On Military Memoirs

Soldier-authors, publishers,

plots and motives

A mixed-method study into military Afghanistan

autobiographies from the US, the UK,

Canada, Germany and the Netherlands

published between 2001 and 2010.

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Over militaire memoires
Militaire auteurs, uitgevers, plotten en motieven
Een mixed-method studie naar militaire autobiografieën over Afghanistan uit de VS, het VK, Canada, Duitsland en Nederland uitgegeven tussen 2001 en 2010

Thesis

to obtain the degree of Doctor from the
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by command of the
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by

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born in Doetinchem, the Netherlands

ERASMUS UNIVERSITEIT ROTTERDAM

Hoc vere historiam belli contextere dextra,

Si calamum arripiat quae tenuit gladium.

The true history of war is best written,

When he who wields the sword takes up the pen

Francisco Balbi de Correggio (1585) (cited in Harari, 2004: 29)

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Contents

Contents

Summary

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Although there are quite a few soldiers who write autobiographies about their deployment experiences, a comprehensive profile does not exist that provides reliable, quantifiable insight into 21st century soldier-authors that exceeds the Anglo-American view, especially when it comes to (self-published) books.

This study makes up for these deficiencies by studying all non-fiction, autobiographical books, first published between 2001 and 2010 in Dutch, English or German in the US, the UK, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands that (mainly) deal with the deployment experiences of military personnel in Afghanistan and are intended for the public at large.

It provides answers to four questions:

1. Who are the soldiers who write autobiographical books about their deployment in Afghanistan?

2. Who are their publishers?

3. What do they write about?

4. Why do they say they write?

To answer these questions, this study uses statistical analysis in combination with qualitative descriptive coding techniques to provide a cross-cultural analysis of five different Western countries. It is an interdisciplinary study, using and combining theories and methods from five different fields: sociology, history, literature, psychology and anthropology.

One of the conclusions from this research is that in the countries studied there is a very strong relationship between the number of soldiers that have been deployed to Afghanistan and the number of books produced. For every 6,000 soldiers in Afghanistan, one extra mission-related autobiographical book is published.

Another main conclusion is that the soldier-authors of these books are only partly (when it comes to branch of service and sex) representative of the average soldier. Particularly noticeable is that where the average soldier is deployed with his own unit, the average soldier-*author* is often (50%) individually deployed. This result was predicted by what is called in this study the 'fringe writer hypothesis'.

In some countries, the majority (Germany) or even all military autobiographies (the UK, Canada) are published by publishers that invest at their own cost and risk in these books ('traditional publishers'), in other countries (the US, the Netherlands) there is also a large self-publishing market for military books. Most military autobiographies are still published with traditional publishers, which are hardly ever specialized military publishers, but normally general publishers. These traditional publishers are looking for the traditional soldier: a soldiers who has been deployed more than once, preferable with his or her own unit, is a professional, not a reservist, with a junior rank and a kinetic[1] background. This ideal commercial writer, however, neither exactly resembles the average soldier, nor the average soldier-author.

Whether a soldier-author's book will have a positive or a negative plot can be reasonably predicted by looking at two author characteristics. Authors who still work for the Ministry of Defence when their book is first published generally write positive plots, and kinetic soldiers predominantly write negative plots.

The research into plots confirmed Harari's revelatory plot thesis, which predicts that the majority of contemporary military autobiographies either has a disenchantment plot or a growth plot. At the same time it showed that Fussell's disillusionment thesis (that military autobiographies have predominantly disenchantment plots) is no longer valid in the 21st century Afghanistan autobiographies that are written by professional soldiers, instead of conscripts.

The specific choice of plot is country-dependent and related to that country's strategic narrative on war in general, and on the mission in Afghanistan in particular. In a nowadays pacifist country like Germany, the disenchantment plots prevail, for example, whereas in a militarily ambitious country such as the UK growth and action plots dominate.

Almost all soldier-authors researched offer some kind of motivation why they write. Four main reasons can be distinguished: getting recognition, enabling change, helping others or helping themselves. What is striking is that intrapersonal reasons (such as helping others or enabling change) are far more common than personal reasons such as helping yourself. Self-help motives in general are mostly given by individually deployed soldiers.

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1   Kinetic soldiers are soldiers who use their weapon primarily for offensive instead of defensive purposes

The study ends with some recommendations for further research, that include validating the results found in this study by looking at other countries, non-military autobiographies books and by researching the illustrations found in these books.

Samenvatting
(Summary in Dutch)

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Hoewel er aardig wat soldaten zijn die autobiografieën schrijven over hun uitzending, bestaat er geen uitgebreid profiel van deze schrijvende soldaten. Wat bekend is, gaat vaak alleen over Amerikaanse en Engels schrijvers en wat ontbreekt, is een betrouwbaar, kwantificeerbaar inzicht in 21[e]-eeuwse militaire schrijvers, zeker als het gaat om (zelfuitgegeven) boeken.

Deze studie probeert deze missende gegevens boven tafel te krijgen door alle non-fictie, autobiografische boeken te bestuderen die tussen 2001 en 2010 zijn gepubliceerd in het Nederlands, Engels of Duits in de VS, het Verenigd Koninkrijk, Canada, Duitsland en Nederland, die (voornamelijk) betrekking hebben op uitzendervaring in Afghanistan en die bedoeld zijn voor een breed publiek.

Deze studie geeft antwoord op vier vragen:

1. Wie zijn die soldaten die autobiografische boeken schrijven over hun uitzendervaringen in Afghanistan?

2. Wie zijn hun uitgevers?

3. Waarover schrijven ze?

4. Waarom zeggen ze dat ze schrijven?

Om deze vragen te beantwoorden, wordt gebruik gemaakt van statistische analyse in combinatie met kwalitatieve coderingstechnieken die samen een cross-culturele analyse van vijf verschillende westerse landen opleveren. Het is een interdisciplinaire studie die gebruik maakt van theorieën en methoden uit vijf verschillende disciplines: sociologie, geschiedenis, literatuurwetenschappen, psychologie en antropologie.

Een van de conclusies van dit onderzoek is dat er een erg sterke relatie bestaat tussen het aantal soldaten dat naar Afghanistan is uitgezonden en het aantal boeken dat wordt gepubliceerd in de landen die bestudeerd zijn. Van elke 6.000 soldaten die in Afghanistan zijn geweest, publiceert er één een boek.

De militaire schrijvers van deze boeken lijken maar voor een klein deel (als het gaat om de verdeling over krijgsmachtdeel en over sekse) op de gemiddelde soldaat. Wat met name opvalt, is dat waar de gemiddelde soldaat met zijn eigen team wordt uitgezonden, de gemiddelde militaire schrijver vaak (50%) individueel wordt uitgezonden. Dit resultaat was voorspeld op basis van wat in deze studie de 'fringe writer hypothesis[2]' wordt genoemd.

In sommige landen worden alle militaire autobiografieën (Verenigd Koninkrijk, Canada) of de meerderheid ervan (Duitsland) uitgegeven door traditionele uitgevers: uitgevers die voor eigen kosten en eigen risico investeren in deze boeken. In andere landen (de VS, Nederland) wordt tevens in grote mate gebruik gemaakt van zelfuitgevers. De meeste militaire boeken worden echter nog steeds door traditionele uitgevers uitgegeven en dit zijn vrijwel nooit uitgevers die gespecialiseerd zijn in militaire onderwerpen, maar meestal algemene uitgevers. Deze traditionele uitgevers zijn op zoek naar traditionele militairen: soldaten die meer dan eens uitgezonden zijn geweest, bij voorkeur met hun eigen team, die beroepsmilitair zijn (geen reservist), met een junior rang en een kinetische[3] achtergrond. Deze commercieel ideale schrijvers lijken echter noch op de gemiddelde soldaat, noch op de gemiddelde schrijvende militair.

Of een militaire autobiografie een positief of een negatief plot heeft, is redelijk voorspelbaar op basis van twee karakteristieken van de schrijver. Auteurs die nog steeds werken voor het Ministerie van Defensie als hun boek voor het eerst uitkomt schrijven over het algemeen positieve plots, terwijl kinetische soldaten meestal negatieve plots schrijven.

Het onderzoek naar plots bevestigt de 'openbaringsplot hypothese[4]' van Harari die voorspelt dat de meerderheid van de hedendaagse militaire autobiografieën ofwel een ontgoochelingsplot[5] ofwel een groeiplot heeft. Tegelijkertijd laat het zien dat de disillusie hypothese van Fussell (dat militaire autobiografieën voornamelijk ontgoochelingsplots hebben) niet langer geldig is in 21[e]-eeuwse Afghanistan autobiografieën die voornamelijk door beroepssoldaten worden geschreven, in plaats van door dienstplichtigen.

De specifieke keuze voor een bepaald soort plot is land-afhankelijk en hangt samen met de manier waarop in een land in het algemeen naar oorlog wordt gekeken en meer specifiek met de houding ten opzichte van de missie in Afghanistan. In Duitsland, wat tegenwoordig

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2   Zelfkant schrijver hypothese

3   Kinetische soldaten zijn soldaten die hun wapen in eerste instantie offensief gebruiken, in plaats van voor defensieve doeleinden.

4   Revelatory plot thesis

5   Disenchantment plot

een pacifistisch land is, overheersen ontgoochelingsplots bijvoorbeeld, terwijl in een militair ambitieus land als het Verenigd Koninkrijk de groei- en actieplots overheersen.

Bijna alle onderzochte militaire schrijvers geven een of andere reden waarom ze schrijven. Vier hoofdredenen kunnen worden onderscheiden: erkenning krijgen, veranderingen in gang zetten, anderen helpen en zichzelf helpen. Wat opvalt, is dat intrapersoonlijke redenen (zoals anderen helpen of veranderingen in gang zetten) veel vaker genoemd worden dan persoonlijke redenen zoals jezelf helpen. In het algemeen worden zelfhulpmotieven voornamelijk door individueel uitgezonden militairen gegeven.

Het onderzoek eindigt met enkele aanbevelingen voor mogelijk toekomstig onderzoek, waaronder het valideren van de resultaten van deze studie door naar andere landen te kijken, naar niet-militaire autobiografieën en door de illustraties in deze boeken nader te bestuderen.

Preface

Preface

When I applied for a job as an assistant professor at the Netherlands Defence Academy (NLDA) in Breda, I was asked whether I wanted to write a PhD thesis during this posting. My firm answer was "no". I had just come from a hectic job, working as the deputy personal advisor to the Dutch Chief of Defence[1], and looked forward to a job that fitted into a 40-hour working week. Writing a PhD thesis while working as an assistant professor seemed like something that would not fit that schedule at all.

With the new job in Breda also came more leisure time. Not so much because the job proved less demanding than my previous one, but because I was no longer commuting over three hours a day as I was billeted in Breda during weekdays. This leisure time was spent, among others, on writing an autobiographical military memoir about my experiences in Afghanistan as chief ground and air transport for NATO (Kleinreesink, 2012b). This was not entirely of my own accord. Although writing a book was somewhere on my bucket list, when I was approached by Dutch publisher Meulenhoff, at first I gave another firm "no". From writing two chapters for the military anthology *Task Force Uruzgan* (Kleinreesink, 2009a, 2009b) I knew how much effort just writing a decent chapter takes. But the promise of being personally coached by Meulenhoff's non-fiction editor Thijs Bartels won me over to the daunting task of writing an entire book.

Thijs Bartels was not the only persuasive man in my life at the time. My new boss, Professor Sjo Soeters, proved to have a great ability to kindle enthusiasm for research. Knowing that I was working on a military memoir in my spare time, he kept suggesting to start some kind of related research, on auto-ethnography or military autobiographies. His enthusiasm, combined with the fact that writing a PhD study no longer seemed as daunting as it had before after having finished an entire book, led to me asking the Royal Netherlands Air Force to extend my period as an assistant professor. They gave me three years and eight months (later reduced to three years and five months due to a massive reorganization) to gratify my curiosity about those other soldiers who, like me, wrote books on their experiences in Afghanistan.

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1   Plaatsvervangend Chef Kabinet Commandant der Strijdkrachten

The next step was trying to find a second supervisor, next to Professor Soeters, to help with the thesis. This proved to be more difficult than expected as I was intent on getting answers on questions that required knowledge from fields as different as sociology, psychology, history, literature and anthropology, combining both a qualitative (text) and quantitative (numbers) approach. But in the end we were pleased to find Professor Henri Beunders willing to embark on this journey into the unknown territory of quantifiable autobiography research.

And what a journey it was. To my surprise, my experience writing a non-fiction work proved rather useful in writing this thesis. It not only gave me confidence that it is possible to write 60,000+ words in a process that is at the same time both orderly and chaotically creative, it had also honed my writing skills. I found out that literary and academic writing both require the same basic skill set and that writing is an activity that gets me into flow quickly. I had no idea that scientific research could be so much fun! All-in-all, writing a PhD thesis even fitted into a 40-hour working week.

What follows is my search for the facts and figures behind soldier-authors: who are they, who are their publishers, what do they write about and why do they write?

One of the things that this research will show is that being deployed is not a neutral event in a soldier's life. It changes them. Sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. When I attended an exhibition of veterans' art[2], I saw a powerful painting that seemed to express that idea. It was a self portrait of a soldier who has been changed by his deployment experiences, in the same way as the autobiographical books from this study are self portraits of people who have changed.

From that moment on, whenever I saw my PhD thesis in my mind's eye, it always had this painting on the cover. Its painter, Stef Fridael, and its current owner, the Nationaal Militair Museum[3], were kind enough to make that idea come true.

They were not the only helpful people. I could not have written this study without the help of innumerable people. Not only writing a book, but science in general is definitely a team effort. I would first of all like to thank the Royal Netherlands Air Force and the Netherlands Defence Academy for this unique opportunity and both supervisors Professor Beunders and Professor Soeters for their unrelenting enthusiasm and support.

■
2   Dutch foundation for Veterans Art, 2013 Veterans' Day in The Hague, the art tent.

3   Dutch National Military Museum

The people from the Netherlands Defence Academy's library, especially Ad Stoop(†), Jack de Graaf, Marianne Marijnissen and Mirjam Kruize, require specific thanks for all the extra support they have provided. I now fully understand why the library was rated so highly by the university accreditation committee.

Then I would like to thank my research assistants for all the work they have done for me: Theo Volkerink and Tristan de Jong for managing my references and Krisha Adhikari for constructing the appendix with all 54 book (Appendix H). I am also very grateful to Irene van Kemenade and Everdien Rietstap who both offered to edit the final draft of this manuscript.

Then I would like to thank all the soldier-authors who have answered the additional questions I had about their books and themselves.

I would like to thank Rachel Woodward and Neil Jenkings for their kind invitation to come to Newcastle University for ten days of immersion into contemporary British military memoirs.

Further, I would like to thank the Promo Sisters (Mirjam Grandia, Irene Lubberman-Schrotenboer and Julia Wijnmaalen) for their moral support during our joint efforts to write our PhDs.

I would like to thank NLDA colleagues Frans Osinga, Bas Rietjens, Floribert Baudet and Martijn Kitzen for providing me with relevant books.

For providing me with research material, I would like to thank Marion Bogers for her ready-to-use NATO information on Afghanistan, Uwe Michl for providing me with personnel information on the German Bundeswehr, Marcin Sinczuch for his English translation of Polish research into Afghanistan veterans, Delphine Resteigne for providing me with Belgian information, and Rachel Woodward and Nielsen BookScan for providing me with UK sales data that was part of the ESRC project 'The Social Production of the Contemporary British Military Memoir'[4]. I would also like to thank Dora Jansen, Gerbert van Loenen, Natasja van der Laan and Michiel Rutten for the data behind the TNS NIPO Trouw Schrijfonderzoek 2007[5], even though this dataset was not used in this study after all.

Glossary

Glossary

3D	Defence, Development and Diplomacy
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
AoO	Area of Operations
CAN	Canada
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation
DoD	Department of Defence (US)
DSM-IV	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (4th edition)
ETT	Embedded Training Team
EU	European Union
EUPOL	European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Germany
IDEA	Integrated Development of Entrepreneurial Activities
IISS	International Institute of Strategic Studies
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NL	The Netherlands
NLDA	Netherlands Defence Academy
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OMLT	Operational Mentor and Liaison Team
OpSec	Operational Security
PDD	Post-Deployment Disorientation
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
TNO	Dutch Organization for Applied Scientific Research
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
US	United States of America
VIP	Very Important Person

Chapter One:
Introduction

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1.1   Problem Statement

The First World War started in 1914, now exactly 100 years ago. It was a war that is sometimes referred to as the 'literary war', as it was documented extensively by its participants. As Steven Pinker puts it in *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, his study on the decline of violence: "By the late 1920s, a genre of bitter reflections was making the tragedy and futility of the war common knowledge" (Pinker, 2011: 246). This literary surge, however, was not a one-off phenomenon, as soldiers nowadays still write down their war experiences, and they did so before this war as well.

With the end of the Cold War, a period ended in which military personnel was mainly focussed on territorial defence. With it came the advent of large-scale peacekeeping and war fighting missions in foreign countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, leading to large numbers of soldiers with deployment experience, 'veterans' as they are called in military parlance. These soldiers came back with stories of their wars, as did their predecessors from earlier wars, such as the First World War, the Second World War, the Dutch East Indies and Vietnam. Stories they shared orally, but also expressed for example through art[1], literature, video diaries (Telegraaf, n.d.), documentaries (Robbins, 2007), blogs and autobiographical books.

It seems almost as if there is nothing new under the sun. However, what has changed recently is that the reach of these stories has increased dramatically. The handwritten letter to dad and mum has become the e-mail newsletter to family and friends, or even the blog or Facebook page visible to the entire world. The military memoir that was carefully selected for its literary qualities by a renowned publisher is nowadays supplemented by self-published books that are affordable to almost any soldier wishing to publish his or her stories in book form. These new media provide a new openness to a larger public.

Their stories are taken more and more seriously. There are numerous examples of the kind of attention veterans' stories recently received. In 2012, the Dutch Veterans Day Committee, for example, initiated a yearly Veterans' Books Day to offer a platform for soldier-authors (Veteranendag.nl, 2012). Part of the British Imperial War Museum's permanent

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1   See for example the site of the Dutch foundation for Veterans Art: www.veteranenkunst.nl or its US equivalent: www.veteranartistprogram.org.

collection is a War Story project about Operation Herrick, the British Afghanistan mission (IWM, 2013), and the Dutch Veterans Institute sponsored a large oral history project in which audio interviews with veterans are made available for secondary analysis (v. d. H. Berg, Scagliola, & Wester, 2010). In short: war stories are hot.

1.1.1   Defence ambiguity

Their (former) employers, the Ministries of Defence from the home countries of these Western soldiers, however, were and are ambiguous about these stories. On the one hand, they endorse them. Book writing projects such as *Operation Homecoming* (Carroll, 2008) in the US and *Task Force Uruzgan* (Bemmel, 2009) in the Netherlands, in which accomplished book writers give workshops to military personnel just returned from Afghanistan to help them to write short stories about their experiences, are fully supported by defence public relations departments. So are projects that document service personnel's experiences such as the earlier mentioned British Imperial War Museum's War Story project (IWM, 2013). As the Dutch department of defence public relations formulates it in its ISAF Stage III communication plan:

> [...] it is essential that the perception of Dutch society does not differ from reality. Knowledge of the operation and insight into the modes of operation will lead to an understanding of the complex circumstances and to an appreciation for the way in which Dutch servicemen operate in them. The social support that is created in this way is important, especially in crisis situations.[2] (DV&C, 2006: 4-5)

The Dutch Air Force Commander at the time said: "It is important to let them hear our voice" (Jansen, 2009).

For any organization, creating a good image is important to ensure its continuity and for organizations that are dependent on politics, such as the armed forces, public support also helps in furthering their cause.

On the other hand, Ministries of Defence are also concerned about leaking too much information, thereby endangering operational security. In the past, they therefore censored letters written by soldiers to their home front; nowadays they still actively censor books on operational security issues or even forbid some soldiers to publish books. In the UK,

2   My translation

for example, the popularity of Andy McNab's autobiographical account of his SAS[3] team's infiltration of Iraq, *Bravo Two Zero* (McNab, 1993), also marked the end of SAS books, as from 1996 on the Ministry of Defence had SAS members sign confidentiality contracts, effectively restricting publications of this kind of memoirs by SAS members (Independent, 1996; Times, 2001). Another example of active and publicly visible censoring took place   in September 2010, when the Pentagon had *Operation Dark Heart* (Shaffer, 2010) destroyed, a military intelligence officer's account of his deployment experience in Afghanistan, as information in the book was said to endanger national security (Time, 2010, September 30). In response, Shaffer republished his book in an edition with all the black barred passages visible in the text, showing the extent of the censoring.

1.1.2   Soldier-author profile

Combining this concern about operational security with the new openness due to additional mass-communication opportunities now available to the individual soldier, such as e-mail, the Internet and self-published books, the question arises: how should defence organisations react to these dilemmas?

Just looking at books: should the Ministry of Defence (MoD) only check books for operational security problems, should they actively discourage this kind of publications, or, on the contrary, should they encourage book writing by military authors? In order to be able to make these kinds of decisions, policy makers would benefit from having a scientific profile of the writing soldier: who are these contemporary soldier-authors, what do they write about and why do they say they write?

Despite the fact that a considerable number of studies have been undertaken into 20th century egodocuments[4] written by soldier-authors (Buchholz, 1998; Ender, 2009; Fussell, 1975/2000; Gill, 2010; Harari, 2004, 2008; Herzog, 1992; Hynes, 1997; J. King, 2004; Vernon, 2005) such a comprehensive profile does not exist. Yes, there are some indications. Research has shown that since the mid 18th century not only kings, noblemen and senior officers wrote books about their war experiences, but junior officers and common soldiers also started to write and to be read by the general public (Harari, 2007: 297). The main theme 20th century soldier-authors write about is how they were disillusioned by the

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3   SAS: Special Air Service, a special forces division of the British Army.

4   Egodocument: a text in which an author writes about his or her own acts, thoughts and feelings (Dekker, 2002: 14). See the theory chapter for more detailed information.

realities of a war that did not add up to their romantic image of it (Fussell, 1975/2000: 130; Harari, 2005: 45). This is known as the 'disillusionment thesis'.

In this research, researchers speculate about all sorts of writing motives, from therapy and relating lessons learned to public recognition (e.g. Dekker, 2002b; McAdams, 1996; Westerhof, 2008). However, a comprehensive taxonomy of modern writing motives is lacking, both in general and for the military in particular.

1.2   Research Gaps

But these are no more than indications. There are quite a few gaps in the research available when it comes to profiling contemporary military writers. At least five serious research gaps present themselves when studying the literature.

First of all, despite the fact that these studies were performed in fields that vary from English literature and history to military sociology, one thing that is absent in all these studies is quantifiable data on soldier-authors, such as how many there are and how many of them write disillusionment stories or negative stories. Secondly, this absence of quantifiable data may have something to do with the fact that these studies are all limited in scope, because of the sheer size of the primary material available. Scholars tend to make choices in picking which texts to study such that the sample is never complete enough to warrant valid conclusions applicable to all soldier-authors of a particular type of egodocument. Some only look at fighters, some only at literary works, others at specific minority groups, such as Afro Americans or women (Vernon, 2005: 3 & 5).

Thirdly, and related to this scoping problem, most scientific studies on soldier-authors concentrate solely on English language (US or UK) experiences, the notable exceptions being Harari, who also draws on books by Israeli, French and German soldiers and Buchholz who compares German and Japanese soldier-authors (Harari, 2004; Buchholz, 1998). It is unclear to what extent the experiences from today's 'warrior nations[5]' (Paris, 2000) such as the UK and the US, can be transposed to today's 'non-warrior nations' such as the Netherlands, Germany or Canada. It is not entirely unlikely that soldiers from those cultures write, for example, other plots, but cross-cultural research comparing Anglo-American soldier-authors with authors from today's non-warrior countries, especially writing in other languages such as Dutch and German, is not available.

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5   The concepts of warrior and non-warrior nations will be further explored and clarified in the theory chapter.

Fourth, even if the English language results could be transposed directly to non-English language cultures, research on 20th century military writers is not by definition still valid in the 21st century. The well-studied wars of the 20th century – First and Second World War, Vietnam - were fought by armies composed of civilian conscripts; contemporary wars, by contrast, are fought mainly by professional armies and that difference may influence who writes, why they write and what their expectations of war are. Do professionals, after a century of reading and looking at disillusionment tales about war in books and films, for instance, still become disenchanted by it?

Finally, on two of the new sources of egodocuments – the Internet and self-published books – research is still emergent. There is some research on the use of the Internet by military writers. For instance, military weblogs were studied as part of the NWO[6] research program on contested democracy (Bekkers, Beunders, Edwards, & Moody, 2009), from the perspective of operational security (Dreijer, 2011) and that of openness in the military in general (Resteigne, 2010). However, there is hardly any research on self-published books (Books-on-Demand, 2013; Dilevko & Dali, 2006; Laquintano, 2010). Self-publishing by military personnel has never been researched at all. The lack of research interest in the self-publishing phenomenon is best illustrated by John B. Thompson's already seminal work on the UK and US book publishing business *Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century*. Despite his conclusions that self-publishers make up a substantial part of all publishing companies and that in 2008 for the first time the number of "traditional titles" are exceeded by books published by self-publishers, he only devotes two pages to self-published books of the total of 256 pages of his book (Thompson, 2010: 152-154 & 239-240).

To summarize: what is missing in the existing literature is reliable, quantifiable insight into 21st century soldier-authors and what they write about that exceeds the Anglo-American view, especially when it comes to (self-published) books.

This research will try to fill in these research gaps. In order to be able to form a reliable profile of soldier-authors, a complete, but also manageable representation of soldier-authors is researched consisting of every military autobiographical book on Afghanistan published between 2001 and 2010, including all publicly available self-published books from five different Western countries. This scope ensures that a relatively new type of egodocuments is researched, notably the one that has never been studied before: self-published books.

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6   Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek: Dutch Organisation for Scientific Research

1.3   Research Design

1.3.1   Aim of this study

This research has both a theoretical and an empirical objective. *The aim of this study is to enhance knowledge about Western soldier-authors of autobiographical books on their deployment to Afghanistan by using qualitative descriptive coding techniques in combination with statistical analysis to compare military background, plots and explicit writing motives in all autobiographical books including self-published books published between 2001 and 2010 by soldiers from five different Western countries.* Figure 1 visualizes the scope of this study that follows from this aim in the form of a Venn-diagram, whereby the study will focus on the overlap between the group of all Afghanistan autobiographies, all military autobiographies and all autobiographies written in the five target countries.
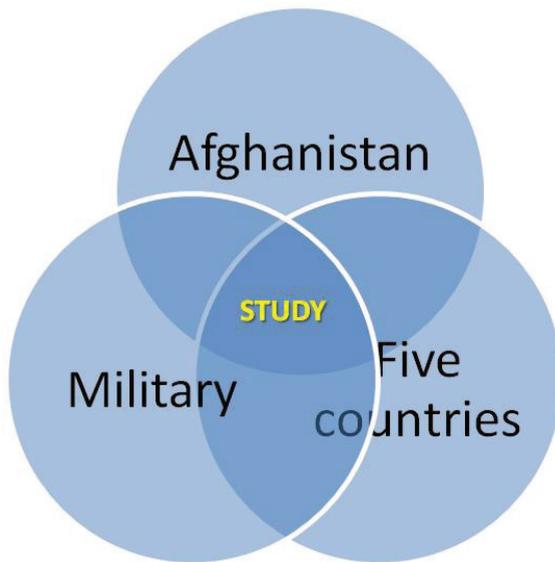
Figure 1: The Scope of the Study

Books from five countries, all main coalition partners of the Netherlands, and written in three languages (English, Dutch and German) will be analysed: Germany, the UK, Canada, the US and the Netherlands itself. In chapter four, the methodology chapter, the specific choice for these five countries will be substantiated.

1.3.2   Research question

As this is first and foremost explorative research, the main questions that have to be answered are the basic descriptive questions: who, what, when and where (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008: 10), see Figure 2. The when (2001-2010) and where (Afghanistan) are part of the research aim and scope. The other two questions (who and what) related to soldier-authors and their books will be studied in detail. These basic descriptive questions will be supplemented by the why question, studying why soldier-authors say they write.
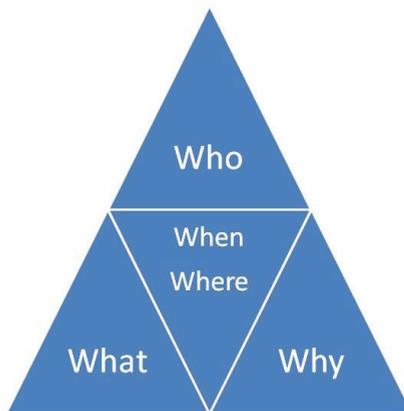
Figure 2: The Main Research Questions

Combined, this leads to the following, central research question to guide this study:

Who are the soldiers who write autobiographical books about their deployment in Afghanistan, who are their publishers, what do they write about, and why do they say they write?

1.3.3   Definition

The books that will be studied during this research are defined as *non-fiction, autobiographical books, first published between 2001 and 2010 in Dutch, English or German in the US, the UK, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands that (mainly) deal with the deployment experiences of Western military personnel in Afghanistan and are intended for the public at large.*

This means that novels (fiction) by soldier-authors, and books on soldier-authors but written by non-military writers, such as journalists are outside the scope of this study.

1.3.4   Unique contribution

The unique contributions of this study are fivefold. First, to my knowledge, it will provide the first quantitative research ever into military memoirs, based on a complete sample of all books available to the public at large that fall under the scope. Second, to my knowledge, it will be the first study comparing traditionally published books with the same type of self-published books. Third, it will be a cross-cultural comparative study, comparing the traditionally well-researched English language Anglo-American countries with Dutch and German language countries, to see whether theories developed in warrior-nations hold up in today's non-warrior nations. Fourth, it will study whether effects found in the 20th century (such as the disillusionment thesis) still hold up for 21st century military writers. Finally, it will be an interdisciplinary study, using and combining theories and methods from five different fields: sociology, history, literature, psychology and anthropology.

Although this study is a form of e-humanity study as it will use computer technology to look for meaningful patterns in books (Bod, 2012: 11), it does not use text-mining or automated distant reading (Bod, 2012: 5; Moretti, 2000: 57), as at the start of this study (2010) the object character recognition technology was not sufficiently developed to cost and time effectively digitalize all 54 books in this study. Instead, as will be explained in chapter four, the patterns are found by close reading, manually coding variables into a database, and using that database to extract the patterns.

1.3.5   Societal relevance

Besides the academic relevance outlined above, the results from this study will also be directly relevant for defence policy makers in the fields of public relations, operational security, and international relations, to all types of publishers, both traditional and self-publishers, irrespective of whether they publish military books or not and to psychologists and social workers.

1.3.5.1 Defence

Defence policy makers in the field of public relations (and operational security) will be provided with a detailed profile of military book writers, which, for instance, includes models to predict the number of books published during and quickly after a mission and to predict which kinds of soldier-authors will be most inclined to write positive and negative plots. Defence policy makers in the field of international relations will be provided with

an in-depth understanding of which military cultural practices related to book writing (such as the kinds of plots written, the reasons why soldiers write) are general (Western) military practices, which are warrior-nation related and which are country specific, thereby deepening their knowledge of cross-cultural similarities and differences. This form of knowledge is increasingly important as international collaboration is nowadays the norm in military missions.

1.3.5.2 Publishers

Publishers will find a wealth of information on the composition of military book markets in different Western countries. They are also provided with a detailed analysis of the similarities and differences between the traditional and self-publishing market, including the kind of writers they attract and the type of plots written. There is even market information on factors related to plot and authors that seem to influence the sales of military memoirs in the UK.

1.3.5.3 Psychologists and social workers

Apart from scholars, defence organisations and publishers, this research is also interesting for psychologists and social workers working with (former) military personnel, as it provides insights into current day military experience.

1.4   Outline

The study is structured as follows. The next chapter is theoretical. It will look at existing theories with regard to egodocuments in general and military autobiographical books in particular, and also at theories on writers, their motivation, the plots they write and how their memory works. The theories discussed will be used in the following chapters either to analyse the books and their writers, or to explain the results that follow from these analyses.

This theory chapter is followed by a short overview of the context of this study, concentrating mainly on the conflict in Afghanistan and the involvement of the target countries in this conflict.

Subsequently, the methodology chapter, chapter four, will describe the scoping and collecting process by further elaborating on the key concepts that are used in the research aim and the research definition and account for the choice of target countries for this study. It will discuss the mixed-method approach that is at the basis of this study combining both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

This will be followed by three result chapters. The first chapter, chapter five, discusses the who-questions: who writes and who publishes soldiers' stories? The second results chapter, chapter six, focuses on the what question: what do soldier-authors write about? It will look into the strategic narratives of the target countries and issues of truth and censorship, and it will also answer the question 'what sells', by looking at the case of the UK. The final results chapter, chapter seven deals with the why-question: why do soldier-authors say they write?

The eighth chapter draws the overall conclusion and integrates the previous three results chapters. The final ninth chapter will be a reflective chapter and will provide insight into the limitation of this research and offer suggestions for future research.

Several appendices will provide more in-depth information on subjects discussed in this study. One appendix, for example, provides the description of all 54 books (Appendix H), another provides the fifteen most remarkable statistical findings (Appendix A).

But first of all, in the next chapter, the theoretical foundations will be laid and concepts will be explained from the different fields (sociology, psychology, history, literature, anthropology) that will be used in this interdisciplinary study. Doing so, I would like to apologize beforehand to the specialists in these fields, in the words of English autobiography researcher Michael Mascuch:

> My study has taken me into many areas of inquiry, theoretical, historical, and otherwise, and I can claim expertise in few of them. Undoubtedly, in some places I have failed to appreciate subtleties. I hope that specialists will pardon my oversimplifications and find something to interest or provoke them. (Mascuch, 1997: 9)

Chapter Two:
Theory

Chapter Two: Theory

2.1   Introduction

As military memoirs have been written since ancient times – the first military memoir that has survived was written in the fourth century BC by the Greek historian and soldier Xenophon (Harari, 2007: 290; Lee, 2005: 18) – there has been extensive research into this and related phenomena. An overview of this research will be presented in this chapter in four main parts. The chapter will start with a discussion of egodocuments in general and military egodocuments in particular. Then the focus will change to theories that will help answer the three main questions in this study. To support the first main question ('who are these writers?') we will address theories that discuss who writers and their publishers are, discussing among others a 'fringe writer hypothesis'. To answer the second question ('what do military writers write about?') not only general plot theories will be discussed, but also theories about the plots that military writers write such as the 'disillusionment thesis' and the 'revelatory plot thesis'. And finally theories that discuss motivation of writers, the third question, are considered.

2.2   Egodocuments and the Military

The term egodocument was coined by the historian Jacques Presser in the 1950s as a generic term for all sorts of autobiographical writing. It can be defined as a "text in which an author writes about his or her own acts, thoughts and feelings" (Dekker, 2002a: 14). Often, a crisis (personal or political, such as war) prompts people to start writing egodocuments (Dekker, 1999: 259).

2.2.1   Social truth

Until the middle of the 20th century, egodocuments as source were regarded by historians as "extremely unreliable" and "simply useless" (Dekker, 2002a: 21). However, with a developing, postmodern orientation in which texts are seen as a medium to investigate opinions instead of facts in itself, the study of egodocuments has been reappraised from problematic to offering exciting new research opportunities. Norwegian autobiography researcher Marianne Gullestad concludes that since 1955, the growing scholarly interest in written autobiographies has "provided a new meeting ground between the interest in 'facts' (history and the social sciences) and the interest in 'stories' (literary analysis)"(Gullestad, 1996: 5)

French autobiography researcher Lejeune stresses that autobiographies should not be seen as sources of historical information, but rather as "*social facts* in themselves, in their reality as texts" (Lejeune, 1989: 165). Polish sociologist Jan Szczepanski, however, is enamoured by autobiographies because of the several layers of information they can provide: from material and objective facts, such as descriptions of houses and furniture, to states of minds and attitudes of (groups of) people, and indirect social data such as mores and customs (Szczepanski, 1981: 230).

Nowadays, egodocuments such as autobiographies are seen as socially determined constructs (Bell, 2003; Berger & Luckmann, 1966/1991; Krassnitzer, 2006; Mascuch, 1997; McAdams, 1996; Roper, 2000; Szczepanski, 1981) and American political scholar Benedict Anderson even traces the development of national consciousness back to the advent of books in general (Anderson, 1991; Bergland, 2001: 636). He suggests that there is a two-way link between books and culture, as culture not only determines what is written in books, but books also helped in establishing culture. This means that different countries can have different (strategic) narratives, that in turn may influence the books written in these countries, even though these narratives are not stabile and can change over time (Bell, 2003: 73-74).

These stories are part of what French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs in 1950 called the "collective memory" (Halbwachs, 1950). In this view, egodocuments are seen as more than just the product of the individual writer, they are cultural products, "narrative unfoldings of codified cultural models" as Israeli historian Gadi Algazi calls them (Algazi, 2002: 23). The American psychologist couple Gergen & Gergen formulate it as follows:

> As stories, self-narratives are preeminantly social. They are essentially communal or participatory events in which the teller is engaging in a public (or implicitly public) act, and in which the target's capacities and predilictions [sec] must be considered. (K.J. Gergen & Gergen, 1987: 125)

In the same way as national narratives are not stable, self-narratives are not fixed, but change over time and in different circumstances:

> By the time we reach adulthood we know how to deliver a suitably edited version of our stories as the occasion requires. [...] Our performance of self-narration, then, takes place in an environment of social convention and constraint. (Eakin, 2011: 236)

Based on memory research, German historian Patrick Krassnitzer even concludes that it *cannot* be a personal truth that we read in an autobiography, but only an experience of how cultures constitute the context for interpreting and remembering events:

> Both observations and memories are highly shaped by the cultural schemes of a society or a social milieu. Nobody remembers on his or her own and individually, it is always in the cultural context of specific memory collectives ("Erinnerungsgemeinschaften").[1] (Krassnitzer, 2006: 214)

British historian Anna Green, however, does warn that only focussing on the way individual memories fit in what she calls "cultural scripts" may lead to rejecting the significance of individual remembering, making it look as if individuals are only able to think and remember events when they fit the collective memories. "In practice, individual and collective memories are often in tension, and the recollections of individuals frequently challenge the construction of partial accounts designed primarily to achieve collective unity" (Green, 2004: 41).

That historians are taking the stories of people more and more seriously as study objects can also be seen in the increasing interest in oral history (e.g. v. d. H. Berg, et al., 2010; Green, 2004; Scagliola, 2010b). And not only historians are studying life stories. In his target article in *Psychological Inquiry* entitled *Personality, Modernity, and the Storied Self: A Contemporary Framework for Studying Persons,* American psychologist Dan McAdams argues that the study of life stories is crucial to contemporary psychology. He refers to life stories as "psychosocial constructions". "In the modern world, such constructions assume the form of stories of the self – internalized and evolving life stories that integrate the reconstructed past, perceived present, and anticipated future" (McAdams, 1996: 301).

People use life stories to create their own identity: internally, but also by telling them to others. Writing down these life stories leads to egodocuments.

2.2.2   Military use

Not only historians and psychologists are interested in egodocuments. As I have discussed in the Routledge Handbook on Research Methods in Military Studies (Kleinreesink, 2014), military scholars with diverse backgrounds use egodocuments to study phenomena that have a bearing on their field of expertise. A few recent examples are a medical researcher

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1   My translation

who uses military egodocuments to study post-traumatic stress disorder and smoking in military personnel (Robinson, 2011, 2012), a sociologist who uses them to study military strategy (A. King, 2010), and a historian who uses them to look at changing ideas about the relationship between body and mind (Harari, 2008). Military memoirs are also used to study gender issues such as military masculinity (Duncanson, 2009; Woodward, 2000) and cross-cultural differences between Japan and Germany (Buchholz, 1998); and military blogs are used by media researchers to look at micro mobilisation of Dutch citizens (Bekkers, et al., 2009). Sometimes, as South African military researcher Abel Esterhuyse concludes when trying to study South African counterinsurgency doctrine, egodocuments may be the only information source available (Esterhuyse, 2012).

This does not mean that the study of the content of texts in general (content analysis) and of military texts in particular is a modern invention. Leiden university academic Julius Lipsius (1547-1606), often referred to as 'the second Erasmus', used to give military advice based on text analysis of ancient classics (Groen, Nimwegen, Prud'Homme van Reine, Sicking, & Vliet, 2013: 302; Sloos, 2012: 395). During the siege of 1590, he was asked, for example, whether the Romans had their own soldiers do the excavation works or whether they had it outsourced[2].

2.2.3   Intended public

Egodocuments can be broadly divided into three categories based on the intended public (Epkenhans, Förster, and Hagemann 2006: xiii) (see Figure 3).

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2   Example described in the exhibition *Gewapend met kennis [Armed with Knowledge]* in book museum Meermanno in The Hague, next to the painting of Julius Lipsius. The exhibition, which ran from 16 June until 15 September 2013, accompanied the book by Sloos (2012) with the same title.
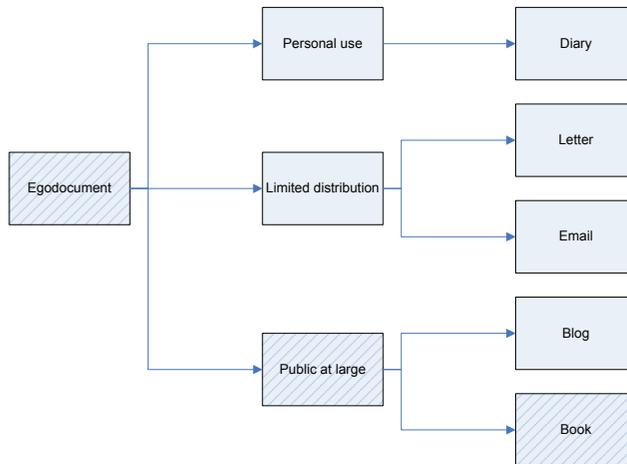
Figure 3: Examples of Egodocuments

First, egodocuments can be written for personal use. Diaries for example are often used to order and reconstruct thought, feelings and memories (Baggerman, 2010: 65), without any intention of other people reading them; they can be purchased with a lock on the cover to protect them from being read by others. Second, egodocuments can be specifically produced for a limited distribution. Traditionally, military personnel communicated with the home front using letters, nowadays they use e-mails. These mail exchanges are egodocuments intended for one or more people to read, but are not expected to be widely read outside the limited circle of addressees. The third option is writing egodocuments specifically aimed at the public at large. Internet blogs and books are examples of communication aimed at a broad public.

The kind of egodocument does not, however, dictate its public. Diaries have also been used for limited distribution, for example in the case of Otto van Eck's diary (1791-1797) that was also read and commented upon by his parents and their friends as an educational tool (Baggerman & Dekker, 2005: 117; Eck, 1998). Some diaries were kept with the specific purpose of being published in book form, such as the Anne Frank diary *Het achterhuis*[3] (Frank, 1947/2007) or the First World War diary of Carl Heller *De oorlogsbrieven van unteroffizier Carl Heller*[4] (C. Heller, 2003). Internet blogs for example can be screened off so that only people who have been invited can see the content of the blogs, thereby making them limited distribution only.

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3   Translated as: *The Diary of a Young Girl*

4   *NCO Carl Heller's War Letters*

2.2.4   Military writers

Writing war memoirs is a trend that started in Europe in the Renaissance (Harari, 2004: 191). Where in earlier history it were mainly kings, noblemen and senior officers who wrote books about their war experiences,

> from the mid-eighteenth century junior officers and common soldiers began to compete with their superiors in the number of texts they produced, in their public visibility and in the views they endorsed. (Harari, 2007: 297)

> Twentieth-century junior ranks memoirs are some of the most influential historical texts ever to be written. The image of war dominant amongst the Western public today is probably shaped by these texts (either printed or filmed) more than by any other source. (Harari, 2004: 19)

Even in the Netherlands, "a country not known for its strong tradition in autobiographical writing" (Dekker, 1999: 255), a comprehensive inventory of all Dutch egodocuments in public archives and collections from 1460 to 1914 shows over 6,000 relevant documents (Dekker, 1999; ING, 2010). Soldiers are excellent contributors to these archives. This Dutch project showed that between 1500 and 1900 the most prolific authors of egodocuments found in these archives were clergymen and military personnel (J. Blaak in: Baggerman, 2010: 68-69). The *Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis*[5] database (ING, 2010) shows that of the 5,033 egodocuments written between 1813 and 1914, 399 (8% of the total) were written by military personnel. In general, Israeli historian Yuval Harari concludes that military "memoirs were the most popular secular autobiographical genre of the early modern period [1450-1740]" (Harari, 2008: 56).

In his archive research, Dutch historian Rudolf Dekker found that the number of diaries peaks in periods of public crisis such as war and political upheaval. He also found that personal crises such as illness and death, prompt people to write (Dekker, 1999: 261 & 272). Although Dekker does not explain these phenomena, it probably has to do with the greater need to make sense of life in these circumstances, with which autobiographical writing can help. Sociologist Barbara Misztal concludes that remembering and memories in general help to understand and comprehend the world (Misztal, 2010: 28) and psychologist Dan McAdams concludes that the main function of life stories (any story about a person's life, not necessarily written down) is to integrate the image of the self. "By binding together

5   Institute for the History of the Netherlands

disparate elements within the Me into a broader narrative frame, the selfing process can make a patterned identity out of what may appear, at first blush, to be a random and scattered life" (McAdams, 1996: 309).

Writing down memories and life stories then, can help come to terms with life in general and life in crisis specifically, both now and in the past.

That writing and publishing war memoirs is not a thing of the past can be seen in veterans' magazine *Checkpoint.* This magazine, which is sent by the Dutch Veterans Institute to 80,000 Dutch veterans ten times per year (Veteraneninstituut, 2011), always features a two-page book review section called *Checkboek* (Veteraneninstituut, 2001-2010). From 2001 until 2010, a period in which the main Dutch military mission was the mission in Afghanistan, 71 autobiographical books written by Dutch military personnel were discussed on the *Checkboek* pages, out of an estimated 500 books discussed in total, see Table 1. As three books describe experiences during two separate missions, adding up all the books in Table 1 does not result in 71 books, but in 74.

Time period	Mission	Books
1940-1950	Second World War	14
	Dutch East Indies	36
1950-1962	Korea	1
	New Guinea	10
1979-1990	Lebanon	4
	The Balkans	3
2000-2010	Iraq	2
	Afghanistan	4
Total		71

Table 1: Autobiographical Books Discussed in Checkpoint 2001-2010

Only 6% of the books are immediate memoirs that dealt with Afghanistan. To understand why this is the case, we need to look at the issue of timing.

2.2.5   Timing

Apart from dividing egodocuments in categories based on the intended public, military egodocuments can also be distinguished based on the timing of the egodocuments themselves. Three distinct kinds of narratives can be distinguished when looking at this time factor (see Figure 4).

On the spot   ⟩   Immediate   ⟩   Retrospective ⟩

Figure 4: Three Kinds of Narratives

The first are those narratives such as diaries, e-mails and blogs that are written 'on the spot', as the writer is still deployed in the area of operations. Then there are memoirs that are written while the war is still going on, or immediately after a war, which Hynes calls "immediate memoirs" (Hynes, 1997: 4). Finally, there are retrospective memoirs, written long after the war itself, that tend to have greater reflective power (Hynes, 1997: 4). According to English scholar Robert Lawson-Peebles, especially military diaries and journals were usually published long after they were written (Lawson-Peebles, 2005: 72).

In Table 1 we can see that almost all books discussed in *Checkpoint* between 2001 and 2010 are retrospective memoirs that deal with memories about missions of 50 or more years ago. This is not at all unusual. In the words of Hynes: "To perceive the changes that war has made in a man requires the passage of time and the establishment of distance from the remembered self, and it is not surprising that most war memoirs come late in life" (Hynes, 1997: 4).

These timing aspects can influence the content of the egodocuments. UK military memoir researchers Woodward and Jenkings write in *War and the Body* that physical and embodied reactions are more likely to be written about immediately than "those which require the passage of time for their realisations, such as mental illness and post-traumatic stress" (Woodward & Jenkings, 2013: 161). Like Hynes, they suggest that degeneration plots[6] (plots in which the personality of the hero changes for the worse, for example plots by soldiers who were diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after their deployment) are

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6   Later on in this chapter, the different types of plots will be extensively treated.

published later than other books as they require more reflection time, and that degeneration plots are written as retrospective and not as immediate memoirs.

Timing aspects can also influence who writes. British medical researcher Lucy Robinson concludes that in the first fifteen years after the Falklands War two-thirds of the accounts were written by officers, whereas since then, two-thirds are written by "ordinary soldiers". "There has been a move from analysis of the decision-making process, and explanation of the war from above, to a description of the experience of its implementation" (Robinson, 2011: 571).

This study will only look into immediate memoirs, due to the time frame (2001-2010) chosen, which will offer the opportunity to test both these hypotheses: the relative absence of degeneration plots in immediate memoirs and the over-presence of officers.

2.2.6   Reminiscence

Writing egodocuments is not a uniquely Western phenomenon. Japan, for example, has a rich tradition in writing down (war) memories, called *jibunshi undo* (movement for writing down one's personal history). Here, men (who make up two thirds of the jibunshi writers) usually start to write after they have retired, between the ages of 60 and 80 (Yoshizawa Teruo in: Buchholz, 1998). This fits nicely with the observation that as adults grow older, they increasingly review their lives. Already in 1963, Butler considered the life review a universal mental process to come to terms with the past in the last phase of your life (Butler, 1963: 65). What better way to do a life review than by writing it down in a short story or a book?

Not only reminiscing veterans who look back on their lives write about their mission experience, it is also done by active duty military personnel after a mission. In America, a short story project for soldiers resulted in a bestselling anthology called *Operation Homecoming* (Carroll, 2008) and in an Oscar nominated documentary with the similar title (Robbins, 2007). In the Netherlands, inspired by the American example, a leading Dutch newspaper, *De Volkskrant*, embarked on a similar project, to encourage soldiers who had recently returned from a tour in Afghanistan to write about their experiences. This project was earlier discussed in chapter one, the introductory chapter. This project was fully supported by the MoD and resulted in a book called *Task Force Uruzgan* (Bemmel, 2009) that reached non-fiction bestseller sales levels (over 11,000 copies sold) and saw four reprints (T. Bartels, personal communication, July 10, 2013).

2.3   Who

As discussed in chapter one, most academic studies of war narratives are limited in their scope as "it would require a small army of scholars on an extended campaign to locate and catalogue the published primary material alone, much less provide any synthesizing analysis. Unpublished personal nonfiction accounts [...] magnify the issue tremendously" (Vernon, 2005: 3).

A common limitation of such studies is to include only narratives by those who have fought (Harari, 2004; Hynes, 1997). But in modern military organizations, fighters are nowadays a minority. Kinetic soldiers - soldiers such as infantrymen, special forces and fighter pilots that carry their weapons primarily for offensive actions - are outnumbered by non-kinetic personnel. Non-kinetic soldiers are soldiers who carry their weapons primarily for self-defence and deliver combat support to the kinetic soldier: from health professionals and military journalists to transport pilots and planners. Vernon even concludes that "as most war narratives are written by combat veterans, they collectively misrepresent warfare as actually experienced by most people in uniform" (Vernon, 2005: 3).

Other common limitations are looking at specific minority groups, such as Afro Americans, or women, or only looking at literary texts that are part of the canon of war literature, instead of looking at all book available, which is more suited for looking at broad, cultural trends (S. Johnson, 2005: 203; Paris, 2000: 154). These limitations are so common that Vernon points out that "personal narratives by male noncombatant military persons – white males especially – are easily the most neglected of all military life writings in Anglo American criticism" (Vernon, 2005: 3).

2.3.1   Warrior nation

Vernon's conclusion that most war narratives are written by combat veterans may be warranted for often researched Anglo-American countries such as the US and UK, "warrior nations" in the words of Michael Paris (Paris, 2000). However, it is not necessarily true for smaller, less researched countries with a less military-oriented culture today, such as Canada, the Netherlands and Germany. Lack of research into soldier-authors from these non-warrior countries prevents us from knowing whether these Anglo-American research results can be generalised to non-warrior countries.

Michel Paris applies the term warrior nation to the UK in his study of images of war in British popular culture between 1850 and 2000. He defines a warrior nation as "a culture that promotes the martial spirit, elevates the warrior to heroic status and romanticizes war. In much of the popular entertainment created for the nation's youth, the overriding national image is of an aggressively militant warrior nation" (Paris, 2000: 11). It fits a country with an expansive "imperialistic world view" (Paris, 2000: 15).

Other authors use similar concepts. UK sociologist Michael Mann uses the term "militarism" to refer to different countries in which there is "a set of attitudes and social practices which regards war and the preparation for war as a normal and desirable social activity" (Mann, 1987: 35). Israeli military sociologist Yagil Levy differentiates between states with a low and a high profile of legitimacy to use force and places most EU countries, as well as Canada and Australia on the low use of force side, and the US and Israel one the high force side, calling them "militarised democracies" (Levy, 2012: 177). American gender researchers Laura Prividera and John Howard use the term "militaristic societ[y]" to refer to the US (Prividera & Howard, 2006: 31).

This is in contrast to the other countries in this study. Although in the 17th century the Dutch Republic was a military superpower, the Netherlands no longer has a visible military tradition (Dekker, 2008: 100) or a culture in which heroism is favoured. Dutch/German anthropologists Hans Marks and Friederike Pfannkuche, for example, use the term "entheroisiert" ('de-heroising') when describing Dutch narrative attitude in World War Two stories (Marks & Pfannkuche, 2007: 130). Germany, who was a warrior nation until the Second World War, nowadays is no longer a warrior nation either, as military *restraint* has become an active element of the German identity (Boekle, Nadoll, & Stahl, 2001: 18). After World War Two, Germany became a more or less pacifistic country (Forsberg, 2005). Canada, with its history of allying with the dominant power and high support for international institutions such as UN and NATO (Zyla, 2012: 107-108), is not a warrior nation either.

I would like to make it absolutely clear that the qualification 'non-warrior nation' does not mean that these countries are not able to fight. The Netherlands and Canada have shown in the unruly South of Afghanistan that they were able to fight equally well and hard as the UK and the US. Instead, the term refers to a societal attitude that currently (at the beginning of the 21st century) does not regard war and the preparation for war as a normal and desirable social activity. Even if these countries have a past in which war was seen as normal and desirable.

Dutch sociologist Joseph Soeters distinguishes two different national military operation styles within NATO that are comparable to the classification into warrior and non-warrior nations: the Achilles (or hedgehog) style and the Odysseus (or fox) style. Both these classical heroes are warriors, but Achilles is the type of warrior who resolves any conflict with his sword, whereas Odysseus first relies on his wisdom, cunning and skills before resorting to fighting and killing (Soeters, 2013a, 2013b). He compares warrior nations (UK and US) to Achilles and other less military-oriented nations in Europe, such as the Netherlands, to Odysseus.

The difference between today's warrior nations and countries with a non-warrior background is not only a theoretical distinction, as can be seen by looking at some statistics. The warrior nations, for example, score consistently higher on the Global Militarization Index (BICC, 2012; Grebe, 2011). About 140 countries world-wide are ranked on this index. The higher the ranking, the more militarized a country is. In the period under research, the US on average ranked 41, the UK 65, Germany 78, the Netherlands 90 and Canada 95[7], showing that the US and the UK are more militarized than the three other countries researched.

It can also be seen by the average percentage of a country's general labour force that is composed of military and civilian personnel in the defence organisation. In the US and the UK, this percentage is higher (1.4% and 1.0%) than in countries such as Canada (0.5%), Germany (0.8%), and the Netherlands (0.8%)[8] (NATO, 2011).

This difference between today's warrior and non-warrior countries is even more pronounced when looking at the defence expenditures as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP), which is seen as one of the most important measures to interpret the defence effort of a country (Bakker & Beeres, 2012: 12; Olson & Zeckhauser, 1966). Within NATO, the yardstick for the defence versus GDP ratio is 2% (Bakker & Beeres, 2012: 12). As can be seen in Figure 5, none of today's non-warrior nations measure up to this yardstick, whereas both warrior nations exceed it to a considerable extent, whereby it is notable that the percentage of GDP spent in the non-warrior nations converges to 1.4% for all of them between 2001-2010, whereas that of the warrior nations increases, especially that of the US which grows from 3.1 to 5.4%. This fits earlier research that shows that the defence spending as a percentage of GDP correlates positively with the degree of Hofstede's masculinity index (Soeters, 1997: 9).

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7   These ranks are composed of the weighted average of the 2001, 2005 and 2010 ranks.

8   This percentage is composed of the weighted average of the 2000, 2005 and 2010 percentages.
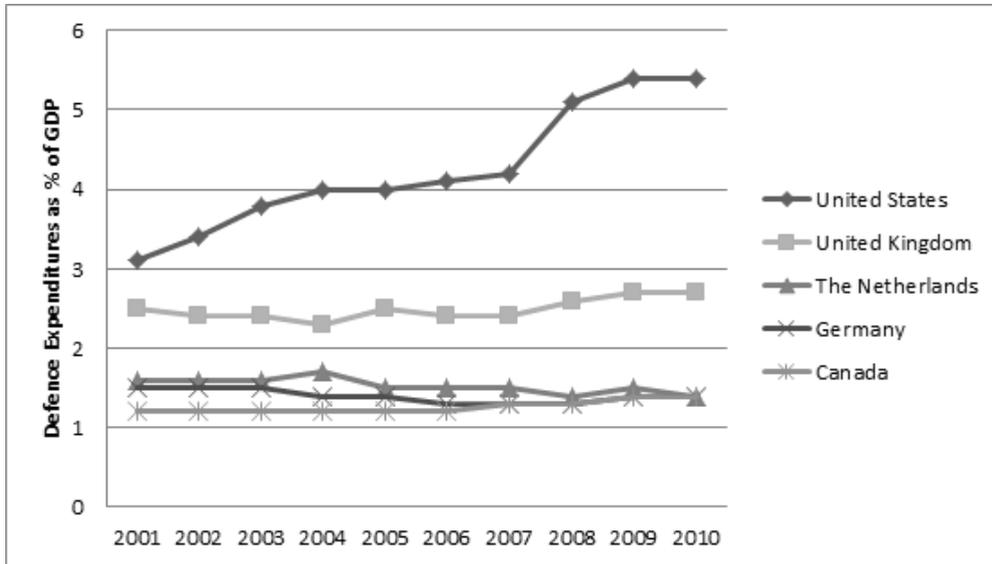
Figure 5: Defence Expenditure as a Percentage of Gross Domestic Product (Based on NATO, 2005, 2010a, 2012)

The division is also visible in the consistent response given to the question 'is war necessary to obtain justice under some circumstances?'. Three-quarters (77%) of Americans and 61% of the UK respondents in the annual Transatlantic Trends survey agree with this statement, whereas all over continental Europe only one-quarter (27%) agrees (Transatlantic-Trends, 2010: 18).

2.3.2   Publishing strategy

Who *writes* may (or may not) be influenced by the country's general attitude towards war, and so may who gets *published* be country-dependent. Buchholz, one of the few researchers who studies military writers from a current day non-warrior country, in this case Germany, concludes for example that although Germans after the Second World War do write war memoirs, they are only published when written by prominent people such as politicians, writers and actors (Buchholz, 1998).

When it comes to publishing a book, a writer has basically two options, either going to a traditional publisher or to a self-publisher. The main difference between the two is that in self-publishing "there has been no capital investment by third-party publishers in the

production or distribution of the books" (Laquintano, 2010: 37); in other words, you need to pay for the books yourself, whereas the traditional publisher invests for its own risk in the book.

But that is not the only difference between these two forms of publishing. There is a stigma attached to self-publishing, as it is often associated with what used to be called 'vanity press' which had a bad reputation (Dilevko & Dali, 2006: 209). 'Vanity press' was the term used for publishing companies that printed books exclusively for the author (and their own warehouse), paid for by the author, which never reached the regular book market (NYT, 2005). However, the concentration of traditional publishers in the US in the late 1990s and the early 2000s made them risk-averse and concentrated on producing bestsellers, thereby making it difficult for many first-time authors to find an established publisher. This turned them, and also established authors who wanted to publish in a new genre, to self-publishing with a new generation of self-publishers (Dilevko & Dali, 2006: 209-210). Where old vanity press publishers typically charged between $8,000 and $50,000 for a limited number of copies, the new self-publishers can do this for as little as $459, thereby substantially lowering the threshold for getting a book into print (NYT, 2005). Due to the digital revolution, the new advertising opportunities on the Internet, and the development of cheap desktop publishing software not only the publishing costs, but also the entry costs to the field of publishing are low nowadays, which has led to an increase in self-publishing companies (Thompson, 2010: 154).

Dilevko and Dali conclude in their study on self-published books that the stigma is quickly disappearing in the US as the new self-publishers serve segmented, niche, and individualized markets the traditional publishers no longer cater for (Dilevko & Dali, 2006: 233). Seven years later, a German study sponsored by self-publisher Books-on-Demand draws the same conclusion for the German book market (Books-on-Demand, 2013: 13)[9].

Another difference between self-published and traditional publishing is that research into self-publishing is scarce (Laquintano, 2010: 20). As mentioned in chapter one, the lack of research interest in self-publishing is best illustrated by John B. Thompson's *Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century*. Thompson concludes in this seminal book on the US and UK publishing business that self-publishers account for nearly half of US publishers with annual revenues of less than $50,000 (a group who makes up 75%

9   An on-line questionnaire with questions on a five-point-scale under 1,144 German Book-on-Demand authors, taken by the Erding Hochschule für angewandtes Management [College for Applied Management in Erding].

of all publishing companies), so self-publishers nowadays make up a substantial part of the publishing business. This is further underscored by his observation that in the US in 2008, the figures for new 'on demand' and short-run digitally printed books (the kind of books that are typically produced by self-publishing companies) for the first time ever exceeded the number of new traditional titles. Nonetheless, even he devotes no more than two pages of the total of 256 pages in his book to self-published books (Thompson, 2010: 152-154 & 239-240).

The only research that I was able to find on self-publishing and autobiographies is by British egodocument researcher Timothy Ashplant in his study of all 200+ autobiographies of British railwaymen, which was published in the French railway journal *Revue d'histoire des chemins de fer*. He finds that only 17% of railway autobiographies have been self-published, as many as the number of railway autobiographies (16%) that are published by general commercial publishers, but that most of them are published by specialised publishers: either railway publishers (49%) or local historical publishers (15%). He does conclude that from the 1990s on, the percentage of self-publishers rises (to 27%) "perhaps reflecting both the falling costs of publication, and the sense created by the specialist publishers that there was an interest in such stories" (Ashplant, 2011: 39)[10].

To my knowledge, there is no scientific taxonomy available on self-publishing books. However, based on his experience, American librarian and book reviewer Will Manley describes four categories of self-published books: personal testimonies, technical treatises, institutional histories and conspiracy theories. The first category, personal testimonies, comprises books that are part of the definition of this study: "a personal testimony of someone who has seen God, survived a terminal disease*, fought in a war* [italics added] or met an alien coming out of a flying saucer" (Manley, 1999: 485).

He describes the "brutal reality" of self-publishing as "99.9 percent of the books that are self-published have been rejected by mainstream publishers for one of two reasons: the book is a poorly written piece of drivel, or the book is on a subject that no one cares about" (Manley, 1999: 485).

This means that we can expect to find self-published books in this study, and it also means that it is likely that self-published books are catering for a different, less commercial market than the traditionally published books, thereby attracting different writers and different stories. This will be tested in chapter five and six respectively.

■
10   Translation from original English language preprint.

2.3.3   Fringe writers

According to anthropologist Victor Turner, writing is a liminal activity, with writers often being liminal people, "people in a betwixt-and-between state – in a state of marginality, people who for some reason had not settled into the static structure of society" (Turner, 1990: 167).

This description of writers as liminal people is reminiscent of what the early 20th century German sociologist Georg Simmel calls "a stranger". The stranger is someone who is part of a group, but also on the fringes of that same group, a "potential wanderer". As Simmel formulates it "[t]he appearance of this mobility within a bounded group occasions that synthesis of nearness and remoteness which constitutes the formal position of the stranger" (Simmel, 1908/2004: 182). It is also someone who can take a more distanced view "[b]ecause he is not bound by roots to the particular constituents and partisan dispositions of the group" (Simmel, 1908/2004: 182).

This distance is a good quality for an autobiographical writer who wants to take a look at his own experiences in a group; in the same way as detachment is a necessary quality for any investigator of the social sciences as German/British sociologist Norbert Elias concluded in 1956 (Elias, 1956). Combining the insights of these historical scholars (Simmel, Turner and Elias), I would suggest that writers are often people on the fringes of the group they write about. Hence, I will refer to this hypothesis as the 'fringe writer hypothesis'.

US military memoir researcher Samuel Hynes, when defining good war memoirists, puts it as follows: "What suits memory best is a war life lived close to the action but at some distance from the values, by a man who is by nature or circumstances an outsider, who can be a witness as well as a soldier, who has felt war but doesn't love it" (Hynes, 1997: 28).

2.3.3.1 Reservists

According to Polish military sociologist Olga Nowaczyk, every veteran could be considered to be in a betwixt-and-between state between military and civilian communities (Nowaczyk, 2012: 3). In my opinion, this concept can be even further refined, as within modern, professional military organisations there are two kinds of military personnel that are the embodiment of this concept of being both inside and outside of the organisation: reservists

on the one hand, and military personnel who are individually deployed on the other. Reservists (see Figure 6) are military personnel that wear the uniform, speak the language, and have had a military training. At the same time they normally work outside of the
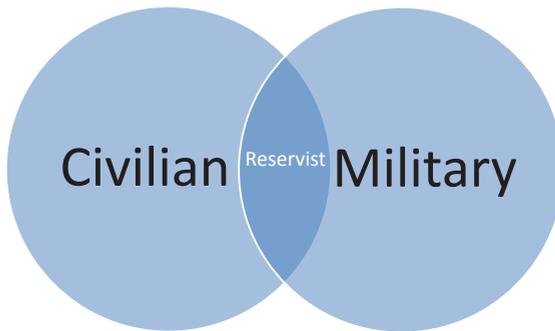
Figure 6: The Reservist as Simmel's Stranger

defence organisation in civilian jobs and only become a soldier for a number of training weekends or weeks a year or when they are given a specific assignment, such as going to Afghanistan.

It is good to note that the influential memoirs on the wars of the 20th century were often written by conscripted soldiers, another type of people who are on the fringe of civil and military society. In the Afghanistan conflict, however, as will be discussed further in chapter three, the context chapter, only one of the five countries researched, namely Germany, still had an active conscription system, but only deployed conscripts on a voluntary basis. So the new 'stranger' in these modern armed forces is the reservist instead of the conscript, who is also becoming more and more important for providing the necessary personnel in countries such as the UK and US.

2.3.3.2 Individually deployed

Where reservists are strangers in the normal context of the military organisation, the second group of candidates for fringe writers can be found specifically in a deployment context and can be applicable to any soldier: this is the individually deployed soldier, the augmentee. In Afghanistan, the large majority of military personnel are deployed with their own unit: a battalion, a flight squadron, a platoon. They trained with their own unit before the deployment, are deployed with them and after deployment go back to that same unit. Some people, however, hold a threshold position between their deployment and their normal military environment as they were individually taken from this normal teamwork environment and put in a new team for the duration of the deployment. Also, when returning home to their own unit, they will once again have this threshold position being in an environment of colleagues who did not share their experiences. This individual deployment gives them a fringe position, which according to the theory would increase their chance of writing about their experiences. Typical examples of individually deployed personnel are military doctors, personnel individually selected for working at an international headquarters, or mentors to the Afghan National Army.

In chapter five, the who-chapter, this fringe writer hypothesis will be tested for both reservists and individually deployed soldiers.

2.3.4 Autobiographical continuum

Books are never only written by the author himself or herself (Foucault, 2001; Inge, 2001), instead there is an (auto)biographical continuum ranging from entirely self written to written by others, see Figure 7:
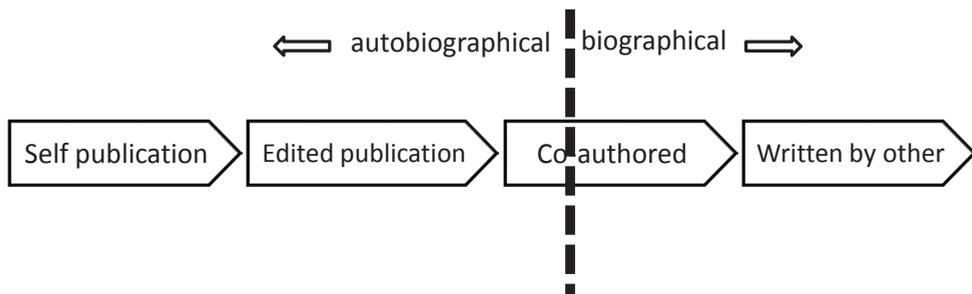
Figure 7: Autobiographical Continuum

Self-publishing companies generally contribute little to nothing to the content of the book; at most they edit the manuscript for mistakes after payment by the author. Traditional publishers (who publish books at their own risk and cost), in contrast, always have an editing process that normally also includes changes in style and content and they often give general indications to their writers of what kind of content would fit their target audience. In some countries traditional publishers even offer an inexperienced author a co-author: an experienced writer or journalist who will help to write the book; this is where the change from autobiographical to biographical book happens.

As the *Encyclopedia of Life Writing* puts it:

> The most perplexing texts in terms of authenticity are collaborative autobiographies, because of their virtually oxymoronic nature. If authenticity is a function of the relationship between the putative source and the words in the texts, then it is obviously problematic in cases of "as-told-to" or otherwise collaborative narratives, whose readers are encouraged to take them as issuing from the titular subject rather than the co-author. [...] collaborative autobiography disrupts the single identity of author cum narrator cum subject that is the constituting feature of the genre. (Couser, 2001a: 72)

French autobiography researcher Philippe Lejeune calls that the "autobiographical pact", the idea that the reader can trust that the author of an autobiography is a real person, who tells his or her real story. In its most basic form, the autobiographical pact presumes that the author, the narrator and the protagonist are identical (Lejeune, 1989: 11-12).

In my view, a co-author who thoroughly adapts the texts of the original author may still be seen as producing an autobiography, whereas a co-author who interviews the original author and does the writing himself, produces in effect a biography[11].

Next to the co-authors there is also another kind of professional writer that helps an inexperienced writer, the 'ghost-writer'. The only difference with a co-author is that in a ghost-written autobiography the collaboration is not openly acknowledged (Couser, 2001a: 72).

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11   There is, however, also a school of thinking that claims that every biography and autobiography is a work of pure fiction, sometimes referred to as 'autofiction' (Gratton, 2001). French sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu, for example, claims in his article *L'Illusion Biographique [The Biographical Illusion]* that autobiographies are organised according to the same chronological and logical rules as fiction writing is. Even the use of a proper name by the author is nothing but a social convention that has no inherent meaning at all (Bourdieu, 1986: 69-71).

The relationship these collaborative writers have with their subjects can change from "ethnographic autobiography, in which the writer outranks the generally anonymous subject, to celebrity autobiography, in which the famous subject outranks the generally anonymous writer" (Couser, 2001c: 222).

It will be interesting to see whether soldier-authors make use of co-authors and if so, what kinds of soldier-authors do so. Is it rank related in that only the highest ranking, famous soldiers are provided with a co-author, or only those with a low rank, to help them write? Or is it country-related? This will also be tested in chapter five.

2.3.5   Preface and foreword

Next to the writers who help to write the entire book, there are also writers who write only one chapter, what French literary theorist Gérard Genette refers to as an "allographic preface"(Genette, 1997: 207). In English such an allographic preface is generally referred to as the 'foreword', as opposed to the preface by the author which is simply called 'preface'.

Prefaces and forewords are forms of paratext. The term 'paratext' refers to all those elements that surround a text: from book covers, forewords and acknowledgments in the narrow sense, to book reviews and interviews with the author in the broader sense (Genette, 1997). Genette himself distinguishes between 'peritext' for the paratext within the book and 'epitext' for paratext outside of the book, but in practice, researchers tend to use the term 'paratext' even when referring only to peritextual elements such as covers (Teunissen, 2010; Woodward & Jenkings, 2012a). Paratext is especially interesting for studying the relationship of the author with his or her public; for example, in the preface of a memoir an author's writing motivation is made explicit, the book cover establishes what kind of audience is sought and book reviews (or the absence thereof) give an indication of the book's impact.

Any preface has as its main function "to get the book read and get the book read properly" (Genette, 1997: 197). For modesty reasons, the only aspect an author can credit himself for in a preface is truthfulness, which has been commonplace in historical books since the Ancient Greeks, and in autobiographies since Montaigne in the 16th century wrote: "This book was written in good faith, reader" (Genette, 1997: 206).

According to Genette, for the author who is not satisfied with the limitations that modesty places on him when trying to sell his book via his preface, there is another option: the

foreword. "When an author is anxious to highlight his merit, talent, or genius, he generally prefers – not unreasonably – to entrust this task to someone else by way of an allographic preface" (Genette, 1997: 207). In other words, the allographic preface is a commercial tool, a sales instrument.

It will be interesting to see whether books by soldier-authors also have forewords. If they do, it will also be interesting to see who soldier-authors use to write these allographic prefaces and whether this is only used by traditional publishers as a sales tool, or also by self-publishers. This again will be tested in chapter five.

2.4   What

2.4.1   Fact versus experience

Harari concludes in his book *Renaissance Military Memoirs*, that "[t]he most outstanding feature of the reality of Renaissance military memoirs is that it is made of facts rather than experiences" whereas "[t]he million-dollar question of our era [twentieth century] is not 'what happened?' but rather 'how did it feel?'" (Harari, 2004: 67).

Harari also concludes, as earlier discussed, that soldier-authors changed in time from kings and noblemen to junior officers and common soldiers. This change in ranks has consequences for the subjects that are discussed in these narratives. From oral history studies, it is known that military personnel in management positions tend to strongly identify with the formal organisational points of view and with the group, whereas common soldiers have a tendency to speak more in terms of personal memories and reflections (Scagliola, 2010: 41).

Harari sees the same kind of differences in the history of written military memoirs and describes them as "the kings-and-generals history" versus the "common soldier's iconoclastic worm's-eye view of war", whereby the worm's-eye view has become dominant in the twentieth century. They became so dominant, that by the end of the 20th century senior commanders started to take over the writing style of the common soldiers to increase their own credibility (Harari, 2007: 302).

2.4.1.1 Honour

Harari also notes that the once prominent "honorary interpretation of war" has also greatly declined in importance in the 20th century (Harari, 2008: 303). Where in the Renaissance the military memoirists are mostly concerned with recounting acts of honour by themselves and by others, and history is seen as "the universal hall of fame and honor", in the 20th century they are more concerned with a process of inner change (Harari, 2008: 111 & 113).

2.4.2   Disenchantment

The main theme in studies on twentieth century egodocuments written by soldier-authors is what British literature scholar Lucas Carpenter calls the "realistic-naturalistic 'war is hell' model" (Carpenter, 2003: 31) and Harari calls the "thesis of disillusionment" (Harari, 2005: 45). American story analyst Robert McKee describes a disillusionment plot as a specific story genre in which a "deep change of worldview from the positive to the negative" takes place (McKee, 1999: 81). The romantic image of war is substituted during the twentieth century by an image of war as hell and soldiers are no longer heroes but are seen as victims. It is described by Vietnam memoirist researcher Tobey Herzog as the typical reaction of soldiers who "enter war with this sense of adventure and innocence shaped by cultural myths, an older generation's war stories, and society's beliefs about war as a rite of passage and a test of character and courage" (Herzog, 1992: 4).

The first researcher to describe this disenchantment in-depth was American literature scholar Paul Fussell in his landmark study of military memoirs from the First World War, *The Great War and Modern Memory.* When describing a "paradigm war memoir" from this period, he described three recurring elements in each of them: first preparation, then the battle experience and finally a contrasting period of contemplation. He found that the "middle stage is always characterized by disenchantment and loss of innocence" (Fussell, 1975/2000: 130).

That this disillusionment thesis (as Harari calls it) or disenchantment effect (Fussell) exists is not under debate. What is under debate is what the exact turning point is and what caused it. The possible turning points vary from the First World War (Fussell, 1975/2000; Krimmer, 2010: 9), to the Second World War (Jay Winter in: Harari, 2005), to the Vietnam War (Bourke, 2004; Herzog, 1992). Hynes (1997) suggests that disillusionment is a nation-specific phenomenon. He sees the British disillusionment starting after World War I, whereas the Americans did not get their disillusionment stories until the war in Vietnam. Even in World

War II their "[i]rony was a serum that inoculated Americans against the disillusionment that had caused England its long hangover" (Hynes, 1997: 115).

However, there are also scientists who place the disillusionment before the First World War. American literature scholar Jeffrey Greenwood Smith convincingly shows in *The Literature of Disillusionment: Public War Correspondence from Waterloo to Khe Sanh* that already at the beginning of the 19th century, English commander Wellington strategically made use of disillusionment in his war-correspondence to shape expectation back home:

> Wellington, in his own career, encountered an Army infected by the cultural illusion of what constituted war. The nation's cultural script authorized charges that had no strategic relevance, or tactical hope for success; governments took for granted the logistical needs of the army, leaving them dangerously dependent upon the ingenuity of the local commander. Left unchallenged, such illusions made soldiers victims not only of their opponent's weaponry, but of their nation's wartime narrative. Wellington's first-echelon dispatches, by destroying the illusion of a healthy army, paradoxically rescued it. (Smith, 1992: 9)

Smith found that starting in 1854, William Howard Russell, the war correspondent of the *Times of London*, used the same disillusioned tone of voice, long before the First World War.

Smith is not the only one to find disillusionment already in the 19th century. Australian literature scholar Neil Ramsay, in his study *The Military Memoir and Romantic Literary Culture, 1780-1835* sees it in the war memoirs of common soldiers:

> Continuing to offer a more sentimental and disturbing picture of suffering, private soldiers' memoirs formed a dissident strain of war writing that endured thoughout [sic] nineteenth-century Britain. Nonetheless, by the 1830s the genre had largely come to be defined in terms of officers' memoirs that celebrated the soldier's heroism and war's adventures. (Ramsey, 2011: 19)

The turning point authors (Fussell, Winter, Bourke, Herzog, Hynes) implicitly assume that the horrors of their specific war and its aftermath cause this disenchantment. Canadian cognitive scientist Steven Pinker adds to that the argument that attitudes towards war have started changing since the Enlightenment, whereby the tolerance for violence has dramatically decreased (Pinker, 2011).

Harari takes a rather different point of view. He argues in *Renaissance Military Memoirs* that the cause of the disillusionment thesis is not so much that the horrors of the wars changed, but that the image of 'life' changed:

> They [twentieth-century military memoirists] grew up on the ideal that life is a process through which the experiences one undergoes build and develop one's "self" [...] For soldiers who entered war expecting life to be the continuous development of a self, and who then strove to somehow integrate the war into such a life, the idea of "disillusionment" provided the key. By utilizing this key even the worst horrors of war could be transformed into a *Bildungsroman*. (Harari, 2005: 67-68)

2.4.3   Flesh-witness

In his book *The Ultimate Experience* (Harari, 2008)*,* Harari further underscores this difference with the concept of the flesh-witness. Where in earlier times military memoirs were eyewitness accounts, stating objective facts about the war as adequate as possible, a new form of authority starts in the eighteenth century "that of flesh-witnessing, which is based not on the observation of facts, but on having undergone personal experience" (Harari, 2009: 217).

That has a number of consequences. Where the eyewitness gains authority by providing the reader with factual knowledge, the flesh-witness gains authority by the very fact that he tells the story, as he lived it in the flesh, without making the audience more knowledgeable. This is an authority that is not diminished by usage, as is eyewitness knowledge. Where someone, such as an historian who collects eye-witness stories, is quickly more of an expert than the military eyewitness who only witnessed a few facts and because of all the emotional engagement of combat probably did not get the facts very objectively (Harari, 2009: 215), the flesh-witness's authority is actually strengthened by the emotional engagement and is not

> squandered by usage. In order to prove that they, themselves, understand the experience of war and have the authority to speak of it, soldiers need to describe the experience of war in shocking detail. Yet they simultaneously remind the audience that these descriptions cannot transmit knowledge because experience cannot be conveyed through words. (Harari, 2009: 220)

According to Harari, this also makes for a different narrative (objective facts versus conveying experiences) and for a different motive for writing. "Very often flesh-witnesses are possessed by their past experience. They are messengers speaking on behalf of countless others who did not live to tell the tale [...] who speak – often against their will – in order to change the world rather than merely to transmit information" (Harari, 2009: 222).

2.4.4   Revelatory plots

To these flesh-witnesses, war became a revelatory experience, providing the flesh-witness with new knowledge and new experiences (Harari, 2008: 22). These revelatory experiences could be represented by two different types of stories, the narratives of positive revelation and the disillusionment stories:

> The quintessential late modern Western war story […] describes the experience of war as an experience of learning the truth about oneself and about the world. The hero of the story is most often an ignorant youth whom turns into a wise veteran. Combat is depicted as a quasi-mystical experience of revelation. [...]

> An alternative war story equates revelation with disillusionment. In this version of the story, the ignorant youth enters war with expectations of glory, but combat teaches him not to believe the false promise of heroism and patriotism, and never again to trust powerful establishment. (Harari, 2008: 1 & 4)

The first types are growth stories in the tradition of the *Bildungsroman.* They show a hero or heroine who changes profoundly "from ignorance to enlightenment" (Harari, 2008: 149) by learning from his or her experiences. So Harari sees an alternative to the disillusionment thesis as well, as he also distinguishes growth plots, or as he calls them "narratives of positive revelation" (Harari, 2008: 303). Basically, the disillusionment story is a growth plot that is taken one step further because of the war experiences. As English literature scholar Lucas Carpenter describes it: "The protagonist follows the customary war narrative progression from innocence to experience to disillusionment" (Carpenter, 2003: 44).

Harari is not the only one who notices that war stories sometimes stop at the 'experience' stage in which they remain growth plots, instead of turning into disillusionment stories. Michael Paris finds in his research into popular culture that the stories told in the interbellum are not only disillusionment stories. "Despite this genuine anti-war sentiment among many Britons, much writing about war continued to portray it as an exciting adventure. […]

The experience of 1913-18, then, seemingly had little effect on the pleasure culture of war" (Paris, 2000: 154 & 184).

However, how many military memoirs are revelatory plots and how they are divided between disenchantment (negative revelation) and growth (positive revelation) is not even clear to Harari. "To what extent they were actually used by authors in different countries and different decades is a question that only future research could answer" (Harari, 2008: 199).

For the first decade of the 21st century, in five different Western countries, this study will try to answer that question.

2.4.5   Truth

Another question that will be interesting to look at is that of the truth or authenticity of military autobiographies, as this is a subject that seems to be interwoven in the concept of autobiographies. In the discussion of egodocuments so far, it kept popping up: in discussing the possible scientific use of egodocuments, in the autobiographical continuum, in the autobiographical pact and in the changing concept from eyewitness to flesh-witness. Aristotle already discussed the role of truth in his *Poetics*. He distinguishes two types of writers, poets and historians, whereby according to him the historian's duty is to talk about events that took place and the poet's duty is to talk about events that could happen (Aristoteles, ca 330 BC/2004: IX 51a36). Basically, what he does is discern between fiction (poet) and non-fiction (historian) whereby only the non-fiction is bound to write the truth. The question then is: is a soldier-author a poet or a historian?

Nowadays military autobiographies are seen as a specific form of non-fiction, whereby the soldier-author is regarded more as an Aristotelian historian than a poet. As any autobiography, military autobiographies come with an autobiographical pact that is all about committing to telling the truth: the author has to be a real person who tells his or her real story (Fussell, 1975/2000: 310; Genette, 1997: 11; Lejeune, 1989: 11-12). As we have seen before, explicitly taking credit for truthfulness has been commonplace since ancient times in prefaces of both historical works and autobiographies (Genette, 1997: 206). Historians (not autobiographers) even back their truthfulness claims up with specific truth guarantees. "Thucydides, for example, maintains that he relies only on direct observation or duly corroborated testimony" (Genette, 1997: 206).

For autobiographers, however, it is common to claim their own honesty (Baggerman & Dekker, 2004: 9). Making these claims can be seen as a speech act of assertion, "a speech act that commits the speaker to telling the truth" (Austin, 1962; Ryan, 2010: 10).

Woodward suggests that these truth claims serve a marketing purpose as "the stamp of authenticity guarantees sales to a readership intrigued by questions about what military violence is actually like" (Woodward, 2008: 368).

The standards to which the autobiographer is held are not extremely high, according to the *Encyclopedia of Life Writing*. "Autobiographers are generally not viewed as obliged to research their own lives; the presumed subjectivity of the genre gains them a degree of latitude when it comes to fact checking" (Couser, 2001c: 222-223).

These concepts are beautifully mirrored in the advertisement for a new book by British soldier-author-turned-novel-writer Andy McNab on the front page of *De Telegraaf*[12]. Besides the name of the famous author and the front cover of the book, it only shows a quote from the *Sunday Times*[13]*: "*Other thriller writers do their research, but McNab has actually been there."[14] The quote implies that for a writer of military memoirs and novels it is more important to have been a flesh-witness, than to do research. The truth is the personal truth of the flesh-witness, not an objective, historical truth of the eyewitness.

According to Harari, by the sixteenth century it was already clear that the objectivity from eyewitness accounts was rather poor and military writers writing these accounts "often admitted that they were poorly positioned to give a factually detailed and accurate description of war" (Harari, 2009: 216).

In her article on the history of the reception of autobiography, Dutch historian Marijke Huisman concludes that unto the 19th century autobiographies were seen as objective truth but by the end of the 19th century they were no longer regarded as historical texts, but as subjective testimonies (Huisman, 2011). Not only scientist have made this change, but also modern writers themselves who are often conscious of how difficult it can be to express 'the truth' or 'reality' in words (Baggerman & Dekker, 2004: 22). In his essay *How to Tell a True War Story*, American novelist and soldier-author Tim O'Brien writes from his own experience that "[i]n any war story, but especially a true one, it's difficult to separate what happened

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12   A well-read, Dutch newspaper that is a cross between tabloid and quality newspaper.

13   A British quality Sunday newspaper

14   Advertisement by publisher A.W. Bruna on the front page of *De Telegraaf* of 20 April 2013 for the book *Het Taliban Offensief* (McNab & Jordan, 2013), which is the Dutch translation of *Battle Lines* (McNab & Jordan, 2012)

from what seemed to happen […] In many cases a true war story cannot be believed. […] Often the crazy stuff is true and the normal stuff isn't" (O'Brien, 1990: 71).

So it will come as no surprise that military autobiography researcher Samuel Hynes concludes that although military autobiographies are true, they are not truthful, as personal narratives are different from history (Hynes, 1997: 16). Echoing Harari's distinction between eyewitness and flesh-witness he writes: "We are confronted with an apparent contradiction here: the man-who-was-there asserts his authority as the only true witness of his war; but the truth that he claims to tell is compromised by the very nature of memory and language" (Hynes, 1997: 25).

Nonetheless, American scholar of German literature Elisabeth Krimmer concludes in her book *The Representation of War in German Literature* that secondary literature dealing with war texts is often preoccupied with historical accuracy. "Consciously or subliminally, authenticity emerges as the gold standard of war writing" (Krimmer, 2010: 5)

2.4.5.1 Memory

When talking about the concept of truth, the concept of memory always needs to be considered as well, as Hynes does, for the writer's memory is the basis of what he or she writes about. As the *Encyclopedia of Life Writing* puts it: "[The autobiography's] narrative authority derives not from research but from personal experience, from memory and subjectivity – that is from self-identity" (Couser, 2001b: 73).

If that memory is perfect than what is written down could be considered the truth as long as it perfectly resembles whatever is contained in the writer's memory. That is a big 'if', especially when considering recent memory research.

In the past, the functioning of the memory was sometimes thought of as a video recorder, albeit a not entirely perfect one (Schacter & Addis, 2007: 773). It was, for instance, thought that at least something called 'flash bulb memory' existed: important and emotionally significant events, such as the assassination of US president John F. Kennedy in 1963, were stored in our memory in an exceptionally vivid way that was resistant to forgetting over time (Brown & Kulik, 1977). Recent research however, for example into the September 11 attacks on the US in 2001, concludes that flashbulb memories are not special in their accuracy, only in their *perceived* accuracy (Talarico & Rubin, 2003).

Other research shows that it is fairly easy to alter the memory by suggestion, but that

humans have no ability to reliably distinguish between real and false memories (Loftus & Pickrell, 1995: 725). Researchers have convinced people that they read words that were not on a list (Roediger & McDermott, 1995), that as a child they got lost in a shopping mall (Loftus & Pickrell, 1995) or that historical events were attended by far more people than actually participated in it (Sacchi, Agnoli, & Loftus, 2007).

Further research shows that people also cannot remember changing their mind. Research into changing testaments, for example, showed that people who have changed their testament, in 75% of the cases falsely remember that their original decision was the same as their later decision, an effect that was not age-related (Sharman, Garry, Jacobsen, Loftus, & Ditto, 2008).

Looking at a specific part of memory, which researchers call autobiographical memory, also shows that there is a two-way link between people's current self-image and their recollections. Current self-views and beliefs influence their recollection of their former selves, and in turn these current self-views also influence what they remember and how they recollect their earlier selves. This all leads to a coherent (and largely positive) self-image (Wilson & Ross, 2003). As Dutch psychologist and memory researcher Douwe Draaisma aptly summarizes: "Memories change with use"[15] (Draaisma, 2008: 113).

2.4.5.2 Storytelling

That search for coherence, specifically in the form of coherent stories, seems to be an innate quality of our brain. It is especially well visible in research into patients who have undergone cerebral commissurotomy to treat severe epilepsy. Simply put: because their brains were 'split' it was possible to study the two cerebral hemispheres separately. This research shows that our left hemisphere has what American psychologist Michael Gazzaniga calls a left-brain interpreter who comes up with coherent stories. Gazzaniga demonstrated that information presented to the right hemisphere, for instance the picture of a snow scene, is picked up by the left hemisphere, but not consciously; whereas the information presented to the left hemisphere, for instance a chicken claw, is processed consciously. When asked to pick up pictures that were associated with the pictures shown, the split brain patient correctly picks out a chicken (chicken claw) and a shovel (snow scene), but when asked why he picked the shovel (the unconscious input) he relates a story that interprets a response that is "consistent with its sphere of knowledge": on that chicken shit needs to be cleaned up with a shovel (Gazzaniga, 1995: 1393).

15   My translation

This tendency in brain patients to confabulate stories (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000: 271; Mar, 2004: 1421; Schacter & Addis, 2007: 773) points to a general innate psychological human preference to storytelling, that is sometimes referred to as *the narrative fallacy* (Nafday, 2009: 192-193; Taleb, 2007: 63) or as part of our *system 1* (our intuitive system) as opposed to our *system 2* (our rational system) (Kahneman, 2003: 1451; 2011: 85; Stanovich & West, 2000: 658). As American psychologist Jonathan Gottschall titles his book on the psychological need for storytelling: humans are *The Storytelling Animal* (Gottschall, 2012).

American memory researchers Elizabeth Loftus and J.E. Pickrell sum up current memory research as "[v]irtually thousands of studies have documented how our memories can be disrupted by things that we experienced earlier (proactive interference) or things that we experienced later (retroactive interference)" (Loftus & Pickrell, 1995: 720).

American psychologists Daniel Schacter and Donna Addis therefore conclude that "[m]emory is not a literal reproduction of the past, but rather is a constructive process in which bits and pieces of information from various sources are pulled together" (Schacter & Addis, 2007: 773).Their current hypothesis is that episodic memory, the memory that recollect past experiences, functions more like a simulator to project the future and calculate possible scenarios than like a video recorder.

All this means that human memory is an unreliable tool and that historical, objective truth guarantees cannot be expected from the memories of soldier-authors. At most a subjective, socially constructed 'truth' or truthfulness can be found in their books.

2.4.5.3 Censorship
It will be interesting to see whether soldier-authors discuss these issues on truth and memory in their autobiographies, especially in light of the typically military phenomenon of censorship. This will be addressed in chapter six. Although in democracies censorship in the sense of preventative supervision aimed at the content of freedom of speech is generally frowned upon, even in democracies there are some limitations to freedom of expression (Coolen, 2004: 89). The European Convention on Human Rights (article 10) for example allows (among others) restrictions for interests of national security, public safety, protection of health and protection of the reputation and the rights of others. In the military, by definition an organisation that deals with issues of national security, public safety and protecting others, these exceptions to the restriction of censorship are daily reality and personnel is trained and expected to keep to a high level of what is technically

called OpSec: operational security. OpSec leads to censorship as the military try to preview written expressions by its own personnel engaged in operations such as letters home, blogs, articles, and – relevant for this study – books.

This is not a modern phenomenon, as wars have traditionally been surrounded with censorship measures (Fussell, 1975/2000: 175; Smith, 1992: 13). OpSec is not only expected from its own personnel, but also from embedded journalists. Dutch war correspondent Arnold Karskens concludes in his book on the history of Dutch war correspondence that censorship and self-censorship have influenced war correspondents since the first war report that was written in 1568 (Karskens, 2001: 17). What is a new phenomenon, however, is the fact that in the digital era keeping total control of all written expressions, such as military blogs, has become virtually impossible (Resteigne, 2010: 524).

2.4.5.4 Self-censoring

In military organisations, the formal censoring is accompanied by self-censoring by military personnel as OpSec is not just an organisational necessity, but also a personal necessity: if you provide sensitive information that is abused by the enemy, you endanger the lives of your fellow soldiers and yourselves. This is a form of what British political philosopher John Horton calls "instrumental self-censorship". "We understand ourselves neither to be merely exercising self-control nor to be simply subject to ordinary censorship: that is, neither acting entirely out of our own volition nor being effectively coerced: it is the uneasy and variable combination of both" (Horton, 2011: 99).

Despite the uneasiness that accompanies censorship and self-censorship, the organisational and personal operational security interests still make it not surprising that recent research into censorship of military blogs in Belgium shows that 52% of soldiers questioned were "very supportive of institutional control over blogs held by personnel" and that military bloggers "generally exert a sort of self-censorship, by not posting certain kinds of sensitive information, or by deleting comments that could be sensitive" (Resteigne, 2010: 522). If military bloggers do so, military book writers will most likely do so as well. It will be interesting to see whether this self-censorship is discussed in their books, and if so, to what extent. It will also be interesting to see, whether official censorship is discussed and whether that leads to either more positive stories because of the censoring, or, alternatively, to more negative stories, as those that specifically mention the censoring may be irritated by it. This will be investigated in chapter six.

Next to these forms of censorship that are specific to the military, the *Encyclopedia of Life Writing* distinguishes forms of censorship that are general to all life writing. Censors here are often family member of the author that seek protection from being hurt by the revelations in the book, and self-censorship can mainly be found "by artfully omitting less flattering details" (Rollyson, 2001: 193).

2.4.6   Plot

In English, as opposed to other languages such as German, French and Russian, the word 'plot' can indicate both what the story is about and how it is arranged (Merenlahti, 2002: 99; Nischik, 1981: 46-49). In this study, plot will be used to answer the what-question (what do soldier-authors write about?) and in particular to test the competing disillusionment thesis and revelatory plot thesis to see which of these (if any) is valid for 21st century military memoirs.

2.4.6.1 Aristotle

The first scholar to systematically distinguish different types of plots was Aristotle in his *Poetics* (Aristoteles, ca 330 BC/2004)[16]. According to Artistotle, a plot first of all has to be coherent; it needs to have a beginning, a middle and an end (VII 50b23), the acts need to be linked by probability or necessity and have to lead to a change of the hero's fortune from good to bad or the other way around (VII 51a6). Secondly, a plot needs to have unity; it should have one act as subject and that act has to form a unity (VIII 51a30) and it should also be limited in time (V 49b9). Therefore, American linguist and Southeast Asia specialist A.L. Becker defines an Aristotelian plot as one that has "temporal unity and linear causality" (Becker, 1979: 218).

Artistotle divides plots in a number of different ways. First, he distinguishes between simple plots and complex plots. A complex plot is characterized by a reversal in fortune and/or a reversal in recognition (from ignorance to insight), whereas a simple plot does not have this kind of reversal (XI 52a22, XI 52a29). Then he distinguishes between plots that move from good to bad and from bad to good (XIII 52b34). Although he also differentiates between good and evil character plots (Halliwell, 1998: 219), Aristotle is clear about the fact that characters do not change during the course of a story (XV 54a26).

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16   The estimated year of publication comes from (Halliwell, 1998).

2.4.6.2 Campbell

In 1949, American mythologist Joseph Campbell delves deeper into Aristotle's concept of the hero's plot and researches myths from all over the world and from all times. In his influential book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, he describes the basic story that underlies every saga he reads, which he calls the "monomyth". "A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man" (Campbell, 1949: 30).

He concludes that the monomyth is valid for modern stories as well, although with one adaptation: "Not the animal world, not the plant word, not the miracle of the spheres, but man himself is now the crucial mystery. Man is that alien presence with whom the forces of egoism must come to terms" (Campbell, 1949: 391).

2.4.6.3 Friedman

Another person who worked with Aristotle's plot theory[17] is English lecturer Norman Friedman. In 1955, he devised an easy to use and formal system to divide plots into fourteen different categories (see Figure 8).

Like Aristotle, he starts with the hero and looks at the main change the protagonist undergoes. But where Aristotle sees only two major changes that the hero can undergo, either in fortune or in thought ("recognition" in Aristotelian language), Friedman sees a third possibility, the one that Aristotle explicitly ruled out, but Campbell brought up as a modern extension: a change in character.

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17   Without ever referring to him
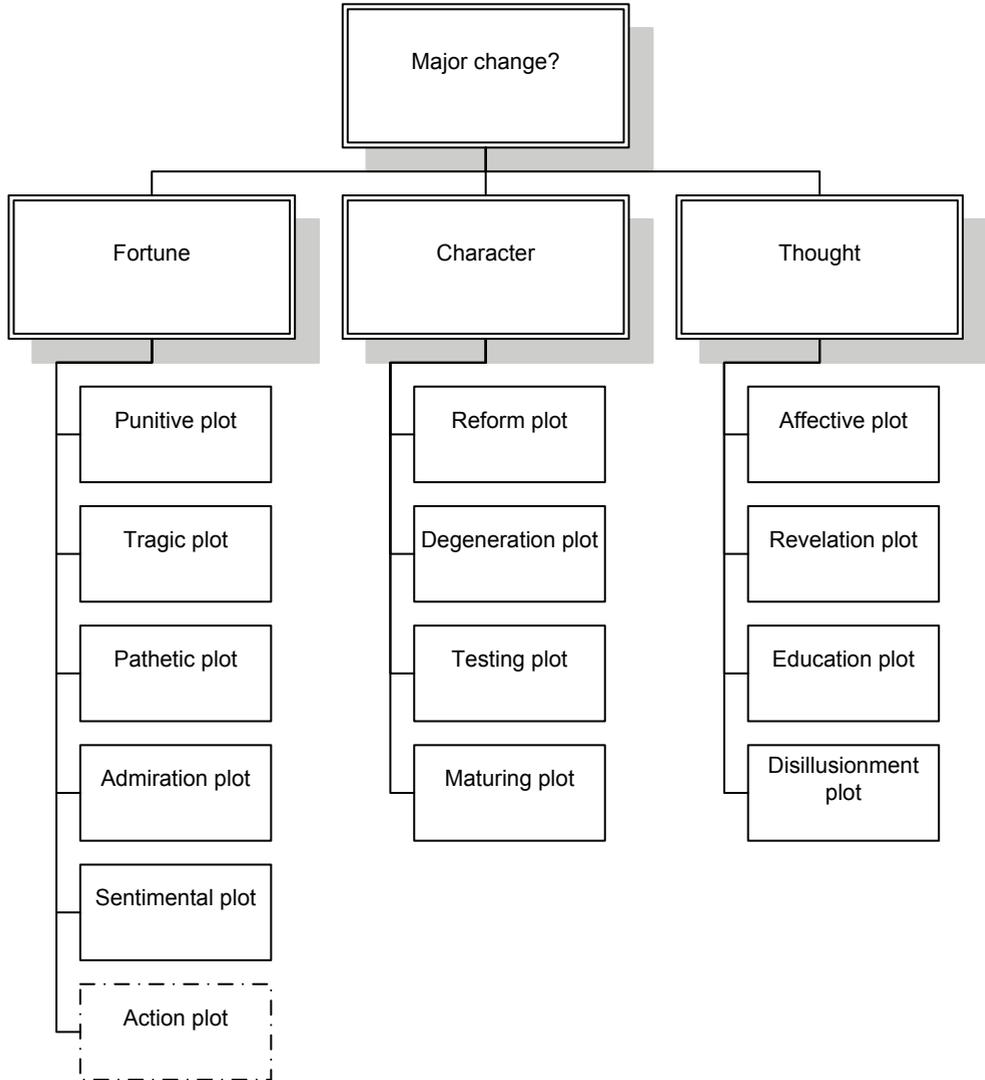
Figure 8: Friedman's Fourteen Plots (Based on Friedman, 1955: 247-252)

Friedman defines these major changes as follows:

> "Fortune" refers to the protagonist's honor, status, and reputation, his goods, loved ones, health, and well-being. Fortune is revealed in what happens to him – happiness or misery – and to his plans – success or failure.

"Character" refers to the protagonist's motives, purposes, and goals, his habits, behavior, and will, and may be noble or base, good or bad, sympathetic or unsympathetic, complete or incomplete, mature or immature. Character is revealed when he decides voluntarily to pursue or abandon a course of action and in whether he can indeed put his decision into effect.

And "thought" refers to the protagonist's states of mind, attitudes, reasonings, emotions, beliefs, conceptions, and knowledge. Thought is revealed either omnisciently, as in many novels, or in what the character says when stating a general proposition, arguing a particular point, or explaining his view of a situation. (Friedman, 1955: 246-247)

Like Aristotle, Friedman also looks at the direction of the change: is it from positive to negative, "from a satisfactory state to a less satisfactory state" (Friedman, 1955: 247), or the other way round? He also looks at the protagonist, whether he is unsympathetic ("evil" in the words of Aristotle) or sympathetic. What is new is that within fortune plots, he distinguishes plots based on whether the fortune change was the protagonist's own fault or not, and within thought plots he discerns different types of knowledge. With these steps, Friedman arrives at the classification of fourteen different frequently used plots, as illustrated in Figure 8. Each of them can be classified into one of the three major change groups of fortune, character or thought, apart from the action plot, which doesn't entail any change at all, hence the dotted line in Figure 8.

The strength of Friedman's analytical framework is that his plot categories are clearly demarcated, so clearly that they can easily be illustrated in flow charts, such as the one in Figure 9 for determining character plots.
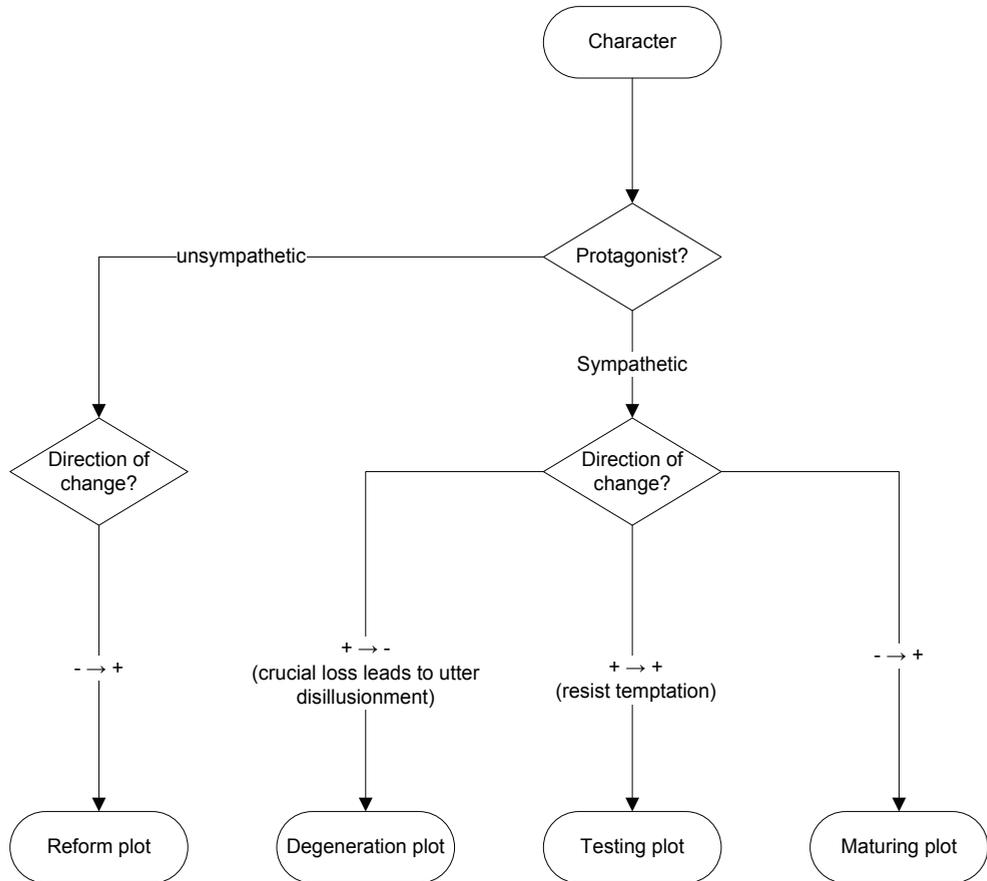
Figure 9: Character Plots (Based on Friedman, 1955: 249-251)

It can be read as follows: After having determined that a protagonist's major change during the plot is related to his character, the subsequent step is to determine whether the protagonist is sympathetic or unsympathetic. In case of an unsympathetic hero, only one change is possible according to Friedman, a change to the positive. He calls this a *reform plot*. When the protagonist is a sympathetic person, three changes are possible. Either a sympathetic character changes for the worse (from plus to minus) "when we start with a protagonist who was at one time sympathetic and full of ambition and subject him to some crucial loss which results in his utter disillusionment" (Friedman, 1955: 250)*,* which leads to a *degeneration plot*. Or a sympathetic character is tested, and by resisting the temptation he remains a sympathetic character (plus remaining plus), which is a *testing*

plot, or a naive or inexperienced sympathetic character changes for the better: the *maturing plot*.

Similar flow charts for fortune and thought plots can be found in Appendix B and C respectively.

Besides the clear plot definitions, there is another feature to Friedman's plot theory that is specifically interesting with regard to testing what Harari refers to as the disillusionment thesis and Fussell as disenchantment: Friedman distinguishes two different disenchantment plots. There is the degeneration plot for negative character plots that was discussed before and also the disillusionment plot for thought plots "in which a sympathetic protagonist starts out in the full bloom of faith in a certain set of ideals and, after being subjected to some kind of loss, threat or trail, loses that faith entirely" (Friedman, 1955: 252).

In the same way, he also distinguishes two different growth plots, the other kind of revelatory plots that Harari distinguishes (see Figure 10): the maturity plot that was explained above as one of the character plots and a similar thought plot called *the education plot,* which "involves a change in thought for the better in terms of the protagonist's conceptions, beliefs, and attitudes [...] [that unlike the maturity plot] does not continue on to demonstrate the effects of this beneficial change on his behavior" (Friedman, 1955: 251).

These characteristics make Friedman's plot theory eminently suitable for testing both the disillusionment thesis and the revelatory plot thesis.
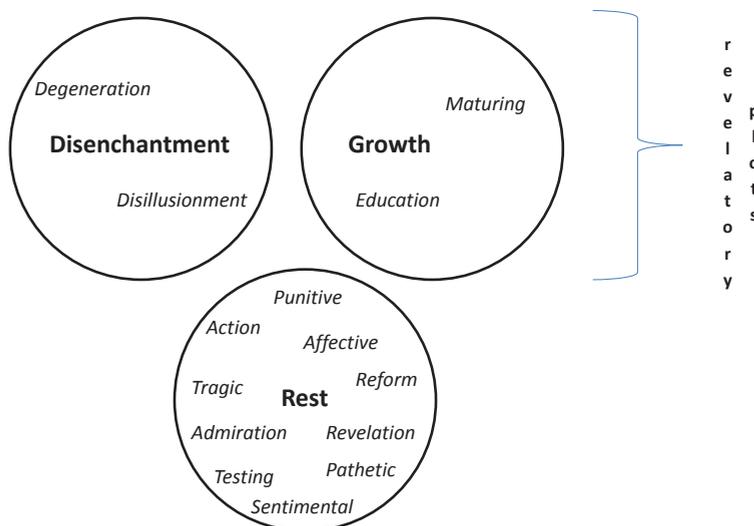
Figure 10: Three Main Plot Types

What is also interesting for analytical purposes is that the different plots are generally linked to overall positive or negative plotlines, with the exception of action plots and affective plots, as they can be both negative and positive (see Table 2). Thereby, the framework provides the opportunity to not only test for disenchantment and growth, but also for overall negativity and positivity, by looking at the change the protagonist went through: from positive to negative (negative plot) or from negative to positive (positive plot).

Plots		
Positive	**Negative**	**Could be both**
Education	Disillusionment	Action
Maturing	Degeneration	Affective
Admiration	Pathetic	
Sentimental	Punitive	
Revelation	Tragic	
Reform		
Testing		

Table 2: Positive and Negative Plots

2.4.6.4 Other plot theories

Friedman is not the only scholar who works with Aristotle's concept of value change when analyzing plots. Gergen and Gergen, for example, describe plots by plotting the positive or negative value of the stories they analyse in time (K.J. Gergen & Gergen, 1988), Dutch psychologist Gerben Westerhof distinguishes a threefold structure: progressive, regressive and stable narratives (Westerhof, 2008: 20), and McKee has reworked it into a technique to not only analyze on the level of an entire story, but also on scene level why a story or a scene 'works' or 'does not work' (McKee, 1999: 257-259). Hungarian mass communications specialist Agnes Hankiss uses value change to distinguish four different ontologies of the self in the plots of life stories, varying from a negative past leading to a negative present unto a positive past leading to a positive present (Hankiss, 1981). There are also plot theorists who do not make use of value change, such as German psychologist and philosopher Jens Brockmeier who distinguishes six different categories of "autobiographical time": linear, circular, cyclical, spiral, static, and fragmentary (Brockmeier, 2000). But none of them offer Friedman's simple elegance in combination with the specific focus on negative and positive revelation plots (disenchantment and growth plots).

In this study, therefore, Friedman's plot theory will be used to analyze what soldier-authors write about. A practical point is that when using both Friedman's terms "disillusionment" and "degeneration" to discuss 'disillusionment' in general, a confusion may arise as to what exactly is the meaning of the word disillusionment: does it refer to a disillusionment plot in the sense of Friedman or to disillusionment in general? To prevent this confusion of tongues, following Fussell, the word 'disenchantment' will be used to refer to disillusionment in general, which encompasses both disillusionment plots (thought plots in which the hero's ideals are shattered) and degeneration plots (character plots in which the hero's character is changed in a negative sense). This can be expressed in the following formula:

Disenchantment = Disillusionment + Degeneration

1.4.6.4.1 Non-Aristotelian

What is important to note is that not all plots are what Becker calls "Aristotelian plots": plots with temporal unity and linear causality (Becker, 1979: 218). According to Becker, by their use of tense (past, present, future), Indo-European languages are inherently time and causality related and will therefore produce Aristotelian plots. But, when studying Javanese shadow theatre, written in non-Indo-European languages that do not use tenses, Becker found completely different plots, lacking unity of time and causality and built around coincidence instead of probability or necessity (Becker, 1979: 219). In these cases, working with an Aristotelian plot theory such as Friedman's would be problematic. However, that is not the case in this study, as it will look at plots written in English, Dutch and German, which are all western languages that are based on tenses.

1.4.6.4.2 Rhizomatic plots

Aristotelian plots are not only related to languages, but also to form. Scientists studying self-narratives also find that Aristotelian plots are often missing in oral life stories. Belgian psychologists Jasmina Sermijn, Patrick Devlieger and Gerrit Loots find that in practice, oral self-narratives generally consist "of a heterogeneous collection of horizontal and sometimes "monstrous" story elements that persons tell about themselves and that are not synthesized into one coherent story from which they derive their selfhood" (Sermijn, Devlieger, & Loots, 2008: 5).

They call these non-linear stories "rhizomatic stories", referring to the biological term 'rhizome', which indicates a usually underground root system that branches out to all sides.

Rhizomatic stories are characterized by the fact that the story elements are not synthesized around a plot, instead the story is a compilation of horizontal, non-hierarchical story elements. These stories employ 'monstrous time', which is nonlinearly organized time, such as time which is difficult to date or conflicts with the separation among past-present-future. They also make use of 'monstrous causality', a lack of linear cause and effect and 'monstrous space', space that is constantly in motion and lacks a fixed central point (Sermijn, et al., 2008: 4). It seems likely that this rhizomatic form is specifically applicable to orally told stories, and that book writing conventions in Western countries dictate a more formal, linear plot line. However, finding out whether contemporary military memoirs are Aristotelian plots will have to be part of this study.

2.4.7   Adaptation and PTSD

We saw earlier that Fussell described a paradigmatic war memoir as having three elements: preparation, disenchanted battle experience and contemplation. Another English literature scholar who looked into war memoirs, Tobey Herzog, concluded from his research into Vietnam war stories that a fourth element can be identified "where soldiers not only continue to reflect on their war experiences but also struggle to adjust to civilian life" (Herzog, 1992: 14).

This adaptation problem fits the disillusionment thesis, which often is a victim narrative about trauma. Harari also sees it, and notes that it merges with psychological theories on this subject, particularly on the subject of post-traumatic stress disorder. "The widespread expectation that veterans must suffer at least some degree of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is often just another twist on the basic theme of martial revelation" (Harari, 2008: 4).

PTSD is a reaction to a traumatic experience which is characterized in the DSM-IV-TR[18] by:

1) intrusive recollection, persistently re-experiencing the traumatic event

2) avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing, such as feelings of detachment or estrangement from others

3) hyper-arousal, such as difficulty sleeping, irritability or exaggerated startle response

At least six symptoms in total from every one of the three criteria have to be present for more

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18   The fourth, revised edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* by the American Psychiatric Association.

than one month for a diagnosis of full PTSD (DSM-IV-TR, 2002: 309.81). Research shows that having partial PTSD, (only having one symptom in each criterion) has considerably fewer consequences than having full PTSD (Breslau, Lucia, & Davis, 2004: 1211).

These symptoms, however, are not only experienced by people having full or partial PTSD, but they are rather common in the first few months after returning from a deployment, and are seen in the military as a normal reaction to an abnormal situation (Kamp & Schok, 2012: 63-66). Research shows that even soldiers who have not experienced traumatic events have problems adjusting to life when coming back from a deployment, which prompted Swedish military researcher Louise Weibull to propose the term post-deployment disorientation (PDD) for these non-clinical symptoms of adjustment problems (Weibull, 2012).

It will be interesting to see whether PTSD symptoms or other adaption problems such as prolonged alienation are present in military autobiographies and if so, whether there is a relationship between disenchantment plots and the presence of PTSD symptoms. This will be tested in chapter six, the what-chapter.

2.5   Why

2.5.1   Therapy

One of the therapeutic responses to PTSD is writing about it (Meijer, 2002: 234; Robinson, 2011: 570), although according to Robinson "neurobiological research and various treatment models now challenge the benefits of telling stories of war as therapy for PTSD" (Robinson, 2011: 579).

Even though for PTSD storytelling may not necessarily be the most appropriate form of therapy, specifically as "expressive writing is generally associated with an immediate increase in negative affect"[19] (Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005: 344), there is ample evidence that creative writing in other circumstances can be therapeutic. In healthy adults, short writing sessions (2 to 15 minutes of writing on 2 to 5 occasions) in which traumatic or positive experiences are described lead to positive psychological and physical health effects, such as less doctor visits and lower blood pressure (Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005; Burton & King, 2008; Mieras, 2010; Pennebaker & Chung, 2007; Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999). Positive effects from writing are

19   Baike and Wilhelm continue: "but this short-term distress does not appear to be detrimental or to pose a longer-term risk to participants [...] Given the large number of studies conducted to date, with only a few finding any worsening of symptoms for those writing about traumatic experiences, the expressive writing paradigm appears to be reasonably safe for participants" (Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005).

also seen in people suffering from depression (Bohlmeijer, Valenkamp, Westerhof, Smit, & Cuijpers, 2005) and psychosis (Stone, 2006). American social psychologist James Pennebaker describes the mechanism behind these health benefits of writing as follows: "[T]he act of constructing the stories is associated with mental and physical health improvement. A constructed story, then, is a type of knowledge that helps organize the emotional effects of an experience as well as the experience itself" (Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999: 1249).

Na de missie[20], a science-based Dutch handbook for soldiers, veterans and home front, therefore recommends writing for returning soldiers in general as "writing or telling stories can be healing when digesting experiences. By writing and thinking about how to write it down, you order your thoughts and build in a moment for evaluation[21]". However, it also warns the reader that it is a myth to think that people are interested in the soldier's stories about his or her deployment (Kamp & Schok, 2012: 47).

It will be interesting to see whether therapeutic reasons are mentioned as writing motives by military writers. This will be tested in chapter seven, the why-chapter.

2.5.2   Implicit and explicit motivation

If soldier-authors do provide therapy as a writing motive, it most probably will not be the only writing motive mentioned. Most egodocument researchers theorise extensively about the writing motives of their research subjects. Dozens of possible writing motives can be found in literature varying from the above mentioned therapeutic reasons to entertainment, from relating lessons learned to public recognition (e.g. Dekker, 2002b; McAdams, 1996; Westerhof, 2008). German literature researcher Helga Meise concludes that in Europe in the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period motives for writing or the intentions of publication are marked by diversity, not by uniformity (Meise, 2002: 107). Her conclusion still holds true nowadays. Most researchers on egodocuments mention explicit motives given by the writer of their researched egodocuments and sometimes also speculate on implicit motives (e.g. Algazi, 2002; Bar-Levav, 2002; Lougee, 2002).

Explicit motives are motives that are clearly stated by the author. They can be found in the books themselves, for example in the preface or the afterword. Just looking at explicit motives will, however, not disclose all motives for writing. First, not every writer will explicitly write about his or her writing motives. Second, even if they did, writers are not

■
20   *After the Mission*
21   My translation

always conscious of all their motives for writing (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). Third, there may be reasons for not disclosing conscious motives, for example when motives are deemed socially less desirable. In a military context, motives such as writing for individual fame or money may fall under this last category, as these motives do not fit the military team spirit in which individual initiative is made subordinate to team effort.

In addition, the explicit motives that authors give do not always concur with the implicit motives that can be deduced from the content of their written work. For example, Harari writes that in the Renaissance " many more memoirists thought it enough to declare their commitment to this ideal [producing the truth about warfare by reliance on personal experience] in their meta-text, and ignored it in the body of the text" (Harari, 2004: 33).

British sociologist Anthony Giddens sees this distinction between implicit and explicit motives as one of the central issues in sociology. A good sociologist must "distinguish between *respect for the authenticity of belief* [...] and the *critical evaluation of the justification of belief*"(Giddens, 1979: 251).

In an extensive overview article in *Psychological Review*, researchers from the Center for Applied Social Science at Boston University show that in practice there is a great difference between explicit ("self-attributed") and implicit motives. "Implicit motives generally sustain spontaneous behavioral trends over time because of the pleasure derived from the activity itself, whereas the self-attributed motives predict immediate responses to structured situations because of the social incentives present in structuring the situation" (McClelland, Koestner, & Weinberger, 1989).

As this study is explorative research, aimed mainly at quantitative fact finding, the focus will be on the clearly demarcated explicit motives. However, where objective measures for more implicit motives are available, they will also be used and contrasted with explicit motives. Such objective measures for implicit motive can be found by looking at dedications or the use of honour lists (such as names of people who have been killed in action or received medals), or come forth from the fringe writer hypothesis.

2.5.3 Historical writing motives

Although most researchers on egodocuments mention writing motives, they usually do so without developing a more general motivational model, in the sense of categorizing

the writing motives. Two egodocument experts who did develop a taxonomy of writing motivation are Dutch historians Rudolf Dekker and Arianne Baggerman.

In his overview of all egodocuments found in public archives in the Netherlands from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, Dekker provides an outline of the four main writing motives explicitly mentioned by egodocument writers during this period. No less than 80% of all egodocuments that give writing motives mention writing for one's own children, to relay information from one generation to the other. A second important reason he finds is that most authors want to keep their memories alive, although Dekker does not mention percentages here. Third are religious motives, mentioned by 20% of the writers who give a writing motive. Finally, Dekker also finds that some writers (no mention of percentages once again) are explicitly looking to reach a readership outside the family circle, for instance to help write an obituary in a newspaper or magazine, or to earn money (Dekker, 1999: 270-275).

Arianne Baggerman, when looking at nineteenth century autobiographies (a subset of egodocuments), also distinguishes four main reasons for writing (Baggerman, 2005). What is interesting about her categorisation is that she incorporates both explicit and implicit motives of the writers, as she distils the implicit motives from the content of their texts. She also distinguishes four main motives: to give an example to others, to help a future biographer or necrologist, to defend oneself ("apologia") and to earn money. Her categorization is partly similar to that of Dekker's, but also has some differences, as can be seen in Table 3:

Dekker (1999)	Baggerman (2005)
Remembering	
Religious	
Children	Example to Others
Reach Readership	Earn Money
	Auto-necrology
	Apologia

Table 3: Comparison of Historical Categorisations of Writing Motives

Where Dekker has one category "reach readership", Baggerman distinguishes two separate motives (to help a future biographer or necrologist and to earn money), but they are essentially the same types of motives Dekker mentions for inclusion in his category. Her

category "example to others" incorporates Dekker's "for children", but extents this category by providing lessons learned also for other people apart from one's own children. She does not mention Dekker's remembrance motive, apart from its use for biographers and necrologists, and she also does not mention the religious motives.

The absence of religious motives may have to do with the fact that her taxonomy covers a different time frame (nineteenth century) than Dekker's (sixteenth to the nineteenth century). From the Middle Ages on, writing an autobiography was problematic as it could be seen, among other reasons, as vain and egotistic to write about oneself (Harari, 2007: 292; Lawson-Peebles, 2005: 64). After the Reformation and Counter Reformation (sixteenth and seventeenth century), however, writing spiritual autobiographies (especially diaries) was stimulated by the clergy for reasons of religious introspection among others (Dekker, 1999: 258; Harari, 2007: 296; Mascuch, 1997: 111). This led to the egodocuments of those periods having a specific religious link, which is logically also reflected in the writing motives. Under the influence of the Enlightenment, from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, secular memoirs started to be written not only by noblemen and senior commanders (as before), but also by commoners and junior officers and common soldiers (Harari, 2007: 296-297; Mascuch, 1997: 131). This change from spiritual to secular autobiographies may have led to the fact that Baggerman can no longer distinguish religious motives as one of the four main reasons for writing in her research of nineteenth century autobiographies.

Baggerman does mention a new category: the apologia. The absence in Dekker's taxonomy of this category can be explained by the fact that this is most often an implicit motive (which Dekker specifically ruled out) that is not explicitly mentioned by a writer. For example, 'I write this book as an answer to being falsely accused' is something which is generally not written down literally, but has to be inferred by the reader from the subtext.

What is strikingly absent in both historical taxonomies is the motive to honour others, the main writing motive that Harari distinguishes in his book *Renaissance Military Memoirs*. For Renaissance memoirists

> a 'lifestory' is a collection of honorable deeds rather than a story of personal development [...] Renaissance military memoirs are bulging with names. They usually take great care to name the protagonists they mention, and they typically contain far more names per page than twentieth-century memoirs. [...] The reason for their obsession with names is that in their view it is one's name rather than, say, one's personality, that gain honor and immortality. (Harari, 2004: 175-176)

This absence may be due to the fact that honouring others is a motive that is specific to military memoirs.

As we have seen before, Harari says that in the 20th century the honorary interpretation of war has greatly declined in importance in his book (Harari, 2008: 303). Earlier, he had argued that a shift had taken place in expectations with which a modern day soldier would enter a war:

> They [20th century soldiers] grew up on the ideal that life is a process through which the experiences one undergoes build and develop one's "self." They consequently entered war not just with rather shallow fantasies of honor and glory [as Renaissance soldiers would], but also with a much deeper expectation that war would provide them with extreme and extraordinary experiences, which would build and develop their selves to a far greater degree than could be accomplished through "ordinary" peacetime experiences. (Harari, 2005: 68)

This may then suggest that although honour was a very important historical motive for soldiers, it may not be prominently visible in contemporary war memoirs. In chapter seven this hypothesis will be tested.

2.5.4   Self and other

Apart from these three historians (Dekker, Baggerman and Harari), the psychologists Baumeister and Newman also looked at basic motives that shape autobiographical narratives in their article *How Stories Make Sense of Personal Experience.* They distinguished two basic motives: self-oriented ("interpretive") versus other-oriented ("interpersonal"). "Stories can serve both as way of interpreting experience and as means of communicating to others" (Baumeister & Newman, 1994: 679).

The interpretive motives can be elaborated into four needs for meaning:

1) elucidating a structure of purposiveness

2) justifying one's questionable actions

3) maintaining a belief in one's efficacy

4) bolstering self-worth (Baumeister & Newman, 1994: 688)

The interpersonal motives, in which "the story becomes a means, a tool for achieving a particular effect on the listener" can also be divided into four sets:

1) to obtain desired rewards such as providing support (supplication) or desisting from thwarting goals (intimidation)

2) to have others validate their identity claims

3) to pass along information

4) to attract others by entertaining (Baumeister & Newman, 1994: 680)

In these two basic motives and their elaboration, the contours of the previous two categorisations are visible. Baggerman's 'example to others' and Dekker's 'for children' are interpersonal motives that have to do with passing along information, whereby 'example to others' also has elements of interpretive motives "such as maintaining a belief in one's efficacy" and "bolstering self-worth". "Justifying one's questionable actions" is a form of Baggerman's 'apologia' and 'earning money' is an interpersonal reward that can be obtained. 'Writing an auto-necrology' (Baggerman) and 'remembering' (Dekker) can be interpretive motives that elucidate a structure of purposiveness and bolsters self-worth, and in the case of an auto-necrology, it is also a means of validating an identity claim.

The interpersonal motive to entertain others can also be part of what Dekker calls 'reaching readership'. Even Dekker's religious motives can be seen in the light of both interpretive (elucidating a structure of purposiveness) and interpersonal motives (to have others, God in this case, validate their identity claims).

So even though Baumeister and Newman's categorisation is not as egodocument specific as those of Dekker and Baggerman, the main concepts of self and other oriented motives can be applied to the diverse motives mentioned by egodocument writers. Although Baumeister and Newman concluded in 1994 that most (psychological) research on stories has focused on the interpretive motives (Baumeister & Newman, 1994: 680), historical egodocument research shows that writers themselves indicate both interpretive and interpersonal writing motives.

Fourteen years later, in 2008, Westerhof concludes in an overview article that when it comes to life story research, the research focus has clearly changed. Both self ("interpretive") and other ("interpersonal") oriented motives are researched nowadays, under a variety of different labels:

> An often researched duality is that between individuality and relatedness (Westerhof & Bode, 2004), sometimes also described as agency and communion (Bakan, 1966) or as A-motive and Z-motive (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995). Both motives are considered the fundamental motives for human existence. Therefore, they can be found in almost any life story.[22] (Westerhof, 2008: 19)

In chapter seven, the explicit motives that contemporary military writers give in their books will be analysed and compared to both the historical taxonomies of Dekker and Baggerman, and those of Baumeister and Newman.

2.6   Concluding Remarks

Looking at all these different theories, we can conclude that military memoirs come from a long tradition of writing autobiographies and other egodocuments. A tradition in which ideas about the truth or authenticity of these books have gradually changed from providing eyewitness reports to socially constructed flesh-witness accounts, and in which the writers gradually changed from kings and noblemen to common soldiers, but to what extent is not clear.

Two competing hypotheses on 20th century military autobiographies - the disillusionment thesis and the revelatory plot thesis - beg for testing and validation in the 21st century practice. Also, the absence of a contemporary, let alone a specifically military taxonomy on writer motivation asks for further substantiation, as does the absence of research on the publishers and particularly the self-publishing companies behind these books.

In the three result chapters that will follow, all these issues will be dealt with quantitatively and qualitatively, providing interesting and sometimes unexpected results. But before we can go there, the context of the conflict in Afghanistan, the subject of the 21st century military memoirs that will be researched in this study, will need to be sketched. That is what the next chapter is for.

■
22 My translation

Chapter Three:
Context

Chapter Three: Context

This chapter will provide background information on both the military operation in Afghanistan and the five countries discussed in the rest of the study. It will quickly sketch the different military missions present in Afghanistan and some specific characteristics of these missions, such as the use of provincial reconstruction teams, mentoring teams and embedded journalism. This will be followed by some basic information on the five countries, focussing specifically on the military contributions the countries made to the mission and the strategic narratives on the war in Afghanistan per country. The goal of this chapter is solely to provide a backdrop to the thesis, not to enter the complex academic critique that surrounds these subjects.

3.1   Military Missions in Afghanistan

3.1.1   OEF

On 11 September 2001, al-Qaeda operatives hijacked four commercial planes and flew these into US targets: one crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, three others hit the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington (S. G. Jones, 2009: xiii). Al-Qaeda was regarded by the US as an international terrorist network. It was led by Osama Bin Laden and hosted by the Taliban who at the time controlled most of Afghanistan. In retaliation, the US started a military intervention in Afghanistan under the name Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), aimed at eliminating both al-Qaeda and the Taliban (Suhrke, 2011: 5; Wagemaker, 2012: 121). The OEF mission was not only aimed at fighting, but also introduced a new civil-military instrument to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan population (a major military goal during irregular operations) and to help rebuild the Afghan society: the provincial reconstruction teams (Grandia, 2009: 17; Hynek & Marton, 2012: 3; Zyla, 2012: 702).

3.1.2   ISAF

Within a few months, the Taliban together with al-Qaeda were dislodged and on 5 December 2001, Afghan opposition leaders signed the Bonn Agreement in which a time path for creating a representative government was laid out, a first step on the route to reconstruct Afghanistan (IRoA, 2008: 1; S. G. Jones, 2009: xiii). In accordance with the Bonn Agreement, a second military mission was established as a separate peace building mission under United Nations (UN) flag: the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). It was mandated in December 2001 by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC, 2001) and in 2003 the lead

for this mission was officially taken over by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (ISAF, 2012; S. G. Jones, 2009: 243). This was the first time NATO operated outside Europe, and all NATO members contributed to the ISAF mission, although not all to the same extent (Bogers & Beeres, 2013: 32).

To take over the mission, a counter-clockwise geographical expansion in four stages (Hynek & Marton, 2012: 2; Mattelaer, 2011: 128) was executed (see Figure 11).
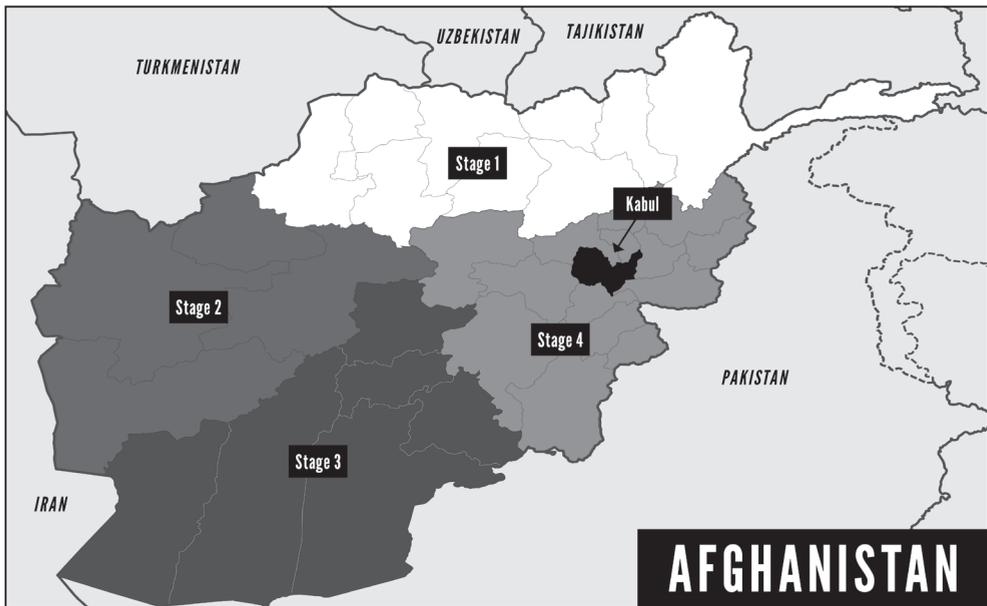
Figure 11: ISAF Expansion in Four Stages (ISAF, 2008)

First mission control over the German-led provincial reconstruction team (PRT) in Kunduz was taken over by NATO, who then established four more PRTs in the north of Afghanistan, which was completed in October 2004. Then Italian and Spanish NATO forces moved into West Afghanistan, taking over two OEF PRTs and a logistic base in Herat and establishing two additional PRTs, which was finished in September 2005 (Bogers & Beeres, 2013; ISAF, 2012: 33). These first two stages went quite smoothly, however, the further expansion went into the more unruly southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan, where the insurgency was intensifying (Hynek & Marton, 2012: 2; Mattelaer, 2011: 128). This led to a steady increase in forces in the area of operations (see Table 4), and also to discussions as to whether NATO should engage heavily in combat operations during this peace building mission. "Some allies,

including Germany, vehemently opposed expanding NATO's role to include riskier combat missions" (S. G. Jones, 2009: 249).

Despite these discussions, in October 2006 NATO had expanded to both the southern (stage three) and the eastern part of Afghanistan (stage four). In the dangerous south, the Canadians were lead-nation for the province of Kandahar, the Britons for Helmand province and the Dutch for Uruzgan. Although NATO formally took over the ISAF mission, many non-NATO members also contributed troops, such as Australia, Malaysia, South Korea and Mongolia (Hynek & Marton, 2012: 3) in what was called a coalition of the willing.

 Although ISAF was first envisioned to only provide security assistance, while OEF would engage in combat operations, its mandate was quietly expanded and as Suhrke concludes "by the end of the decade, both forces were operating under the NATO/ISAF umbrella […] and had become organizationally indistinguishable" (Suhrke, 2011: 73).

3.1.3   UNAMA and EUPOL

Next to these two large scale military missions (OEF and ISAF), two smaller, more civilian missions were set up in Afghanistan that were also partly staffed with military personnel: UNAMA and EUPOL. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was mandated in March 2002 by the United Nations Security Council to coordinate "the planning and conduct of all United Nations activities in Afghanistan" (UNSC, 2002). In 2007, a separate police mission, the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan, EUPOL in short, was set up by the European Union to help strengthen the rules of law and security sector reforms by "improving [the Afghan] civil police and law enforcement capacity" (EU, 2007: 34).

In the Afghanistan area of operations (AoO), which is defined in this study as the whole of Afghanistan and airport Termez in Uzbekistan, the countries in this study contributed the following number of posts to these four missions in the period studied (2001-2010). Note that a 'post' refers to a position, not to the actual number of people in the area of operations:

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Australia	0	1	1	1	401	240	907	1081	1351	1553
Belgium	0	165	250	250	301	265	368	497	530	491
Canada	0	0	1	1576	2301	2336	2782	2514	2844	2922
Germany	1283	2463	2072	2073	2964	3064	3379	3473	4470	4495
The Netherlands	150	610	153	153	1825	1895	1522	1776	2160	380
United Kingdom	400	300	316	585	4600	6100	7399	8330	9001	9500
United States	7500	8500	18000	18067	19589	23300	24758	31700	65929	97000

Table 4: Military Posts in Afghanistan per Country per Year (IISS, 2002-2011)

3.2   Peace

The ISAF, UNAMA and EUPOL missions are intended to bring Afghanistan what is commonly called the liberal peace: "Democratization, good governance according to principles of accountability and transparency, human rights, the rule of law, security sector reform and a market-based economy" (Suhrke, 2011: 8). The two main military instruments that are used to this effect are the provincial reconstruction teams and mentoring teams for the Afghan National Security Forces (both army and police).

3.2.1   Provincial reconstruction teams

A provincial reconstruction team (PRT) is a new instrument that was introduced by the Americans in Afghanistan to support state building, to promote rule of law and to provide governance assistance at the sub-state level. A PRT consists of a joint team of civilian and military personnel that, among others, facilitate sustainable development assistance in the form of relief and reconstruction projects (Grandia-Mantas, Bollen, & Rietjens, 2011: 221; Hynek & Marton, 2012: 3). In March 2009, there were 26 PRTs in Afghanistan (Malkasian & Meyerle, 2009: 3).

3.2.2   Mentoring teams

The mentoring teams provide on-the-job training. They are composed of experienced western NCOs[1] and officers who live, train and fight together with their Afghan counterparts

1   NCO: Non-Commissioned Officer (sergeant, sergeant-major and warrant officer). For more details on military ranks, see Appendix E and F.

from the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan National Police (ANP) or the Afghan Border Police (ABP) (Harpviken, 2012: 165; Kulesa & Gorka-Winter, 2012: 218). These monitoring teams are the main instrument for security sector reform and are known under two names: they are called Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLT, pronounced as 'omelette') when operated by NATO and Embedded Training Teams (ETT) by the US. In October 2009, 59 OMLTs were operating in the five regions of Afghanistan, and they were foreseen to expand to 103 teams in December 2010 (NATO, 2009).

Despite the increasing number of military personnel in the area of operations and the use of PRTs and mentoring teams, peace was not accomplished in Afghanistan during the period that this study covers (2001-2010). Dutch military analyst Allard Wagemaker concludes that between 2001 and 2011, Afghanistan became more and more "a hybrid state, an illiberal democracy with repressive, autocratic and democratic characteristics" in which "very little has come of the high aims of the intervention" (Wagemaker, 2012: 231 and 271).

In the introduction to *Statebuilding in Afghanistan*, international security specialists Nik Hynek (Czech Republic) and Péter Marton (Hungary) write that "the Taliban and other insurgent factions seem to have grown in numbers over the years" (Hynek & Marton, 2012: 2) and US political scholar Seth Jones surmises that although there were definitely signs of progress, there were "too few American and Coalition military forces, and there was too little American civilian expertise to ensure the permanence of this progress" (S. G. Jones, 2009: 301).

3.3   *Embedded journalism*

The military personnel that went to Afghanistan were accompanied by journalists. In all countries in this study, the media were given controlled access to Afghanistan by the military in the form of embedded journalism: journalists being protected by, travelling and living with soldiers, whereby the MoD controls aspects such as selection of journalists, timing of the visit, facilities and freedom of movement during visits and has some control over the content of the articles published. The media predominantly made use of these embedded journalism arrangements, which led to stories in the media that mainly focused on the life of Western soldiers in Afghanistan and little on the socio-political situation in Afghanistan (Bekkers, et al., 2009: 178; Mans, Meindersma, & Burema, 2008: 33).

However, there were also unembedded journalists in the area, such as Dutch war reporters Arnold Karskens, Deedee Derksen and Natalie Righton. The two female reporters also wrote

autobiographical books about their Afghanistan experiences: *Thee met de Taliban*[2] (Derksen, 2010) and *Duizend dagen extreem leven*[3] (Righton, 2013). In all five countries, journalists, whether embedded or unembedded, wrote not only articles, but also books about their own experiences and/or those of the soldiers and civilians they encountered there, such as *War* by American journalist Sebastian Junger (Junger, 2010), *In the Hands of the Taliban* by UK journalist Yvonne Ridley (Ridley, 2001), the German *Afghanistan Code* by Marc Thörner (Thörner, 2009), the Dutch *Als een nacht met duizend sterren*[4] by Jouri Boom (Boom, 2010), or Canadian Kathy Gannon's *I is for Infidel* (Gannon, 2006).

This means that soldier-authors are not the only ones to write (books) about their experiences, as in each of the five countries researched the regular media also write about the situation in Afghanistan, even from a shop-floor perspective.

3.4   Contribution & Strategic Narrative

3.4.1   Cultural differences

Despite having a common experience fighting and reconstructing in Afghanistan, the countries in this study (the US, the UK, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands) do have cultural differences. Obviously, culture is a big and complex topic and finding a way to quickly and easily determine variables for cultural differences is something that raises many challenges. However, some large studies have been able to identify variables that distinguish countries based on culture (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2007; G. Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). In a seminal study in over 50 nations, Dutch cultural researcher Geert Hofstede has shown that differences between nations can be described and explained by analysing four different dimensions:

> (1) *Power Distance*, that is the extent to which members of a society accept that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally. A society's Power Distance norm is present in the values of *both* the leaders and the led, and reflected in the structure and functioning of the society's institutions.

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2   *Tea with the Taliban*

3   *Thousand Days of Extreme Living*

4   *Like a Night with Thousand Stars*

(2) *Uncertainty Avoidance*, that is the level of anxiety within the members of a society in the face of unstructured or ambiguous situations. This anxiety expresses itself in aggressivity and emotionality, in a preference for institutions promoting conformity, and in beliefs promising certainty.

(3) *Individualism*, which stands for a preference for a loosely knit social framework in which individuals are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate families only; as opposed to *Collectivism*, which stands for a preference for a tightly knot social framework in which individuals are emotionally integrated into an extended family, clan, or other in-group which will protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. [...]

(4) *Masculinity*, which stands for a society in which social sex roles are sharply differentiated and the masculine role is characterized by need for achievement, assertiveness, sympathy for the strong, and importance attached to material success; as opposed to *Femininity,* which stands for a society in which social sex roles show considerable overlap and both the masculine and the feminine role are characterized by a need for warm relationships, modesty, caring for the weak, and importance attached to the non-material quality of life. (G Hofstede, 1983: 295-296)

When analysing the countries in this study on these dimensions, based on Hofstede's research, what they have in common is that they are all individualist societies with a low power distance. However, there are differences when it comes to masculinity and femininity between the countries. Both Germany, the US and the UK are masculine countries, whereas the Netherlands is an extremely feminine country, ranking as low as 72 out of 74 countries on the masculinity index, while Canada takes a middle position. This is especially interesting in a military context, as one of the key differences is that in a feminine culture fighting and aggression are not acceptable behaviour for children, whereas in masculine societies they are, especially for boys. Another difference can be seen between Germany and the other countries when it comes to uncertainty avoidance, where the Germans score higher than the rest of the countries (G. Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005: 39-238).

Additional cultural differences can be found in the attitudes towards war in the different countries. The annual *Transatlantic Trends* survey concludes in 2010:

> One of the most deeply rooted transatlantic value differences can be found in general attitudes toward the use of military force [...]. [W]hen asked whether they agree that war is necessary to obtain justice under some circumstances, three-quarters of Americans (77%) and only one-quarter of EU respondents (27%) agreed. Although both numbers are up slightly from last year, these numbers have largely remained the same over the past several years and represent a significant and lasting divide in American and European public opinion. The U.K. (61%) remains the only European country where a majority of the population agrees with this sentiment. The differences are even more pronounced when considering 49% of Americans and only 8% of EU respondents agree strongly. (Transatlantic-Trends, 2010: 18)

All these cultural differences have an impact when it comes to the way the five countries contribute to the mission, as cultural differences also lead to differences in the military. Researchers from the NATO Technology & Human Factors Branch, for instance, concluded that culture influences information sharing, collaboration and decision making in military settings (Houston & Eshelman-Haynes, 2011) and Dutch international relations analyst Rem Korteweg concludes from his case studies into the way the US, Germany and the Netherlands have transformed their defence organizations since the end of the Cold War, that what he calls "strategic culture" is central to explaining the different transformation strategies (Korteweg, 2011: 349).

Research by Dutch sociologist Joseph Soeters on military academies in 13 different countries (including the five countries in this study) comparing them with Hofstede's model, however, shows that apart from strong national differences there is also a general, international military culture. This military culture can be seen in the fact that military students in general are more collectivistic and less individualist than civilians in their country, as they are, for instance, more willing to make sacrifices for their organisation (leisure time, moving to other places) than their civilian counterparts. This general international military culture can also be seen in the large power distance between superiors and subordinates at military academies that fits the highly hierarchical and bureaucratic structure of peacetime armed forces (Soeters, 1997: 19-20). Soeters describes his finding that apart from strong national differences there is also a general, international military culture as "a true paradox" (Soeters, 1997: 25). Both these country specific cultural differences and the common military culture could influence the plots that are written by soldier-authors in these countries. In chapter six this will be tested to see whether these plots are generally the same due to a common military culture, or are country specific.

3.4.2 Contributions

As can be seen from Table 4, earlier in this chapter, as expected, the countries in this study did not contribute equally in terms of military posts filled. Nor did they contribute in the same spectrum of violence; most of them actively sought out deployments in the unruly southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan, but Germany was reluctant to engage in missions that would entail direct combat engagements, which fits Germany's high uncertainty avoidance profile. Apart from cultural differences, these burden sharing differences also have to do with country size: a country like Belgium with a population of ten million cannot be expected to deploy as many soldiers as the US with over 300 million inhabitants. On the other hand, it also has to do with the country's attitude towards war in general, the mission in Afghanistan in particular and the strategic narratives that follow from these attitudes. As Hynek and Marton conclude: legitimacy of mission and risk sharing are closely connected (Hynek & Marton, 2012: 12).

Dutch military economists Marion Bogers and Robert Beeres conclude that although all NATO countries contributed to the NATO mission, some countries shared a heavier burden than others both in terms of deployed personnel (relative to country size, active military personnel and GDP) and in terms of risk (measured in casualties and dangerousness of the province). The US, UK, Canada and the Netherlands have operated in the riskiest circumstances and these countries have also contributed in line with or exceeding their relative population and economy size. Germany contributed relative less to the ISAF total than could be expected from their economic position and also operated under less demanding circumstances (Bogers & Beeres, 2013).

A general note to make on contributions in Afghanistan is that they are not only made by air force and army personnel. Although Afghanistan is enclosed by other countries and therefore does not have any seaports, navy personnel has participate in the Afghanistan missions, for instance with navy aircraft, with marines, who are specifically suited for land based missions, and with fleet personnel placed on joint posts (posts suitable for military personnel regardless of branch of service).

3.4.3   Strategic narratives

Strategic narratives are the storylines that governments create to explain and legitimise a military mission to the public (Dimitriu & Graaf, 2011: 11). In the section below, each country's specific contribution and its strategic narratives on the mission in Afghanistan will be discussed for the five countries that will be followed during the rest of the study. Australia and Belgium will not be discussed, as the research will show (in chapter five) that no autobiographical books that fit the definition from chapter one were published in these countries. These strategic narratives are important background information in this cross-cultural study, as differences in culture will lead to differences in the kind of stories told (Tannen, 1984: 191), and may therefore lead to different kinds of autobiographical books and plots.

3.4.4   United States – fighter of evil

3.4.4.1 Contribution

When the US invaded Afghanistan in October 2001, they designed Operation Enduring Freedom to have a light footprint: not many boots on the ground. Although that was enough to quickly overthrow the Taliban, it was not enough to provide basic security to the whole country (S. G. Jones, 2009: 124), so an increase in military personnel was needed. This was not as straightforward as it sounds, as starting from 2003, the US was also tied to a larger war in Iraq that took precedence (S. G. Jones, 2009: 125, 301). However, this increase did happen incrementally (Suhrke, 2011: 42-43). Also, more support from allies was sought. In 2010, the number of US soldiers had risen from commander Frank's first estimate of 10,000 (Suhrke, 2011: 37) to 97,000 actually in the area of operations, providing both combat operations and civil-military activities, such as running provincial reconstruction teams. In March 2009, 12 of the 26 PRTs in Afghanistan were US led (Malkasian & Meyerle, 2009: 3). The US military contributed more than half of all ISAF troops, which exceeded its relative population size compared to the population size of the other ISAF countries (Bogers & Beeres, 2013: 42).

3.4.4.2 Strategic narrative

The US has won both Great Wars of the 20th century. For the US, supporting a war is a moralistic choice, as American political sociologist Seymour Lipset says: "The United States primarily goes to war against evil, not, in its self-perception, to defend material interests" (Lipset, 1996: 20).

When going to war, the US strategic culture can be described as having a preference for

fighting missions as opposed to reconstructing missions (Korteweg, 2011: 205).

However, they have not won all 20th century wars: they lost the war in Vietnam, and that loss plays a large role in the national memory of the US. British political scholar Duncan Bell calls it "the disillusionment of Vietnam" in his description of what he calls the US national mythscape (Bell, 2003: 76). It is disillusionment on many fronts. English literature scholar Tobey Herzog concludes in his *Vietnam War Stories*:

> Vietnam ended American innocence about the politics of war, the role of political dissent, the effectiveness of technology, and battlefield brutality […] From the resulting blows to America's pride and spirit arose profound disillusionment throughout all segments of American society during the war's final years. Consequently, after the war ended, much of the country rejected the war and, most tragically, rejected the combatants. (Herzog, 1992: 214)

Lipset names Vietnam as a catalyst for the dramatic loss of faith in institutions in the US, that inspired a growth of cynicism (Lipset, 1996: 281-284). Although the military are one of these institutions, there is still a belief that armed conflict can lead to something good.

Where we will see that the German motto is 'Never again war', the American motto is 'Never again Vietnam'. The mistakes that were made then should not be repeated. That refers to no long-term Asian land wars (Suhrke, 2011: 37), but also to the idea that the US media should not be given the same unlimited access as in the Vietnam conflict, to prevent turning American public opinion against the war[5], and to the idea that support for the troops themselves should be given even when one does not agree with the war itself (Ender, Campbell, Davis, & Michaelis, 2007: 34; Griffin, 2010: 13; Mans, et al., 2008: 11).

Even though Afghanistan did become a long term land war in Asia, the media focus in the US during this period is not on Afghanistan, but on the larger scale war in Iraq, making Afghanistan an almost forgotten war. Jones quotes a US Civil-Affairs officer saying: "We're like the Pacific theatre in World War II, we will get more resources after we defeat Berlin" (S. G. Jones, 2009: 300-301), alluding to the US focus on Iraq.

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5   Which is actually a widespread myth, as recent studies have shown that the US media were in general supportive of the US government war efforts during the Vietnam War (Griffin, 2010; Hallin, 1986; Wyatt, 1995)

Apart from this over-all strategic narrative, a more specific discussion also unfolded during this period in the US[6]. Having two different large scale conflicts going on at the same time (Iraq and Afghanistan), the US military resorted to regularly invoking the stop-loss clause. Stop-loss means that when the end-date for the active duty part of a military contract is reached, but not the end-date for the entire service period, which includes being part of the reserve force, the US military can extend the active duty without consent of the soldier. This policy led to "fierce debate" in the US (Wooten, 2005: 1065).

3.4.5   United Kingdom – over-ambitious

3.4.5.1 Contribution

In 2001, the UK participated from the start in Operation Enduring Freedom, among others with tanker, reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft. Operation Herrick, the codename given in the UK to the mission in Afghanistan, started in 2002 on a rather small scale with provincial reconstruction teams in the relatively safe northern provinces and training the Afghan National Army. From 2006 on, however, the UK became lead-nation of the southern province of Helmand (A. King, 2010: 314; MoD-UK, 2012) that at the time was not considered a dangerous province. The ambitiousness with which the British armed forces entered the province, combined with some strategic miscalculations[7] did lead to fierce local resistance (Farrell, 2013; A. King, 2010; Soeters, 2013b) in the same way as it had done in the past in Northern Ireland (Gladwell, 2013: 197-231; Soeters, 2013b). This in turn led Bogers and Beeres to conclude that in terms of military fatalities, attacks on non-combatants and opium cultivation the province of Helmand had become the most dangerous province of Afghanistan measured (Bogers & Beeres, 2013: 51). The relative contribution of the UK (in term of population size and GDP, but also in terms of casualties) exceeds that of the US.

3.4.5.2 Strategic narrative

For centuries, Britain was a global player. The British Empire was the largest empire ever, spanning over a quarter of the globe (Judd, 1996: 432). Despite the demise of the British Empire, as another winner of both Great Wars of the 20th century, this global outlook is still part of the UK's foreign policies, and the military are seen as an instrument of policy that is used to promote UK interests (Campagne, 2013: 87; Mattelaer, 2011: 134). The political-strategic culture of the UK can be described as being able and willing to participate in

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6   A discussion that will be mentioned in the US autobiographies.

7   The dispersal of (an inadequate number of) forces into isolated forward operating bases and the removal of the governor of Helmand, leading to his militia taking the Taliban side (Farrell, 2013: 94; King, 2010: 313).

a broad spectrum of operations, from stabilization to high-end operations coupled with a medium willingness to use force unilaterally (Korteweg, 2005: 15).

The UK government framed the mission in Afghanistan from the beginning as a war of necessity to protect the security interests of the UK, and kept depicting the mission as successful (Ringsmose & Børgesen, 2011: 515-516). This mission purpose was accepted by the public, but from 2006 on, the depiction of a successful mission met with great resistance. Counter-arguments emphasized that there were too few troops, lack of equipment and unequal burden sharing within NATO (A. King, 2010: 312; Ringsmose & Børgesen, 2011: 517) to accommodate the ambitious military approach.

Like in the US, apart from this over-all strategic narrative, a more specific public discussion also unfolded in the UK[8]. Here, it was not about the US-related phenomenon of stop-loss, but around the UK specific military covenant concept, a moral code that was written down as part of the military doctrine as recent as 2000, stating that in exchange for putting their lives on the line and giving up many of their civil rights, soldiers and their families need extra attention from society (Ingham, 2011; Walters, 2012: 2-3). A charity service, the Royal British Legion, campaigned from 2007 to 2011 under the title *Honour the Covenant* for fair treatment for those who had left the armed forces, especially the disabled (Mileham, 2010: 34; RBL, 2013) and in 2008, the Conservative Party, then in the opposition, brought out a report titled *Restoring the Covenant* in which it concluded that it was a "national scandal" that the UK government did not provide well enough for its troops, veterans and their families (MCC, 2008: 1). In 2011, these principles were enshrined in law (Walters, 2012: 3).

3.4.6   Germany - pacifist

3.4.6.1 Contribution
Germany entered the conflict in Afghanistan in 2001 by contributing special forces to support the OEF mission, even though this was little known at the time in Germany. They also contributed troops from the start of the ISAF mission, and quickly became the third-largest troop contributor (Rid & Zapfe, 2013: 196). Germany was the first ISAF nation to create PRTs, opening PRT Kunduz in 2003, followed by PRT Feyzabad in 2004 (Harsch, 2011: 13). In 2003, the German-Netherlands High Readiness Forces (Land) Headquarters took charge of the ISAF headquarters. German personnel were not only stationed in Afghanistan itself, but also in the neighbouring country Uzbekistan on airbase Termez from where air transport

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8   A discussion that will be mentioned in the UK autobiographies.

was provided. As a risk-minimization strategy was chosen by the German government, these troops were contributed to the northern provinces of Afghanistan, which were generally considered low risk provinces (Bogers & Beeres, 2013; Collmer, 2011; Harsch, 2011), leading to analysts describing Germany's stance in Afghanistan as a "reluctant warrior" (Harsch, 2011) and "hesitant ally" (Korteweg, 2011: 350).

Germany is the only country in this study that still had an active conscription system during the period researched (2001-2010), which was suspended in 2011 (Collmer, 2012: 9). Regular conscripts were not deployed to Afghanistan, however. Only conscripts who voluntarily extended their conscription period to 23 months were in a few cases deployed. The exact number is not known, but estimates by German military researcher Gerard Kümmel place the number of German extended conscripts that were deployed to Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010 in the range of 500 to 600 individuals (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

3.4.6.2 Strategic narrative

Losing both Great Wars of the 20th century, and especially its defeat in World War II, led in Germany to the development of a culture of military restraint (Boekle, et al., 2001: 18; Forsberg, 2005: 223; Korteweg, 2011: 350; Rid & Zapfe, 2013: 194). This post-war pacifism is expressed by the slogan "Never again war!"[9] and is for instance also accompanied by a taboo on national pride, because of its connotations with Nazism (Miller-Idriss & Rothenberg, 2012: 137). This fits the concept of Germany being a "civilian power"[10]: a country that respects international laws, understands the necessity of cooperation and that does not look for unilateral military options (Forsberg, 2005: 215-216). Especially after the atrocities in Bosnia, the pacifist stance embedded in "Never again war!" is extended to "Never again Auschwitz!"[11], leaving room for (multilateral) military interventions from a humanitarian perspective. In the 1990s, this led to the first German military engagements after the Second World War, due to German participation in NATO-led interventions in the Balkans (Boekle, et al., 2001: 19; Stahl, 2006: 16).

There is a general lack of interest in military and security issues in Germany, a quite common phenomenon in continental Europe in general. German military sociologist Sabine Collmer concludes that "the sacrifice [German] war veterans make by risking their lives in violent conflicts, takes place under a kind of non-observance of the wider public" (Collmer, 2012: 15).

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9   Nie wieder Krieg!

10   Zivilmacht

11   Nie wieder Auschwitz!

With regard to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, until the 'Kunduz airstrike'[12] (also known as the 'tanker incident') in September 2009, the mission was seen by politicians and the public as a reconstruction mission, not as a fighting mission, fitting the culture of military restrain described above, even though German soldiers did fight, as the participation in the OEF mission also attests to. German conflict scholars Thomas Rid and Martin Zapfe note that politicians did not use words like 'combat[13]' and 'killed in action[14]' until 2009, and whenever politicians did so afterwards, it would make headline news (Rid & Zapfe, 2013: 197-198).

3.4.7   Canada – global peacekeeper

3.4.7.1 Contribution

Canada's contribution to the mission in Afghanistan in the period under study (2001-2010) can be divided into three distinct phases. First, in 2002, Canadian combat troops were sent to the unruly southern province of Kandahar as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Then, from 2004 to 2006, they relocated to Kabul as part of the ISAF mission, taking over the Kabul Multi-National Brigade (KMNB). Finally, from 2006 to 2010, they re-deployed to Kandahar as the lead-nation of that province (Beckman, 2005: 5; Saideman, 2013: 219). Bogers and Beeres conclude that the relative numbers of casualties of Canada (like those of the UK) in this period exceeded the burden of the US, due to its active involvement in the second most dangerous province in Afghanistan: Kandahar. It also has a relatively high percentage of troops deployed relative to the active military personnel available in Canada (Bogers & Beeres, 2013: 42 & 51; Zyla, 2012: 112).

3.4.7.2 Strategic narrative

The Canadian national self image is that of a global peacekeeper, a middle power that plays the role of umpire by actively supporting multilateral institutions such as the UN and NATO (Härting & Kamboureli, 2009; Jefferess, 2009; Jockel, 2014; Preece, 2010; Zyla, 2012). Canada participated in every NATO mission before Afghanistan, and therefore contributing to the Afghanistan mission was a logical and uncontroversial choice (Saideman, 2013: 220-221; Zyla, 2012: 110). It was deemed a comprehensive, government wide approach, involving not just the defence department. The successive Canadian governments' official strategic narratives about the reasons for Canadian participation, however, were not at all consistent

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12 A German colonel ordered the bombing of two gasoline trucks that had fallen into enemy hands. The bombing killed 142 people, most of them civilians (Collmer, 2011: 20; Rid & Zapfe, 2013: 209).

13 Kampfeinsatz

14 Gefallen

over the years nor always fitting with this self image (Jockel, 2014; Preece, 2010). The mission purpose was first deemed national security, international (alliance) responsibilities and promoting Canadian values, later on that changed to humanitarian reasons, whereby the humanitarian argument was used at a time when the military reality in Afghanistan had started to be more of a war situation than a reconstruction mission. This led Danish political scholars Jens Ringsmose and Berit Børgesen to conclude that there was a "mismatch between the nature of the mission and the government's messages communicated to the electorate" (Ringsmose & Børgesen, 2011: 518).

3.4.8   The Netherlands – 3D approach

3.4.8.1 Contribution

The Netherlands, as a trade country economically strongly connected to the US, was quick to join the US in 2001 in their fight against the Taliban. Both for Operation Enduring Freedom (navy vessels and planes, F-16's, special forces) and for ISAF missions, although (like in Germany) only the ISAF mission with its emphasis on stabilisation and reconstruction were emphasized in the press. In 2003, the German-Netherlands High Readiness Forces (Land) Headquarters took charge of the ISAF headquarters, in 2004 the Dutch led a provincial reconstruction team in the relatively safe northern province of Baghlan, and from 2006 on they were lead-nation in the more dangerous southern province of Uruzgan (Bogers & Beeres, 2013: 51; Klep, 2011; Meulen & Grandia-Mantas, 2011; NIMH, 2010). Like Canada and the UK, the number of troops deployed when compared to the active military personnel of the Netherlands (4.0%), surpassed that of the US (2.3%) (Bogers & Beeres, 2013: 41-42).

Economic reconstruction and trade opportunities are emphasized by deploying CIMIC and IDEA[15] specialists (Homan, 2007: 63-64), such as business consultants for small and medium enterprises and agricultural experts who try to introduce the production of saffron as an alternative to the opium production, with guaranteed purchase by a Dutch company (Hein, 2007). These are often reservists as they have specific knowledge that is not readily available within the Dutch armed forces, aimed at stabilisation and reconstruction work such as business consultant, legal advisor or agricultural expert.

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15   CIMIC: Civil Military Cooperation; IDEA: Integrated Development of Entrepreneurial Activities.

3.4.8.2 Strategic narrative

In the 17[16] century, in what was called the "Golden Age"[16], the Netherlands was a military power to reckon with. The American sociologist, political scholar, and historian Charles Tilly puts the Netherlands in this period among the capital-intensive states that "reached out chiefly by the ruthless pursuit of trading monopolies, but invested little effort in military conquest and colonization" (Tilly, 1992: 24). That does not mean that the Netherlands did not colonize at all. Until 1949, what is now Indonesia was a colony of the Netherlands, with its own professional army, the KNIL[17], which fought a de-colonization war[18] after the Second World War that was not without military excesses (Bank, 1995).

In the beginning of the 20th century, neutrality had become part of the Dutch ideology (Voorhoeve, 1979: 37). Even though neutrality is no longer part of Dutch foreign policy, nowadays the Dutch armed forces are viewed "as a peacekeeping force to support international stability" (Korteweg, 2011: 300), with a preference for reconstructing missions instead of fighting missions, which fits a country that scores extremely high on what Hofstede calls "femininity" (G. Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005: 121). Uniquely Dutch is the fact that this role is constitutionalized. Article 90 of the Netherlands constitution states that "the government shall promote the development of the international legal order", and articles 97 and 100 state that the Dutch armed forces are there (among others) to "maintain and promote the international legal order" (Besselink, 2003).

The political debate on Afghanistan in the Netherlands was characterized by the question whether the mission was a fighting mission or a reconstruction mission, whereby the government tried to 'sell' it as a reconstruction mission, but the daily reality, which was also shown in the media and debated in parliament was that it was also a fighting mission, especially the mission in Uruzgan (Klep, 2011: 45; Meulen & Grandia-Mantas, 2011; Ringsmose & Børgesen, 2011: 520). By both the military and government, the term '3D approach' was used to emphasize that the operations in Afghanistan involves both Defence, Diplomacy and Development activities (Brocades Zaalberg, 2013; Moelker, 2009, 2014). This was also characterized as the 'Dutch approach' even though other countries, such as Canada, used the same comprehensive approach.

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16   Gouden Eeuw

17   Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger [Royal Netherlands East Indies Army]

18   Referred to as 'police actions' at the time

Although the public support for the mission in Afghanistan was not high in the Netherlands[19], as in the rest of continental Europe, the support for its military personnel was very high, both in society and in politics (Voogd & Vos, 2010: 452). Public opinion research by the Dutch MoD shows that only 6% of the population did not feel proud of the soldiers in Uruzgan (MoD-NL, 2010: 14), and Dutch historian Christ Klep notices that "[p]olitical criticism against the military was almost not done"[20] (Klep, 2011: 187).

3.5   *Concluding Remarks*

As the previous backdrop descriptions of the five different countries' contributions and strategic narratives shows, the different NATO allies have different ways of contributing to and talking about the mission in Afghanistan. Other historical backgrounds lead to other national images and to other attitudes towards war. From war as a necessity to fight evil (the US) on one side of the continuum, via war to promote national interests (UK), to keep the global peace (Canada and the Netherlands), to German pacifism on the other side. These attitudes in turn lead to other ways of framing the war, whereby in Germany and to a lesser extent in Canada the mission in Afghanistan is first of all framed as a reconstruction mission, even if the military reality is different, creating a mismatch between the nature of the mission and public expectations. In the Netherlands both the reconstruction and the fighting frame are present, whereas in the UK and the US the fact that a lot of fighting takes place has never been veiled. In the latter two countries, other debates are leading such as the question whether British society keeps up its side of the military covenant, the use of the stop-loss policy in the US or other things are veiled, such as the war itself in the US, as another war (Iraq) takes precedence.

These different frames may well contribute to other kinds of plots and books in the different countries. Whether that is the case will be studied in the rest of this book, as soon as the methodology of this study has been explained. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

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19   43% mean public support between August 2006 to December 2009 based on nine polls (Kreps, 2010: 195).

20   My translation

Chapter Four:
Methodology

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the research methodology is set forth in seven different parts. The chapter starts with the scoping process in which the scoping will not only be explained, but will also be used to further explicate the research definition developed in chapter one. This will result in a detailed definition list. This will be followed by an explanation of the collecting process that stems from the scoping. The third section will deal with a general description of the mixed-method approach and explains the two research models (standard scientific model and grounded theory) used and then details the qualitative data analysis method used in general. Elaborating on these models, in the fourth section the development of the database underlying the research will be explained, particularly the main variables used in this study and how they were recorded. The recording of the variables having to do with motive, will automatically lead to an explanation of the analysis method via the software used: ATLAS.ti. Both the motive variables and the other main variables were analysed with another software tool: SPSS. The details of these analyses can be found in the fifth section. The chapter will conclude with a section on reliability and validity which will specifically deal with triangulation via field research as a covert participant observer and intercoder reliability tests. The entire research will be structured around the basic descriptive questions: *who, what, when* and *where* (Blumberg, et al., 2008: 10) complemented with *why.*

4.2   Scope

4.2.1   Comparative method

This thesis is a military cross-national study. As military researchers Chiara Ruffa and Joseph Soeters conclude in the *Routledge Handbook on Research Methods in Military Studies,* in military studies international comparisons are rather uncommon, and the 'one-nation, one-case' approach dominates, "perhaps because the armed forces - national phenomena *par excellence* – predominantly attract national scholarly attention" (Ruffa & Soeters, 2014: 217-8). Although cross-national comparisons do not often occur in military studies, they are influential in the social and economic sciences.

Some of the basic assumptions of cross-national research are that they are about statistical - not absolute – differences: if a country's population is tall, that does not mean that individuals in that country cannot be small, nor does it mean that individuals in other

countries cannot be tall. On average though, most people in this country are taller than in other countries. Other assumptions are that national characteristics are not fixed, but can change, and are not necessarily unique to one country, as some nations resemble one another in certain aspects. But even small differences may have large consequences. These national differences may result in different operating styles for the military that most often do not come from deliberately planned strategies (Soeters, 2013a: 901).

Cross-national comparisons have also been rare when it comes to most studies of war narratives. As we have seen in chapter two, the theory chapter, most studies of war narratives are limited in their scope. They are often Anglo-American and combat soldier oriented and quantitative studies on soldier-authors that look at statistical differences do not seem to exist. This seems to be due to the fact that most of life-writing analysis stems from literary and cultural studies, where quantitative methods are uncommon as their focus is traditionally on textual analysis, which is generally performed via qualitative methods. Many influential studies on war narratives, such as *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Fussell, 1975), *Vietnam War Stories* (Herzog, 1992) and *The Soldiers' Tale* (Hynes, 1997) are written by English or American literature scholars which also accounts for the Anglo-American dominance.

What this study will do is compare the traditionally well-researched Anglo-American countries (the UK and the US) with less researched European countries (Germany and the Netherlands) and Anglo-Saxon Canada. As we have seen in chapter three, these countries differ in many respects from each other, for instance in the way they emphasize the military in their society, but they also have many aspects in common, such as the fact that they are all committed to NATO and its mission in Afghanistan.

When using comparative methods, there are two basic research design possibilities, either to compare cases that are most similar or to compare dissimilar cases (Przewoski & Teune in: Ruffa & Soeters, 2014: 219). In this study, a similar design strategy is chosen. By focussing on the Afghanistan mission, in a fixed time-period (2001-2010) and via one particular medium (printed books), I exclude context variables in order to be able to specifically focus on those elements that are country-dependent or warrior nation dependent, and those that are not.

4.2.2   Definition

An important starting point for defining the scope of this study was that it should be manageable, but at the same time as complete as possible, preferably researching all documents that fit the definition, in order to give a reliable judgement on the quantitative data to be collected. Therefore, the scope was designed to ensure that *all* books that fit the definition could be researched.

This resulted in the following definition:

This study will concentrate on non-fiction, autobiographical books, first published between 2001 and 2010 in Dutch, English or German, that (mainly) deal with the deployment experiences of Western military personnel in Afghanistan and are intended for the public at large.

In the rest of this section, first the key concepts from this definition will be defined after which the choice of target countries is explained.

4.2.2.1 Time period
The period from 2001 up to and including 2010 was chosen as it is a 10-year period, starting in the year the first actions by western countries were carried out in Afghanistan, thereby providing insight into the production of immediate memoirs. This first decade fitted the timing of this PhD study, which also started in 2010. The total number of books published during this period (54) was such that they could all be included in the study and was large enough (>50) to perform statistical analysis. It also meant that my own military memoir was not included in the research.

4.2.2.2 Book
The definition implies that many books on Afghanistan are excluded from this study. This exclusion process starts with the definition of books used in this study, which is defined smaller than the usual "set of printed pages that are held together in a cover so that you can read them" (Longman, 2006: 161). To be considered a book in this study, it needs to be available in physical, printed form. The word 'book' also refers to the medium of text. A book which is predominantly (>60% of the pages) filled with photographs is regarded a photo book and excluded from the sample.

As the definition calls for books intended for the public at large, the books should be readily available. Therefore it first of all needs an ISBN number, otherwise it cannot be ordered

by booksellers. A publication such as *Peukverhalen*[1] (Takken, 2006) that was printed and exclusively distributed by the department of counselling[2] of the Dutch MoD and lacks an ISBN number is excluded from the study. Furthermore, any book that in December 2010 could be ordered on the dominant book website of the country of origin (see Table 5) is deemed readily available, following Anglo-American book scholar John B. Thompson conclusion that "[b]eing available on Amazon has increasingly become the litmus test of availability per se" (Thompson, 2010: 45).

Country	Website
The Netherlands	bol.com
Belgium	bol.com
Germany	amazon.de
Australia	dstore.com
United States	amazon.com
United Kingdom	amazon.co.uk
Canada	amazon.ca

Table 5: Dominant Book Website per Country

4.2.2.3 Autobiographical

The study will concentrate only on non-fiction books, "books about real facts or events, not imagined ones" (Longman, 2006: 1115) that are autobiographical, "based on the author's own experiences" (Longman, 2006: 85). Novels, which are romanticised and fictionalised books, are therefore excluded, even when written by soldier-authors. That does not necessarily mean that only stories written in first person are studied. A book such as *Soldaat in Uruzgan*[3] (Roelen, 2009) which is written in the third person and uses fictitious names for the people involved, but which is entirely based on the experiences of the writer as indicated in the foreword[4] is included in the selection. Books that tell the stories of soldiers, but are written down by journalists or writers are excluded (see Figure 12), as this study is interested only in observing what soldier-authors themselves write about. So are books that are not memoirs but rather unit or regiment accounts, such as *Attack State Red* (Kemp & Hughes, 2010).

■

1   *Fag Stories*
2   Dienst Geestelijke Verzorging
3   *Soldier in Uruzgan*
4   And confirmed in personal communication with Roelen (March 13, 2013)
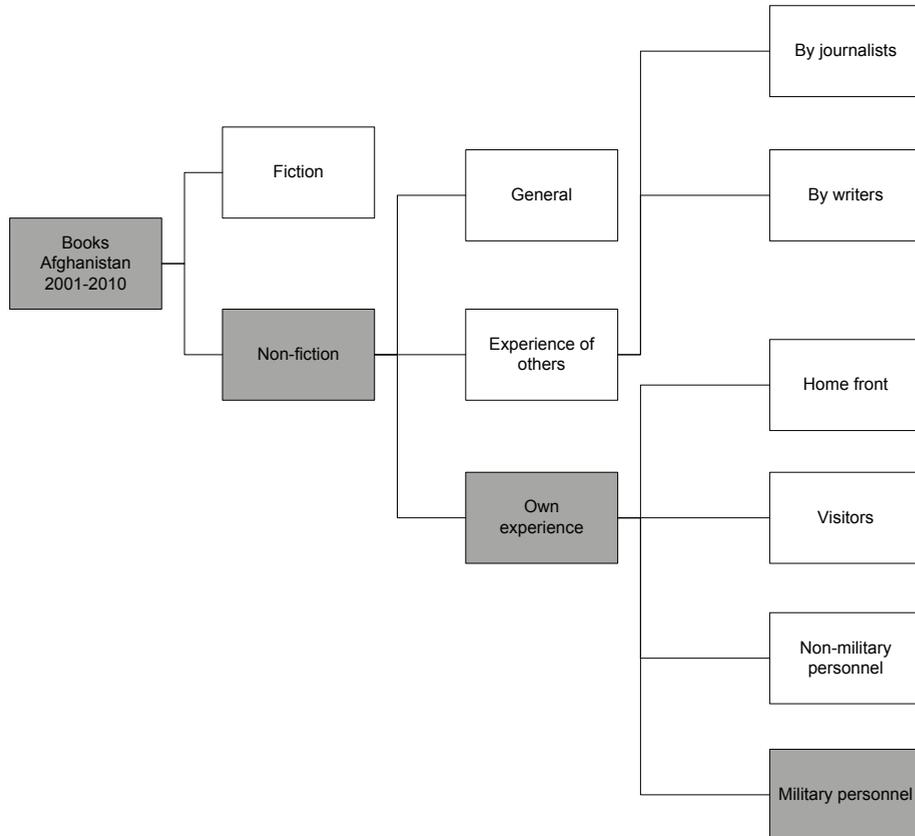
Figure 12: Book Definition

In this study, books that are co-authored are only included when according to the colophon the copyright of the book is owned at least partially by the soldier-author. A book such as *Immediate Response* (Hammond, 2009) is omitted from the scope: even though according to the cover it is written by Major Mark Hammond and according to the inside cover by Mark Hammond with Clare Macnaughton, the copyright is only with Clare Macnaughton.

4.2.2.4 Military personnel/soldier-author

In this study military personnel is defined as anyone on the payroll of the MoD of the countries researched who is not considered to be a civilian and is trained to wear a military uniform and to handle a lethal weapon. This definition excludes military contractors and civilian personnel who are temporarily militarized for insurance reasons.

Soldier-authors are a sub-group consisting of military personnel writing about their own military experiences in books.

Since the definition of the writer only includes military personnel (see Figure 12), it excludes autobiographical books written by visitors, such as embedded journalists (Grunberg, 2006), actors (Lageveen & Witte, 2008) or comedians (Gleeson, 2008). Also excluded are books by spouses or parents of soldiers that relate the deployment from their home front[5] perspective (Houppert, 2006), and books by non-military personnel such as political advisors (Bont, 2010), intelligence agents (Berry, 2007) or historians (Maloney, 2009). A book by German television reporter Boris Barschow (Barschow, 2008) is included in the definition, as the author went to Afghanistan as a reservist. However, the definition excludes the book by German journalist Kerstin Tomiak, who, like Barschow, worked for the ISAF publication *Sada-e-Azadi*, but went there as a civilian instead of a reservist (Tomiak, 2009).

4.2.2.5 Afghanistan
Also excluded are military autobiographies that only briefly refer to a deployment in Afghanistan. Books will be included as long at least 50% of its written text is about experiences in, or related to Afghanistan. Books such as *Bullet Proof* (Croucher, 2009) which is 1/3 general autobiography and military training, 1/3 Iraq and 1/3 Afghanistan and *SAS Sniper* (Maylor & Macklin, 2010) which deals with Maylor's time in Northern Ireland, Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, are therefore excluded. So are autobiographies that deal with the entire career of the writer, such as *Leading from the Front: An Autobiography* (Dannatt, 2010), *One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer* (Fick, 2005), *Extreme Risk: A Life Fighting the Bombmakers* (Hunter, 2010) and *A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War* (Hillier, 2009).

Books from a genre that is sometimes referred to as "literature of wounds" (Hynes, 1997: 127) or as "recovery narratives" (Jenkings & Woodward, 2014: 2) and deal with the recovery from a potentially fatal injury are included when they deal with the aftermath of injuries sustained in Afghanistan, as these recount deployment experiences in and directly related to Afghanistan and tell a story that is an integral part of the military experience, that of getting injured in the course of the job . Examples are *Home from War* (Compton, Compton, & Summerfield Smith, 2009) and *Man Down* (Ormrod, 2009).

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5   Home-front: military term to denote family and friends who remain in their home country.

4.2.2.6 Deployment

In this study the term deployment refers to a period of time that someone is stationed in Afghanistan to work for a MoD. To be counted as a deployment, someone had to be stationed in Afghanistan for at least two months (Beeres, Waard, & Bollen, 2010: 352).

4.2.2.7 Target countries

When selecting target countries for this study, the inclusion of the Netherlands was paramount, as this research is performed at the Netherlands Defence Academy by a Dutch military researcher. As the outcome of this study will be specifically relevant to the military when it provides more insight into cultural differences between coalition partners, the second criterion was that the main coalition partners of the Netherlands should be included in the selection. Structural cooperation exists with the US in many forms, such as pilot training and counter drugs operations in the Caribbean (MoD-NL, 2011e), with the UK Marines in the UK/Netherlands Amphibious Force (MoD-NL, 2011b), with Germany in the 1 (German/Netherlands) Corps (MoD-NL, 2011a) and with the Belgium navy (MoD-NL, 2011d).

Furthermore, in Afghanistan, large-scale cooperation with foreign nations specifically took place in Regional Command South during the period that the Netherlands were in charge of the military operations in the province of Uruzgan starting in 2006. Intensive cooperation existed with Australia, the UK, the US, Canada, Romania and Denmark (NIMH, 2010). In addition, in 2003 the combined German-Dutch High Readiness Forces Headquarters was in charge of the ISAF Headquarter (MoD-NL, 2009).

A number of these countries were eliminated for language reasons as I only master three languages well enough to do academic research in (Dutch/Flemish, English and German). Denmark and Romania were totally eliminated, and Belgium and Canada can only be researched to some extent as they are both partly Francophone.

This resulted in the following target countries:

- The Netherlands
- UK
- US
- Germany

- Australia

- Canada (the English-language part)

- Belgium (the Flemish-language part)

This specific choice provides a diverse selection of Western countries. First of all, it includes both Anglo-American countries (US, UK, Canada and Australia) and European countries without an Anglo-American background (the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany) and both warrior nations (US, UK) and currently non-warrior nations. It also ensures that not only a well-studied language (English) but also two less studied languages (Dutch and German) are included. Furthermore, the countries selected span the three different geographically 'Western' regions: North-America (US, Canada), Europe (UK, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands) and Australasia (Australia). The selection includes not only NATO countries, but also one non-NATO country (Australia). Lastly, as can be seen in Table 6 below, the countries vary in population size and military expenditure from small (Belgium, the Netherland, Australia and Canada) and medium (UK and Germany) to large (US).

In terms of Dutch political researcher Joris Voorhoeve, they include a Super Power (US), a Major Power (UK), a Middle Power (Germany) and several Small Powers (the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, and Canada) (Voorhoeve, 1979: 19-20, 108, 114-115).

Country	Population (millions)	Defence budget (bn US$)
Belgium	11	4
The Netherlands	17	11
Australia	22	25
Canada	34	20
UK	62	57
Germany	82	41
US	318	722

Table 6: Population and Defence Budget per Country in 2010 (source: IISS 2011)

4.3   Collecting

Contrary to research into older autobiographies (e.g. Ashplant, 2011), a ready-to-use list with all books which fit the definition was not available. In order to ensure a complete sample of all the books that fit the definition, three main methods were used: lists, library searches and book website searches.

4.3.1   Lists

The list method can be divided into four categories. The first category is the solicited list. I asked the Dutch military attachés in the UK, US, Canada, Australia and Germany if they could provide a provisional list of books that fit the definition. This resulted in a German booklist from the *Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt*, two English lists from the *British National Museum Royal Navy* and the *British Prince Consort's Library* and a list compiled by the Dutch military attaché in Canada. In addition, I also received a Dutch list from the *Netherlands Institute for Military History*.

The second category is the Internet list. I used the book review part of the Dutch military website *Boekje Pienter*[6] (Hemert, 2011), the lists with new acquisitions from Cogis, the Dutch centre on the psycho-social effects of war (Cogis, 2011) and the almost 300 *Listmania!* lists from Amazon.com that come up when searching on the word combination Afghanistan + war, such as the lists 'War in Afghanistan - The British Way' and 'The Best Books About The War On Terror' .

The third category of lists used, was the literature review, specifically the book review pages from all editions of veteran magazine *Checkpoint* between 2001 and 2011 (Veteraneninstituut, 2001-2010) and the literature list from the Netherlands Defence Academy (NLDA) overview study *Dutch Research of Military Operations* (Weger, 2009).

Finally, Rachel Woodward from Newcastle University heads a research group that also researches current military autobiographies, but focuses on British memoirs exclusively. Her list with British autobiographies from 2001-2010 is exactly the same as mine (Woodward & Jenkings, 2012b).

6   *Little Black Book*

4.3.2   Library searches

The second method used was library research. The NLDA library, the Cogis library and the National Library of Australia (NLA, 2010) were all searched for books on Afghanistan. Reference words that were used (in English, Dutch and German) included: Afghanistan, war, memoirs, life story, autobiography, personal narrative, personal experiences, soldier, military, military history and modern war books.

4.3.3   Book website searches

As the definition states that all the books in the sample should be readily available on the dominant book website of the country of origin, the books collected via the list and library research methods were looked up in December 2010 on the relevant websites (see Table 5). During this process, the content and author descriptions were read to verify that the books did indeed fit the definition and availability was confirmed. Furthermore, the same reference words as used in the library searches were also used to look for additional books on the book websites.

All these websites offered the possibility of using a snowballing method as they all included a 'you-might-also-like' section that indicated similar books to the book looked at. Checking all these additional books would lead to further books that had not surfaced during the previous search methods.

This threefold search and snowballing process was stopped when saturation was reached and no new books surfaced. All in all, an estimated 3,000 books were considered during this process, resulting in 54 books that fit the definition.

4.4   Mixed-Method

This study is first of all explorative research, as the main questions that have to be answered are the basic descriptive questions: who, what, when and where (Blumberg, et al., 2008: 10) describing who soldier-authors and their publishers are and what they write about. Although why-questions are often seen as going beyond the description into a more explanatory mode (Blumberg, et al., 2008: 11), there is a why-question in this context that is both explanatory and exploratory: the question 'why do soldier-authors say they write?'. This question is exploratory in the sense of simply describing which explicit motives writers mention, but explanatory when combined with data on who writes what in order to explain

why soldier-authors write. That explanatory aspect can also be found when combining the what-question and who-questions in order to describe their interdependence.

In order to answer these question, this study is set up as an interdisciplinary study, drawing on theories and methods from sociology, literature science, history, psychology, and anthropology, which will try to synthesize these diverse perspectives (Leavy, 2011: 20).

It is also a mixed-method study in that it combines qualitative and quantitative research methods (Bryman, 2008; Jick, 1979; R. B. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007; Russell Bernard, 1996; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). The goal of this study is to complement existing qualitative research on (military) autobiographies with quantitative substantiation. As discussed earlier, autobiography researchers normally do not quantify their results. They do occasionally talk in probability, but then only use guarding terms such as 'often', 'sometimes', 'in a few cases'. How often 'often' is, however, never becomes clear to the reader and probably is not clear to the researchers themselves either.

To my knowledge, this form of mixed-method research has never been performed either in autobiography research in general, or in military memoir research specifically. Mixed-method research is upcoming, but still rare in the social sciences (Bergman, 2010: 380; Bryman, 2008: 603), although there are some social sciences, such as sociology and geology, in which it is no uncommon. The use of mixed-methods in biographical research is generally restricted to linking existing quantitative datasets (such as longitudinal data) to qualitative case studies or to use social trend data to contextualize a qualitative study especially in cross-national research (Nilsen & Brannen, 2010). That does not mean that there are no methodologies available that propagate combining qualitative text analysis with statistical analysis. Krippendorff's standard work *Content Analysis* describes several different ways of combining these kinds of design (Krippendorff, 2004: 81-96) and Bergman's hermeneutic content analysis also uses statistical analysis (Bergman, 2010). In a military context, mixed-method research is used occasionally, for instance by American armed forces researcher Wilbur Scott (W. Scott, McCone, & Mastroianni, 2006; W. J. Scott, McCone, Sayegh, Looney, & Jackson, 2011). However, I have not been able to find any examples of combining qualitative text analysis with statistical analysis in autobiography research in general, or in military memoir research specifically.

In terms of the British sociological methodologist Alan Bryman, who distinguishes sixteen different ways of combining qualitative and quantitative research (Bryman, 2008: 608-609), the mixed-methods approach will first of all be used in this study for completeness, to provide a more comprehensive account of military memoirs. The quantitative methods will

be the basis that can be used to explain existing qualitative data. Conversely, the qualitative data will be used to provide context and illustration to the quantitative data. Finally, using a mixed-method approach will provide the opportunity for triangulation (greater validity) and enhancing the credibility of the findings.

4.4.1   Humanities 2.0

The study will take to some extent the form of what computational humanities researcher Rens Bod calls Humanities 2.0, and is also alternatively referred to as e-science, e-humanity or e-social science (Adriaans, Diederen, & Heimeriks, 2011; Blanke, Aschenbrenner, Küster, & Ludwig, 2008; Bod, 2012; Nilsen & Brannen, 2010: 692). In Bod's vision, Humanities 1.0 (the old version) is based on the interpretive method by Dilthey that dominated the humanities since the Second World War and rejects the positivist method for the humanities. Instead of trying to emulate the search for laws and patterns in the natural sciences that describe and explain, German social scientist Wilhelm Dilthey (and many others with him) felt that the humanities should aim to understand the specific and the uniqueness of a historical period: interpreting instead of describing (Bod, 2012: 4-5).

However, with the advent of computer technology, it became viable to search much more data and to find new connections that are also more complex than before, even the kind of complex data that the humanities research. This brought a renewed interest in finding patterns even in the humanities (Bod, 2012: 11). This integration of technology and humanities and the resulting renewed search for patterns is what Bod calls Humanities 2.0 and others e-science.

In this definition, this study is also a Humanities 2.0 study as it will make extensive use of the possibilities that computer aided research has to offer and is first of all interested in finding meaningful patterns in the books researched. However, it is not a study that will research books based on text mining or automated distant reading (Bod, 2012: 5; Moretti, 2000: 57), but on 'old-fashioned' close reading, whereby texts are coded into a database and that database is searched for patterns.

4.4.2   Research paradigms

In order to fully use the mixed-method approach, this study will also use two different research paradigms: both the standard scientific model and the grounded theory model.

4.4.2.1 Standard scientific model

The standard scientific model (see Figure 13) starts with a theory (from which hypotheses can be formulated) that can be projected onto the data.
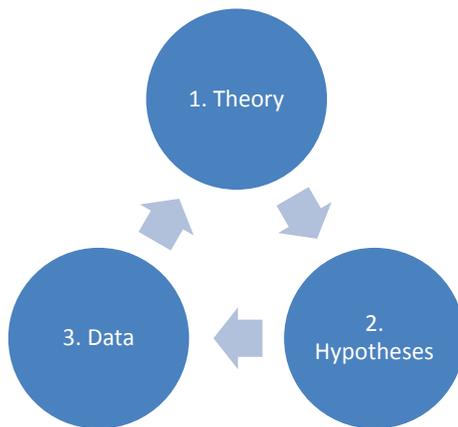
Figure 13: Standard Scientific Model (Deductive)

This is the classical, deductive model applying general rules to specific cases. The main advantages of this model are that by using an existing theory, this theory can be refined in many different research circumstances, and does not have to be reinvented time and again. A major disadvantage is that it forces the scientist to look at data with a preconceived, even biased, view (Guba & Lincoln, 1989: 63-65).

Only looking through fixed lenses at the military books from this study will not credit the complexity and richness of the data. Nor will this help when no appropriate theories or models are available, as is the case, for instance as we have seen in chapter two, the theory chapter, with respect to writing motivation.

4.4.2.2 Induction

There are two basic other options that could alternatively be used that do not start with the theory, but with the data itself: induction and abduction. Induction (see Figure 14) is the traditional counterpart of deduction, whereby specific cases are used to infer general rules, the opposite process of deduction, using data to generate theories.
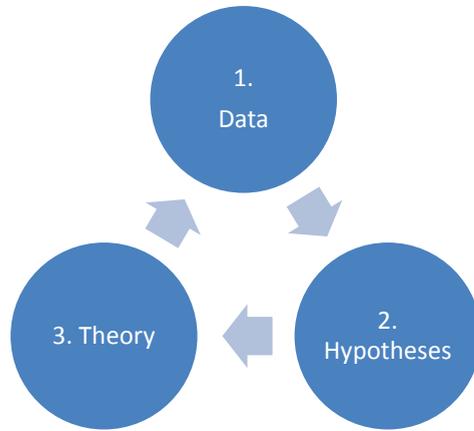
Figure 14: Inductive Thinking

4.4.2.3 Abduction

Abduction is a hybrid form. It also starts with the data and is focused on finding explanations for observed data, but it uses existing theories that are conceived in other circumstances to explain the data (Richardson & Kramer, 2006: 499). In the words of the American philosopher C.S. Peirce, who coined the term abduction: "Any proposition added to observed facts, tending to make them applicable in any way to other circumstances than those under which they are observed" (Peirce, 1955, in: Richardson & Kramer, 2006).

Abduction as an explanatory technique will be explicitly used in this study whenever statistical analyses lead to unexpected results, such as a failed hypothesis, by drawing on other theories from sociology or psychology to explain the unexpected phenomenon.

4.4.2.4 Grounded Theory

In instances when the scientific research model is not appropriate, another research model can be used, that of grounded theory, which is based on inductive theory forming, but also incorporates abductive and deductive elements. The term grounded theory comes from Strauss and Glaser (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and refers to theories that are 'grounded' in the underlying data. The basic idea is that the starting point is not the theory, but the data itself (see Figure 15).
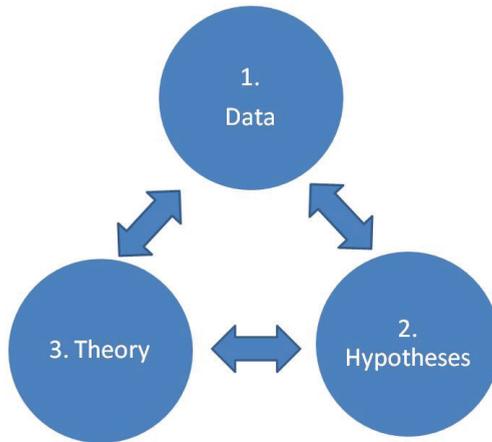
Figure 15: Second Generation Grounded Theory

By consistently coding those elements of the data that the researcher finds striking in an iterative process, and subsequently dividing these codes into larger categories and looking for connections between those categories, the researcher arrives at new theories. Grounded theory is an approach in which data collection and data analysis keep alternating (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006: 27). Traditional grounded theory was often thought of as requiring the researcher to be a *tabula rasa* at the start of her research, who deliberately does not look at other theories and keeps an empty head for fear of contaminating the analysis of codes (Glaser, 1992; Karsten & Tummers, 2008; Mills, et al., 2006; Richardson & Kramer, 2006). In contemporary use of grounded theory (indicated with terms such as *second generation grounded theory* (Morse, et al., 2009) and *evolved grounded theory* (Mills, et al., 2006)) this is no longer seen as a requirement. In the words of Strauss, one of the founding fathers of grounded theory:

> Glaser and Strauss overplayed the inductive aspects. Correspondingly, they greatly underplayed both the potential role of extant (grounded) theories and the unquestionable fact (and advantage) that trained researchers are theoretically sensitized. Researchers carry into their research the sensitizing possibilities of their training, reading, and research experience, as well as explicit theories that might be useful if played against systematically gathered data, in conjunction with theories emerging from analysis of these data. (Strauss & Corbin, 1994)

This can be summed up in the words of Dutch methodologist Fred Wester that the only academics who can do research without any consultation of previous theory are researchers who are already 'walking libraries'[7] (Wester, 2008: 13). In real life, scientific *tabula rasas* do not exist.

Basically, grounded theory is nothing more than a formalized way of doing qualitative research. In history, for example, the historical method is an elusive process that mainly takes place in the mind of the historian. Carr (quoting writer L. Paul) describes the historian applying the historical method in his book *What is History?* as "rummaging in the ragbag of observed 'facts', selects, pieces and patterns the relevant observed facts together, rejecting the irrelevant, until it has sewn together a logical and rational quilt of 'knowledge'" (Carr, 1975: 104). Grounded theory is a way of formalizing that almost magical process in the head of the researcher and bringing it out in the open for other academics to scrutinize.

4.4.3   Data analysis

4.4.3.1 Content analysis

In qualitative data analysis of texts, often referred to as "content analysis" (e.g. Altheide, 1987; Kassarjian, 1977; Krippendorff, 2004; Popping, 2010; Rapley & Jenkings, 2010; Wester, 2006; Wester & Peters, 2009), both research models can be used. The methodology is always based on coding elements of the texts to be researched. Methodologists Miles and Huberman hardly distinguish between the two research models in their book *Qualitative Data Analysis.* They simply conclude that in order to create codes there are two basic approaches: either a provisional start list of codes is used that could be based on a conceptual framework or hypotheses (the standard scientific model), or an inductive coding technique is used (grounded theory) (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 58). The inductive technique means that the scientist starts without any preconceived codes and prepares a coding list on the go, based on the texts she analyses, trying to keep as close to these texts as possible. Friese also concludes when describing her Notice-Collect-Think (NCT) model, which will be explained in the next paragraph, "[y]ou may approach the process with a deductive framework in mind, as used in provisional coding, or you may develop codes inductively, as suggested by initial or open coding, or use a mix of deductively and inductively developed codes" (Friese, 2012: 92).

7   Lopende bibliotheek

Dutch military organisation specialist Sebastiaan Rietjens gives some direction as to which model to use in which context by stating that "[w]hen a phenomenon a researcher investigates is better understood, it might, however, be a waste of time to use a loose and inductive design" (Rietjens, 2014: 132).

In this study, following Rietjens' guidance, both research models were used, in a mix of deductively and inductively developed codes, by using the standard scientific model where theories were readily available and using grounded theory where theories were more or less absent. The deductive, standard scientific model was used to look at the plots that military authors use in their books and to look at general demographic characteristics. As indicated in chapter two, a number of theories on plot exist, including one by Friedman (Friedman, 1955) that accommodates the two basic concepts that are pivotal in theories about military authors: disenchantment and growth. Working with this existing plot theory made use of the advantages of the standard scientific model, and made it possible to statistically test existing hypotheses about military authors and the kind of plots they write. The same goes for using standard (demographic) variables (such as age, sex, (military) occupation, number of book pages and year of publication) for looking at differences and similarities between these authors. Furthermore, Genette's theory about paratext was used to identify paratextual variables (Genette, 1997).

The inductive, grounded theory model was used to look at writing motivation of military authors, as no appropriate motivation theories were available. It was also used to code striking differences and similarities between the books that showed up during repeated reading. One of these striking similarities was the emphasis in many books on 'the truth' while at the same time giving disclaimers as to the content, and discussing censorship by the MoD. Striking differences that popped up during the analysis phase were, among others, that some books have ranks and medals on the cover, some authors donate the proceeds to charity, and some describe adaptation problems, but certainly not all of them. Another noticeable difference that appeared was between self-published books and books published by traditional publishers: not only did the self-published books look different because of their often deviating formats, either smaller or larger than regular books, and because of the spelling mistakes that sometimes already started on the cover, in general they also gave a different reading experience: most of them were not as polished as the traditionally published books.

4.4.3.2 NCT method

In her book *Qualitative Data Analysis with ATLAS.ti*, Friese (2012: 228-236) provides a comprehensive summary of the steps involved in qualitative data analysis specifically aimed at computer-assisted analysis, which she calls the NCT method:

1. First stage coding: Notice things in the text and attach a code to them

2. Structure code list: Make higher order conceptual labels, also called categorical codes, that merge similar items under one heading

3. Second stage coding: Continue coding with the structured code list

4. Write memos: write down interesting observations in memos (during the coding process)

5. Write memos answering research questions (after the coding process).

6. Visualise relationships between code categories

This Notice-Collect-Think method was followed during the collecting phase of this study; all six steps were taken. What was new in my approach was the addition of a seventh step: the statistical analysis of the data collected in this way.

Although the steps are numbered, this does not indicate that the process is linear, on the contrary, data analysis is usually seen as an iterative process (Friese, 2012: 92; Miles & Huberman, 1994: 12; Wester & Peters, 2009: 43).

At least five different iteration cycles were used. The first cycle consisted of simply reading all fifty-four books (the first part of step 1) and writing some *observation memos* on striking similarities and differences between the books (step 4).

In the second cycle, each book was individually examined and for each book a *motive memo* was written: a Word document that captures all quotations that indicate explicit writing motives (step 4). For this, the paratext (flaps, acknowledgement, preface, epilogue) and first chapter, last chapter and (where available) why-I-wrote-this-book chapter were all searched for appropriate quotes that indicated writing motives. These quotes were typed out verbatim for later use in ATLAS.ti, as computer-assisted analysis needs texts to be in electronic (.rtf, .txt or .doc) format. In ATLAS.ti, steps 1, 2 and 3 (first stage coding, code

structuring and second stage coding) were performed on the explicit motives collected in this way, as will be explained in detail later on in this chapter.

Also, in these motive memos quotations were collected that have to do with disenchantment or the lack of it, or other plot indicators having for example to do with learning and changing, in order to substantiate the choice of plot. A short content description was written, too, that was later used in the construction of Appendix H in which each of the 54 book researched are described. Special focus was given to the first chapter, the last chapter and the epilogue, because in these chapters a change in character, thought or fortune is most clearly visible and often explicitly mentioned. As English autobiography researcher Michael Mascuch observes, story endings especially are good at showing "an intentional structure consisting of personal actions and choices independent of atemporal forces such as nature or providence" (Mascuch, 1997: 36).

Based on these three elements (quotations, first-last-epilogue check and content description) a paragraph in the motivation memo was written that detailed the choice of plot, providing an audit trail (Guba & Lincoln, 1989: 243) to the choice of plot.

In the few cases in which choosing a plot was not entirely straightforward, these memos were peer-reviewed by both supervisors and a fellow NLDA researcher in order to see whether they agreed with the logic of the chosen plot. The choice of plot for all fifteen British books in the sample was also discussed in-depth with British contemporary military memoir researcher Rachel Woodward. The results will be discussed later on in this chapter in the paragraph on reliability and validity.

During this cycle, the initial filling of the SPSS database (step 1) also started, which is further detailed later on in this chapter. This in-depth analysis of the books led to further observations that were captured in new observation memos (step 4). Subsequent reading cycles were necessary as further research and analysis (in the form of *research memos* or preliminary SPSS or ATLAS.ti analyses (step 5)) led to new codes to be added to the SPSS database, generally to help facilitate the testing of new hypotheses. Each code that was added to the SPSS database was defined in a separate Excel codebook, and required a new reading cycle of all books (step 3).

In SPSS, code list structuring (step 2) was performed at the end of the collection process and was done in two ways: both by merging and by splitting up. A code such as 'plot', which has 14 different options, was split up into 14 dummy variables, such as 'action

plot (yes/no)'. These 14 categories were visualised in several illustrations that showed the relationship between the categories (step 6), see for example Figure 16 later on in this chapter. The plot codes were also merged into what Friese calls *categorical codes* such as 'positive plots', 'negative plots', 'disenchantment plots', 'growth plots'.

4.5   Filling the SPSS Database

During the collecting phase, a SPSS database was constructed with eight types of subject variables: book, sales, paratext, author, deployment, truth and censorship, plot and motivation. In the following section, each subject variable type will be separately discussed.

In principle, all data in the two databases (SPSS and ATLAS.ti) is based on the texts of the 54 books in the dataset. Where necessary, basic variables necessary for the statistical analysis that could not be found in the books themselves, such as the writer's age, the status of the publisher (self or traditionally published) or whether the writer was deployed with her own unit or individually deployed, were additionally acquired. First via the Internet (via newspaper articles or author websites for example) and if that did not work, by contacting the author directly where possible, or otherwise via the publisher; by e-mail, telephone and/ or by formal letter. Age was also looked for in the catalogues of the British Library and the Library of Congress. In one case, whether an Apache pilot (Madison, 2010) was individually deployed or unit deployed was decided after consultation with a military helicopter pilot and Apache expert (G. Bakx, personal communication, August 22, 2013)[8]. An audit trail of these variables was kept in the book's motive memo: the memo that also captures all quotations that indicate explicit writing motives that were fed into ATLAS.ti.

Contacting authors was not in all cases successful, as not all publishers replied to queries; the self-publishing companies were generally quick in replying, whereas trying to get in contact with a real person instead of voicemail messages or automated e-mails proved impossible with several large, traditional publishers. Some authors who have their own author web pages also did not respond to (repeated) inquiries, such as Ed Macy[9] and Stuart Tootal[10]. Hence, not all comparative data is available; specifically the variable age is missing in nine books (17% of all books).

During the course of these additional enquiries, I had e-mail conversations with writers that

8   See also (Bakx & Nyce, 2013)

9   http://www.edmacy.com first accessed 5 December 2011, no longer available on 15 March 2013

10   http://stuarttootal.co.uk first accessed 5 December 2011

extended the simple demographic questions posed, in which issues such as truth, censorship and motivation where discussed with me as a fellow military writer. In all cases, I have asked whether I was allowed to quote from these personal e-mails in this research. This was not always granted and in some cases immediately put a stop to the e-mail conversations. This was for example the case when discussing censorship by the MoD with two authors who made neutral to positive statements in their books about this phenomenon, but who in their e-mails to me expressed less enthusiasm with the support they had been given by their MoD. During this study I only quote from e-mail conversations with soldier-authors that have given explicit permission.

This example shows one of the limitations of text research in general: what is researched is only that which the person has put onto paper, which does not necessarily comply with the oath that US courtroom witnesses have to take to tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth". It is, however, that what the writer wants to share with his or her expected readers and thereby the basis for a social construction of the 'truth' or as the founding fathers of social-constructivism, Berger en Luckmann, would say: the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966/1991). This is exactly what this research is interested in uncovering: the social construct that military writers offer through their books about their deployment experiences.

4.5.1   Book

The first (out of eight) subject variables to be discussed are the book variables. The book variables used in this study range from simple descriptives that hardly require interpretation (title, publisher) to descriptives that seem simple, but do require a good definition (author, co-author, year, number of pages) to grounded variables: variables that emerged when reading these books, and were not noted down based on a preconceived model (genre and publishing strategy).

4.5.1.1 Author

'Author' refers to the name of the author who is also the military protagonist of the book and who has sole or shared copyright of the book, according to the colophon. The copyright element of this definition is not applicable to the German books, as in these books the publisher, not the author, is named after the copyright sign in the colophon.

4.5.1.2 Co-author

A 'co-author' is the name of the writing expert (a journalist or writer) who shares authorship with the 'author' according to paratextual elements such as cover, title page and/or copyright statement.

4.5.1.3 Second Author

The 'second author' is someone who shares authorship with the 'author' according to paratextual elements such as cover, title page and/or copyright statement, but who is not a writing expert.

4.5.1.4 Year

'Year' in this study refers to the year in which the first edition was published according to the copyright date. When the publishing date was not available in the colophon, the date as published on the country's main book website (see Table 5) was used. When a book was first self-published before it was published by a traditional publisher, the year of publication of the self-published book is leading.

4.5.1.5 Years to publication

'Years to publication' shows how many years passed between deployment and publication. It is made up by subtracting 'last deployed' from 'year'. 'Last deployed' refers to the year in which the last deployment in the book ends.

4.5.1.6 Translated

'Translated' gives some indication of whether a book has been translated into another language. This was researched in April 2013 by looking up every author on amazon.com, and additionally also looking up the English language authors on the Dutch and German main book websites (see Table 5).

4.5.1.7 Pages

The number of pages of a book is calculated by adding four elements:

1) The highest Roman page number

2) The highest Arabic page number

3) The number of pages between the highest Roman page number and page 1

4) The number of not numbered illustration pages

4.5.1.8 Genre
When reading the books, three different types of 'genre' were distinguished. First, the diary type books, which are chronologically ordered with specific dates indicating the different chapters. Then there are the books with a continuous storyline or a thematic ordering, that were dubbed 'literary non-fiction' and finally, two books stood out as they were more informative and factual in nature (*Consultant in het groen* (Braat, 2006) and *Unter Beschuss. Warum Deutschland in Afghanistan scheitert* (Lindemann, 2010)).

4.5.1.9 Publishing strategy
In this study, a 'traditional publisher' is a publisher that carries the publishing costs and risks himself as opposed to 'self-publishers' who ask the author to pay the publishing costs. To distinguish between the two main types of publishers (self-publishers and traditional publishers), the publisher's website was visited and specifically the section on manuscript submissions. If authors have to pay for printing and basic marketing activities, as indicated on the website, it is considered a self-publisher. When the publisher carries the costs and risks of publishing, the publisher is considered a traditional publisher. When the website was ambiguous, the publisher was asked by phone who carries the publishing costs: the author or the publisher.

4.5.1.10 Military and Christian publishers
Apart from this main distinction between 'self-published' and 'traditionally published', two other types of publishers were also distinguished as grounded variables: the specialized 'military publishers', and publishers who aim at a Christian audience. I distinguished military publishers as it would be interesting to see how dominant (or not) these specialized publishers would be in the military non-fiction market, and 'Christian publishers' as in their books religious aspects were strikingly present. All military and Christian publishers in this dataset fall under the definition of 'traditional publishers'.

4.5.2   Sales
Sales figures of the books in this study are not in the public domain. In some instances, especially with regard to traditionally published books, they can be commercially acquired, though. As sales figures are not necessary for this explorative study (they are at most a

nice-to-have), no budget was reserved for it. However, Nielsen BookScan did provide sales data on British Afghanistan memoirs for scientific research to fellow contemporary military memoir researchers Woodward & Jenkings. Based on this sales data, their interviews with soldier-authors and the data from this study, the three of us wrote a collaborative piece on factors that do and do not seem to influence British military book sales (Kleinreesink, Woodward, & Jenkings, in press). Where applicable, the results of this separate research are shown in chapters five and six. They do need to be treated with caution, as the British military book market has a number of characteristics that are not shared with all the other countries in this study, as we shall see in the rest of the study[11]. The specific variables that are used in this research are incorporated in the SPSS database and are defined as follows:

4.5.2.1 Sales
'Sales #' refers to the number of British books sold in the UK until 23 February 2011 and includes lifetime sales of both hardback and paperback copies, which is every printed copy sold from the first publication up to 23 February 2011 as provided by Nielsen BookScan.

4.5.2.2 Adjusted sales
To properly compare the sales figures of the British books, a heuristic ('70-20-10') was applied to the 'sales #', as especially books published later in the research period (2001-2010) can be expected to go on selling more copies after 23 February 2011. Books are expected to sell most (70%) copies in the year of publication, but also continue selling 20% in the second year and 10% in the third year. This heuristic is used to calculate 'adjusted sales' by multiplying the real sales figures of books published in 2010 with $10/7^{th}$ and those from 2009 with $10/9^{th}$. This heuristic was decided in consultation with a publisher (A. Koppies, personal communication, June 12, 2013).

4.5.2.3 Better-seller
A 'better-seller' is a British book that has an 'adjusted sales' of over 15,000 copies.

4.5.3   Paratext
Apart from general variables that deal with the book itself and more content oriented variables related to plot and motivation, a type of intermediate variables was also coded: the paratextual elements of these books.

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11   Such as frequent co-authorship, no self-published books, only kinetic writers and an emphasis on combat medals.

4.5.3.1 Foreword

'Foreword' refers to the occupation of the writer of what Genette calls the 'allographic preface' (Genette, 1997: 207), a chapter at the beginning or the end of the book written by someone who is not the author, co-author, or second author of the book. The occupations can be grouped into four main groups: military (= military and retired military), writer (= journalist and writer), statesman (= politician and royalty) and home front. A foreword writer can have more than one occupation. Bing West, for example, the foreword writer to *A Nightmare's Prayer* (Franzak, 2010), is a Vietnam veteran, who writes books and was the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs during the Reagan Administration (Wikipedia, 2012) and is therefore categorized as military, writer and statesman.

4.5.3.2 Award

'Award' indicates whether the author was awarded a personal medal or high honour. This includes all combat medals, but also other kinds of personally awarded medals or high honours such as the Order of the British Empire. It excludes non-personal remembrance medals that are given to entire groups, such as the NATO medal.

4.5.3.3 Combat medal

A 'combat medal' refers to a personally awarded specifically combat-related medal, as indicated by the author in the paratext (cover, preface, epilogue, appendices, and afterword) of his book. In the dataset the following medals and distinctions are found that are considered a combat medal: Navy Cross, Military Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, Silver Star, and Bronze Star with a 'V'. These are particular to the UK and US, as in other countries no combat medals were mentioned in the paratext.

4.5.3.4 Medal on cover

'Medal on cover' indicates whether the author mentions having some sort of personally awarded medal, not a collectively received remembrance medal, on the cover (not including the flaps), for example via a post-nominal behind the author's name on the cover or in the bio text.

4.5.3.5 Donations

'Donations' refers to whether (parts of) the book royalties are donated to charity organisations that help for example war veterans, animals or Afghanistan.

4.5.3.6 List with names

Two types of 'lists with names' can be found in the books in the dataset: lists that detail soldiers that died in Afghanistan, and soldiers that were awarded 'combat medals' for actions in Afghanistan.

4.5.3.7 Dedication

A 'dedication' is a usually small text fragment often located on a separate page in a book after the colophon and before the foreword and/or preface and preceded by the word "for..." or "dedicated to...", which indicates the person(s) or group(s) of persons the writer dedicates the book to. In a few cases a dedication is written in the last paragraph of a preface, instead of on a separate page.

4.5.3.8 Dedicated

'Dedicated' refers to the person(s) or group(s) of persons a writer dedicates the book to, as indicated by the book's 'dedication', such as family members, fellow soldiers or God.

4.5.4   Author

The author variables that follow are all variables directly linked to the soldier-author, such as his or her age, sex and nationality.

4.5.4.1 Age

'Age' is defined as the author's age in the year the book was first published. Often, the writer's age or his or her year of birth is mentioned in the biography section, in other cases a birthday celebration is mentioned or the writer mentions his age in another context. Where applicable, age is calculated as 'year first published' -/- 'year of birth'. When age could not be established, the author or his or her publisher was contacted. In 17% of the cases, this was unsuccessful.

4.5.4.2 Sex

'Sex' refers to whether the soldier-author is male or female.

4.5.4.3 Rank

An author's 'rank' refers to the rank the author held during the last deployment discussed in the book. This means, for example, that even though the cover of a book such as *Danger*

from these three as defined by the *Military Balance* (IISS, 2002-2011). The Netherlands has a military constabulary ('Koninklijke Marechaussee'), the US has the Coast Guard and Germany has the Joint Medical Service, Joint Support Service and a small reserve force for the ministry which all fall under the category 'other'.

4.5.4.6 Status
The soldier-author's military 'status' is defined as being a professional, a reservist or a conscript. In the period researched, only Germany still had active conscription.

4.5.4.7 Nationality
'Nationality' refers to the country of employ of the soldier-author. So the Canadian-born author of *Dressed to Kill* (Madison, 2010) who served in the British Army Air Corps is referred to as British.

4.5.4.8 Warrior nation
A 'warrior nation' is a country with "a culture that promotes the martial spirit, elevates the warrior to heroic status and romanticizes war" (Paris, 2000: 11). In this study, it refers to the UK and the US and specifically does not refer to Germany, Canada and the Netherlands. A more exhaustive examination of the warrior nation concept was provided in chapter two in paragraph 2.3.1.

4.5.4.9 Anglo-Saxon
In this study, 'Anglo-Saxon' refers to the UK, the US, Canada and Australia, and specifically excludes Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium.

4.5.4.10 Work
'Work' indicates whether the author was still working for the MoD when the book was first published.

4.5.5 Deployment

4.5.5.1 Province
In this study, the variable 'province' refers to the Afghan province in which the author was stationed. If the book deals mainly with one specific mission, then the place of the mission

is where the variable refers to. The name of the Afghan place or the name of the military base the author is stationed on, is leading for determining in which province he or she is stationed, not the author's own idea of the province, as these sometimes do not match. In *An Angel on my Shoulder* for instance, the author tells us he is stationed in the Kandahar area in Deh Rawood (Heichel, 2006: 24), and further describes the Tarin Kowt river and Rollercoaster Hill (Heichel, 2006: 65). These are all locations in the province of Uruzgan, however, not in Kandahar province.

4.5.5.2   Stage
'Stage' refers to a division of Afghanistan in five parts used by ISAF in their take-over of the mission from the US-led OEF mission. It divides Afghanistan into four geographical areas plus the greater Kabul area (ISAF, 2008). Each of the four geographical areas, which are numbered from one to four, includes several provinces. Each of the provinces can be related to one of the five stages. For more detailed information on which province belongs to which stage see Figure 11 in chapter three.

4.5.5.3   CJSS code
The kind of work a soldier does, is called their military occupational specialism. Although every branch of service in every country has its own classification with regard to occupational specialisms, there is one system that is used all over NATO and in many other defence organisations: the Common Joint Staff System (CJSS). It is a classification system which divides all functions into groups that are numbered the same in each country (Kalloniatis, Macleod, & La, 2009: 1624), see Table 8.

Nr	Name
1	Personnel
2	Intelligence
3	Operations
4	Logistics
5	Strategy
6	Signals
7	Training
8	Finance
9	Civil-military Cooperation

Table 8: Common Joint Staff System (CJSS)

In this study, category 1: Personnel also includes health professionals and category 9: CIMIC also includes legal personnel. People engaged in gathering intelligence such as interrogation specialists, but also soldiers producing and influencing opinions such as military journalists are part of category 2: Intelligence.

The classical fighting soldier and the fighter pilot fall under category 3: Operations, or, when training other soldiers, for instance by being embedded with the Afghan National Army or Police in a mentoring team (OMLT/ETT), under category 7: Training. In a few cases OMLT/ETT personnel could also be placed in another category, such as Signals (Wood, 2008) or Personnel (Lachapelle, 2009), being a signals man and a nurse respectively. In these cases, as with the operational personnel, the mentoring aspects prevailed and they were placed in category 7: Training. Signals (6) is military jargon for information and communication technology.

4.5.5.4 Kinetic
The variable 'kinetic' refers to the main orientation of the soldier-authors' military speciality: whether they are oriented towards fighting or not. Kinetic soldiers, such as infantry, special forces, fighter pilots or forward air controllers (including the people who directly manage them), carry their weapons primarily for offensive actions. Non-kinetic personnel, such as health professionals, interrogators and military journalists, carry their weapons primarily for self-defence.

4.5.5.5 Individually deployed

Soldiers who are 'individually deployed' are not deployed with their own team, but are added, for the duration of their deployment, on an individual basis, to a team with military personnel they do not normally work with, nor after the deployment return to.

4.5.5.6 National deployment

Soldiers who are 'nationally deployed' work in a team that is composed of military personnel from their own country during their deployment. That does not exclude that national team to operate in an international environment.

4.5.5.7 Multiple deployments

An author who indicates in his or her book that he or she has been deployed more than once, or is scheduled for a second deployment, is considered to be a 'multiple deployment' author.

4.5.5.8 Volunteer

'Volunteer' refers to any reference in the preface or first chapter that indicates that the soldier-author could have refused this deployment in some way, but instead specifically volunteered for a mission in Afghanistan (Afghanistan volunteer), or volunteered for active duty after the September 11 attack (9/11 volunteer).

4.5.5.9 Last deployed

'Last deployed' refers to the year in which the last deployment in the book ends.

4.5.5.10 ISAF

The variable 'ISAF' refers to the mission the book is written about: either OEF, ISAF, UNAMA or EUROPOL or a combination of these. More information on these missions can be found in chapter three, in the paragraph 3.1.

4.5.6   Truth & censorship

4.5.6.1   Truth

'Truth' indicates whether a soldier-author in the paratext explicitly mentions that what he or she writes is 'the truth'. If the truth statement seems to indicate that the writer describes an objective truth that can be known by anyone who has been there at the same time, it is called an *objective truth.* If the writer acknowledges the fact that what he or she writes is

only their own truth and may have been experienced differently by someone else, it is a *subjective truth.*

4.5.6.2 Disclaimer
Disclaimers are admissions by the author that certain aspects of the content of the book are not entirely truthfully represented in the book. Several different categories are distinguished. *Names* of persons can be changed or anonymized. *Photographs* can be black-barred or in other ways touched up to anonymize the person or persons in it. *Places* where military actions took place can be obscured, or changed for security reasons. *Details* can be left out for security reasons and *events* changed. *Dates* and timelines can be changed to make the story a more attractive read. *Dialogues* can be made up for the same reason.

4.5.6.3 Self-censored
All disclaimers that are used for reasons of self-censorship, generally to guarantee operational security, are called 'self-censored'. This concerns *names, photographs, places, details* and *events.*

4.5.6.4 Literary disclaimers
All disclaimers that are used for literary reasons are called 'literary disclaimers': *dates* and *dialogues.*

4.5.6.5 Truth guarantee
The further substantiation of the truth claim in the form of reports, letters, e-mails, blogs, photographs, diaries, statements to the publisher, own impressions or conversations with others are called 'truth guarantees'.

4.5.6.6 Censor
'Censor' indicates whether the author or publisher explicitly mention in the paratext that the defence organization was offered the text, in order to check the text prior to publication.

4.5.6.7 Encouraged MoD
A book in which the author acknowledges active sponsorship, endorsement or initiation by the Ministry of Defence is indicated as 'encouraged MoD'.

4.5.6.8 Discouraged MoD

A book in which the author explicitly states that the Ministry of Defence discouraged its publication is indicated as 'discouraged MoD'.

4.5.7 Plot

4.5.7.1 Plot

Fourteen 'plots' as defined by Friedman (1955) and detailed in paragraph 2.4.6.3 distinguished. The disillusionment plot was further divided into three separate plots, to see where the disillusionment mainly originated from: from shattered ideals about war, the armed forces or society.

4.5.7.2 Plot positive/negative

'Plots' can be generally divided into two groups: 'negative plots' and 'positive plots'. A negative plot is a plot in which the main change for the protagonist is from negative to positive, a positive plot has the opposite change, or is positive all the way through. Most plots are by definition (Friedman, 1955) negative or positive. Where this is not the case (for action and affective plots), each plot was individually coded as giving an overall negative or positive outlook. An overview of which plots are positive and negative was earlier provided in Table 2 in chapter two. Please note that in this definition the variable positive/negative focuses on the positivity of the hero's journey, which does not necessarily correspond with the overall storyline. A story can have a rather negative overall feel, while the hero's journey is positive, or vice versa. A good example is *Two Wars* (Self, 2008). The book is mostly a positive, exciting, action story, but the hero gets traumatized in the final one-third of the book, making it a negative plot.

4.5.7.3 Disenchantment plot

'Disenchantment plot' is the collective term for the three disillusionment plots and the degeneration plot.

4.5.7.4 Growth plot

'Growth plot' is a term that indicates both education and maturing plots.

4.5.7.5 Rest plot

'Rest plots' indicate all plots that are not part of the categories 'growth plot' or

'disenchantment plot'. This includes all admiration, sentimental, revelation, reform, testing, pathetic, punitive, tragic, action and affective plots.

4.5.7.6 PDD

'PDD' refers to post-deployment disorientation (Weibull, 2012) which is defined here as the writer describing either a feeling of prolonged alienation or one or more of the three post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms (re-experiencing, avoidance and numbing and/or increased arousal) with respect to his or her own experience.

4.5.7.7 Life story

A book is considered to describe a 'life story' when the author describes his or her youth in ten pages or more, instead of remaining mostly in the here-and-now of Afghanistan.

4.5.7.8 After return

Books that continue with the story after the deployment itself (including decompression[12] and return to the writer's own country) describe an 'after return' situation.

4.5.8   Motivation (ATLAS.ti)

All prefaces, acknowledgments, epilogues and (where applicable) why-I-wrote-this-book chapters were searched for quotes in which the author explicitly describes why he or she wrote the book, following Dekker (Dekker, 1999: 270) as described earlier in paragraph 2.5.3. Implicit motives were not looked for, as these require a more in-depth research of each book that does not fit the explorative and more quantitative character of this study. As described earlier, these quotes were all collected in a separate, digital, motivation memo per book. These motivation memos were then fed into the qualitative data analysis software programme ATLAS.ti. The use of separate motivation memos was necessary, as ATLAS.ti needs a digital version of a text to work with, and the majority of the publishers were not willing to provide a digital copy for research and scanning the books with a professional copying machine with OCR (object character recognition) proved at the time when this study started (2010) to still require too much manual text correction and time.

A grounded theory approach to the discovery of military writing motives was chosen, as

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12   Decompression is a military term for readjusting returning troops from war zones by sending them to an isolated, but attractive places (such as Cyprus or Crete) where they can discuss their combat experiences and have their first alcoholic beverages in a controlled environment.

little research exists into writing motives, many different reasons for writing have passed in review, and there is no existing code list available for coding motives apart from the broad categories defined by Dekker and Baggerman (Baggerman, 2005; Dekker, 1999). This started with coding all quotes collected in ATLAS.ti with an inductive, open coding technique, which resulted in 54 first stage codes (Friese, 2012: 228-236), see Appendix G, last column. This was done by looking at each quote and describing it with a short (one to three words) code, such as 'easier than talking', 'order thoughts', or 'therapy'. In this way a coding list was built with the aid of ATLAS.ti out of the material present. This open coding technique ensures that the variety of motives that is present in the original texts is kept, while at the same time achieving a first, comprehensive level of modelling.

I subsequently divided these 54 first stage codes into 14 subcategories of a higher order (see Appendix G, the middle column and Figure 16), by merging similar items under one heading.
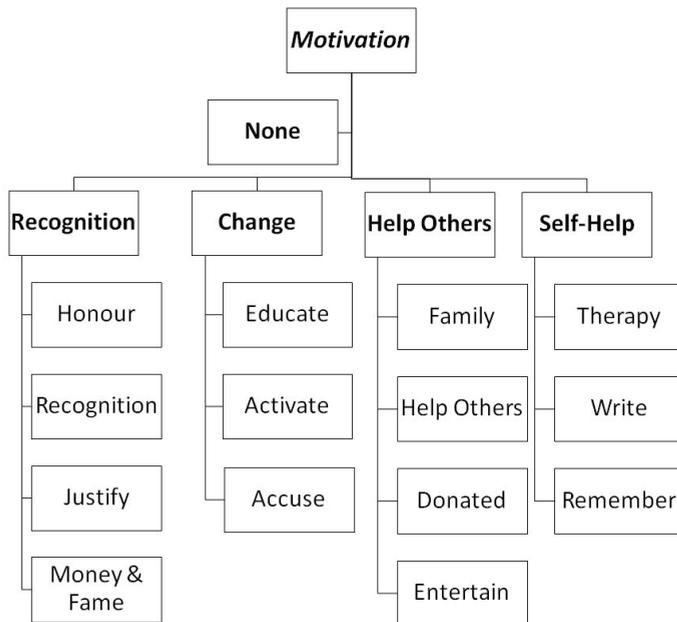
Figure 16: Main and Sub Categories of Writing Motivation

The codes 'easier than talking', 'order thoughts' and 'therapy' were, for example, clustered into the subcategory 'therapy'. In these categories, the negations (such as 'not for fame' or 'not for therapy') were also included; even though the writer denies that they play a role, the fact that they are mentioned at all suggest that they are important for the writer. As UK

literature scholar Lisa Nahajec says, "viewed as a pragmatic phenomenon, negation, as a cooperative process between speaker and hearer, writer and reader, operates to activate implied rather than explicit meaning" (Nahajec, 2009: 109).

Further analysis, especially when looking into the self-other dimension that was identified as important to life writing in chapter two (e.g. Baumeister & Newman, 1994; Westerhof, 2008), showed that these fourteen subcategories could be further summarized into five main categories (see Figure 16): books with no writing motives mentioned, and four main writing motives: to write to help yourself, to help others, to get recognition or to enable change. To continue the example: the subcategory 'therapy', together with the subcategories 'write' and 'remember' would all fall under the main category 'self-help'.

I transferred these results at subcategory and main category level from the ATLAS.ti database (via Excel) to the SPSS database in the form of dichotomous (yes/no) variables per book. This means that each book in the SPSS database has an indication which motives are explicitly mentioned by the soldier-author and which are not, whereby a book can contain more than one motive. All statistical analyses were performed on this SPSS database.

Three paratextual features of military memoirs that were coded in the SPSS database in an earlier stage could also be conceived as denoting writing motivation, notably the variables 'donations', 'list with names' and 'dedication'. An extra subcategory under 'help others' was created for each book in which the author indicated that (parts of) the book royalties were donated to charity organisations ('donated'). Books that were dedicated to military personnel, home front in general or God were added to the subcategory 'honour' which is part of the main category 'recognition'; books dedicated to the writer's own family and friends were added to the subcategory 'family' under the main category 'help others'. Finally, books that had lists with names of soldiers that had either died in Afghanistan, or were awarded medals for actions in Afghanistan, were also added to the subcategory 'honour' under the main category 'recognition'.

4.6   Second Database: Comparative Data

Apart from the SPSS database with all the coded information from the 54 autobiographical books in the dataset, including the motives from the ATLAS.ti database, a separate database was set up with comparative military data on the countries researched. It contains estimates of the numbers of people deployed to Afghanistan, and the normal composition of the armed forces per country in terms of sex, age, rank, branches of service and status (reservists versus professionals).

4.6.1   Deployment figures

There is no exact number available of people deployed to Afghanistan. ISAF for example did not start to collect what they call "placemat figures" (the numbers of forces provided to ISAF) until 2007, and even those are only estimates (ISAF, 2011). Different organizations that make comparable defence information available, such as the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), all provide other numbers, because of different definitions (Bakker & Beeres, 2012: 7). In order to compare the deployment numbers from different countries, it is therefore necessary to use figures that share the same definition, in effect, that come from one source. In this study, a commonly used source in defence research was used: the IISS's *Military Balance*.

4.6.2   Posts in area of operations

The number of military posts in the area of operations in a particular year for a particular country are all taken from the *Military Balance* of the next year (IISS, 2002-2011).They come from the section 'Deployment' (in earlier editions   'Forces Abroad') and combine the numbers under the headings 'Afghanistan' and (for Germany, who flies its planes from airport Termez) 'Uzbekistan', for operations OEF, ISAF, UNAMA and EUPOL. That excludes people stationed in other countries (e.g. Bahrain, Kuwait) who also may work for ISAF or OEF in addition to other operations in the region. 'Post' here refers to a position, not to the actual number of people in the area of operations.

4.6.3   Soldiers in area of operations

In order to translate these 'posts' into an estimation of actual people in the area of operations, they were multiplied with the country's average rotation factor (CRF, see Appendix D), as in some countries a post is normally filled for an entire year, whereas in other countries an average rotation period only takes four months.

$$\Sigma \text{ (\# posts in AoO (2001-2008)}^{13}\text{*country rotation factor) = estimated \# soldiers in AoO}$$

■

13   The reasons for calculating to 2008 instead of 2010 will become clear in chapter five, the who-chapter. They are related to the average publishing time for a book.

This resulted in the following table:

Country	Posts 2001-2008	CRF	Estimated # soldiers
Australia	2,632	2	**5,264**
Belgium	2,096	3	**6,288**
Canada	11,510	2	**23,020**
Germany	20,771	2 - 3	**53,434**
The Netherlands	8,084	2	**16,168**
United Kingdom	28,030	2	**56,060**
United States	151,414	1	**151,414**
Total			**311,648**

Table 9: Calculation of Estimated Soldiers in Area of Operations

4.6.4   Normal composition

To compare the soldier-authors in the dataset with the normal composition of the armed forces per country, data was collected on every variable that was publicly available for each of the five countries: sex, age, rank, branches of service and status (reservist versus professionals). Where possible, numbers from 2010 were used.

Status and branch of service were taken from the *Military Balance* of 2011 (IISS, 2011). The other variables (sex, age and rank) were not available in the *Military Balance* and were therefore acquired from country specific public sources. For the US, numbers from the Department of Defense's statistical website (DoD-US, 2011) were used, for the UK the numbers were taken from the *Annual Manning Report* (MoD-UK, 2011) and for Canada from an article in the journal *Statistics Canada* (Park, 2008) with numbers from 2006. The German MoD does not provide public statistics, but was generous enough to provide me with the data necessary for use in this study based on the state of affairs in December 2011 (U. Michl, personal communication, May 1, 2012). The Dutch numbers came from internal sources as well, both from the Personnel & Organisational Dashboard (MoD-NL, 2011c) and from the section information management Personnel & Organisation (R. van Leeuwaarden, personal communication, January 31 and March 9, 2012). The US DoD website does not provide information on age, and repeated e-mail inquiries to the DoD to provide these numbers were not answered, therefore US information on age is missing.

4.7   Analyses in SPSS

After filling the databases, the data in it was analysed. The analyses were performed with two different software programmes: SPSS for the statistical analyses and ATLAS.ti for the qualitative analyses of the motives. The analysis method in ATLAS.ti was described earlier in this chapter, the basic assumptions used to analyse in SPSS are detailed below.

4.7.1   Necessity

In general, the statistical calculations are made in PASW 18/19, commonly referred to as SPSS. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

As we have seen in chapter one, the research population in the dataset can be visualized as the overlap of the groups of all Afghanistan autobiographies, all military autobiographies and all autobiographies written in the focus countries.
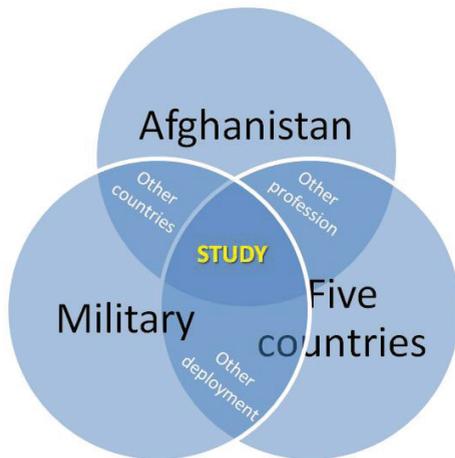
Figure 17: Research Population

Strictly speaking, statistical testing on this dataset is not necessary, as it is not a *sample* of the entire research population of autobiographical books on Afghanistan in five western countries (see Figure 17), but it comprises the whole of the dataset, a 100% sample. Therefore, in many cases the numbers do not indicate a probability, but the situation 'as is' and indicating an effect size should be enough to describe the dataset.

However, statistical probability is relevant if we are interested in generalizing the effects we see in this study to a broader range of autobiographies such as Afghanistan memoirs written

by non-military people, military Afghanistan autobiographies written in countries that are not in the dataset, or military autobiographies about other deployments. In Figure 17, these are represented by the double overlapping areas. Statistical probability is also relevant when seeking to explore differences within the dataset, for example between countries. Therefore, throughout the entire study statistical probability will be indicated.

4.7.2   Chi-square

Chi-square is a statistical test used to compare observed data with data that we expect to obtain according to a specific hypothesis. If we know, for example, the percentage of officers in the armed forces of a country (expected data), we can use a chi-square test to compare it to the percentage of officers in this country writing a book (observed data). The test indicates the "goodness to fit" between the observed and expected data.

The main statistical tests performed were chi-square tests, as most of the data in the research database is nominal, the number of cases are relatively low ($n = 54$) and the data is independent.

Where necessary and possible, data was made dichotomous in order to comply with the statistical requirement of a minimum expected value of five in each cell. In 2x2 tables Fisher's exact test was used instead of Pearson Chi-Square as it is more exact and can even compensate for lack of a minimum expected value of five in each cell. When I use the Fisher's exact test I indicate this by 'X^2_{Fisher}' instead of 'X^2', whereby the two-side probability is noted, unless otherwise indicate by '$p_{one-sided}$' (Field, 2009: 690).

In larger tables in which one or more of the cells has an expected value of less than five – which is always the case when comparing countries, as Canada only has three books, which will automatically lead to at least two cells with a count of less than five – an asterisk was added to the chi-square to indicate loss of statistical power: X^2*.

The chi-square tests on the database with comparative data compare expected values from existing data (such as percentage of female soldiers in each country) instead of theoretically expected values. These are all manually calculated in Excel based on the formula: $X^2 = \Sigma((observed-expected)^2/expected)$ and are distinguished from the other analyses by their use of the '<' or '>' sign in the probability description (p) instead of the exact number ('=') that SPSS calculates.

In 2x2 tables, (manually calculated) odds ratios were used as measure of effect size (Field, 2009: 699-700).

4.7.3 T-test

A t-test assesses whether the means of two groups are *statistically* different from each other. It is used to compare whether the average difference between two groups is really significant or if it is due instead to random chance. For example, when you know the average time it takes for a diary to be published and the average time for other types of books to be published, the t-test can tell whether that difference is large enough to conclude that diaries are produced much faster (or not).

T-tests were performed when a scale variable could be compared with a nominal variable. The Levene's test (Field, 2009: 340) was always performed, but never reported. When reporting t-tests, effect size was also indicated as *r*, manually calculated as $r = \sqrt{(t^2/(t^2 + df))}$ (Field, 2009: 332) and defined according to Cohen (in: Field, 2009: 57): where *r* = .10 is a small effect, *r* = .30 a medium effect and *r* =.50 a large effect.

4.7.4 Regression

Regression analysis is a statistical technique for studying the relationships between variables. It is used to predict scores on one variable from the scores on a second (or third) variable. For example, it is possible to predict the number of books published in a country (variable one) based on the number of soldiers that country has deployed in the previous years (variable two).

Two types of regression were performed: both linear and logistic regressions. The linear regression (predicting the number of books published in a country) was performed based on only seven cases (countries), making the number of cases in principle below the normal minimal sample size of 10-15 (Field, 2009: 222), as indicated in the text. This means that a loss of power for this particular calculation has to be accepted.

For the binary logistic regression (to predict the type of plot) the backward stepwise (likelihood ratio) method was chosen as this is an exploratory study, for which no previous research exists that can be used to base hypotheses on (Field, 2009: 272). This regression was based on 51 cases, as in three cases one of the variables ('work') was classified as 'unknown'. The dataset contained no outliers. Odd ratios and Nagelkerke's adjusted value for R were used to measure effect size.

4.7.5   Loglinear

Like a regression analysis, a loglinear analysis is used to create a model to predict scores on one variable from the scores on a second (or third) variable. The difference is that the variables used are categorical (yes/no) variable. In this study a loglinear analysis was used to see what variables can predict whether a book will have a positive or negative plot. The categorical variables work (yes: still working for the Ministry of Defense on publication date; no: no longer working for the Ministry of Defense) and kinetic (yes: combat soldier; no: combat support soldier) were used in this analysis.

The loglinear analysis (to model the relationship between work, kinetic and positive stories) suffered from a loss of power from the same problem as some of the chi-square tests: although all cells had an expected value over one, three out of eight cells had an expected value under five, as indicated in the text. This analysis also used only 51 cases, by filtering out the three work-unknown cases. For interpretation a graph was made and odd ratios were used to measure effect size.

4.8   Reliability and Validity

Next to using firmly established methodological procedures, such as statistical analysis, grounded theory and the NCT method, three additional measures were taken to ensure reliability and validity of this research. First of all, field research was done into writing motives as a form of methodological and data triangulation. Secondly, for the most subjective coding (that of the plots) an intercoder reliability test was performed, to get some idea of the reproducibility of this research. Finally, an extensive audit trail was provided for. These three measures are detailed below.

4.8.1   Field research as covert participant observer

A critique that may be given to content analysis of motives is that it only takes into account what was written down, and there may be a discrepancy between motives written down for a large public and more privately held motives. That calls for some form of methodological and data triangulation (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993: 137-138; Jick, 1979: 602). A unique opportunity for this kind of triangulation arose when in 2011 Dutch veterans' organisation *De Basis* organised a writing contest in order to compile an anthology with short stories by Dutch military veterans of all ages (Basis, 2011).

I asked permision to attend the information session and the writing weekend[14] organised by *De Basis* in order to research the writing motivation of these (future) soldier-authors. This permission was not granted, as the organisation[15] felt that having a researcher present at these events would change the intimate atmosphere of 'being among veterans'. After learning that I had participated in another military anthology, the bestseller *Task Force Uruzgan* (Kleinreesink, 2009a, 2009b), I was, however, invited to participate in the contest itself, and allowed to make notes of what people said as long as it was context appropriate, and as long as I only presented myself as a fellow contestant and actually participated in it. Basically, I was allowed in as covert participant observer (Vinten, 1994)[16].

As I was one of the sixteen finalists of the contest (Kleinreesink, 2012a), I was able to study writing motivation on three separate occasions:

1) The information session on 19 March 2011

2) The writing weekend on 28 and 29 May 2011

3) The book presentation on 30 May 2012

The veterans who attended these meetings were all veterans from Dutch missions, and varied widely in terms of age and the kind of missions they had been deployed to. The sixteen winners of the contest, who were published in the anthology *We missen een man: Zestien eigenzinnige verhalen van veteranen*[17] (Morren, 2012) were between 37 and 84 years of age, three of them were women, there were reservists, professionals and conscripts, and they had been deployed to missions as diverse as the Dutch East Indies, Lebanon, New Guinea and Afghanistan. None of the 54 book authors researched in this study were present during these meetings, providing a completely different sample of soldier-authors, albeit only from one of the researched countries (the Netherlands).

During these occasions, I wrote down every writing motive mentioned by a veteran that I overheard during introduction sessions, question sessions, formal interviews between

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14   The sixteen winners of the contest were offered a writing weekend at De Basis, to start writing their stories helped by professional writers.

15   Jos Morren, head of public relations.

16   This led to an ethical issue choosing between the right of subjects to know they are researched and acquiring this specific data for research purposes. As this was data which was volunteered by the subjects and never explicitly asked for, in large part in an environment in which there were journalists present (known by the subjects) who wrote about the content of the discussions, whereby the organization specifically asked for this covert role, it was decided in consultation with both supervisors to use this covert method as long as the data gathered and used was anonymized.

17   *One Man Missing: Sixteen Unique Veterans' Stories*

participants and journalists, personal conversations and in the bar. These motives were captured in a *field memo* in the form of quotes. Most of them were written down immediately, some (for instance those mentioned during personal conversations and in the bar) as quickly as possible after the event. I did not initiate questions on why people write in order to adhere to the terms agreed with *De Basis*, but those questions were asked by others.

These field notes with writing motives were then coded in ATLAS.ti in the same way as the motives from the books were coded. The field-motives were collected before any book-motives had been collected, but were coded after the book-motives had been coded, when the coding list had already been established. The results are used in chapter seven, the why-chapter, to see whether there is a discrepancy between motives written down for a large public and more privately held motives.

4.8.2   Intercoder reliability

In content analysis studies, such as this study, the researcher interprets texts, a process which involves a subjective interpretation, which could compromise the reliability. According to American political scholar Ole Holsti, reliability in content analysis depends on three different aspects (Holsti in: Popping, 2010: 1068-1069):

1) The coders' skills, insight, and experience

2) The clarity of categories and coding rules

3) The degree of ambiguity in the data

How can we be sure that when other researchers look at the same texts with the same coding instructions, they will generate the same encoded data? When more than one researcher has coded the data, this question is answered by looking at the intercoder (also: interrater) reliability. A number of intercoder reliability measures have been developed, such as the percent agreement, Scott's pi, Cohen's Kappa, Cronbach's alpha en Krippendorff's alpha (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007; Popping, 2010). These intercoder reliability tests all involve comparing codes given to the same sample of text by different raters, but they differ in factors such as whether more than two raters can be compared, how they use the categories the researcher distinguished, whether the scale used represents a statistical relationship or not, and whether it can cope with missing data. The most sophisticated of these reliability measures for content analysis studies is Krippendorff's alpha (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007: 79-82; 88).

In this study, however, all coding was done by the same coder, which provides an internal consistence of the coding, as there is no difference in skills or experience between coders, and the interpretation of categories and coding rules is consistent. Therefore, intercoder reliability of the coding is not an issue in this study. But in my opinion, these reliability measures could also be used as an indication of how reproducible this one-coder-research is, and that is what this section will address.

4.8.2.1 Coding tasks

There are several different types of coding tasks. American sociologists Andrew Montgomery and Kathleen Crittenden distinguish three: type A, type B-1 and type B-2:

> Type A coding tasks require a coder to find a specific answer to a specific question at a given place on an instrument. Type B-1 coding tasks involve locating relevant information within a larger context. Finally, type B-2 coding tasks are those where the coder has not only to locate relevant information, but also to evaluate the relative importance of two or more possible responses to arrive at a single code. (Montgomery & Crittenden, 1977: 236)

In this study, most of the coding that underpins the who-questions is type B-1, as it is factual and does not require interpretation, such as age, rank and sex. The coding of the why-question is also of the B-1 type as it does not require a lot of interpretation either; in addition, why-question coding is also validated by triangulation with the field research described above. The what-question ('What do soldier-authors write about?'), however, does require quite some interpretation by the researcher and suffers from a much higher degree of ambiguity in the data and is therefore a B-2 task. Reproducibility is then an especially interesting question when it comes to the data for answering the what-question.

4.8.2.2 Test coding

At the start of the research, the answer to the what-question and to dealing with this ambiguity was first of all sought in using an existing coding framework that was developed by Dutch research institute TNO[18] to research the influence of military events on soldiers' physical, emotional and cognitive sustainability. In the pilot for that study, TNO created a military event list that distinguishes approximately 250 different events that are categorized into 20 different categories, varying from incidents or victims, to health issues and leisure

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18   Nederlandse Organisatie voor Toegepast Natuurwetenschappelijk Onderzoek [Dutch Organization for Applied Scientific Research]

activities (Vrijkotte, Wouwe, & Delahaij, 2010). Coding with these events proved to be rather difficult on all three of Holsti's reliability aspects. Getting familiar with 250 codes takes a lot of effort (coder), the definitions of the codes were not always clear and unambiguous (codes), and neither were the texts that needed coding (data) as the trial texts (chapters of the Dutch military anthology *Task Force Uruzgan* (Bemmel, 2009)) tended to incorporate multiple events per paragraph, leading at times to having to code at the level of sentences. A test coding of two chapters comparing my coding with that of two untrained coders (both supervisors of this study) led to a Krippendorff alpha of only 0.27[19] on the level of the 20 categories, and to lots of complaints about the difficulty of using this coding system; the military event list provided was therefore abandoned for practical reasons for this study.

The test coding led to three requirements for a new coding scheme to answer the what-question. First, the codes needed to be clearly demarcated and unambiguous. Second, the level of measurement should be the book, not the sentence or paragraph. Third, it would be preferable if the codes could be translated into dichotomous variables to enable statistical calculations in this relatively small (n = 54) database. As described in chapter two, this led to the use of Friedman's plot theory, as his categorisation was so clear that it could be translated into flowcharts (first requirement), it could be related to the overall hero's journey of the book (second requirement), and the categories could be transformed into the relevant dichotomous variables 'positive plot (yes/no)', 'disenchantment plot (yes/no)' and 'growth plot (yes/no)' (third requirement).

4.8.2.3   Reproducible

To see whether my coding based on Friedman's plot theory was reproducible by others, a second coder was sought to code a significant part of the books. Finding someone who was willing to read at least 10-15 books in order to code them proved difficult, as it required an extensive amount of time. Fellow military autobiography researcher Rachel Woodward assented (e.g. Woodward & Jenkings, 2012a), since she had read all British memoirs in this study at least once for her own research. After an explanation of the Friedman scheme and the provision of Friedman's original article and the matching flowcharts, she categorized the plots of all fifteen British memoirs on her own, from memory, without consulting the books themselves. This resulted in much higher Krippendorff alpha scores (0.42-0.54) than working with the Military Event List (0.27), as can be seen in Table 10[20].

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19   Calculated with the SPSS macro developed by Krippendorff (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007) based on 52 observations.

20   Table 11 and Table 12 are calculated with the ReCal2 ('**Re**liability **Cal**culator for **2** coders') web tool developed by Deen Freelon (Freelon, 2010)

	Agreement (%)	Krippendorff's alpha	N Cases
Disenchantment	80	0.54	15
Positive	73	0.46	15
D-G-R[22]	67	0.51	15
14 plots	53	0.42	15

Table 10: Initial Agreement between Coders on Plots for British Books

Discussing the results afterwards, two consistent differences in scoring between the two coders came up. Woodward, scoring the plots based on her overall recall of the stories from memory, scored both recovery narratives (*Home from War* (Compton, et al., 2009) and *Man Down* (Ormrod, 2009) as negative, pathetic plots. I, however, looking at the hero's journey and thereby emphasizing the beginning and the ending of the book, scored both these books as positive plots (one a maturity plot, the other an admiration plot). These different starting points – overall feel of the story (Woodward) versus hero's journey (Kleinreesink) – also led to three other plot interpretations, for *An Ordinary Soldier* (Beattie & Gomm, 2008), *The Junior Officers' Reading Club* (Hennessey, 2009) and *Blood Clot* (J. Scott, 2008). These were explainable variations that for both coders showed an internally consistent way of coding. Leaving out the cases that led to variation due to the different starting points shows a high agreement between the coders (see Table 11) leading to the conclusion that with some training and the reliance on the books instead of coding from memory, the coding for plots with the Friedman scheme could be reproducible. We can also conclude that results that are based on comparing the content of the books are much more reliable when coding by Friedman than when based on the TNO military event list.

	Agreement (%)	Krippendorff's alpha	N Cases
Disenchantment	100	1.00	10
Positive	100	1.00	10
D-G-R[23]	90	0.85	10
14 plots	80	0.73	10

Table 11: Agreement between Coders on Plots for British Books Excluding Codes Coded without Hero's Journey as Starting Point

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21 Disenchantment, Growth or Rest plot

22 Disenchantment, Growth or Rest plot

Still, it also shows that defining genre and plot is a complex task, and that in working with texts some subjectivity is unavoidable. Next to that, a country specific effect could be the case, as chapter six, the what-chapter, will show that British soldier-authors produce more positive plots than can be expected (for numerous reasons that are detailed in that chapter), while at the same time criticizing a lot. This indicates that there may also be a cultural difference, that makes that the plot format (the hero's journey) in the UK is expected to be positive, whereas the overall tone of the story can still be negative, where in other countries there seems to be more consistency between the overall tone of the book and the hero's journey.

4.8.3   Audit trail

Finally, as discussed earlier in this chapter, an extensive audit trail was developed as a consequence of the consistent application of the methodology. For the analysis with ATLAS.ti, four types of memos were written: motive memos, observation memos, research memos and field memos; for the analysis in SPSS, a code book and research reports were prepared. These analyses were performed on three databases: the ATLAS.ti database, the SPSS book database and the SPSS comparative data database. All this basic data has been placed in a secured Dropbox account for the doctoral committee members to examine. It is also available, upon request, for fellow researchers interested in the data or the methodology.

4.9   Concluding Remarks

The previous section on reliability and validity finishes this rather extensive chapter on methodology. Its detail and size were not coincidental. First of all, in most studies that deal with literature in general, including research into military autobiographies, a thorough methodology chapter is missing, an omission I wanted to make up for. Secondly, the mixed-method approach used to research autobiographies certainly is uncommon, but I wanted to show that it is thoroughly rooted in a combination of established scientific methods. This chapter tried to demonstrate that literature research does not have to be methodologically lean, but can be underpinned with proven methodology from different scientific backgrounds. As such, this chapter has provided an extensive basis for the next three chapters in which the results of this study will be presented.

Chapter Five:
Who Writes and Publishes Soldiers' Stories?

Chapter Five: Who Writes and Publishes Soldiers' Stories?

5.1   Introduction

Now that the research set-up has been established, the next three chapters will show the research findings. This first chapter of the three, chapter five, will focus on *who* these military authors and their publishers are, more specifically on three of the eight main variable types: author, book and deployment. The next chapter, chapter six, will delve deeper into *what* they write and what sells, combining the previous three variable types with three new ones: paratext, plot and truth & censorship. The third chapter, chapter seven, will look at *why* they write, and cover the seventh variable type, motivation, in combination with the previous variables. The final variable type, sales, will be used, when applicable, in chapters five and six to further substantiate the results with statistics that take into account British sales figures, as discussed in chapter four in paragraph 4.5.2 (Kleinreesink, et al., in press).

Before looking at the who-questions, we start this chapter by looking at the related where and when-questions: where do these authors come from and when did they write their books? Then we look at the other writers of these books: not the authors/protagonists, but their co-authors and foreword writers, before we focus on the soldier-authors themselves: who are they and can they be considered a proxy of the normal military population? We finish with who publishes these soldier authors and specifically who gets published commercially by the traditional publishers?

5.2   Where & When

5.2.1   Books per country

In chapter four, we defined the books for this study as follows:

Non-fiction, autobiographical books, first published between 2001 and 2010 in Dutch, English or German that (mainly) deal with the deployment experiences of Western military personnel in Afghanistan and are intended for the public at large.

The scope was further restricted to seven target countries: The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium (the Flemish-language part), the UK, the US, Canada (the English-language part) and Australia. This resulted in the following number of books per country (see Table 12).

An overview of all these books can be found in Appendix H, which provides a short summary of each book and details on the main variables related to the book, author and publisher.

Country	# books
The Netherlands	7
Germany	7
Belgium	0
United Kingdom	15
United States	22
Canada	3
Australia	0
Total	**54**

Table 12: # Books Per Country

In the two countries with the least estimated soldiers in the area of operation (Belgium ca 5,000 and Australia ca 6,000) no books were published that fall under the definition. Belgium did not have any books published by military personnel that had been deployed to Afghanistan. In Australia, several books were published about Afghanistan experiences that did not fit the definition. For example, in *SAS Sniper* (Maylor & Macklin, 2010) less than half of the written text relates to Afghanistan, as it also deals with Maylor's time in Northern Ireland, Timor and Iraq, and *War Dogs* (Bryant & Park, 2010) was told to a journalist, and written by someone who did not have the status of military personnel at the time of his deployment, as he was an ex-army civil contractor.

5.2.2   Books versus deployed personnel

The majority of the books come from the US (41%) and the UK (28%). The variance in numbers of books published in each of the seven countries researched is almost fully explained[1] by the estimated number of soldiers that were deployed to Afghanistan between 2001 and 2008 per country. This is visualized in Figure 18.

1   R^2 = .85, slope = .15, p = .003, r = .92 (extremely large-sized effect). This model does suffer from a smaller sample size (7) than normally expected for reliable results (10-15 per predictor).
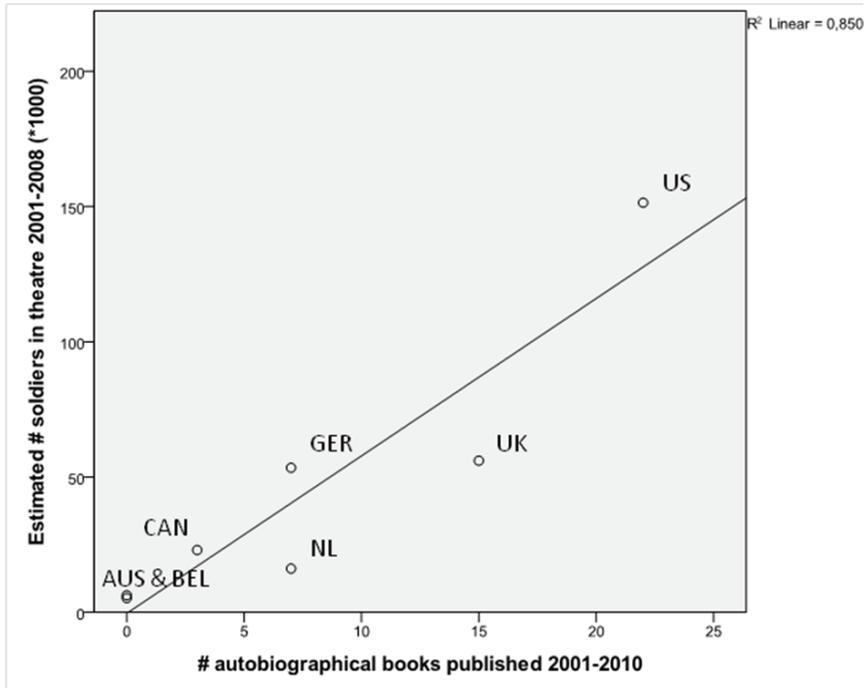
Figure 18: Relationship between Books Published and # Soldiers in Area of Operation per Country

The estimated number of military personnel per country in this model was calculated as follows:

Σ (# posts in AoO (2001-2008)*country rotation factor) = estimated # soldiers in AoO

A full explanation of this estimation can be found in paragraph 4.6.3. In this model, the years 2009 and 2010 have been excluded as on average it takes military authors two years before they publish a book after having been deployed[2].

2   *M* = 2.31, *SD* = 1.89

The number of books published in a country per 10,000 soldiers deployed is predicted by this model as follows:

books = 1.2 + 1.5 * (estimated # soldiers in AoO/10,000)

Simply put, as can be seen from Table 13, on average one book is produced per every 6,000 soldiers in the area of operations, although in the UK and the Netherlands relatively more books are produced. Since Belgian and Australian deployment figures evolve around this threshold number, no autobiographical mission specific books were written at all.

Country	Estimated # soldiers	Books	Soldiers/book
Australia	5,264	0	0
Belgium	6,288	0	0
Canada	23,020	3	7,673
Germany	53,434	7	7,633
The Netherlands	16,168	7	2,310
United Kingdom	56,060	15	3,737
United States	151,414	22	6,882
Total	**311,648**	**54**	**5,771**

Table 13: Soldiers in AoO Compared to Books Published

5.2.3   Stationed in Afghanistan

As we have seen in chapter three, the intervention in Afghanistan was carried out in two main missions: Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The US started with OEF in 2001, and NATO took ISAF (and parts of the OEF mission) over between 2003 and 2006 in a counter-clockwise direction, in four stages (see Figure 19). First Kabul and the north of the country (stage one), then the west of Afghanistan (stage two), followed by the south (stage three) and the east (stage four) or as Conrad writers in *What the Thunder Said: Reflections of a Canadian Officer in Kandahar:* "the two most volatile remaining pieces of Afghanistan" (Conrad, 2009b: 77).

Figure 19: ISAF Operation in Four Geographical Stages (ISAF, 2008)

Most (81%) of the military authors indicate the mission for which they were in Afghanistan. For the four British and six Americans who did not mention the specific mission, being in Afghanistan mattered, not under which mandate. Of the 44 who named their mission, most of them (64%) were deployed on the ISAF mission and only one on both: Canadian logistical officer Conrad indicated that his mission served first under the OEF mandate, and it "was only on 31 July 2006 that the torch passed to NATO" (Conrad, 2009b: 80). No books on the relatively small UNAMA and EUPOL missions were published.

Despite the shroud of secrecy that comes with guarding operational security - a topic that will be extensively discussed in the next chapter when dealing with issues of truth and (self) censorship - all authors give some indication of where they were stationed in Afghanistan (see Table 14).

5.2.4   Deployment

The deployments described in the books are in line with the stage-by-stage take-over of Afghanistan, as can be seen from Table 15:

		Stage					
		Kabul	Stage 1 (North)	Stage 3 (South)	Stage 4 (East)	Multiple stages	Total
Last deployed	2001	-	-	-	1	-	1
	2002	1	-	-	2	1	4
	2003	-	-	-	4	-	4
	2004	1	1	-	1	-	3
	2005	-	-	-	2	1	3
	2006	-	2	7	-	-	9
	2007	2	1	9	2	2	16
	2008	-	1	5	4	-	10
	2009	-	1	3	-	-	4
Total		4	6	24	16	4	54

Table 15: Location of Author's Last Deployment

The American authors in stage 4 locations are there from the start of operation OEF, and the first Kabul based story also starts in 2002. Deployments in the northern part of Afghanistan (stage 1) start from 2004 and in the southern part (stage 3) not until 2006.

5.2.5   Speed of production

The majority of the books published between 2001 and 2010 (55%) deal with a deployment that ended only in or after 2007, while most of the books themselves (59%) were published in 2009 and 2010 (see Table 16).

Year	# published
2004	2
2006	4
2007	6
2008	10
2009	19
2010	13
Total	**54**

Table 16: # Books Published per Year

This fits the two-year average between last deployment and publication date that we saw before, and it means that publication of immediate memoirs goes quite rapidly. The speed of production depends on the genre, as the fourteen diaries in the sample are even more quickly produced than the thirty-eight literary non-fiction books; this is a significant difference, which represents a large-sized effect[4]. This could be because diaries are normally written as on-the-spot memoirs and therefore only had to be party rewritten to fit in book format, whereas writing in a literary format requires more rethinking of the content and therefore more time.

Interestingly, even though diaries are most popular with self-publishers (see Table 17)[5], self-publishers were not significantly quicker in publishing than people who publish via a traditional publisher[6].

	Genre			
	Diary	**Literary non-fiction**	**Other**	**Total**
Self-published	11	6	1	**18**
Traditional publisher	3	32	1	**36**
Total	**14**	**38**	**2**	**54**

Table 17: Publishing Strategy per Genre

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4   Diaries: $M = 1.07$, $SD = .62$; Literary non-fiction: $M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.98$; $t(49) = -4.99$, $p = .000$, $r = .58$ (large-sized effect)

5    $X^2 (2, N = 54) = 18.41$, $p = .000$

6   Self-publishers: $M = 1.72$, $SD = 1.64$; Traditional publishers: $M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.96$; $t (52) = 1.65$, $p = .10$, $r = .22$ (low-sized effect)

This is mainly caused by self-publishers taking longer to publish diaries than traditional publishers, which represents a medium-sized effect, even though it is not statistically significant[7]. There is no difference in production time of literary non-fiction between self-publishers and traditional publishers[8].

5.3   Who Writes?

Now that we have gained some general insight into the where and when of these military memoirs, we will look at who the writers are. We will start by looking at the different types of authors of these books, than discuss the question in what way these soldier-authors can be seen as a proxy of military personnel in general, test the fringe writer hypothesis, and conclude with a look at the publishers that publish these works.

5.3.1   Authors other than the protagonist

In these military autobiographies, four types of authors can be distinguished. The first category regards the author/protagonist. Normally (98%), it follows the standard autobiographical pattern of the first person narrator who has the same name as the author (Lejeune, 1989: 12), although in this dataset there is one exception: Dutch soldier-author Niels Roelen writes in third person about "kapitein Vic de Wildt" while the foreword makes clear that in effect he writes about himself[9]. He, for instance, describes Vic thinking about using someone as a human shield (Roelen, 2009: 254), which would constitute a war crime, something he discusses in first person terminology in a television talk show where he presents his book (KvdB, 2009, June 20). Roelen chose to write in third person as in his opinion "writing in third person leads to more self-reflection and honesty. Some passages may not have been included had I written in first person"[10] (N. Roelen, personal communication, March 13, 2013).

Sometimes (in 13% of the books), the author is aided by a professional writer, either a novelist or a journalist. In two cases (4%), a second author is involved who is not a professional writer. In one case a spouse (*Home from War* (Compton, et al., 2009)), in the other a military colleague (*Endstation Kabul* (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008)). Lastly, quite a few books start

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7   Self-published*: M* = 1.18, *SD* = .60; Traditional publisher: *M* = .67, *SD* = .58; *t*(12) = 1.32, *p* = .21, *r* = .36 (medium-sized effect)

8   Self-published: *M* = 3.00, *SD* = 2.28; Traditional publisher: *M* = 2.84, *SD* = 1.95; *t*(36) = 0.175, *p* = .86, *r* = .03 (no effect)

9   And confirmed in personal communication with N. Roelen (March 13, 2013).

10   My translation

(or in some cases end) with an endorsing foreword by someone besides author, co-author or second author. In the next section we will look in more detail at these other authors: co-authors, second authors and foreword writers.

5.3.1.1 Co-author

In this study, a co-author is a professional writer, such as a journalist or a novelist, who helps the soldier-author to write the book and is credited for his or her work in the book's colophon or title page as joint author. As discussed in chapter four, co-authors who have single instead of joint authorship were excluded from this study, as the resulting book no longer falls under the definition of autobiography.

Most books (87%) do not have a co-author. Whether a co-author is involved, is country-dependent[11], and is an exclusively US and UK affair (see Table 18).

	Co-author		Total
	No	**Yes**	
The Netherlands	7	0	**7**
Germany	7	0	**7**
United Kingdom	10	5	**15**
United States	20	2	**22**
Canada	3	0	**3**
Total	**47**	**7**	**54**

Table 18: Co-authors per Country

Most of the co-authored books (five out of seven) are UK books, which means that a rather large part of all UK military books (one-third) is co-written. This fits the professional military book market in the UK (Paris, 2000: 19; Woodward & Jenkings, 2011b: 119). For the US, both books published by Little, Brown and Company were co-authored (*The Interrogators* (Mackey & Miller, 2004a) and *Lone Survivor* (Luttrell & Robinson, 2007)); none of the other US publishers used a co-author. In the UK, four different imprints use publicly acknowledged co-authors: Ebury Press (Grahame & Lewis, 2010), Mainstream Publishing (Compton, et al., 2009), Michael Joseph (Orchard & Barrington, 2008) and Simon and Schuster (Beattie & Gomm, 2008, 2009). For Mainstream Publishing and Michael Joseph, these are their only

11    $X^2 *$ *(4, N* = 54) = 11.07, *p* = .026

books in the dataset. Ebury Press and Simon and Schuster also published other Afghanistan books that were written without a co-author: *Callsign Hades* (Bury, 2010) and *One Dog at a Time* (Farthing, 2009). This indicates that publishers who use co-authors do not by definition provide every one of their soldier-authors with one (or do not acknowledge they do so for every one of their authors).

5.3.1.1.1 Kinetic

As can be expected, co-authors are only provided by publishers who are willing to invest in their authors: traditional publishers. As in the US and UK traditional publishers specialize in kinetic books[12], (which are books by soldiers who use their weapon offensively), most of the US and UK books are also kinetic books (see Table 19).

		Country					Total
	Kinetic	NL	GE	UK	US	CAN	
Self-published	No	5	1	0	7	0	13
	Yes	0	1	0	4	0	5
Traditional publisher	No	1	3	0	1	3	8
	Yes	1	2	15	10	0	28
Total		7	7	15	22	3	54

Table 19: Division of (Non) Kinetic Books per Publishing Strategy per Country

There is one exception to this rule: *The Interrogators* (Mackey & Miller, 2004a). This book is written by an American reservist who worked as an interrogator in Afghanistan. He wrote this book as a reaction, a semi-insider's view, on the Abu Ghraib scandal, the interrogation facility in Iraq where inmates were abused by US military personnel. It is both the only non-kinetic book (a book by a soldier who uses his weapon defensively) among all 26 books published by traditional US or UK publishers and the only non-kinetic book that is co-authored. It seems that non-kinetic books only appeal to traditional publishers in warrior nations when it concerns a very specific area of expertise.

This effect is completely absent in today's non-warrior nations, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands[13]. The fact that co-authorship can only be found in warrior nations may have something to do with the possibly larger commercial market for military memoirs in these

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12   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 37) = 16.31, *p* = .000

13   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 17) = .565, *p* = .603

countries, making the investment in co-authors more commercially viable. That does not mean that co-authors and ghost-writers do not exist at all in the non-warrior markets. In the Netherlands, since 2012, there is a publisher, Uphill Battle, who explicitly offers ghost-writers and specifically aims at military personnel. Their first book on leadership, ghost-written with Militaire Willemsorde[14] bearer Captain Marco Kroon, was a bestseller[15] (Kroon, 2012).

5.3.1.1.2 Rank

As we have seen in chapter two, the theory chapter, two main categories of collaborative autobiographies can be distinguished: ethnographic and celebrity autobiographies. In a military context the ethnographic autobiographies, where the writer helps and (socially) outranks the subject, could be translated as co-authored stories by lower ranking soldiers that get writing support in the form of a co-author. Celebrity autobiographies could be translated as providing a co-author for especially high ranking officers or soldiers that were awarded medals for combat actions. How does that work for military collaborative autobiographies?

Looking at Table 20, neither the lower ranks nor the higher ranks hypothesis seems to be valid.

	Co-author		
	Yes	No	Total
Senior officer	1	17	18
Junior officer	2	16	18
NCO	3	11	14
Junior enlisted	1	3	4
Total	7	47	54

Table 20: Co-authors per Military Category

Soldier-authors of all ranks are teamed up with co-authors, and although officers are three times less likely to have a co-author than NCOs and junior enlisted together, this is

14 Highest Dutch military combat medal, has only been awarded once in the last 50 years: in 2009 to Captain Marco Kroon.

15 It sold over 8,000 copies, according to Jan Louwers, Uphill Battle, in a presentation during the Veteranen boekenmiddag [Veterans' book afternoon] in Museum Meermanno, The Hague, September 1, 2013. In the Netherlands, for this type of book, a book is considered a bestseller with a sales of over 5,000 copies.

statistically not significant[16]. When only looking at the UK books it even seems to be nothing more than a statistical coincidence[17]. On the lower rank side of this hypothesis, this may have to do with the fact that military personnel, including lower ranks, that feel drawn to writing may have higher education levels than generally expected. For example, the lowest ranking author in the dataset, Johnny Rico, had two master degrees (Rico, 2007: 27) and worked as a probation officer before he joined the army as a private. Woodward & Jenkings also found in their interviews with British soldier-authors that most of them had military jobs that entailed writing as part of the job description, such as writing logs and reports (R. Woodward, personal communication, May 2, 2013).

On the higher rank side of the hypothesis, only one, fairly low ranking senior officer (a lieutenant-colonel) was aided by a co-author: navy pilot Ade Orchard, the author of *Joint Force Harrier.* In this research population, real celebrity high ranking officers such as Chiefs of Defence are missing. Although they have written autobiographies in the period researched (e.g. Dannatt, 2010; Franks & McConnell, 2004; Hillier, 2009; Jackson, 2008), their autobiographies do not deal with one deployment, but rather with their entire career and are therefore not part of this dataset and study.

5.3.1.1.3 Medal

How about the third hypothesis: is it the military celebrity, here defined as someone who wears either a personal specifically combat-related medal or high distinction, who gets a co-author? In the dataset the following combat related medals are mentioned by authors: a Navy Cross, Military Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star and the Order of the British Empire. All authors who indicate they received a combat medal are from the US (6) and the UK (6) and their books are traditionally published. Though nearly half (43%) the co-authored soldier-authors are medallists (see Table 21), combat medal wearers do not automatically get a co-author, as only three out of eleven UK and US combat medal wearers (27%) have a co-author. There is no statistical relationship at all between having a combat medal and getting (visibly) teamed up with a co-author by traditional publisher in the US or the UK[18].

■

16   Military category: X^{2}* (3, N = 54) = 2.33, p = .506; Officers: X^{2}_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 2.05, p = .205

17   Military category: X^{2}* (3, N = 15) = .90, p = .825; Officers: X^{2}_{Fisher} (1, N = 15) = .13, p = 1.000

18   X^{2}_{Fisher} (1, N = 26) = .00, p = 1.000

		Combat Medal		Total
		No	Yes	
Co-author	No	11	8	19
	Yes	4	3	7
Total		15	11	26

Table 21: Co-authors and Combat Medals in UK and US Traditionally Published Books

Looking at the sales figures from the UK, there is however a strong link (at least in the UK) between having a medal and getting sold. Simply put: having a medal guarantees a better-seller[19], i.e. a book with an adjusted sale of over 15,000 copies (see Table 22).

		Better-seller		Total
		Yes	No	
Medal	Yes	6	0	6
	No	3	6	9
Total		9	6	15

Table 22: Medals and Better-sellers in the UK

On average, medallists sell more books (adjusted sales) than non-medallists, which represents a medium-sized effect, although this is not a statistically significant difference[20] in this small database of only 15 books.

5.3.1.1.4 Ghost-writer

Not all co-authors will be acknowledged in these books. There are also ghost-writers – co-authors that go unmentioned in the books – but that wrote the book instead of the military author. That actually seems to be a good selling strategy as, at least in the UK, autobiographies that do acknowledge a second author sell (slightly) less well than autobiographies that claim to have been written by the soldier-author alone[21]. This is quite possibly a consequence of

◼

19 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 15) = 6.67$, $p_{one-sided} = .017$

20 Medallists: M = 41,763, SD = 28,631; Non-medallists M = 20,946, SD = 27,516; $t(13)$ = -1.41, p =.181, r = .36 (medium-sized effect)

21 Co-written: M = 25,782, SD = 17,685; single author: M = 31,019, SD = 33,950. This is not a statistically significant difference, $t(13)$ = .32, p =.754, r = .09 (no effect).

the audience's expectations of autobiographies being written by the protagonist himself. Potential buyers of autobiographical memoirs may be suspicious of books that overtly indicate that they are not written single-handedly by the author/protagonist on the cover.

5.3.1.2   Second author

There are two books that have a second author who is not a professional writer. The first one is *Home from War: How Love Conquered the Horrors of a Soldier's Afghan Nightmare,* which is written by soldier-author Martyn Compton and his wife Michelle Compton (aided by co-author Marnie Summerfield Smith). It is a recovery narrative that describes Martyn Compton's recovery after being severely burned in Afghanistan from the perspective of both the soldier and his partner. Although it is not unheard of for someone from the home front to write a foreword or afterword in the book – Wohlgethan (2010) and Self (2008) let their partners tell how they experienced their deployment and subsequent return, and Wood's son gets editing credit and writes the foreword to his *Don't Clean the Tables with a Floor Mop* (Wood, 2008) – the Compton's book is the only duo-autobiography in the dataset. The duo authorship is not the only stylistic difference from the rest of the books in the dataset: it also has a cover that deviates from the regular 'soldier in action' illustration, as it shows the both of them during their wedding ceremony in traditional black and white. It seems to be the only book in the set that specifically aims for a more female audience. Even *Dressed to Kill*, written by a female Apache pilot, depicts an attractive woman and her machine on the cover, in a way that may draw both women and men to the book.

The other book that also credits a second author, *Endstation Kabul: Als deutscher Soldat in Afghanistan - ein Insiderbericht*[22] (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008) is co-written by a fellow soldier who does not have a separate voice in the story and is only visible on the biography flap, but not on the cover. He does not co-write on Wohlgethan's second book *Operation Kundus* (Wohlgethan, 2010), but is mentioned there in the acknowledgement.

5.3.1.3   Foreword writers

Next to the writers who help to write the entire book, there are also writers who write only one chapter; these are the foreword (sometime afterword) writers, who write what Genette refers to as an "allographic preface". According to Genette, they write an endorsement and an introduction to the book in a way the author cannot for modesty reasons (Genette, 1997: 207).

22   *End Station Kabul: A German Soldier in Afghanistan - An Insider's Story*

There is one author in the dataset, Rico Grass, who makes fun of this immodesty thesis. Grass has a humorous writing style that resembles the Second World War classic *Catch-22* (J. Heller, 1969), and he starts *Blood Makes the Grass Grow Green* with the acknowledgment "I'd like to acknowledge myself for all my hard work on this project. Myself and no one else" (Rico, 2007: ix). Grass obviously does not have a foreword writer, as he does not need one from a modesty point of view. His exception to the immodesty rule seems to prove it.

Grass is not the only one without a foreword writer, as only 12 books (22%) have one. Basically, the foreword writers can be divided into two groups, the ones that are likely to be known by the reader and the unknown ones, which is the difference between home front writers (unknown) and the rest (known). The famous ones can be further divided into three groups: the military, the writers and the statesmen. Examples of these famous foreword writers include Canadian General Hillier (Wiss, 2009), Dutch author Arnon Grunberg (Roelen, 2009) and HRH Prince William of Wales (Compton, et al., 2009).

In the dataset we find that each of these four types of writers writes either three or four forewords, and none of them are significantly more or less present in one of the countries. Even foreword writers with a military background are not more present in warrior nations than in other countries[23].

Two of these books, *Kabul, ich komme wieder* (Barschow, 2008) and *Two Wars* (Self, 2008), have two foreword writers, or in the case of *Two Wars*, afterword writers. Barschow lets a retired military (Generalleutnant a.D. Walter Jertz) and a retired journalist (Wolfgang Funke) discuss the reasons for reading his book, and writer Stu Weber writes the afterword for Nate Self, right after a chapter titled *An Army Wife's Perspective,* which is written by Julie Self, Nate Self's wife.

This indicates the difference in content between the known and the unknown foreword writers, that is also visible in the other book (*Operation Kundus* (Wohlgethan, 2010)) in which a partner writes about her experiences on the home front, in a chapter with a similar title: *From the Perspective of a Soldier's Wife*[24]*.* In both books, the partner writes a chapter at the end of the book to add to the content and describe the deployment from her perspective. These home front afterwords are not there to promote the book, but to add to it, thus deviating from Genette's idea of the allographic preface as a commercial tool. The third home front preface, however, is a classical allographic preface. It is written by Adam M.

<hr>

23   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = .011, $p_{one-sided}$ = .623

24   *Aus der Sicht einer Soldatenfrau*

Wood, the son of the author of *Don't Clean The Table With A Floor Mop* (Wood, 2008) and both its place at the start of the book, and the content indicate that it is meant as a sales instrument; it ends with the sentence "It's a comedy", a clear recommendation to read on.

The allographic forewords by famous writers are all commercial tools: not only is its content an incentive to buy the book, with sentences such as "I encourage you to read this book, to think about what it is to be Canadian in the context of this story and to encourage your family and friends to read it" (General Hillier in: Wiss, 2009: xv), but the presence of the famous writer himself is also an added incentive to pick up the book and start reading. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that it is mainly a tool used by commercial publishers, but this is not statistically significant[25] (see Table 23). The use of a foreword therefore is not publishing strategy dependent.

	Foreword		Total
	No	Yes	
Self-published	16	2	**18**
Traditional publisher	26	10	**36**
Total	**42**	**12**	**54**

Table 23: Use of Foreword by Publication Strategy

Forewords by famous people also do not necessarily lead to increased sales: when looking at the available sales figures for the one British book that has a famous foreword writer in the form of HRH Prince William of Wales (Compton, et al., 2009), the commercial effect does not seem impressive: *Home from War* sold only 1,973 copies[26]. It was the second worse selling UK Afghanistan memoir, which may have been caused by the fact that it deviates from the 'standard' military memoir in that half the book is written by the partner, instead of the soldier-author and its cover, with a wedding photograph, seems to aim at a female audience instead of a military audience.

So we can conclude that only 22% of the books make use of an allographic preface. In the majority of the cases (83%) this is done to help sell the book by using a well-known writer, military or statesman to write a promotional text in the classical Genettian sense. However, there is another use for allographic prefaces as well, that Genette did not mention, and which may be specific to military autobiographies: the home front afterword author, the spouse who

25 All foreword writers: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 1.93, p_{one-sided} = .149;$ Only famous foreword writers: $X^2_{Fisher\ one-sided} = .081$
26 Real sales on 23 February 2011: 1,973 copies.

writes about her partner's deployment from her perspective. This allographic postface is not written with the prime objective to help sell the book, but to add to the content.

5.3.2   The author/protagonist

Having looked at the 'other' authors in a book, it is now time to look at the author/ protagonist himself. As we shall see in chapter seven, soldier-authors try to influence others with their books. As 6,000 soldiers in the area of operations produce on average only one book, the question arises how representative these writers are compared to their fellow soldiers. Are they a representative sample of normal soldiers, only a proxy as Woodward suggests (Woodward, 2008: 380), or are soldiers that take up the pen completely different from the normal military population? In this section, we will try to answer this question by looking at five variables of the normal military population of each country that are publicly available for each country – sex, age, rank, branches of service and status (reservists versus professionals) – to see whether the soldier-authors are significantly different from the normal military population or not.

5.3.2.1 Sex

Woodward and Jenkings conclude that in the British military book market since 1980 the books are "written overwhelmingly by men" (Woodward & Jenkings, 2012a: 364). Male heroes also dominate other military related entertainment markets, such as the first-person-shooter games market, where only 19% of the games offer the opportunity to select a none-male avatar, either being female or gender neutral (Hitchens, 2011). This male dominance is visible in the Afghanistan dataset too, where 4 out of 54 books (7.4%) are written by a woman: each country, with the exception of Canada, has one female writer (see Table 24).

	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
The Netherlands	6	1	7
Germany	6	1	7
United Kingdom	14	1	15
United States	21	1	22
Canada	3	0	3
Total	50	4	54

Table 24: Female Soldier-Authors per Country

That may not sound like much, neither in relative nor absolute terms, but it is not significantly different[27] from the normal population, since the percentage of female soldiers varies between 8.8% in Germany to 14.7% in Canada (see Table 25).

The low number of female soldier-authors is in accordance with the low number of female soldiers in the armed forces in general.

Women	
The Netherlands	11%
Germany	9%
United Kingdom	10%
United States	15%
Canada	15%

Table 25: Percentage of Female Soldiers per Country[28]

5.3.2.2   Branch of service

The same goes for branch of service. The division of soldier-authors over the service branches (see Table 26) also does not significantly differ[29] from the normal military population.

	Branch of Service				Total
	Air Force	**Army**	**Navy**	**Other**	
The Netherlands	0	6	1	0	**7**
Germany	1	5	0	1	**7**
United Kingdom	0	12	3	-	**15**
United States	3	16	3	0	**22**
Canada	0	3	0	-	**3**
Total	**4**	**42**	**7**	**1**	**54**

Table 26: Soldier-Author's Branch of Service per Country

■

27   X^2 (4, N = 54) = 2.40, p >.05

28   Sources: see chapter four, paragraph 4.6.4

29   X^2 (12, N = 54) = 18.09, p >.05

Most writers are army personnel, which is conform the normal dominance of the army in each of the countries which varies from 41% in Germany to 67% in the UK (see Table 27).

Branch of Service	*Army*	*Navy*	*Air Force*	*Other*	*Specification 'other'*
The Netherlands	51%	18%	18%	13%	Military Constabulary
Germany	41%	7%	17%	35%	Joint Medical Service + Joint Support Service + MoD reserves
United Kingdom	67%	15%	18%	0%	
United States	46%	31%	21%	2%	US Coast Guard
Canada	62%	15%	22%	0%	

Table 27: Percentage of Soldiers in Branch of Service per Country[30]

Despite the fact that Afghanistan does not have any seaports as it is enclosed by other countries, the navy did participate in the Afghanistan missions with navy aircraft, with marines, and with fleet personnel placed on joint posts. Judging by the division of writers, it does so in accordance with its size[31]. There are writing navy pilots in the area of operations (Franzak, 2010; Orchard & Barrington, 2008), marines (Farthing, 2009; Ormrod, 2009), a Navy Seal (Luttrell & Robinson, 2007), an information technology expect (Wood, 2008) and a civil-military cooperation expert (Heukers, 2010).

A striking, though not statistically significant[32] absence of writers from a specific branch of service can be seen in the Netherlands, where 12% of the force (in Table 26 indicated by 'other') is composed of Military Constabulary, but where no account from a military police official is published. In Germany, the 'other branch' (which comprises 35% of all military personnel) is represented by a doctor (Groos, 2009) from the Joint Medical Service. The other two elements of the non-specific branch, the Joint Support Service and a small reserve force for the Ministry, did not feature any soldier-authors. The only other country that also has another branch apart from the regular air force, army and navy is the US, with the US Coast Guard. The US Coast Guard is the only US military organization that is not part of the

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30   Sources: see chapter four, paragraph 4.6.4

31   $X^2 (4, N = 54) = 3.42, p > .05$

32   $X^2 (1, N = 7) = 0.90, p > .05$

defence organization, but of the Department of Homeland Security; it comprises only 2% of the military population and has mainly domestic tasks (DHS-US, 2013). Hence, the absence of Coast Guard accounts in the dataset is not surprising.

5.3.2.3 Status

5.3.2.3.1 Reservists

So far, looking at female writers and the division in branches, it looks like soldier-authors are a representative sample of the normal military population. However, the fringe writer hypothesis (see 2.3.3) suggests that the writers are probably outsiders to the organisation. These 'strangers' have distance and are more inclined to write about it. Reservists are likely to be fringe writers, as are individually deployed soldiers.[33]

The percentage of reservists differs from country to country, from 7% in the Netherlands to 36% in the US (see Table 28):

Reservists	
The Netherlands	7%
Germany	14%
United Kingdom	32%
United States	36%
Canada	34%

Table 28: Percentage of Reservists per Country[34]

If the fringe writer hypothesis is right, we should see a larger portion of reservist soldier-authors than full-time soldiers. Looking at Table 29, reservists indeed make up a large proportion, but certainly not the majority of soldier-authors: 31%.

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33 Soldiers who are individually deployed are not deployed with their own team, but are added, for the duration of their deployment, on an individual basis, to a team with military personnel they do not normally work with, or after the deployment return to.

34   Sources: see chapter four, paragraph 4.6.4

	Status		Total
	Professional	Reservist	
The Netherlands	2	5	**7**
Germany	5	2	**7**
United Kingdom	15	0	**15**
United States	12	10	**22**
Canada	3	0	**3**
Total	**37**	**17**	**54**

Table 29: Professional Status of Soldier-Authors per Country

Compared to the reservist percentage per country, at first glance, the theory seems to be corroborated, as the outcome is highly significant[35]. However, further analysis shows that this high number is almost fully brought about by the extremely high number of reservist-authors in the Netherlands[36], and in part also by the total absence of reservist writers in the UK[37]. This indicates that there is a country-based difference. Further analysis based on theoretically expected values also confirms that the number of reservist soldier-authors is dependent on the author's country[38]. Leaving the seven Dutch cases out of the analysis, even when leaving the UK results in, no longer shows any significant deviation from the expected number of reservists[39].

So whether soldier-authors mirror the normal military population when it comes to their status as reservist or professional depends on the country: In the UK and the Netherlands they do not mirror the normal population, in the other countries they do. The fringe writer hypothesis is therefore not confirmed for reservists in a military context, as it only seems to apply to the Dutch situation. What is different about the Dutch situation, especially when compared to the UK and the US, is that reservists in the Netherlands are generally CIMIC-oriented non-kinetic specialists who are individually deployed, instead of kinetic soldiers who generally train and operate with their own unit. All this seems to point to the possibility that the fringe writer hypothesis is more likely to hold for individually deployed soldiers, which will be tested later in this chapter.

■

35    $X^2 (4, N = 54) = 48.71, p < .001$

36    $X^2 (1, N = 7) = 41.29, p < .001$

37    $X^2 (1, N = 15) = 4.73, p < .05$

38    $X^2 * (4, N = 54) = 15.47, p = .004$

39    $X^2 (3, N = 47) = 7.43, p > .05$

5.3.2.3.2 Conscripts

In contrast to armed force in the well-researched wars of the 20th century (First World War, Second World War, Vietnam) that were fought by civilian soldiers (Hynes, 1997: 145, 219), present day Western armed forces are predominantly no longer conscripted. In the period researched, from 2001 to 2010 inclusive, only one of the countries in this study still had active conscription: Germany. About 15% of Germany's active force was made up of conscripts during this period (IISS, 2002-2011), but only an estimated 500 to 600 extended conscripts actually were deployed to Afghanistan on a voluntary basis (G. Kümmel, personal communication, July 4, 2013). The rest of the countries have professional armed forces, which are supplemented with reservists.

As none of the German soldier-authors is a conscript, the Afghanistan war has not been written about by conscripts, which is quite different from the 20th century wars in which conscripted authors dominated. The fact that none of the few hundred German conscripts wrote a book should not come as a surprise, as we have seen that an average threshold of approximately 6,000 deployed soldiers is required to produce one book (see Table 13).

5.3.2.4 Rank

Despite the fact that in the 20th century more and more military autobiographies were written by the lower ranks, two-thirds of the 21st century soldier-authors are still officers (see Table 30). The officers in the dataset consist of one colonel, eight lieutenant-colonels, nine majors, fourteen captains and four lieutenants. There are no generals in the dataset as they tend to write stories about their entire career instead of one mission. Where in 19th century captains were the most prolific book buyers in the Netherland (Sloos, 2012: 307), nowadays they are the most prolific military writers in general.

	Rank			Total
	Officer	**NCO**	**Enlisted**	
The Netherlands	7	0	0	**7**
Germany	4	2	1	**7**
United Kingdom	8	5	2	**15**
United States	14	7	1	**22**
Canada	3	0	0	**3**
Total	**36**	**14**	**4**	**54**

Table 30: Rank of Soldier-Authors per Country

This high percentage of officers in the dataset is not representative of the normal officer population[40], see Table 31. However this fits conclusions from British military memoir researcher Robinson that immediate memoirs are predominantly written by officers whereas lower ranking soldiers write the majority of retrospective memoirs (Robinson, 2011: 571).

Military Rank	Officer	NCO	Enlisted
The Netherlands	23%	46%	31%
Germany	18%	53%	29%
United Kingdom	17%	23%	60%
United States	15%	41%	44%
Canada	20%	20%	60%

Table 31: Percentage of Soldiers per Military Category per Country[41]

Only four enlisted men wrote a book about their experiences in Afghanistan (Compton, et al., 2009; Ormrod, 2009; Rico, 2007; Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008), which is significantly lower than the percentage of enlisted men in general[42]. None of these four are average enlisted men. Rico is a well-educated man, who consciously chose a low ranking job, Wohlgethan was promoted after his first mission in Afghanistan to the ranks of non-commissioned officers (NCOs), and although Compton and Ormrod are regular enlisted men, they were both severely wounded: Compton suffered severe burns all over his body, and Ormrod lost three of his four limbs. Compton was assisted by a co-author and although not indicated formally in the colophon or on the front cover, the acknowledgement of Ormrod's book strongly suggests that he had a ghost-writer in the form of a journalist with a specific interest in wounded soldiers[43], to help him: "To Robert Kellaway for helping me to write" (Ormrod, 2009: viii).

This may indicate that both men had not written a book had they not been exceptionally wounded, and assisted by a professional writer.

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40   X^2 *(4, N* = 54) = 79.20, *p* <.001

41   Sources: see chapter four, paragraph 4.6.4

42   X^2 *(4, N* = 54) = 17.82, *p* <.01

43   http://journalisted.com/robert-kellaway, accessed 16 November 2011

The number of non-commissioned officers that write, however, is consistent with the percentage of NCOs in the countries in this study[44].

When looking at sales, rank seems very important at least when it comes to selling British military memoirs, as it is one of only two variables that correlate with sales, the other one being whether the soldier-author has been rewarded a medal, as we have seen before. Being a sergeant or higher gives a better chance of getting a better-seller than being an ordinary soldier or corporal in the UK[45]. In this dataset, none of the British soldiers and corporals (Ormrod, Compton and Scott) was awarded a combat medal, and the numbers suggest that therefore none of them have better-sellers, as they could not compensate for their rank.

5.3.2.5 Age

The youngest soldier-authors to publish a book about their experiences in Afghanistan were 25 when their books were published (Eckhold, 2010; Exum, 2005; Ormrod, 2009), and the oldest was 61 (Scholtens, 2007), see Table 32.

| | Age group | | | | Total |
	15-24	25-39	40-54	55+	
The Netherlands	-	1	5	1	**7**
Germany	-	2	4	1	**7**
United Kingdom	-	6	3	-	**9**
United States	-	10	9	-	**17**
Canada	-	-	3	-	**3**
Total	**0**	**19**	**24**	**2**	**45**

Table 32: Soldier-Author's Age Group Distribution per Country

With no writers under 25 and a significantly higher proportion of writers in the 40-54 cohort[46] and the 55+ cohort[47], it is clear that soldier-authors are not representative of

44   $X^2 (4, N = 54) = 5.75, p > .10$

45   $X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 15) = 5.63, p = .044$

46   40-54 cohort: $X^2 (3, N = 15) = 17.63, p < .001$. This doesn't include the US authors as no information on age distribution within the US armed forces is available.

47   55+ cohort; $X^2 (3, N = 2) = 11.07, p < .02$. This doesn't include the US authors as no information on age distribution within the US armed forces is available.

the normal military population when it comes to the distribution of age [48](see Table 33). Writing books is something for the older soldier, with an average age of 40[49] either because it is more their medium, whereas younger soldiers may be more attracted to other public media such as blogs, or because it takes a distance that comes with maturity to write books.

Age group	*15-24*	*25-39*	*40-54*	*55+*
The Netherlands	26.3%	39.8%	31.5%	2.5%
Germany	29.4%	52.9%	16.1%	1.6%
United Kingdom	29.2%	53.3%	17.4%	0.2%
United States	not available			
Canada	19.3%	51.8%	28.3%	0.6%

Table 33: Percentage of Soldiers in Main Age Groups per Country[50]

The age analyses in the previous paragraph were not done on the entire population. First of all, for the US no age distribution data was available, so the analyses were performed on four out of five countries. Secondly, despite quite some effort, it proved impossible to find out the age of three US authors and five UK authors, who in total produced 9 out of 54 books (17%). Where it is quite normal to mention year of birth in the biography text of the book cover in the Netherlands and Germany, it is less common in the Anglo-Saxon countries of this study (the US, the UK and Canada), where one's age apparently is more private than in continental Europe.

5.3.2.6 Sub conclusion representativeness

All in all, based on the five variables for which comparison data was available for the countries in this study, we can conclude that soldier-authors are to a certain degree (sex, branch of service) representative of the normal military population, but are not entirely representative, as they are older and higher in rank than the average soldier.

5.3.3   Work related variables

Apart from the variables discussed above, there are more variables that give us some insight the background and representativeness of these soldier-authors, even though no

48   X^2 (9, N =26) = 39.58, p <.001

49   M = 39.9; SD = 9.6

50   Sources: see chapter four, paragraph 4.6.4

comparative data is available. Here, we will discuss five of those variables that are work related: whether the soldier-author is fighting oriented or not ('kinetic'), the military profession he or she practices ('cjss code'), whether they were still working for the MoD when their book was published ('work'), how they were deployed ('deployed') and whether this was their first deployment or not ('multiple deployments').

5.3.3.1 Kinetic

In 2005, Vernon concluded that even though fighters are a minority in contemporary armed forces, most war narratives are still written by them (Vernon, 2005: 3). From the total Afghanistan dataset, it is clear that this conclusion still holds in the 21st century (see Table 34) as 61% of the books is written by a kinetic author. However, whether kinetic authors dominate or not is completely warrior nation dependent: kinetics dominate only in warrior nations[51]. In warrior nations a book is 12 times more likely to be written by a kinetic author than in today's non-warrior nations. This extremely strong relationship also indicates that the distinction between warrior nations and non-warrior nations is a valid one.

	Kinetic		Total
	No	**Yes**	
The Netherlands	6	1	**7**
Germany	4	3	**7**
United Kingdom	0	15	**15**
United States	8	14	**22**
Canada	3	0	**3**
Total	**21**	**33**	**54**

Table 34: # Kinetics per Country

5.3.3.2 CJSS code

As we have seen in paragraph 4.5.5.3, the Common Joint Staff System (CJSS) is a widely used military occupational classification system that distinguishes nine different categories of military work. The domination of kinetics is also reflected in the CJSS coding of the work

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51   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 54) = 14.75, p = .000*

the soldier-authors performed during their last deployment, see Table 35. There is an almost one-on-one connection between CJSS code and whether someone does kinetic work[52].

		Kinetic		Total
		No	Yes	
1	Personnel	4	0	4
2	Intelligence	5	1	6
3	Operations	0	21	21
4	Logistics	1	0	1
5	Strategy	0	0	0
6	Signals	1	1	2
7	Training	3	9	12
8	Finance	0	0	0
9	CIMIC	7	1	8
	Total	21	33	54

Table 35: CJSS Code and Kinetics

All three authors (Groos, 2009; Heijden, 2009; Wiss, 2009, 2010) who do personnel related work are doctors from today's non-warrior countries. One of them has his self-published book sponsored by a pharmaceutical company (Heijden, 2009). There are no other personnel related writers such as counsellors, psychologists, or people who work in personnel departments. All people who work in intell (4) or public affairs (2) (CJSS code 2) are non-kinetics, apart from Shaffer, who describes his intell work as black-ops: "the most top-secret class of clandestine operation" (Shaffer, 2010: 8).

All 21 soldier-authors who work in Operations are kinetics. There are a Forward Air Controller (Grahame & Lewis, 2010), four fighter pilots, two of which are Apache pilots (Macy, 2008, 2010; Madison, 2010) and two are Harrier pilots (Franzak, 2010; Orchard & Barrington, 2008) and the remaining are combat soldiers, from infantry, marines and Army Rangers to a Navy SEAL (Luttrell & Robinson, 2007) and a Delta Force operative (Fury, 2008).

Most people who work in Training (CJSS code 7) are also kinetics. Apart from one author who works as an Education officer on a staff in Kabul (Monahan, 2009), all other soldier-authors are involved in training their Afghan counterparts in the ANA or ANP in small

52    $X^2*(6, N = 54) = 35.24, p = .000$

mentoring teams (ETT/OMLT). Most of them do so from a combat background, but there are also a signals man (Wood, 2008) and a nurse (Lachapelle, 2009) who mentor Afghan teams within their own, non-kinetic expertise group. The kinetic signals man (CJSS code 6) is from the Household Cavalry Regiment (Compton, et al., 2009) and is therefore first of all a kinetic person, even though usually signals people are non-kinetic. The one person involved in civil-military cooperation who carries a gun for more than self-defence is Skelly: his Civil Affairs team was attached to the Green Berets and actively fought with them (Skelly, 2010). Nobody with generic skills such as finance (CJSS code 8) or strategic planning (CJSS code 5) wrote a book. The one logistician (CJSS code 4) who writes (Conrad, 2009b) emphasizes the uniqueness of the logistical operation he is involved in.

From this overview, we can draw the conclusion that military personnel who write a book either have a solid military background in fighting (kinetic) or intelligence (non-kinetic), are doctors, or perform work that is unique to the mission they are in. In Afghanistan that refers to training Afghan counterparts in mentoring teams and working in civil-military cooperation constructions, such as the newly invented provincial reconstruction teams.

5.3.3.3 Multiple deployments

From only one author (Lachapelle, 2009) it is not clear whether she was deployed more than once, the rest of the authors indicate this in their book or after being asked. Two-thirds of the soldier-authors have been deployed more than once, reservists and professionals alike[53]. Whether one comes from a warrior nation or not does not influence the number of deployments[54].

As no comparative data is available, it is not clear whether this is a higher percentage than in the regular armed forces. However, as during the period researched two large scale missions were conducted, both in Afghanistan and Iraq, both constantly requiring large numbers of military personnel, this percentage does not have to be unrealistic. Having been deployed before increases the chance of being traditionally published six fold[55] (see Table 36).

53 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 53) = .33, p = .360$
54 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 53) = .84, p = .530$
55 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 53) = 8.22, p = .010$

	Multiple Deployments		Total
	No	Yes	
Self-published	10	7	**17**
Traditional publisher	7	29	**36**
Total	**17**	**36**	**53**

Table 36: Publishing Strategy versus Multiple Deployments

5.3.3.4 Work

Who are these writers when it comes to the question of whether they still work for the MoD when they publish their book? Is it the proud soldier-for-life who writes about his experiences, or on the contrary, the working soldier reluctant to talk about his experiences in view of the adage 'you don't bite the hand that feeds you'. Are writers mostly former soldiers, or is there no difference between them, as military identities do not disappear on discharge (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011a: 262)? In the next chapter, the kind of plots soldiers write (such as positive or negative) are discussed, but here we can already conclude that both still working and former soldiers write, see Table 37.

This table does not add up to 54, as for three authors it is not clear whether they were still working for the MoD when the first edition of their book was published.

	Still working for MoD		Total
	No	Yes	
Non-warrior nation	5	12	**17**
Warrior nation	21	13	**34**
Total	**26**	**25**	**51**

Table 37: Still Working for the MoD versus Warrior Nation

The division between people who still work for the MoD and the ones who do not is almost 50-50. In warrior nations (US and UK) the majority (62%) is no longer working for the MoD, in today's non-warrior nations (Germany, Canada and the Netherlands) the majority (71%) is

still working when their book is published, which is a significant difference[56]. At first glance, it seems to be less difficult to write while still on active duty in non-warrior countries than it is in warrior nations.

5.3.3.5   Individually deployed

Earlier in this chapter, we have seen that in three of the five countries the percentage of reservists that write books does not differ from the percentage of reservists in that country. From that fact we concluded that reservists in general do not fit the fringe writer hypothesis, as we would expect a higher percentage of writers from a 'fringe group' to write autobiographies than from the 'standard group'. However, in a deployment context there is another candidate who could fit the theory: the individually deployed soldier. In this case too we should see more authors with an individual deployment than can be expected.

Although no public data is available on the percentage of individually deployed military personnel, the J1[57] from the Dutch Defence Operation Centre estimates the number will not exceed 10% of all military personnel deployed to Afghanistan in any of the countries researched (F.P.M. Verweij, personal communication March 26, 2013).

Table 38 shows that exactly half of the soldier-authors were individually deployed (two authors did not specify in their text or after being asked whether they were individually deployed or with their own unit). Only if 35% or more of all military personnel deployed to Afghanistan were individually deployed, would this not be significantly higher than expected[58], and 35% is an unrealistically high percentage (F.P.M Verweij, personal communication, March 26, 2013). Therefore we can conclude that there is a fringe writer effect visible in Afghanistan autobiographies as individually deployed authors are more likely to write about their experiences than authors deployed with their own unit.

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56   X^2_{Fisher} *(1*, *N* = 51) = 4.75, *p* = .040

57   J1: personnel department responsible for deploying all military personnel, regardless of branch of service.

58   X^2 *(1*, *N* =52) = 3.91, *p* ≈ .05

		Deployment		Total
		Own unit	Individual	
1	Personnel	0	4	4
2	Intelligence	1	3	4
3	Operations	19	2	21
4	Logistics	1	0	1
6	Signals	2	0	2
7	Training	1	11	12
9	CIMIC	2	6	8
	Total	26	26	52

Table 38: Kind of Deployment per CJSS Code

There are two main factors that influence whether someone is individually deployed or not: their military specialty during their deployment[59] (see Table 38), and whether they are a reservist or not[60] (see Table 39).

Table 38 shows the main military specialties. Logically, the specialty dictates to a large part whether an individual deployment is possible or whether team work in one's own unit is more likely. Most people who work in Training are working in mentoring teams, the so-called ETTs and OMLTs. They are individually employed as they are embedded in the ANA or ANP together with only a handful of other soldiers from their own country.

Also, some military occupations are inherently more individualistic, such as health professionals (here categorized under 'personnel'), legal and CIMIC professionals ('CIMIC') and journalists (who fall under 'intelligence'). Operations, on the other hand, is a speciality that is almost by definition performed in teams that were trained intensely: that is what military teamwork is all about. The two exceptions are an individually deployed German soldier who assists the Dutch special forces in Afghanistan (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008), and a forward air control specialist, someone who directs bombs onto targets (Grahame & Lewis, 2010).

59 X^2* (6, N = 52) = 32.10, p =.000
60 X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 52) = 5.78, p = .034

	Deployment		Total
	Own unit	Individual	
Professional	22	14	**36**
Reserve	4	12	**16**
Total	**26**	**26**	**52**

Table 39: Status versus Kind of Deployment

Whether you are a reservist also influences the kind of deployment. In some countries, such as the Netherlands, it is an inherent part of being a reservist to be individually picked out for an assignment to complement an existing team with specific expertise, instead of being deployed as an entire reserve team. This effect can also be seen among the soldier-authors (see Table 39): a reservist is five times more likely to be individually deployed than a professional.

This also explains the Dutch phenomenon of the reservist fringe writers. As five out of seven of the authors are reservists and all of these reservists were individually deployed, there seems to be a connection between reservist and fringe writer in the Netherlands, where this is actually part of the general phenomenon of the individually deployed fringe writer.

5.3.3.6   *Fringe writer hypothesis*

Both the work-related variables and the comparative data therefore lead to the conclusion that soldier-authors are not an entirely representative sample of the normal military population. This can most clearly be seen from the large numbers of individually deployed soldiers (50%) who write, which corroborates the fringe writer hypothesis: individually deployed soldiers are far more likely to be writers because of their outsider's position during their deployment. Although reservists are more likely to be individually deployed, being a reservist in itself is not sufficient cause for the fringe writer effect to appear.

The fringe writing theory explains the high occurrence of individually deployed soldiers-authors by their observer status as being an outsider in both their deployment teams and the own unit they return to. A recent study among 400 Polish soldiers who were still in service and had returned from a deployment in Afghanistan also provides additional insight into the mechanics of this phenomenon in the military. As can be seen in Figure 20, when

asked with whom they most often share their mission memories[61], the majority (76%) preferred doing that with colleagues who had also been to Afghanistan and only 48% (also) does so with colleagues who did not participate in the mission (Iwanek, 2011: 14).
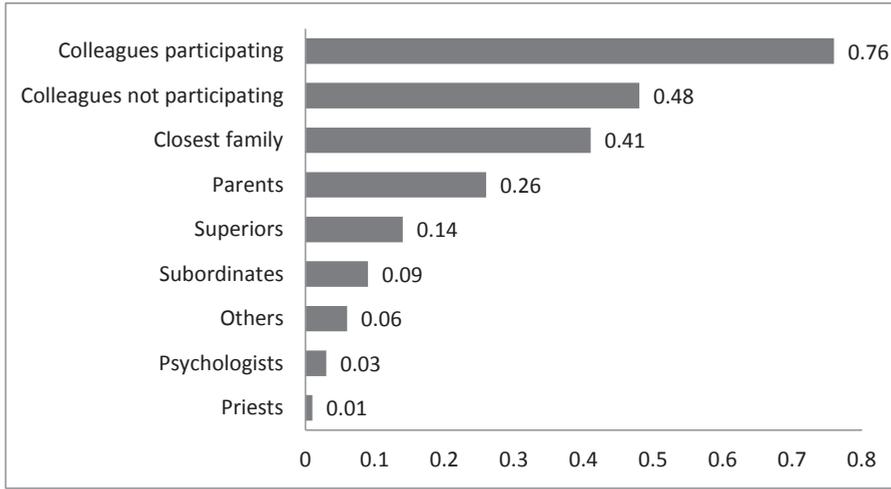

Figure 20: With Whom Do You Most Often Share Your Mission Memories? (Iwanek, 2011)

These figures seem to indicate that, in line with the fringe writing theory, sharing mission experiences is easiest for military personnel who have been deployed with their own unit and more difficult for individually deployed personnel. This, therefore, may result in a greater motivation for individually deployed personnel to share their stories with the outside world in the form of books, than for personnel deployed with their own unit who have more outlets for their experiences. It also indicates a self-help motive for the individually deployed: a way of dealing with their experiences in the absence of like-minded colleagues. Chapter seven will analyse whether self-help motives are also explicitly mentioned more often by individually deployed soldiers.

5.3.4   Publishing Strategy

Now that we have a good idea of who the soldier-authors are, the next question is 'who are the publishers that publish military autobiographies?'

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61   Multiple answers possible

5.3.4.1 Self-published and traditionally published

Based on the scarce literature on self-published books, it was expected that at least some part of the books would be self-published, as personal testimonies from people who have fought in a war are among the popular subject categories for self-published books (Manley, 1999).

With 18 out of 54 books, self-publishers are indeed well-represented in the dataset, but with two-thirds of the books published by a traditional publisher, the traditional publishers still dominate the military book market. One of the books, *Greetings from Afghanistan, Send More Ammo* (Tupper, 2010b), was first self-published as *Welcome to Afghanistan: Send More Ammo* (Tupper, 2009), before being picked up by traditional publisher Nal Caliber.

The publication method (traditional or self-published) depends on the country of origin[62] as can be seen in Figure 21. In the United Kingdom and Canada, the military book market for Afghanistan books is completely dominated by traditional publishers; there are no self-published books available. Germany is also dominated by traditional publishers, with five out of seven books published by traditional publishers. The US takes a middle position: the self-published market is well-developed and exactly half the books are traditionally published. Finally, in the Netherlands soldier-authors mostly use the self-publishers to get their books published.
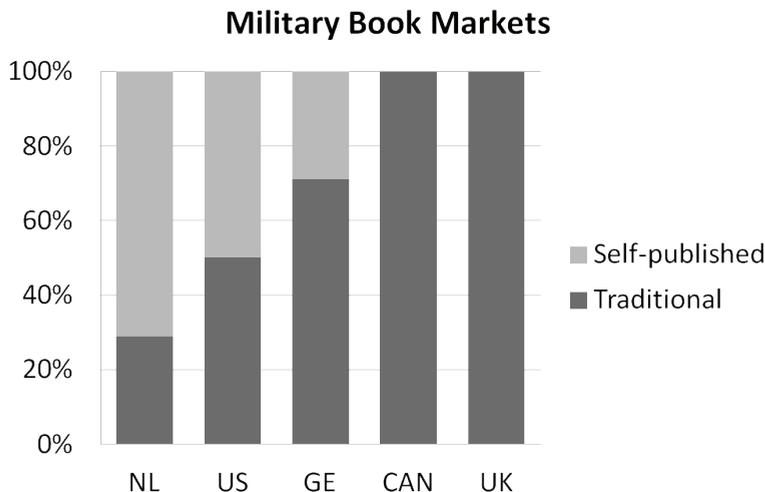
Figure 21: Military Book Market per Country

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62   $X^{2}*(4, N = 54) = 16.39, p = .003$

These different book market compositions may have two completely different causes. On the one hand, the increased rate of self-publishing in the US in particular may have to do with an increase in acceptance of self-publishing as a viable alternative for traditional publishing (Dilevko & Dali, 2006). On the other hand, the high self-publishing rate in a non-warrior nation such as the Netherlands may indicate an unwillingness of traditional publishers to publish military autobiographies, due to the absence of a commercially viable military book market. In the same way, the 100% traditional publishers market in the United Kingdom, a warrior nation, indicates a professional, commercial, military book market. Something which is underscored by even a quick glance in a high street bookshop in the Netherlands. Where British military book researchers Woodward and Jenkings identified all but one of their 150+ books in bookshop sections entitled 'Military' or 'Military History' (Woodward & Jenkings, 2012a: 352), these sections are virtually non-existent in Dutch bookshops. However, the German case seems puzzling in this context, as nowadays Germany is a non-warrior country having a large percentage of traditionally published books, which indicates a commercial interest in military books. This will to some extent be explained in the next chapter, when we look at the plots of these German books, which are predominantly negative, glorifying the non-warrior stories, instead of the warrior stories. The Canadian sample (three books by two authors) is too small to draw country specific conclusions from.

With 39 different imprints on a total of 54 books, not one publisher dominates the international military market, although in Germany Econ is a popular traditional publisher with 3 out of 7 books (43% of the total books, and 60% of the traditionally published). Other publishers that also published three military Afghanistan autobiographies are self-publisher CreateSpace in the US, and traditional publisher Simon and Schuster in the United Kingdom. No one publisher published more than three autobiographical books on Afghanistan, indicating that autobiographical military memoirs are part of a diverse portfolio for publishers, but not something to specialize on.

What is interesting is that Buchholz' conclusion that German war memoirs are only published when written by prominent people such as politicians, writers and actors (Buchholz, 1998) is no longer valid for Afghanistan memoirs. None of the German soldier-authors are very prominent people, but they are published nonetheless predominantly (5 out of 7) by traditional publishers.

5.3.4.2 Translations

At first glance, we may conclude from this that there is no international military book market, but that the military book market is country-specific. This is also underscored when looking at the nationality of the armed forces the soldier-author serves in and the country of publication. Not surprisingly, there is a 100% match: publishers publish local military personnel, local heroes.

However, two of the books in this dataset were translated for one of the other language markets in the study: the German *Endstation Kabul* (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008) was translated into Dutch as *Soldaat in Afghanistan* (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2009). Here, the local hero phenomenon is also visible: even though the protagonist is a German soldier, he works closely with (and is very positive about) Dutch special forces. The other book, the American *The Interrogators* (Mackey & Miller, 2004a), translate as *Vragenvuur* (Mackey & Miller, 2004b), had no Dutch connection. The Netherlands just shared the US interest in background information to the Abu Ghraib scandal in a US lead prison in Iraq, and this book describes the work of US military interrogators in a comparable prison, albeit in Afghanistan instead of Iraq.

Also, an Internet search of the main book websites showed that several books (15%) from the dataset were translated into other languages. For example, Canadian John Conrad brought out his book in the two Canadian languages: both in English (Conrad, 2009b) and French (Conrad, 2009a). One of Macy's books was translated into French as *Apache: L'Homme. La Machine. La Mission* (Macy, 2013)), as was Grahame's book *Fire Strike 9/11* (*Appui feu en Afghanistan* (Grahame & Lewis, 2011)) and Fury's book *Kill Bin Laden* (*Mission: Kill Ben Laden* (Fury, 2012)). *The Junior Officers' Reading Club* (Hennessey, 2009) was translated in Spanish as *El club de lectura de los oficiales novatos* (Hennessey, 2011), and Luttrell's *Lone Survivor* (Luttrell & Robinson, 2007) was even translated into Chinese (Luttrell & Robinson, 2011) as was Pen Farthing's *One Dog at a Time* (Farthing, 2010). Luttrell's book was also adapted into a film (P. Berg, 2013), which was internationally distributed (IMDB, 2013).

From this data, we cannot conclude that military book markets in general are local markets, only depicting local heroes. Even though in this dataset the English and German language markets do not seem to incorporate foreign heroes, the Dutch market does and so do other language markets such as the French, Chinese and Spanish market.

5.3.4.3 Military and Christian publishers

Are military autobiographies published mainly by military oriented publishers, in the same way as railway autobiographies are largely published by specialised publishers (Ashplant, 2011: 38)? In the dataset, the category 'traditional publishers' includes three military publishers (Carola Hartmann Miles Verlag (Germany), Canadian Defence Academy Press (Canada) and Helion and Company (the United Kingdom)), each of which only published one book. This share of only 6% of all books means that specialized military publishers do not dominate this market. All self-publishers are general publishers, publishing many categories of books for a diverse audience; the same goes for non-military traditional publishers.

Only two publishers aim for a specific public; the two specifically Christian publishers, Tate Publishing and Tyndale House Publishing, which are both US companies. Nathan Self's *Two War* starts with a publisher's note that clearly indicates the special interest of his Christian publisher:

> Dear Reader:
>
> The story you are about to read is true. The events depicted include violence and vulgar language of a kind that typically doesn't appear in books we publish. But after careful consideration, we decided to include some dialogue that, though potentially offensive, is historically accurate, helps to capture in an authentic way the intensity of the events, and gives a truthful illustration of the human condition, including our brokenness and need for redemption. In this way, we believe our decision is consistent with the biblical principle of showing life as it truly is, without attempting to whitewash human nature. (Self, 2008: ix)

All military and Christian publishers in this study can be considered traditional publishers as they all carry the costs and risks of publishing, even though their final products often have the look and feel of self-published books, due to out of the ordinary book formats like the rather broad (22x17 cm) *Afghanistan, jetzt weiß ich erst...* by German military publisher Carola Hartmann Miles Verlag (Schwitalla, 2010) or the small (21x13 cm) *An Angel on my Shoulder* by US Christian publisher Tate Publishing (Heichel, 2006) or the ubiquitous spelling mistakes that sometimes already start on the cover as in *Blood Clot* by UK military publisher Helion & Company:

> He became a member of the Air Cadets, which showed him [sic] different way of life and he soon became a crack shot and strong hillwalker [sic]. (J. Scott, 2008: back flap)

5.3.4.4 The typical traditional publisher

Do traditional publishers attract other soldier-authors than self-publishers? If so, this would indicate that the commercial book market is still substantially different from that of self-publishers. Or do soldiers who write for these two kinds of publishers more or less have the same background, indicating a divergence of the self-publishing branch from niche market to regular book market?

Earlier, we saw that there was a country-based difference in reservist writers. The question is whether this difference is based on their status as reservist or whether this is caused by a moderator variable. Especially the absence of any reservists in the professional military book market of the United Kingdom, even though reservists make up 32% of the UK armed forces, may indicate that reservists are outsiders who are not granted access to the traditional military book market. This suggests that publishing strategy may be a moderator variable. Analysis indeed shows this to be the case (see Table 40). Independent of country, a professional soldier is almost eight times more likely to get published by a traditional publisher than a reservist[63]. This also fits the hypothesis that the commercial military book market in the Netherlands is rather small, as here the majority of the books are self-published by reservists.

	Status		Total
	Professional	**Reserve**	
Self-published	7	11	**18**
Traditional publisher	30	6	**36**
Total	**37**	**17**	**54**

Table 40: Publishing Strategy by Status

Apart from professional soldiers, traditional publishers also have a preference for kinetic soldiers. As can be deduced from Table 41, kinetic soldiers are nine times more likely to get published by a traditional publisher than their non-kinetic colleagues[64]. We saw earlier, that in warrior nations this effect is even stronger as traditional publishers generally only accept kinetic soldiers. Earlier results also showed that traditional publishers are six times more likely to publish stories by soldiers who have been on multiple deployments.

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63 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 10.99, p = .002$
64 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 12.62, p = .001$

	Kinetic		Total
	No	Yes	
Self-published	13	5	**18**
Traditional publisher	8	28	**36**
Total	**21**	**33**	54

Table 41: Publishing Strategy versus Kind of Soldier

Even though the individually deployed soldier is more likely to be a writer than the soldier who is deployed with his own unit, traditional publishers are five times more interested in publishing the stories from people who went with their own unit than from the individually deployed ones[65] (see Table 42), which seems logical from a commercial perspective, as their stories will be more representative of the general military team experience an audience expects.

	Deployment		Total
	Own unit	Individual	
Self-published	4	13	**17**
Traditional publisher	22	13	**35**
Total	**26**	**26**	**52**

Table 42: Kind of Deployment versus Publishing Strategy

Although traditional publishers do not attract significantly younger authors than self-publishers[66], they do attract three-and-a-half times more junior ranks (enlisted men, NCOs below senior sergeant (OR-7) and officers below major) than self-publishers[67], as can be seen in Table 43.

---

65   X2Fisher (1, N = 52) = 7.08, pone-sided = .008

66   Traditional publishers: M = 38.00, SD = 10.27; Self-publishers: M = 43.06, SD = 8.47; t (41) = 1.66, p = .104

67   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 4.51 p = .045

	Seniority		Total
	No	**Yes**	
Self-published	6	12	**18**
Traditional publisher	23	13	**36**
Total	**29**	**25**	**54**

Table 43: Publishing Strategy versus Seniority

Further, authors with a traditional publisher are three times less likely to still be working for the MoD than authors who self-publish, although this is statistically not significant[68], see Table 44.

	Work		Total
	No	**Yes**	
Self-published	5	11	**16**
Traditional publisher	21	14	**35**
Total	**26**	**25**	**51**

Table 44: Publishing Strategy versus Work Status

What traditional publishers do not seem to select for is sex[69], as there are as many female authors as can be expected with a traditional publisher, as there are self-published.

The answer to the question that started this section (who publishes military autobiographies?) is that even though war stories are a popular self-publishing category, they are still mainly published by the traditional, general publishers; only a handful of specialised military publishers are active in this market. This is fundamentally different from the railway memoirs which were predominantly published by specialised publishers, as we saw earlier (Ashplant, 2011). It also indicates that military autobiographies do not fall under Manley's category of "subjects no one cares about" (Manley, 1999: 485).

Military book markets are mainly country oriented, and each country has its own market composition in terms of the ratio between traditional and self-published. In some countries self-publishers are absent (Canada and the UK) or only marginally used by soldier-authors (Germany). In the US the self-publishing sector is well-developed, as half of the books are

68    $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 3.63\ p = .075$
69    $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .54\ p = .594$

self-published, whereas in the Netherlands soldier-authors are mainly found in the self-publishing sector.

These differences can to some extent be explained by two complementing phenomena: on the one hand the acceptance of self-published books in a country and on the other the existence of a professional commercial market for military books, which may be linked to whether a country is a warrior nation or not. In the UK, a warrior nation, the military book market is completely traditional published, in the Netherlands, not a warrior nation, the military book market is mainly self-published, and in the US with its well-established self-publishing market the market is 50-50 divided. Based solely on the information from this chapter, Germany, nowadays a non-warrior country with a dominating traditional market then still provides a puzzle. The structure of the country's military book market does explain the earlier conclusion that status (reservist or professional) is a country-dependent variable, as reservists are eight times less likely to be published by a traditional publisher.

The self-published and the traditional book markets are still highly diverged. They each attract soldiers with another background, indicating that some soldier stories are commercially more interesting to invest in than others. Traditional publishers, independent of country, are up to nine times more likely than self-publishers to publishing soldier-authors who are kinetic oriented (combat soldiers) , who are professionals instead of reservists, that have been deployed more than once, were deployed with their own unit instead of individually and that have a junior rank. These are apparently the soldiers with stories that are commercially viable, who profess to the image of the 'real soldier'. Whereas the self-published market absorbs the rest of the soldier-authors: who are more often senior, non-kinetic, reservist and individually employed.

5.4   Concluding Remarks

Having looked at all sorts of variables that tell us who the soldier-authors and their publishers are, we can conclude that there are three separate categories of variables that can be distinguished (see Figure 22). On the one hand there are general variables that are the same in every country. If we would like to extend the results from this study to other soldier-authors from other countries, deployments, and even time periods, these general variables are good starting points for further research.

There are, however, also specific variables that make it more difficult, although not entirely impossible, to generalise the results to other contexts. Generalising seems possible in those

cases where there is a clear difference in the way warrior nations (UK and US) respond, compared to today's non-warrior nations (Germany, Canada and the Netherlands), but not when the variables are country specific.
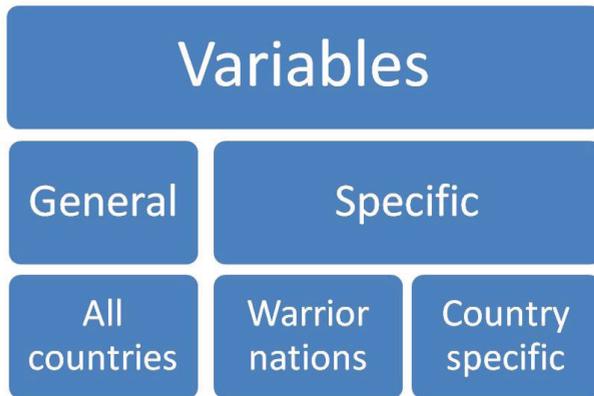
Figure 22: Three Categories of Variables

5.4.1   General variables

Most of the variables discussed in this chapter are variables that are the same for all countries in this study. The kind of soldiers who become writers are the same in these countries: they are mostly officers, over 40 years of age, coming from all branches of services with as many women writers as could be expected from the low number of female soldiers in general. In all of these countries, individually deployed personnel are particularly likely to put pen to paper, confirming the fringe writer hypothesis.

The publication process is also similar in these countries. For every 6,000 soldiers on average in the area of operations, one publishes an intermediate memoir. These books are generally produced in two years after return from deployment, whereby diaries are published faster than literary non-fiction. Traditional publishers in the countries in question are looking for a similar type of author: a professional who has been deployed more than once with his or her own unit with a junior rank and kinetic background. In short: the traditional publisher is looking for the traditional soldier, who neither exactly resembles the average soldier, nor the average soldier-author.

5.4.2   Warrior nation variables

Only a few variables were specific to warrior nations. When it comes to publishing, for traditional publishers in warrior nations kinetic soldiers are not merely a preference, but an absolute must and having a combat medal as prospective writer is a definite advantage for getting traditionally published. In exchange, in warrior nations, traditional publishers provide some soldier-authors with a co-author.

The soldier-authors themselves are more likely to still be working for the MoD when publishing in a non-warrior nation than in a warrior nation.

5.4.3   Country specific variables

There are two main variables that seem to be country specific, thereby making generalizing difficult. First of all, the percentage of reservists versus professionals that write as compared to the nation's reservist pool is country-dependent. It varies from no reservists who have published an Afghanistan memoir in the UK, to the situation in the Netherlands, where despite the low percentage of reservists, the majority of soldier-authors is reservist.

The same goes for the composition of the military book market. In some countries all books are traditionally published (the UK, Canada), whereas in other countries half or more of the books are self-published (the US, the Netherlands).

Overall, we can conclude that when it comes to soldier-authors, the paradox that Soeters found in his research on cultural difference between military academies (Soeters, 1997) is also visible in this research: apart from strong national differences there is also a general, international military culture.

Chapter Six:
What Do Soldier-Authors Write About?

Chapter Six: What Do Soldier-Authors Write About?

6.1 Introduction

Now that we know who write military autobiographies about Afghanistan, the next question to be answered is: what do they write about? As we have seen in chapter two, the theory chapter, starting in the 18th century, but specifically seen in the 20th century, the focus in military memoirs changed from heroic stories dealing with factual information from eyewitnesses, to revelatory stories dealing with emotional information from flesh-witnesses. These are stories in which the protagonist either grows, or he or she gets disillusioned, whereby this disillusionment is often seen as the defining characteristic of the modern soldier-author's story (e.g. Fussell, 1975/2000; Harari, 2008).

In this chapter, we will test both the disillusionment thesis and the revelatory plot thesis in order to see whether one of them is still valid in the 21st century, by looking at the plots used by military writers. But before doing so, this chapter will look at two other aspects soldier-authors do or do not write about. First of all truth and censorship and secondly the phenomenon of post deployment disorientation (PDD): experiencing adaptation problems when returning home. The chapter will end with an extensive overview of plots per country to answer the question: do soldier-authors from different countries write different plots?

6.2 Truth

As discussed in chapter four, writing 'the truth' is an element of military memoirs that that is emphasized by soldier-authors in their books. The majority of them (57%) make some kind of truth claim. This is in line with the conventions of the autobiographical genre, as discussed in chapter two. These truth claims can be further divided into objective truth claims and subjective ones, see Figure 23**.**
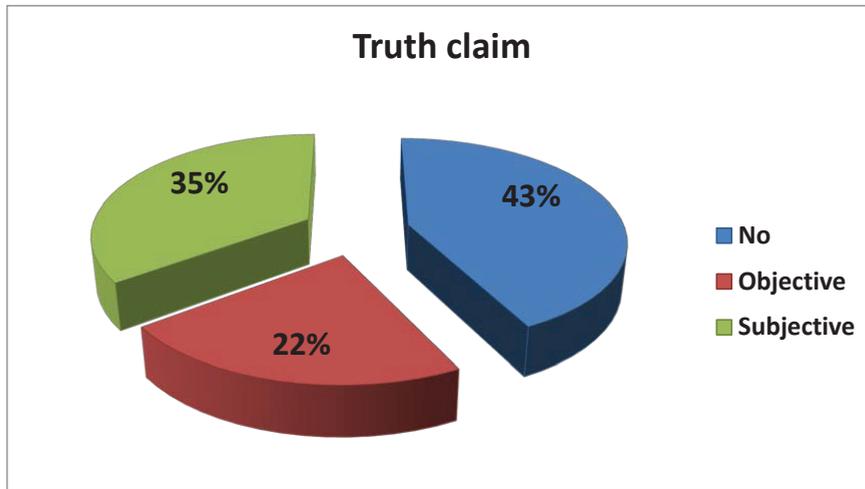
Figure 23: Type of Truth Claim

6.2.1   Objective truth claim

A typical objective truth claim comes from Craig Mullaney who starts his author's note with the sentence: "This is a true story" (Mullaney, 2009: 379). Another form of objective truth claim is given by the publisher instead of the author himself, such as in *Man Down*, in which the colophon reads:

> This book is a work of non-fiction based on the life, experiences and recollections of Mark Ormrod. In some cases names of people have been changed to protect the privacy of others. *The author has stated to the publishers that*, except in such respects, not affecting the substantial accuracy of the work, *the contents of this book are true* [italics added]. (Ormrod, 2009: iv)

These objective truth claimers simply state that they write the truth, without any further elaboration on ontological and epistemological questions on what truth is and whether it is possible to know this truth.

6.2.2   Subjective truth claim

The majority (61%) of truth claims, however, are not objective, but subjective claims. Although these writers also claim to describe some form of truth, they do comment on

the nature of that truth and they are conscious of the fact that what they write is only an approximation of their own reality. Martien van der Heijden, for example, writes:

> I will try to describe my experiences as adequately as possible […]. Whoever reads this does have to understand that this is my story, my experience and my perception. It might well be that someone else who has been deployed in the same period to Camp Holland has experienced it in a totally different way.[1] (Heijden, 2009: 5-6)

This fits with Baggerman and Dekker's observation that it is common for egodocument authors to claim their own honesty and also with their observation that egodocument authors nowadays are often conscious of how difficult it can be to express the truth or reality in words (Baggerman & Dekker, 2004: 9 & 22).

6.2.3 Influences on truth

When looking at what influences the use of a truth claim, the main hypothesis to be tested is Woodward's suggestion that these truth claims serve a marketing purpose (Woodward, 2008: 368). If this is true, we can expect to see more truth claims in the books published by professional publishers, than by those that are self-published. Table 45 shows that this is indeed the case: authors with a traditional publisher are four times more likely to add a truth claim to their books than self-publishers[2].

	Truth claim		Total
	No	Yes	
Self-published	12	6	**18**
Traditional publisher	11	25	**36**
Total	**23**	**31**	**54**

Table 45: Truth Claims per Publishing Strategy

1 My translation
2 X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 6.40, $p_{one-sided}$ = .013

Besides the use as a marketing ploy, clearly there is also a cultural aspect present in the use of truth statements, as there is a significant difference[3] between the use of truth claims between the Anglo-Saxon countries (UK, US and Canada) and the continental European countries (Germany and the Netherlands), as can be seen in Table 46.

	Truth claim			Total
	No	Objective	Subjective	
The Netherlands	4	0	3	**7**
Germany	6	1	0	**7**
United Kingdom	4	4	7	**15**
United States	8	7	7	**22**
Canada	1	0	2	**3**
Total	**23**	**12**	**19**	**54**

Table 46: Truth Claims per Country

In the Anglo-Saxon countries, soldier-authors are five times more likely than in continental European countries to make a truth claim[4] and the majority of authors indeed make such a claim. In Germany and the Netherlands, however, only a minority makes a truth claim. In Germany, only one of the seven authors even does so. There is, however, no statistical difference between the use of objective or subjective truth claims between both groups of countries. [5] This suggests that the use of truth claims in general has both a marketing and a cultural component, as it is seen more in traditionally published books (marketing) and in Anglo-Saxon countries (cultural).

6.2.4   Truth guarantees

In chapter two, we saw that explicitly taking credit for truthfulness has been commonplace since ancient times in both historical works and autobiographies. This is a phenomenon we can clearly still see in our modern day soldier-authors. But according to Genette, only historians are known to back up their truth claims with specific truth guarantees (Genette,

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3   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 6.43, p = .026

4   While Anglo-Saxon authors are only 2,5 times more likely to have a traditional publisher, which is not a significant difference from the continental European (German and Dutch) authors: X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 2.36, p = .188

5   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 0.36, p = 1.000

1997: 206). What is therefore interesting is that the results of this study show that soldier-authors also provide truth guarantees, on average two[6] per book with a truth claim in it.

Craig Mullaney, for example writes:

> I had to rely on more than my memory in writing this book. To that end I was fortunate in having journal entries, letters, emails, and photographs [...] petrol reports, maps, radio logs. Additionally, I interviewed many of my soldiers and colleagues and asked them to read early drafts and to correct any inaccuracies. (Mullaney, 2009: 379)

Almost all (94%) soldier-authors who make a truth claim also substantiate their claim. As can be seen in Table 47, like Mullaney, they do so with a variety of guarantees, some of them more objective (i.e. photographs, reports, research) than others (i.e. memory, statements to publishers).

Truth guarantee	#	%
Memory (own)	21	68%
Diary	11	35%
Memory (others)	8	26%
Emails/letters	7	23%
Photographs	3	10%
Reports	2	6%
Statement to publisher	2	6%
Research	1	3%
Unsubstantiated	2	6%

Table 47: Number and Percentage of Truth Guarantees in Books with Truth Claims

These truth guarantees are reasonably in accordance with what the *Encyclopedia of Life Writing* writes on research sources for autobiographies, that "[i]ts narrative authority derives not from research but from personal experience, from memory and subjectivity" (Couser, 2001b: 73).

Table 47 clearly shows that memory indeed has a prominent role among the truth guarantees provided, and that research as such is only mentioned by one soldier-author.

■
6   1.77

However, there does seem to be an inclination to provide the reader with more certainty than just a 'trust me on my word'. Soldier-authors apparently find it very important to emphasize and substantiate their truth claims, also with more objective methods such as reports and photographs, which shows an inner need to be heard and believed. This need will materialize more explicitly in the next chapter, when we will look at the motives that soldier-authors give for writing their books.

6.2.5   Memory

That the rather subjective guarantee of memory is the most prominent truth guarantee is clear. Twenty-two soldier-authors say they trusted on their own, or others' memory when writing their books, which amounts to 41% of all soldier-authors and 71% of the ones that make a truth claim. Of those, almost two-thirds rely solely on their own memory and one-third on both their own and on others' memory (see Figure 24). For exactly half of them memory is the only truth guarantee they provide.
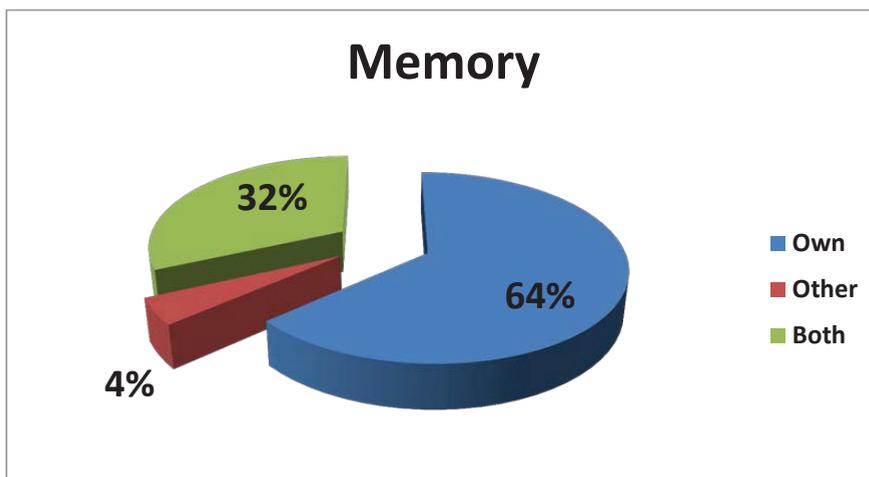
Figure 24: Types of Memory Use as Truth Guarantee

The acknowledgment of the use of memory is not statistically related to variables such as the (higher) age of the writer[7] (even though there is a medium-sized effect), or a longer time between deployment and publication[8]. There is a strong relationship, however, between the

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7   Average age no memory: M = 34.2; SD =11.4; Average age with memory: M = 39.8; SD = 9.4; t(22) = -1.21, p =.239, r = .25 (medium-sized effect).

8   Average years to publication no memory: M = 2.6; SD = 2.4; Average years to publication with memory: M = 2.6; SD = 2.0; t(29) = -.10, p =.925, r = .02 (no effect).

writers who claim to write about a subjective truth and the acknowledged use of memory[9]. Someone who writes that he describes only his own truth is twelve times more likely to acknowledge making use of memory as a research tool. This suggests that people who consciously make use of memory as a writing tool are also more conscious of the limitations that memory brings with it and thereby of the subjectivity of their image of the world. Alternatively, it may also be possible that writers who adopt a post-modern view of the world, which includes a subjective or constructivist view of the truth are more likely to acknowledge the role that memory plays in the construction of their truth.

From this we can conclude that in general soldier-authors satisfy the common expectation of autobiographers: the majority make a truthfulness claim, likely for marketing (and cultural) reasons and their stories are mostly based on subjective memory. What is a bit surprising is that these truthfulness claims are also at times substantiated with some forms of proper research.

6.2.6   Disclaimer

What is even more interesting is that the majority of soldier-authors (59%) also make some kind of disclaimer as to the content of their book, and that these disclaimers are in no way related to their truth claims, and are posed by all authors alike.[10] These disclaimers take two distinct forms: they are either literary disclaimers or forms of self-censorship. As can be seen in Figure 25, military writers are predominantly occupied with providing disclaimers that have to do with self-censorship.

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9   Memory in general: X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 31) = 8.16, p = .012; Own memory: X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 31) = 6.09, p = .021

10   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = .83, p = .411
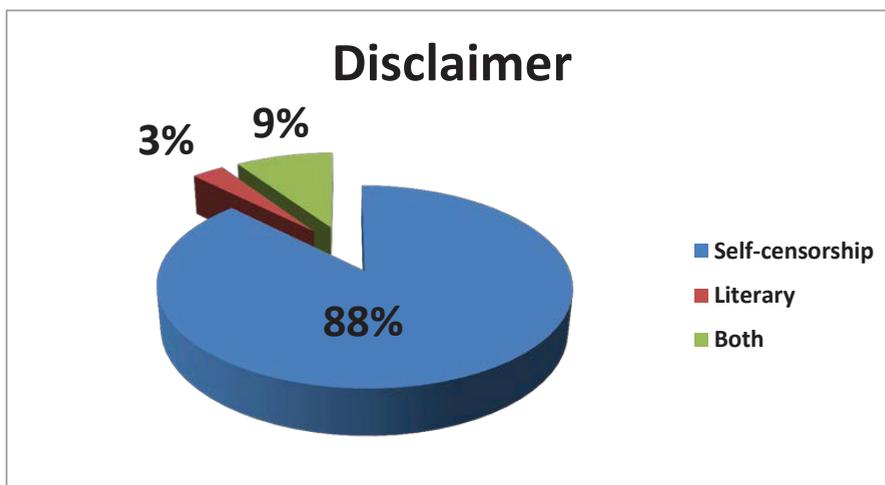
Figure 25: Disclaimer Categories in Books with Disclaimers

Craig Mullaney makes a typical literary disclaimer:

> By necessity, the dialogue is an approximation of conversations that I can't recall verbatim. (Mullaney, 2009: 379)

Martien van der Heijden by contrast makes self-censored disclaimers:

> I will not be able to write about everything, since specific cases may also be read by others who can use it to extract useful information. So I cannot discuss tactical and operational events. In the same way, I will try to relate experiences with other soldiers and/or civilian in the most anonymous way possible, so they won't get into trouble if the wrong people read my book.[11] (Heijden, 2009: 5)

As can be seen in Table 48, disclaimers for literary reasons, which takes the form of either an apology for the fictionality of the use of dialogues, as Mullaney does, or for playing with timelines or dates in order to make the book easier to read, can only be found in four books (7% of all books, 13% of all books with a disclaimer). The most frequently made self-censored disclaimers have to do with anonymizing the people discussed in the books. In 84% of disclaimers, names have been changed and in 34% of the cases photographs have been black-barred.

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11   My translation

Disclaimer	%	#
Censorship		
Name	84%	27
Photograph	34%	11
Details	13%	4
Place	9%	3
Event	9%	3
Literary		
Dialogue	6%	2
Dates	3%	1
Time line	3%	1

Table 48: Number and Percentage of Disclaimer Types in Books with Disclaimers

6.2.6.1 Names

Protection of the people involved for operational security reasons, is in line with common military safety precautions such as removing nametags from uniforms when getting photographed, interviewed or attending a local market, in order to diminish the possibility of any kind of personal retaliation by opponents. A safety consciousness that is thoroughly ingrained in every modern soldier and that clearly shows up in these books. It is quite a contrast with Renaissance military memoirs in which memoirs (and history in general) are seen as "the universal hall of fame and honor" (Harari, 2008: 113), whereby naming names is more or less the whole purpose of writing memoirs. Nowadays, generally other people are only specifically named in these books in the form of lists in the appendices. These are hero lists constituting either of the names of the people killed in action, or of those awarded a combat medal.

6.2.6.2 Illustrations

What is interesting is that not only names are anonymized, but also photographs. Although nowadays literary books for the adult market rarely contain illustrations, in stark contrast with 19th century novels (Sillars, 1995: 16), almost all military memoirs (94%) contain illustrations. Mostly photographs made by the author himself, but half of them (52%) also contain maps. In eleven books (20% of all books) one or more of these photographs are black-barred to hide the identity of the people in it. This black-barring occurs both for fellow-soldiers, Afghan

citizens, opponents and sometimes for the author himself. In one case (see Figure 26) even the author photo in the biography section, by an author who also uses a pseudonym, is black-barred to protect his identity (Macy, 2008).

Figure 26: Ed Macy

6.2.6.3   Self-censorship

These forms of self-censorship are absolutely not reserved for people who are still in service, as people who were no longer working for the MoD when their book was published were just as likely to censor themselves as active soldiers[12].

Neither is it a country or warrior nation dependent variable[13], as can be seen in Table 49.

	Self-censored		Total
	No	**Yes**	
The Netherlands	4	3	**7**
Germany	2	5	**7**
United Kingdom	4	11	**15**
United States	11	11	**22**
Canada	2	1	**3**
Total	**23**	**31**	**54**

Table 49: Self-Censored Books per Country

This seems to be first of all a form of self-discipline that is engrained within soldiers in order to provide a secure environment for themselves and others. As reservist and legal advisor Gijs Scholtens writes:

> Obviously, my weekly letters and the other contents of this book will contain no operational, let alone secret information. I have therefore consciously imposed the self-censorship necessary from a security point of view in my weekly letters.[14] (Scholtens, 2007: 7)

12   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 51) = .03, p = 1.000 (for three books it is unknown whether the author was still active at the publication date)

13   Country: X^2* (1, N = 54) = 3.93, p =.416; Warrior nation: X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = .20, p = .769

14   My translation

It is not just social desirability that causes this self-censorship. I would suggest at least two other causes for it. The first one is a marketing reason: My speculation is that black-barring of photographs in particular shows the exciting and secretive nature of the work described in the books, thereby adding the sales value. The second reason for self-censorship may be that it is a precursor of an organisational constraint that in Western countries is specific to the military: censorship.

6.2.6.4   Censorship

In order to preserve operational security (OpSec), some egodocuments have always been checked by the military before being distributed. In both World Wars it was common practice to censor letters written by military personnel to the home front. Although nowadays letters or blogs are no longer actively censored, they are bound by OpSec rules and books written by military personnel are still checked before publication by the military for OpSec problems. In each of the countries at least one of the soldier-authors indicates that his or her book was checked by the MoD, as can be seen in Table 50. This censorship is a common military feature that is not country-dependent[15]. It is so common, that most authors do not even mention it, and when they do so it is in a neutral or positive way.

	Censored		Total
	No	**Yes**	
The Netherlands	5	2	**7**
Germany	6	1	**7**
United Kingdom	14	1	**15**
United States	17	5	**22**
Canada	2	1	**3**
Total	**44**	**10**	**54**

Table 50: Censoring Mentioned per Country

Ray Wiss for example writes:

> As a serving officer in the Canadian Forces, my priority is to ensure that nothing I do harms our combat efficiency. I therefore worked closely with the Operational Security (OpSec) branch to ensure that this book gave nothing away that our enemies

might use to any advantage, no matter how small. This process had no impact on the story. The OpSec personnel often merely asked that a sentence be rewritten to make a detail somewhat vaguer, rather than removing the sentence completely […] Not a single paragraph's meaning or import was altered. (Wiss, 2009: 3-4)

In one of the books, the possible extent of the censorship, however, does become quite salient. In *Operation Dark Heart* by military intelligence agent Anthony Shaffer, black-barring is not used for photographs, but for the text itself. The first edition of the book was bought up and destroyed by the American DoD for security reasons and the subsequent edition was published in the same format, however with the full extent of the DoD censorship visible (Shaffer, 2010; Time, 2010, September 30). His publisher starts this second edition with an extensive explanation on this censoring process:

This was unexpected, since we knew the author, Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Shaffer, had worked closely with the Department of the Army, and had made a number of changes to the text, after which it passed the Army's operational security review. […] based on the discussions our author had with the government he requested that we incorporate some of the government's changes into a revised edition of his book while redacting other text he was told was classified, though he disagreed with that assessment. (Shaffer, 2010: i)

Those soldier-authors who actively indicate that they have been censored do not write different stories from authors who do not indicate any formal censorship. Their stories are not more negative or disenchanted in any way[16] (see Table 51).

		Censored		Total
		No	Yes	
Plot	positive	26	5	**31**
	negative	18	5	**23**
Total		**44**	**10**	**54**

Table 51: Type of Plot per Censored Books

However, of the ten authors who actively acknowledge having been censored, three of them indicated that they were also actively discouraged to write a book, two of these authors

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16   Negative: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .28$, $p = .728$; Disenchanted: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .01$, $p = 1.000$

However, there are two kinds of books that have some rhizomatic quality. First of all the diaries. Although they present a clear temporal unity because of the diary structure (including dates, cause and effect, and a fixed space), generally they nonetheless are not sorted consciously around a central plot and often give the impression of being a compilation of horizontal story elements. That does not mean, however, that it was impossible to fit them in one of Friedman's plot categories, as a change in the hero's circumstances, thoughts, or even character was often easily observable by comparing the initial entries with the last. A good example is *Memoirs of a Deployed Airma*n (Monahan, 2009), which will be discussed in detail later on in this chapter in paragraph 6.5.4. It shows the journey of an agreeable man who becomes more and more unsociable when the exhaustion of his deployment hits home.

The second category of books with rhizomatic quality is composed of some of the degeneration plots. They provide insight into the mental confusion that their authors experienced by using what Sermijn c.s. called "monstrous time and space" constructions: nonlinearly organized time, that is difficult to date or conflicts with the separation among past-present-future and space that is constantly in motion and lacks a fixed central point (Sermijn, et al., 2008: 4). The best example is Nate Self's *Two Wars*, which will also be discussed later on in the chapter, in which, strikingly, the date and space indications of the first part (the action part) are removed in the second part (which discusses his PTSD symptoms). Here, too, there was no real problem observing the general direction of the hero's journey in the books. This means that there are no formal obstacles in using the Aristotelian plot theory of Friedman in the rest of the analyses.

6.3.2   Friedman's plots

To test whether the disillusionment thesis and/or the revelatory plot thesis are still valid in the 21st century, we will look at the plots that soldier-authors write, see Table 52. When discussing the results, it may be useful to refer to the flow diagrams that visualize Friedman's plot theory, which can be found in Figure 9 and Appendix B and C.

Friedman's plot types		Nationality					
		NL	GE	UK	US	CAN	Total
Fortune	**Action**	-	-	4	1	-	**5**
	Punitive	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Tragic	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Pathetic	-	-	-	1	-	**1**
	Admiration	4	-	1	-	-	**5**
	Sentimental	-	-	-	2	-	**2**
Thought	**Affective**	-	-	-	3	1	**4**
	Revelation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Education	3	1	1	2	1	**8**
	Disillusionment	-	2	4	8	1	**15**
Character	Reform	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Degeneration	-	3	-	3	-	**6**
	Testing	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Maturing	-	1	5	2	-	**8**
Total		**7**	**7**	**15**	**22**	**3**	**54**

Table 52: Plots per Country

6.3.2.1 Missing plots types

What is striking in Table 52 is that many of Friedman's plots, but not all of them, are used by soldier-authors. Both plot types with an unsympathetic protagonist (punitive and reform plots) are not used, which seems logical from a psychological perspective: why write an autobiographical book portraying yourself as an unsympathetic person, especially as these are immediate memoirs that by definition lack the evaluative power that retrospective memoirs have? Neither is the tragic plot used, in which fortune changes for the negative because of the hero's own fault. Both findings suggest that soldier-authors want to portray themselves as sympathetic people who are in control. This fits with the observation that in most Western nations, people find it improbable and even irrational to evaluate themselves as both good and bad, and tend to evaluate themselves as good (e.g. Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999: 766; Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, Wang, & Hou, 2004: 1417; Westwood, 2001).

Revelation plots are not used either. Although the soldier-authors researched do acquire new knowledge as we shall see later on in this section, changing them both in a positive way (knowledge about people: affective plots; general/philosophical knowledge: education plots) and a negative way (changed ideals: disillusionment plots), they do not write books that deal mainly with changes in knowledge on situational facts. None of the soldier-authors write books that hinge "upon the protagonist's ignorance concerning the essential facts of his situation" (Friedman, 1955: 251). Their situation is generally clear, apart from the fog of war that comes with fighting: they are soldiers on a mission. More surprising is that there are also no plots that centre on making the right moral judgement under duress: testing plots.

6.3.2.2   From Friedman to Harari

Friedman divides his plots into three groups, fortune, thought and character plots, as can be seen in Table 52. As we have seen in chapter two, these 14 Friedman plots can in another constellation be used to test the disillusionment and revelatory plots hypotheses, by dividing the 14 plots into three main categories: the disenchantment plots, the growth plots and the other plots, see Figure 27. If the disillusionment thesis is correct, the large majority of plots used by military memoirists are disenchantment plots. If Harari's revelatory plot thesis is right, the large majority of plots should be either disenchantment or growth plots.
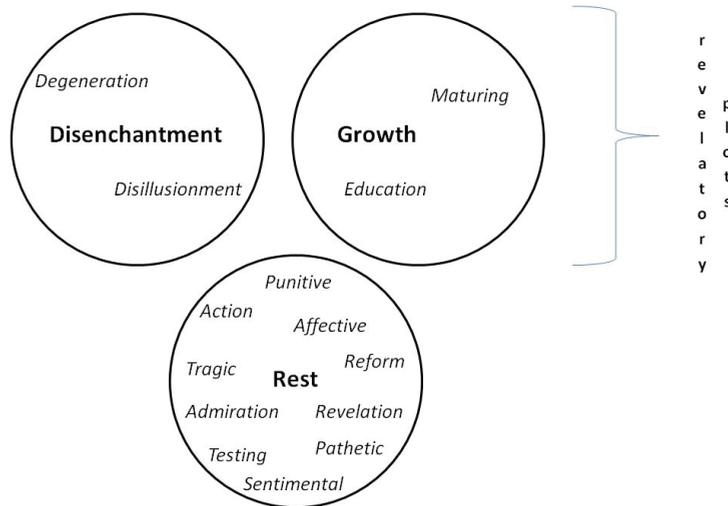
Figure 27: Three Main Plot Types

In the next section we will examine each of the plot types that do feature in military Afghanistan memoirs by looking at these three main categories. We will start by examining the plots in the rest category, then look at the growth plots, and end with an in-depth exploration of the disenchantment plots.

6.3.3   Rest plots

6.3.3.1 Action plots

The first rest plot to be discussed is the action plot. Action plots are the kind of plots that are about what-happens-next and in which little attention is paid to characters and their thoughts (Friedman, 1955: 248).

A good example is *Fire Strike 7/9* (Grahame & Lewis, 2010), in which a UK forward air controller (a ground based soldier who directs air-to-ground pilots to a target) describes how he saves his team time and again, killing 203 enemy fighters in the process. Both the cover art and the subtitle of this book (*One man. 180 days. 203 kills.)* give the impression of a first-person-shooter video game, and the plot is just as one-dimensional as the average first-person-shooter. Opening the book on three arbitrary pages results in the follow scenes:

> At 0530 all hell broke loose at Alpha Xray. First came the angry crackle of small arms fire, as the enemy opened up on our version of the Alamo. Then came the swoosh-boom of RPG rounds slamming into the base. (Grahame & Lewis, 2010: 171)

The second random opening of the book results in this action scene:

> We were in the fight of our lives. I'd landed in a shallow ravine, and a storm of bullets was slamming over the top of us. All around me the lads were hunkered down in cover, and trying to return fire. (Grahame & Lewis, 2010: 229)

The third arbitrary opening of the book shows he is not even able to go on a helicopter to take a few photographs without being shot at:

> As the Apaches thundered low across the bush, there was a sharp crackle of gunfire. Bullets went tearing pas our heads. Rounds started kicking up the dust and dirt on the roof. We forced a line of cheesy grins... (Grahame & Lewis, 2010: 284)

Fire Strike 7/9 is literally action-packed.

Although one may expect that action plots abound in military writing, as military missions seem to lend itself well to this kind of plot approach, only 9% of all Afghanistan memoirs are actions plots.

6.3.3.2 Admiration plots

Admiration plots are those plots in which the hero turns the circumstances for the better. An example of an admiration plot is Scholtens' *Task Force Uruzgan, op zoek naar het recht*[18] (Scholtens, 2007). It is the diary from a retired lawyer, the oldest (61) soldier-author in the dataset, who went as a reservist to Uruzgan to be the first Dutch legal specialist to help restore the rule of law in this area. He writes a typical diary with lots of action, but little reflection, an almost rhizomatic plot. There is no change of character and hardly any change of thought: he was positive when he started the mission and still believes in it when he returns home. This makes it in terms of Friedman a fortune plot, one in which he influences the outcome in a positive way. He writes:

> In short, all is well, I am very happy here and feel that I'm also doing useful work, and will keep on doing that. (Scholtens, 2007: 75)

Like action plots, admiration plots make up 9% of all Afghanistan memoirs.

6.3.3.3 Affective plots

Another minority plot type, being used in only 7% of all Afghanistan memoirs, is the affective plot. Affective plots are people-centred plots with a protagonist who starts to think differently about other people (Lachapelle, 2009; Wood, 2008) or who focuses on painting portraits of people (Tupper, 2010a; Wiss, 2010). American nurse Nancy Lachapelle writes for instance:

> I hope by reading this journal you will appreciate the loyal, generous, friendly and intelligent nature I discovered in the Afghan people I met and came to love. I hope it gives you a different perspective on what we are fighting for in Afghanistan… it is for the people. (Lachapelle, 2009: 8)

In his aptly named *Dudes of War*, American author Benjamin Tupper paints often ruthless portraits of the people he has been deployed with. About a character he calls 'Old Yeller' he writes:

■
18   *Task Force Uruzgan, Looking for Law*

> Old Yeller had spent a good number of years on the combat chuckwagon circuit, and it's fair to say he was a little past his prime in the art of war. To his credit, he was still an ardent patriot who didn't want to hang up his spurs, and he still had something in the gas tank to offer. But everyone eventually hits a wall and needs to pass the torch along to the next generation. (Tupper, 2010a: 28-29)

6.3.3.4 Pathetic plots

Where all these previous plots show people who are in control of their destiny, two plot types that are about *not* being in control can also be found in the dataset: pathetic and sentimental plots. These plots where the hero is not in control are a minority though, only taking up 6% of the plots.

The first is the pathetic plot in which the circumstances change for the worse because of no fault of the hero. The only pathetic plot in the dataset is *Kill Bin Laden*. Although this book has a minor growth plot, telling the story of a boy who "viewed the military as a dead-end profession" (Fury, 2008: 30), but grew up to become a proud Delta Force operative, the main plot is concerned with how Delta Force is not able to capture al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden because of mistakes made by others. At the end of his book, the American Delta Force operative concludes:

> As uncomfortable as it may be to accept, we have now known for years that bin Laden was not killed or captured at Tora Bora.
>
> So regardless of how one chooses to spin the facts, the battle must be viewed as a military failure. This harsh reality is not to imply in any way that the American and British commandos, controllers, and intelligence operatives did not perform according to billing, for they certainly did. (Fury, 2008: 291)

Earlier he had another character in his book already explain who was to blame, if it were not the military professionals:

> 'You didn't just face a single enemy here, but battled political, regional, and personal dilemmas in a culture completely foreign to you and your men,' he said. (Fury, 2008: 278)

6.3.3.5 Sentimental plots

The second plot in which the hero is not in control is the sentimental plot. These are fortune plots in which a change for the better takes place outside of the influence of the hero. Only two Afghanistan memoirs use a sentimental plot. The first one is *An Angel on My Shoulder* (Heichel, 2006), published by US Christian publisher Tate Publishing. In this book the protagonist, who is a mentor for the Afghan National Army (ANA), keeps on getting nearly killed and frustrated by others, but always miraculously survives. When his ANA team is accompanied by a special forces unit, for example, not everything goes according to plan when the special forces (accidently) start shooting at his team:

> I was relieved because the fighting had stopped, but was taken back at the danger that we all were placed in. The guys we depended on to help actually got mad when we had things under control. It was amazing. I was angry mostly because they were trying to showboat themselves into this and make it look like they were the ones who did the work. Well, it worked, because 3 of them got bronze stars for it. For shooting at MY MEN! When bronze stars were submitted for me and Mike (in the same exact format) our BDE S1 said they were incorrect and needed changed to the right format. Whatever. I wasn't in this for chest candy anyway, I just hated the fact that those guys got the awards for shooting at our men and then some paper pusher wouldn't process ours because he was too lazy to help out. (Heichel, 2006: 50-51)

Not only the operation he takes part in is frustrated by others, but also getting a medal for his actions. He has no control over his destiny, but survives his deployment nonetheless.

The other book with a sentimental plot is *Lone Survivor* (Luttrell & Robinson, 2007) which describes a mission to detain an al-Qaeda leader by a Navy SEAL team gone awry. Luttrell is the only member of his team to survive the mission, thanks to the honour code of a local tribe who provides him with food, shelter and medical care after he has been severely wounded.

In total, the rest plots together make up 31% of all plots.

6.3.4   Growth plots

Growth plots are plots in which the protagonist becomes a better person because either his thoughts improve (education plot) or even his character (maturing plot). Often, the difference between education and maturity plot is not very clear.

6.3.4.1 Maturity plots

A typical growth plot would be Charlotte Madison's maturity plot *Dressed to Kill* (Madison, 2010). It is the story of a naive young girl, who becomes an Apache pilot and will be the first UK pilot since the Second World War to use all ammunition on board an aircraft during one flight. At fourteen, being on an all-girl boarding school, she first joined the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) because

> Kate, one of the coolest and prettiest girls in my class, told me that if I wanted a boyfriend, CCF was the place to be. (Madison, 2010: 4)

She liked it well enough to stay and become a junior NCO[19] with the CCF and impresses the new instructors:

> [My battle command] is impressive. It's so impressive, in fact, that when we turn round, it's as if there is a whole new bunch of instructors facing us. The slightly patronizing looks on their faces have been replaced by genuine smiles, and wide mouths and teeth have replaced the pinched cheeks and squinty eyes. From that moment on, they are totally respectful. They don't think to question our sex, our rank, our knowledge, they just let us get on with it. (Madison, 2010: 9)

After being picked for Apache training, the process of acceptance starts all over again, however:

> I'm surrounded by new and unfamiliar male faces brandishing little Yorkie-bar-style stickers saying 'APACHE – IT'S NOT FOR GIRLS'. (Madison, 2010: 37)

But she passes and becomes an Apache pilot. The opening scene of the book is her first real engagement with an enemy:

> I pause for a split second to think about the gunfire I am about to spray across the battlefield. At that moment, I realize that I have no choice but to be good at my job. There are people relying on me. After today, I'll no longer be the new girl. (Madison, 2010: 3)

The book ends with her change from army professional to army wife, ending a journey from naïve girl, via Apache pilot, to a woman in the traditional female role (Friedan, 1963):

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19   Non-commisioned officer, see Appendix F: NATO Codes for Non-Officer Personnel Army

> Jack [her husband] comes home every evening and always seems more pleased than the previous night that I'm there. We've talked about things we've been putting off, like starting a family and moving to a bigger house. Now I am out of the army, he's been able to take a new job, the one that is going to take him away from me in a few months, but he's so excited about it, it's given him a new lease of life. And I have the exciting decision of what to do next; I feel that the world is opening up before me. (Madison, 2010: 314)

Eight books, 15% of all books, have maturity plots.

6.3.4.2   Education plots

Like maturity plots, education plots also make up fifteen percent of all Afghanistan memoirs. A typical education plot is Artur Schwittala's *Afghanistan, jetzt weiß ich erst...*[20]. In this book, provincial reconstruction team commander Schwitalla thematically describes what he has learned in Afghanistan. The book has a unique structure, as each chapter answers a different question and starts with "Only now I know… ".

Both growth plots together make up 30% of all Afghanistan memoirs, which means that the percentage of growth plots (30%) and rest (31%) plots are equal among these military autobiographies

6.3.5   Disenchantment plots

Disenchantment plots are plots in which the protagonist's ideals are scattered (a disillusionment plot), or even his or her entire personality (a degeneration plot).

6.3.5.1   Degeneration plots

In a military context, the degeneration plot generally refers to a plot that details the process of someone getting diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or as the dust jacket of Heike Groos' *Ein schöner Tag zum Sterben: Als Bundeswehrärztin in Afghanistan*[21] *(Groos, 2009)* puts it, it is a book on "how war injures the human soul"[22]. Although Heike Groos herself is not sure whether this change in her also means that she is actually ill. She

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20   *Afghanistan, Only Now I Know…*

21   *A Beautiful Day to Die: Army Doctor in Afghanistan*

22   My translation

ends her book with an open letter to the psychiatrists and psychologists of the German armed forces:

> Of course I have seen and experienced awful things. But would it not have been terrible, had I not reacted to them? Wouldn't I have been really ill if I had not had compassion with the dead and the wounded, if violence and suffering had left me unmoved?[23] (Groos, 2009: 259)

6.3.5.1.1 Retrospective memoirs

This collection of immediate Afghanistan memoirs contains five similar degeneration stories. This means that degeneration plots make up a total of 11% of all memoirs. This is a surprisingly high percentage, taken that according to memoir researchers (Hynes, 1997: 4; Woodward & Jenkings, 2013: 161) degeneration plots need reflection time and are therefore not expected among immediate memoirs, but are only seen as part of retrospective memoirs: memoirs published long after the war has ended. Although the average production speed[24] of degeneration plots with four years is significantly longer, than for other plot types, as they only take 2 years to get published[25], it is not significantly longer than for disillusionment plots, which take on average three years after the deployment has ended before they get published[26]. Disenchantment plots in general simply take significantly longer to produce than other plots[27]. So memoir researchers Hynes and Woodward & Jenkings are right to a certain extent: degeneration plots indeed take longer to produce. However, all disenchantment plots in general take longer to produce than other types of plots. In the 21st century, degeneration plots already have been produced as immediate memoirs and are not only a feature of retrospective memoirs. This may have to do with publishers publishing quicker nowadays in general, or with the longevity of the Afghanistan conflict, whereby publishers want to take advantage of the fact that the war is still going on and thereby produce topical books.

So although disenchantment stories take significantly longer than other plot types to be written, they are published fairly quickly (within three to four years after deployment) and are an integral part of the immediate memoirs published.

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23 My translation

24 Production speed indicates the average years between last deployment described and publication date

25 Degeneration plots: M = 4.0; SD = 2.3; Non-degeneration plots: M = 2.1; SD = 1.8; $t(52)$ = -2.42, p =.019, r = .32 (medium-sized effect)

26 Disillusionment plots: M = 2.9; SD = 2.2; $t(19)$ = -1.01, p =.325, r = .23 (low-sized effect)

27 Disenchantment plots: M = 3.2; SD = 2.2; Growth and Rest plots together: M = 1.7; SD = 1.4; $t(52)$ = -3.08, p =.003, r = .39 (medium-sized effect)

6.3.5.2   Disillusionment plots

The largest single plot type used by Afghanistan soldier-authors is the disillusionment plot which is used in 28% of all books. Disillusionment plots are more about shattered ideals instead of shattered souls. In the Afghanistan memoirs, disillusionment can be subdivided into three different types: disillusion with war, disillusionment with the armed forces and disillusionment with society at large, see Figure 28.
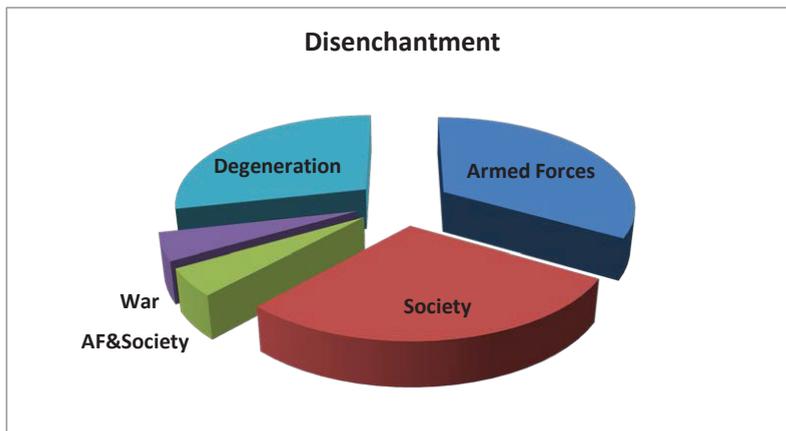
Figure 28: Types of Disenchantment Plots

6.3.5.2.1 Disillusioned with war

Where we saw in chapter two that within the disillusionment thesis disillusionment is first of all based on the shattered romantic ideals of war, this is a theme that can hardly be seen in 21st century memoirs, as only one book (5% of disenchantment plots) deals mainly with this kind of disillusionment, Patrick Bury's *Callsign Hades.* Bury writes:

> War was clean, fun. Everyone came back to life at the end. Not that I was ignorant of the implications of what I was getting myself into […] I knew, I thought, the horror, the bleakness, the pain and the dirt. In fact, I was in awe of it. Transfixed. And maybe I could understand it. But I hadn't felt it. Just like you haven't. And that made all the difference. (Bury, 2010: 5)

6.3.5.2.2 Disillusioned with armed forces

Instead, in these 21st century how-war-shattered-my-ideals narratives, two other ideals are most often shattered: that of caring armed forces and that of a caring society. US MajorAnthony Shaffer is a good example of someone who is disillusioned by the armed

forces is. In his book *Operation Dark Heart* (Shaffer, 2010) he describes how the Defense Intelligence Agency tried to fire him after he has testified about a secret mission in Afghanistan in front of the 9/11 commission. He is disillusioned, but not by war itself, but by what the cover of his book describes as the "hopelessly flawed" policies of top officials.

Another good example is German special forces man Achim Wohlgethan in his first book *Endstation Kabul*[28]. He was individually deployed together with Dutch special forces and thoroughly enjoyed his time with them:

> A deeper friendship for a group of soldiers I have never experienced and will never experience again. I had become very fond of my Dutch pals.[29] (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008: 265)

Coming back to Germany and trying to pick up his professional life, however, he is disillusioned by the way he is treated by the German army:

> None of my friends or colleagues from the barracks understood my situation. Many of them made jokes that cut to my heart. A standard question was: "And, did you have a nice holiday over there?"[30] (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008: 275)

When he asks for leave of absence after having worked day and night for a year, the first thing his commander says is something like:

> You ran off to Afghanistan while we urgently needed you here to form a special forces unit.[31] (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008: 276)

Shaffer and Wohlgethan are not the only ones: 7 out of 21 disenchantment narratives deal mainly with how the writers were disappointed by their own armed forces, which amounts to 47% of all disillusionment plots, 33% of all disenchantment plots and 13% of all plots.

6.3.5.2.3 Disillusioned with society

Other soldier-authors are not so much disillusioned by their own armed forces, but more by society in general, such as German soldier-author Marc Lindemann's book *Unter Beschuss:*

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28 *Destination Kabul*
29 My translation
30 My translation
31 My translation

Warum Deutschland in Afghanistan scheitert[32] (Lindemann, 2010). This book is part autobiography, part analysis of why Germany fails at reconstructing Afghanistan and what should be done. He is mainly critical of politicians, not of the armed forces itself.

Although soldier-authors writing other plots sometimes also indicate they feel disillusioned during their books, the essence of the disillusionment plot authors is that they both sprinkle the entire book with disillusioned observations and also end their books with it, often devoting several final chapters to a negative ending of their Afghanistan mission.

In the UK, Lieutenant-colonel Stuart Tootal and his men from 3 Para are also disappointed by the armed forces, but they are even more bothered by the lack of care society in general provides them with and specifically after they return from a deployment:

> I reinterred the things that bothered both me and my soldiers most: the poor treatment of the wounded, the poor accommodation for our families and the lack of decent pay. But I emphasized that what particularly angered them was the complete lack of proper equipment to train with prior to imminent operations in Afghanistan. (Tootal, 2009: 305)

Tootal is disillusioned enough to resign, and when his resignation letter is leaked to the press, it leads to major media attention in the UK.

In the US it is a lack of media and other attention that US reservist and lawyer Lieutenant-colonel Platte Moring describes in his book *Honor First* (Moring, 2006). At the end of his book, he concludes that he has come home to a country that does not recognize his service:

> In the months following my return from Afghanistan, I realized that some Americans did not even see any honor in military service in a combat zone. (Moring, 2006: 337-338)

There was no recognition by the top army lawyer for his work he writes, nor were there "parades for my unit or dinner parties for my family" (Moring, 2006: 326 & 336). As many as 40% of the disillusionment plots and 28% of the disenchantment narratives (six books in total) ascribe to feelings of disappointment in the reactions from and the support of people back home, and society in general.

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32   *Under Fire: Why Germany Fails in Afghanistan*

That leaves one more disenchantment narrative, *Desert of Death*, that is equally disillusioned by the society that send him to Afghanistan (and Iraq) as by the army itself:

> I feel foolish for believing so whole-heartedly that in coming to Afghanistan I would be part of something intelligent, meaningful and constructive. I know now that our entry into Helmand has been ignorant, clumsy and destructive – vainglorious folly.

> My faith in the establishment to which I have devoted my life for more than five years has proved to be ill-founded. I feel angry at this betrayal, and angry at my own foolishness. A feeling – not a decision, but a slowly rising knowledge – comes to me that I will leave the Army and voice my anger. (Docherty, 2007: 178)

That is exactly what he does in *Desert of Death,* voicing his anger and disillusionment. Basically, that is what all disillusionment-society and disillusionment-army plots do: criticizing the existing situation.

6.3.6   Testing the theses

Having collected factual information on the distribution of plot types in all intermediate military Afghanistan memoirs published between 2001-2010 in five different Western countries (see Figure 29), we are now in a position to actually test whether the disillusionment thesis and/or the revelatory plot thesis are correct.
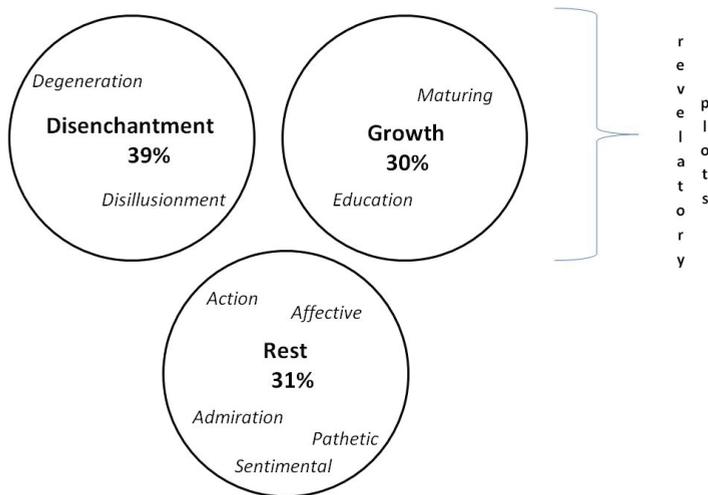
Figure 29: Percentage of Plot Types in Dataset

6.3.6.1 Disillusionment thesis

If the disillusionment thesis is correct, the large majority of plots used by military memoirists should consist of disenchantment plots. Although these 21st century military authors are still disillusioned by their war experiences, disenchantment books do not make up the majority of Afghanistan memoirs, as only 39% of all books nowadays are disillusionment stories. From these figures we can conclude that for 21st century immediate Afghanistan memoirs the disillusionment thesis no longer holds up.

In these 21st century books, written by professional soldiers instead of conscripts, we also see a different kind of disillusionment than in the classical 20th century disillusionment book. The disillusionment nowadays takes the form of deep disappointment in and criticizing both the armed forces and society itself, and not so much with the practice of war as such. This may point to the fact that the romantic notion of war as a pleasurable pastime is no longer an ideal that can be shattered. It may be that the disillusioned writers from the 20th century did (in the words of Harari) replace a fictional image of war with a true image for future generations, even though it did not prevent those new generations from going to war.

6.3.6.2 Revelatory plot thesis

The next question is whether Harari's revelatory plot thesis does hold up. If he is right, the large majority of plots should be either disenchantment or growth plots. Looking at all plots from the Friedman model, we can conclude that revelatory narratives (growth and disenchantment plots together) do make up the majority (69%) of Afghanistan memoirs, as Harari predicted, see Figure 29. The revelatory plot thesis is therefore still valid for 21st century military Afghanistan memoirs.

6.3.7   Negative versus positive plots

Apart from dividing the plots into disenchantment, growth and rest plots, they can also be divided into positive and negative plots. Most plots are by Friedman's definition either positive or negative, only affective and action plots can be both, see Table 2 in chapter two. Having individually coded these two plot types, Table 53 shows the number of plots in total, whereby slightly more books have positive (57%) than negative plots. Whether mostly positive or negative plots are written is country-dependent[33].

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33    $X^2*(4, N = 54) = 11.68, p = .020$

	Plot		Total
	Positive	**Negative**	
The Netherlands	7	0	**7**
Germany	2	5	**7**
United Kingdom	11	4	**15**
United States	9	13	**22**
Canada	2	1	**3**
Total	**31**	**23**	**54**

Table 53: Positive and Negative Plots per Country

In the Netherlands (100%), the UK (73%) and Canada (67%) mainly positive plots are written, whereas Germany (71%) and the US (59%) produce predominantly negative plots. These differences are not due to the kind of missions, as missions in these countries are generally the same, with the UK, Canada, the Netherlands and the US all performing missions in the dangerous southern provinces, whereby only the Germans, who are most negative, work in relatively lower risk parts of Afghanistan. This suggests that there are country-specific mores with regard to the kinds of plots that are written, independent of the content of the mission, or country-specific narratives that are told. This idea will be further developed later on in the chapter.

6.3.8   PDD

As we have seen in chapter two, a notion that is linked to disenchantment plots in general, and to degeneration plots in particular, is that of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). On the other hand, the symptoms associated with PTSD can also be seen as part of a normal, temporary response to returning home after a deployment, for which Weibull proposed the term post deployment disorientation (PDD) (Weibull, 2012). Vietnam war researcher Tobey Herzog even finds that the description of adaptation problems is part of a paradigmatic war memoir (Herzog, 1992: 14). It is interesting to see if military writers still describe this phenomenon: whether it is described outside of degeneration plots (which in this dataset are generally the-making-of-PTSD stories) and whether it is a general military phenomenon that can be described in all sorts of plots, or a country-specific or even warrior nation specific phenomenon.

6.3.8.1 PDD and plots

Let us start with the question whether contemporary military writers are inclined to talk about the fact that their deployment did impact their daily lives mentally, either by experiencing a feeling of prolonged alienation or because they experience one or more of the three PTSD symptoms (re-experiencing, avoidance and numbing and/or increased arousal). Looking at Table 54, this is clearly not a taboo subject, as 22 out of 54 books (41%) of the books describe these kinds of experiences. When only accounting for books that continue with the story after the deployment itself (44 out of 54 books), this percentage goes up to 50%, which means that describing post deployment disorientation is a normal feature of military memoirs, although not as paradigmatic as Herzog indicated. The type of plot significantly influences the number of books that describe a PDD experience[34]: disenchantment plots do so more often (57%) than growth plots (44%) and rest plots (18%).

	PDD		Total
	No	**Yes**	
Disillusion	9	12	**21**
Growth	9	7	**16**
Rest	14	3	**17**
Total	**32**	**22**	**54**

Table 54: Plot Type versus PDD Symptoms

As Captain Doug Beattie describes in his second book, the action plot *Task Force Helmand*, the possibility of experiencing adaptation problems is discussed by the UK military as part of the decompression:

> You are told your mood will change without warning. You will get angry, sad, depressed, resentful and you won't know why. You might start drinking too much, driving too aggressively, arguing unnecessarily, picking fights for no good reason. (Beattie & Gomm, 2009: 312)

All four aspects of PDD (prolonged alienation, increased arousal, re-experiencing and avoidance & numbing) are described by Afghanistan soldier-authors. German paratrooper Achim Wohlgethan, for example, describes the alienation he felt when he arrived back home as "a culture shock in your own country" (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008: 274). For

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34   X^2 (2, N = 54) = 6.16, p =.046

UK Apache pilot Charlotte Madison, who has been deployed many times, this is an all too common feeling:

> Back home, it feels like the other times I've returned from Bastion: very green, very alien and very emotionally uncomfortable. I know it will take me weeks, even months, to get used to being here. (Madison, 2010: 310)

American Captain Craig Mullaney experiences increased arousal in *The Unforgiving Minute,* a maturity plot: "I jumped every time one of our cannons fired, and I wasn't the only one" (Mullaney, 2009: 335). Some soldiers re-experience their deployment in the form of nightmares, as Doug Beattie does in his first book *An Ordinary Soldier*:

> Nights were becoming an endless stream of battles. Time and again I found myself charging up and down the drainage ditches that dissected the landscape around Garmsir. As I ran I encountered countless bodies. Lifeless and bloody. They were dressed as Afghans. (Beattie & Gomm, 2008: 294)

Others start avoiding and numbing, as described by another German paratrooper, Robert Eckhold in *Fallschirmjäger in Kunduz*[35], a degeneration plot:

> I couldn't understand why after such a short period of time I wasn't the same person I was before the deployment, and I withdrew more and more, also because I felt unrecognized. Friendships and my relationship with my partner broke up, as I was no longer interested in maintaining them.[36] (Eckhold, 2010: 293)

6.3.8.2 PDD and country

Most books (44 out of 54) not only describe the Afghanistan deployment itself, but also its aftermath, what it is like to return home after the deployment. Whether PDD is discussed in these books, is country-dependent[37], see Table 55.

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35   *Paratrooper in Kunduz*

36   My translation

37   $X^2 (4, N = 44) = 13.07, p = .011$

	PDD		Total
	No	Yes	
The Netherlands	3	1	4
Germany	0	5	5
United Kingdom	11	4	15
United States	7	10	17
Canada	1	2	3
Total	22	22	44

Table 55: Country versus PDD Symptoms in After Return Books

In the Netherlands, where positive books seem to be the norm as we have seen before, only one book describes PDD, whereas in Germany, where negative books abound, each of the books that discusses the time after return also describes PDD. The same effect can be observed for the UK, where generally positive plots are written and the US, where the plots are generally negative.

This suggests a link between positive plots, PDD and country. Indeed, there is a statistically significant link between positive plots and the absence of PDD symptoms[38]. As the existence of PDD seems to be a normal effect of being deployed, that is described by at least one soldier-author per country, the most logical causal effect seems to be that either the country's or the publisher's mores influence whether a book describes PDD or not, which is something that can be tested.

Looking into the book market structure, there is no connection between the kind of publisher and whether a book discusses PDD symptoms[39]. This is interesting, as traditional publishers are significantly[40] more likely to publish books that do not stop at the end of the deployment, but also describe the period after returning, see Table 56. Only 8% of the traditionally published books do not describe the period after return, as opposed to 39% of self-published books.

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38   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 4.13, $p_{one\text{-}sided}$ = .040

39   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = .614, p = .560

40   X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 7.43, p = .006

	After return		Total
	No	Yes	
Self-published	7	11	**18**
Traditional publisher	3	33	**36**
Total	**10**	**44**	**54**

Table 56: Publishing Strategy of After Return Books

Therefore, it seems most likely that the country's (and not the publisher's) mores with regard to the kind of military plots written (such as positive or not) influence whether PDD symptoms are discussed or not.

6.3.9   Plots and authors

Having looked at the different plots used and what influences whether a soldier-author discusses PDD, let us now examine what influences the type of plot an author chooses. The answer to that question is rather straightforward, as there are only three statistically significant author variables that influence the kind of plot written in terms of whether it is a positive or a negative plot: co-author, work and kinetic. Other variables do not seem to influence the plot.

6.3.9.1   No influence

6.3.9.1.1 Rank

Officers, for example, write negative and positive plots in the same proportion, as NCOs and junior enlisted men, as can be seen in Table 57[41].

		Military Category				Total
		Senior officer	Junior officer	NCO	Junior enlisted	
Plot	**Positive**	10	10	9	2	**31**
	Negative	8	8	5	2	**23**
Total		**18**	**18**	**14**	**4**	**54**

Table 57: Relationship between Plot and Military Category

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41   X^2* (3, N = 54) = .411, p =.938

6.3.9.1.2 Age

Age also does not seem to influence plot. Soldier-authors who write negative plots have about the same age as writers of positive plots, indicating that although wisdom might come with age, age certainly does not come with negativity[42]. Nor are disenchantment plots found more often with the younger generation, which one may expect based on the disillusionment thesis[43].

6.3.9.1.3 Multiple deployments

There is not even any relationship between positive and negative plots and the number of deployments[44], see Table 58.

		Multiple deployments		Total
		No	Yes	
Plot	**Positive**	10	20	**30**
	Negative	8	15	**23**
Total		**18**	**35**	**53**[45]

Table 58: Relationship between Plot and Multiple Deployments

Not even degeneration plots (which are generally about getting post-traumatic stress disorder) are related to either one deployment or multiple deployments[46]. Two degeneration plots are written after only one deployment (Eckhold, 2010; Tupper, 2010b) and four after multiple deployments (Franzak, 2010; Groos, 2009; Self, 2008; Wohlgethan, 2010).

6.3.9.1.4 Branch of service

Branch of service also does not seem to influence choice of plot: army personnel, for example, are statistically no more or less likely to write negative stories[47] than soldier-authors from other branches.

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42   Negative plots: *M = 39.0; SD =8.9*; Positive plots*: M = 40.6; SD = 10.2; t(43) =- .570, p =.572, r = .09* (low-sized effect)

43   Disenchantment plots*: M = 38.6; SD =9.4;* All other plot types: *M = 40.7; SD = 9.9; t(43) = .715, p =.479, r = .11* (low-sized effect)

44   $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 53) = .012, p = 1.000$

45   From one author (Nancy Lachapelle) it is unknown whether she has been on other deployments as well

46   $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 53) = .001, p = 1.000$

47   $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 1.95, p = .200$

6.3.9.1.5 Publisher

That disillusionment plots are such institutionalized parts of military memoirs as both Fussell and Herzog concluded, can also be seen in the publisher's preferences. Although we saw in the previous chapter that traditional publishers are looking for an ideal soldier (young, kinetic, professional, deployed with his or her own unit), they are not specifically looking for upbeat stories; soldier-authors with a negative plot can just as easily find a traditional publisher as a self-publisher[48].

6.3.9.1.6 Charity

Not even whether the soldier-author intents to donate (parts of) the proceeds of the book to a charity influences their plot choice, as both positive (73%) and negative plots (27%) are used by charitable authors in a ratio that statistically does not deviate from the normal pattern[49], see Table 59. Whether a author donates the proceeds is country-dependent though, as it is a phenomenon only seen in the Anglo-Saxon countries in this database: the US, the UK and Canada[50]. None of the Dutch or German books mention book royalties going to a charity, whereas over a quarter of all Anglo-Saxon books (11 out of 40), donate to charity.

		Donated		Total
		No	Yes	
Plot	**Positive**	23	8	**31**
	Negative	20	3	**23**
Total		**43**	**11**	**54**

Table 59: Relationship between Plot and Donations to Charities

In the UK this may also be instigated by the MoD, which has SAS servicemen sign confidentiality contracts forbidding them to write about their exploits and has investigated other soldier-authors, claiming that servicemen should not be paid for writing about their careers (Independent, 1996; MoS, 2010; Times, 2001).

Charity also does not lead to better sales: on average, charitable books in the UK sell even slightly less well than books without a charitable intention, but this is not in any way a statistically significant difference[51].

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48   $X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = .151, p = .776$

49   $X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 1.33, p = .319$

50   $X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 4.84, p_{one-sided} = .024$

51   Charitable: $M = 25,900, SD = 19,051$; Non-charitable: $M = 30,960, SD = 33,630$; $t(13) = .31, p = .762, r = .09$ (no effect)

6.3.9.2 Co-author

The first of the three author characteristics that do influence plot (co-author, work and kinetic) is whether a known co-author was involved in the book, as co-authors only write positive stories[52]. No disenchantment plots are written by co-authors, instead the seven co-authored books mainly have action plots (3 out of 7) and growth plots (2 out of 7) and one admiration and one sentimental plot can also be found, probably on the assumption that positive stories sell better. This is not correct, however, as in the British book market (that makes up 75% of all co-authored books in this study), autobiographies that clearly indicate that they are co-authored sell on average fewer copies instead of more[53]. This may be because potential readers feel that co-authoring does not fit the autobiographical genre, as it is inconsistent with the idea of concordance between author and protagonist that is generally associated with the autobiographical genre.

6.3.9.3 Work

Not only the co-author, but also soldier-author characteristics influence the plot, such as whether the soldier-author is still working for the MoD. As can be seen in Table 60, soldier-authors who write negative plots (in our dataset these are disillusionment, degeneration and pathetic plots) generally no longer work for the MoD when their book is published[54].

Working soldiers are nine times more likely to write positive plots than former soldiers.

		Work for MoD		Total
		No	**Yes**	
Plot	**Positive**	8	20	**28**
	Negative	18	5	**23**
Total		**26**	**25**	**51**

Table 60: Relationship between Plots and Work in All Countries

This can have two reinforcing reasons. The first one is the 'you don't bite the hand that feeds you' reason: people who write about the organisation they work for may be more inclined to write positively about the organisation. The second reason is that people who

52 X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 54)* = 5.97, *p* = .016

53 the average adjusted sales of co-written books in the UK (*M* = 25,782, *SD* = 17,685) is lower than of single authors (*M* = 31,019, *SD* = 33,950), although this is not a statistically significant difference: *t*(13) = .32, *p* =.754, *r* = .09 (no effect)

54 X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 51)* = 12.48, *p* = .001

are disillusioned by their experiences are more likely to leave the defence organisation, and therefore naturally start writing down their story only after they have left.

Heike Groos describes this last effect, leaving the army because of negative experiences, in her degeneration plot *Ein schöner Tag zum Sterbe*[55]:

> I left the German army, I have even left the country. I have chosen a quiet, peaceful country to live in: New Zealand – far, far away. Actually not to flee or to run away. More in order to crawl away. Far away from all the images, somewhere where nothing reminds me of them and where I can very carefully risk looking back a little.[56] (Groos, 2009: 12)

This fits with what Berger and Luckmann call "nihilation": denying the reality of (the interpretation of) a phenomenon that does not fit the denier's universe: if it doesn't fit your view of the world, then deny it (Berger & Luckmann, 1966/1991: 132). People who have left an organisation are more prone to be negative about their former employer, to fit with their new beliefs about this organisation as no longer positive: they have left the organisation for good reason after all, so being positive may no longer fit the worldview of the ex-employee. This is a phenomenon that is for instance also observed in people who have left religious sects (Price, 2008: 313). It also fits what psychologists term 'cognitive dissonance', "the idea that if a person knows various things that are not psychologically consistent with one another, he will, in a variety of ways, try to make them more consistent" (Festinger, 1962: 93).

It also mirrors the well-know phenomenon in organisational science that there is a negative relationship between turnover on the one hand and organisational commitment and organisational identification on the other hand (e.g. Abrams, Ando, & Hinkle, 1998; Blau & Boal, 1987; Mael & Ashforth, 1995; Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979).

In the previous chapter we drew the conclusion that it appeared to be less difficult to write while still on active duty in today's non-warrior countries than it is in warrior nations, as in warrior nations (US and UK) the majority of the writers (62%) are no longer working for the MoD, whereas in non-warrior nations (Germany, Canada and the Netherlands) the majority (71%) are still working when their book is published.

---

55   *A Beautiful Day to Die*

56   My translation

Looking at the plots they write, we can now explain this difference, as in the non-warrior countries (and in the UK also), people who write negative plots (in our dataset these are disillusionment, degeneration, pathetic plots and one of the affective plots) do not work for the MoD anymore when their book is published[57]. There is one exception to this rule, German paratrooper and self-publisher Robert Eckhold. Only in the US (see Table 61), this relationship between positive books and working for the MoD does not hold up[58].

		Work		Total
		No	Yes	
Plot	Positive	3	3	6
	Negative	9	4	13
Total		12	7	19

Table 61: Relationship between Plots and Work in the US

So it may well be that it is not inherently easier to publish a book while still working for the MoD in non-warrior countries than it is in warrior nations, but that it has to do with the fact that people in today's non-warrior nations write positive stories (with Eckhold as only exception) when in active service and negative stories when retired from duty (with no exceptions) as can been seen from Table 62. In warrior nations, this image is more nuanced; 38% of the soldier-authors in the UK and the US who are no longer working for the MoD write positive plots and although in the UK no negative plots are written by active personnel, more than half (four out of seven) of the active US personnel writes negative plots:

		Country					Total
	Work	NL	GE	UK	US	CAN	
Positive	No	-	-	5	3	-	8
	Yes	7	2	6	3	2	20
Negative	No	-	4	4	9	1	18
	Yes	-	1	-	4	-	5
Total		7	7	15	19	3	51

Table 62: Division of Plot Types and Work Strategy per Country

■
57   $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 32) = 12.64, p = .001$
58   $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 19) = .652, p_{one-sided} = .378$

6.3.9.3.1 Reservists

Further analysis shows that in the US, the four books that have a negative plot while the author still works for the MoD have two things in common that none of the other negative plots have: they are all written by reservists who specifically indicate that they volunteered for the Afghanistan mission and are still part of the reserve force. So it seems to be a combination of not being a professional soldier, but a reservist (and therefore not being totally dependent on the income that soldiering generates) and being very motivated to participate in the mission (and then being disillusioned) that produces negative plots by soldier-authors who still work for the MoD.

A good example of a negative plot writer who is still a reservist is *Operation Dark Heart* by MajorAntony Shaffer, a reservist called up to work for the Defence Intelligence Agency, who according to his book fired him because of his testimony before the 9/11 Commission. Although his book is clearly written to exonerate himself, and he is rather negative about the Defence Intelligence Agency, he holds no grudge against the army in general.

> It took the better part of two years before [the DIA] fired me. I remained serving in the Army Reserves. The army took no adverse action against me and promoted me to lieutenant colonel in February 2005. I remain a reserve lieutenant colonel to this day. (Shaffer, 2010: 272)

Professional soldiers in all cases wait with the publication of negative memoirs until after they have completely left the service, with the exception of German paratrooper Robert Eckhold. That does not mean that reservists write more negative stories than professionals[59], or that individually deployed soldier-authors do[60] .

6.3.9.4 Kinetic

The only other soldier-author characteristic besides work that does influence plot is whether or not the author is kinetic[61], see Table 63.

---

59   $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .20, p_{one\text{-}sided} = .437$

60   $X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 52) = 1.26, p_{one\text{-}sided} = .400$

61   $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 4.96, p = .047$

		Kinetic		Total
		No	Yes	
Plot	**Positive**	16	15	**31**
	Negative	5	18	**23**
Total		**21**	**33**	**54**

Table 63: Relationship between Plot and Kinetic

A kinetic soldier-author is almost four times more likely to write a negative plot than a non-kinetic soldier. This may well be caused by the fact that kinetic work is less likely to produce positive stories as kinetic soldiers first of all have a greater chance of incurring direct losses in their own teams (and seeing death on the other side as well) and also less chance to see what the (positive) effect of their work is. Non-kinetic soldiers with more regular jobs such as doctors and nurses (Groos, 2009; Heijden, 2009; Lachapelle, 2009; Wiss, 2009, 2010), legal advisors (Moring, 2006; Scholtens, 2007) and business consultants (Braat, 2006; Silvius, 2007) may have a better chance at directly experiencing the results of their work and not incur direct losses in their own teams, although medical personnel will see their fair share of death as well.

We can see a similar effect when we divide the kinetic soldiers into ground-based and air-based groups (pilots and forward air controllers), whereby the latter have work that much more readily leads to results especially when performing air-to-ground work, such as relieving friendly forces who are under fire by delivering support from the air. The ground-based group is almost four times more likely to produce negative stories as the air-based group. As can be seen in Table 64, only one of the kinetic air books (17%) has a negative plot, where 63% of the ground bound kinetic protagonists write a negative plot, although this difference is not (entirely) statistically significant[62]. It fits Samuel Hynes' concept of the "romantic war in the air". The war in the air still "offered to the combatant the possibility of a personal war, and to the public the possibility of heroes", something the war on the ground has less to offer nowadays (Hynes, 1997: 81).

---

62    $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 33) = 4.24$, $p_{one-sided} = .053$

		Kinetic		Total
		Ground	**Air**	
Plot	**Positive**	10	5	**15**
	Negative	17	1	**18**
Total		**27**	**6**	**33**

Table 64: Relationship between Plot and Kinetic Air for All Kinetic Protagonists

The one kinetic air book with a negative plot is *A Nightmare's Prayer,* by US Marine Harrier pilot Michael Franzak who describes how exhausting a twelve month deployment can be, especially when you do not get along with your commanding officer (Franzak, 2010). The rest of the air controlled group write either action plots (Grahame & Lewis, 2010; Macy, 2008; Orchard & Barrington, 2008) or maturity plots (Macy, 2010; Madison, 2010).

Apart from the greater chance of incurring direct losses in their own teams (and seeing death on the other side as well) and less chance to see what the (positive) effect of their work is, there may be another reason that is specific for kinetic work: the fact that the nature of the work is troublesome. US combat historian S.L.A. Marshall estimated in 1947 that only 15 to 25 per cent of the frontline troops that are near the enemy actually fired a gun at the enemy. This percentage went up when soldiers were better trained (Marshall, 1947: 50-54). More recent research into photographs of firing soldiers by US sociologist Randall Collins shows that even after improved training aimed to undo this effect, less than half the troops fire when expected to do so (Collins, 2008: 53). A recalculation by Collins of data from a survey of Vietnam combat veterans (Glenn, 2000) shows that of the average combat enlisted men only 40% virtually always fires back in life-threatening enemy confrontations, whereby the percentage for well-trained and crew-served weapons, such as in helicopter crews, rises to 76%. Of those that do fire, only a small percentage actually hits the target. Collins therefore concludes that fighting generally is not perceived as a joyous activity, but that tension and fear predominate (Collins, 2008: 52, 57-59). This also fits the decreased tolerance for violence nowadays (Pinker, 2011). No wonder that among kinetic soldiers negative stories abound. This perfectly fits the 20th century disillusionment thesis: disillusionment is part of the combat experience.

6.3.9.5   Kinetic and work combined

A loglinear analysis seems to indicate[63] that the two variables influencing plot that are directly related to the soldier-authors themselves, kinetic and work, also seem to have a combined, three way interaction (plot*work*kinetic) effect[64]. This suggests that when you know whether a soldier-author has a kinetic background and whether he or she still worked for the MoD when the book was published, it is possible to predict the kind of plot written: positive or negative.

For non-kinetic soldier-authors there was a significant relationship between the kind of plot they wrote and whether they still worked for the defence organization[65], for kinetic personnel this relationship was not significant[66] (see Figure 30). Kinetics are three times more likely to write positive plots when they are still working for the defence organization than when they left the organization, whereas non-kinetics only write negative plots when they are no longer working for the MoD. This fits the fact that kinetic are generally more negative, which may have something to do with the fact that the characteristics of their jobs makes it more difficult to write positive stories, as discussed before.
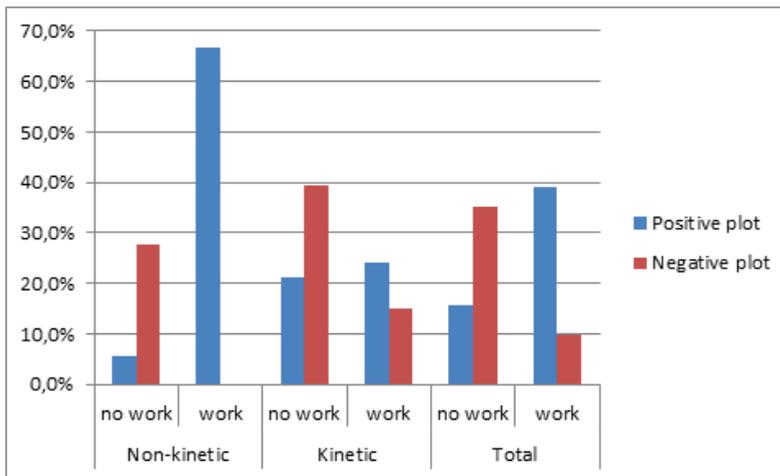
Figure 30: Plots for the Combination of Kinetic and Work

63 The assumptions for loglinear analysis do not entirely hold up. Although all cells have an expected frequency greater than one, three out of eight cells (35%) have expected frequencies less than five (1,7; 3,3 and 4,3). Therefore, loss of power for the loglinear analysis will have to be accepted (Field, 2009: 710).

64 Likelihood ratio: $X^2(0) = 0$, $p = 1$

65 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 18) = 13.85$, $p = .001$

66 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 33) = 2.70$, $p = .157$

However, logistic regression shows that in order to predict whether a book will have a positive or negative plot, the most important variable to know is whether the soldier-author was still employed by the defence organization at the moment his or her book was first published. Work alone can predict for 30%[67] whether a plot will be positive or negative, which is considered to be a large effect (Cohen in: Field, 2009: 57)[68]; adding the variable 'kinetic' to the model, only raises this to 33%. Of those who still worked, 80% will write a positive plot, whereas former soldiers will mostly (69%) write a negative plot. We have seen earlier in this chapter that this can be explained by two mechanisms, both the 'you don't bite the hand that feeds you' reason and that people who are disillusioned by their experiences are more likely to leave the defence organisation and then write negative stories.

6.4   Publisher

Apart from the influence of the author, it seems logical to also expect some kind of influence on the plot by the publisher. Looking at the figures, we must conclude, however, that there is no difference between the kind of plots that self-published and traditionally published books have, neither when looking at the positive/negative level, nor when looking at the difference between disenchantment, growth and rest plots[69], as Table 65 also shows.

	Publishing Strategy		
Plot type	Self	Traditional	Total
Disillusionment	6	15	**21**
Growth	5	11	**16**
Rest	7	10	**17**
Total	**18**	**36**	**54**

Table 65: Plot Type per Publishing Strategy

UK memoirist researchers Woodward & Jenkings do conclude that in the UK there are certain publishing conventions, whereby the memoir starts by introducing the author "as a young recruit embarking on a process which will turn him from unformed youth to soldier or equivalent" (Woodward & Jenkings, 2013: 154). That suggests that the influence of the publisher may be found in whether the mission memoir also describes the protagonist's life

67 R^2 = .30 (Nagelkerke).
68 Model X^2 (1) = 13.09, p =.000. Work: ß = -2.19, SE = .66, p =.001. Odds ratio = 0.11, 95% CI for odds ratio = 0.03-0.40. Constant: ß = 1.39, SE = .50, p =.006
69 Positive/negative: X^2_{Fisher} (1, N =54) = .15, p = .776; D-G-R plots: X^2 (1, N =54) = .72, p = .699

story, or focuses on the mission(s) only. Here, we indeed find a highly significant statistical difference[70] between traditional publishers and self-publishers, as can be seen in Table 66.

	Life Story		Total
	No	**Yes**	
Self-published	18	0	**18**
Traditional publisher	19	17	**36**
Total	**37**	**17**	**54**

Table 66: Life Stories per Publishing Strategy

Nobody who self-publishes a mission-related military memoir devotes more than ten pages on his or her youth, whereas half the traditionally published books start at that point. We can therefore conclude that traditional publishers seem to guide their authors into divulging more of their personal life and upbringing than they may naturally be inclined to do, but traditional publishers do not seem to guide their authors into a specific plot type.

6.5 Country

In the previous sections, we have seen that there are indications that choice of plot is country-related. We saw, for instance, that in the Netherlands more reservists write books and their books are all positive. We also saw that there was only one country, the US, in which negative plots are written by military personnel (all reservists) still working for the MoD. And in discussing post deployment disorientation (PDD) we found indications that countries have specific mores as to the kind of plots and subjects written about in military memoirs.

 In this section we will delve deeper into the question whether soldier-authors from different countries write different plots, and if so, what may explain this difference.

6.5.1   Plot types

Figure 31 provides insight into the answer to the first question: do military memoirs in different countries have different plots? The figure visualizes that the answer is 'yes': in different countries different plots are written.

■
70    $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 12.41$, $p = .000$
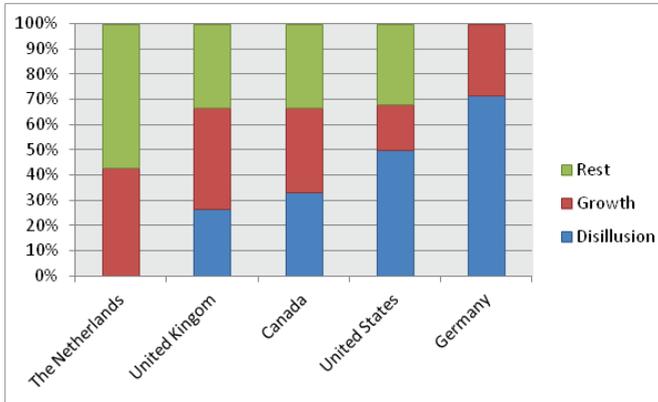
Figure 31: Types of Plots per Country

Although the number of growth plots and rest plots do not statistically differ from country to country, countries do differ strongly in the number of disenchantment plots, from none in the Netherlands to the majority (71%) of all German plots being disenchantment plots[71]. Especially degeneration plots are country-dependent, as they are only published in Germany and the US[72].

6.5.2   The Netherlands – worthwhile work

In the Netherlands, a country not known for its military prowess, only two kinds of plots are written: education and admiration plots, as can be seen in Figure 32.
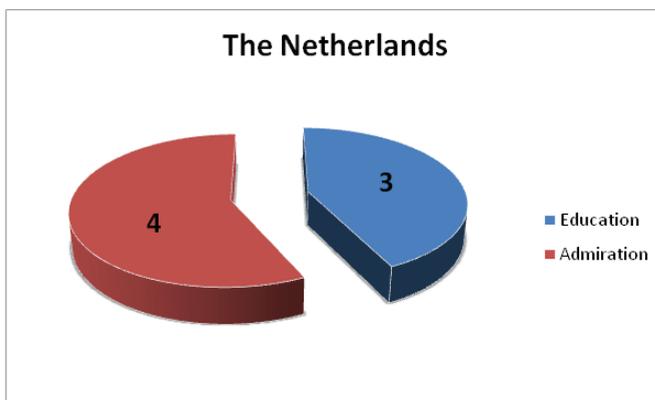
Figure 32: Dutch Plots

71   Growth plots: $X^{2*}(4, N = 54) = 2.77$, $p =.597$; Other plots: $X^{2*}(4, N = 54) = 5.38$, $p =.250$; Disenchantment plots: $X^{2*}(4, N = 54) = 9.70$, $p =.046$

72   Degeneration plots $X^{2*}(4, N = 54) = 10.41$, $p =.034$

As we have seen in the previous chapter, most of these books are self-published (71%) and written by reservists (also 71%). This is in line with the Netherlands nowadays being a non-warrior country in which little (commercial) interest in war books can be expected. As discussed in chapter three, the Dutch reservists deployed to Afghanistan are mainly non-kinetic CIMIC[73] specialists. That is also reflected by the reservists who write: a legal advisor (Scholtens, 2007), two business consultants (Braat, 2006; Silvius, 2007), a government expert (Heukers, 2010) and an infrastructure specialist (Bielleman, 2009). The title of the last book even referred to his status, as it was aptly called *Een reservist in Uruzgan*[74]. These reservists proudly write about their reconstruction work, eager to share the message that they have done good work in Afghanistan. A good example of these books is *Consultant in het groen*[75] by Florentien Braat. She worked as a business consultant at the Pol-e-Komri PRT where she tried to introduce the solar cooker to the Afghan population and taught at the local polytechnic.

When describing the project she works for, Integrated Development of Entrepreneurial Activities, IDEA for short, she writes:

> When someone helps and supports you, it inspires confidence! We, as real IDEA-lists are fantastically equipped to offer people that. [76] (Braat, 2006: 42)

In the epilogue she concludes that "the mission in Baghlan was very successful" (Braat, 2006: 81).

As we have seen before, there is no relationship between positive plots and reservists[77]. However, there is a relationship between non-kinetic soldiers and positive plots[78], and all the Dutch reservists have a non-kinetic background, as does one of the two professionals: Lieutenant-colonel Martien van der Heijden who is a military doctor and self-published *Huisarts in Uruzgan*[79]. Only one of the Dutch books is published by a kinetic professional, *Soldaat in Uruzgan*[80], and his book also has a positive plot, as it is an education plot. This is one of the two books published by a traditional publisher, the other one is *Taskforce*

73 Civil-Military Cooperation
74 *A Reservist in Uruzgan*
75 *Consultant in Green*
76 My translation [sic]
77 $p_{one\text{-}sided}$ = .437
78 $p_{one\text{-}sided}$ = .024
79 *Family Doctor in Uruzgan*
80 *Soldier in Uruzgan*

Uruzgan, op zoek naar het recht[81] by non-kinetic reservist Gijs Scholtens (Scholtens, 2007). As stated before, it may not come as a surprise that reservists find it hard to find a traditional publisher to publish their story, but it is still striking that even in a non-warrior nation as the Netherlands the traditional publishers still seem to favour the kinetic story.

What we see is that all these books are positive stories about a job well-done and a protagonist who has grown, fitting the non-kinetic status of the majority of the writers which may be linked to the sense of control that their work may give them, as discussed before. It also fits the fact that all seven Dutch writers are still working for the MoD when their book comes out, as the relationship between positive plots and work is statistically the strongest link[82].

Apart from these prototypical relationships between positive plots, work and kineticism, the positive stories also fit the main strategic narrative in the Netherlands, debating whether the mission is a reconstruction mission or a fighting mission in which the mission is criticized, but not the military personnel itself (Klep, 2011; Meulen & Grandia-Mantas, 2011; Voogd & Vos, 2010). Both the non-kinetic reservists and the one kinetic professional fuel this debate by providing their own perspective, and showing their own professionalism. No large scale criticism of the military or their reception by society can be found in these books. The dominant message is: Dutch soldiers are doing a good, professional job in Afghanistan, both reconstructing and fighting. As Dutch military historian Christ Klep concludes on the back cover of his book *Uruzgan*: "[Dutch] soldiers are proud of their work in Uruzgan"[83] (Klep, 2011). It is also a logical strategy for soldiers in a non-warrior country to choose a positive approach to show that the work done by military personnel is meaningful. An appropriate motto for Dutch soldier-authors may therefore be 'worthwhile work'.

6.5.3   Germany – war exists and scars

German soldier-authors send a completely different message to their public. Where the Dutch books are all positive, the German books, as can be seen from Figure 33, are predominantly negative.

---

81   *Task Force Uruzgan, Looking for Law*

82   $p_{one-sided}$ = .0005

83   My translation
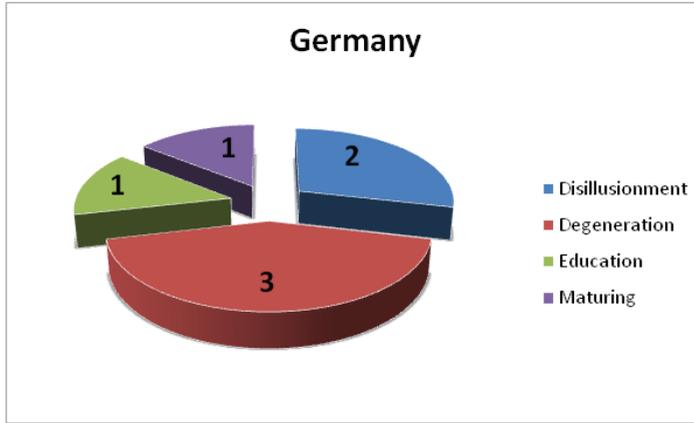
Germany

Figure 33: German Plots

No other country produces such a high percentage of disenchantment plots in general and of degeneration plots specifically. Not only do negative stories prevail, but as Table 67 shows, traditional publishers in Germany prefer negative stories to positive ones.

		Country					Total
	Plot	NL	GE	UK	US	CAN	
Self-published	Positive	5	1	-	5	-	11
	Negative	-	1	-	6	-	7
Traditional publisher	Positive	2	1	11	4	2	20
	Negative	-	4	4	7	1	16
Total		7	7	15	22	3	54

Table 67: Type of Plot versus Publishing Strategy for All Countries

Here, no specific dominance can be found in soldier-authors still working for the ministry, and the ratio between kinetic and non-kinetic writers is 3:4, so that cannot explain the specific negative tendency either. However, the German strategic narrative can provide some explanation. In a pacifist country, which Germany has become after the Second World War, the dominance of negative plots makes sense. Degeneration plots particularly fit the pacifist notion that war is inherently evil, which is the main message that these plots bring;

as Heike Groos so aptly says in her degeneration plot *Ein schöner Tag zum Sterben*[84]*,* "war injures the human soul"[85] (Groos, 2009: dust jacket).

Apart from being disillusioned by the experience of war, there is also the disillusionment of coming home to a country that is not interested in hearing your story, which is a recurring theme in all German books. As Wohlgethan puts it in his second book, *Operation Kundus:*

> The [German] public opinion hardly registers the work of German soldiers. The politicians underplay their efforts. Only few know what they really achieve.[86] (Wohlgethan, 2010: 297)

These German degeneration plots set the tone from the first page. Paratrooper Robert Eckhold for example starts with what he experiences as disrespectful possible captions provided by visitors of an Internet site for a photograph of a coffin carried by German soldiers:

> ' The German Armed Forces on the right path: a first step into disarmament'

> 'Once again one less'

> ' We hail these concrete measures to further reduce the size of the German Armed Forces.' [87] (Eckhold, 2010: 10)

He concludes like Wohlgethan that "the position and responsibility of the German Armed Forces is unfortunately completely ignored by most of German society"[88] (Eckhold, 2010: 10).

Not getting enough credit from the public and politicians seems to be a general military theme, as it can be found in many books in other countries as well. What is special in the German case is the fact that their efforts are played down and trivialized. In the eyes of the German public, the soldiers should not be in Afghanistan to fight, they are there only for state-building purposes, and therefore the fighting stories are not deemed part of the pacifist strategic narrative. These soldiers find that their experiences are denied to them, as if they should not have had them. No wonder this leads to disenchantment plots. Even the one positive book published by a traditional German publisher[89], written by a colonel who

84   *A Beautiful Day to Die*
85   My translation
86   My translation
87   My translation
88   My translation
89   Carola Hartmann Miles Verlag, a small military publisher

still works for the MoD and who led the German PRT in Feyzabad in 2007, is in a subtle way critical about this downplaying, notably from within this own circle. He starts his afterword with:

> 'The situation is quiet, but not stable!' This was the military intelligence's normal assessment of the general security situation during my period in the province of Badakhshan.[90] (Schwitalla, 2010: 264)

He then follows with a list with of what happened during the six months he was a commander. He mentions for instance four foiled IED[91] attacks and a live one, two foiled attacks on his life, the camp was shot at four times, seven people were injured of which two badly wounded and one Czech colleague was killed. He ends his book with the words:

> **"The situation is quiet, but not stable".** Anybody is allowed to judge for himself![92] (Schwitalla, 2010: 264)

These are stories about a country that does not want to see its soldiers fight. A country with soldier-authors that feel that the German people do not understand that in reality it is a combat mission as much as it is a reconstruction mission. What all of them try to accomplish is to change the existing discourse from 'just reconstruction' to a broader and more realistic story that includes fighting soldiers. They try to get recognition for their military work in a form that is acceptable in a pacifist country, by mainly writing degeneration and disillusionment plots. 'War exists and scars' may be an appropriate motto to describe the German military memoirs.

6.5.4   The United States - unfulfilled expectations

As exactly half of the US plots are disenchantment plots (see Figure 34) and 59% of all plots are negative plots, this German tendency to negative plots brings up another question: why does the US, a country in the tradition of warrior nations if ever there was one, also prefer negative plots?

90   My translation
91   Improvised Explosive Devise
92   My translation, emphasis in original
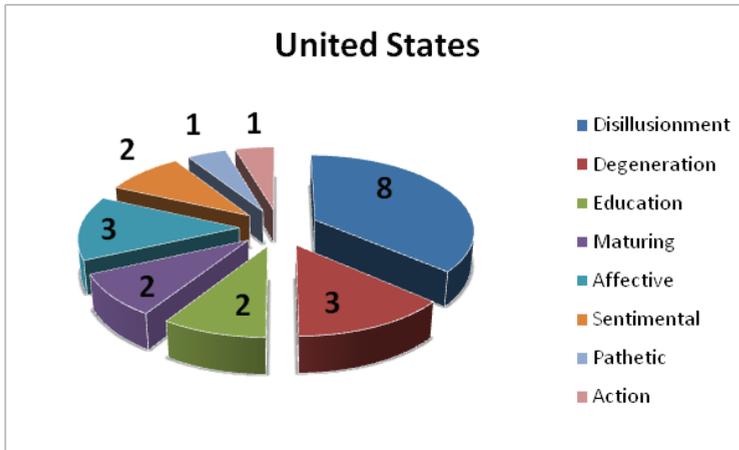
Figure 34: US Plots

The 20th century answer to that question is: because their romantic notions about war are shattered and because disillusionment is part of the combat experience.

The answer from this study's database is: because they no longer work for the MoD and are kinetic. However, we have seen earlier (in Table 61) that for the US the relationship between negative plots and no longer working for the ministry does not hold up as more of the people still working as a reservist for the ministry write negative (57%) than positive plots (43%). The relationship between kinetic soldiers and negative plots does hold up[93], as can be seen in Table 68. It is even stronger than the general link[94]:

		Kinetic		Total
		No	Yes	
Plot	Positive	6	3	9
	Negative	2	11	13
Total		8	14	22

Table 68: Relationship between Plot and Kinetic in the US

This relationship seems to fit the 20th century answer that disillusionment is part of the combat experience. It is certainly the case for all three degeneration plots in the US. They are

93   US: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 22) = 6.04, p = .026$
94   All countries: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 4.96, p = .047$

all written by kinetic soldiers: an ANA mentor (Tupper, 2010b), a Harrier pilot (Franzak, 2010) and a Ranger (Self, 2008). However, their stories are different from the German degeneration plots in that they are first of all action plots filled with adventure, that in the end turn out to have seriously changed the protagonist. Whereas in the German degeneration books it is the other way round: the change to the protagonist is on the foreground, not the action itself. Take for example *Two Wars* by US Ranger Nate Self. As the subtitle (*One Hero's Fight on Two Fronts - Abroad and Within)* indicates, after the war, Self had to fight the man he had become. The book, however, starts with exciting action:

> "Where is this landing zone?"
>
> "On top of a ten-thousand-foot mountain," says a voice on the radio.
>
> "Roger."
>
> We're on a rescue mission, and I'm in command of a thirteen-man Quick Reaction Force (QRF). We are searching for a missing American who fell out of a helicopter in enemy territory two hours ago. He is somewhere below us in the Skah-i-Khot Valley, an area teeming with hundreds of al-Qaeda fighters. Right now, there's no place on earth more hostile to U.S. soldiers – and no place my team would rather be. We're here because we're Rangers, and we have a creed to uphold**:** *never leave a fallen comrade.* (Self, 2008: xiv)

His degeneration story does not start until page 251, two-thirds into the book, when the action packed twenty-hour-rescue-mission has been written down. Where this action part is written chronologically, with dates and times starting each chapter, the 'war within' is written in fragmented, short sentences without any date/time indications:

> I want to die. I want to kill the man who has taken my place. But no one will let me. My family sees the brokenness and they've closed in around me, forming a tight perimeter. No one is going to get in. Or out. (Self, 2008: 309)

According to priest and writer Stud Weber, who wrote the afterword to Nate Self's *Two Wars*, his two wars are nothing special:

> Every combat warrior fights two wars. For the soldier, the sheer shock of combat is traumatic enough, but the anguish of losing his bearing in its wake may prove to

be even more troublesome. Eventually, the battlefield falls silent. But its horrible echoes do not. (Self, 2008: 357)

This is an almost classical disillusionment that looks a lot like the First World War disillusionment that Fussell describes (Fussell, 1975/2000).

But most of the disenchantment plots written are not of this type: besides the three degeneration plots discussed above, there are also three disillusionment-with-society plots and five disillusionment-with-the-army plots. They are sometimes written by soldiers who feel they have been treated unfairly by the military, such as the earlier discussed *Operation Dark Heart* (Shaffer, 2010). Another example is *A Soldier's Tale* (Skelly, 2010). This book not only describes what it is like to be a civil-affairs reserve-officer among green berets, but it also describes that the soldiers upon return to the US were kept more or less imprisoned for four weeks without any explanation:

> The Army soon decided that they didn't want to release soldiers until the Mefloquine [a malaria medicine] was out of their systems and they were sure we weren't suffering any side effects. It took a month for it to get out of our system. We were never told about the side effects of Mefloquine before we started taking it, nor were we ever told about it when we returned. The Army tried to keep it a secret from us, which was why we were never told why we weren't being released. (Skelly, 2010: 169)

But most of them are simply disappointed in their expectations of being a warrior-hero in efficient and effective armed forces. An example is Master Sergeant Regulo Zappata's reaction when he is told by his commander that because of security reasons they will not get a 'Welcome Home-Coming' committee reception:

> Wow! We all stood there dumbfounded, looking at the commander and wondered what had happened. It did not make any sense – it sounded crazy. After watching many times on CNN as other welcome-home receptions took place for military units returning from their mission in Afghanistan, it was confusing to us as to why we would not be allowed this on our return. Sometimes, I wondered about the decision-making processes of our leaders in the military and in the civilian political bureaucracy. (Zapata Jr, 2007: 186)

Although definitely a form of disillusion, and aimed at attaining a change within the armed forces or within society, usually directed at improved respect and materiel, it does not have the urgency of for example the German stories. Where the German soldier-authors talk about getting noticed at all, in the US it is the degree of notice that could still be further improved. At times, one may even be tempted to use the term 'complaints' for these disenchantment plots.

However, that may not be entirely fair, as the US Armed Forces are the most demanding from all armed forces in this study. There seems to be one criticism that is specific for the US that underscores the demanding nature of the US Armed Forces: the stop-loss policy[95]. It comes up a number of times as something that haunts soldiers and is independent of plot choice, as it is mentioned both in disillusionment plots (Exum, 2005; Rico, 2007) and in positive plots such as *An American Island* (Dinneen, 2009), which is a maturity plot. Private Johnny Rico describes the effect it has on him on his last working day:

> I keep scanning my watch. I'm almost out. I keep watching the doorway, waiting for some Army official to come in the room calling my name, alerting me that the stop-loss has just dropped into place and that on this, my last day in the Army, he has to deliver the unfortunate news that I'm not getting out (Rico, 2007: 316).

Another aspect of this demanding force is the fact that the US deploy their soldiers on average for twelve months, whereas other countries use either six months (UK, the Netherlands, Canada) or four months (Germany) as can be seen in Appendix D. A number of US soldier-authors write about how difficult it is for them to be deployed for twelve months on a stretch, such as Harrier pilot Michael Franzak in *A Nightmare's Prayer* (Franzak, 2010) and security assistance officer Patrick Monahan in *Memoirs of a Deployed Airman*. Monahan's book is a detailed diary of a man who gets more and more exhausted and the influence that exhaustion has on him:

> April 27, 2007. I got my third roommate for my tour in Kabul, Afghanistan [...] the first thing I told him when I came in the room was that I'm only here for ten more days (so basically, don't get used to me being here). I took my shower, crawled into bed, and prepared myself for counting off another day of my extended tour. I'm pretty mentally fatigued at this point in my tour and I'm rather ambivalent towards change. (Monahan, 2009: 498)

■

95   Stop-loss: retaining military personnel in service beyond the terms of their enlistment contracts (Wooten, 2005: 1063).

As especially the three disillusionment-with-society books show, those high expectations are also expected in return from society by these soldiers, but they are disappointed in the level of recognition they receive. It seems from the books that the mistakes from Vietnam are not repeated in the US, as most of the soldiers get welcomed back in the US in a positive way, by welcome home committees and parties. Zappata's earlier recounted experience of not being granted a formal welcome home is the exception to the rule. But the welcome home committees and parties are not sufficient. As Sergeant Jeff Courter, who was a mentor to the Afghan Border Police for a year, writes at the end of his *Afghan Journal*:

> I'm upset about the apathy I see everywhere I go. I guess I expected prospective employers to want to offer me jobs. I expected people in my community to want to hear about what we are doing in Afghanistan. I expected more than just my family and friends to care about us Soldiers [sic] after our tour of duty. I suppose I was wrong to expect all this, but I did. It seems my expectations were too high. I don't see very many people caring about what we're doing in Afghanistan, and it has been very disappointing. (Courter, 2008: 380)

Then again, this is only half the story. The other 41% are positive books of all sorts. Affective plots for example, such as nurse Nancy Lachapelle's *Messages from Afghanistan* on the Afghans she worked with while mentoring an Afghan hospital (Lachapelle, 2009) and commander David Wood's comedic *Don't Clean the Tables with a Floor Mop and Other Important Lessons from The Global War on Terror* (Wood, 2008). But also growth plots such as *An American Island* (Dinneen, 2009), which is the story of a depressive adrenaline junkie who joins the army to refind the reasons for living and *The Interrogators* (Mackey & Miller, 2004a), about work as an interrogator. But even in these positive books, the demanding US Armed Forces are never far away. Chris Mackey's interrogators for example only get four to five hours of sleep per day (Mackey & Miller, 2004a: 288) and when Timothy Dinneen has been in Afghanistan for ten months without a break, his tour is extended for an extra three months (Dinneen, 2009: 187).

In short: although the stories in the US books differ, there is a definite negative tendency in the books that is consistent with the dominance (64%) of stories written by kinetic soldiers. Even people who are still on the payroll (always as reservists) write more often negative than positive about their experience. The expectations are high on both sides: the US Armed Forces are very demanding of their personnel and that personnel expects respect in return both from the armed forces and from US society at large, which they feel they do not get

in a sufficient degree. 'Unfulfilled expectations' could sum up most of the US Afghanistan memoirs.

6.5.5   The United Kingdom – positive criticism

From the fact that all of the soldier-authors in the UK are kinetic soldiers (all published by traditional publishers), one would expect a large number of negative plots, as there is a link between kinetic soldiers and negative plots in general[96]. The same could be expected from the fact that 9 out of 15 books were written by authors who no longer work for the MoD. In the UK this is not the case, however, with only 4 out of 15 books in total (27%) being disillusionment plots. The majority of the books are maturity (33%) and action (27%) plots, see Figure 35.
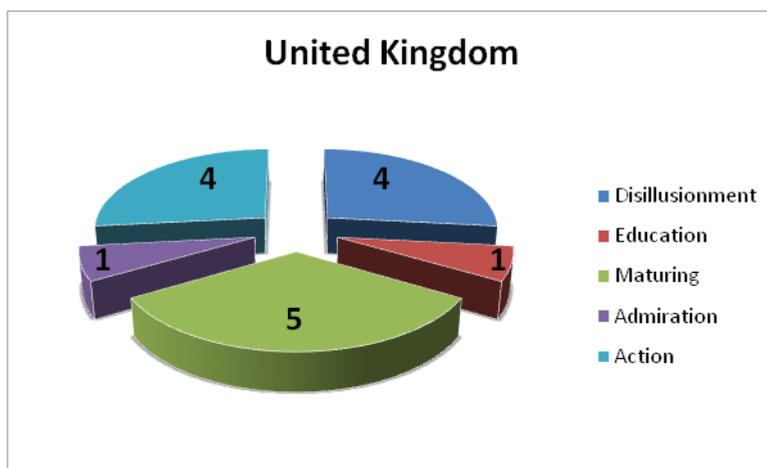
Figure 35: UK Plots

Part of the explanation for this positivity can be found in the relatively large number of co-authored books (one-third) in the UK: as we have seen earlier in this chapter, co-authors only write positive Afghanistan memoirs.

It could be hypothesized that the high number of people who donate their book royalties to charity(one-third of all UK authors) may also influence the type of books written, but that does not seem to be the case. As we have seen before in this chapter, there is no general relationship between the kind of plot and whether proceeds are donated. In the UK this is

96    $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 4.96, p_{one-sided} = .025$

also the case: the positivity or negativity of plots is totally unrelated to whether authors donate or not[97]. The only book with a negative plot that donates money is Danger Close by Stuart Tootal:

> Facing a poorly structured and under-resourced welfare system, 3 PARA set up its own charity called the Afghan Trust […]. The focus of the trust was to raise money to help look after the long-term wounded and the next of kin of those who lost their lives fighting in Helmand […].

> Having to set up the Afghan Trust said much about the existence of a strange dichotomy that exists in the way this nation [UK] treats and regards its armed forces.[…] the remarkable outpouring of support contrasted starkly with acts of sheer ignorance and prejudice. (Tootal, 2009: 300-301)

The fact that UK authors write predominantly positive plots, however, does not mean that British soldier-authors are not critical. On the contrary, like their US counterparts, they display a lot of dissatisfaction with both British society and the British army. Doug Beattie writes in the preface of his first book:

> Some might also think this book is a snipe at the British armed forces. It is not. It is a personal account of what happened to me, and why I think it happened. These are the reflections of an ordinary soldier, asking the same type of questions anyone would when faced with terrifying, horrifying, extreme circumstances. If I did not think the British Army a wonderful place to have a career, then I would certainly not have stayed in it for the whole of my adult life thus far. […] And I most certainly would not have signed the papers that allowed my sixteen-year-old son to enlist and follow in my footsteps. (Beattie & Gomm, 2008: xvii)

With their books, these UK soldier-authors actively participate in and fuel the public discussion around the military covenant concept[98]. They make the abstract slogan *Honour the Covenant* from the Royal British Legion (Mileham, 2010: 34; RBL, 2013) very concrete. The commander of 3 Para, Stuart Tootal, describes the rats that scurry around the social housing that the families of his men are forced to live in:

■

97   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N* = 15) = .17, *p* = 1.000

98   A moral code that was written down as part of the military doctrine as recent as 2000, stating that in exchange for putting their lives on the line and giving up many of their civil rights, soldiers and their families need extra attention from society. This debate was earlier described in the context chapter.

> I had also begun to reflect deeply on the level of rewards service personnel received for the risks they took. As well as being poorly looked after when injured, soldiers earn less than the minimum wage, much of their accommodation is sub-standard and their families fare little better. The housing estate my soldiers lived on was one of the worst I had seen. The houses were small and many were in a poor state of repair. [...] One wife had to wait for months for a boiler to be fixed despite having a small child. Another once told me how she had lived among rats whose urine ran down the walls. (Tootal, 2009: 306)

Martyn and Michelle Compton's book *Home from War* literally mentions the Military Covenant in the chapter called *A Duty of Care*:

> [I]f I hadn't been blown up, I would've willingly fought for my country for the rest of my life. So now that I'm unable to do that, I hope that my country feels it's right to look after me. Me and all the injured soldiers. There's something called the Military Covenant in Britain, which is the duty of care the nation has towards its armed personnel [...] The army has looked after me [...] But I think that the covenant between soldier and state needs strengthening, and I can understand why soldiers and their families sometimes feel let down. (Compton, et al., 2009: 263-264)

Then he tells that at first he was awarded £ 98,837.50 in compensation for being severely burned and injured for life, which was later, in 2008, after public debate and a change in the rules, raised to almost £400,000.

It is unclear whether these books only fuel and substantiate the military covenant discussion that is already part of the national debate, or that they also have helped to instigate the discussion, not only fuelling the debate but also starting it. What is certain is that they contribute to it. UK military memoir researcher Rachel Woodward argues that UK military memoirs "are strategic interventions in long-standing and ongoing cultural negotiations over the meaning of military participation" (Woodward, 2008: 363-364), suggesting they both start and fuel the debate.

What is interesting is that this criticism does not necessarily lead to predominantly negative plots. It does not automatically disillusion UK soldier-authors to such an extent that the book's protagonist takes it so personally that it reduces his or her motivation as we have seen in the German books. It seems that in warrior nations in general and the UK in particular it is easier to be critical of society and the armed forces, without it necessarily having to impact

the person's sense of being in control. Even if the disappointment with society does lead to personal disillusionment, for instance with Stuart Tootal, it does not prevent him from taking personal action in the form of setting up a charity and donating the proceeds of his book to this charity.

This, however, still does not explain why the UK books are mostly positive. One may think that this is simply a country specific feature of a professional military book market which favours growth and action plots over other plot types. However, when looking at the sales figures, no single dominant plot type leads to a UK better-seller. Neither disenchantment plots, nor growth plots, nor rest plots produce significantly more better-sellers[99]. There is not even a statistically significant relationship between positive plots and sales, even though the negative plots on average do sell less copies (about 10,000) than the positive plots (about 36,000), which does represent a medium-sized effect[100]. So the market does not seem to have a particular preference for plots, even though the majority of the books published have a positive plot, despite the critical contributions to the military covenant debate.

Maybe it can be explained by the UK image of military masculinity that Woodward describes in the article *Warrior Heroes and Little Green Men*. She describes the UK military book market as a mass-market of "true life army story" paperbacks which comprises a "genre in which former soldiers tell their stories of active service to a mostly young, male readership eager to learn how it really was" (Woodward, 2000: 642). These stories describe a culture of military masculinity, of warrior heroes in a warrior nation. This is a market not filled with the disenchanted true-to-life stories from the First World War trenches that Fussell talks about in *The Great War and Modern Memory*, but with the popular, heroic stories that Michael Paris describes in *Warrior Nation* (Fussell, 1975/2000; Paris, 2000). In this specific book market, it does not seem too far-fetched to suppose that although complaining and criticism is allowed, as it may even enlarge the hardship the hero endures, the final outcome and plot is generally positive, in order to become this masculine warrior hero. For this, action and growth plots are much more suited than disenchantment plots. This also fits the over-ambitiousness of the British military as described in chapter three: although over-ambitiousness may lead to disappointments and difficulties, in the end, the can-do mentality of the warriors should end in some sort of upbeat note, otherwise it all would have been in vain.

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99   Disillusionment: X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 15) = 2.78, p = .235; Growth: X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 15) = .185, p = 1.00; Rest: X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 15) = 1.25, p = .580*

100 X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 15) = 2.78, p = .235. Positive: M = 36,323, SD = 30,701; Negative: M = 9,885, SD = 8,940; t(13) = -1.66, p = .121, r = .4 (medium-sized effect)*

Characterizing the UK books then entails two different aspects: both the active participation in societal debates and the dominance of positive plots. They can therefore be summed up as 'positive criticism'.

6.5.6   Canada - missionaries

In Canada the story is completely different. The two Canadian soldier-authors, Ray Wiss, who wrote *FOB Doc* (Wiss, 2009) and *A Line in the Sand* (Wiss, 2010)) and John Conrad, who wrote *What the Thunder Said* (Conrad, 2009b), are both on a mission to educate their readers. The kinds of plots they choose to accomplish that mission vary, as can be seen in Figure 36.
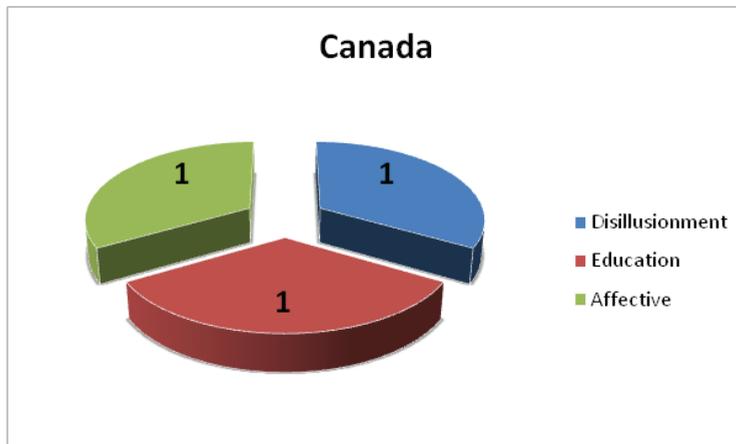
Figure 36: Canadian Plots

John Conrad, a combat logistics officer, wants his readers to understand the importance of logistics and that is a message that is hard to miss in his book. It already starts on the back cover and in the preface:

> Canadian combat operations were widespread across southern Afghanistan in 2006, and logistics soldiers worked in quiet desperation to keep the battle group moving. Only now is it appreciated how precarious the logistics operations of Task Force Orion in Kandahar really were. (Conrad, 2009b: back cover)

> With few exceptions Canadian military history has ignored the combat logistics side of the battle – the nine-tenths of activity and effort that lie below the surface of all military operations. In my admittedly modest academic experience, I have noticed

that the records at the National Defence Directorate of History and Heritage and Archives Canada are full of material on combat units but extremely lean on logistics memories. (Conrad, 2009b: 20)

He keeps up this message until the second to last paragraph:

The [Canadian soldiers] that deliver logistics have a specific, time-revered role. The value of their contribution has diminished in the in the [sic] eyes of some across the breadth of Canadian military history, but I tell you now the esteem they have earned and deserve could not be higher. The combat logistics troops I knew are among the finest Canadians I have had the privilege of meeting. As an officer, a father, and as a taxpayer I am so very proud of them. (Conrad, 2009b: 220)

Ray Wiss also has a message to tell his readers, but being a doctor, his message is not that of the importance of military logistics, but of the importance of the mission in Afghanistan in general. He starts the introduction to his first book, *FOB Doc*, with his writing motivation:

The war in Afghanistan divides our country pretty much right down the middle. But this division is much more emotional than factual. I have been surprised, both before and after my tour of duty in Afghanistan, at the lack of hard knowledge on both sides of the debate. [...] I therefore began writing this diary to explain to approximately one hundred friends why I had chosen to interrupt a very successful medical career to serve my country at war. (Wiss, 2009: 5)

I completely support our mission in Afghanistan, and I want to do my part. I believe our country is engaged in a just cause and our soldiers need help. (Wiss, 2009: 9)

This message, of the just cause of the Afghanistan war, keeps coming back in his diary, with a strength that is unique in this dataset. Although there are other soldier-authors who profess anti-Taliban sentiments, none of them voice it in such strong language and so adamantly:

I despise the Taliban for what they are, for what they did and for what they continue to do to powerless people under their control. [...] Their ideas are so diametrically opposed to anything I can imagine is rational human behaviour that there has to be an element of mental imbalance at work here. Be that as it may, they have to be stopped – and their hostages, the Afghan people, have to be released from their clutches. (Wiss, 2009: 51)

> I sincerely believe we will beat the Taliban for the same reasons we beat the Nazis and then the Communists: our ideas are fundamentally more appealing than theirs. (Wiss, 2009: 175)

In his second book, *A Line in the Sand,* he is less harsh, but the message remains throughout the book. When he goes on patrol and meets a young girl, for example, he comments:

> Her name sounded like "Maria", and she is seven years old. It is sad to think how different her life will be from Michelle's [his seven-year-old daughter]. It is even sadder to think of what her life will be like if we do not defeat the Taliban. (Wiss, 2010: 210)

This almost missionary approach from both these writers fits the Canadian national self-image of global peacekeeper, of a country of people who have firm ideas about how the world should work and strive to attain those ideals.

The Canadian books can be summed up in one word: 'Missionary'.

6.6   *Concluding Remarks*

It looks like the 20th century disillusionment stories have changed character in the 21st century. First of all, the dominance of disenchantment plots can in this dataset only be found in Germany, which has become a rather pacifist country after the Second World War, but no longer in the other countries, although the US, with exactly 50% disenchantment stories still has a high percentage. Secondly, and more importantly, the character of the disillusionment plots has changed. Degeneration plots and disillusionment with war nowadays make up only a small percentage (one-third) of all (disillusion) plots, whereas disillusionment with the army and society are much more dominant now with two-thirds of the disenchantment plots, but still only make up a quarter of all plots. These are more critical plots ('We do not get the respect we deserve') than plots by people who have seen their view of the world completely shattered.

6.6.1   Country-related

We can also conclude that the kind of plots that soldier-authors write are country-related as each country seems to favour different plots. This choice of plot seems related to the specific country's strategic narrative with regard to war in general and the conflict in Afghanistan in particular, see Figure 37.
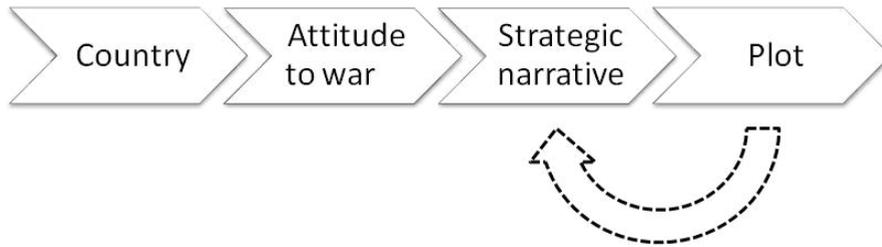
Figure 37: The Relationship between Country and Plot

According to Woodward and Jenkings, the direction of this relationship between plot and strategic narrative may be bilateral when it comes to UK military memoirs:

> Michael Roper observes how personal accounts are not produced in isolation from public narratives, but must operate in their terms through "the working of past experience into available cultural scripts" (Roper, 2000: 183). We would go one step further here, and argue that these available cultural scripts are in turn constituted through the processes by which personal accounts are brought into being in material form. (Woodward & Jenkings, 2012a: 353-354)

Whether this is true for each of the countries studied is not clear. The high percentage of self-published and therefore probably hardly sold books in the Netherlands, for example, may not influence the strategic narrative in the same way as the well-sold UK books do. From this study, the direction of this relationship between plot and a country's strategic narrative cannot be established, but that it exists seems evident.

Chapter Seven:
Why Do Soldier-Authors Write?

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7.1   Introduction

In chapter two, I proposed the fringe writer hypothesis, suggesting that writers are probably outsiders to the organisation they write about: people who are part of the organisation in one way, but in another way they are not, which provides them with the necessary distance to write. This fringe writer hypothesis was confirmed in chapter five, the who-chapter, for individually deployed authors, as they were far more likely to write about their experiences than authors deployed with their own unit. Their outsider position both during their deployment and after getting back to their old unit not only provided them with distance, but most likely also with a motivation to write, as writing provides the opportunity to recount experiences at the writer's convenience.

When it comes to writing motivation, it is often assumed that soldier-authors write for therapeutic reasons. *Elsevier*[1], for instance, seems surprised to discover on the first Dutch Veterans' Book Day that "not all veterans write out of a form of therapy" (Elsevier, 2012: 80). As we concluded in chapter five, it seems likely that especially individually deployed soldiers use book writing for self-help reasons, to share their experiences in the absence of like-minded colleagues.

In this chapter we will delve deeper into the motivations that soldier-authors themselves give for writing their books, and see whether therapy is indeed the main reason for writing, as provided by the writers themselves.

When looking for writing motives in books, I distinguish four basic locations, see Figure 38.
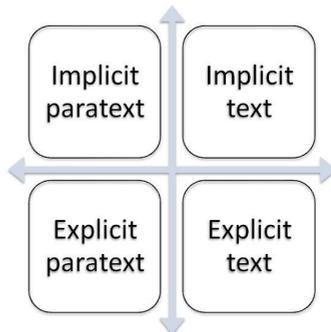
Figure 38: The Four Locations for Motives in Books

1   Weekly Dutch magazine, comparable to English-language weekly *Time*.

They can either be found in the text itself (the chapters of the book), or in the book's paratext (such as preface, acknowledgement, dedications and appendices), and in both cases, they can be explicitly stated ('I wrote this book because...') or the motivation is implicit but may be inferred by the reader/researcher with a certain margin of error from the content of the text or paratext. In this explorative study, we will focus mainly on explicit motivation, with a small deviation into two types of paratextual elements (dedications and lists with names) that indicate implicit motives, but do so in such an obvious way that they can almost be considered explicit. As discussed in chapter four, the methodology chapter, more implicit motives are not considered, as they require a more in-depth research of each book that does not fit the explorative and quantitative character of this study.

In contemporary military memoirs, explicit writing motives are mainly indicated in the paratext; most commonly in the text of prefaces and acknowledgments. Sometimes they are also found in the text itself, particularly in epilogues and in separate why-I-wrote-this-book chapters. These explicit elements can also be used for other purposes besides explaining why the book is written, such as thanking people, or explaining why one should read the book (Genette, 1997: 197). There are, however, two paratextual elements that can be found in military memoirs that are mainly and specifically aimed at explaining writing motives, even though they do so almost implicitly: dedications and lists with names. Dedications are common features of books in general; lists with names are rather specific to military memoirs.

In this chapter, we will start by looking at these two implicit paratextual motives, and then we will move on to look at explicit motives that can be found in Afghanistan memoirs in both text and paratext. All these motives will be related to the who & what, to see whether there is a relationship between the type of author or the plot on one hand and the motivations given by the author on the other hand. Next, the data gathered during field research into the making of a military anthology will be used to see whether the motivations authors give in their books correspond with the motivation for writing they discuss amongst themselves. Finally, the motives found will be compared with the historical motives described by Dekker, Baggerman and Harari to see whether 21st century military authors differ from earlier writers.

7.2   Implicit Paratextual Elements

As discussed, military memoirs feature two paratextual elements that are specifically aimed at explaining writing motives, even though they do so almost implicitly: lists with names and dedications.

7.2.1   Lists with names

In the dataset, two lists with names feature in the form of appendices: the names and sometimes even photographs of soldiers who have died in Afghanistan and the names of soldiers who were awarded combat medals in Afghanistan. In both instances they indicate a motive to honour other.

The first group, the lists with colleagues who have died during the mission can be found four times in the dataset. Both books by Canadian doctor Ray Wiss (Wiss, 2009, 2010) feature the Canadian soldiers who have been killed in action including a military photograph of each of the deceased. *Callsign Hades* (Bury, 2010), by UK infantryman Patrick Bury lists every US and UK soldier who died in Sangin, the Afghan town he was deployed to, in the period he was there (March-September 2008). In *Ein schöner Tag zum Sterben*[2] *(Groos, 2009),* German doctor Heike Groos details the dates and numbers of German soldiers killed in Afghanistan, but not their names.

The second group, with lists with names of people who were awarded medals consists of two books, *Danger Close* (Tootal, 2009) by UK 3 Para commander Stuart Tootal and *Fire Strike 7/9* (Grahame & Lewis, 2010) by UK forward air controller Paul Grahame. Tootal lists all Honours and Gallantry Awards awarded to members of 3 Para and those that collaborated with them during the period he was in Afghanistan, which includes some US colleagues. Grahame also lists the decorations awarded to people during his tour. The fact that both books featuring a medal list are written by UK authors fits a culture in which the most important predictor for military books sales is having been awarded a medal as a soldier-author, as we have seen in chapter six, the what-chapter. One of these authors, Tootal, was himself awarded a Distinguished Service Order for his actions in Afghanistan (Tootal, 2009: 320), whereas Graham was only given a General Commander's Commendation, which does not entail a medal (MoD-UK, 2010), but does comprise of a formal certificate, the text of which he prints fully in one of the appendices of his book (Grahame & Lewis, 2010: 323-324).

2   *A Beautiful Day to Die*

The use of these lists is in general a country-dependent phenomenon[3], that is especially featured in the UK (25% of all UK books) and Canada (in Canada one of the two authors publishes them in both his books), whereas it is completely absent in American and Dutch books.

7.2.2   Dedications

The other paratextual element that is even more specifically related to writing motivation is the dedication. Dedications are a general feature of military memoirs, as 80% of the soldier-authors dedicate their book to one or more persons or groups of persons and there is no statistically significant relationship with countries[4].

Most of these authors (27 out of 43) dedicate their book to only one person or group, but a still rather large part (37%) dedicates to more than one. *Memoirs of a Deployed Airman* beats the lot with this dedication:

> To my wife Melanie, my daughters – Annabelle & Suzanna, my son – Corbin, my extended family, my friends, my battle buddies and wingmen, the wonderful people who supported U.S. and Coalition Forces during Operation Enduring Freedom, and the brave and courageous people of Afghanistan – especially Omer, Yar, and Omid... my ever faithful interpreters and most loyal friends. (Monahan, 2009: v)

Monahan dedicates his book both to specific people (e.g. Melanie, Annabelle and Omer) and to groups of people (e.g. extended family, friends, battle buddies and wingmen, Afghani) and indicates four different groups that are also distinguished by other soldier-authors. The first group is military personnel in general (battle buddies, wingmen), a group which is mentioned in 14 of the 43 books (33%) with dedications, as can be seen in Figure 39.

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3     $X^2*(4, N = 54) = 14.27, p =.006$

4     $X^2*(4, N = 54) = 7.97, p =.093$
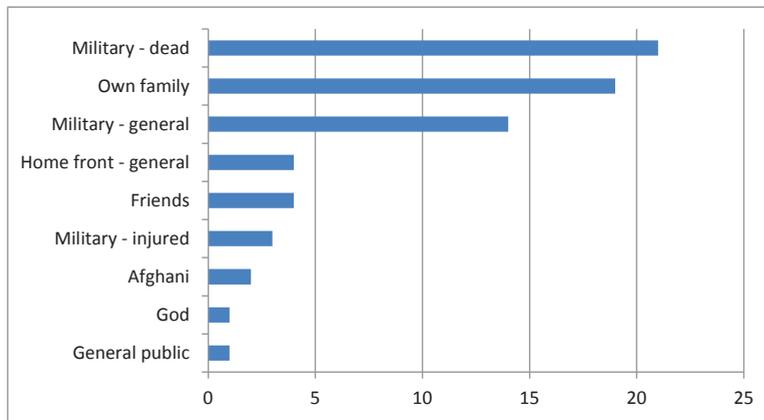
Figure 39: # Books in which Group is Mentioned in Dedication

Another group are the Afghan people, a group which is mentioned only by one other soldier-author as well: Benjamin Tupper, who was part of a mentoring team for the Afghan National Army. Monahan also has one unique group to honour: the general public. Other writers mention other groups they like to honour with their books, such as military comrades who were killed in action (49%) or were injured (mentioned by three writers, 7%), or even God, as Nate Self does in his *Two Wars*, which is published by a Christian publisher (Self, 2008). Some writers (4 out of 43, 9%), such as Harrier pilot Ade Orchard, write their dedications specifically to honour the home front in general, indicated in Figure 39 by 'home front – general':

> To the families, friends and loved ones of all those who fight for their country, for they are the ones who truly endure the fear and uncertainty of war. (Orchard & Barrington, 2008)

Monahan also mentions the home front, but in a much more specific way, not only to honour them in general as Orchard does. Monahan mentions family and friends, which are two categories mentioned by other authors as well, see Figure 39. The own family is the second largest dedication category, mentioned by 35% of all dedicators; friends are a small category, mentioned only by 4 out of 43, which is 9% of the authors. Writing for these people (friends and family) who have not been in Afghanistan can be done to honour them, but is most likely (also) done to help them understand what the author (who is their father, mother, granddad, spouse, daughter,...) went through, and therefore to help them. Heike Groos clearly makes this distinction when she writes:

> For my children, so they know who their mother is and can maybe, at a later date, give this book to their children, so they know who their grandmother was.
>
> In memory of all comrades who have been killed in action in Afghanistan, including those I have not known personally, so we won't forget them. (Groos, 2009: 268)

So we can conclude that two distinct kinds of writing motivation are indicated with the aid of dedications; some dedications indicate that the writer wanted to honour others (other military personnel, the home front in general, the Afghani, or even God) by writing their book, whereas other dedications are more to help their own family and friends.

7.2.2.1 In-group and out-group

We can also conclude that two groups are mentioned most often in the dedications: own military personnel (31 out of 43, 72%) and home front (23 out of 43, 53%). What is interesting is that the people they fight for, the Afghani, are only mentioned by two writers (5%), even though a substantial part of the writers was in close contact with them, as the high number of people in a mentoring role with Afghan counterparts (11) testifies to. This can be easily explained with reference to in-group and out-group behaviour (Tajfel, 1982). The social identity, what organisational psychologists Ashforth and Mael define as "a perception of oneness with a group of persons" (Ashforth & Mael, 1989: 20) of the soldier-authors seems to be first of all with their own military personnel, closely followed by their own family and friends. Their perception of oneness with other groups, such as the Afghans, seems to be rather low, judged from the dedications.

These findings are also in line with terror management theory. Both laboratory experiments and in vivo research into terror management have shown that when people are confronted with their own mortality, they distance themselves from foreigners (see Pyszczynski, Greenberg, Solomon, Arndt, & Schimel, 2004 for an extensive review on terror management theory). Research in Afghanistan, for example, showed that Dutch soldiers from the 1st German-Netherlands Corps were less willing to collaborate with military personnel from other nations (including their direct German colleagues) while in Kabul where the perceived death threat was substantial, as compared to their safe headquarters in Münster (Dechesne, Berg, & Soeters, 2007). A similar effect seems to be visible in these dedications: in these books, which are written in or about an environment in which soldiers are regularly confronted with death, foreigners (in this case Afghans) are rarely acknowledged.

7.3   Explicit Motives

Apart from dedications and lists with names, there are more textual and paratextual elements that provide insight into motives of a writer, in this case very explicitly. All these elements (prefaces, acknowledgments, epilogues and, where applicable, why-I-wrote-this-book chapters) were coded for quotes in which the author explicitly describes why he or she wrote the book, as discussed in chapter four. This resulted in fourteen motivational subcategories, which in turn could be fitted into five main categories. In Figure 40 these five main categories ('no motivation', 'change', 'recognition', 'help others' and' self-help') and the matching subcategories are shown, together with the percentage of books in which they are mentioned.
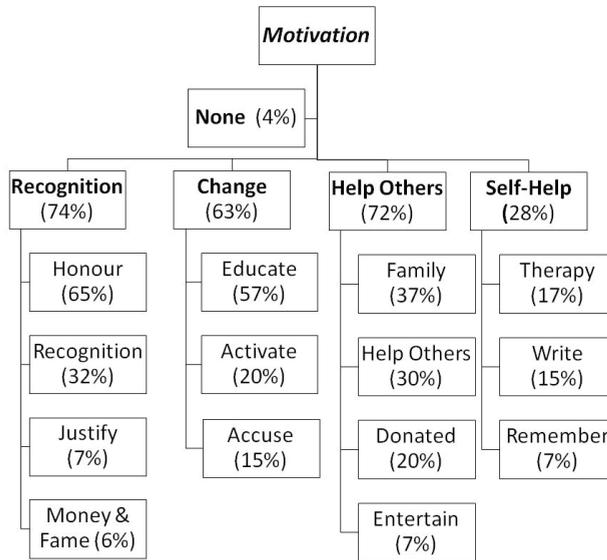
Figure 40: Occurrence of Writing Motives in Books

These percentages include the lists with names and dedications, as the dedications to own family and friends are integrated in the category 'family' (part of the main category 'help others') and the dedications to military personnel, home front in general, the Afghans and God are integrated in the category 'honour' (part of 'recognition'), as are the lists with names. The percentages of the five main categories do not add up to 100%, nor do the percentages of the subcategories below each of the main categories add up to the percentage of that specific main category, as most books mention more than one motive.

In the following section, each of these categories will be discussed in detail.

7.3.1   No motive

Providing the reader with a writing motivation is not mainly done by dedications alone, of which one may argue that they are simply book conventions. Most authors explicitly articulate their reasons for writing in the preface or epilogue or even in a specific chapter on 'why I write' of 78% of the books. Combining these explicit motives with the implicit dedications and lists shows that nearly all soldier-authors (96%) feel the need to explain why they write and publish their book. The only exceptions are two self-published diaries: the Dutch *Voor de verandering: Dagboek van een consultant in uniform*[5] (Silvius, 2007) and the American *Observations of an Average Airman: Letters to Those Back Home...* (Gregory, 2010).

When it comes to explicit text and paratext, self-publishers are just as likely as traditionally published soldier-authors to provide explicit motivations[6], despite the fact that the two books that did not give any explanation whatsoever were self-publishers. This indicates that soldier-authors feel an internal need to provide an explanation for their urge to write, instead of being pushed by an editor to do so.

Often soldier-authors have more than one reason for writing. US soldier-author Benjamin Tupper for example, who started as a blogger, and whose books are based on his blogs, explains in his second book, *Dudes of War* why he and fellow military bloggers write:

> We wrote because we had stories and information we wanted to share, and arguments we wanted to make and attention we wanted drawn to the difficult war being fought by US servicemen and women in Afghanistan. (Tupper, 2010a: 119)

This one sentence indicates change motives, as he wants to activate his audience into a social debate, and educate them; it indicates recognition motives as he wants attention for the difficult war the US serviceman and women fight; and it indicates a need to help himself as he has stories that needed telling.

The UK is the exception here[7], as more than half the soldier-authors (7 out of 13) do not provide their readers with explicit motivation, whereas in the rest of the countries, only a small percentage of writers (13%) refrain from giving explicit explanations of their motives. This difference is not related to typical British phenomena such as the large number of co-

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5   *For a Change: Diary of a Uniformed Consultant*

6   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 54) = .48, p = .730*

7   UK versus other countries: X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 54) = 7.18, p = .012*

writers or medal bearers[8]. The UK difference seems to be related to whether the writer is still working for the MoD at the time the book is published: soldier-author who are still working for the UK MoD are eighteen times more likely not to explicitly mention their writing motivation than writers who no longer work for the MoD[9]. In other countries, work only increases the chance of not giving an explicit motivation 2.5 times, which is not enough to be statistically significant[10] . Apparently, in the UK, with its professional, military book market, soldiers who write do not need to explain themselves verbally, at least not when still in the employ of the MoD; a dedication (which 87%, 13 out of 15 have) suffices. This may be another sign that writing is an accepted practice for British soldiers. What further seems to play a role in whether or not to provide explicit motivation, is the kind of plots they write.

All four negative plots are accompanied by a writing motivation, whereas only four out of eleven (36%) positive plots are, see Table 69, although this effect is statistically not significant in this small (n=15) sample[11].

		Explicit motivation		Total
		Yes	No	
Plot	Positive	4	7	11
	Negative	4	0	4
Total		8	7	15

Table 69: Explicit Motivation versus Plot in the UK Books

This is a general phenomenon, as almost all (91%) negative plots are accompanied by an explanatory motivation text, as can be seen in Table 70. A positive plot is five times more likely not to have an explanatory motivation text than a negative plot[12], so soldier-authors feel more compelled to verbalize why they write their book when writing a negative plot than when writing a positive plot.

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8   No motivation versus medal bearers in the UK: X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 15) = 2.14, p = .282*; No motivation versus co-authored books in the UK: X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 15) = 1.61, p = .315*

9   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 15) = 5.40, p = .041*

10   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 51) = 1.96, p = .199*

11   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 15) = 4.77, $p_{one-sided}$ = .051*

12   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 54) = 4.24, $p_{one-sided}$ = .039*

		Explicit motivation		Total
		Yes	No	
Plot	Positive	21	10	**31**
	Negative	21	2	**23**
Total		**42**	**12**	**54**

Table 70: Explicit Motivation versus Plot in All Countries

7.3.2   Recognition

The most important motivation category is 'recognition', with three-quarters of all books mentioning this as a motive for writing, see Figure 41.
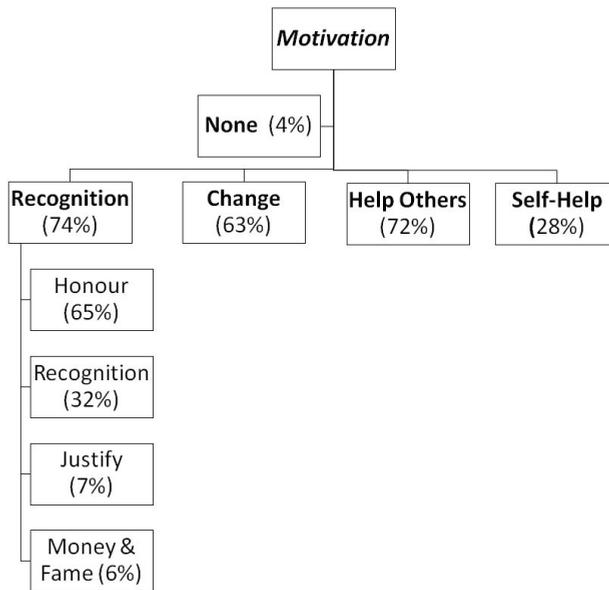
Figure 41: Writing Motive Recognition

Most of the writing motives in this category indicate that they want to honour others (65%) or directly ask for recognition (32%), but soldier-authors who want to justify themselves (7%, four books) or are looking for money and fame (6%, three books) are also part of this category. According to American psychologist Abraham Maslow, recognition (he calls it 'esteem') is one of the five basic needs of psychologically healthy humans (see Figure 42) (Maslow, 1943).
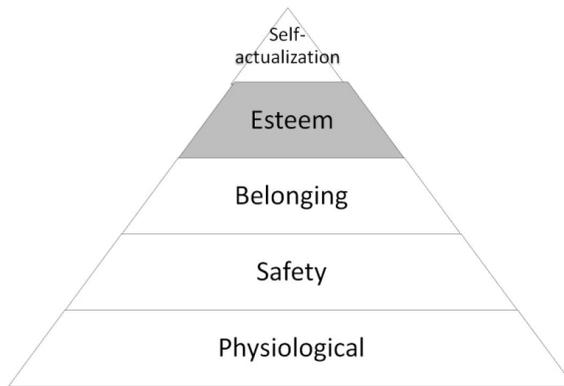
Figure 42: Recognition ('Esteem') in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943)

The fact that it is mentioned so often by soldier-authors may indicate that they experience a lack of recognition, and a need to be heard. This fits the discussion in the previous chapter on the tendency of soldier-authors to substantiate their truth claims with truth guarantees. Here, too, the conclusion was that it indicated an implicit need to be heard.

7.3.2.1 Honour

The largest category of recognition is one that in the Renaissance was the most important reason for writing military memoirs: to honour others (Harari, 2004: 176). It is still an aspect that is prominent to soldier-authors, as it can be found in 35 books. It is most often found in the dedications, with 32 books dedicated mainly to fellow soldiers or the home front in general, but it is also verbalized in thirteen books, a quarter of all books. In *Task Force Helmand*, UK Captain Doug Beattie's second book, he writes in the preface:

> […] but this time I wasn't doing so for myself. I was writing to honour others; attempting to record the bravery and commitment of those who were there with me. (Beattie & Gomm, 2009: ix)

He reinforces this message at the end of his book in his epilogue, even detailing who he feels should have received a medal:

> Many of these brave soldiers have drifted off into obscurity, their exploits never to be recognized by anyone other than friends and family.

In my opinion [Sam New] deserved the highest honour, yet he received nothing. At a time when some parts of the media are suggesting medals are too easy for this generation of soldiers to come by, Sam New is the foil to such arguments.

Of all the people I believed deserved decoration, and who received nothing, Q was at the top of the list. (Beattie & Gomm, 2009: 318, 319, 321)

Talking about medals, what is striking is that those soldier-authors that were awarded a medal or high honour are five times more likely[13] than the rest of the authors to honour others, as can be seen in Table 71.

		Award		Total
		No	Yes	
Honour	No	17	2	**19**
	Yes	22	13	**35**
Total		**39**	**15**	**54**

Table 71: Honouring Others as Motive for Authors with Awards

This interesting psychological phenomenon can be explained as a form of in-role behaviour that is magnified by the augmentation principle. In-role behaviour is the kind of behaviour that is seen by others as in line with clear and potent social expectations that accompany a social role (E. E. Jones, Davis, & Gergen, 1961: 303). Here, the role of soldier, and even more that of medal bearing soldier is that of being a hero who sacrifices himself for the good of the group (whether that is society at large or his own military team). The augmentation principle refers to the idea that if taking an action that involves sacrifices or high risk (such as medal worthy behaviour like rescuing others during a dangerous mission), than the action is more attributed to the actor than it would be otherwise (Kelley, 1973: 114). As getting a medal generally involves some sort of sacrifice to others in the group (such as rescuing people while being shot at), it is likely that the medal wearer will attribute honouring others to his own role.

On the other hand it can also be explained by a military culture in which team effect is emphasized over individual effort and where the medallist therefore has to compensate for

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13    $X^2_{Fisher} (1, N = 54) = 4.35, p_{one-sided} = .035$

his being singled out, by paying extra attention to the rest of the team. It could even be a form of false modesty or socially imposed modesty that may account for this phenomenon.

7.3.2.2   Recognition

The second most popular recognition category, which can be found in 17 books, is 'plain' recognition: attention for the author and his or her servicemen, to get some understanding for the problems they have had to deal with.

American soldier-author Donald Heichel for example writes:

> I hope that through the true stories, a person can understand what we are going through to bring democracy to the Middle East[14]. Freedom is not easy, nor is it free. Sacrifice including sleeplessness, fatigue, blood, sweat, and tears are an essential part of freedom. (Heichel, 2006: 7)

German journalist Boris Barschow decided to go to Afghanistan as a reservist to become the editor-in-chief of a NATO newspaper aimed at the Afghan public, something which also did not come easy. He writes that he felt like he was the only one volunteering and that he therefore demanded[15] attention and respect, but did not get it. That is one of the reasons for him to write his book, because as a journalist

> I can offer people attention, the kind I would have liked to receive after my return.[16] (Barschow, 2008: 249)

This category of plain recognition is then a way of asking readers for acknowledgement of the work (or even sacrifices) of the soldier-author and his or her military colleagues.

7.3.2.3   Justify

In three cases, all by US servicemen, the soldier-authors clearly want recognition by justifying their own actions. Lieutenant-colonel Anthony Shaffer writes *Operation Dark Heart* because he feels unjustly fired by the DIA. In his epilogue he writes:

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14   Heichel doesn't seem to realize that Afghanistan is an Asian country, not a Middle Eastern one. This is not the only time in the book his geography is inexact. According to him, he is stationed "in the Kandahar area", but different locations he mentions, such as Deh Rawood, Rollercoaster Hill, and the TK River suggest he is in the province of Uruzgan, not Kandahar (Heichel, 2006: 24 and 65).

15   He uses the German word 'einfordert'.

16   My translation

One of the key conclusions of the DoD IG[17] report on Able Danger was aimed directly at me. I was called a "marginally qualified intelligence officer" in an effort to discredit my credibility and the fact that I was the most accurate, consistent witness. Given my twenty years of training and experience, I would say that is patently untrue and a sign that their larger investigation was equally lacking in accurate content and veracity. (Shaffer, 2010: 275)

His whole book can be seen as an attempt to prove he was much more than "marginally qualified".

In the same way, Chris Mackey, who worked as a military interrogator in Afghanistan, joins the debate around the abuse in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq with his book *The Interrogators*, to show that there are also good American interrogators:

It may also be impossible to grasp fully how destructive their [the Americans at Abu Ghraib] actions were - to the reputation of the intelligence corps, to our country, and to a world hoping for better from those who wear the army's uniform. It doesn't matter that those accused so far are mainly MPs. All soldiers, and to a greater extent, intelligence soldiers, are tarnished, if only by our proximity. (Mackey & Miller, 2004a: xxiii)

The third and final book in the justification category is *This Man's Army*, written after US soldier Andrew Exum became a public figure in the stop-loss debate[18] in the US:

The week after I was discharged, I penned an angry Op-Ed piece in The New York Times about the stop-loss policy in an effort to get the Pentagon to review the way the Gladiators and soldiers like them were being treated. [....] I soon began appearing on television and radio criticizing the use of stop-loss as well as the similarly distasteful activation of the Individual Ready Reserve. [....] My transition from uniformed officer to suit-wearing activist was a difficult one. I had never been called a traitor to my country before, but that's exactly what women began to call me after I began criticizing the Pentagon. (Exum, 2005: 240)

All of these three US soldier-authors also turn their need for justification into a need for change (the next main motivational category). Schaffer actually accuses the Defense

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17   Department of Defence Inspector General

18   See the context chapter for an explanation of the US stop-loss policy.

Intelligence Agency, and Exum and Mackey want to activate their readers by stimulating a social debate. But with only three out of fifty-four books, self-justification is not one of the dominant writing motives, at least not one that is made explicit by soldier-authors.

7.3.2.4 Money & Fame

Another recognition category which is hardly ever mentioned is writing for money or fame. Only three authors mention this motivation explicitly and two of those three deny being after it. Benjamin Tupper explains in his chapter on why-he-writes that he is most definitely not in it for fame, as that is a socially unacceptable reason for writing:

> Many of our [the bloggers] critics' core objections to blogging came from the soldier cultural tenet that there is no room for individuality in the military. Being a blogger is seen by these critics as an attempt to be a lone voice, someone "special" who wants to hog the spotlight. If it was boiled down to a bumper sticker, I think these critics would say: "There is no blog in team". [...] We never thought we were special, we just wanted people to know about the caliber of soldier we had the honor of working with and the challenges of the mission we had been asked to accomplish. (Tupper, 2010a: 120-121)

In the same vein, Canadian doctor Ray Wiss feels that earning money by writing a book on his deployment to Afghanistan is not right:

> As a soldier, I wanted it to be clear that I had gone to Afghanistan to support the mission, not to write a book. The solution to this problem was easy: give any profits I might make to the Military Families Fund. (Wiss, 2009: 2-3)

Wiss is not the only one to donate the proceeds, as we know from chapter six that the royalties of eleven books, 28% of all books in the US, the UK and Canada, go to charity.

Only in the epilogue of *Don't Clean the Tables with a Floor Mop*, money and fame are mentioned in a more positive sense, but even here it is done only in a subordinate clause and jokingly, fitting the comedic style of the entire book:

> Throughout this *(best selling, award winning)*[italics added] memoir, I tried to focus on the things that had a high "goofy" content. (Wood, 2008: 200)

It therefore seems that although social recognition is an important motive for soldier-authors to write their books, *personal* recognition in the form of money or fame is not deemed a socially acceptable reason for soldier-authors, as it is hardly mentioned, and when mentioned it is mostly done in a negative context.

7.3.2.5   Recognition & country

Recognition in general is not related at all[19] to what kind of plot a soldier-author writes, as about 50% of the authors of both disenchantment plots, growth plots and other plots mention recognition as an important writing motive.

Does that mean that it is a general military variable? Not according to the Dutch Veterans Institute which concludes from its online veterans panel (n=3109) that especially veterans from missions that are unknown by the public at large, such as smaller missions, feel a lack of understanding in their environment. This lack of understanding is often mentioned as the reason for a large need of aftercare, which in turn is associated with high needs of recognition (Reuver, 2012: 28-29). Although the Afghanistan mission cannot be classified as a 'smaller mission', there are two countries in this dataset in which the general public are less aware of the Afghanistan mission than in the other countries: The US and Germany. As we have seen in chapter three, in the US the dominant mission during the time period researched was Iraq, with the Afghanistan mission playing second fiddle and in Germany, which after the Second World War has become rather pacifistic, the public is not interested in military deployments in general. If the conclusion from the Dutch Veterans Institute can be interpreted a little broader, both in the sense of incorporating other countries and in what constitutes 'unknown by the public at large', it could lead to the hypothesis that recognition is a country-related variable, which will be more present in Germany and the US than in the other countries in this dataset.

Looking at Table 72 in which the explicitly written down recognition (so without the dedication aimed at honouring groups) are specified, it is clear that recognition is a country-dependent writing motive[20], and in Germany and the US, there are indeed more books[21] with recognition motives than in the Netherlands and the UK, in which there was ample public knowledge of the mission.

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19   X^2 (2, *N* = 54) = .958, *p* =.619

20   X^2* (4, *N* = 54) = 15.97, *p* =.003

21   US & Germany versus the other countries: X^2_{Fisher} (1, *N* = 54) = 6.03, $p_{one-sided}$ = .014

	Explicit Recognition		
	No	**Yes**	**Total**
The Netherlands	7	0	**7**
Germany	1	6	**7**
United Kingdom	10	5	**15**
United States	9	13	**22**
Canada	0	3	**3**
Total	**27**	**27**	**54**

Table 72: Explicitly Given Motives for Recognition versus Country

The hypothesis does not hold up completely, though, as both Canadian authors also write for more recognition, focussing mainly on honouring their fellow soldiers. This may indicate that in Canada recognition of the mission in Afghanistan by the public was not optimal either. Canadian logistician John Conrad for example writes in his preface:

> ...the logistic aspects of this story haven't attracted the attention of historians and journalists. To be blunt, a story like this would be hard-pressed to find a sponsor because it is a tale about logistics desperation.

> [...] a large part of my desire to write this book stemmed from a deep need to give voice to this exceptional group of men and women who rarely find a champion. I want people to understand the inside horrors and tribulations of doing this mundane replenishment work in southern Afghanistan. (Conrad, 2009b: 20-21)

Ray Wiss not only ends both his books with the photographs of all Canadians who have died in the mission in Afghanistan, but also honours them in words. In his second book, *A Line in the Sand*, he writes:

> This book is also an act of remembrance, and not only for our fallen. I hope that [...] Canadians will learn what life was like for all those who served in Afghanistan. (Wiss, 2010: 2)

In short, we can conclude that social recognition and honouring others is an important writing motive for soldier-authors, whereas personal recognition, either in the form of fame and money or justifying their own actions is not indicated by soldier-authors as an important motive for writing, or even seems to be a taboo subject. In terms of Baumeister

and Newman, the interpersonal reasons abound whereas the interpretive reasons do not (Baumeister & Newman, 1994).

7.3.3   Change

Another important motive (in 63% of all books) soldier-authors give for writing a military memoir is to change something in the outside world, either because they want to educate their readers (57%), or actively engage them (20%) and in some cases (eight books, 15%) they even use their book to accuse some practice or group of people, see Figure 43.
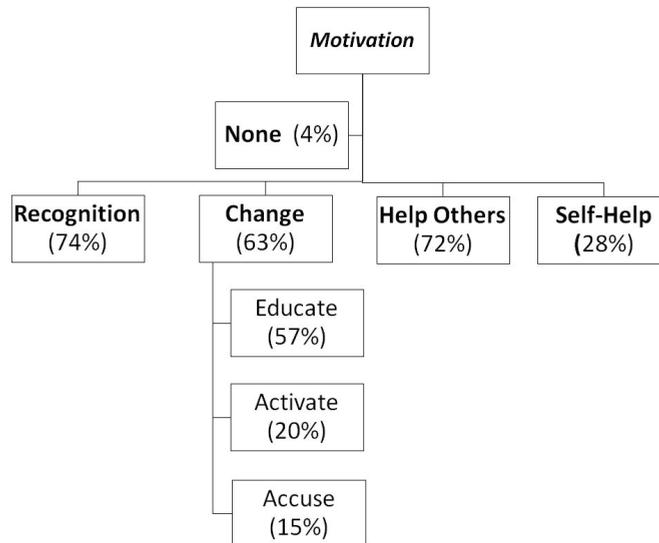
Figure 43: Writing Motive Change

 Two examples of books which combine all these three change-motives are *Operation Kundus* (Wohlgethan, 2010) and *Danger Close* (Tootal, 2009). *Operation Kundus* is the second book by German paratrooper Achim Wohlgethan, and where his first book, *Endstation Kabul* (Wohlgethan & Schulze, 2008) was a disillusionment-with-the-army plot, this book has a degeneration plot for which he has clear writing motives.

7.3.3.1 Educate

Wohlgethan first of all wants to educate the German public, as in his opinion the press and the government do not provide the public with all the relevant facts:

Defence minister Jung ducks out of the truth. The government wants to tell the German population the hard, ugly facts about this dangerous and more and more ineffective deployment only in small, well-dosed bits.[22] (Wohlgethan, 2010: 300)

This is a recurring theme: people do not get all the information they should be getting and the book will fill this information gap. This is especially interesting phenomenon as there are quite some embedded journalists present in the area of operations, who are actually criticised, as we saw earlier in paragraph 3.3, about the fact that they mainly share soldiers' stories instead of the socio-political situation. Apparently, soldier-authors do not feel entirely represented in the stories of these journalists.

Others want to educate the public about what it is really like on the battlefield, like US special force Master Sergeant Zapata:

I have many stories to tell, and if a few of them get read, maybe someone will learn what happened with those of us fighting the secret, front-line war on terrorism in Africa and Afghanistan. […] they may help my readers understand what it was really like for a Special Forces team and its team sergeant. (Zapata Jr, 2007: viii-ix)

Or they want to educate the public about what the Afghan people are really like, as US nurse Nancy Lachapelle does:

I hope by reading this journal you will appreciate the loyal, generous, friendly and intelligent nature I discovered in the Afghan people I met and came to love. I hope it gives you a different perspective on what we are fighting for in Afghanistan… it is for the people. (Lachapelle, 2009: 8)

US soldier-author Benjamin Tupper ends his chapter in *Dudes of War* on why he blogs (and turns his blogs into books) with the words:

Honest and unsterilized bloggers play an important role in educating America on the war, and of the myriad of challenges we continue to face in what is the longest conflict our country has ever fought. (Tupper, 2010a: 121-122)

In short: informing the public of what happens in Afghanistan is a very important writing motive for soldier-authors.

■
22   My translation

7.3.3.2 Activate

For some authors (20% of the books), however, educating their readers is not sufficient, they also want to activate them to actually do something with these new insights. The commander of 3 Para, Stuart Tootal, for example, says:

> The following pages chart the highs and lows the Battle Group experienced and also deal with the consequences of doing the nation's bidding, both on and off the battlefield. They say something of a peacetime society where the implications of war are often poorly understood and where there have been far too many incidents of poor treatment of those who suffer the mental and physical scars of battle. (Tootal, 2009: xiv)

With this book he wants to contribute to a societal debate about this poor treatment, the 'military covenant' discussion. His book donates parts of the proceeds to the Afghan Trust, a charity set up by *3 Para* to look after battalion members who had served in Afghanistan after "[f]acing a poorly structured and under-resourced welfare system" (Tootal, 2009: 300).

Wohlgethan also wants to activate his readers:

> The soldiers not only need mental support, but also back-up from politicians and the general population, but most of all they need better equipment.[23] (Wohlgethan, 2010: 301)

He provides a specific list of equipment that he finds is lacking, from air transport to artillery and adequate hand weapons, ready for use by any German politician or military planner.

7.3.3.3 Accuse

For both Wohlgethan and Tootal their activation of the reader is coupled with a sharp accusation of what they feel are wrongs that need to be exposed. Wohlgethan tells the story of a soldier who had to pay his own lawyer after he has fired his weapon while on duty at a checkpoint:

> But that this soldier, who had to make a decision in a matter of seconds to fire the deathly shot, has to find and pay for his own lawyer is a scandal. [...] That is exactly what I have already written about in my first book *Endstation Kabul*: the lack of back-up for soldiers who are deployed. (Wohlgethan, 2010: 298)

23   My translation

Tootal is just as sharp in his preface:

> Undermanned and suffering from critical equipment shortages, the intensity of the conflict stretched resources to breaking point. (Tootal, 2009: xiii)

Wohlgethan and Tootal are not the only ones who write down their criticism in strong words, six other authors do so too in preface or epilogue, although not always to educate and/or active the reader. Surprisingly, though, only one of them does this in conjunction with self-justification: the before mentioned *Operation Dark Heart* (Shaffer, 2010).

So although accusing is not the largest motive for which soldier-authors write, it definitely fits their general desire to change the world with their writings.

7.3.3.4   Change and plot

Not surprisingly, there is a strong link[24] between negative and disenchantment plots on the one hand and these three change motives, as authors of negative plots are five times more likely to voice a desire for change than authors of positive plots, see Table 73.

		Motive Change		Total
		No	Yes	
Plot	Positive	16	15	**31**
	Negative	4	19	**23**
Total		**20**	**34**	**54**

Table 73: Motives for Change versus Plot

This connection can be explained for one thing as the desire to defend the choice to write a negative plot and for another as a normal outcome of writing a negative plot: a negative plot asks for someone or some institution to undo that negativity, at least in a Western culture. In the same way that we saw in the previous chapter that Western autobiographical writers present themselves as sympathetic heroes, fitting the positive self image that Western cultures promote (e.g. Heine, et al., 1999: 766; Spencer-Rodgers, et al., 2004: 1417), negativity asks for a change to the positive in cultures that desire to achieve pleasure and avoid pain (Westwood, 2001).

■

24   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N* = 54) = 6.63, *p* = .012

Storytelling in general and writing autobiographical books in particular is pre-eminently a way of changing society. As Norwegian social anthropologist Marianne Gullestad writes, " [p]eople live their lives and tell their stories within socially structured conditions, but their actions and stories also have a potentially transformative impact on 'society'" (Gullestad, 1996: 32).

So we can conclude that soldier-authors, especially those who write negative plots, are on a mission to educate their audience and change, which fits a desire in Western cultures to strive for the best. This is once again an interpersonal motive and is part of the normal function of storytelling.

7.3.4   Help others

The second largest writing motive for soldier-authors, mentioned in 72% of the books, is to help others, see Figure 44.
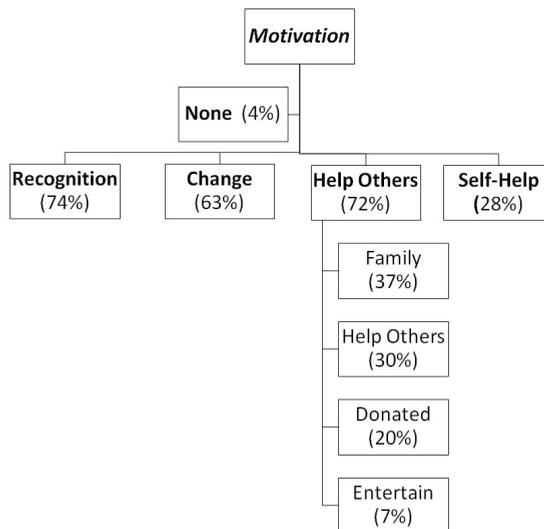
Figure 44: Writing Motive Help Others

It is a category that is deeply intertwined with the previous two motives: recognition and change. The 'others' the authors want to help are often their fellow soldiers or their home front who also need recognition and change. This category is composed of four distinct subcategories. The first one concerns helping the home front, a motive that can be found in 37% of the books. Secondly, 30% of the books specifically refer to wanting to help others

by writing their book. The third category is composed of those books (eleven in total, 20% of all books) that actively donate the book royalties to help others. Finally, four books (7%) indicate that they are written to entertain the reader, which could also be construed as a way to help others, albeit of a different type than the previous three motives.

7.3.4.1 Family

The largest group that military authors write their books for are their own family and friends. As we have seen in the paragraph above on dedications, in Figure 39, the second-largest category of dedications is that of the soldier-author's own family, with 19 dedications, sometimes (in four books) complemented with their friends as well. Apart from dedications to their own families, which are implicit motives, four authors (7%) also explicitly verbalize that they have written their book in order to help their family. Canadian doctor Ray Wiss, for example, dedicates his first book to his daughter Michelle, with these words:

> For my daughter, Michelle
> Why do soldiers risk their present, if not for their future? (Wiss, 2009: v)

He explains this dedication further in his preface:

> I wrote that first letter to help my friends understand what had motivated me. That same person suggested I keep a diary for my daughter to read when she was older. (Wiss, 2009: 1)

UK infantry Captain Doug Beattie explains on multiple occasions in *An Ordinary Soldier* that he started writing as a way of communicating with his wife about his deployments, both for himself and to help her. He opens his preface with this sentence:

> At the outset this book was written for myself and my family. It was a way of coming to terms with what I had seen and done, not just in Afghanistan, but over a quarter of a century of soldiering. (Beattie & Gomm, 2008: xvii)

7.3.4.2 Help others

Books are not only written to help the soldier-author's family, they are also written to help others.

In a good military tradition, these books are seen as a way of transmitting the 'lessons learned' by the author. For example, Dutch business consultant Florentien Braat writes:

> Ending this book without any 'lessons learned' would seem like a lost opportunity. (Braat, 2006: 81)

She then provides three lessons learned on cultural adaptation, on the IDEA[25] formula she worked for and on the relationship between CIMIC[26] and IDEA.

US infantry Captain Craig Mullaney also wants to help others:

> I felt compelled to pass on what I had learned. It is said that a fool learns from his own mistakes and a wise man from others'. I hope my mistakes make future leaders, in the military and elsewhere, a little bit wiser. (Mullaney, 2009: 380)

Some writers write whole chapters at the end of their book with lessons learned, like US intelligence officer Anthony Shaffer, who concludes with a chapter titled *How to Win in Afghanistan* (Shaffer, 2010: 277-289) and ETT officer Donald Heichel who writes two chapters on leadership (Heichel, 2006: 93-101).

But it is not only to help fellow military personnel, as German journalist Boris Barschow writes his book also to help the Afghani:

> I feel that anyone who has ever been to Afghanistan will have been fascinated by this country and has seen with his own eyes that the people over there need our help. I interpret my profession [as a journalist] also as a possibility to help, by telling stories that have really happened. [...] That is also why I write this book.[27] (Barschow, 2008: 245)

7.3.4.3 Donated

Apart from helping others by writing about them or providing them with lessons learned, 11 writers indicate in their books that they chose an even more hands-on method of helping others: donating the proceeds of the book to them. A number of different charitable causes are funded with this money, mostly to help military personnel (9 out of 11 books), such as the Canadian Military Family Fund (Wiss, 2009, 2010) or the UK Combat Stress Fund (Grahame & Lewis, 2010; Orchard & Barrington, 2008).

Three books also donated money to other causes: one for building a school in Afghanistan

25   Integrated Development of Entrepreneurial Activities

26   Civil-Military Cooperation

27   My translation

(Lachapelle, 2009: 123), one, by UK Harrier pilot Ade Orchard, to the Royal Navy Historic Flight (Orchard & Barrington, 2008: vi) and although *One Dog at a Time: Saving the Strays of Helmand* does not say the proceeds go to the Afghanistan dog rescue charity *Nowzad Dogs* established by its author, it is at least implied with the last three pages fully devoted to his charity (Farthing, 2009: 311-313).

Here we see the same pattern as with the dedications: the in-group is once again the military, to which most of the donations go (9 out of 11, 82%), and donations related to Afghanistan itself are only 2 out of 11, 18%, indicating they are mainly the out-group.

7.3.4.4 Entertain

There is also another category of motives that are aimed at helping others, but this one is much less serious, and refers to one of the general functions of storytelling: to entertain people (McAdams, 1996: 310). This is, however, a reason that is hardly ever mentioned, as only four books (7%) refer to it.

The only book in the dataset that refers to itself as a comedy, *Don't Clean the Tables with a Floor Mop*, says that it focused "on the things that had a high 'goofy' content" (Wood, 2008: 200)*.* Another example of a soldier-author who also writes to entertain his readers is Anthony Pente, the author of *Afghanistan Diaries.* Pente hopes at the beginning of the book that the reader "will enjoy the ride" and at the end that he or she "had a chuckle or two" (Pente, 2006: x & 138).

The relative absence of these more frivolous reasons, especially compared to the abundance of more solemn reasons such as change and recognition, indicates that soldier-authors feel a need to explain their writing not in terms of writing as an art but as a serious means of achieving social (not personal) goals.

7.3.4.5 Help Others, plot and country

The motivation to help others seems to be a general military variable, as it is neither country[28] nor plot[29] related. That does not have to be a surprising conclusion, as all the writers in this dataset are people who have chosen, either as professional soldiers or as reservists, to work in a profession that is about bringing peace and stability and serving your country; in short, about helping others.

28 $X^2*(4, N = 54) = 1.96, p = .743$
29 Help others versus positive/negative plots: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .98, p = .369$

Next to getting recognition and bringing about change, helping others is also an important motive that soldier-authors give for publishing their stories. More frivolous reasons, such as for entertainment, are scarcely mentioned. This, once again, points to the fact that for soldier-authors writing military autobiographies is serious business, mainly oriented towards interpersonal reasons instead of interpretive reasons.

7.3.5   Self-help

The last main category of writing motivation, however, is an interpretive category. It consists of those reasons that have something to do with the writer helping himself or herself by writing the book, see Figure 45.
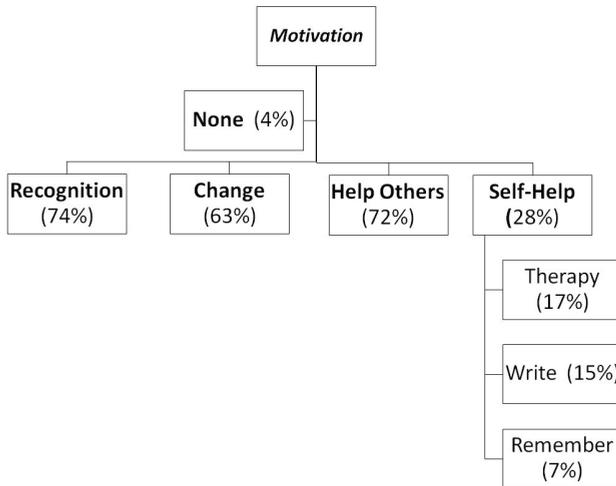
Figure 45: Writing Motivation Self-Help

This is a strikingly smaller category when compared to the previous three. Where the previous categories applied to the majority (63-74%) of the books, only a quarter of the books (28%) provide this kind of personal motivation. This fits the earlier observation that the reasons given are mainly social (interpersonal) and not personal (interpretive). This category 'self-help' consists of three subcategories. First of all people who write for therapeutic reasons (nine books, 17%), secondly those who write because they feel an inner need to write (eight books, 15%), and thirdly the aid-memoir reason: to keep the memory of a special period in their life (four books, 7%).

7.3.5.1 Therapy

As we have seen, people often assume that soldier-authors write as a form of therapy, to help them cope with negative experiences. Although it is certainly one of the reasons to write a memoir, it is only mentioned by nine authors. One of them is UK author Doug Beattie:

> It was a way of coming to terms with what I had seen and done, not just in Afghanistan, but over a quarter of a century of soldiering. (Beattie & Gomm, 2008: xvii)

US soldier-author Craig Mullaney explains that the started writing in the hope to get closure:

> I hoped that by putting those experiences on paper, particularly the more painful memories from Afghanistan, I could finish the war I had brought back home with me. (Mullaney, 2009: 379)

German author Boris Barschow confirms that writing did exactly that for him:

> On the one hand, I have been able to once again relive my experiences in Afghanistan, I have certainly also been able to process a lot, and I am now finally able to leave it behind.[30](Barschow, 2008: 253)

What is interesting is that all three authors cited above have written maturity plots, which are positive plots, see Table 74.

		Motive Therapy		
		No	Yes	Total
Plot	Disenchantment	18	3	21
	Growth	11	5	16
	Rest	16	1	17
Total		45	9	54

Table 74: Therapy as Motive versus Plot Types

Of the eight authors who wrote about the therapeutic value of writing[31], three of them wrote disenchantment plots: US author Benjamin Tupper (who also wrote the 'rest' plot

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30 My translation

31 Tupper wrote about it in both his books *Greetings from Afghanistan* (Tupper, 2010b), a disenchantment plot and *Dudes of War* (Tupper, 2010a), a negative affective plot.

in the table above) and German authors Heike Groos and Achim Wohlgethan. The other five authors all wrote growth (maturity) plots. It is interesting, and counter-intuitive to see that statistically there is absolutely no relationship between negative plots and therapy as writing motive[32]. A possible explanation could be that those who give therapeutic reasons for writing have experienced favourable result from the writing process and therefore are more attracted to writing growth plots. Testing this hypothesis by looking at the statistical relationship between growth plots and therapeutic motive, falsifies it, as this is statistically also not a significant relationship[33], even though soldier-authors who write growth plots are four times more likely to write about therapeutic effects than authors of the other plot types. Even when the resulting book is a disenchantment plot, the writing itself can still have been therapeutic, as Benjamin Tupper concludes in a chapter titled *PTSD: A Blog as Therapy*.

> But I've found that writing these essays is an incredibly potent therapy. It's much more potent than any of the anti-depressants and sleep medications being offered to me by the Army. (Tupper, 2010b: 239)

It seems therefore that whether writing is seen as therapeutic (or not) does not influence the type of plot written. Also, in reverse, the type of plot used to write the book does not influence whether the therapeutic quality of writing is explicitly articulated.

There is, however, a relationship between book content and the mentioning of therapy as writing motive that is statistically significant and that is post deployment disorder (PDD). Soldier-authors who write that they themselves have experienced some kind of mental adaptation problem (such as PTSD symptoms or prolonged alienation) are eighteen (!) times more likely to write as a form of therapy than people who do not write about having PDD[34]. As can be seen in Table 75, there is only one author who does not confess to PDD, but does claim therapeutic effects; this is UK author Patrick Hennessey in *The Junior Officer's Reading Club* (Hennessey, 2009: 322). This does not mean, however, that everyone who writes about PDD also indicates therapy as a writing motive: about one-third of them (36%) does so.

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32 Negative plots and Therapy: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .02, p = 1.000$

33 Growth plots and Therapy: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 3.48, p = .106$

34 $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = 10.37, p = .002$

		Motive Therapy		
		No	Yes	Total
PDD	No	31	1	**32**
	Yes	14	8	**22**
Total		**45**	**9**	**54**

Table 75: Therapy as Motive versus PDD

There may be three possible causes for this effect that could reinforce one another. First of all, in order to talk about therapy, logically, there should also be a need for therapy, which is expressed in these books as some form of PDD: either a feeling of prolonged alienation or one or more PTSD symptoms[35]. Secondly, taking an open position by admitting to mental difficulties may also make it easier to talk about mental solutions, such as therapy. Thirdly, experiencing PDD may lead to other people suggesting writing as a solution for this problem, thereby making therapy the main motive for writers with PDD. Several writers allude to this. UK soldier Doug Beattie writes:

> A friend once told me that he found the easiest way of getting things off his chest was to write them down, and in doing so he also managed to make others aware of his fears and foibles. With time on my hands and no sign of another way out of the grinding memories I tried it for myself. (Beattie & Gomm, 2008: 296)

German journalist-soldier Boris Barschow has the same experience as a friend tells him writing a book helped him a great deal:

> "You will see that in this way you will experience your deployment once again and it will make things a lot clearer. See it as part of your personal way of dealing with it."[36] (Barschow, 2008: 229)

7.3.5.2 Write

Another self-help motive that is also mentioned in eight books is the urge to write. Sometimes as a hobby, a way of spending time, as German PRT commander Artur Schwitalla writes in his preface:

■
35   Re-experiencing, avoidance and numbing and/or increased arousal
36   My translation

> And with this book I can finally answer the question my lovely wife so often asked on the phone: „Well, what are your plans for tonight?". I wrote this book. (Schwitalla, 2010: 9)

Sometimes because the stories just needed telling. As US special forces soldier Regulo Zapata simply puts it:

> I have many stories to tell. (Zapata Jr, 2007: viii)

Sometimes because the soldier-author always wanted to be a writer, such as US author Johnny Rico:

> I am here out of some absurd sociological curiosity. The desire to make my own personal life resume look more like Hemingway's. (Rico, 2007)

7.3.5.3   Remember

Finally, the last self-help motive is one that according to Dekker was the second largest writing motive mentioned in the egodocuments in historical Dutch archives: to keep memories alive (Dekker, 1999: 270). In military autobiographies on Afghanistan, this reason for writing is only mentioned four times, and is therefore together with entertainment and justification the second least-mentioned writing motive, after fame and money (with three mentions).

For Craig Mullaney to remember was the immediate cause to start writing:

> At first it began as an attempt to hold on to memories I felt were slipping away from me. (Mullaney, 2009: 379)

For Anthony Pente remembering was the main reason to be glad that he wrote the book:

> I'm glad I decided to write these diaries, if for no other reason than I'll always have these stories and experiences to look back on. As I'm sure you know, the mind loses way too many memories over time, but this one-year adventure will always be remembered. (Pente, 2006: 137)

Writing to keep the memories alive is directly linked to growth plots[37], as all four books with this motive are growth plots (Barschow, 2008; Mullaney, 2009; Pente, 2006; Schwitalla,

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37   $X^2 (1, N = 54) = 10.26, p = .006$

2010). This is not illogical, as it suggests that (only) soldier-authors who describe their experience in a very positive way, namely as a form of self-enhancement, are explicitly interested in keeping those memories alive.

7.3.5.4 Self-help and plot

We saw at the beginning of the chapter that people often assume that soldier-authors write as a form of therapy, to help them cope with negative experiences. There is a certain truth in that self-help motives in general are significantly more often found in growth plots than in other types of plots[38], see Table 76. This indicates that people who clearly explain that they used the book writing process as a vehicle to help themselves are more likely to experience (or at least write down) their deployment as an opportunity for growth. However, self-help motives, like all interpretive motives are most definitely not foremost on the minds of writers when they explain to their readers why they wrote their books.

		Motive Self-Help		
		No	**Yes**	**Total**
Plot	**Disenchantment**	16	5	**21**
	Growth	8	8	**16**
	Rest	15	2	**17**
Total		**39**	**15**	**54**

Table 76: Self-Help Motives versus Plot Types

7.3.5.5 Self- help and authors

Besides a relationship with plot, we may also expect a relationship with a specific kind of author, when it comes to who writes about self-help: the individually deployed soldier. We have seen in chapter five, as the fringe writer hypothesis predicted, that it is the individually deployed soldier who feels most compelled to write, even though he is not the preferred writer to be published by traditional publishers. One of the reasons for writing for this specific group is to help themselves, as it is more difficult for them to relate their story in other ways, since they do not come back to the people they have been deployed with. Therefore, it would be logical to assume that individually deployed soldiers more often give

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38   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N* = 54*) =* 5.60, *p* = .043

self-help writing motives than others. As can be seen in Table 77, this is indeed the case[39]. Of all soldier-authors who give self-help motives, 79% are individually deployed, and they are almost six times more likely to give self-help motives than soldiers who have been deployed with their own unit. This seems to indicate that for individually deployed soldiers, writing performs an important function in dealing with the deployment, which seems necessary due to lack of team support.

		Motive Self-Help		
		No	Yes	Total
Deployment	Own unit	23	3	26
	Individual	15	11	26
Total		38	14	52

Table 77: Self-Help Motives versus Deployment Type

7.4   Triangulation

As discussed in chapter four, when Dutch veterans' organisation *De Basis* organised a writing contest in order to compile an anthology with short stories by Dutch military veterans from all kinds of missions, this offered a unique opportunity for methodological and data triangulation (Erlandson, et al., 1993: 137-138; Jick, 1979: 602) by using a second method, apart from content analysis, to gather data on writing motives, namely participant observation.

Analysis of the motives soldier-authors talk about among themselves in this completely different context showed that all of the writing motives mentioned by the 54 soldier-authors in this study were also mentioned by the anthology writers, with one exception. This can be seen in Figure 46, where the same motivation categories as discussed earlier in this chapter are shown, whereby the numbers in brackets now relate to the number of quotes overheard during the field research that relate to that particular motive. This provides some insight into the relative importance of these motives.

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39   X^2_{Fisher} *(1, N = 52) = 6.26, p = .027*
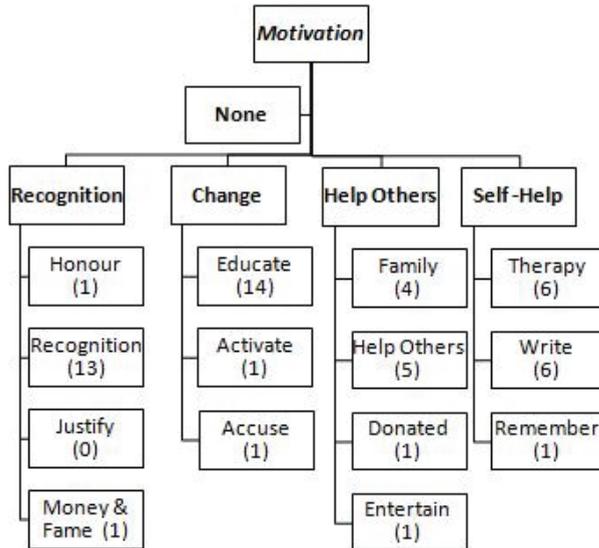
Figure 46: Writing Motives Mentioned by Participants Writing Contest Military Anthology 'De Basis'

The only motive absent in the conversations overheard is 'justify', which is one of the motives that is also hardly mentioned (7%) in the books in this study, so its absence is not unusual.

What seems unusual is the presence of a Dutch veteran who writes to donate money to a charity, as donating royalties was described in chapter six as an exclusively Anglo-Saxon habit, not found in the Netherlands and Germany. This can, however, be explained by the fact that the veteran in question was at the time living in the UK and had done so for most of his adult life, after having been deployed right after the Second World War. His royalties also went to UK causes.

All the motives that were mentioned in more than 30% of the books ('recognition', 'educate', 'family', 'help others', 'honour'), see Figure 40 earlier in this chapter, are also among the most frequently mentioned motives (between 4 and 14 times) by the Dutch anthology writers. A good example is this quote from one of the contestants who is looking for recognition and hopes that his writing will educate the Dutch public on what it was like in the Netherlands East Indies:

> People here in the Netherlands know too little of what really happened. They have very incomplete and very wrong ideas about what happened and why. Only fragments are known. That is the pain of being of a veteran[40].

Once again, there is one exception: the category 'honour', mentioned in 57% of the books, is used only by one anthology writer. 'Honour' as an explicitly mentioned motive, was however only found in a quarter of the books, and was further topped up to 57% with the implicit motives found by dedicating a book to honour others. Therefore, not finding 'honour' as a motive in the same frequency as for instance 'recognition' and 'educate' seems to fit the pattern that motives that are mentioned in more than 30% of the books are also mentioned at least four times by the anthology writers.

It is striking that two self-help motives that are not often mentioned in the international books, therapy (17%) and love for writing (15%), are used more frequently in this 'writers among themselves' context. The fact that the need or love to write is mentioned more often in a context of 'writers among themselves' than in a book destined for the general public should not come as a surprise. That leaves the therapy motivation: does the fact that writers mention this motive more often among themselves mean that it is a more important category than soldier-authors admit to on paper? Delving a little deeper in the quotes shows that 'therapy' is mentioned by four different writers. When asked, two explicitly deny that they use writing as a means of therapy. The first one says:

> [Writing the story] was not a way of dealing with a trauma, not to write it away, I did think and talk a lot about it.

So the fact that these two talk about writing as therapy may have to do more with expectations of the outside world (the interviewer in this case) than of the writer himself. However, two others admitted to writing as a form of therapy, even without being prompted by an interviewer. All in all, this does not yet lead to the conclusion that therapy is a more important writing motive than the analysis of the books suggests. It would, however, be interesting for further study to look into this subject further with another methodology, such as interviews.

In total, this data and method triangulation with a different set of soldier-authors in a more intimate and oral setting seems to confirm the validity of the writing motives found in the international books studied.

■
40   My translation

7.5 *Comparison Historical Motives*

Having analysed the motives that can be found in contemporary military autobiographies and among writers themselves, it will be interesting to see how they compare with motives that writers have given in earlier time periods. As discussed in chapter two, both Baggerman and Dekker have analyzed historical writing motives in egodocuments in general, and Harari those of Renaissance military memoirs specifically. As no taxonomy of contemporary writing motives for autobiographies or books in general seems to exists, it will not be possible to compare the motivation of soldier-authors with those of other contemporary writers.

7.5.5.1 *Baggerman & Dekker*

In Table 78, the motives found in the historical egodocuments that Dekker and Baggerman analysed are compared with the motives that soldier-authors give in their autobiographies on Afghanistan. Remarkably, apart from the 'auto-necrology' motivation, all other motives found in historical texts can still be found in contemporary autobiographies.

Dekker (1999)	Baggerman (2005)	Soldier-Authors on Afghanistan
Remembering		Self-Help/Remember
Religious		Recognition/Honour/Honour God
Children	Example to Others	Help Others/Family
		Help Others/Help Others/Lessons Learned
Reach Readership	Earn Money	Recognitions/ Money & Fame
	Auto-necrology	-
		Help Others/Entertain
	Apologia	Recognition/Justify
		Change/Accuse

Table 78: Soldier-Author Writing Motives versus Historical Writing Motive Models

The fact that the 'auto-necrology' motive - to help a future biographer or necrologist - is absent should not come as a surprise, as this motive presumes that the author is or feels famous or at least important enough to warrant a biography or extended obituary. As we have seen before, for soldier-authors individual fame is an almost taboo subject, not fitting the team spirit expected of soldiers, therefore an explicit acknowledgement of fame in the form of an auto-necrology motive is highly unlikely.

The second marked difference is that, although all five historical categories are mentioned in contemporary memoirs, only one is still a popular category: 'example to others' comprises of the current categories 'family' and of the 'lessons learned' part of the category 'help others'. Especially writing for your own family, which is indicated as a reason for writing in 37% of the books, is a motive that has held up quite well. As can be seen in the greyed-out motives in Figure 47, the other historical categories mentioned are all minor motives, with the exception of 'honour' (which will be discussed in the next paragraph).
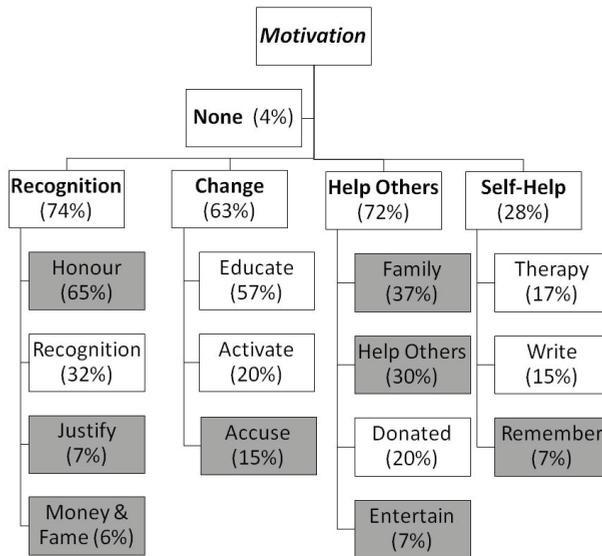
Figure 47: Historical Motives (Gray) Compared to Contemporary Motives (All)

The historical motive 'remembering' is mentioned only by 7% of present-day soldier-authors and only 6% write about money & fame, which can be construed as part of the historical 'reach readership' category. Explicit apologia motives (here in the form of 'justify' (7%) and 'accuse' (15%)) are also relatively low, although this percentage may go up if implicit motives, that are not part of this study, are also researched. Finally, religious motives are only given by one author, who publishes with a Christian publisher in the US: Nate Self. In the acknowledgement to *Two Wars* he writes:

> My purpose is to honor God first and foremost and to honor those who participated in and were affected by the events reflected in this book. (Self, 2008: 373)

So although classical, general writing motives can still be found among contemporary soldier-authors, only the focus on helping others, and especially the writer's own family, remains a popular writing motive.

7.5.5.2 Harari
However, when looking at the writing motive that is specific to historical soldier-authors, 'honouring others' (Harari, 2004: 176), we can conclude that it has not lost strength at all. It is still the most often mentioned subcategory (35 books, 65%). So the background idea of writing to honour fellow soldiers is still up and running in the 21st century, as 24% (13 books) of contemporary writers explicitly say so, and others (41%) do so in the form of lists of names with fellow soldiers who died or were awarded medals for bravery, or by dedicating their book to their comrades. The shift away from writing eyewitness accounts in order to honour others to flesh-witness accounts that are part of the development of a self that Harari saw in the 20th century (Harari, 2005: 68) and his conclusion that "the honorary interpretation of war, once so prominent, has greatly declined in importance" (Harari, 2008: 303), a conclusion corroborated by (Pinker, 2011: 261), clearly has not resulted in honour becoming an unimportant or even non-existing motive for soldier-authors.

7.5.5.3 New motives
There are also motives that are not mentioned by the three historians. These can be divided into three groups: educational motives, self-help motives and donations.

7.5.5.3.1 Educational motives
The largest group of motives that is not found in the historical taxonomies discussed is composed of educational motives; it comprises the large categories 'education', 'recognition', and 'activate'. All three of them indicate that the writer wants his audience to understand and act upon new information the book will offer the reader, particularly by giving some form of recognition. Although in the historical motives there are elements of learning from the content of the egodocuments and acting upon them, notably Baggerman's categories 'example to others', and 'apologia', these are not as pronounced as the modern military educational motives seem to be.

The need to educate and get recognition can be seen as part of one of the fundamental functions of storytelling, to "knit communities together" as American clinical psychotherapist Ed Tick in his book *War and the Soul* describes. "The public platform is necessary for the

story to get passed on and become part of the community's collective wisdom and mythical history". But he continues with the remark "[n]otoriously, however, few of our veterans seek a public platform, nor are they offered one. Veterans most often withhold their stories [...] because they fear that, in our culture of denial, we won't properly receive them" (Tick, 2005: 221).

These modern soldier-authors did seek a public platform, and explicitly asked for community recognition, while at the same time educating their audience, thereby making their audience participate in what American journalist Kevin Sites calls "sharing the burden of war" (Sites, 2013: xxxii).

The emphasis placed by contemporary military memoirists on educating their audience seems to indicate a more profound and underlying principle absent in historical egodocuments in general and historical military memoirs specifically. This underlying principle may have to do with the legitimacy of contemporary military missions. In the past, the legitimacy of military missions was self-evident: a clearly demarcated enemy had to be fought in order to gain control over a geographical region. Nowadays, in stabilizing and peacekeeping missions such as the mission in Afghanistan, the legitimacy and the goals of the operation are no longer self-evident. Although the political elites in NATO countries deployed in Afghanistan are in favour of the mission, the public opinion is generally negative. The percentages of support for the mission vary from a slight majority in the US (55%) to a minority of only 32% in the UK (the Netherlands: 43%, Canada: 40%, Germany: 39%)(Kreps, 2010: 195)[41]. What these modern soldier-authors seem to be doing is a specific form of 'sharing the burden of war': legitimizing why they are in Afghanistan, by educating their readers on what they do there in order to gain recognition and activate their readers.

The education motive perfectly fits with the historically new flesh-witnesses as Harari calls them. "Very often flesh-witnesses are possessed by their past experience. They are messengers speaking on behalf of countless others who did not live to tell the tale [...] who speak – often against their will – in order to change the world rather than merely to transmit information" (Harari, 2009: 222).

41 Mean public support between August 2006 to December 2009 based on multiple polls per country, varying from nine polls in the Netherlands to 43 polls in the US.

7.5.5.3.2 Self-help

Although interpretive (personal) motives such as remembering and earning money are common historical writing motives, two of them are absent in the historical taxonomies that are aimed at helping yourself: therapy and the pleasure or necessity of writing as such. Both of these motives reinforce the meaning of 'the individual self', which is a relatively modern concept, particular to Western countries (Kirmayer, 2007: 233; Mascuch, 1997). In economics, the principle of self-interest is often attributed as the main axiom since Adam Smith wrote his *The Wealth of the Nations* in 1776. Even more recent is the advent of psychology as a science and particularly psychotherapy at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. With founding fathers such as Freud and Jung, who are at the basis of the concept of the self in Western psychology, the idea of having psychological illnesses next to physical ones and being able to treat these illnesses was introduced (Mosig, 2006). Combined with the introduction of the modern individualist welfare state also came the right and expectation to be cared for (Swaan, 1988; 1993: 976). The fact that therapy and self-help are modern phenomena may explain why they are not present in the historical taxonomies.

Deriving pleasure from writing may also be a modern phenomenon. With the advent of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, writing itself and documenting your life and personal history has become a normal part of everyday life, an accepted leisure activity.

7.5.5.3.3 Donations

Finally, the last group of motives missing from the historical taxonomies – donations - is probably not caused by modern developments, as the previous missing motives were, but by cultural differences. These historical taxonomies are based mainly on Dutch sources, and as has been shown before in chapter six, donating book proceeds to charity is an Anglo-Saxon tradition, not a Dutch one.

On the whole, it seems that although historical motives for writing can still be found in contemporary military memoirs, they have been by supplemented by new motives such as educating the audience and self-help in the form of therapy or simply by enjoying the writing process.

7.6   *Concluding Remarks*

7.6.1   Author influences on writing motives

To sum up, there seem to be three author variables that influence writing motives: country, award and individual deployment.

7.6.1.1 *Country*

The country the writer comes from influences writing motivation, as in the UK writing motives are less often given than in other countries. The country also influences the importance of recognition motives. One way of giving recognition to others is by providing lists with names of fellow soldiers who have died or who have been awarded a medal. These lists are mostly given by UK and Canadian authors, whereas they are absent in American and Dutch books. And the use of recognition motives is less in countries where public awareness of the mission in Afghanistan is high, such as the Netherlands and the UK, and is more prominent in German, American and Canadian books, countries in which, for a variety of reasons the public is less aware of the mission.

7.6.1.2 *Award*

Not only is the author's country relevant when it comes to honouring others (one of the 'recognition' motives), the question whether he or she was awarded a medal is important as well, as these soldier-authors tend to be even more inclined to honour others than the authors without a personal medal.

7.6.1.3 *Deployment*

Whether the author was deployed with his or her own unit or not also plays a part in the reasons for writing, as self-help motives are mostly (79%) mentioned by individually deployed soldiers.

Other author variables such as rank, age, or whether the writer is a reservist or has a kinetic background do not influence writing motives[42].

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42 I.e. Self-Help versus Officer: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .000$, $p = 1.000$; 40+: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 45) = .11$, $p = 1.000$; Status: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .03$, $p = 1.000$; Kinetic: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .01$, $p = 1.000$

7.6.2 Plot influences on writing motives

Apart from author variables there are also three plot variables linked to writing motives, notably growth plots, negative plots, and the mention of post deployment disorientation.

7.6.2.1 Growth plots

Next to the type of deployment, there is also a link between growth plots and self-help motives, as books with growth plots are more likely to feature self-help motives.

7.6.2.2 Negative plots

Alternatively, negative plots in general are associated with change motives, as soldier-authors who write negative plots more often explicitly indicate that they want to change their readers, for instance by educating them. Negative plots are also more often provided with some kind of writing motivation than positive plots. Negativity apparently requires not only change, but also an explanation.

7.6.2.3 PDD

Finally, therapeutic writing motivations are strongly linked to the description of post deployment disorientation symptoms. Almost all therapeutic motives can be found in books that also mention the writer experiencing PDD.

7.6.2.4 Other variables

Other variables do not seem to influence motives. Book variables such as genre or publishing strategy do not seem to have any influence on the writing motives. Diary writers give the same kind of motives as literary non-fiction writers do. They, for instance, do not use more self-help motives than other writers[43]. The same goes for publishing strategy[44]. Self-publishers use the same kind of writing motives as traditionally published writers.

7.6.3 Writing motives in general

Reading all these writing motives, three conclusions are inevitable. First of all, that writing books is a serious matter for soldier-authors. Secondly, that they mainly have (or at least:

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43 Self-Help versus Diary: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .38, p = .733$

44 Self-Help versus Publishing Strategy: $X^2_{Fisher}(1, N = 54) = .000, p = 1.000$

give) interpersonal reasons for writing them. Finally, that therapy is definitely not the main reason soldier-authors give for writing.

7.6.3.1 Serious

Frivolous reasons for writing, such as for the entertainment of others, or writing for writing's sake, are scarcely mentioned by soldier-authors when they explain why they write. The main reasons given by the large majority of military writers are, in order of importance: recognition, helping others and effecting change. These three reasons are often interwoven. An excellent example of how these three motives combine can be found in this quote from the author's note of *The Unforgiving Minute* by Craig Mullaney:

> If I could tell the story well, it might help America better understand its military, might inspire some to serve and most to appreciate, and might shed some light on operations in Afghanistan that seem to have been largely forgotten by the American public. I could either continue complaining that people lacked understanding about military service or I could do something to bridge that gap. Finally, as I watched my brother and my students inch closer to graduation and inevitable combat deployments, I felt compelled to pass on what I had learned. (Mullaney, 2009: 379-380)

Reading these writing motives, one can only conclude that writing a military autobiography is a very serious matter for soldier-authors.

7.6.3.2 Interpersonal

Strikingly, these three main reasons (recognition, helping others and effecting change) are all interpersonal reasons, meant mostly to help others. Personal reasons, such as therapy, remembering or fame & money are only found in a small minority of the books. Writing for money almost seems to be a taboo among soldier-authors, especially under Anglo-Saxon writers who in more than a quarter of the books indicate that they forsake their royalties.

This may have to do with the fact that soldiers are selected and trained for working in teams, and for valuing team effort over individual effort. This may cause an uncommonly high focus on others, due to soldiers being a non-random group. What is striking in this regard is the fact that the soldier-authors who have been singled out by being awarded a personal medal or high honour are especially prone to honour others.

On the other hand, it may also provide social pressure to mention motives that are biased

to socially acceptable reasons, which logically in this military environment are group based, instead of individual, especially as this research mainly takes explicit motives in account. However, the picture that emerges from these books and statistics is that these are genuinely involved people that are writing to affect serious changes and help others. To claim that that is only a socially acceptable front does not seem to reflect the sheer numbers of this research. Other research with other research methodologies shows similar results, such as the recent interviews of Norwegian Afghanistan veterans carried out by Norwegian military researcher Elin Gustavsen. In her study, she also finds that veterans often express a desire for recognition in general. "The petition for recognition was not connected to themselves as individuals. They did not want to be praised or honoured at a personal level; rather, they missed a greater level of knowledge about their effort" (Gustavsen, 2013: 11). This also confirms that interpersonal motives are very important for soldiers in general and soldier-authors in particular.

7.6.3.3 Therapy

One of the personal reasons mentioned is therapy. By outsiders, therapy is often assumed to be the most important reason for soldier-authors to write. However, this is most certainly not one of the major writing motivations indicated by writers themselves. It is only mentioned as a writing motive in 15% of the books, predominantly by authors who also mention experiencing mental adaptation problems, and specifically when writing growth plots. That does not mean that the author of every book that mentions adaptation problems also gives therapeutic motives for writing, as only 31% of these writers do so. The relatively low frequency of this personal motive fits the general pattern of giving mainly interpersonal reasons for writing and seems to suggest that therapy is not the main reason for writing these books.

However, the finding that therapeutic reasons are fairly often mentioned by anthology writers when they are among themselves, casts some doubt on the conclusion. As does the fact that in chapter five the fringe writer hypothesis is confirmed for individually deployed soldiers. This indicates that writing is used as a tool to deal with deployment experiences as a substitute for sharing them in a group which has gone through the same experiences. Lastly, the large emphasis on recognition seems to indicate that these soldier-authors experience a lack of recognition, which they try to undo by writing their books. As recognition ('esteem') is one of the five basis needs in psychologically healthy humans (Maslow, 1943), this undoing by writing may also be interpreted as a therapeutic motive. The fact that this search for

recognition is formulated mainly in terms of interpersonal motives, does not invalidate this argument, as the soldier-authors personal identity is linked to the group identity for which they try to achieve recognition.

This ends the concluding remarks on writing motivation and also ends the third results chapter. It is now time to sum up the entire research in the next concluding chapter.

Chapter Eight:
Conclusion

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1   Introduction

This study has provided an overview of military autobiographies aimed at enhancing knowledge about Western soldier-authors of autobiographical books in general, and more particularly on all 54 books published between 2001 and 2010 in the US, the UK, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands about deployments to Afghanistan.

The goal was to complement existing research on military memoirs with reliable, quantifiable insight into 21st century soldier-authors and what they write about that exceeds the Anglo-American view, especially when it comes to (self-published) books. An insight that is not only academically useful, but also to a number of different practitioners, from psychologists and social workers who work with veterans, to publishers who (wish to) publish military autobiographies, to defence policy makers in the fields of public relations, operational security, and international relations.

In the last three results chapters of this study, a large amount of quantitative data was provided that now makes it possible to answer the four questions posed in chapter one:

Who are the soldiers who write autobiographical books about their deployment in Afghanistan, who are their publishers, what do they write about, and why do they say they write?

In this chapter the global answers to these questions will be given, more details can be found in the previous three results chapters and in Appendix A, which sums up the most important statistical findings. This chapter will be followed by the reflection chapter, which is the last chapter.

What becomes clear from the research into all four questions, is that soldier-authors in the five different Western countries researched are a lot alike. However, at times there are clear differences in the way soldier-authors from warrior nations (UK and US) think, write and behave as compared to today's non-warrior nations (Germany, Canada and the Netherlands). In a few cases, for instance when it comes to the kind of plots written in the different countries, these differences are not warrior/non-warrior nation related, but even country-specific. In the following section these similarities and differences will be detailed.

8.2   Who Are These Soldier-Authors?

The first question that was posed in chapter one was: Who are the soldiers who write autobiographical books about their deployment in Afghanistan? This question can now be answered with a profile of the soldier-authors and the kind of books they produce.

8.2.1   The soldier-authors

The average soldier-author who writes about his or her Afghanistan experiences is an average soldier when it comes to branch of service and sex: most of the writers are male and are army personnel, in exactly the same ratios as in their country's armed forces. Apart from these two variables, they are not representative of the normal military population. The average soldier-author is an officer who is over 40 years of age, who is either a combat soldier (a foot soldier or a fighter pilot), a doctor, works in the intelligence gathering community and/or does work that is specific to the Afghanistan mission: either in a mentoring team or a provincial reconstruction team. Where the average soldier is deployed with his own unit, the average soldier-*author* is often (50%) individually deployed.

For warrior nations we can add to this picture that the average soldier-author has a kinetic (offensive) position and no longer works for the MoD when his book is published, whereas in today's non-warrior nations the average soldier-author is still working for the MoD and has a non-kinetic (supportive) position.

Where the soldier-author was stationed in the area of operations is completely country-dependent, as is his or her professional status: either reservist or professional soldier. With the advent of the professional army we can draw the general conclusion, however, that conscripts are no longer writing war stories.

8.2.2   The books

In each of the countries the number of books published is rather stable: for every 6,000 soldiers in the area of operations, one extra mission-related autobiographical book is published. Most of these books take the form of either a literary non-fiction novel (70%) or a diary (25%). On average, these immediate memoirs are published two years after the author's last deployment, whereby diaries are published faster than literary non-fiction. They are virtually always written in the first person, and are mostly (85%) written by the author/protagonist himself, or at least give that impression.

Only in warrior nations, soldier-authors are sometimes provided with a co-author, a professional writer (a novelist or journalist) who helps to write the book. In the UK this is actually quite common, as one-third of all autobiographies published are co-authored.

8.3 Who Are Their Publishers?

8.3.1 The publishers

This distinction between getting a co-author or not has to do with the fact that the composition of the military book market is entirely country-dependent, as was shown earlier in chapter five in Figure 21: Military Book Market per Country.

In some countries, the majority (Germany) or even all military books (Canada and the UK) are published by publishers that invest at their own cost and risk in these books ('traditional publishers'), attesting to a commercially viable military (or in the case of Germany: anti-military) book market. In other countries there is also a large self-publishing market for military books, either because the self-publishing business has become an accepted alternative to traditional publishing (the US) or because of a small commercial military book market (the Netherlands).

Most (two-thirds) of the books are still published by traditional publishers, which are hardly ever specialized publisher in the military book market. There is not one imprint that dominates these markets in any of the countries. The average self-published book is a diary, whereas the average book published by a traditional publisher is a literary non-fiction novel. The production speed of books is not significantly different between these two kinds of publishers.

Besides publishing more literary non-fiction novels, the commercial market for military Afghanistan autobiographies, which is defined here as the books that traditional publishers are willing to invest their money in, is still quite different from the self-published market when it comes to the background of its soldier-authors. In any one of the countries researched, soldier-authors with the following profile are most likely to be published by a risk-averse traditional publisher:

He or she (the traditional publisher is not biased toward sex) has been deployed more than once, preferable with his or her own unit, is a professional, not a reservist, with a junior rank and a kinetic background.

In warrior nations, the kinetic background is not merely a preference, but an absolute must for finding a traditional publisher and having a combat medal is a definite advantage, which in the UK also is one of only two statistically significant variables (together with seniority) which increases the chance of producing a better-selling book (>15,000 copies).

In short: the traditional publisher is looking for the traditional soldier, who neither exactly resembles the average soldier, nor the average soldier-author.

8.3.2   Fringe writer effect

In all countries we can see the fringe writer effect in action: individually deployed soldiers are far more likely to be writers than soldiers who have been deployed with their own unit. The fringe writer effect explains the high occurrence of individually deployed soldiers-authors by their observer status as being an outsider in both their deployment teams and the own unit they return to after their deployment. Although reservists are more likely to be individually deployed, being a reservist in itself is not sufficient cause for the fringe writer effect to appear. However, as these fringe writers, on account of not being deployed with their own unit, are not the ideal soldier the traditional publishers are looking for, they are four times more likely to take refuge into self-publishing. The urge to write does not automatically translate into being published by a traditional publisher.

8.4   What Do They Write About?

8.4.1   Truth and censorship

The majority (57%) of soldier-authors provide some kind of truth claim as to the contents of their book. When making truth claims, the majority (61%) acknowledge the subjectivity of their truth claim, fitting our post-modern era. The fact that this is four times more often seen in books published by traditional publishers supports existing theories that this practice is a marketing tool. These truth claims are important to soldiers for positioning their books as non-fiction stories, something which is quite common for autobiographers. What is unusual, however, is that they also provide evidence for their truth claims; sometimes only in the form of their own memory, but often also in the form of some sort of research. Contrary to other autobiographical writers, soldier-authors thoroughly substantiate their truth claims, fitting the specific demands of war writing in which authenticity is seen as the gold standard.

For soldier-authors, these truth claims can go hand-in-hand with disclaimers and censorship. A large part of them (59%) make some kind of disclaimer as to the content of their book; almost always (in 97% of the cases) about some form of self-censorship for operational security reasons, such as anonymizing names or black-barring photographs. We can conclude from this data that for soldier-authors censorship and self-censoring are normal, integral parts of being a soldier, irrespective of country. Censorship seems to be so normal that most soldier-authors do not even mention it and it does not lead to more negative plots. There are some indications, however, that active discouragement by defence organisation does lead to more negative plots. What is interesting is that defence organisations do not seem to actively encourage their personnel to write books; on the contrary, the number of soldier-authors who specifically indicate that they have been encouraged by their organisation is just as low as the number of soldier-authors who have been discouraged. In both cases only three.

8.4.2   PDD

A subject that is much more often mentioned than censorship is post deployment disorientation (experiencing adaptation problems after returning home from a deployment). PDD is not a taboo subject among soldier-authors as it is discussed in 41% of all books; mostly in books with a negative plot.

8.4.3   Plots

Of the fourteen possible Friedman plot types that can be distinguished, only nine are used in military Afghanistan memoirs. Especially plots that portray the hero as unsympathetic or at fault are not used. Slightly more books have positive plots than negative plots. Whether mostly positive or negative plots are written is country-dependent.

As was shown in chapter six in Figure 29: Percentage of Plot Types in Dataset, the four revelatory plot types (degeneration, disillusionment, maturing and education) make up the majority (69%) of all plots. This means that Harari's revelatory plot thesis, which states that to modern day flesh-witnesses war is a revelatory experience providing them with new knowledge and new experiences that can be either positive or negative (Harari, 2008: 22), is therefore still valid for 21st century military Afghanistan memoirs.

The fact that a minority of all 21st century Afghanistan memoirs (39%) has a disenchantment plot, however, implies that Fussell's disillusionment thesis no longer holds up. Books no longer predominantly describe negative revelatory experiences portraying the protagonist

as a naïve youngster who enters the war with a romantic image of war that is shattered by a harsh reality, turning the protagonist into a victim instead of a hero. In these 21st century books, written by professional soldiers instead of conscripts, we also see a different kind of disillusionment than in the classical 20th century disillusionment books. Their disillusionment nowadays takes the shape of deep disappointment in and criticism of both the armed forces and society itself, and not so much in the form of disillusionment with the practice of war as such.

8.4.3.1   Plots and authors
There are three author characteristics that influence the kind of plot written: co-authors, work and kineticism. The first one is whether an acknowledged co-author is used, as co-authors only write positive stories, probably assuming that positive stories sell better. Sales figures in the UK, however, do not show better sales for positive stories, nor for co-authored books.

Secondly, whether the soldier-author still works for the MoD greatly influences the plot. People who still work for the ministry tend to write positive plots, whereas people who have left the organization tend to write negative plots. This may be explained by a combination of the 'not biting the hand that feeds you' reason for the positive plots by people who still work for the organization and by the fact that disillusioned people are more likely to leave the organization, a well-known fact in organizational turnover literature. Only in the US, reservists who actively volunteered for the Afghanistan mission write negative stories while still remaining reservist. Despite being disillusioned, the reasons why they volunteered in the first place are apparently strong enough to keep them in the organization.

Finally, kinetic soldiers, especially ground based kinetic soldiers, are four times more likely to write negative plots, possibly because they run a greater risk of losing team mates, have less chance to directly experience the (positive) results of their actions and because of the nature of their work, as most people have problems with exercising violence.

Other factors, such as rank, age, branch of service, number of deployments or donation to charity (a solely Anglo-Saxon custom) do not seem to influence the kind of plot written. This also means that disenchantment plots are not related to younger (more 'innocent') soldiers nor that degeneration plots are in any way related to the number of deployments, which fits the earlier conclusion that nowadays soldier-authors are rarely disillusioned by war itself, but more by how societies or their own organization treat them.

8.4.3.2 Plots and Publishers

Nobody who self-publishes a mission-related military memoir devotes more than ten pages on his or her youth, whereas half the traditionally published books start at that point. We can therefore conclude that traditional publishers seem to guide their authors into divulging more of their personal life and upbringing than they may naturally be inclined to do. However, traditional publisher do not seem to guide their authors into a specific plot type, as self-published authors do not use other plot types than traditionally published soldier-authors.

8.4.3.3 Plots and countries

The soldier-author's country, by contrast, does exert a strong influence on the kind of plot written, as was shown in Figure 31: Types of Plots per Country in chapter six.

8.4.3.3.1 The Netherlands

In the Netherlands all seven books are positive stories about a job well-done and a protagonist who has grown, fitting the non-kinetic status of the majority of the writers which may be linked to the sense of control their work may give them. It also fits the fact that all seven Dutch writers were still working for the MoD when their book came out, as there is a statistically strong relationship between positive plots and work. It is also a logical strategy for soldiers in a non-warrior country to choose a positive approach to show that the work done by military personnel is worthwhile, especially as the strategic narrative in the Netherlands focuses on the question whether the mission in Afghanistan is a fighting or a reconstruction mission. The Dutch soldier-authors show both sides of the coin, depending on their military occupational specialism. The message these Dutch soldier-authors give to their readers is that they do worthwhile work.

8.4.3.3.2 Germany

By contrast, all seven German books are stories about a country that does not want to see its soldiers fight; a country with soldier-authors that feel that the German people do not understand that the reality in Afghanistan is that it is a combat mission as much as it is a reconstruction mission, as the German strategic narrative is one that emphasizes pacifism. What the German soldier-authors try to accomplish is to change the existing discourse from 'just reconstruction' to a broader and more realistic story that includes fighting soldiers and gets them recognition for that part of their work too. They try to get this recognition for their

military work in a form that is acceptable in a pacifist country, by mainly writing degeneration and disillusionment plots. 'War exists and scars' describes the German military memoirs.

8.4.3.3.3 The US

Like in Germany, there is a definite negative tendency in the 22 American books, although the stories in the US books differ. The negative tendency is consistent with the dominance of stories written by kinetic soldiers. In the US, even people who are still on the payroll (always as reservists) write more often negative than positive about their experiences. The expectations are high on both sides: the US Armed Forces are very demanding of their personnel and those personnel expect respect in return, both from the armed forces and from US society at large, which they feel they do not get in a sufficient degree. That fits the strategic narrative in which the US sees itself as a fighter of evil. That requires a lot from the people who have to execute that heroic role, but it also means that when they arrive home from their mission to fight evil they are in need of a hero's reception. If that fails, it is no surprise they write negative stories. 'Unfulfilled expectations' could sum up most of the US Afghanistan memoirs.

8.4.3.3.4 The UK

From the fact that all of the soldier-authors in the UK are kinetic soldiers (all published by traditional publishers), one would expect a large number of negative plots, because of the link between kinetic soldiers and negative plots in general. The same could be expected from the fact that 9 out of 15 books were written by authors who no longer work for the MoD. In the UK this is not the case, however, with only a quarter of the books being disillusionment plots, despite the fact that these books in general are rather critical and actively participate in societal debates on the military. Part of the explanation for this positivity can be found in the relatively large number of co-authored books (one-third) in the UK as co-authors only write positive Afghanistan memoirs.

In this specific book market, it seems not too far-fetched to suppose that although complaining is allowed, as it may even enlarge the hardship the hero endures, the final outcome and plot is generally positive, in order to become a masculine warrior hero. This also fits the over-ambitiousness of the British military policies and of the strategic narrative in the UK. Characterizing the UK books then entails two different aspects: both the active participation in societal debates and the dominance of positive plots. They can therefore be summed up as 'positive criticism'.

8.4.3.3.5 Canada

The almost missionary approach in all three Canadian books exactly fits the strategic narrative on war and Canadian national self image of global peacekeeper. The books fit a country that has firm ideas about how the world should work and strive to attain those ideals. The Canadian books can be summed up in one word: 'Missionary'.

This leads to the overall conclusion that choice of plot is country-related, and seems particularly related to the specific country's strategic narrative with regard to war in general and the conflict in Afghanistan in particular.

8.5   *Why Do They Say They Write?*

The final research question to be answered was: Why do they say they write? As Figure 48 shows, almost all soldier-authors (96%) provide some sort of writing motivation to their audience. Four main reasons can be distinguished: getting recognition, enabling change, helping others or helping yourself.
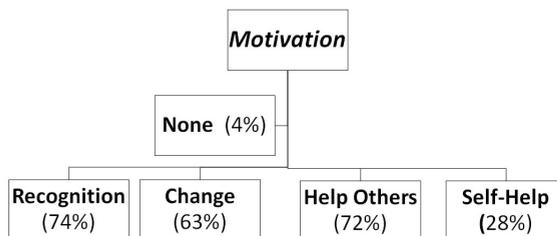
Figure 48: Main Reasons for Writing by Soldier-Authors

8.5.1   Recognition

Social recognition and honouring others is an important writing motive for soldier-authors, especially for authors that come from a country in which the general public is less aware of the mission described, such as the US and Germany and possibly Canada as well. Medal bearers are even more likely to honour others than soldier-authors without a personal award. Personal recognition, either in the form of fame and money or justifying their own actions are not indicated by soldier-authors as important motives for writing, whereby fame and money even seem to be socially unacceptable reasons for soldier-authors to write, especially in Anglo-Saxon countries.

8.5.2   Change

Soldier-authors, especially those who write negative plots, are also on a mission to educate their audience. They not only long for recognition, but they also want that recognition turned into action, into a change, by educating and activating their readers and in some cases by accusing social institutions such as the military or politics. This fits a desire in Western cultures to strive for the best.

8.5.3   Help others

Next to getting recognition and bringing about change, helping others is also an important motive that soldier-authors give for publishing their stories. They write to help their families and friends to understand them or to provide lessons learned or even money to (mainly) other military personnel. More frivolous reasons, such as for entertainment, are scarcely mentioned. This 'help others' motive, like the previous ones, points to the fact that for soldier-authors writing military autobiographies is serious business, mainly oriented towards interpersonal (social) reasons instead of interpretive (personal) reasons.

8.5.4   Self-help

The last main category of writing motivation, however, is an interpretive one, but it is much smaller than the earlier categories, as only 28% of the writers indicate self-help reasons for writing: therapy, the need to write, or to keep memories alive. Therapy as a reason is predominantly provided by those soldier-authors that also write about post deployment disorientation (PDD). Self-help motives in general are mostly given by individually deployed soldiers. Both the fringe writer effect and this conclusion seem to indicate that for individually deployed soldiers writing is used as a tool to deal with deployment experiences as a substitute for sharing them in a group that has gone through the same experiences.

8.5.5   Comparison

Covert participant observation shows that these book-based contemporary military writing motives are the same as the reasons that soldier-authors give in a more intimate and oral setting. Compared with historical writing motives, these contemporary military memoirs still encompass the historical reasons for writing, especially motives related to honouring and helping others, but they have been by supplemented by new motives such as educating their audiences and self-help in the form of therapy or simply enjoying the writing process.

8.6   How Should Defence Organizations React?

Besides these four official research questions, chapter one posed an additional question: how should defence organizations react to the production of books by soldier-authors? Should the MoD only check books for operational security problems, should they actively discourage this kind of publications, or, on the contrary, should they encourage book writing by military authors?

Based on the data from this research, the answer to this question could be formulated as follows:

The data show that in Western countries the production of immediate memoirs is an almost unavoidable consequence of deploying soldiers nowadays; it can even be predicted by a formula[1]. The data also show that the most reliable variable in predicting whether a book has a positive or a negative plot is 'work': whether the soldier-author was still working for the MoD when his or her book was first published. Furthermore, the research shows that non-kinetic soldiers (who are in the majority in modern armed forces) write far more positive plots than kinetic soldiers. Provided that defence organisations are first and foremost interested in positive publications in any medium, the recommendation to any Western military organisation with regard to (potential) soldier-authors is: try to stimulate them to write when they are still in your employ and stimulate especially those who have non-kinetic backgrounds. Specifically doing so for individually deployed soldiers may actually help them as well, as writing will provide them with an extra outlet that is dearly needed as the fringe writer effect seems to indicate.

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1   # books = 1.2 + 1.5 * (estimated # soldiers in area of operations/10,000)

Chapter Nine:
Reflection

Chapter Nine: Reflection

9.1   Introduction

Having looked at the conclusions from this study in the previous chapter, this final chapter will examine the broader context of this study: after a full disclosure of the researcher's position and the limitations of this study, the role of military memoirs will be examined as influencers of public opinion. Then some speculation on the future of military memoirs and on their use as proxy for soldiers in general will follow. The chapter will end with some suggestions for further research.

9.2   Researcher's Position

9.2.1   Soldier-author

Let us start these reflections with a full disclosure. I am a lieutenant-colonel with the Royal Netherlands Air Force and writer of a military Afghanistan memoir, *Officier in Afghanistan*[1], which was published in 2012 and was therefore not part of this investigation (Kleinreesink, 2012b). In terms of this study, *Officier in Afghanistan* is a disillusionment-with-armed-forces story. At first glance that would mean that my book is an outlier as I write a negative story, which is an exception among the Dutch worthwhile-work-stories and among non-warrior nations where writing negative stories while still on active duty is uncommon. However, the armed forces I write about are not the Dutch defence organization, but NATO, which places me in a comparable position as American soldier-author Anthony Shaffer in *Operation Dark Heart* who is critical about one part of the defence organization (in his case the Defence Intelligence Agency), but still happily employed at another part (the army). *Officier in Afghanistan* was a consequence of my participation in the Dutch military anthology *Task Force Uruzgan* (Kleinreesink, 2009a, 2009b), a book that was actively sponsored by the defence public relations department.

The fact that I myself wrote a military memoir means that I know from personal experience what the influence of operational security and censoring is on that writing, that I have given a lot of thought to the mix of writing motives, and that I have personally experienced the difference between the reception within the defence organization of a guided publication such as *Task Force Uruzgan* and that of a self-initiated autobiography. These personal

experiences provide me with a unique insider's view on the military and on soldier-authors, which will certainly have contributed to the kind of questions I asked and the hypotheses I formulated to answer these questions.

9.2.2   Active service

Apart from this positive impact, the fact that I am an active servicewoman may also, unconsciously, influence the research in a less favourable way. To continue the full disclosure: this study was undertaken in the time set aside for research during my post as military assistant professor at the Netherlands Defence Academy (NLDA), which is part of the Dutch military organization. It was supervised by Professor Soeters, who is also employed by the NLDA. This posting was extended by the Royal Netherlands Air Force in order to accommodate the writing of this PhD thesis. So in practice this study has been sponsored by the Dutch armed forces.

In order to guard for any unwanted biases, a number of measures have been taken. The first one is institutional: the position of the NLDA and its researchers within the armed forces is legally different from other defence institutes in order to guarantee academic freedom. Both the publication of academic books (such as this study) and publication of research in academic journals are, for example, not bound by checks of the defence public relations department. Secondly, a second supervisor from a civilian university, with no ties to the defence organization, was found in Professor Beunders from Erasmus University Rotterdam. Thirdly, a quantitative and qualitative methodology was rigorously applied to ensure maximum reproducibility of the research, as detailed in the extensive methodology chapter (chapter four).

9.3   Limitations

With the full disclosure dealt with, let us now look at the limitations of this study.

9.3.1   Extending the results

The results fully describe the immediate Afghanistan memoirs published in the five countries researched, as they are not a *sample* of the total population of Afghanistan memoirs, but represent the *total* population. Extending these results, however, to other (military) autobiographies from earlier periods, other missions, or other countries can only be done tentatively. Especially those variables that were shown to be general indicators

in all five countries, and to a lesser extent those variables that were shown to be warrior nation dependent are good candidates for making generalization about military memoirs, but further research has to go into all the conclusion of this study to see whether they can be applied outside of the 21st-century-immediate-military-Afghanistan-memoir framework as presented here.

As only books written in three languages (English, German and Dutch) were researched, a lot of other interesting European countries were not part of this study. A European nuclear power such as France, which contributed almost 18,000 posts during the ten-year period under research, roughly equivalent to the contribution of Canada, was not part of this study. Nor were southern European countries, such as Italy (ca 17,000 posts contributed) or a Muslim country such as Turkey, which contributed ca 9,000 posts, about the same number as the Netherlands contributed (NATO, 2002-2011).

From the number of posts contributed, which for each of these countries is well over the threshold of 6,000 soldiers in theatre needed on average to produce one book, it seems likely that soldier-authors in these countries will have written Afghanistan autobiographies. In France, at least one book was published in the period researched: *Task Force Tiger: Journal de marche d'un chef de corps français en Afghanistan*[2] (Nen, 2010), and several books in the years after 2010 (Barthe & Kauffmann, 2011; Can & Mingasson, 2011). It will be interesting to see whether that was also the case in Turkey and Italy. If this is the case, is their plot choice also influenced by its country's strategic narrative on war and to what kind of plots does that lead? Do they indicate the same kind of writing motives? Do soldiers in a Muslim country show the same in-group/out-group effects, in that they hardly perceive a oneness with the Afghans they fight for and with? Only future research can tell.

9.3.2   Content analysis

The content analysis methodology used comes with its own limitations. Content analysis, as the name implies, only looks at the content of the text under analysis, in this case the content of the 54 books. What is not written down, what is consciously or unconsciously withheld by the author can therefore hardly be researched (although the fringe writer effect and the semi-implicit writing motives found in dedications and lists do give some indication of less-conscious motivations). What is consequently studied is not some kind of objective truth (if that were to exist and could be known), but the social construct that soldier-authors

2   *Task Force Tiger: War Diary of a French Battalion Commander in Afghanistan*

create by writing these books. In this study content analysis was further substantiated by the use of another methodology, i.e. covert participant observation, for the validation of the why-question.

9.3.3   Procrustean bed

Finally, the combination of the use of content analysis and statistical analysis leads to limitations. Content analysis means that the researcher interprets texts, which always involves some kind of subjective interpretation. It also involves coding, and coding means reducing the complexity of the real world into a limited number of categories. Statistical analysis needs this categorization in order to make calculations. However, this subjective coding process may lead to different outcomes if different researchers were to code the same data. As discussed in chapter four, this study does hold an internal consistency as it was coded by only one researcher, but especially the choice of plot could be different if someone else had coded it, thereby potentially reaching different conclusions, although an intercoder reliability test with fellow autobiography researcher Rachel Woodward showed that the reproducibility of this coding was quite high.

Like the Greek myth about Procrustes and his magical one-size-fits-all bed[3], scientists try to reduce complexity, but that always bends 'the truth' somehow.

However, doing qualitative research by definition entails quite a lot of individual subjectivity. Coding data into a procrustean bed undoes that shortcoming to a large degree, as it reduces the unverifiable, almost magical individual subjectivity of qualitative research into a verifiable, methodical approach. Even if that means that it simplifies reality to some extent.

9.4   Military Memoirs and Public Opinion

Having looked at the limitations of this study, it now seems appropriate to look at how the results of this study fit in the larger scheme of things. How do these military memoirs relate to the military organizations, press or public opinion?

9.4.1   Military organisations

In principle, military organizations are not negative toward publicity. From the start of

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3   Procrustes had an iron bed in which he invited passers-by to sleep in. He claimed the bed fit everyone. It did indeed, after he either amputated their legs or stretched them to fit.

the operations in Uruzgan, the Dutch military authorities have embarked upon an open course, inviting large numbers of journalists and politicians to Afghanistan. Any politician who wanted to see with his or her own eyes what the situation was like in Afghanistan was provided with VIP transport, cabinet members were welcomed wholeheartedly and a permanent stream of Dutch celebrities and journalists was encouraged by the defence organization to come to Afghanistan. That this was not a uniquely Dutch phenomenon, I know from personal experience. When I was NATO's head of air transport[4] in Afghanistan, VIP transports took up a large portion of the rather scarce NATO air transport capacity.

One of the reasons for this enormous public relations campaign was the fact that the mission in Uruzgan was controversial from the start and this openness should win over both the politicians and the public opinion. Historically, public opinion has always been an important factor for both politicians and the defence organization, when it comes to fighting a war. When in democracies the support at home is lost, the war is lost.

This openness seems to have worked. Although the mission readiness of the general public was never higher than 35-50%, the popularity of 'our boys and girls' in Afghanistan was extremely high, with only 6% of the Dutch population not proud of them (MoD-NL, 2010: 7, 14) and weekly *Elsevier* declaring the soldiers in Uruzgan "Dutchman of the Year 2006" (Elsevier, 2006).

There was some critique on this approach, however, as the stories from the embedded journalists tended to focus mainly on the military life on Camp Holland and little on the socio-political situation in Afghanistan itself. This critique came both from the side of (unembedded) journalists, but also from military personnel themselves, as the critical or even disillusioned side of the military did not get mentioned in these Camp Holland stories. It is an often mentioned frustration in military memoirs that in the press their story is never told and this is probably why the education motive is so strong among military memoirists, as they want to tell their own side of the story.

And that side of the story is not always the side that the defence public relations departments find most interesting when it comes to keeping up a positive image. Despite the preference for open publicity, the relationship between military autobiographies and the military organization seems to be ambivalent. Autobiographies vary from guided, but uncensored publications like *Task Force Uruzgan* (Bemmel, 2009) to heavily censored and banned books

■
4   Chief Joint Theatre Movement Staff

like *Operation Dart Heart* (Shaffer, 2010). This ambivalence is not unjustified, as this research shows that almost half of the books (43%) have negative plots.

9.4.2   Press

As the research shows, the fact that these stories are written by military personnel does not mean that these are uncritical, positive stories, even though that is sometimes the way these books are considered, as this Twitter conversation between independent Dutch war correspondent Arnold Karskens and myself attests to:

> **@arnoldkarskens** to **@Ekleinreesink:** Who says [Officier in Afghanistan] is a book? It may well be a propaganda brochure.

> **@EKleinreesink** to **@arnoldkarskens**: Maybe reading Officier in Afghanistan will answer that question?

> **@arnoldkarskens** to **@EKleinreesink** I prefer reading the real truth[5].

If the attitude from Arnold Karskens were an indication for the reciprocity between press and military autobiographies, its shows a one-sided relationship whereby the press does not read these autobiographies, but these memoirs are to some extent a reaction to what is written in the press. However, that is not entirely the case, as sometimes these autobiographies do get discussed in the press. *Task Force Uruzgan* (Bemmel, 2009) was an initiative from a newspaper and was presented to the public in the popular talk show *Pauw en Witteman* (P&W, 2009, November 24). *Soldaat in Uruzgan* (Roelen, 2009) was discussed with its soldier-author in the talk show *Knevel & Van den Brink* (KvdB, 2009, June 20*)*. So there are instances where there is a form of two-way interaction.

The idea voiced by Karskens that military memoirs are nothing but untrue propaganda, is not visible in this study. The number of disenchantment stories in this research (39%) alone show that immediate military autobiographies cannot be simple considered 'propaganda'. The fact that the number of soldier-authors who admit to being discouraged is on par with those who admit to having been encouraged by their MoD, does not indicate high levels of support by the MoDs. The emphasis that soldier-authors place on proving their authenticity

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5   My translation, Twitter: 06:00 AM – 02 Jul 12 (https://twitter.com/arnoldkarskens/status/219656793222152194?uid=499008143&iid=am-3732748621341205235335379&nid=27+236) and Twitter: 05:13 AM – 03 Jul 12 (https://twitter.com/arnoldkarskens/status/220007210791604224?uid=499008143&iid=am-91760041513412887813706360&nid=27+236), accessed 8 December 2013

also shows their commitment to telling 'the real truth', whatever that may be. However, it has an element of truth in it in that these disenchantment stories are predominantly written by people who have already left the service by the time their book is published.

9.4.3   Public opinion

The question whether and to what extent these autobiographies have influenced public opinion in the different countries is as much an important question as it is an unanswerable one. The fact that the change motive is an important reason for soldier-authors to write their books means that influencing public opinion is certainly one of their goals. How public opinion, in this case on the conflict in Afghanistan, comes about is more or less unknown, however. There are many elements that influence the opinions of people, some conscious, some unconscious. They comprise experiences that people have, things they hear from others and do or do not believe and/or retell: from politicians, journalists, defence spokespersons, their neighbour's daughter who has been deployed, or in a book by a soldier-author.

In the 21st century with its new media, such as Internet blogs, e-mail, YouTube 'helmet-cam' videos, Twitter and affordable self-publishing there are so many more opportunities to influence others than before. However, that can also be a drawback, as it produces an information overload, which makes it even more difficult to estimate the effect of specific influencing mechanisms such as autobiographical books. So the answer to the question of the influence of these military memoirs can only be answered tentatively. An indication can be given by the UK sales figures. The average sales of 27,000 copies per book in this warrior nation's book market that had exclusively traditionally published books does not indicate that military books find a mass audience; even the best-seller *Apache* (Macy, 2008), with almost 100,000 copies sold, was only sold to 0.15% of the UK population. If these 100,000 Britons do not discuss the book with others, it will still not significantly influence UK public opinion. On the other hand, public opinion is not just a numbers game. If the right people read a book, they can change everything. Some soldier-authors, like the writer of *Unter Beschuss*[6] (Lindemann, 2010) aim specifically at influencing politicians; and if three members of parliament do read his book and act on it, it may just turn public opinion in an instance, or bring about the desired changes.

Another way in which autobiographies in the past have influenced public opinion was by turning them into a film. Military memoirs such as *Jarhead* (Swofford, 2003) and *Born on*

6   *Under Fire*

the Fourth of July (Kovic, 1976) were adapted for film and thereby attracted large audiences, but it is a rare process. Only one of the books in this study's selection has been adapted so far; in 2013, *Lone Survivor* (Luttrell & Robinson, 2007) was turned into a motion picture with the same name (P. Berg, 2013).

9.5   Military Memoirs in the Future

9.5.1   Books

With all these other options to influence public opinion, why would soldiers choose the medium of books? It is not as up-to-date as social media: even though this study shows that books are produced fairly quickly, as the average military memoir is on sale within two years after the deployment ends, it is still not up-to-date. Is not writing books an old-fashioned medium, bound to disappear, as can also be seen from the fact that the younger generation of soldiers under 25 do not write books and the average memoirist is 40? I personally do not think so. First of all, taking the time to think and carefully craft words into coherent sentences, which become chapters and finally a book, takes other, more challenging skills than writing for the social media. It takes time and reflection that come with age and no doubt will come to the current generation of young soldiers at a later age, as it has for previous generations as well. And this young generation will be better prepared to write longer prose than any of the previous generations, as the advent of the social media have honed their writing skills and have made documenting one's life and personal history something common and ordinary, an accepted part of modern life. Secondly, I find that going into a bookstore to physically hold one of the 1,200 printed copies of my own book is far more gratifying than seeing on a screen that my Twitter account has almost 3,000 followers. In my opinion, writing in a printed medium is more gratifying and permanent than the fleeting social media and with the advent of affordable self-publishing it has become achievable to anyone.

9.5.2   Publishers

I not only foresee that the market for self-published autobiographies will remain and probably grow in future, but the role of traditional publishers on this market will also remain, as there is quite a difference between the quality of the self-published books and those by traditional publishers, and even between those books by large traditional publishers and the small specialized military and Christian publishers. In general, the products of the self-publishers (and to some extent also those of the specialized publishers) have a completely

different look and feel; these books have smaller or in some other way deviating formats, are filled with typo's and bad dialogue (if there is any dialogue at all) and their writers tend to explicitly tell their stories instead of subtly showing them. There are some exceptions: *Dressed to Kill* (Madison, 2010) may be traditionally published, but it was clearly a rush job with no chapter titles, badly cut paper and typo's on the cover, whereas *Honor First* (Moring, 2006) is a beautifully produced, spelling-error free self-published book. But these are the exceptions that prove the rule. In my opinion, the role of the traditional publisher, who provides its authors with text and copy editors and whose name provides the reader with a quality guarantee will remain crucial in selecting the pearls from this increasing sea of self-published books.

9.6   *Military Memoirs and Their Authors*

9.6.1   Need to write

Apart from the question whether these books can and do influence public opinion, this study shows that these books can create other effects. They also influence its writers, as these soldier-authors have a need to write. In modern, individualist, I-centred societies such as the ones researched in this study, soldiers occupy a special place. They live in a society-within-the-society in which team spirit, collectivism and we-centeredness are important. This leads to conflicts and misunderstandings, to stories that do not fit current society, but that do need to be told. The more conflict and friction there is, the more the urge arises to tell stories, which will lead to more books. And there is not only the friction between we-centred soldiers in an individualistic society, but also that of individuals finding their place in that collective, military society.

Although soldier-authors are by definition team-oriented, as they are soldiers, those that write books without a ghost-writer also have an individualistic orientation, otherwise they would not find the time and space to lock themselves away to write a book or keep a detailed diary. In their explicit motives for writing, and also in most of the implicit ones we studied, we saw that intrapersonal reasons abound, fitting the team-orientation. But at the same time we know from the comparison of demographics that they are not entirely representative for the general soldier. This study shows there is a strong fringe writer effect visible in these books, as it is especially the individually deployed soldier who writes much more than can be expected. For them, being deployed on their own, being a sole individual

in a new team and later on returning with new experiences to their old teams is the ultimate case of this type of friction between team and individual. No wonder they need to write.

9.6.2   Representative

Does this mean that as these soldier-authors are not entirely representative of the general military population that what these soldier-authors write about can be dismissed as not representative? I feel, based on the results of this research, that is this not the case. On the one hand there are themes that consistently show up in all stories, from all countries, from all wars, such as the difficulty of adapting when coming home, the truthfulness of their experiences, and lost ideals about the care provided to soldiers by society or the armed forces. Themes that give us insight into what is important for veterans, and what they have gone through. The kind of insight that is important in understanding the stream of new veterans from large scale conflicts such as Iraq and Afghanistan that will enter into society in the coming years. The fact that there are themes that are consistent over time and countries shows that these writers not only describe their own experiences, but also those of their fellow soldiers who do not take up the pen. The fact that there are elements of their stories that are warrior nation related or even country-related also shows that they represent more than just their own opinions. This study has shown that the kinds of plots that soldier-authors chose are directly linked to the strategic narrative about war in the soldier-author's country. I therefore feel that military autobiographies can certainly be used as a proxy for what soldiers in general think and maybe even as a proxy for a nation's attitude to war.

9.7   Military Memoirs and History

9.7.1   History

That leads us to another question: what is it that influences a nation's attitude toward war and peace? The differences that this study shows between today's warrior nations and non-warrior nations seem to indicate that a nation's own history may be the most important factor in determining this attitude. The US and the UK with their history of winning the major wars and battles of the last century show a much more ambitious attitude towards the war in Afghanistan than Germany, who lost both Great Wars. From its own experience, today's Germany is dominated by the idea that war leads to nothing and that determines a pacifistic and risk-avoiding take on the conflict in Afghanistan. Both the Netherlands and Canada take a more intermediate position, being ambitious in the fact that they take up

lead-nationship in the South of Afghanistan, while at the same time taking a nuanced, 3D approach. Perhaps, but this is no more than speculation, their recent experiences in the 1990s with peacekeeping missions gone wrong (the Canadian torture scandal in Somalia in 1993 and the Rwandese genocide in 1994, and the Dutch failure to save Srebrenica in former Yugoslavia in 1995) have led to these choices to prove themselves to the outside world, but to do so in a careful, measured way.

9.7.2   Disenchantment

When it comes to history, interestingly, the classical disillusionment stories from the 20th century seem to have changed in character in the 21st century. The disillusionment is no longer predominantly about the romantic notion of war itself, but focuses more on lack of recognition by society at large or on feeling abandoned by the armed forces, elements that were historically also present, but never so much on the foreground as they are in contemporary military memoirs. I feel that change has three dominant causes.

The first one has to do with the change in writers. Where the writing soldiers used to be conscripts, these draftees have now changed into professionals and reservists who have voluntarily chosen to join the armed forces, thereby making a conscious and perhaps more considered and balanced choice, knowing more about the kind of work they are about to perform including the character of war. Maybe even from reading military autobiographies of previous wars. Also, the soldiers who write their stories are no longer only kinetic soldiers, who are most inclined to (still) write disillusionment stories, most likely due to the nature of their work.

Secondly, the character of war has changed over time. In contrast with the Great Wars of the 20th century, the conflict in Afghanistan is not a war with frontlines and trenches, not a war in which death almost literally stares the average soldier in the eyes, so the chance of getting disillusioned by war itself is slimmer.

Thirdly, in these immediate memoirs we see that the negative stories come mainly from people who no longer work for the MoD. These may be the people who are disappointed as they have left the organization, but perhaps also the people who feel more at ease discussing their disillusionment. But only half of the immediate memoirs come from people who have already left the organization when their book was first published. Previous research on 20th century books, in contrast, is generally performed many years after the war itself, on the canonical texts, which are not predominantly immediate, but mostly retrospective memoirs.

The kind of books generally written long after the author has left the armed forces. Maybe, if we were to repeat this research in 25 year's time we would see that the retrospective Afghanistan memoirs have a totally different character to the immediate ones, too.

On the other hand, it is also possible that 21st century immediate memoirs are no different from 20th century retrospective memoirs. Researchers such as Woodward & Jenkings (Woodward & Jenkings, 2013) and Hynes (Hynes, 1997) conclude from earlier memoirs that it takes time to write reflexively, to analyze what went wrong in a war and to write about the personal, mental, consequences it has had, implying that retrospective memoirs have a different character and contents than immediate memoirs. However, in the 21st century immediate memoirs these elements are already visible. There are plenty of Afghanistan memoirs that provide detailed analyses of how the mission strategy could be improved (e.g. Heichel, 2006; Lindemann, 2010; Schwitalla, 2010; Shaffer, 2010) and stories on the mental impact of the mission abound as well (e.g. Eckhold, 2010; Franzak, 2010; Groos, 2009; Self, 2008; Tupper, 2010b; Wohlgethan, 2010). Combining this with the high speed with which the average book is produced (within two years after deployment), it may well be that nowadays the speed of book production in general has picked up, leading to immediate memoirs and retrospective memoirs overlapping. Whether the difference between immediate memoirs and retrospective memoirs has indeed disappeared is an interesting subject for further research.

9.7.3   Moral

In the end, however, despite the still rather large portion of books with a negative plot, no matter how disillusioned and how critical the soldier-authors are, their reasons for writing these books are positive. Soldier-authors want to educate their readers, honour and help others and change the world for the better. Most of all they want their readers and society at large to get a better understanding of their experience. As a PTSD expert I interviewed for this study so aptly put it, "being a veteran equals needing recognition"[7]. In this, soldier-authors do not deviate from the general veteran.

9.8   Further Research

This study was, to my knowledge, the first to use quantitative methods to thoroughly explore autobiographical books. Hopefully, it will not be the last one, as the resulting

7   My translation, interview 23 February 2013 with lt-col J.J.J.M. van den Dungen.

findings are exciting and ask for further validation in other contexts. There are three main directions for further research, see Figure 49.
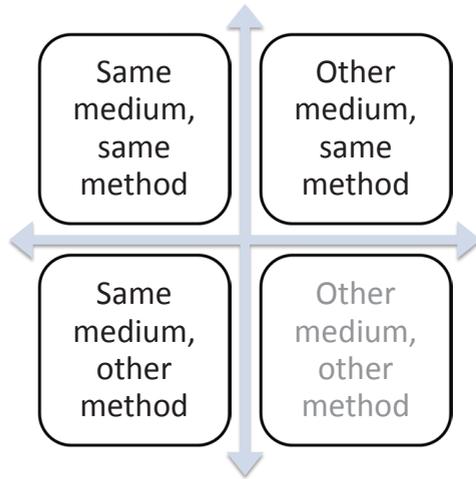
Figure 49: Main Directions for Further Research

9.8.1   Same medium, same method

First of all the, the same methods can be used on the same medium (books), either on the same subset (military Afghanistan memoirs) or on different subsets, such as other military memoirs or other autobiographies.

9.8.1.1 Same books

Although in the current 54 books on the mission in Afghanistan quite a few variables from fields that differ widely were researched that were linked to the four main questions (from sociology and psychology to international relations, publishing and literature), many other research fields were only touched slightly or not touched at all, even though the books provide ample interesting research material. These books, unknowingly, provide a plethora of health related information, for example. Not only about the occurrence of PDD or PTSD symptoms as we have seen, but also on other issues such as the frequency of smoking among soldiers. In the field of logistics these books are treasure troves of information on how the clients of logisticians experience their services and products, and psychologists and sociologists interested in understanding group behaviour could have a field day reading these books while looking at the different images of the Afghan people, foreign soldiers or

the enemy. And where in this research only explicit writing motivation has been researched, further research could also be extended into implicit writing motivation.

9.8.1.2   Other military memoirs

Instead of using the same books for getting new information, other military memoirs could be researched to validate the results from this study. Afghanistan memoirs from other countries and in other languages could be studied to see whether the general variables found in this study hold up in other Western countries such as France, Italy and Turkey, and whether they also hold up in Asian countries or African countries. Variables that were associated with warrior nations could be validated in other warrior nations such as Israel or Russia.

Mission related military autobiographies from other 21st century missions such as Iraq, could be compared for the same countries as in this study (the US, the UK, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands) to see whether the results from this study can be confirmed for different mission. Or with earlier, 20th century missions, to see whether results such as the fringe writer effect were always visible and to once and for all confirm (or also disprove) the disillusionment thesis for the 20th century with quantitative data.

In 25 years it may be interesting to compare the then retrospective Afghanistan memoirs to the current immediate memoirs to see whether there still is a difference between these two kinds of memoirs, or that the speed of production has increased to such an extent that retrospective memoirs no longer have other characteristics than immediate memoirs. It will also be interesting to see at that time whether retrospective writers are still dominated by individually deployed soldier-authors, or that the fringe writer effect is only valid for immediate memoirs.

9.8.1.3   Other autobiographies

Not only military autobiographies can be used to compare the results from this study, as it is also interesting to see whether some of the phenomenon described in this study can also found in general autobiographies. Is the predominance of intrapersonal (social) writing motives a typically military phenomenon, or can it also be found in other autobiographies? Are soldier-authors the only autobiographers who provide their readers with truth guarantees? Do only military writers provide disclaimers or is that a common phenomenon, and if so, do other writers also predominantly give self-censorship disclaimers or are literary disclaimers more common?

The largest open question is that of self-publishing: is the composition of military book markets in the different countries identical to that of ordinary autobiographies, with the Netherlands and the US as forerunners when it comes to self-publishing autobiographies? And how much do self-published books (military and general books) actually sell? Self-publishing is still a completely new research area.

9.8.2   Same medium, other method

Secondly, other methods could be used to research these books, such as interviews, illustration analysis and n-gram analysis.

9.8.2.1 Interviews

Interviews could be a good additional method to further delve into questions of a more personal nature that content analysis of books that are aimed at a large audience cannot directly bring to the surface. Two particular subjects that were researched in this study and that could be further elaborated on by interviewing the authors directly were attitudes toward censorship and therapy.

As indicated in chapter four (the methodology chapter) and chapter seven (the why-chapter), only a few soldier-authors discussed being censored by their MoD in their book. From e-mail and personal conversations I had with many soldier-authors, I gathered that there can be quite a discrepancy between what they write in their books about censoring and even about being encouraged by their own defence organization and what actually went on. One soldier-author who wishes to remain anonymous, for example, told me that (s)he had to retire from the regular force in order to say the critical things (s)he said, even though the book gives the impression that (s)he was actually helped by the MoD. Interviewing authors may lead to more insight into the real functioning of the phenomenon of censoring.

The same goes for therapeutic writing motives. Although therapy is not frequently mentioned as an explicit writing motive, both the fact that there seems to be a fringe writer effect for individually deployed soldiers and the fact that therapeutic reasons are more often mentioned by writers when among themselves does cast some doubt on the conclusion derived from researching explicit writing motives that therapy is not an important reason for writing these books. Interviewing authors may provide more insight.

9.8.2.2 Illustrations

As almost all military memoirs, in contrast to other literary adult-oriented publications, contain illustrations, mostly photographs and maps, it will be interesting to research these. Although photographs *of* the military in newspapers have been researched before (Collins, 2008; Fahmy, 2005; Fahmy & Kim, 2008; Griffin, 2004, 2010; Griffin & Lee, 1995), photographs *by* military personnel in their own books have never been studied. Research questions such as what do they show, who do they show, and how what they show is related to their writing motivation or to the plots they write, can shed new light into the experiences of military personnel in general and of military writer specifically.

9.8.2.3 N-gram

As discussed earlier, when I started this study in 2010, optical character recognition technology available to the average scholar had not evolved enough to do large scale quantitative research on the level of words. In the last few years the technology has improved substantially, offering new opportunities to combine the kind of content analysis used in this study with word-level research such as n-gram analysis via Google Lab (Michel, et al., 2010) or the psychology of word use via Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count software (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007). New questions such as: what kind of word use is indicative of negative plots or do writers in warrior nations use specific words (e.g. honour, or enemy) more than writers in non-warrior nations can now be researched.

9.8.3   Other medium, same method

And finally, the methods used in this study could also be applied to other media, such as the social media or minutes of meetings.

9.8.3.1 Social media

This study, as previous studies did before, showed that book writers are older and higher ranked than the general military population. That does not mean that the younger generation does not write. They do, but generally in another context: the social media. It will be interesting to see whether the content of what is written in the social media is radically different from what is written in the books, or whether, for example, the differences in plots between the countries can also be seen in the writings on military blogs and in military tweets. Also, it will be interesting to see whether the fringe writer effect is visible among the soldier-authors who write in the social media.

9.8.3.2 Decision making process

Finally, the techniques developed in this study can also be used in any other text based context, whether these are other egodocuments such as the social media or letter, diaries, or other kind of documents, such as official documentation. It could well be used, for example, to do archival research into the minutes of meetings by political and military decision makers, to corroborate or disprove the earlier speculation that peacekeeping missions gone awry in Canada and the Netherlands have led to these countries wanting to prove themselves to the outside world by taking on military assignments in the dangerous southern provinces of Afghanistan.

9.9   Concluding Remarks

Military writers write because they want to be heard. They want to tell their own, unique story, but do so within existing frameworks of their own country's story culture on war and of the larger world's attitude towards war. Judging from these books, that larger attitude towards war has changed in the past century, from disillusionment as dominant theme in the 20st century to revelation as main theme in the beginning of the 21st.

All veterans want recognition. What better way to get that, than by putting your own story on paper for the whole world to read?

Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A: The Fifteen Most Remarkable Statistics

The results that follow come from the study of all immediate military Afghanistan memoirs from five different countries: the US, the UK, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands. They were published between 2001 and 2010. Whether they can be transposed one-on-one to other military and non-military autobiographies, from other countries than the ones researched and from other time periods is something that further research will have to show.

Who

- On average it takes military authors of immediate memoirs two years before they publish a book after having been deployed, irrespective of whether they publish with a self-publisher or a traditional publisher.

- In a warrior nation a book is 12 times more likely to be written by a kinetic author than in a non-warrior nation.

- Independent of country, kinetic soldiers are nine times more likely to get published by a traditional publisher than their non-kinetic colleagues.

- Even though the individually deployed soldier is more likely to be a writer than the soldier who is deployed with his own unit, traditional publishers are five times more interested in publishing the stories from people who went with their own unit than from the individually deployed ones.

- The same goes for professional soldiers, they are almost eight times more likely to get published by a traditional publisher than a reservist

What

- Revelatory plots (growth and disenchantment plots together) make up the majority (69%) of Afghanistan memoirs.

- Working soldiers are nine times more likely to write positive plots than former soldiers.

- A kinetic soldier-author is almost four times more likely to write a negative plot than a non-kinetic soldier.

- Soldier-authors with a traditional publisher are four times more likely to add a truth claim to their books than self-publishers.

- A large part of all soldier-authors (59%) make some kind of disclaimer as to the content of their book; almost always (in 97% of the cases) about some form of self-censorship for operational security reasons, rarely (12%) for literary reasons.

Why

- 78% of all soldier-authors feel the need to explicitly explain why they wrote and published their book.

- A positive plot is five times more likely not to have an explanatory motivation text than a negative plot.

- Authors of negative plots are five times more likely to voice a desire for change than authors of positive plots.

- Soldier-authors who write that they themselves have experienced some kind of mental adaptation problem (such as PTSD symptoms or prolonged alienation) are eighteen times more likely to admit to writing as a form of therapy than people who do not write about these problems.

- Of all soldier-authors who give self-help motives, 79% is individually deployed, and individually deployed soldiers are almost six times more likely to give self-help motives than soldiers who have been deployed with their own unit.

Appendix B: Flow Chart Fortune Plots

```
                                   ┌──────────┐
                                   │ Fortune  │
                                   └──────────┘
                                        │
                                        ▼
           ┌─────────unsympathetic──────◇ Protagonist? ◇
           │                                  │
           ▼                              Sympathetic
      ◇ Direction of ◇                        │
        change?                               ▼
           │                          ◇ Direction of ◇
                                        change?
           │                         ┌──────┴───────┐
         + → -                    + → -          - → +
           │                        │               │
           ▼                        ▼               ▼
   ┌──────────────┐         ◇ Own fault? ◇    ◇ Own influence? ◇
   │ Punitive plot│         ┌────┴────┐       ┌──────┴──────┐
   └──────────────┘        yes       no      yes           no
                            │         │       │             │
                            ▼         ▼       ▼             ▼
                     ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
                     │Tragic plot│ │Pathetic  │ │Admiration│ │Sentimental   │
                     └──────────┘ │  plot    │ │  plot    │ │    plot      │
                                  └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────────┘
```
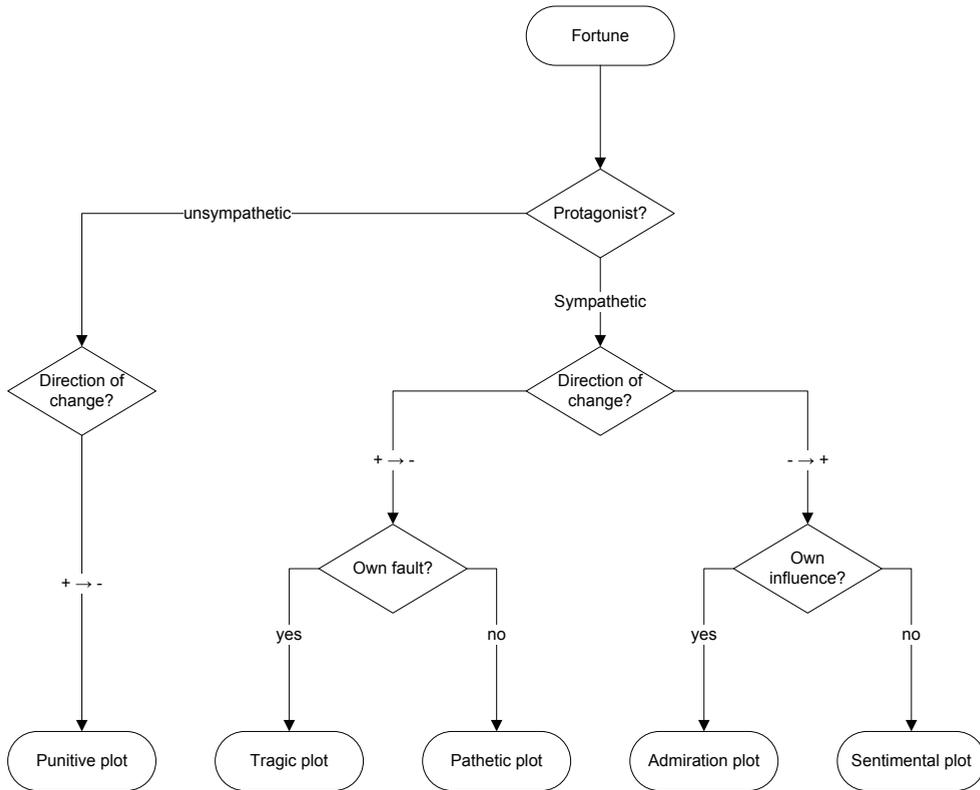
Based on Friedman, 1955: 247-249

Appendix C: Flow Chart Thought Plots
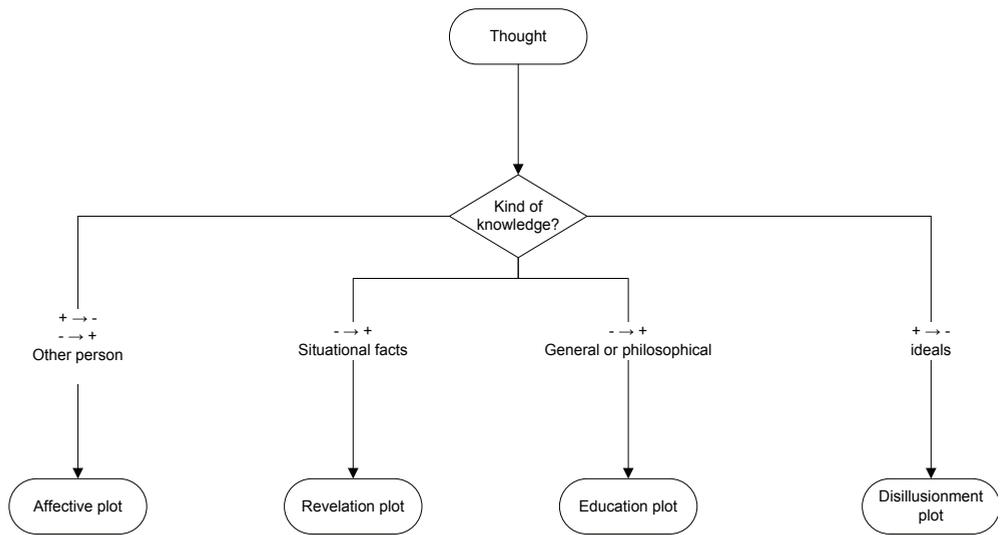
Based on Friedman, 1955: 251-252

Appendix D: Country Rotation Factor

Country	Rotation factor	Remarks	Source
NLD	2		Beeres, Bakker et al. 2009: 218 and my own experience
GER	2	Till 05-2005	German Defence Attaché in The Hague,
	3	From 05-2005	Oberstleutenant Schmidt, e-mail 20-11-12
BEL	3		ACOS Ops & Trg, Lt-Col Quintelier, e-mail 26-11-12
UK	2		DASA, e-mail 7-1-2011
US	1		Dutch Defence Attaché in Washington, Col Ooms, e-mail 25-10-10
CAN	2		Public Affairs Editor CEFCOM Headquarters, e-mail Van Meeteren 3-11-10
AUS	2		Australian Defence Attaché in London, Cdre Lockwood, e-mail 29-11-12

Appendix E: NATO Codes for Officer Personnel Army

NATO CODE	Canada	Germany	UK	The Netherlands	US
OF-10	No equivalent	No equivalent	Field Marshal	No equivalent	General of the Army
OF-9	General	General	General	Generaal	General
OF-8	Lieutenant-General	Generalleutnant	Lieutenant General	Luitenant-generaal	Lieutenant General
OF-7	Major-General	Generalmajor	Major General	Generaal-majoor	Major General
OF-6	Brigadier-General	Brigadegeneral	Brigadier	Brigade-generaal	Brigadier General
OF-5	Colonel	Oberst	Colonel	Kolonel	Colonel
OF-4	Lieutenant-Colonel	Oberstleutnant	Lieutenant Colonel	Luitenant-kolonel	Lieutenant Colonel
OF-3	Major	Major	Major	Majoor	Major
OF-2	Captain	Stabshauptmann/ Hauptmann	Captain	Kapitein	Captain
OF-1	Second Lieutenant	Leutnant	Lieutenant/ Second Lieutenant	Eerste-luitenant/ Tweede-luitenant/ Vaandrig	First Lieutenant/ Second Lieutenant

Based on Stanag 2116 (NATO, 2010b)

Appendix F: NATO Codes for Non-Officer Personnel Army

NATO CODE	Canada	Germany	UK	Netherlands	US
OR-9	Chief Warrant Officer	Oberstabs-feldwebel	Warrant Officer I	Adjudant	Sergeant Major/ Master Gunnery Sergeant
OR-8	Master Warrant Officer	Stabsfelwebel/ Hauptfeldwebel	Warrant Officer II/ Staff Sergeant	Adjudant	Master Sergeant
OR-7	Warrant Officer	Hauptfeldwebel	Sergeant (> 3 years)	Sergeant-majoor	Sergeant First Class/ Gunnery Sergeant
OR-6	Sergeant (> 3 years)	Oberfeldwebel/ Feldwebel	Sergeant	Sergeant 1	Staff Sergeant
OR-5	Sergeant	Stabsunter-offizier/ Unteroffizier	Corporal	Sergeant	Sergeant
OR-4	Master Corporal	Oberstabs-gefreiter/ Stabsgefreiter	Lance Corporal	Korporaal 1	Corporal
OR-3	Corporal	Hauptgefreiter/ Obergefreiter	Private (1-3)	Korporaal	Private First Class/ Lance Corporal
OR-2	Private trained	Gefreiter	Private (4)	Soldaat (1-2)	Private E-2/ Private First Class
OR-1	Private basic	Grenadier	-	Soldaat	Private E-1

Based on Stanag 2116 (NATO, 2010b)

Appendix G: Motivation Codes and Categories

Main Category	Subcategory	First level code
NONE		NONE
SELF-HELP		
	WRITE	Hobby
		Story needs telling
		Writer
		NOT Literary acknowledgement
	THERAPY	Easier than talking
		Order thoughts
		Therapy
		NOT Therapy
	REMEMBER	Remembering
HELP OTHERS		
	HELP OTHERS	Afghani: help
		Donate money
		Help veterans
		Lessons Learned
		MoD
		NOT Alleviate suffering home front
	FAMILY	Family
	ENTERTAIN	Amuse
		Inspire
RECOGNITION		
	MONEY & FAME	Fame
		NOT Fame
		Money
		NOT money
	JUSTIFY	Apologia
		Clear name

RECOGNITION (continued)			
	RECOGNITION	Get listened to	
		Military covenant	
		Understanding	
		Reach large audience	
		NOT Reach audience	
		Recognition	
		NOT Recognition	
	HONOUR	Honour God	
		Honour home front	
		Honour soldiers	
		Honour the dead	
		NOT honour	
CHANGE			
	ACCUSE	Accuse	
		Revenge	
		NOT Critique	
	EDUCATE	Press	
		Afghani: show	
		Explain	
		Just war	
		Appreciate own country	
		female soldiers	
		Educate	
		NOT Educate	
		History	
		NOT history	
	ACTIVATE	Activate readers	
		Social debate	
		support	

Appendix H:
The Fifty-Four Books

Appendix H: The Fifty-Four Books

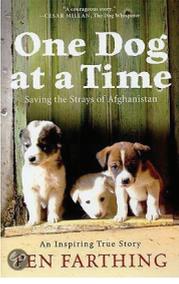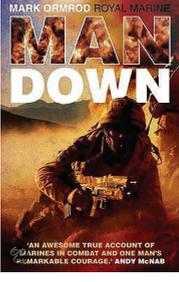|		
	Canada	
2009		Conrad, John. (2009). *What the Thunder Said: Reflections of a Canadian Officer in Kandahar.* Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press. **Summary:** John Conrad (45) was head of logistics of Canada's first National Support Element for the mission in Afghanistan. He starts out with a history of military logistics, and then tells his personal tale on logistical desperation. Despite his team being too small, it did manage to provide adequate logistical support due to the tremendous effort of everyone involved. *Senior officer (OF-4), army, non-kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published (military publisher), disillusionment-armed forces (disenchantment) plot*
2009		Wiss, Ray. (2009). *FOB Doc: A Doctor on the Front Lines in Afghanistan - A War Diary.* Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre **Summary:** This is the diary of Ray Wiss (50), a Canadian military doctor who works mainly at primitive Forward Operating Bases in the Afghan province of Kandahar. He volunteered to help liberate Afghanistan from what he sees as the evils of the Taliban and to protect Afghan civilians. In his book he emphasizes Canada's moral duty to fight in Afghanistan. The book was one of Amazon.ca's Editors' Picks Top 100 Books of 2009. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published, education (growth) plot, diary*
2010		Wiss, Ray. (2010). *A Line in the Sand: Canadians at War in Kandahar. Vancouver:* Douglas and McIntyre. **Summary:** In his previous book (FOB Doc), Ray Wiss (51) wrote about his own experiences during a deployment in Afghanistan on Forward Operating Bases. In this book, he describes the people with whom he has worked on his next mission in Afghanistan: both Afghans and his fellow soldiers. It is a collection of portraits of people. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published, affective (rest) plot, diary*
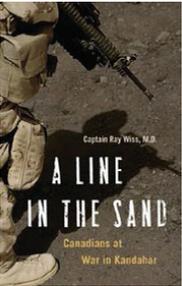
2010		Eckhold, Robert. (2010). *Fallschirmjäger in Kunduz: Wir kamen, um zu helfen, und erlebten den perfiden Terror! [Paratrooper in Kunduz: We Came to Help, and Lived Through the Vicious Terror*!]. Limbach-Oberfrohna: Command Verlag. **Summary:** Robert Eckhold (25), an enthusiastic sergeant-in-training, volunteers for a mission in Afghanistan, where he goes on patrol for a provincial reconstruction team. Upon his return in Germany, he feels alienated from himself, his friends and Germany's attitude toward Afghanistan. He established his own publishing company to publish his book. *NCO (OR-5), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, still in service, self-published, degeneration (disenchantment) plot, diary*
2010		Lindemann, Marc. (2010). *Unter Beschuss: Warum Deutschland in Afghanistan scheitert [Under Fire: Why Germany Fails in Afghanistan]*. Berlin: Econ. **Summary:** Marc Lindemann (32) was an intelligence officer with the provincial reconstruction team Kunduz. Based on his experiences, he disagrees with the German mission in Afghanistan, and in his book he draws up an improved deployment strategy. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, non-kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, no longer in service, traditionally published, disillusionment-state (disenchantment) plot*
2010		Schwitalla, Artur. (2010). *Afghanistan, jetzt weiß ich erst...: Gedanken aus meiner Zeit als Kommandeur des Provincial Reconstruction Team Feyzabad [Afghanistan, Only Now I Know...: Thoughts from my Time as Commander of PRT Feyzabad]*. Berlin: Carola Hartmann Miles - Verlag. **Summary:** Provincial reconstruction team commander Artur Schwitalla (56) thematically describes what he has learned in Afghanistan. The book has a unique structure, as each chapter answers a different question and starts with "Only now I know… ". *Senior officer (OF-5), army, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published (military publisher), education (growth) plot*

| 2010 | | Wohlgethan, Achim. (2010). *Operation Kundus: Mein zweiter Einsatz in Afghanistan [Operation Kundus: My Second Deployment to Afghanistan]*. Berlin: Econ.

Summary: This second book by Achim Wohlgethan (43) about his second mission in Afghanistan - this time with a German special forces unit - deals with his strong disapproval of the way the German armed forces operate in Afghanistan and with the problems he experiences having a girlfriend at home while he is in Afghanistan. When he returns to Germany, he ends up in a black hole and is eventually treated in the military hospital for it.

NCO (OR-5), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, degeneration (disenchantment) plot |

	 The Netherlands	
2006		Braat, Florentien. (2006). *Consultant in het groen: Foto's en verhalen van een IDEA-list in Afghanistan [Consultant in Green: Photos and Stories by an IDEA-list in Afghanistan]*. Maastricht: Boekenplan. **Summary:** Florentien Braat (42) serves as a business consultant with the Dutch provincial reconstruction team in Pol-e-Khomri via the IDEA programme (Integrated Development of Entrepreneurial Activities). She tries to introduce the Solar Cooker in the region and teaches at a local polytechnic. She is the girlfriend of another author (Gilbert Silvius, *Voor de verandering*), but does not mention him. *Junior officer (OF-1), army, non-kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, self-published, education (growth) plot*
2007		Scholtens, Gijs. (2007). *Taskforce Uruzgan, op zoek naar het recht [Task Force Uruzgan, Looking for Law]*. Soesterberg: Aspekt. **Summary:** Gijs Scholtens (61) is the legal advisor to the first Dutch provincial reconstruction team in Tarin Kowt (Uruzgan). He strongly believes that restoring stability in Uruzgan requires restoring the rule of law. The book begins with an article he published in a legal magazine, which is followed by all the weekly newsletters he sent to his home front published in its original form (including typos). *Senior officer (OF-3), army, non-kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published, admiration (rest) plot, diary*
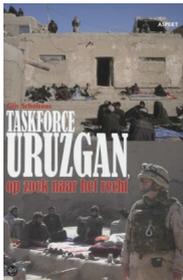
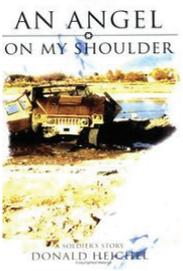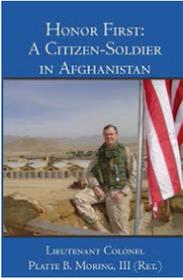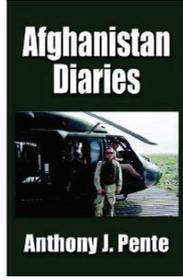| 2007		Silvius, Gilbert. (2007). *Voor de verandering: Dagboek van een consultant in uniform [For a Change: Diary of a Uniformed Consultant]*. Maastricht: Boekenplan. **Summary**: Like his girlfriend, Florentien Braat (*Consultant in het groen*), Gilbert Silvius (44) is a business consultant with the Dutch provincial reconstruction team in Pol-e-Khomri via the IDEA programme (Integrated Development of Entrepreneurial Activities). He tries to initiate or continue small business projects and he teaches. His deployment in Pol-e-Khomri overlaps with that of his girlfriend. *Senior officer (OF-3), army, non-kinetic reservist, individually deployed, still in service, self-published, admiration (rest) plot, diary*
2009		Bielleman, Reinder. (2009). *Een reservist in Uruzgan [A Reservist in Uruzgan]*. Amsterdam: Mijn Eigen Boek. **Summary:** Reinder Bielleman (53) is a civil-military specialist in the area of infrastructure, who works for the Dutch operational mentor and liaison team in Tarin Kowt (Uruzgan) that mentors the Afghan National Army. He describes how difficult international cooperation can be, both with Afghans and Western international partners, and how he deals with it by negotiation and with creative solutions. *Senior officer (OF-3), army, non-kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published, admiration (rest) plot*
2009		Roelen, Niels. (2009). *Soldaat in Uruzgan [Soldier in Uruzgan]*. Amsterdam: Carrera. **Summary:** Infantry patrol leader Niels Roelen (36) describes his and his team's work around Camp Holland (Uruzgan): from social patrols to shoot-outs. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, still in service, traditionally published, education (growth) plot*
2009		Van der Heijden, Martien. (2009). *Huisarts in Uruzgan [Family Doctor in Uruzgan]*. Assen: Servo. **Summary:** In this diary, Camp Holland's doctor Martien Van der Heijden (50) describes his daily life and his patients at the Dutch camp. The book was sponsored by Daiichi-Sankyo, a pharmaceutical company. *Senior officer (OF-4), army, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, still in service, self-published, admiration (rest) plot, diary*
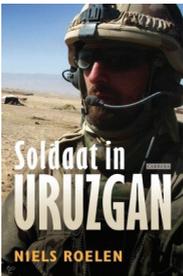
| 2010 | | Heukers, Frits. (2010). *Berichten uit Kandahar [Messages from Kandahar]*. Soest: Boekscout.nl.

Summary: Frits Heukers (41) is a civil-military specialist in the area of governance who works at the Regional Command South's head quarters. He writes about his daily life and on how the rule of law in Afghanistan can be improved.

Senior officer (OF-3), navy, non-kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, self-published, education (growth) plot, diary |

	United Kingdom

| 2007 | | Docherty, Leo. (2007). *Desert of Death: A Soldier's Journey from Iraq to Afghanistan*. London: Faber and Faber.

Summary: Leo Docherty (age unknown) serves as a mentor for an operational mentor and liaison team in Helmand. His background is in linguistics and he has a great deal of interest in Afghanistan and Pakistan: he has even spent his holidays there.

Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, professional, individually deployed, no longer in service, traditionally published, disillusionment-general (disenchantment) plot, sales: 8,624 |
| 2008 | | Beattie, Doug, & Gomm, Philip. (2008). *An Ordinary Soldier: Afghanistan: A Ferocious Enemy. A Bloody Conflict. One Man's Impossible Mission*. London: Simon and Schuster.
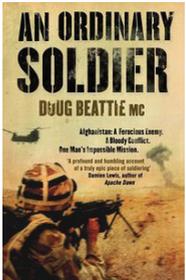
Summary: Doug Beattie (42) describes how and why he became a soldier, but focuses in this first book mainly on the two weeks he fought as an operational mentor and liaison with the Afghan Nation Army in Garmsir (Helmand) which earned him his Military Cross. ITV journalist Philip Gomm helped him write the book.

Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, professional, Individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published, maturity (growth) plot, sales: 48,698 |

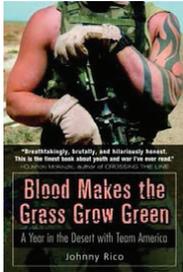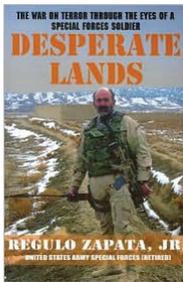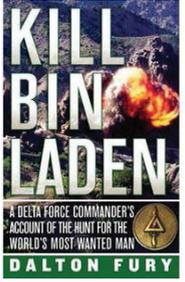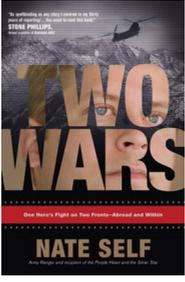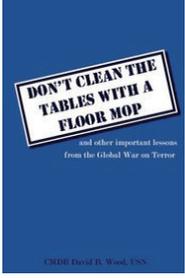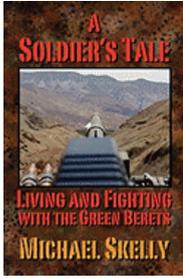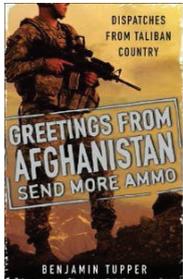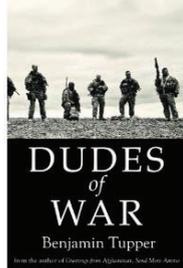|		
2008		Macy, Ed. (2008). *Apache: The Man. The Machine. The Mission*. London: HarperPress. **Summary:** Ed Macy (age unknown), the pseudonym of a British Apache pilot, describes a tour in the province of Helmand in which his 656 squadron was frequently put into action. His tour ends with the (failed) rescue operation of Mathew Ford from Jugroom Fort. He is a colleague of fellow author Charlotte Madison (*Dressed to Kill*) and mentions her in his book. *NCO (OR-9), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, action (rest) plot, sales: 96,369*
2008		Orchard, Adrian, & Barrington, James. (2008). *Joint Force Harrier: The Inside Story of a Royal Navy Fighter Squadron at War*. London: Michael Joseph. **Summary:** Adrian Orchard (age unknown), the commander of a Harrier squadron stationed at Kandahar Airfield describes the actions of his team, but he does not get to experience any action himself. When he is finally allowed to drop a bomb, it goes off too early and he almost collides with a UN helicopter. This book is written together with co-author James Barrington. *Senior officer (OF-4), navy, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, still in service, traditionally published, action (rest) plot, sales: 35,740*
2008		Scott, Jake. (2008). *Blood Clot: In Combat with the Patrols Platoon, 3 Para, Afghanistan 2006*. Solihull: Helion and Company. **Summary:** Action packed story by paratrooper Jake Scott (27) who writes from his own perspective about the mission in Helmand. Upon return home, he is disappointed in the disinterest the British show their troops. Jake Scott (27) is part of the same unit, 3 PARA, as Stuart Tootal (*Danger Close*). *NCO (OR-5), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published (military publisher), disillusionment-state (disenchantment) plot, sales: 1,681*
2009		Beattie, Doug, & Gomm, Philip. (2009). *Task Force Helmand: A Soldier's Story of Life, Death and Combat on the Afghan Front Line*. London: Simon and Schuster. **Summary:** Although Doug Beattie (43) was supposed to retire after the tour he described in *An Ordinary Soldier*, he takes a second, action packed tour in Afghanistan as operational mentor and liaison with the Afghan National Army. The book is once again written together with Philip Gomm. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, action (rest) plot, sales: 22,338*
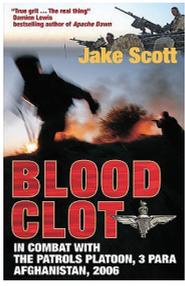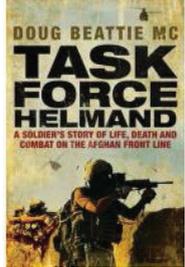
2009		Compton, Martyn, Compton, Michelle, & Summerfield Smith, Marnie. (2009). *Home from War: How Love Conquered the Horrors of a Soldier's Afghan Nightmare*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing. **Summary:** Martyn Compton (26), a Household Cavalry Regiment signalman annex driver burns 70% of his body during a mission in Afghanistan. Back in the UK, he and his fiancée Michelle Compton (who writes the book together with him) fight in rehab to get back their old life, so that he can walk her to the altar all by himself. Marnie Summerfield Smith helped the Comptons write down this recovery narrative. *Junior enlisted (OR-4), army, kinetic, deployed in own unit, professional, still in service, traditionally published, admiration (rest) plot, sales: 1,973*
2009		Farthing, Pen. (2009). *One Dog at a Time: Saving the Strays of Helmand. An Inspiring True Story*. London: Ebury Press. **Summary:** In Afghanistan, Royal Marines troop leader Pen Farthing (40) rescues Afghan stray dogs. Back in the UK he establishes a charity to help other soldiers save dogs during their deployments as well. This book is more often found in bookstores under the heading 'animal stories' than under 'military autobiographies'. *NCO (OR-7), navy, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, still in service, traditionally published, education (growth) plot, sales: 47,185*
2009		Hennessey, Patrick. (2009). *The Junior Officers' Reading Club: Killing Time and Fighting Wars*. London: Allen Lane. **Summary:** Beautifully written account of the journey from a "clueless civilian student" through Sandhurst, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Falklands to a retired soldier who has seen it all, and still longs for action. In Afghanistan, Patrick Hennessey (27) served as an operational mentor and liaison in Helmand. *Junior officer (OF-1), army, kinetic, professional, individually deployed, no longer in service, traditionally published, maturity (growth) plot, sales: 73,343*
2009		Ormrod, Mark. (2009). *Man Down*. London: Bantam Press. **Summary:** Mark Ormrod (25) describes not only how he became an experienced Royal Marine, but also how he deals with the aftermath of being severely wounded during an action in Afghanistan in which he lost three limbs. *Junior enlisted (OR-2), navy, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, still in service, traditionally published, maturity (growth) plot, sales: 7,613*

2009		Tootal, Stuart. (2009). *Danger Close: Commanding 3 PARA in Afghanistan.* London: John Murray. **Summary:** Stuart Tootal (age unknown), the commander of 3 PARA, takes his men to Helmand in the expectation that they will barely have to fight. In reality, they have to risk their lives on a daily basis and many people are wounded and killed in action. When he resigns after his tour, his disillusioned resignation letter is leaked to the press. *Senior officer (OF-4), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, disillusionment-state (disenchantment) plot, sales: 19,511*
2010		Bury, Patrick. (2010). *Callsign Hades*. London: Simon and Schuster. **Summary:** Beautifully written story on how Patrick Bury (29), a young, Irish platoon commander of 1 Royal Irish and his team become old hands under the force of arms in Sangin, Afghanistan. *Junior officer (OF-1), army, professional, deployed in own unit, kinetic, no longer in service, traditionally published, disillusionment-war (disenchantment) plot, sales: 3,095*
2010		Grahame, Paul, & Lewis, Damien. (2010). *Fire Strike 7/9: One man. 180 days. 203 kills.* London: Ebury Press. **Summary:** Paul Grahame (age unknown) is a forward air controller for 3 PARA, someone on the ground who talks aircraft to the bomb drop site during fights. Helped by co-author Damien Lewis, he describes how he saved his team time and again, stealing a car and killing 203 enemy fighters in the process. *NCO (OR-7), army, kinetic, professional, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published, action (rest) plot, sales: 12,221*
2010		Macy, Ed. (2010). *Hellfire*. London: HarperPress. **Summary:** Ed Macy's second book describes how a former paratrooper becomes a helicopter pilot, goes all out to be able to fly the first Apaches of the British air force and flies them in Afghanistan. In this book he mentions Stuart Tootal (*Danger Close*). *NCO (OR-9), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, maturity (growth) plot, sales: 20,945, age unknown*

| 2010 | | Madison, Charlotte. (2010). *Dressed to Kill: The True Story of a Woman Flying under Fire*. London: Headline Review.

Summary: *Dressed to Kill* is the story of a young, naïve girl that wants to prove herself, makes it to Apache pilot and, during a mission in Afghanistan, becomes the first pilot since the Second World War to use all ammunition on board. Charlotte Madison (26), born Canadian, was Britain's first ever female Apache pilot.

Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, maturity (growth) plot, sales: 8,232 |

	 United States

| 2004 | | Mackey, Chris, & Miller, Greg. (2004). *The Interrogators: Inside the Secret War Against al Qaeda*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

Summary: Interrogator Chris Mackey (32) (a pseudonym) goes to Afghanistan where he invents new interrogation techniques, thereby struggling with the limitations of the Geneva Conventions. On the one hand he shows that interrogators are very aware of their ethical responsibilities, on the other hand is his book also a study in moral degeneration.

NCO (OR-5), army, reservist, non-kinetic, deployed in own unit, traditionally published, education (growth) plot |
| 2005 | | Exum, Andrew. (2005). *This Man's Army: A Soldier's Story from the Front Lines of the War on Terrorism*. New York: Gotham Books.
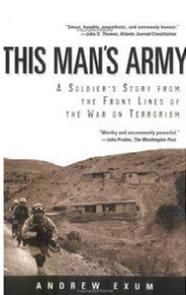
Summary: Andrew Exum (25) joins the Rangers to pay for his Ivy League education. While on a boring mission in Kuwait, his team is abruptly called in to support Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan. Back in America, his reintegration does not run smoothly as he wonders whether at 25, he has already lived the best days of his life.

Junior officer (OF-1), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, disillusionment-state (disenchantment) plot |

2006		Heichel, Donald. (2006). *An Angel on my Shoulder: A Soldier's Story*. Mustang: Tate Publishing. **Summary:** Donald Heichel (age unknown), a mentor to the Afghan National Army, shows in this book that it takes a lot of effort to bring democracy to the Afghan people, but that proper American leadership will definitely pull it off. Time and again he finds himself in dire straits, which are never his own fault, and that always end up well thanks to the angel on his shoulder. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published (Christian publisher), sentimental (rest) plot*
2006		Moring, Platte B. (2006). *Honor First: A Citizen-Soldier in Afghanistan*. Charleston: BookSurge. **Summary:** Platte Moring (48), a civilian lawyer, takes up the uniform to help the Afghans write a constitution and criminal laws in his capacity as Chief Legal Advisor in Kabul. For him, honour is very important, but he does not always get appreciated the way he wants to. *Senior officer (OF-4), army, non-kinetic, reservist, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, self-published, disillusionment-state (disenchantment) plot*
2006		Pente, Anthony J. (2006). *Afghanistan Diaries*. Bradenton: Booklocker. **Summary:** With a touch of humour, Anthony J. Pente (34) writes about his daily experiences as an imagery expert with the military intelligence unit in Bagram. *NCO (US warrant officer), army, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, still in service, self-published, education (growth), diary*

2007		Luttrell, Marcus, & Robinson, Patrick. (2007). *Lone Survivor: The Eyewitness Account of Operation Redwing and the Lost Heroes of SEAL Team 10*. New York: Little, Brown and Company. **Summary:** Navy SEAL team leader Marcus Luttrell (32) attempts to detain an al-Qaeda leader with his team. His team is discovered by local herders and he makes the final decision not to kill them, a decision he will from then on regret. Quickly thereafter, they are attacked and he is the only one to - severely wounded - survive the heavy fighting, thanks to the honour code of a local tribe who provides him with food, shelter and medical care. In 2013, this book was made into a movie with the same title (P. Berg, 2013). *NCO (OR-6), navy, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, sentimental (rest) plot*
2007		Rico, Johnny. (2007). *Blood Makes the Grass Grow Green: A Year in the Desert with Team America*. New York: Presidio Press. **Summary**: Johnny Rico (32) has a boring job as a probation officer. He does not know what to do with his life and therefore joins the infantry. He finds out that the army is certainly not a solution for his problems when he finds himself "living a Lord of the Flies existence among soldiers who feared civilian life more than they feared the Taliban". *Blood* has a style that is reminiscent of the Word War Two classic *Catch-22* (J. Heller, 1969). *Junior enlisted (OR-1), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, disillusionment-armed forces (disenchantment) plot*
2007		Zapata Jr, Regulo. (2007). *Desperate Lands: The War on Terror Through the Eyes of a Special Forces Soldier*. Gilroy: Nadores Publishing. **Summary:** Regulo Zapata (age unknown), a special forces man with the Army National Guard, is called up after 9/11 to be deployed in Africa and Afghanistan. Even though his missions keep changing constantly, his main mission remains training the Afghan National Army. *NCO (OR-8), army, kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, no longer in service, self-published, disillusionment-armed forces (disenchantment)*

2008		Courter, Jeff. (2008). *Afghan Journal: A Soldier's Year in Afghanistan.* Charleston: CreateSpace. **Summary:** When Jeff Courter (51), a drill sergeant with the National Guards, is deployed to Afghanistan to mentor the Afghan Border Police, he keeps a journal of this period of his life. Upon return, he is disappointed by the disinterest shown by Americans for him and his experiences in Afghanistan. *NCO (OR-7), army, kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, self-published, disillusionment-state (disenchantment), diary*
2008		Fury, Dalton. (2008). *Kill Bin Laden: A Delta Force Commander's Account of the Hunt for the World's Most Wanted Man*. New York: St. Martin's Press. **Summary:** Dalton Fury (44), a troop commander with Delta Force, describes his team's hunt for al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden and the resulting Battle of Tora Bora. Because of mistakes and opposition from other governmental parties, Delta Force is unable to capture Bin Laden. *Senior officer (OF-4), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, pathetic (rest) plot*
2008		Self, Nathan E. (2008). *Two Wars. One Hero's Fight on Two Fronts - Abroad and Within*. Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishing. **Summary:** This book is written in two parts. The first, action packed story is about Nathan Self (32) as an Army Ranger. He is a team leader whose team functions as Quick Reaction Force. They are called in to rescue a soldier left on a hill top and barely survive the rescue. The second part describes his 'war within', after he is diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published (Christian publisher), degeneration (disenchantment) plot*
2008		Wood, David B. (2008). *Don't Clean the Tables with a Floor Mop and Other Important Lessons from The Global War on Terror*. Lexington: CreateSpace. **Summary:** The hilarious perspective of a navy man, David Wood (50), who temporarily joins an army team as a communications specialist to mentor the Afghan National Army. With a lot of humour, he describes the US army life and training and cooperating with the Afghan National Army. His son has shared copyright as he edited the book and wrote the foreword. *Senior officer (OF-4), navy, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, self-published, affective (rest) plot, diary*

2009		Dinneen, Timothy Will. (2009). *An American Island: A Paratrooper's Deployment to Afghanistan*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse. **Summary**: Timothy Will Dinneen (31) is an adrenaline junkie, who gets depressed after his girlfriend leaves him and looks for danger in Afghanistan as a military journalist. In his book he provides the background information to the articles he has written there. In Afghanistan, he regains the meaning of life. *NCO (OR-5), army, non-kinetic, professional, deployment unknown, self-published, maturity (growth) plot, diary*
2009		Lachapelle, Nancy. (2009). *Messages from Afghanistan*. Bloomington: Xlibris. **Summary:** A diary by a military nurse, Nancy Lachapelle (53), who goes to Afghanistan as a mentor for the Afghan National Army Regional Medical Center. The steps she can take to improve the hospital are small, but she enjoys working with the Afghan people. *Senior officer (OF-4), air force, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, no longer in service, self-published, affective (rest) plot, diary*
2009		Monahan, Patrick B. (2009). *Memoirs of a Deployed Airman: The Adventures, Exploits, and Travails of a Combat Security Assistance Officer; Kabul, Afghanistan*. Bloomington: iUniverse. **Summary**: Despite the fact that he is a bit ill, Patrick Monahan (36) volunteers to go to Afghanistan as an International Education officer. During the deployment, his health deteriorates, and his military job back in the US is at stake because of the Reduction in Force policy. Upon return to the US, he finds it difficult to acclimatize, which results in his resignation. *Senior officer (OF-3), air force, non-kinetic, professional, individually deployed, no longer in service, self-published, disillusionment-armed forces (disenchantment) plot, diary*
2009		Mullaney, Craig M. (2009). *The Unforgiving Minute: A Soldier's Education*. New York: The Penguin Press. **Summary:** To get his father's approval, Craig Mullaney (31) does not study but goes to West Point. At this military academy, he wins a scholarship for Oxford. He is deployed to Afghanistan as a platoon commander with the Rangers, where he loses one of his men. He finishes teaching history at the Naval academy. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, maturity (growth) plot*
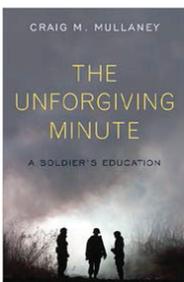
2010		Franzak, Michael. (2010). *A Nightmare's Prayer: A Marine Corps Harrier Pilot's War in Afghanistan*. New York: Threshold Editions. **Summary:** Harrier pilot Michael Franzak (age unknown) describes how exhausting a twelve month deployment can be, especially when you do not get along with your commanding officer. In this period, he changes from an agnostic into a believer. *Senior officer (OF-3), navy, kinetic, professional, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, traditionally published, degeneration (disenchantment) plot*
2010		Gregory, Clinton D. (2010). *Observations of An Average Airman: Letters to Those Back Home...* Lexington: CreateSpace. **Summary:** Clinton Gregory (39), a communications specialist, describes the daily life on a Forward Operating Base in Afghanistan for someone who never leaves the compound and trusts in God. *NCO (OR-6), air force, non-kinetic, reservist, deployed in own unit, still in service, self-published, action (rest) plot, diary*
2010		Shaffer, Anthony. (2010). *Operation Dark Heart: Spycraft and Special Ops on the Frontlines of Afghanistan - and the Path to Victory*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books. **Summary:** When intelligence officer Anthony Shaffer (48) discloses the truth about a mission to the 9/11 commission, the Defense Intelligence Agency tries to fire him after calling him "a marginally qualified intelligence officer". In this book, he shows his competence during "black ops" missions and writes down how he feels the Afghanistan mission should be improved. The book is published with the extensive black bars from the censor visible. *Senior officer (OF-3), army, kinetic, reservist, deployment unknown, still in service, traditionally published, disillusionment-armed forces (disenchantment) plot*
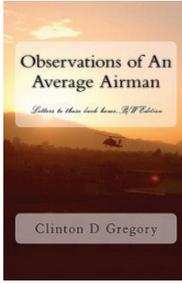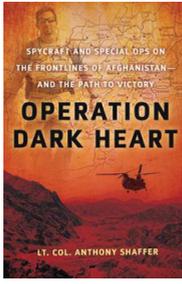
2010		Skelly, Michael G. (2010). *A Soldier's Tale: Living and Fighting with the Green Berets.* Durham: Eloquent Books. **Summary:** Michael Skelly (51), a school director, is called for reserve duty in Afghanistan, where, as team leader Civil Affairs, he stands his ground among the Green Berets at primitive Forward Operating Bases. However, he cannot restrain his enthusiasm for the army, particularly not when after returning home his team is involuntarily restrained for weeks without any explanation due to dangerous malaria pills. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, reservist, deployed in own unit, no longer in service, self-published, disillusionment-armed forces (disenchantment) plot*
2010		Tupper, Benjamin. (2010). *Greetings from Afghanistan, Send More Ammo: Dispatches from Taliban Country*. New York: Nal Caliber. **Summary:** Benjamin Tupper (41) was a mentor to the Afghan National Army for one year and tells about working with the Afghan soldiers, their combined operations and culture. When he returns home, he develops post-traumatic stress disorder. This book is an adaptation from a blog and was first self-published under the title *Welcome to Afghanistan – Send more Ammo.* *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, traditionally published, degeneration (disenchantment) plot*
2010		Tupper, Benjamin. (2010). *Dudes of War*. Rhinebeck: Epigraph Books. **Summary:** The dust jacket of Benjamin Tupper's second book calls it "an enlightening and uncensored introduction to modern American soldier culture" and that seems fitting. Tupper sketches critical, and often relentless pictures of people and debates during his deployment as an Afghan Nation Army mentor. *Junior officer (OF-2), army, kinetic, reservist, individually deployed, still in service, self-published, affective (rest) plot*, *age unknown*

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Author's index

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In this index, authors can be found who are explicitly mentioned in the text. Primary source authors are indicated with the name(s) of their book(s) in brackets.

Curriculum Vitae

Curriculum Vitae

Esmeralda Kleinreesink is a lieutenant-colonel with the Royal Netherlands Air Forces. She studied Business Administration at the Erasmus University Rotterdam where in 1996 she majored in change management. She also studied English and in 1998 became a certified interpreter/translator Dutch-English.

In 2001, after having worked as a business consultant and later as a project manager and information analyst in automation, she joined the armed forces. In the rank of major, she worked as a policy maker in the field of automation at the Air Force Staff and as an account-manager research & development for the Defence Materiel Organisation.
In 2006, she was promoted to lieutenant-colonel when she was made chief ground and air transport planning for NATO in Afghanistan. She published several short stories and an autobiography (*Officier in Afghanistan*) about this deployment in Afghanistan (Kleinreesink, 2009a, 2009b, 2012a, 2012b).

After her return, she became deputy personal advisor to the Dutch Chief of Defence. Currently, she works as an assistant professor at the Netherlands Defence Academy.