armed forces, the nation and national identity; the purpose of the second questionnaire was to measure impressions received from watching the commercials. Their standardised anonymous design consisted of open-ended and closed questions as well as rankings. This combination of different question styles provided some concise and easy-to-analyse components. It presented the respondents with a more stimulating approach enabling them to freely express their opinions without having to modify them in order to fit fixed categories thus “more closely representing actual attitudes” (Fowler, 2002, p. 91). Striking a balance between the different methods was key. Although time constraints and the possibility of respondents not volunteering to write down individual answers had to be taken into consideration, relying solely on closed questions would have severely limited findings. Ranking questions were employed as research has shown that they achieve higher quality data than ratings, as they pre-empt nondifferentiation which is common amongst less educated respondents (Krosnick, 1999, p. 556). A prevailing survey technique is to administer the same questionnaire identically to all respondents (ibid, p. 542) which, considering the bilinguality of this study, was as closely adhered to as possible.

My original target was to perform this survey with about 100 respondents from each country and obtain an even coverage of the age group. Furthermore, I felt it was important for the validity of my study for the pupils to come from various social backgrounds. I therefore arranged sessions in both secondary schools and sixth-form colleges. In Germany, I chose two different types of schools (one Hauptschule and one Gymnasium) as the separation of students according to abilities is still widely considered to also reflect different social standings (Solga and Wagner in Becker et al., 2003, p. 195). In Britain, sessions were carried out at a school regarded to be in a socially ‘well-off’ area as well as in a neighbourhood deemed, according to ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods - a geodemographic information system based on consensus data) to be rather

poor. A trial session revealed that the survey would take approximately an hour and although there were no major problems with arranging the sessions, obstacles such as holidays, exams and work experience significantly decreased the number of respondents. As a result I lowered my target to 75 and at the same time decided to use the internet as another medium to carry out my study. I created a website with links to the advertisements as well as online survey forms which would then be forwarded to me anonymously. I sent information on how to access this website to the teachers that I had worked with before and asked them to pass it on to their colleagues and their pupils within the relevant age groups. Furthermore, I emailed some further education colleges with the same request to cover the whole age range. This approach ensured that I would have an adequate amount of responses that would still sufficiently reflect people's opinions.

#### *The Use of In-Depth Interviews as a Qualitative Research Method*

Despite qualitative elements, the survey largely produced quantitative data which at times lacked depth. Weiss remarked in 1968 that "qualitative data are apt to be superior to quantitative data in density of information, vividness, and clarity of meaning" (p. 344-345). By using a qualitative approach for the last part of the study, I tried to gain more detailed insights into people's opinions. As the format of semi-structured interviews enables the researcher to elaborate on certain issues (May, 2001, p. 123), I was able to go into more detail about subjects that occurred during the analysis of survey questionnaires. For this two interviewees from each country were chosen. In Germany conscription has existed since 1956. Although conscientious objection is common, being drafted is not the same as choosing to join which is why one recent recruit as well as a volunteer from 1957 were interviewed. When conducting interviews however, one has to keep in mind one's own positionality. In these circumstances, it is extremely difficult not to express personal opinions which might influence the respondent's answers (Seale, 1998, p. 127). At the same time findings are always limited by the amount of information people are willing to disclose about themselves. This is also

true for the survey component of this study. Although all three approaches have their respective weaknesses, previous research experience has shown that this combination satisfactorily offsets these.

## **Two Contemporary Recruitment Campaigns: An Analysis of Their Content**

This chapter investigates the values, themes and methods employed by the armed forces to gain new recruits through advertisements. A detailed analysis of the text and images of the three commercials from Britain and Germany will be followed by a comparison of the way these adverts are constructed in the two countries and what role constructions of national identity play in this process. “Only a tiny proportion of the population has any direct experience of the army as it is today, so their images of it are even more liable to be influenced by press and television as well as thoroughly outmoded stereotypes” (Ball in Strachan, 2000, p. 66). The media have a significant role in directing public perceptions of the military. Conversely, the armed forces utilise this power by using it as a recruitment tool in the form of commercials. Adverts affect consumer behaviour, in particular children who are less critical when it comes to the content (Dotson and Hyatt, 2000, p. 228, Dertouzos et al.). The development of the ability to understand persuasion tactics used in adverts partially depends on changes in information-processing abilities which occur during childhood and adolescence (Boush et al, 1994, p. 166) making younger viewers more likely to accept values, attitudes and norms supplied in adverts as true and desirable. It is thus vital to analyse commercials aimed primarily at young adults and which encourage them to choose a career that could potentially involve risking their lives.

Although most European armies have significantly downsized since the end of the Cold War, in 2009 there was a shortfall of 5030 troops in the British Armed Forces (MoD 2009) and recruitment is also becoming more difficult in Germany, as reflected in the Bundeswehr’s move to lower entry requirements in 2008 (Bundeswehr magazine “Innere Fuehrung”, August 2008). Suitable military recruits are on the decline due to various factors such as growing obesity, and a growing pleasure-seeking society (MoD 2006, p. 32). This problem is exacerbated by mounting public criticism of the way missions are carried out by the armed forces in both countries and has led to an intensification

of their recruitment efforts. The two armed forces however have rather different approaches that need to be explored briefly in order to contextualise the adverts.

### Recruitment in the British Armed Forces

The British military have relied on an all-volunteer force since 1962. Recruitment in the twenty-first century has embraced technological advancements and the new media. It regularly takes place in form of television recruitment campaigns, advertisements in the print media and an interactive component has recently been added in which you can play out missions online. In 2005, £27.8 million was spent on advertising alone (Gee, 2007, p. 18). This is accompanied by over 150 careers centres all over the country and recruiters visiting schools. Furthermore, in 2009, three 'showrooms' opened their doors to anyone aged between nine and ninety in London shopping centres, enabling the public to virtually experience what being a soldier is like as well as getting their hands on real equipment. These centres are supposed to help eradicate people's misconceptions about the profession (Thomas, 2009), but their openings were met with a substantial amount of criticism and deemed by many to be inappropriate for London's (gun) crime-ridden inner city boroughs.

Gee observes that efforts to recruit younger people to the armed forces are "intensifying and diversifying, particularly among those below the recruitment age" (2007, p. 2) – which is sixteen and the lowest in Europe. This is supported by a statement from the head of the service's recruitment strategy declaring that their new approach is based on early exposure which may start with a "seven-year-old boy seeing a parachutist at an air show and thinking : "That looks great". From then the army is trying to build interest by drip, drip, drip" (in Armstrong, 2007). As well as aiming recruitment strategies at a younger audience, observations that the armed forces traditionally recruit people from a poorer social backgrounds and low educational abilities (Dandeker and Strachan, 1993, p. 282) are reinforced by figures released by the MoD: on average, "army recruits have 0.9 of a GCSE at grade A-C" (in Gee, 2007, p. 15). Data obtained through the Freedom of Information Act

revealed that in Wales, visits to schools in the most deprived areas were 50% more likely than visits to less deprived ones (ibid, p. 16). Although the MoD maintains that recruitment takes places across all sections of society, thus making the target group anyone in the process of choosing a career path, it is important to keep these trends in mind when interpreting findings from this analysis.

Although the three British advertisements were deliberately chosen from different campaigns covering a number of years, within these campaigns they were picked randomly. The Air Assault Infantry advert was part of a recruitment campaign titled “Forward as One” first shown at the beginning of 2006 and aimed at raising infantry recruitment numbers which had fallen short by 17% in the previous year (Gee, 2007, p. 17). The advert is made up of quickly changing images depicting ‘typical’ soldiers’ activities. The thirty second clip commences with soldiers disembarking from a moving plane and running towards their target. The scene then cuts to the soldiers storming a building and throwing an explosive into a room while shots are being fired. These images are accompanied by the narrator describing what one experiences as a member of the infantry as well as the difficult conditions that soldiers seemingly excel in: “For the action, for excitement, for adventure. Under pressure, under fire, under any circumstances”. The social aspect of being in the armed forces is highlighted following a transition shot of a soldier jumping out of a plane and landing in the middle of a nightclub and interacting with friends. Simultaneously, one hears the words “For the fun, for the



friendships, for the Friday nights”. Then, with the opening of a door, the scene merges into a shot of the inside of a military aircraft and follows a group of soldiers jumping out and landing in a field with their weapons out and promptly running towards what looks like a battlefield. While the audience watches these images, the narrator concludes his appeal by stressing the manner in which soldiers work together: “With pride, with professionalism, with honour. As a unit, as a team. Through it all, together – Forward as One”.

There are certain themes that become prominent when watching the adverts that have implications not only for the perception of national identity, but also gender and ethnicity. It seems there is a fluid transition between the different aspects of being in the infantry – soldiers work and have fun together and as a result, they become an accomplished team that takes on challenges with ease. This is further underlined by the voice-over which is comprised of a sequence of nouns that accompanies the three parts of the advert. Whereas the scenes merge smoothly, nouns rather than full sentences are employed to create a less flowing contrast and thus adding impact to what is being said. By bringing together terms that are usually considered to be juxtaposed such as fun and professionalism, the advert tries to communicate the scope of the military profession. At the same time, it attempts to emphasise the importance of friendship and team work by repeatedly showing groups of soldiers and stressing their unity at the end of the advert. Themes of friendship, adventure and challenge dominate throughout the commercial.

The Royal Marines advert with the slogan “It’s a State of Mind” was first broadcast in 2007 and was meant to portray the mental qualities required for the job and to instil confidence in potential recruits about ‘having what it takes’ to join the Royal Marines (taken from agency website [wcrs.com](http://wcrs.com)). The advert starts with a close-up of an aggressive-looking man of Asian origin shouting in a foreign language and then zooms out to show a beach where a battle has seemingly just taken place. One can see a helicopter surrounded by fire and a few troops running around, while the person the viewer immediately identifies to be ‘the enemy’ is still shouting and shooting his gun.



A voice seems to be acting as a translator until the hostile man storms off and it is revealed that the narration is instead the inner monologue of a marine who had been camouflaged behind a fallen tree all along. He joins his comrades and follows the enemy into the unknown forest. The advert ends with shots of the marines exploring the jungle with their weapons ready to be fired. This advert is constructed in a slightly different way in that it focuses on one aspect of the profession rather than the various components of a soldier's life. It depicts a tense scene in an exotic location. The images closely resemble those of an action film aiming to create excitement and tension amongst the audience and the use of a subjective camera and quickly changing camera angles make the viewer feel part of the action. The inner monologue which starts with: "I am your worst nightmare. I have conquered fear" is aimed at the soldier's enemies and serves to highlight the tough nature of marines and the fact that intensive training has made them highly skilled. The fact that one of the job's requirements is to put one's life on the line is rendered less off-putting by stressing the strong bond that seemingly exists amongst marines. Indeed, the word 'brothers' is used to refer to comrades: "My brothers will lay down their lives for me as I will for them" creating a strong sense of group identity. Not only does it contribute significantly to their motivation, as other military sociological studies have shown, the bonds of camaraderie within the institution also help recruits to "endure the tough pre-deployment training, master precarious situations and permanently bear risking one's own life" (Tomforde in Kuemmel et al, 2009, p. 50). Furthermore, it generates a strong

sense of community amongst soldiers which is implied to be as strong as the bond between family members.

The third and most recent advert is taken from the army's "Start Thinking Soldier" campaign which was launched in 2009 and combined TV commercials with an interactive online game. The commercial is set in a desert-like location that is not dissimilar to Afghanistan or Iraq. During the advert, the viewer follows a group of soldiers as they advance towards a building that seems to serve as a bomb factory to the enemy. The whole time the camera seems to be held by one of the soldiers



following his commander thus making the viewer very much feel part of the action. When they reach their target, the leader turns around and directly addresses the audience and requests advice on how to proceed. Three different scenarios are proposed and the viewer is then encouraged to go online in order to prove that s/he has the skills to make the right decision. The camera angle and interactivity of this commercial make the audience part of the action even more so than the previous two adverts, but they also largely resemble the advertisement campaign that the US army launched in 2002. Following the huge success of first person shooter games such as "Call of Duty", the American army launched its own video 'advergame' called "America's Army". In 2005, 40% of new recruits were reported to have played the game before signing up to the military (Stahl, 2006, p. 125). The interactive "Start thinking Soldier" campaign employs the same technique of blurring reality with

fantasy which Hall describes as the “cross-fertilisation [...] between adult political culture and adolescent popular culture [that serves to] reformulate the play of childhood and the seriousness of adulthood” (2003, p. 13). This combination successfully attracts an ever younger audience and through participation the consumer shifts meaning to himself and thereby defines himself as a “virtual citizen-soldier” (ibid.) and cultural entity (Pennington in Nieborg, 2004, p. 3). The classification of shooter simulations as games and the harmless connotations attached to playing both subordinate critical and ethical questions and glamourise the job of a soldier (Stahl, 2006, 126). By making the potential recruit an active part of the action, the advert utilises themes of adventure and excitement combined with being part of a tightly-knit soldier community in a heightened fashion.

Having closely examined all three adverts, it can be said that themes of strong camaraderie and fun and adventure are consistently used throughout. Weapons and scenes of combat are frequently employed to create tension. No direct references to ‘doing your bit’ for the nation are made. Instead, emphasis is time and again placed on the strong friendships forged on the job by never showing or referring to a soldier on his own. Throughout all three commercials emphasis is placed on the fun and excitement shared by members of this tightly-knit military community. In a society that is becoming increasingly hedonistic and in which as Loeb points out “the common good has become an uncommon concern” (in Morgan, 2003, p. 376), these adverts suggest that reference to fighting for one’s nation-state is increasingly becoming more marginal as a recruitment tactic.

As with other product advertisements, the British military recruitment commercials do not only promote a particular job, they also advertise a certain way of life by depicting an idealised soldier who is strong, heroic and selfless (Fancher, 2008, p. 125). Accordingly, the dangers of the job are to a large extent glossed over or downplayed as bravery which is seemingly self-evident amongst members of the armed forces. Furthermore, neither members of ethnic minorities (except as ‘the

enemy') nor women are represented in any of the adverts. Although only three adverts were investigated, this suggests a rather narrowly-defined image of the ideal recruit.

### *The Bundeswehr's Approach to Recruitment*

The German Bundeswehr has a rather different approach to recruitment. After the defeat of Germany in World War Two, "blame and mistrust played a large part in societal-military relationships for many years" (Arrington, 2002, p. 532) and it can be argued that the public remains rather sceptical (Liese, 2009, p. 18). Although the formation of the Bundeswehr was portrayed as a clean break from the Wehrmacht, Germans were vehemently against its creation (Maull, 2000, p. 3). The extent to which this had an impact on the Bundeswehr's image even relatively recently becomes obvious in a statement made by a Bundeswehr lieutenant in 1993: "Perhaps Germans should finally consider whether it is really fair to make an institution, and with it every single member, the whipping boy and scapegoat for things that happened half a century ago" (in Arrington, 2002, p. 538-9). The West German army was formed solely for Cold War defensive purposes, yet has more recently taken on a more active role in peace-keeping missions. Despite its changing purpose and most European armies transforming their armed forces into all-volunteer professional armies, the Bundeswehr has retained its conscription service. This set-up is deemed to not only tie civilians to their nation-state, but also bridge the gap between society and the military (Frevert, 2001, p. 11). Over the last decade however, the number of men carrying out military service has dropped by almost two-thirds and out of approximately 254000 members of the armed forces, only 68000 are conscripts (bundeswehr.de). Although this trend has caused a step up in recruitment efforts, expenditure of roughly €15.2 million between 2005 and 2009 is still far less than that of the British armed forces which spent £27.8 million in 2005 alone. Not only is the budget much smaller, it was also spent rather differently. Although almost half was spent on television and radio advertisements, there have only been three TV/ cinema commercials and various radio advertisements. Instead the

Bundeswehr has numerous recruitment projects such as the yearly competitions “Bundeswehr Olympix” and “Bundeswehr Musix”, as well as a big band that tours the country and plays at local festivals and a summer camp called “Bundeswehr Adventure Games” for youths. Furthermore, since 2006 the “Karrieretreff Bundeswehr”, a mobile career centre equipped with climbing walls and flight simulators has been touring the country. All these events are completely free. That the public remains rather apprehensive about the Bundeswehr and its overt recruitment efforts is demonstrated by a protest at a careers fair in Bad Oeynhausen in May 2010. Bundeswehr vehicles were completely covered in red paint, thus prevented from taking part in the exhibition (Indymedia.de). Additionally, a north German government recently (at least temporarily) blocked a proposal that would have seen Bundeswehr officers who had returned from Afghanistan go into secondary schools in order to discuss their work (NDR.de). The following analysis of the adverts will assess the impact of this uneasy relationship on the way adverts are constructed.

The first Bundeswehr advert under discussion was shown in German cinemas at the beginning of 2006 and was one of two commercials promoting a career as a pilot. The advert starts with a close up of a fighter jet and follows its take- off. The words “Two types of first-class training, two challenging jobs, two 37000 horsepower (engines)” are superimposed onto the images and narrated for further impact. Then the audience is shown a sideways shot of the aircraft whilst being informed about the attractive proposition that comes with the job: not only does it offer practical training which runs parallel to a university course, it also provides recruits with a full salary.



The advert ends with the Bundeswehr's slogan "a career with a future", again highlighting the seemingly excellent job prospects. This rather simplistic commercial is constructed around two very prominent themes. The impressive technology and mechanics are supposed to appeal to people fascinated by planes and looking for exciting and challenging careers while the stress on career potential is supposed to attract people looking for a well-paid and sound career. This approach was taken at a time when most German states started charging tuition fees at universities resulting in many young people being put off higher education due to the costs (Spiegel 2007). The viewer is encouraged to believe that a military career is no different from any other profession.

Whereas this advert does not inform the viewer about the tasks this job involves, a television advert released at the beginning of 2010 attempts to cover the variety of professions on offer in the Bundeswehr. The colourful twenty second clip quickly flicks between some of the different positions



in the Bundeswehr: diver, parachutist, military police and a female pilot flying a Eurofighter. The voice-over simply consists of the Bundeswehr slogan "a career with a future" showing that the advert solely relies on its visually stimulating images of apparently very exciting jobs. Without the occasional shot of the Bundeswehr logo and the slogan at the end of the advert, one would have no indication as to the company behind the commercial. No parallels between the jobs in the advert and how they

contribute to the work of the Bundeswehr are drawn. One gets the impression that a career in the armed forces serves only to fulfil one's own aspirations and any considerations that go beyond the personal level are ignored. This notion seems to affirm trends towards a more self-centred society.

The radio commercial is a conversation in which two girls discuss the start of their careers. When one of them announces that she is becoming a pilot, the other one laughs it off by declaring that she is going to be the new pope. After the girl reiterates her intentions, a male voice encourages the listeners to apply for a job online and assures that "while others are still worried about their future, the Bundeswehr offers excellent prospects" through secure, exciting and well-paid apprenticeships and degree courses. Broadcast at a time where apprenticeships are in short supply and university courses are no longer free, this advert too is centred around the notion of a safe and well-paying military career, yet completely neglects to mention the unique nature of the military profession. The Bundeswehr, it is suggested, simply gives young people access to jobs that they would otherwise struggle to obtain.

All three adverts are extremely detached from the Bundeswehr's main purpose which is peacekeeping and defending Germany against external threats ([www.bundeswehr.de](http://www.bundeswehr.de)). No allusions to any sort of combat are made, not a single weapon is shown and at no time is the audience shown the day-to-day activities of an average soldier. Instead, one sees professions that only a minority of people in the armed forces actually hold. The adverts clearly promote the enlisting of women to the armed forces and appeal to those who are struggling to find job opportunities and security in an unstable economic climate. The rather non-militaristic portrayal of army jobs seems to be an attempt at reinforcing long-established ideals of minimal German military interference in conflicts which are still upheld by many Germans (Lehmann, 2005, p. 67). There is no doubt that extensive imagery of soldiers handling weapons would quickly conjure up connotations drawing comparisons between the Bundeswehr and its predecessor the Wehrmacht. With increasing involvement in foreign missions however, this approach seems rather outdated. Another observation that can be made is the fact

that all three adverts demonstrate a complete lack of direct references to any notions of identity. Not only could all three adverts easily be adapted to promote recruitment to another nation's armed forces, but no attempts are made to create any sort of group identity amongst members of the military. As previously mentioned, since 1945 identification with absolutes has occurred only reluctantly and, combined with a growing self-centredness amongst the public, it is reflected in all three commercials. Although the adverts are far removed from any allusions to the nation, it is evident that notions of national identity largely determine the representation of the Bundeswehr in these clips. This takes place in a rather negative way as German history and the way it is remembered prevents the Bundeswehr from using national identity and the commitment to the national cause which might consequently be deepened. The vital role of defending one's nation with one's life is thus reduced to providing outstanding and lucrative career opportunities.

#### *Cross-National Similarities and Differences*

The British adverts too lack overt allusions to nationalism. When comparing them with the German commercials however, one notices a significant point of contrast. A much less contested national identity that is not burdened with the genocide and complete defeat of the Second World War permits a much more confident portrayal of the military. One of the British adverts refers to honour and pride in connection to the military, implying that the armed forces are traditionally a highly regarded institution. Furthermore, while the term 'brother' is used interchangeably with 'colleague' in one commercial primarily highlighting the strong ties in the armed forces, one can also infer from this that anyone eligible to serve - any British citizen - can acquire this status. However, like their German counterparts, the British commercials do not openly promote a sense of national identity. Whilst Germany evidently cannot make use of nationalist themes the way other countries can, British army recruiters seem to choose not to overtly utilise them. Instead, they promote a strong professional military identity. This indicates a trend away from regarding military service as an

obligation to one's nation-state and towards deeming it to be indifferent from other jobs. One might also conclude that theorists such as Segell are right in arguing that a once prevailing sense of national identity which functioned as a motor for fighting and putting one's life at risk is now being replaced by the interplay of numerous individual identities in this decision-making process (in Danks and Kennedy, 2001, p. 124). Moreover, the big difference recruitment advertising expenditure in the two countries is mirrored in the complexity of the commercials. In a time where people are accustomed to seeing high quality visual effects, there is no doubt that the British adverts are a lot more visually impressive and of the same standard as other adverts on television. In comparison, the German adverts, in particular the radio commercial, seem slightly substandard and the next chapter will clarify whether they consequently do not hold the same appeal to a young technology-savvy audience.

## **Surveying the Future: The Effects of the Recruitment Campaigns on Their**

### **Target Audiences**

Having examined themes in the military recruitment adverts as well as putting them into their specific national context, this chapter investigates the perception of these texts by their target groups in both countries. Furthermore, despite only constituting a limited sample of young people's opinions, this survey suggests current attitudes towards identification with the nation-state and the armed forces as a potential employer. The survey consists of two questionnaires – one administered before the screening of the advertisements and one afterwards (see Appendices A and B, p. 73-80). To facilitate a better comparison of findings from the two countries, German and British results from Questionnaire 1 will be analysed and contrasted before proceeding to discuss immediate responses to the commercials from Questionnaire 2.

One key aspect of producing representative data from surveys is to conduct research with a significant number of people from a wide demographic profile. In this case, the aim was to achieve an equal representation of different age ranges within the previously determined target group, as well as an equal gender ratio and a varied sample of educational backgrounds which still largely reflect social class (Archer et al, 2003, p. i). The survey was conducted with 76 British respondents and 80 Germans. In Germany, two different types of schools were chosen (one Gymnasium and one Hauptschule) and in Britain research was carried out at comprehensive schools in two socially diverse areas. The first school is situated in an area of Birmingham classed amongst the "Wealthy Achievers" category according to ACORN while the other school is in an area of Nottingham mostly inhabited by people with "lower incomes" (<http://www.caci.co.uk/acorn2009/CACI.htm> and [www.upmystreet.com](http://www.upmystreet.com)). In order to increase the number of participants, members of the target group were also encouraged to take part through an Internet website. Conducting research with school classes means that the male to female ratio to a large extent cannot be influenced and online

participation, although prompted, occurs completely on the respondents' own accord thus reflecting personal interest in the subject matter rather than demographic variety. As a result, considerably more men than women have taken part in the survey and even though the gender ratio is consequently far from even, it nevertheless represents interest in the armed forces in which women only amount to 9% of military personnel in both countries (see Bundeswehr and MoD websites).

#### *Pre-Existing Attitudes Towards National Identity Amongst Survey Respondents*

The first part of Questionnaire 1 tries to capture existing attitudes towards the nation by asking the respondents about their identity, patriotism, what they believe makes up a national community and the relationship between the citizen and the nation. This analysis will therefore firstly deal with each question in turn.

When asked whether they identify most with a region, their nation or indeed Europe as a supranational entity, 72% of Germans indicated that they primarily identified with Germany, then Europe and lastly with their Bundesland (state). Although national identity seems to prevail, identification with Europe is also strong (with 80% of respondents ranking it 1 or 2), reinforcing observations made by Kriesi et al. in 2004 of a German tendency to seek identification outside of Germany. This is further supported by the subsequent question about whether they are proud to be German which received only a small majority of 56% positive replies. Amongst the reasons for having pride in Germany, participants mention a good quality of life, the economy, sports achievements, a safe and fair society and a strong sense of community. On the other hand, 20% of those who are not proud to be German base their attitude on the argument that one's nationality is a coincidence and thus does not warrant any sort of pride. Furthermore, it becomes obvious that a considerable number of young people consider it to be inappropriate or indeed frowned upon to feel proud due to the devastation and suffering caused by Germany during the Second World War (34% of respondents who were not proud). This is illustrated by one respondent who is of the opinion that national pride

is often equated with National Socialism. More recent issues such as high unemployment, racism and politics also appear to impede feelings of pride.

British responses differ notably from the German responses with 80% declaring they are proud to be British. Various explanations for being proud are given and include high living standards, a sense of community within a multicultural society, Britain's status in the world and its history. Issues preventing a minority of young people from being proud to be British are an untrustworthy government, high levels of crime, social inequality and here too respondents stress that being British is "a matter of chance, nothing to be proud of". For the next question, British participants were given four units of identification to rank. On top of the regional, national and supranational, a distinction between England and Britain is made. Primary identification takes place in almost equal amounts with either England or the respondents' region followed by Britain. Europe is clearly the category young Britons identify with the least which is illustrated by 77% of respondents putting it in fourth place. These findings not only disclose a strong connection with the nation-state in times of increased European integration, but high levels of regional identification also point towards a complex interplay between regionalism and attachments to the nation. That this is a complex issue in Britain is further highlighted by a question asked by the pupils on numerous occasions during the implementation of the survey: "Aren't Britain and England the same?" These results seem to support Hall (1993, p. 354) in arguing that a revival of identities within the nation-state is occurring but conversely a significant supranational identification cannot yet be detected. They also mirror Westle's findings from 2004 revealing the Germans' greater affiliation with Europe and reduced identification with the nation in comparison to their British counterparts (Europe was ranked one by 7% of Britons and 17% of Germans). He observes that in Germany there is a profound "scepticism with respect to intense national feelings whereas many Europeans consider national pride as their natural duty" (in Kriesi et al., p. 181).

When asked what patriotism means to them today, respondents' opinions diverge immensely both within their own country, but also on a cross-national level. German replies demonstrate a mainly negative attitude towards the concept of patriotism. Arrington believes that World War Two has triggered the decomposition of "the sense of identity with and loyalty to the nation-state" in Germany (2002, p. 531). Results confirm that while a large number of respondents believe there is no room for patriotism in German society because of the Second World War, others feel it can only be expressed in a very limited way through support of sports teams and German musicians and actors. There is also a significant amount of those questioned who are of the opinion that patriotism is no longer needed in a modern multicultural society which is experiencing increasing levels of integration into the European community (less than two thirds voiced an opinion on patriotism and out of those about 24% said patriotism should no longer be important in the twenty-first century). It is remarkable that there are only a handful of responses (7%) that advocate a public manifestation of love for one's country, thus highlighting the negative connotations attached to the term.

Despite many declaring they do not consider themselves to be very patriotic, British respondents' interpretation of patriotism in the twenty-first century is more positive. They believe appreciation and respect should be expressed for the safeguarding of free speech, the armed forces and traditions as well as music and sports. Whereas most Germans seem to have some understanding of the term patriotism, the fact that it needed explaining during almost all sessions with British participants could be put down on the one hand to lower levels of education, but also suggests that it plays a less prominent role amongst young Britons.

Next the respondents were asked the question: "What connects you with other British people and gives you the feeling of being British?" They were required to rank five criteria and the purpose was to establish the extent to which certain factors contribute to the imaging of a community. Responses were as follows with the most frequent ranking of each term highlighted:

German Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Traditions</b>	14%	11%	<b>23%</b>	20%	13%	19%
<b>Shared History</b>	10%	9%	13%	15%	19%	<b>34%</b>
<b>Language</b>	<b>31%</b>	25%	18%	11%	10%	5%
<b>Common Characteristics</b>	9%	16%	18%	<b>27%</b>	14%	16%
<b>Consumption of the Same Media</b>	8%	20%	18%	16%	<b>23%</b>	15%
<b>Permanent Residence</b>	<b>29%</b>	23%	15%	9%	18%	6%

The terms listed above are often mentioned when trying to define what factors contribute to national identity. These results suggest that the opinions of the respondents on this matter differ from that of academics. Theorists often argue it is the idea of sharing memories of a common past and traditional values, often through the exposure to the same media which create a sense of community (Anderson, 1983). However, these abstract terms score relatively poorly whereas speaking the same language and living within the borders of a nation are more concrete and, combined with often stereotypical traditions, create a strong differentiation between national citizens and 'others'. Such differences are clearly reflected not only in the ranking of German respondents, but also in the answers of their British counterparts:

British Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Traditions</b>	9%	16%	18%	22%	9%	<b>26%</b>
<b>Shared History</b>	9%	11%	23%	18%	<b>27%</b>	12%
<b>Language</b>	<b>51%</b>	9%	17%	7%	11%	5%
<b>Common Characteristics</b>	7%	11%	<b>26%</b>	23%	20%	13%
<b>Consumption of the Same Media</b>	8%	19%	15%	16%	15%	<b>27%</b>
<b>Permanent Residence</b>	20%	<b>34%</b>	12%	11%	9%	14%

Although a shared history ranks low in both surveys (6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively), one cannot help but notice the consensus amongst a large sections of German respondents on considering this the least important while British responses in relation to the least important factors are a lot more varied. One could argue that this compliments the findings from previous questions which show that still today many young Germans struggle to incorporate a historical aspect into their understanding of national identity due to the overarching legacy of Nazism.

The Place of the Armed Forces in Contemporary Society

At a time where military service is either no longer compulsory or can be avoided through performing civil service, risking your life for your country is more optional than ever before. “An individual’s willingness to transcend himself and to face the prospect of dying for the ‘big solidarity’ is the ultimate touchstone of patriotism and national identity” (Hedetoft, 1993, p. 281). While this degree of devotion to one’s country might have once been high, the surveys from both countries show that young people no longer consider it necessary to qualify as a ‘good citizen’. Indeed only 28% of Germans and 30% of Britons say a citizen should be willing to put their life on the line for their country. In 2003 Morgan surmised that the events of 9/11 might renew “an awareness of

absolute values” and strengthen political authority in the struggle against terrorism (p. 377), thus making people more willing to fight for their country. If this was the case, it seems to have been short-lived. Reasons given by British respondents for this type of sacrifice being unnecessary are various: “I don’t want to die young”, “I don’t feel under any obligation”, “I think primarily of my family and loved ones” and “it often doesn’t happen for the right reasons”. It becomes obvious that young people believe solving conflicts today should not require violence and that missions that are difficult to morally justify have put doubts in people’s minds.

German opinions are fairly similar, but reveal an even more distinct departure from serving a higher institution such as the nation-state. Attitudes include: “My life is too precious to sacrifice it for the country”, “most fellow citizens would not do this for me and I don’t expect them to, so why should I?”, “one should not regard the nation-state too highly” and “no individual should subordinate himself to a greater organisation such as the nation” [my translations]. German responses centre on issues of transparency and the importance of being able to justify one’s actions at all times. This can be linked to long-established fears of a re-emergence of a rather unquestioning society like the one during the Nazi regime. It becomes obvious that identification with one’s surroundings to a large extent takes place on smaller level than the nation-state and military service is no longer what Janowitz calls the “hallmark of citizenship” (in Segal, 1989, p. 10). In its place, individual needs rank much higher than concerns for the welfare of society. On the other hand, respondents from both countries give reasons for a willingness to make this sacrifice. Britons mention “giving something back” and “showing loyalty” in order to protect the nation and one’s “way of life”. Some of the positive German responses included “One should do everything to ensure the welfare of others”, to show support for one’s country and “its culture and traditions”. However, a trend towards a requirement of moral justification was originally observed by Janowitz in 1975 (in Burk, 1989, p. 68) and has, according to the results, since intensified and led many young German people to severely limit their willingness to participate in warfare: “only if you can justify it on moral

grounds” and “only in very extreme cases”. Assuming that most people realise that joining the armed forces is to put your life at risk, the above-mentioned reluctance suggests that the link between one’s identification with the nation and a motivation to join the armed forces is weak at best.

The last section of the first questionnaire investigates attitudes towards the armed forces prior to watching the advertisements. British respondents fall into a number of categories. Many associated the forces with the ‘war on terror’, Afghanistan and the Taliban and Iraq as well as discipline and following orders. Furthermore, war machinery and equipment are frequently mentioned by respondents when asked what they instinctively associate with the armed forces. Parallels to films and computer games such as “Call of Duty” and “Medal of Honour” are also repeatedly drawn. These associations are accompanied by positive connections such as “heroism” and “bravery”, but also comments such as “misery, weapons, death” and “unnecessary pain and suffering”. German respondents’ initial associations with the term ‘Bundeswehr’ such as “war, violence, death and destruction” and “pure waste of money and time” are undoubtedly negative. However, at the same time an awareness of the Bundeswehr’s potential to provide foreign aid and stability becomes obvious and good career prospects are mentioned on numerous occasions. Any indications of pride or honour are, however, not voiced in connection with primary ideas of the armed forces. The varied answers show that while Britons are largely affected by visual media such as news, films and computer games, German participants add another element by comparing the Bundeswehr to its predecessor’s behaviour during World War Two. Furthermore, the diverse opinions are reflected in the relatively even ratio of positive and negative rankings when asked whether being in the armed forces is a highly-regarded job. Britons and Germans concur that people who are willing to sacrifice their lives for their country and work under such tough conditions deserve respect and that bravery as displayed by soldiers is highly-regarded. In contrast, although previous questions illustrated that Britons too are of the opinion that violence should no longer be necessary, their idea of the profession is not as negative as that of some Germans. German responses to the

question what they associate with the Bundeswehr include: “because of the horrible events of the past, Germans have turned their back on soldiers and war” and some directly compare soldiers to machines and murderers. These statements corroborate that even today mistrust and blame play a considerable role in German civil-military relations (Arrington, 2002, p. 532). When asked in which order factors contribute to deciding whether a career in the armed forces is for them, the most common response by British and German participants is as follows:

British Responses

Rank	Factor
1	Salary
2	Challenge and Adventure
3	Reputation
4	Contribution to Society
5	Job Security
6	Training and Progression
7	Current International Climate

German Responses

Rank	Factor
1	Salary
2	Training and Progression
3	Job Security
4	Challenge and Adventure
5	Contribution to Society
6	Reputation
7	Current International Climate

Whereas young British people class “Salary” and “Challenge and Adventure” as the most important factors, Germans consider “Salary” to have the biggest impact on their decision, followed by “Training and Progression”. These results on the one hand support those of a survey carried out in 2007 by Bulmahn on behalf of the Bundeswehr Social Studies Institute. It found that the most influential factors in creating interest in a military career were the challenging and interesting tasks (p. 6-7). On the other hand they show that existential concerns, especially in times of economic instability, play a considerable part in young people’s career choices. Good training and progression as well as job security thus also rate high amongst young Germans. International conflicts and wanting to make a positive contribution to society on the other hand are of less or little importance when considering a career in the Bundeswehr. That current international climate ranks low amongst German respondents is somewhat unexpected and suggests that media coverage of conflicts has

little impact on their career choices. This stands in contrast to the previous study by Bulmahn which established that interest in the armed forces decreased following negative media reports (ibid, p. 33). Although personal benefits are emphasised by the recruitment campaigns in their respective countries, less than 25% of British respondents can imagine pursuing a career in the armed forces. The percentage is slightly higher amongst German participants (27%), which is surprising considering the historically rather negative view of the Bundeswehr that is often accompanied by pacifist tendencies. The fact that young Germans do not consider the Bundeswehr's reputation to have a big impact on their decision-making process despite it being rather problematic highlights the extent to which personal considerations take priority when making career choices.

#### *Reactions to the Military Adverts – Measuring Their Impact on the Target Audience*

The purpose of Questionnaire 2 is to record the reception of the recruitment adverts by their target audience. The issues explored focus on likes and dislikes in relation to the adverts as well as their impact on respondents' attitudes towards the armed forces and their country. Initially respondents are asked about their first impressions. British opinions are split - many participants find the commercials "exciting" and "persuasive" because the profession is depicted as challenging, fun and as requiring strong and brave recruits. The 'action-packed' lifestyle and the 'fun factor' which are advertised on numerous occasions strike a chord with most respondents. But there are also respondents who take a more critical stance. Whereas a substantial part of the target audience (42%) believes they are shown a realistic impression of "what soldiers go through", some note that these adverts "try to manipulate the audience by not showing the reality of war". While soldiers are frequently shown in tense and challenging situations and handling guns, a number of respondents recognise a degree of one-sidedness: "they only show the good parts, but do not mention the real living conditions". Here, a distinction can be drawn between the different levels of education amongst the sample groups. "Exciting" is the most common description used by the younger and less

knowledgeable participants of which only 16% reflect critically on the adverts and illustrating that most critical opinions can be attributed to more educated people. Traditionally, soldiers are mainly recruited from less qualified school leavers (Dandeker and Strachan, 1993, p. 282). There is no doubt that armed forces recruitment is still largely targeted at less educated people and this survey shows that responses to the commercials are indeed more positive amongst this social group.

German impressions of the Bundeswehr recruitment adverts also vary. The attractive starting salary is deemed by most respondents to be the best selling point. Although several respondents positively mention the way the different professions are depicted as “enjoyable” and “exciting”, a rather unfavourable tenor criticising the commercials’ “glorifying” tendencies is prevalent. The radio advert in particular is described as “ridiculous” on various occasions and one person comes to the conclusion that the Bundeswehr should not advertise at all. Germans, too, voice concerns over downplaying the primary function of the profession. Numerous comments are made about the embellished, uninformative nature of the adverts that “centre on salary as a primary incentive”. Furthermore, respondents note that the adverts try to lure in potential recruits with “dream” jobs which only constitute a very small part of the military life. Criticism is directed at “a focus on personal development rather than the opportunity to support one’s own as well as other nations in terms of crisis” which also replaces any references to team work. In contrast, respondents appreciate the absence of allusions to the nation and pride indicating that identification with the nation in military terms remains a contested subject. As a result, only about 50% of German people surveyed find the adverts appealing. 83% of Germans consider the adverts to be unrealistic and due to this large majority, most respondents would like to see a “more detailed and realistic” depiction of the military profession.

The different conceptualisations of the recruitment commercials in Germany and Britain and their unique national contexts have produced varying impressions amongst their audiences. While the Bundeswehr still stresses its non-violent character, Frevert draws attention to the fact that the

British military does not need to legitimise its existence in that way. Instead, it acquires recognition through its ability to carry out politically sanctioned violence in a professional manner (2001, p. 351). Yet there are issues that surveys in both countries share and which explain the effectiveness of the advertisements. Despite slightly more British respondents indicating that their opinion has been changed by the adverts than their German counterparts, less than 20% of all participants declare that their attitude towards the military has been altered. Out of these, 28% reported that it was actually a negative change which considering the fact that advertising is supposed to bring about a positive change in opinion, is relatively high. As Dertouzos et al. Remark however, "marketing literature contains countless studies attempting to quantify the effect of advertising on the sales of consumer products. However, despite a vast literature no strong consensus has emerged" (1989, p. 6). It is difficult to determine whether these percentages are below or above average since the army recruitment adverts differ from normal product advertising in that they directly promote a career choice/change rather than promoting a lifestyle-enhancing product. One also has to take into consideration that although people say they have not been influenced directly by the commercials, an indirect impact might still occur subconsciously.

Additionally, amongst Britons, the modest change in attitude that takes place with regards to affecting their opinion about their armed forces is largely positive while it is divided 50/50 amongst Germans. Reasons given for a positive change following the viewing are different in both countries. On the British side they feature aspects such as the emphasis on the mental and physical demands appealing to people who seek a personal challenge while Germans appreciate the representation of women in the adverts. A lack of change in opinion or indeed a negative change was, in both countries, largely due to the adverts being perceived as unrealistic to varying degrees. Advertising is rarely required to be realistic to be successful, but in this case commercials in both countries are criticised for their unrealistic depiction of the profession and the "absence of significant and informative" content. This shows that when it comes to dangerous professions like that of a soldier,

young adults want to see adverts that talk about the risks. Reports in the media about soldiers getting injured and dying are abundant and, as further supported by participants' proposals for improvement, the audience would prefer a "more realistic portrayal of what it is like to be a soldier" in the form of authentic footage. It thus comes as no surprise that the majority of respondents in both countries think the adverts only partly feature the criteria that they had considered the most important in relation to Questionnaire 1 (see Appendices A, p.73). However, 42% of British respondents compared to only 17% of Germans think the commercials deliver a convincing description of army life. This is surprising since the British adverts resemble action films and video games much more closely than their German equivalents. It suggests that a considerable number of young people have difficulty distinguishing reality from virtual gaming. Ball is of the opinion that the "fantasy film diet" and virtual reality that adolescents are exposed to in today's society have led young people to believe they can "have incredible adventures without real physical dangers" (in Strachan, 2000, p. 65). Not only do participants associate fighter games with the armed forces before seeing the adverts, they also recognise their features in the commercials. As a result, it is this blending of reality and game that seems to work most effectively. The complete absence of references to shooter games by German respondents before and after viewing the adverts illustrates their rather different conception of the German armed forces which focuses on a non-combat role. This shows that efforts to redefine the military as a "humanitarian tool" to allow a more positive reading of military deployment (Hoffmann and Longhurst, 1999, p. 152-3) have been successful to the extent that primary associations are not characterised by violence.

That military recruitment adverts are perceived rather differently in Germany and Britain is further underlined by the fact that less than a quarter of Germans feel the adverts make them proud of the Bundeswehr and even fewer associate the commercials with feeling proud of Germany. Although almost 50% of German participants consider the adverts themselves appealing, the armed forces are still far from being a source of national pride. This in combination with a trend towards a

more self-centred mentality implies that young people separate the armed forces from a national framework, 'normalising' the profession rather than seeing it as a civil duty or obligation. The situation is somewhat different in Britain where two-thirds of respondents class the adverts as appealing. Furthermore, 74% of British respondents feel the commercials make them proud of the armed forces and just slightly fewer people declare the adverts make them proud of their country. Although no direct references to the nation are made, British respondents detect an emphasis on team work and a strong sense of group identity in the military which suggests interpellation on a national level (Althusser, 1971). One can conclude from this that most British respondents relate to some degree to an active armed force and consider it to be an institution that instils national pride. This validates Wallace's argument that Britain's "military capability and determination" remain a source for unreserved pride (1991, p. 74).

When comparing impressions from the adverts with responses from Questionnaire 1, there are a number of findings that stand out. On the one hand, respondents in both countries indicate that they consider risking one's life for the nation to no longer be necessary and that they are indeed not willing to do so. On the other hand, responses have shown that personal challenge and adventure are amongst the main motivations for embarking on a military career. Moreover, it is the action-packed nature of the British adverts and the advanced technological equipment of recruitment adverts also present in the German commercials that catches young people's attention. Realistic notions of military life mostly in the form of the death of soldiers in the news create wariness towards the armed forces amongst young people and stand in opposition to films and video games which trivialise death and turn fighting into a game, reducing it to an adventure. While the British armed forces try to build on this latter trend, the Bundeswehr attempts to entice the viewer with completely non-violent images and a focus on career prospects.

Determining the impact of the commercials on their target audience is complex. Both strategies have proved to only have limited success amongst their surveyed target audiences, but

they unmistakably exemplify the significance of their national contexts. Pre-existing national frameworks lead young people to believe that “the British Army are the best in the world” or to decide that the Bundeswehr is “absolutely pointless” before being confronted with the commercials. It becomes evident that there is a ‘circuit of culture’ at work. As Eder (1999) and Fanher (2008) point out, it is institutions which communicate mass culture as well as “politics, history and fiction” that decide what is to be identified as collective beliefs and which construct the ‘ideal soldier’. The memory of historical military behaviour and current issues are amalgamated and hence determine the level of acceptance by society which is often considered a ‘given’ that remains unquestioned. This is then reflected in the way each institution is able to portray itself in its adverts, which in turn affects audience perceptions - “The Bundeswehr is an army of wimps” versus the British army being “very brave and extreme”. The fact that only very few respondents disclose having learned something new strengthens the notion that the recruitment advertisements very much, albeit subconsciously, reinforce pre-existing opinions.

## **Comparing with the Past: Interviews with Veterans and New Recruits**

“Western institutions [...] including armies always change in response to internal and external factors” (Bondy, 2004, p. 31). The importance of national identity in this process is identified by Juhasz who points out “a firm attachment to the nation appears to be a guarantee of a pronounced willingness to fight” (in Everts and Isernia, 2001, p. 77). The evolution of these notions is crucial when it comes to understanding the conceptualisation of army recruitment adverts and their impact on young audiences. This chapter investigates to what extent motivations to join the armed forces have changed over time as a result of societal developments. Two interviews have been conducted with military veterans who joined the Bundeswehr and the British Armed Forces in the 1950s. Two further interviews took place with a German and a Briton who joined the military in the last few years. One has to acknowledge that three out of the four interviewees are or were in high-ranking positions and their positionality thus does not match that of advertisements’ target audience. However, by contrasting their experiences, one not only gets an insight into the relationship between people’s national identity and the armed forces as an institution. But it also facilitates an exploration of issues that have affected the military over the last decades and illustrates ways in which they have been dealt with by members of the armed forces. This qualitative component of the study functions to further determine the importance of specific national contexts in relation to armed forces recruitment and the role of national identity in contemplating a military career. A comparison of the two British depth interviews will be followed by a close examination of the two German interviews.

### **Interview with a Young British Recruit**

The first interviewee (see Appendix E, pp. 96-99) is an officer-in-waiting in the Royal Air Force who enlisted for 18 years in 2009. His primary motivation to join the RAF was the “challenge and adventure that you get with the job”. Like most respondents in the survey, he too emphasises this

aspect of the job and states that after finishing university, it was a choice between a normal, boring job and one that despite paying less, was more exciting and something that he would actually enjoy doing. The officer in training hence also points out that for him, choosing a career wasn't about the financial benefits, but about doing something that was right for him. Having joined the military only a year ago, he would have been exposed to some of the recent television recruitment adverts. He maintains however that his decision to enlist was not based on media recruitment material at all. In fact, he stresses that advertisements were completely absent during his time at a Scottish comprehensive school and the only way to obtain more information would have been through directly asking his school career advisor. It wasn't until a university fair that he came into contact with the armed forces. There, the RAF was recruiting new members for its University Air Squadron by attracting them with free flying lessons and a "reputation for being a bit of a drinking club". A rigorous selection process admits the best university candidates to this "exclusive" institution in return for partaking in a number of mandatory training camps per year. As long as you put the effort in, you can remain in the squadron for four years with apparently "no expectations of commitment" from you. It was this "insight into what life in the armed forces is like" that persuaded him to join a military career. Having already experienced the tough conditions, it was the prospect of a massive feeling of achievement after the completion of training that motivated his decision. Additionally, it was the level of teamwork that is, according to him, unique to the military that further encouraged him to pursue this career. Surprisingly, he remarks that after university graduation, there was little pressure to join the RAF. Although he believes this might vary considerably amongst different squadrons and certainly in the Army's Officer Training Corps, he is of the opinion that rather than being a recruitment tool, the University Air Squadron serves as a way to put across a "more positive image" of the RAF and gain the support of future contacts in industry.

Apart from his motivations for joining the RAF, the interview also explores his views on notions of history and tradition within the institution as well as his understanding of the relationship

between national identity and the military. The recruit considers history and tradition to be of major importance and immediately mentions the Battle of Britain as one of Britain's proudest moments. That tradition plays a big role within the armed forces is further underlined by his comment about the nearly 100 year-old RAF "getting stuck" for being such a young institution in comparison to the British Army. He is not only proud of the military, but also of his nation, yet he does not consider himself to be very patriotic. In his view, patriotism is good in "measured amounts", but is also rather dangerous as it can easily develop into extremism.

While he acknowledges that there are people who join the armed forces out of a "strong sense of nationalism" and an urge to "defend the nation", he does not apply this to his own thinking. This mindset underlines Ball's thesis of a redefinition of citizenship. While in the past it was linked to "patriotic duty, loyalty and responsibility", today it is defined by "individual rights without individual responsibility" (in Strachan, 2000, p. 71). People no longer feel obliged to 'fight for Queen and country'. Instead, they base their decision on a different set of values. The holding officer identifies a fundamental change in the interplay between the military and national identity. He states that Britain has "traditionally had a really good reputation for being involved in wars that were entirely just like the Battle of Britain", but that a lot of disillusionment has taken place recently. He goes on to acknowledge that it is wars like the ones in Iraq and Afghanistan which are hard to justify and states that often it is not only the public who do not understand why soldiers are deployed to these areas, but members of the armed forces as well. Through his comments he not only questions the military's interpretation of its function, but also reveals the armed forces' apparent blurring of the term 'national interest'. This supports Segell's argument that whereas wars "may have historically reinforced nationalism, wars today may reinforce global values" (in Danks and Kennedy, 2001, p. 133). As most Western societies have not been under any major threats since the end of the Cold War, it seems international alliances and especially "economic ties" have taken precedence over the safety of the national community. It seems however, that changes have not only occurred on a

governmental level, attitudes among individuals have changed too. When asked about his views on the potentially life-threatening nature of the job that he signed up for, references to making sacrifices for the nation are completely absent. In their place he alludes to the complete “team mentality” that makes you want to help your comrades, no matter what the situation. This opinion is congruent with that portrayed in the British recruitment adverts which convey a strong military identity rather than a sense of national identity.

The interview reinforces a number of trends that emerged from the survey carried out with young people in Britain. In this case, personal considerations also take priority over societal and national concerns in motivating the recruit. As Segell points out “the military have experienced a renaissance in their identity, with professionalism replacing patriotism” (in Danks and Kennedy, 2001, p. 127). Although national identity does not seem to have overtly affected the recruit’s career choice, his statement that “there is a massive national responsibility” indicates that he is aware of the scope of his profession. Furthermore, what this interview seems to confirm is the fact that conventional recruitment adverts contribute little to change people’s perceptions of the military. Indeed, it is only through first-hand experiences that the interviewee became interested in a career in the armed forces. This suggests that the recent move towards a more interactive engagement with potential recruits will prove to have a greater impact on people’s opinions.

#### *Interview with a British Air Force Veteran*

The second interview (see Appendix E, pp. 100-101), conducted with a British veteran who joined the armed forces in 1958 attempts to establish the degree to which motivations have shifted and how the relationship between the military and national identity was perceived over 50 years ago. Coming from a family with a long military tradition, the retired pilot declares it was a matter of carrying on with the family tradition rather than external influences that motivated his enlistment with the RAF. As military recruitment via the media was “unheard of” at the time, it was only the active decision to

visit an army recruitment office that would provide more information to interested people. During the Cold War, the armed forces were more than twice as big as they are now and with national service still in place in the 1950s, large-scale recruitment campaigns were unnecessary. The RAF veteran however points out that the military tried to attract recruits with money incentives and thus supports observations made by Strachan about 1950s recruitment strategies (2000, p. 50). This went so far that men who were about to start their military service were compelled to sign on for longer because they “relied on the extra money” that they would receive after committing to an additional year in the military in order to support themselves throughout their mandatory service. He also mentions that for many young men it was hard to find apprenticeships at the time and that it was the military that provided opportunities for many. It appears that mostly existential factors influenced a young recruit’s decision to join the army. Finding a well-paying job and good training were the main priorities. After an initial service of twelve years, the veteran decided to extend his contract and again states that “the money was constantly dangling over your head”. Factors mentioned by survey respondents as well as the officer-in-waiting such as personal challenge and adventure are not mentioned at all by the veteran. A generational shift of job expectations that accompanied changing living conditions seems to have occurred since the post-war years. When asked whether he believes that values have changed over time he responds “most certainly”. Indeed in the 80s Beevor observed that not only had a “significant decline in the quality of recruits” occurred, but that attitudes were also completely different and far from reality (in Strachan, 2000, p. 57). Furthermore, the retired RAF officer indicates that he believes the constant threat from the Soviet Union during the Cold War created a stronger sense of national identity amongst citizens. Surprisingly however, any references to this serving as a source of motivation are missing. He too brings up the problem of justifying recent military missions such as Afghanistan and Iraq and the “needless” deaths of soldiers. According to him, the geographical distance of the threat seems to justify a lessening of national support. One can infer from this that threats to the national territory are still considered to be some

of the most influential triggers of a strong sense of national identity amongst citizens. Comments made by the two interviewees seem to support Janowitz's observation that it is during times of crisis that feelings of national identity grow more intense (in Caforio, 2002, p. 118) and thus also strengthen the relationship between the armed forces and society. This tendency is emphasized by a statement made by the Minister for the Army in 1969, who declared that the "best recruiting sergeant" had been lost as the British forces had not been in action anywhere in the world during the preceding twelve months (in Strachan, 2000, p. 54).

The veteran interviewee has an attitude similar to the young recruit towards risking one's life on the job and states that "one does not consider the fact that one's life could be at risk". This can be seen as an attempt at avoiding the difficult matter of dying. But the apparent absence of serious contemplation of the subject also highlights that although it is the biggest sacrifice one can make for one's nation, it does not have a great impact on the recruits' decision to join the military. This further underlines that in Britain, the notion of being willing to risk one's life for the nation is sparsely used to justify enlistment with the military as "service life is no longer a vocation. It is just another career" (Beevor in Strachan, 2000, p. 64). Although the interviews disclose a number of overlaps in the two interviewees' opinions, they also very clearly highlight how driving forces have changed over time. While the young recruit's primary motivations to some extent reflect those of the survey participants, the veteran's priorities differ and actually seem to mirror the theme of the recent Bundeswehr advertisements which rely on salary, training and job security in order to appeal to their audience. This is an example of how closely military recruitment is linked to a nation's economic situation (Ball in Strachan, 2000, p. 49). According to the surveys, the armed forces are often considered to be a "last resort", yet in times of economic downturn they seem to provide alternative opportunities. This idea influenced British recruits in the 1950s and is also adopted as the Bundeswehr's main recruitment strategy. Whether it similarly determined German army recruitment

shortly after the Second World War and to what extent it still matters today is investigated in the following interviews.

#### *Interview with a Bundeswehr Officer Candidate*

The first German interview (see Appendix E, pp. 102-103) to be analysed was carried out with a young recruit currently training to become an officer and studying towards an engineering degree. His main reasons for agreeing to a twelve year commitment are of a financial nature and he explicitly mentions “economic uncertainty” as a crucial factor. The prospect of a secure job that not only provides “job security, a good salary and a free university education” convinced him to pursue a military career. Being in the military has provided him with a lifestyle that he would not have been able to afford otherwise. The officer candidate says advertising material such as posters and leaflets only played a minor role and in 2005 television had not been appropriated as an advertising medium by the Bundeswehr. As with the young British recruit, it was personal contact with the army that had the biggest impact on his decision. With the financial advantages taking centre stage, it was apparently not until training commenced that he started considering what army life really entailed.

Having established in previous chapters that national identity remains a complex topic in Germany, it is especially interesting to examine its role in civil-military relations. The young recruit declares that he is proud of his country and goes on to argue that patriotism should be expressed more freely since today’s generation “has nothing to do with Germany’s difficult history”. His attitude towards nationalism is a lot less critical than that of many German survey respondents. Moreover, he reveals that his definition of good citizenship does involve being willing to make sacrifices for your country, yet these considerations are far outweighed by motivations based on personal ambitions. Once more it seems that interpretations of military service being a patriotic duty have eroded. That national identity is of little importance to him is further highlighted by his identification as a “European soldier”.

A stark contrast between the German and the British armed forces becomes obvious when the recruit is asked about tradition and history. A German Air Force general said in the 1950s that the term tradition would not feature in the vocabulary of future German soldiers (in Kodalle, 1981, p. 137). That the statement is still true today is shown by the young recruit's remark that there is hardly any tradition in the Bundeswehr as it is only 55 years old. Furthermore, he emphasises that the little tradition there is, is completely detached from that of its predecessors. This response is evidence of a constructed history that the Bundeswehr has employed since its creation in order to avoid association with the atrocities committed by the Wehrmacht. The fact that it was originally largely made up of former Wehrmacht staff, that barracks have been named after seemingly carefully selected Wehrmacht officers, and that symbols such as the 'Iron Cross' have been appropriated by the Bundeswehr are omitted. As research from previous chapters has shown, there is no doubt that the relationship between the armed forces and German society is still fragile and efforts to construct a positive image for the military are ongoing. The young recruit declares that he has never had any bad experiences concerning his profession with members of the public, in fact he has encountered people at fundraisers and open days who "praise the soldiers for their responsibility and discipline". Yet he is aware of a constant struggle to justify the Bundeswehr's changing role, especially to older people. The deeply ingrained aversion to the military in Germany meant that throughout the Cold War, Germans would only tolerate an army for territorial defence purposes. But the recruit's statement indicates that German society is still trying to come to terms with the Bundeswehr's extended tasks of "global conflict prevention and supporting allies in the fight against terrorism" and remains fairly antimilitaristic. Although he too mentions the distinctive camaraderie present in the armed forces and the responsibility that rests on his shoulders, he appears a lot more career-orientated than the young British recruit. Team work is also not depicted in the German commercials which goes hand in hand with the Bundeswehr's concept of the 'citizen in uniform' and tries to prevent a detachment from civil society and the creation of a strong military identity. To what degree

this notion was already in place shortly after the establishment of the Bundeswehr is explored in the final interview with a German army veteran.

#### *Interview with a German Army Veteran*

The veteran (see Appendix E, pp.104-105) was one of the first volunteers to join the military in 1956 before conscription began in April 1957 ([www.bundeswehr.de](http://www.bundeswehr.de)). His decision to enlist came at a time when most Germans were against rearmament and only a mere 19% would recommend considering a military career to family and friends (Arrington, 2002, p. 532). In the second half of the 1950s, with the Nazi regime still fresh in people's minds, there is no doubt that attitudes towards the armed forces as an institution and motivations behind voluntary signing-on differ from both a German society 50 years on and British society that has not experienced any similar defeat in its recent history (Frevort, 2001, p. 350). In a society where manifestations of nationalism or patriotism were arguably still "utterly unacceptable and totally discredited" (Fulbrook, 1999, p. 19), it was the urge to experience adventure that made the German veteran enlist for a total of three years. What appealed most to him was the travelling that came with the job - something he would not have been able to afford otherwise. He also points out that joining the army was an opportunity to lead a less controlled lifestyle. This notion indicates that on the one hand, the "Nachkriegsgeneration" (generation directly after the war) wanted to leave behind the hardships of the post-war years, but also highlights the non-militaristic character of the Bundeswehr after its establishment. Arrington describes the young West German armed forces as having an environment with "no heel-clicking, no piercing looks, no clipped nods, no spirited strikes, no harsh voices" (2002, p. 532). The discipline and the strictness associated with the military today (see surveys) were largely absent and also not desired in the 1950s. Unlike the British veteran who had not been exposed to any recruitment material before his enlistment in the 1950s, the former German soldier reports it was a newspaper advertisement that made him sign on. When asked what adverts were like at the time, he replies

that they emphasised the need to ensure security within the state. Moreover, he remembers them to stress “the beginning of a new era” and that they were completely void of allusions to tradition and history, both of which were impossible due to the fact that Germany “had not come to terms with its recent past yet”. When comparing this to the recent recruit’s emphasis on the Bundeswehr’s complete separateness from its predecessor and the fact that German recruitment adverts do not refer to any historical or traditional notions, it is arguable that German society has still not managed to create a suitable national identity with reference to its military history. As Fulbrook points out, the nation is “unable to tell a collectively acceptable story about its own [military] past” that does not require “constant soul-searching and repeated attempts at redefinition” (1999, p. 141). The extent to which these attempts have been made is further illustrated by the differing attitudes towards the dangerous nature of the job. Whereas the young recruit believes a ‘good citizen’ should be willing to risk his/her life for the country and thinks it is a vital component of his job, the veteran does not consider this a necessity and also points out that the subject of sacrificing one’s life did not arise at all during his time as a soldier. This was largely due to the Bundeswehr’s limited role that strictly confined its function to the defence of national territory, but also reflects the rejection of national identity and the denunciation of sacrificing one’s life as an extremist notion no longer appropriate in German society. The veteran describes his experience of history within the Bundeswehr as rather ambiguous. New recruits were shown American documentaries depicting scenes from concentration camps, but the people discussing these with them were officer who had served during the Third Reich. The interviewee joined the Bundeswehr at a time when history was being redefined on multiple occasions in order to justify foreign policy developments and when a strong anti-militaristic culture was being ensconced (Berger, 1997, p. 42). This is reflected in his experiences of repeatedly being bullied in public for wearing the Bundeswehr uniform. Furthermore, although he says today that he feels “connected” to Germany, the lack of a positive collective national identity at the time

prevented him from feeling any obligation towards the nation-state. In this he differs from the recent recruit who divulges a stronger link to fellow Germans.

When comparing the interviews on a cross-national level it becomes evident that issues of national identity have been dealt with very differently over the last 50 years. Neither in the late 1950s nor in 2009 have national identity or patriotism been the main motivations behind recruits joining the forces. Yet it becomes evident that a positive military history facilitates this decision-making process. Not having to deal with the 'burdens of Nazism' means that pride and tradition play a much bigger role in Britain than in Germany. However, the interviews illustrate that when choosing to pursue a military career, considerations evolve around personal benefits much more than 'the greater national good'. This is also the case amongst the two German interviewees thus supporting Lippert's thesis of hedonism and materialism replacing traditional values such as discipline, willingness to subordinate oneself and social obligations (in Opitz et al, 1995, p. 170). While in Britain the military profession seems to have evolved from being a very traditional profession to being "just another career" (Beevor in Strachan, 2000, p. 64), the interviews suggest that in Germany the process has occurred in reverse. It is arguably only since foreign missions have become more frequent and military cooperation with other nations more intense that German soldiers have personally come in contact with other nationalities and thus explored the connection between their national identity and the military profession in reference to 'the other'. However, the unavailability of tradition and a positive interpretation of history weaken this relationship. The final chapter of this study will consider the results of the study as a whole and establish to what extent post-national values have replaced any notions of an emerging 'normalised' national identity in connection with the military profession.

## **Conclusion: An Obligation to the Nation or A Job Like Any Other?**

Having examined what academics have said about the relationship between national armies and the concept of national identity and having analysed data from my own research, it is now crucial to triangulate their findings and draw conclusions from this study. Furthermore, it is important to determine what the results contribute to contemporary discussions and how this subject could be explored further.

The purpose of this thesis was to determine the relationship between national identity and army recruitment. In 1952, Wolfers believed it to be common to make sacrifices to preserve “minimum national core values, national independence and territorial integrity” (p. 489). More recently Ignatieff stated that nationalism is “the claim that while men and women have many identities, it is the nation that provides them with their primary form of belonging” (1993) and that it is the sense of security that is thus created which justifies demanding heroic sacrifices. Both theorists presuppose a paramount link between the citizen and his/her nation that results in a willingness to risk his/her life. This thesis illustrates that this relationship has taken on a different tenor in the twenty-first century. Many of the participants of this study do feel attached to their nation and show pride in their country. However it also demonstrates that national identity is no longer of overriding importance. “A foreign attack or military threat leads to stronger identification with the nation” (Stern, 1995, p. 221), but with no perceived major threat to the ‘national’ group, young people no longer feel the need to defend it by using violence. In Britain, joining the military, which ultimately means being willing to risk your life for the nation, is no longer seen as a measurement of national loyalty. Instead, it is merely a career choice like any other. In Germany, after the refutation of national identity following the Second World War, young Germans, although still wary, are more disposed to displaying their national identity. However, a severe mistrust of the military which has been in place since the end of the Nazi regime has prevented Germans from expressing their national

belonging through participating in the armed forces. Like their British counterparts, the German participants of the study rate personal benefits higher than altruistic motives when contemplating a military career. These findings indicate a more post-national interpretation of the military institution amongst participants which supports Moskos et al.'s argument that the "postmodern military [...] undergoes a loosening of the ties with the nation-state" (2000, p. 1).

As both armies heavily rely on voluntary enlistment, there is no doubt that recruiters would like a strong sense of national identity and duty to be prevalent amongst potential recruits. Yet the adverts that have formed part of this study both follow and produce societal trends as alluded to earlier with reference to the 'circuit of culture'. In the case of Britain, the creators of these commercials have realised that they need to "equate the nation symbolically with family and community" (Stern, 1995, p. 230) as there exists a "tendency to identify with, learn from, and favour groups to which one has strong emotional ties" (ibid, p. 225). Moreover, by creating a strong military identity, the armed forces manage to attract the attention of adolescents who do not consider the nation as their primary point of identification. Despite a more 'normal' attitude towards national identity, the German advertisers have avoided alluding to the nation. Instead of using TV adverts as a tool to attempt to steer German society towards a greater acceptance of a military identity linked to national identity, it acknowledges the primacy of individualistic advancement. Furthermore, that the adverts represent a masculinised concept of the nation that also lacks references to ethnic minorities is illustrated by both countries' adverts in different ways. The British adverts fail to include any role models for women and only depict white military personnel. Although women feature in all three German adverts, their presence is met with surprise by the audience. This suggests that stereotypes are not only reinforced but also challenged. Yet in the German adverts too, no attempt towards ethnic inclusion is made.

The approaches chosen by recruiters in both countries reflect young people's dispositions towards society and working life. While military television recruitment commercials are a relatively

new phenomenon in both Britain and Germany thus making a comparison over time impossible, contrasting attitudes and motivations towards a military career today with those in the 1950s has revealed recurring themes. Like the survey participants, the older military recruits named adventure and salary as primary reasons for wanting to join the armed forces. This further underlines the strong link between enlistment and the recruit's concerns over his economic situation. Examining only the views of people who are/were not faced with direct threats to their national security, this thesis proves that personal advancement is much more important than 'serving the greater good' in the absence of a territorial threat. Rather than pointing towards a weakening of national identity, this indicates a displacement of citizenship in the absence of intense warfare (Sassen in Isin and Turner, 2002, p. 286) and concurs with Smith's statement that "human beings have multiple collective identities whose scope and intensity will vary with time and place" (1991, p. 178). Today national identity continues to shape society. Its intensity determines the extent to which it influences army recruitment and currently other identifications have a greater impact on army recruitment.

As for the effectiveness of recruitment adverts, this study has shown that while the commercials manage to change the opinion of a considerable percentage of their target audiences, ultimately it is personal circumstances and experiences that inspire young people. This supports Lambin's observation from 1976: "The impact of advertising is modest in comparison with that of environmental factors and other market variables" (p. 101). The fact that the British military have started using a more interactive approach in their recruitment strategy also underlines these findings, but the surveys have also shown that target audiences in both countries would like to see a more realistic depiction of the military profession. Interactive adverts featuring scenes with real military personnel and showing all aspects of life in the armed forces could achieve greater success amongst young people. In addition, the research has shown that although the armed forces as a national institution are still inextricably linked to national identity, recruitment advertising benefits from emphasising individualistic aspects rather than alluding to notions of patriotism and sacrifice for

the 'imagined community'.

The inevitably limited scope of this thesis leaves numerous subjects to be explored. Firstly, a more comprehensive study of recruitment commercials would deliver more representative results. In Germany, recruiters have only just started employing television adverts and with many Germans believed to have reached a more 'normalised' approach to national identity, it remains to be seen whether future campaigns will contribute to this normalisation or if society has indeed adopted more post-national values leaving no space for nationalistic references. This question also arises in Britain. Although the three British adverts demonstrate a number of different approaches to recruitment, there is a constant stream of new adverts. The most recent ones clearly mirror the current economic climate by centring around a good salary and good training opportunities. Further research needs to be carried out to explore which directions the two nations are taking with their recruitment advertisements especially considering the increasing European dimension of military missions. With all German forces being under European or international command (Werkner, 2003, p. 182) and the growing importance of the European Security and Defence Policy it can be argued that the armed forces will soon cease to be a national institution. Whether and to what extent this transformation will further weaken the link between the military and national identity and thus also alter the conceptualisation of recruitment adverts remains to be explored.

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#### **Links to Advertisements on Youtube:**

British Advert 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f8mG4KvqMw&feature=related>

British Advert 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weudbL9tXCQ&feature=related>

British Advert 3: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUqXa03KC0o&p=09846162B14D33EB&playnext=1&index=5>

German Advert 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGFYF96WOtw&feature=related>

German Advert 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kd2MrhDIXg>

## **Appendices**

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## Appendix A

### British Questionnaire 1

#### General Information

1. Are you a British citizen? Yes  No
2. Male  Female
3. Age: 15-17  18-20  21+
4. Qualifications: GCSEs  AS-Levels  A-Levels

#### Questions about Britain and Identity

5. What do you identify with the most? (1= most, 4= least)  
European  Midlands  England  Britain
6. Are you proud of Britain/ to be British?  
Yes  No

7. Why are you (not) proud?

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8. What is your attitude towards Britain and patriotism? What factors is it influenced by?

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9. What connects you with other British people and gives you a feeling of being British? Please mark the following terms from 1 to 6 (1= most, 6 = least).

Traditions  shared history  language  common characteristics   
consumption of the same media  permanent residence in Britain

10. Do you think a 'good citizen' should be willing to sacrifice his life for his country? Why?

Yes  No

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Questions about the British Armed Forces

11. What, off the top of your head, do you associate with the Armed Forces?

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12. Is being a soldier a highly regarded job in your eyes? Please explain your opinion.

Yes  No

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13. In your opinion, what are the most important criteria when considering a career in the Armed Forces? Please indicate the importance of the following factors (1= most, 7= least).

Salary  Reputation of the job  Adventure and personal challenge

Positive contribution to society  Current international climate  Job security

Good training and prospects for progression

14. Can you imagine pursuing a career in the Armed Forces? Please give reasons.

Yes  No

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## British Questionnaire 2

1. What are your first impressions of the army advertisements?

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2. Having watched the adverts now, has your opinion about what being a soldier is like changed? If so, why?

Yes  No

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3. If so, was it a positive or a negative change?

Positive  Negative

4. Do the adverts make you proud of the armed forces?

Yes  No

5. Do the adverts make you proud of Britain?

Yes  No

6. Have you found anything out about the army that you didn't know before or discovered a new side that you weren't aware of before? If so, what?

Yes  No

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7. Did you find the adverts appealing? Please explain your answer.

Yes  No

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8. In Questionnaire 1, you indicated which criteria you find most important in order to consider a career in the Armed Forces. Do you think these have featured enough in the adverts?

Yes  No  To some extent

9. Do you think the adverts give the viewer a realistic idea of what it is like to be a soldier? Why (not)?

Yes  No

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10. What do you think would make the adverts more appealing and more effective?

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## Appendix B

### Fragebogen 1

#### Allgemeine Informationen

1. Deutsche Staatsangehoerigkeit: Ja  Nein
2. Maennlich  Weiblich
3. Alter: 16 – 18  19-21  22+
4. (angestrebter) Schulabschluss: Hauptschulabschluss   
Realschulabschluss  Fachabitur  Abitur

#### Fragen zum Thema Deutschland und Identitaet

5. Wie wuerdest du dich beschreiben? Bitte kennzeichne die Begriffe von 1 bis 3 (1= am meisten, 3= am wenigsten).

Als: Nordrhein-Westfale  Deutscher  Europaer

6. Bist du stolz auf Deutschland/ stolz Deutsch zu sein? Ja  Nein

7. Warum bist du stolz/nicht stolz auf Deutschland?

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8. Was ist deine Einstellung zum Thema Deutschland und Patriotismus im 21. Jahrhundert?  
Durch welche Faktoren wird deine Einstellung beeinflusst?

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9. Was verbindet dich mit anderen Deutschen und gibt dir das Gefuehl deutsch zu sein? Bitte nummeriere die folgenden Begriffe von 1(= am meisten) bis 6 (=wenigsten).

Traditionen  gemeinsame Vergangenheit  Sprache

„typische Eigenschaften“  Konsum der gleichen Medien  Wohnsitz in  
Deutschland

10. Findest du, ein guter Buerger sollte bereit sein, sein Leben fuer sein Land zu riskieren?  
Warum?

Ja  Nein

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#### Fragen zur Bundeswehr

11. Was verbindest du spontan mit der deutschen Bundeswehr?

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12. Hat der Beruf des Soldaten deiner Meinung nach ein hohes Ansehen oder nicht? Bitte  
begruende deine Antwort.

Ja  Nein

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13. Was sind fuer dich die wichtigsten Kriterien, um einen Beruf in der Bundeswehr in Betracht  
zu ziehen? Bitte ordne die folgenden Begriffe nach ihrer Wichtigkeit (1= am wichtigsten, 7=  
am unwichtigsten).

Gehalt  Ansehen des Berufes  Abenteuer und Herausforderung   
positiver Beitrag zur Gesellschaft  momentane internationale Lage   
Arbeitsplatzgarantie  gute Ausbildung und Aufstiegschancen

14. Kannst du dir vorstellen, dich bei der Bundeswehr zu verpflichten? Warum?

Ja

Nein

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## Fragebogen 2

1. Was sind deine ersten Eindrücke über die Werbung der Bundeswehr?

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2. Nachdem du nun die Werbung für die Bundeswehr gesehen hast, hat sich deine Vorstellung über den Beruf des Soldaten geändert? Wieso (nicht)?

Ja  Nein

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3. Falls ja, war es eine positive oder eine negative Änderung?

Positiv  Negativ

4. Macht dich die Werbung stolz auf die Bundeswehr?

Ja  Nein

5. Macht dich die Werbung stolz auf Deutschland?

Ja  Nein

6. Hast du durch die Werbung etwas ueber die Bundeswehr erfahren, was du vorher nicht wusstest (eine neue/andere Seite der Bundeswehr)? Wenn ja, was?

Ja  Nein

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7. Fandest du die Werbung ansprechend? Bitte begruende deine Antwort.

Ja  Nein

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8. In Fragebogen 1 hast du die Kriterien angegeben, die dir am wichtigsten sind, um eine Karriere bei der Bundeswehr in Betracht zu ziehen. Wurden diese in der Werbung genuegend aufgegriffen?

Ja  Nein  teilweise

9. Glaubst du, die Werbung gibt Zuschauern ein reeles Bild von der Arbeit bei der Bundeswehr? Warum (nicht)?

Ja  Nein

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10. Was wuerde deiner Meinung nach die Werbung der Bundeswehr ansprechender und effektiver machen?

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## Appendix C

### British Questionnaire Results

#### Questionnaire 1

1. British citizen: Yes: 71 No: 5

2. Male: 39 Female: 37

3. Age: 15-17: 52 18-20: 14 20-23: 10

4. GCSEs: 50 AS-Level: 2 A-Level: 24

5.

Identification	1	2	3	4
Europe	7%	6%	10%	77%
Midlands	34%	21%	21%	11%
England	39%	38%	8%	2%
Britain	20%	35%	61%	10%

6. Are you proud? Yes: 80% No: 20%

7. Why yes? Free education, home, multicultural society, racial barriers are starting to get broken down, my identity, good politics, history, human rights, sports, many nice cities, opportunities, world status, my accent, community,

Why no? Corruption in the government, BNP = shame, pride is feeling good about a personal achievement, being from Britain is a matter of chance, nothing to be proud of, past events, way country is run, too much crime, government is not doing enough to help, current economic issues, not from Britain, politics, social issues (benefit cheats and unemployment)

8. What is your attitude towards Britain and patriotism? What factors is it influenced by?  
Not very patriotic, Britain is very patriotic/passionate and supportive, sports, respect but no connection, feel strongly about the war, prefer America, would be patriotic if there wasn't so much corruption, don't feel obliged to Britain – just grateful, too much focus on certain religions, world status, influenced by media and government, born here, being from a military family, music, free speech, multicultural society and open-minded people, armed forces, tradition

9. What connects you with other British people and gives you a feeling of being British? Please mark the following terms from 1 to 6 (1= most, 6 = least).

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Traditions</b>	9%	16%	18%	22%	9%	<b>26%</b>
<b>Shared History</b>	9%	11%	23%	18%	<b>27%</b>	12%
<b>Language</b>	<b>51%</b>	9%	17%	7%	11%	5%
<b>Common Characteristics</b>	7%	11%	<b>26%</b>	23%	20%	13%
<b>Consumption of the Same Media</b>	8%	19%	15%	16%	15%	<b>27%</b>
<b>Permanent Residence</b>	20%	<b>34%</b>	12%	11%	9%	14%

10. Should a good citizen be willing to sacrifice his life? Yes:30% No: 70%

Why yes?

- give something back
- get paid
- get respect
- dying with dignity
- should be a normal part of being British
- shows loyalty and bravery
- want to protect your country and fellow citizens and way of life
- show that Britain is a strong country

Why no?

- Not fair to ask anyone to do that
- should be no obligation
- just happen to be born on land that is part of Britain
- corruption
- think of family and loved ones only
- think freely, could be for the wrong reasons
- unnecessary, show your support in different ways
- no violence needed
- don't want to die

11. What, off the top of your head, do you associate with the Armed Forces?

- Sacrifice
- love for your country
- guns, war, tanks,
- misery, weapons, death, violence,
- killing, call of duty
- Iraq, government, MPs
- sponsored events for the army, heroism, men,
- Afghanistan, Iran, bombs
- napalm gas
- training, different types of forces
- honour, camouflage, respect, nation
- the films "Jarhead" and "Tears of the Sun",
- bravery, front line, helicopters
- pain and suffering, fighting for the country
- Medal of Honour, Call of Duty
- danger, courage
- fighting for what is right
- best in the world
- the war on terror, politicians, planes, explosions, Taliban, predator missiles, armoured vehicles, oil
- wasting your life, orphaned children, widows

12. Is being a soldier a highly regarded job in your eyes? Please explain your opinion.

Yes: 57% No: 43%

Why yes?

- Prepared to give up their lives
- fighting for our country, have to be very brave
- representing their country
- sacrifice lives for queen and country
- good pay, hard job
- protecting country, very disciplined

Why no?

- Not always fighting for the right reasons
- violence is not necessary
- bad pay, associated with violence
- there should be no war, waste of a (young) life
- killing is never good
- has anyone ever asked the public if they want them to fight for us

13. In your opinion, what are the most important criteria when considering a career in the Armed Forces? Please indicate the importance of the following factors (1= most, 7= least).

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Salary	27%	10%	11%	20%	9%	8%	15%
Reputation	9%	22%	21%	7%	19%	16%	9%
Adventure and challenge	20%	28%	16%	14%	14%	10%	10%
Contribution to society	15%	3%	15%	23%	9%	12%	7%
International climate	3%	2%	8%	10%	16%	11%	34%
Job security	14%	12%	14%	9%	26%	19%	11%
Training and progression	12%	23%	15%	17%	7%	24%	14%

14. Can you imagine pursuing a career in the Armed Forces? Yes: 24% No: 76%

Why yes:

- be a pilot or medical staff
- like a challenge
- I play shooting games, I want to join the SAS, my brothers are in the army
- not afraid of dying
- teach discipline
- exciting and adventurous, wild

Why no:

- life too precious, academic career
- would only risk my life for my family
- don't believe in war, I'm a girl
- war is unnecessary
- because I am too clever
- too much stress and pressure, wouldn't risk my life for any country

- bad pay
- don't want me or family to suffer, too violent
- extremely cold-blooded, make difference in some other way
- too scared, I would surrender too easily, not capable, wrong size

## Questionnaire 2

### 1. What are your first impressions of the army advertisements?

- Good job
- very extreme
- gives the impression the job is very hard,
- very brave, made me feel the things they go through
- propaganda, trying to manipulate the audience, don't show the reality of war, if you 're tough, you join the army"
- serious, different, catchy, only a certain few would be good for the job
- make it look like it's fun, makes the army look exciting, very patriotic
- first one good, didn't get the message of the other two
- from soldier's point of view: brings countries and societies together
- informative
- they all encourage violence
- team work, lots of fun, challenging
- shocking, trying to make it look cool, always have guns out,
- shows the positive but not the negative,
- professional, trying to attract young people, made it look adventurous, links to computer games
- persuasive, scary, bravery, does show shouting and killing
- make it look rewarding, strict
- stealth, machine guns, makes me think I want to do it, shows dangers, welcoming

### 2. Having watched the adverts now, has your opinion about what being a soldier is like changed? If so, why? Yes: 33% No: 67%

#### Why yes:

- takes a lot of strength, very interesting and challenging
- their experiences of friendship, life and work
- showed that it's a really important job, looks enjoyable
- disguise how bad it can be, you have to be alert all the time
- get to carry a gun and be stealthy, job to save the country, high pressure, good experience

#### Why no:

- seems hard, fighting for the wrong reasons
- violence is not necessary
- adverts don't explain soldier's life very well, don't give much information
- already knew what soldiers were like
- shows how dangerous it really is
- makes it out as fun, but doesn't point out the dangers
- quite biased

3. If so, was it a positive or negative change? Positive: 23% No Change: 59% Negative: 18%

4. Do the adverts make you proud of the armed forces? Yes: 74% No: 26%

5. Do the adverts make you proud of Britain? Yes: 71% No: 29%

6. Have you found out anything new? Yes: 16% No: 84%

What?

- Involves thinking and decision-making
- show one-sided view of war
- social life when they are not on duty
- not on front line all the time
- don't only fight in deserts

7. Did you find the adverts appealing? Yes: 65% No: 35%

Why:

- made the army feel like an adventure
- fun factor (jumping out of planes rather than actual fighting)
- makes you put yourself in their situation
- show everyday life, having new (exciting) experiences
- soldiers were very courageous, lots of possibilities
- emphasise challenge, fun
- good graphics, appealing but encourage violence
- well-equipped, emotive, aimed at one person
- full of action, adverts not too long
- rewarding, good experience
- grab your attention
- I want to kill people and blow objects up
- honourable and patriotic
- make friends

Why not:

- glorifies war, not true reflection of job
- doesn't show the negatives
- intense action could be off-putting
- not realistic
- blood-thirsty and ready to kill anyone
- risk of death, hard work

8. In Questionnaire 1, you indicated which criteria you find most important in order to consider a career in the Armed Forces. Do you think these have featured enough in the adverts?

Yes: 23% No: 16% To some extent: 61%

9. Do you think the adverts give the viewer a realistic idea of what it is like to be a soldier?

Yes:42%      No: 58%

Why yes?

- Relates to their interests and experience
- show serious side, different situations
- different choices you have to make
- both positive and negative points
- have to work as a team
- shows the things you have to think about in war

Why no?

- much harder than adverts make it out to be
- adverts make it appear risk-free
- show only the good parts
- looks like Call of Duty
- don't show any fighting
- make it seem really fun
- bad food and no sleep in real life
- no death or injury shown
- fails to show living conditions
- doesn't show what they are fighting for
- doesn't show what it's actually like to kill someone
- makes it look easy, very single-minded

10. How can the adverts be improved?

- Showing real action, less of a one-sided view
- show more types of jobs, nurses, submarine, etc.
- relating more to younger audience
- more talking about circumstances, etc.
- can't be any more effective, more real life (coffins) but at the same time show families being proud of their children fighting
- more action
- have a real soldier talk about his job
- adding more information for the audience
- more violence
- more real life footage not acting
- tell you how much you get paid
- actual fight scenes
- show more situations where soldiers have to think and make decisions
- have an interview with a soldier
- be less intense
- more patriotism
- don't make it look so fun
- show proud family and friends
- show someone being shot, show dead people

## Appendix D

### German Questionnaire Results

#### Questionnaire 1

1. German Nationality: Yes= 74                      No= 6
2. Male: 44      Female: 36
3. Age:                      15-18: 54                      19-21: 20                      22+: 6
4. Qualification: Hauptschulabschluss: 14 Realschulabschluss: 19 Fachabitur: 5 Abitur: 42
5. What do you identify with the most?

Identification	1	2	3
Europe	17%	63%	24%
Nordrhein-Westfalen	11%	15%	58%
Germany	72%	22%	18%

6. Are you proud to be German?                      Yes: 56%                      No: 44%

#### 7. Why are you proud?

- You can voice your opinion, democracy
- high living standard (not too much poverty, well developed)
- feel safe, good education, good opportunities
- equality, good organisation
- German football team
- good sense of community
- export world champions, good economy
- glorious past
- people are treated well
- unification
- good food

#### Why are you not proud?

- Germany's past, bad politicians
- WW2
- too average to be proud of it
- national socialism still too recent
- Germans are responsible for so many deaths and a lot of misery
- I haven't done anything to be German, nationality is just a piece of information about a person
- too much unemployment
- being proud has negative connotations
- not much equality, xenophobia
- you get the feeling you are not supposed to be proud
- national pride is often equated to national socialism

8. What is your attitude towards patriotism? What is it influenced by?

- People do not dare to be patriotic because of the past ( people easily call you a Nazi)
- I don't feel any attachment to the nation
- patriotism should be avoided in order to establish a society free of violence
- it is not compatible with unity, equality and freedom
- more should be done about environmental protection on a global level and poverty reduction instead of patriotism
- despite the Nazi past, we have a right to patriotism, but one has to be careful with it
- Germany is still being reduced to its Nazi past
- there is nothing wrong with being proud of Germany
- football world cup
- it is finally acceptable to show the German flag
- there is no patriotism
- Germany is being restricted by other countries' fears
- German music and film industry as a trademark
- one has to be sceptical about patriotism because people easily lose their objectivity
- I don't like patriots and Germany doesn't need any
- patriotism is becoming less and less important, especially because of the EU
- patriotism shouldn't play a big role any more, we live in a multicultural society, globalisation

9. What connects you with other Germans and makes you feel German? Please rank the following terms from one to six.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Traditions</b>	14%	11%	<b>23%</b>	20%	13%	19%
<b>Shared History</b>	10%	9%	13%	15%	19%	<b>34%</b>
<b>Language</b>	<b>31%</b>	25%	18%	11%	10%	5%
<b>Common Characteristics</b>	9%	16%	18%	<b>27%</b>	14%	16%
<b>Consumption of the Same Media</b>	8%	20%	18%	16%	<b>23%</b>	15%
<b>Permanent Residence</b>	<b>29%</b>	23%	15%	9%	18%	6%

10. Do you think a 'good citizen' should be willing to sacrifice his life for his country? Why?

Yes: 28%      No: 72%

Why yes:

- if you can justify it on moral terms
- to show that you support your country
- only in extreme cases like war
- if you are proud of your country, you should defend it
- you should do anything to ensure people's welfare
- you would like other people to do the same for you in extreme cases

- if there was no national identity, Germany would never have become as powerful as it is today

- to defend culture and traditions
- solidarity

Why no :

- my life is too precious to risk it for Germany
- it is not necessary, you should not value your nation too highly
- there is no obligation, but you should try to give something back to your country
- life is too precious to sacrifice it for some higher aims
- dying for your country is pointless
- you shouldn't risk your life for your country but for your values and you always need to be able to justify your actions
- one's individual life has nothing to do with one's nation
- the sacrifice would be too great
- you cannot expect anyone to put their life below the wellbeing of the nation
- you can rebuild a country, but a human being only lives once

- we live in a time where it should no longer be necessary to risk your life for the country
- arguments between two nations should not be fought by their citizens and no one should have to risk their lives for that
- an individual should not subordinate himself to a big organisation
- pacifism, I don't expect it from other people either
- In the twenty first century people should be able to solve conflicts without using violence
- one's own life is more important than anything else
- a person should not risk his life for such a big group of people
- you can never tell who you are actually protecting, instead you should look after individuals
- people have become egotistical and wouldn't risk their lives for me

11. What, off the top of your head, do you associate with the Bundeswehr?

- Safety, time filler
- war, violence, death and destruction
- duty, crises, fear
- foreign missions, tough working conditions
- well paid, good prospects
- helps countries that have political or social problems
- aggressiveness, people who have been in the Bundeswehr have become more aggressive and ready to use violence

- lots on offer, good training
- traumatised people who want to get out of their job
- discipline, strict regime, obedience – sometimes questionable methods
- Afghanistan
- choir, Big Band, best musicians in Germany
- an average army where people drink too much
- peace keeping
- bad food, hard work

- pointless rearmament, sport
- brotherhood, solidarity, memorable experiences
- protector
- puppet of the superpowers
- fight against terrorism, futile missions (Afghanistan) – helpful in the Third World
- army of wimps, archaic institution
- fallen soldiers, cases of abuse, waste of money

12. Is being a soldier a highly regarded job in your eyes? Please explain your opinion .

Yes: 55%      No: 45%

Why no?

- no longer necessary
- work is pointless and wastes money
- violence
- I only know people whose chances of getting a good job are slim that consider joining the Bundeswehr
- I can't imagine taking part in a war
- it is not something to be proud of
- after the atrocities that Germany committed during the Second World War, people in Germany do not want anything to do with soldiers and war
- times in which soldiers were highly regarded are over, today technology is what counts
- soldiers are people that are being turned into machines, people underestimate the profession
- a soldier is just a puppet, soldiers are being equated to murderers
- stereotype = stupid and aggressive, brutality
- glorification of weapons and war, violence does not deserve a high reputation
- people think war is bad and reduce the Bundeswehr to this
- just another job
- soldiers kill people and have to obey orders, even if they don't want to
- Bundeswehr doesn't do much, not very tough

Why yes?

- People who risk their lives deserve to be highly regarded
- hard job, they are protecting the country
- good training
- they show bravery, commitment and courage
- very difficult job, deep conviction
- they put their lives on the line

13. In your opinion, what are the most important criteria when considering a career in the Armed Forces? Please indicate the importance of the following factors (1= most, 7= least).

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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<b>Salary</b>	<b>45%</b>	10%	21%	6%	12%	7%	7%
<b>Reputation</b>	5%	11%	13%	9%	9%	<b>23%</b>	17%
<b>Challenge and Adventure</b>	9%	15%	18%	<b>25%</b>	11%	17%	19%
<b>Contribution to Society</b>	12%	3%	6%	21%	<b>23%</b>	15%	15%
<b>International Climate</b>	2%	6%	10%	10%	17%	18%	<b>21%</b>
<b>Job Security</b>	8%	24%	<b>23%</b>	16%	15%	11%	9%
<b>Training and Progression</b>	19%	<b>31%</b>	9%	12%	13%	9%	12%

14. Can you imagine pursuing a career in the Bundeswehr? Please give reasons.

Yes: 27%      No: 73%

Why yes?

- I would be fighting to protect the country
- many opportunities, challenge, never boring
- excellent training
- curious what it is like
- job with a future
- fun and dedication to the nation
- you learn to be disciplined
- salary, adventure and job security
- only if I can't get any other job

Why not?

- want to do something else with my life
- too dangerous, scared of being sent abroad
- too many risks and rules
- I am not fit enough
- you sign up to kill people in extreme cases
- I want to enjoy my life, violence doesn't solve any problems
- my life is too precious
- I am a pacifist
- don't want to risk my life for conflicts between other people
- old fashioned job

## Questionnaire 2

### 1. What are your first impressions of the army advertisements?

- They use job security and opportunities for progression to advertise the job
- everything is depicted in a very positive light
- exciting and well paid
- you can have a good career with them
- pretty boring, not really like an army
- only positive
- strong emphasis on salary
- in times of economic crises, they advertise with high wages
- hard and difficult job, action packed
- very positive impression because you get an idea of the different positions on offer
- overly uncritical, not informative
- like an action film
- impressive visualisation
- dangerous, fun
- serious, the personal advantages are stressed more than societal obligations
- national tasks, security and crises are ignored
- it is advertised as if there were no risks involved in the job at all
- hardly any information, intellectually undemanding
- the word future does not fit in with war
- aimed at middle and upper classes
- it appeals to men because of the technology
- euphemistic, too perfect
- career aspects are talked about more than the fact that soldiers save lives and bring peace
- war is not mentioned at all even though that is what it's all about
- radio and new TV commercial are rather ridiculous, the other TV commercial is better
- far from depicting reality
- diverse, adventure
- no weapons are shown
- cold, warlike
- superficial, cheap

### 2. Having watched the adverts now, has your opinion about what being a soldier is like changed? If so, why?

Yes: 12%      No: 88%

#### Why yes?

- women are welcome in the Bundeswehr
- diverse jobs

- not only protecting the country
- high expectations both mentally and physically

#### Why no?

- adverts haven't got anything to do with the job
- had the same idea as was shown in the adverts

- bad image
- content not of any significance
- knew a lot about the Bundeswehr before

- adverts only show the good sides of the job
- not everyone can become a pilot or a parachutist
- the commercials omit a lot, e.g. that one might have to kill others
- not very persuasive for people who are critical
- it is only an advert and very different from reality
- seriousness of the profession is completely ignored
- everybody knows that the reality is very different
- you hardly ever see women in the Bundeswehr
- advertising with money but no mentioning of the consequences of joining
- any other job is better than being trained for war
- was already informed about the positives and negatives of the profession through newspaper articles
- not much helpful information
- adverts did not give you any information about what being a soldier is like
- dull and predictable

3. If so, was it a positive or a negative change?

Positive: 13% Negative: 13% (74% = no change)

4. Do the adverts make you proud of the Bundeswehr?

Yes: 20% No: 64% no comment: 16%

5. Do the adverts make you proud of Germany?

Yes: 16% Nein: 67% no comment: 17%

6. Have you found anything out about the army that you didn't know before or discovered a new side that you weren't aware of before? If so, what?

Yes: 22% No: 78%

What?

- good pay
- dangerous
- more interesting than I thought
- women are welcome in the army too
- go to university for free
- diverse jobs, fun, solidarity

7. Did you find the adverts appealing? Please explain your answer

Yes: 51% No: 49%

Why yes?

- Adventure and challenge
- in difficult times, the Bundeswehr provides good training
- well designed adverts, but the perfect faces don't fit
- show the advantages of the Bundeswehr

- the adverts give hope and advertise good prospects
- appealing because of technology (370000 horsepower)
- emphasises challenge, Bundeswehr more like a game rather than a job
- appeals to unemployed people who don't know what else to do
- if you don't know what you want to be yet, good pay, adventure and good

opportunities for progression are certainly appealing

- many people dream of flying a jet
- it is very much aimed at its target audience
- action packed, very creative
- women can join too
- job security, uses current economic instability

Why no?

- over the top, no information
- I don't think the Bundeswehr should advertise at all, especially not when the advert looks like a new game
- a critical take on the profession was missing, but it was good that the adverts did not try to allude to national pride
- adverts seemed very fake, obviously not enough money is spent on them
- no inspiration to make the army into one's career

- not everyone can become a pilot in the army
- humanitarian aspects are much more important than good equipment and a good career
- it was all about the adrenaline, team work was not mentioned at all
- the adverts only show privileged positions in the Bundeswehr, thus embellishing the reality of the average soldier

8. In Questionnaire 1, you indicated which criteria you find most important in order to consider a career in the Armed Forces. Do you think these have featured enough in the adverts?

Yes: 22%      No: 15%      To some extent: 63%

9. Do you think the adverts give the viewer a realistic idea of what it is like to be a soldier? Why (not)?

Yes: 17%      No: 83%

Why yes?

- exciting and interesting,

- gives you an idea of the profession

Why no?

- it is not as adventurous as the adverts, it's very tough and serious
- they only show the positive aspects, strict life and duties are not mentioned

- they only show the things that young people enjoy, stress, fear and killing are not mentioned
- not everyone can get an exciting job in the Bundeswehr
- no one ever takes adverts seriously
- far-fetched, not a normal job

- always tough, you don't get an insight into the life of a soldier
- you don't see one soldier with a weapon in his hand
- one has to obey orders from above

- gives the impression that it is a fun job
- not many people become officers and hardly anyone becomes a pilot, their job doesn't get explained

10. What do you think would make the adverts more appealing and more effective?

- More information, better insight into the day to day routines
- more about the actual people in the Bundeswehr
- longer adverts, explain all the different areas of work
- less promises, emphasise the positive contribution to society
- show that soldiers have emotions and that they are not all about the adrenaline
- show more teamwork

- show the negative aspects as well
- don't use the word future all the time
- show how the soldiers stand up for others and save them
- it is difficult to achieve a positive image without patriotism
- show the fight against terrorism
- more transparency
- show real footage, personal stories, more like the British adverts, refute stereotypes

## Appendix E

### Interview with a Young Recruit

I = Interviewer

R= Recruit

I: First of all, when did you join the Armed Forces?

R: August last year, so 2009.

I: And how long are you planning on staying with the RAF?

R: I have got a contract for 18 years.

I: First question then: Before joining the RAF, what did you think it was going to be like?

R: Well, plenty of flying I suppose. You know, the day to day work here is flying as opposed to anything else. But then I joined specifically to be a pilot, so that's really a very general answer. But early and late nights and obviously you can go on operations at any time, so you never know where you are going to be. For the first five years we are in training so I have got no idea year by year where I am going to end up. Like I was only aware that I was going to be here for two months three weeks before I went. I could have been anywhere for up to a year. After that, I found out where I am going next a few weeks after I had been here.

I: What was your primary motivation for joining the RAF?

R: I suppose the main motivation was the challenge and the adventure that you get with the job. I didn't know all the way through uni that I was going to join the forces. But I was in the University Air Squadron which gives you a little insight into what life in the forces is like. And I thought: "actually this is awesome" and I got to the end of my degree and I thought I can go and do artificial intelligence and get paid for doing a hard boring job or go and get paid less but do a much more challenging and much more exciting job with the air force. And so I went for the air force instead.

I: Did any other factors influence you?

R: Yes, it was good doing something that wasn't about the money that was really a big thing for me. I think a lot of people end up doing jobs for the sake of the cash instead of doing something that they really want to do. I always maintained that I would do something that I wanted to do. And it's a bit cheesy but in the air force when you are doing exercise or training; you get a sense of teamwork that you just don't get in a private sector work environment, because you are all working together. And it doesn't purely have to be because you are in a life and death situation, but you do have this overwhelming sense of team bonds that you just don't get outside. It was a flavour of that that I got while I was at uni from the air squadron. It was something that I really liked and wanted to keep going.

I: What impact has recruitment material had on your decision?

R: Not a huge one really. In the Scottish school system, I went to a comprehensive there, there is pretty much no military advertising whatsoever. Maybe if you talk to your career adviser in your last year but nothing else. Throughout school I had never really paid any attention to any adverts or anything. It was the air squadron at uni that asked me if I wanted to learn how to fly for free and I said yes, what is the catch?

I: What's it like in the air squadron?

R: It gets bad press for being a bit of a drinking club because you get cheap booze associations which is one way of getting the students involved. But they teach you to fly in return for you putting in a few mandatory training camps in the year. You can stay for as long as you want, but then they might kick you out if you don't put the effort in. It's quite hard to get in. The army have an equivalent – the Officer Training Corps- in a city maybe they have about 400 people in one of those because it's really cheap to run. But because in the RAF they teach you how to fly, it is necessarily that much more exclusive. For example in Edinburgh, our air squadron covered the whole Scottish east coast, 9 unis and there was maybe 80 of us in total. It had to be that much more select.

I: How do they select you?

R: You are recruited at Fresher's Fair and you get a quick little interview there and if they liked you, they would ask you back for a longer interview. They do about a 45 minute interview and at the end of that they give you a few team-building exercises and see how you perform in that and then they make a recommendation whether or not you get the invitation in or not. As long as you put the effort in, you get to stay in it for up to four years.

I: Is there any pressure to join afterwards?

R: I was really expecting it to be quite like: "You should think about joining. You should really think about it". But it wasn't like that at all. It was really easy-going. I think it varies quite a lot between the different universities but much more so between the university air squadron and the officer training corps. I think in the army they eventually grab people and go: "Right you have been here for three years, go join the army". But with the air force, they don't expect commitment from you and I think that's a sign of them using it as a tool and trying to bring a more positive military image to future captains of industry. If you are a good student candidate at university, then you are probably going to go on to do good things at your work so in their view it's good to have supportive personnel in industry. That said, it does still work as a recruitment tool. But there is no pressure there. I got to my last year at uni and my boss suggested that I might as well put my application in, there is no harm in trying, but it was clearly just a 'if you want to', it wasn't a serious request.

I: How did you deal with the fact that you might have to risk your life on the job?

R: I mean that's the pretty big thing when joining the military. To be honest it doesn't bother me as much as it bothers my parents. Parents are always going to be more worried...I don't know, I don't know how I deal with that...

I: Did you think about it a lot before?

R: Yes, I did think about it and you are especially conscious of it when there is already wars going on at the time and when we have not really had a period of time where we have been out of war for more than a couple of years at a time. There are no illusions, especially when you are joining the British military that you will definitely see some active service at some point in your life. The way I look at it is, supposing I end up flying helicopters, then what I am doing is I am picking up guys who..you know if I am getting shot at in my helicopter, I might think: "S\*\*\* I might die", but the thing is I might be doing that but I am picking up guys who have been shot at for two weeks and I am trying to get them home. So really I can't complain about getting in danger when I am trying to get other people out of danger. It's a complete team mentality thing. You are always trying to look out for each other. It's hard to think of it purely in terms of just you on your own fighting and then dying. If you focus on that, it is quite an unhealthy way of thinking because you constantly think about dying whereas like this is much more about trying to get your team back - trying to stay alive rather than trying not to die.

I: You said at the beginning you joined for the adventure and the challenge.

R: Yes, don't get me wrong. It's not like I am sitting there going: "I want to go to war. Give me a challenge"! It's not like that. A huge amount of the challenge actually comes from the training and you get that all across the forces. There is always going to be a fair amount of challenge, especially if you get deployed into theatre, obviously the challenge is incredible and it's horrific work. You are not enjoying yourself out there. And to be honest, there are a lot of the parts in training where you are not having a good time. The challenge is massive and the feeling of achievement once you have done it is awesome. Showing that you want to rise to the challenge is also part of the selection process.

I: What role did patriotism play in your decision?

R: I wouldn't say I am very patriotic. I think patriotism is good in measured amounts, but you can quite easily get far too carried away. If you become extremely national, then it starts to have an extremely negative effect on neighbouring countries. As a patriot, you say: "my country is great", which is fine, because you're supporting your own industry, your armed forces, your own society. But it is when you start supporting your own country at the severe expense of your neighbouring nations because if everyone turned round and did that, you start having serious problems. It works in a balance but you have got to be careful. It can easily become extremist. I am proud of my country, but I am perfectly happy for you to be proud of your country.

I: How do you see the military profession in comparison to other jobs?

R: There is a massive national responsibility. You know you are sent somewhere as a country so you do feel responsible for your country. But recently there has been a lot of disillusionment within the military itself because traditionally Britain has had a really good reputation for being involved in wars that were entirely just like the Battle of Britain, which is still one of our proudest moments in history and was a perfectly just war. It was the same with the Falklands and Gulf War 1, where Iraq invaded Kuwait which were justifiable wars. Whereas after that, it gets a bit woolly and as soon as you are saying now we're just going after dictators. You are kind of just rampaging and you pick and choose

and then leave a mess. Of course they've picked up on the fact that they have to clean up the mess now but the overwhelming feeling is that Tony Blair was using the military as another way of getting what he wanted as opposed to a focus on national interests but not so much national economic interests. When there is no other connection than economic ties, that when it gets disillusioning and that is genuinely something that keeps bothering me now, when you see guys coming back and you ask: "What were they doing there in the first place? Why did they get sent out there? A lot of guys do join up because they want to do the whole defend the country thing and do have a strong sense of nationalism. But how much of a threat was Iraq or Afghanistan to Britain? A lot of the public don't even know what we are doing out there. It is now much harder to justify.

I: You have sort of already answered my next question. How do you deal with the fact that you might have to do something you don't agree with?

R: When you sign on the dotted line, you are perfectly aware of the fact that you are entitled to your own opinion but you are also under a completely different set of rules. Once you are in the military, you can theoretically go to jail if you turn up late in the morning or if you don't shave. If you did it persistently, it would be a prisonable offence. In the army, you do as you are told. In fairness, you are also told that you are not obliged to follow an illegal order. The institution just works a lot better like that.

I: What about tradition and history? How do they influence military life?

R: Tradition and history play a pretty big role. I think in Britain there is a huge amount of pride in tradition. The RAF is nearly 100 years old, yet it gets a lot of stick from the army and navy for being such a new institution. That gives you an idea of how important tradition is. I personally think there is a certain level of pride in the Battle of Britain stuff and the air force attitude in general.

## Interview with a Veteran

V= Veteran

I= Interviewer

I: First of all, when did you join the RAF?

V: I joined the armed forces in 1958.

I: And how long were you in the RAF?

V: 37 years.

I: Can you remember at all what you thought it would be like before joining the armed forces?

V: Yes, I had a good idea because all my family had been in the armed forces.

I: What was your main motivation for signing on?

V: I suppose it was a continuation of the family tradition. They all served in the Royal Navy.

I: How did people obtain information about the profession back then? Was there any recruitment material around?

V: No, in those days you had to go to a recruitment office to get the 'propaganda'. You popped into a recruitment office and asked them for literature. If you were lucky you escaped, but they tried hard to sign people on. But you have to remember that national service was still in when I joined.

I: So did you do the national service first or how did it work?

V: No, I could have possibly been called up for national service. It was coming to an end, but when I joined, there was lots of national service people working alongside me.

I: So how did the recruitment people try to get young people to sign up then?

V: Money. Normally a married national serviceman got £1.50 a week and his wife got an allowance. But the usual bait dangling over your head was: "If you sign on, you will a gratuity or you get an increased salary. So many people who came in for two years (of national service) actually couldn't survive on the money and signed on for three years so they got extra money. The other thing was if you wanted a particular trade, it was:" if you want to do that, we can get you into it". And you had to sign on for longer to get a particular trade. I would say nearly always it was the money that was dangling over your head.

I: How long did you originally sign on for?

V: 12 years with the intention of not going beyond that. I even turned down a promotion. But then I applied to extend my contract.

I: Ok. What role did tradition and history play during your time with the armed forces?

V: It has most certainly changed over time. There is a different slant on the armed forces today. It used to be about defending the country. But these days that involves being in another country 300-400 miles away. The Falklands War was justified because it was British territory, but Iraq and Afghanistan I don't agree with one little bit. We're fighting a war for what? The death toll rises and its needless.

I: How did you personally deal with having to do things that you didn't agree with?

V: When you join the armed forces you surrender your freedom. You have to obey. It looks after you very well until you disobey. Lots of things that I did I didn't agree with. It's very difficult in this day and age. During the Cold War it was very much us and them, but now it's terrorism.

I: How did you deal with the fact that you might lose your life on the job?

V: You never think about losing your life, do you? I have been in a couple of sticky situations, but you don't consider it's going to happen to you. I believe in fate. If I die tomorrow, that's how my life has been mapped out. But you don't think for one moment that you are going to die. I have served with people who were killed whilst doing their job. But you can't go through life thinking: "Is it going to happen to me?"

I: What about before you joined up? Did you think much about it then?

V: No it's not something that I ever really considered. You know it's a dangerous job but you don't think about it. It will happen to somebody else, but not you.

I: Did 'doing your bit for the nation' feature in your career choice at all?

V: I have never really considered that. You go (abroad) because you've got to go. I am very proud of Britain and its traditions and history. What I like about the British way of life is we are an extremely tolerant nation.

I: Do you think motivations have changed over time?

V: Yes I do. Unemployment. A lot of people who join the armed forces now can't get work so the option is to join the military, particularly the army. So yes there has been a change in motivation. Unemployment is a great motivation to join. But today people have to want to join the armed forces, they no longer have to. It's not driven by serve Queen and Country; it's driven by what affects them. There are people who see being in the military as a career now and they want to get all the way to the top, but I think they are quite unique now.

## Interview with Bundeswehr Officer Candidate

(own translation)

R = Recruit

I = Interviewer

I: Why did you join the armed forces? What were your motivations?

R: At the time when I was applying to join the Bundeswehr, my main goal was to secure a good future for myself. I wanted to achieve this through an academic education, a fixed salary and a secure job. I did not think much about what a role as a soldier or officer in the army entailed. It wasn't until after I had enlisted and started my job that I realised that there are many other aspects on top of the above mentioned which in fact are much more important. It is about camaraderie, taking on responsibility, learning new skills – you are kind of thrown in at the deep end as you are in charge of others right from the beginning and are expected to pass on your knowledge to them. You also learn to go to the limits of your mental and physical abilities – territory that until you join the armed forces remains unexplored. You are required to make do without luxuries, are exposed to situations of physical and mental stress and at the same time need to be able to make important decisions that could affect a large number of people. I wasn't aware of these responsibilities before I joined the army, but during training, you learn to deal with them successfully.

I: What kind of reactions have you had from the public?

R: You hardly ever hear positive comments about a career in the Bundeswehr, but they do exist. On occasions such as open days, exhibitions and fundraisers for the upkeep of war memorials you get into contact with people who are open and friendly towards the armed forces. These people praise the work that soldiers do, their sense of responsibility and discipline. I personally have not yet encountered people drawing historical comparisons with the Bundeswehr's predecessors. It is usually comments by elderly people when they see you in uniform that make you think and sometimes urge you to correct them. These comments are mostly about the changing role of the Bundeswehr (from a territorial army to acting under the auspices of an international command) or the fact that training today is rather different from how it was a few decades ago. The role of the Bundeswehr has experienced some fundamental changes due to the change in international relations. Whilst it was focused on defending German territory during the Cold War, emphasis today lies on conflict prevention, fighting terrorism and supporting allies. Although defending our borders remains the Bundeswehr's primary purpose, it has become much less important as we are surrounded by allies. Instead, it has become much more important to ensure safety and stability across Europe and the whole world. Part of this is to make sure that conflicts that threaten the lives of many people and their economy are avoided or kept to a minimum.

I: How do you see this new extended role?

R: I believe that missions abroad are crucial as one cannot stop shootings over the phone or the internet. Taking into account the role of today's Bundeswehr, one has to consider oneself as a European soldier and that is exactly what I do. Since Germany is part of Europe, I don't feel there is any discrepancy between feeling German and European. As a matter of fact, soldiers who are deployed abroad wear two crests – the German one and that of their international or European command.

I have never been abroad as you can only be deployed once you have completed training.

I: How do you feel about active service and the potential dangers of the job?

R: Having completed three years of training, I am currently studying and disruptions in the form of deployment on foreign missions are rare. After finishing my degree, I will have another five to six years of service left and deployment abroad is likely. Although the Bundeswehr can force you to take part, this hardly ever happens. Most soldiers wish to be deployed which is good as it shows they are fully motivated. I want to get used to my comrades and army life before I get stationed abroad since I will completely rely on them and vice versa.

## Interview with German Veteran

(own translation)

V = Veteran

I = Interviewer

I: Why did you join the army?

V: I just wanted to leave home. Get away from everything. My parents argued a lot. I wanted to leave, see something new, have an adventure.

I: Were there other factors that motivated you?

V: Well it was mainly getting away from my parents. But I am from a fairly small town and me and my friend just wanted to experience something new and different. A lot of young men did this in 1956. We all had to go and do national service the following year anyway so it was just a way to become more independent quicker. Also, you got to travel a lot with the Bundeswehr. Training camps and moving to new barracks. It was the longing for a less controlled lifestyle that motivated us.

I: How did young men get informed about the military? Was there any recruitment material?

V: The only recruitment materials were adverts in the press and on the radio. And me and my friend saw an advert in the local newspaper and decided to sign up after reading that.

I: How did the recent history and military traditions back then influence Bundeswehr recruitment?

V: The role of the Bundeswehr was portrayed to be solely about ensuring safety and stability in the state. Tradition and history did not play any part. The country had not come to terms with its Nazi past so the adverts were all about the beginning of a new era and distanced themselves from the Bundeswehr's predecessor.

I: How was German military history portrayed at the time?

V: Hardly at all. We were shown documentaries filmed by the Americans about the liberation of the concentration camps and the piles of corpses that they found. Those images left a mark on us. It was however a bit difficult because our mentors had served in the Third Reich and although they did not undermine these sessions, they did not promote them much either. There was discussion and certain aspects were mentioned with a certain level of pride.

I: Do you think Germany's military history, the Second World War in particular, still has an impact on the image of the Bundeswehr today?

V: Yes I do. Maybe not to the same extent as it used to at the beginning. At the beginning, when I was walking around Hamburg in uniform, I would get bullied a lot. I think this negative image is not a prevalent anymore, but it has certainly not vanished completely.

I: What role does patriotism play in your life?

V: I identify with my country. I like being German, but am not so attached to my country that I cannot benefit from the diversity to be found in other cultures. But I will always support my country.

I: Being a soldier potentially involves risking your life. How did you feel about that when you signed up?

V: Well, that is what being a soldier is all about I guess. But until the war in Yugoslavia, that wasn't really something that German soldiers had to consider much. They did not really get involved in any missions abroad. But these days, it is definitely something that plays on people's minds before signing up. It is one thing to think about it from a distance, but a completely different matter to actually be in that situation. I didn't once think about putting my life at risk for my country when I joined the Bundeswehr.

## Appendix F

### ***PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET***

Title of Project: An investigation of the relationship between national armies and the concept of national identity with particular reference to army recruitment campaigns in Germany and Britain

Please will you take part in a study which investigates to what extent army TV advertisement campaigns in both Britain and Germany are shaped by national identity and a nation's history as part of an MPhil thesis conducted at the University of Birmingham.

You have been asked to take part as you form part of the target audience of these adverts. The adverts are primarily aimed at young people who are in the process of choosing a career. The research is however not intended to increase the effectiveness of recruitment advertising.

You will be required to fill in a short questionnaire before seeing the recruitment advertisements, then watch the adverts and fill in another short questionnaire about what you have just seen. There is also potential for a discussion of these adverts if the students wish to talk about them in a group. Participation is completely voluntary and you can choose to withdraw at any time. Questionnaires are anonymous and participant confidentiality will be ensured at all times.

The survey will take place during a normal school lesson in the classroom with the teacher present at all times. It will not take longer than the duration of one lesson. As well as the potential discussion of the adverts with the rest of the class, you are also able to ask any questions you have got at the end of the session.

The questionnaires will only be dealt with by the researcher once they have been collected and no one else will have access to them. The questionnaires will be kept until September 2010 when the information gathered from this survey will be published in an MPhil thesis.

If you would like to have access to the results of this study or have any further questions, please get in touch with the researcher or the supervisor.

Contact details are as follows:

Katharina Boehmker email: [REDACTED]

Dr Joanne Sayner email: [REDACTED]

## **CONSENT FORM**

Title of Study: An investigation of the relationship between national armies and the concept of national identity with particular reference to army recruitment campaigns in Germany and Britain

**Please answer the following questions by circling your responses:**

Have you read and understood the information sheet about this study? YES NO

Have you been able to ask questions about this study? YES NO

Have you received enough information about this study? YES NO

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from this study? YES NO

At any time? YES NO

Without giving a reason for your withdrawal? YES NO

Your responses will be anonymised before they are analysed.

Do you give permission for the researcher to have access to your anonymised responses? YES NO

Do you agree to take part in this study? YES NO

Your signature will certify that you have voluntarily decided to take part in this research study having read and understood the information in the sheet for participants. It will also certify that you have had adequate opportunity to discuss the study with an investigator and that all questions have been answered to your satisfaction.

**Signature of participant:**..... **Date:**.....

**Name (block letters):**.....

**Signature of investigator:**..... **Date:**.....

Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.

Katharina Boehmker

Email: [REDACTED]